



# BETSIE VALLEY TRAILBLAZER

JUNE, 2008

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## NEW BENCHES, MORE PARKING

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### MDOT BIKEWAY INITIATIVE A WIN FOR BENZIE COUNTY

If current planning and funding proposals prevail, we will have an interconnected system of paved bicycle pathways in western Benzie County.

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has long advocated for and facilitated nonmotorized transportation and has been a strong supporter of bike trails. When it makes major improvements to existing highways, such as the recent renovation of M-22, a 6 foot paved bicycle lane is added on each side. When the new US-31 bridge in Beulah was built a few years ago, a separate arch for the Betsie Valley Trail was included. And MDOT provided \$348,900 in grant funding for construction of the Betsie Valley Trail between Frankfort and Beulah.

Last winter MDOT funded a statewide project to determine each County's desires for bicycle lanes beside existing highways to give them guidance for construction as funding becomes available.

We are very pleased with the proposal for Benzie County. It includes bicycle lanes beside Deadstream and Platte Rds. to Honor, encircling Big Platte Lake. Also included are Crystal Dr. on the north side of Crystal Lake and South Shore Dr. and Shorewood Dr. on the south. Since M-22 and M-115 already have bike lanes, this would provide a safe route completely around Crystal Lake. We applaud MDOT's efforts and plans.

Our priority has always been to complete as much trail surface as funding would allow and leave trail "amenities" until later. Since we have no Trail to build right now, we've been concentrating on projects to enhance Trail user's enjoyment and safety.

Benches came first. Last fall volunteers placed one bench and built railroad tie aggregate filled "bumpouts" between Elberta and M-115 to create flat surfaces for seven more. This spring the remaining seven benches were placed and they are being enjoyed. This project cost almost \$6,000, funded by your FBVT contributions, and required over 200 hours of volunteer effort.

The next project involves the need for improved parking at River Rd and Mollineaux Rd. BVTMC is working with the DNR Fisheries Division, owner of both properties and, with FBVT funding, has hired Dean Sandell to prepare preliminary plans for consideration by BVTMC and the DNR. Dean was the DNR Trail representative as the Trail was built, so is very familiar with the Trail and its needs.

The off road parking space at Mollineaux Rd. is too small. On busy days cars park and unload bikes and children on Mollineaux Rd., a dangerous situation. FBVT and BVTMC propose the plan shown on page 2. This plan will allow those using the Trail and the Crystal Lake beach to access the Trail directly, not via  
**(continued on page 2)**

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Visit our web page: [www.BetsieValleyTrail.org](http://www.BetsieValleyTrail.org)

(benches, parking, cont.)

Mollineaux Rd. This "Outlet" property was purchased by the DNR for the proposed Crystal Lake boat launch. Because of local opposition to a launch at this site, the DNR purchased the Labadie property to the east for the launch. As part of the development of that property a wetland mitigation will be required, and this is proposed for the "Outlet" property. Development of the Labadie property is currently delayed in a permit Administrative Hearing process and an Appeal to a Circuit Court decision. Until decisions are made regarding the launch site and the mitigation, planning for parking at Mollineaux Rd. will have to wait.

We would like to start planning for the River Rd. parking lot this summer. This is a busy lot, serving both the Trail and the Betsie River boat launch. There is severe erosion of the sand parking area and the deteriorated DNR launching ramp should be replaced. We will work with the BVTMC and the DNR toward construction of an approximately 135 ft. x 55 ft. aggregate parking area and a new launching ramp. The DNR planning and permitting process takes a long time. We will keep you informed.

## **FBVT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Terms expire July 2008**

Nancy Call-President  
Kathi Houston  
Jane Gary

**Terms expire July 2009**

Tom Davy  
Mary Osborn  
Bill Parris-Treasurer

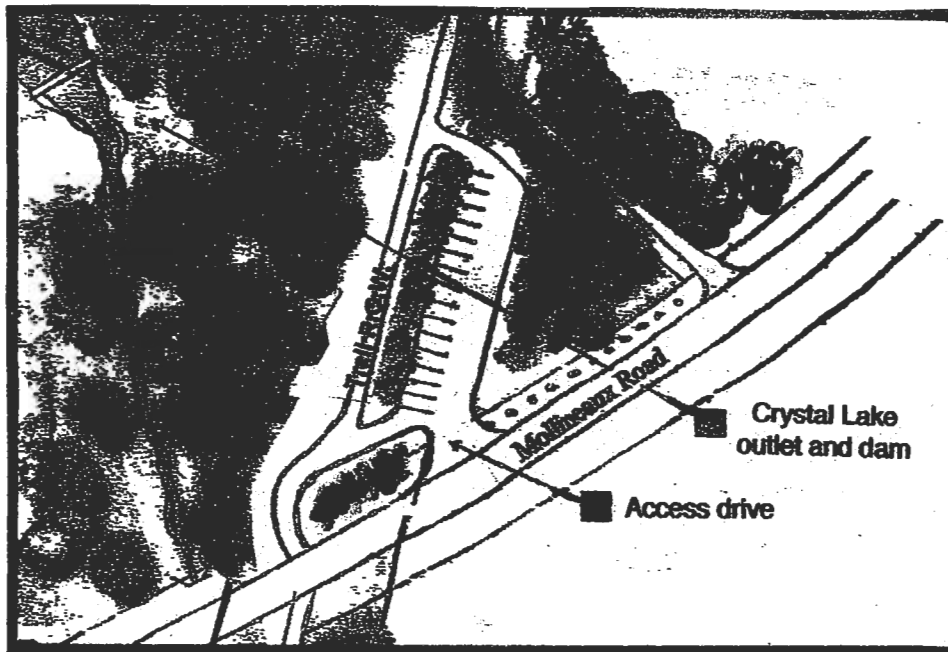
**Terms expire July 2010**

Larry Burks-Vice President  
Pete Peterson  
Karyn Thorr-Secretary

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## **ADDRESS CHANGE?**

If so, please call 231-352-6049 or  
e-mail [akoclark@bignetnorth.net](mailto:akoclark@bignetnorth.net)



**Preliminary proposal for improved parking at Mollineaux Rd.**

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**visit our web page: [www.BetsieValleyTrail.org](http://www.BetsieValleyTrail.org)**

## TRAIL IN EXCELLENT CONDITION

We are very pleased to report that the Trail has never looked better, thanks to recent changes in the mowing and volunteer programs.

For the past three summers the shoulders of the Trail from Frankfort to Thompsonville have been mowed twice a year by the Benzie County Road Commission under a contract funded by FBVT. The BCRC uses the same large tractor and mower it uses on road shoulders and the improvement is impressive. The "cut" is 5 ft. wide and produces a nice contrast between the trimmed shoulder and the wild growth. We are impressed how well grass and wild flowers flourish on the cut shoulder. We expected that the mowing would control woody growth, and it does, but it also controls the "snake grass" and poison ivy surprisingly well. There has been expressed concern about the use of herbicides to control the noxious weeds. We find that this is not necessary. In fact we use no herbicide except some Roundup (several applications a year) to try to keep the willows under control in a couple of short segments near Frankfort. These willows are going to be a continuous problem and some of the damaged trail will have to be replaced eventually.

Thanks for the second big improvement goes to our volunteers. Each spring, crews drive the trail with chain saws and remove trees and branches which have fallen during the winter. Then our Adopt-a-Trail groups walk the trail to pick up debris and throw off branches. And Bill Olsen uses his tractor and FBVT's powerful blower to blow the debris and sticks off the Trail as needed.

Our thanks to all of our members for your support in making all of this possible!!!

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## BEULAH BOOSTERS LOOKING FOR TRAILHEAD VOLUNTEERS

The Beulah Boosters Inc., a new not for profit corporation formed to promote and improve Beulah, is looking for volunteers to spend a few 4 hour shifts in the Beulah Trailhead and Visitors Center to offer information and assistance to visitors. If interested, please call Joan Duggan at 882-0262 or contact [BeulahBoosters.com](http://BeulahBoosters.com).

## BYLAWS AMENDMENT

The Proposed Amendments to Article XI, Section 4 of the FBVT bylaws on the other side of this page have been approved by our Board of Directors. We urge you to read them. They will be discussed and voted upon at our annual meeting in July.

The Board believes these changes are needed because DNR funding is no longer sufficient to properly maintain the Trail. The proposed changes will allow FBVT to provide funding for specific projects our Board approves. We have built a beautiful Trail and we want to keep it that way. We urge your support these changes to our bylaws.

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## TOUR de' TYKES & TOUR de TINY TYKES

One of the best ways to garner awareness of and support for the Betsie Valley Trail is through exposure at events that appeal to potential Trail enthusiasts. Our FBVT Board would like our organization to capitalize on just such an event.

On Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, Crystal Mountain in Thompsonville will be hosting the popular Peak2Peak bike race. Last year's very successful event turned out approximately 250 riders, and this year's event is expected to be bigger yet. After the race on Saturday, a Tour de' Tykes fun race is scheduled at the resort for children, and a host organization is being sought to coordinate the event. This is where the Friends organization comes in.

We're looking for a committee of 5 to 8 people, to help with this one day event. We see this as is a prime opportunity to showcase to active bicyclists and their families the outstanding cycling opportunities offered by Benzie County and the Betsie Valley Trail. This is the kind of awareness and exposure that helps to build membership in our organization.

If you'd like to assist with this event, please phone Nancy Call at 231-378-2000 ext. 3302.

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**FBVT factoid:** The world produces 110 million bicycles a year; 49 million cars

# Proposed Amendments to Article XI, Section 4

Strike thru = delete;

Double underline = add

Sec. 4 Accounts. The Corporation will maintain Operating, Capital and Endowment Fund accounts.

a. Operating Account. The Operating Account will consist of funds to be used to conduct the business and operating functions of the Corporation. ~~All membership and other non-directed contributions will be deposited in the Operating Account.~~ All income not specifically directed to another account or fund will be deposited in the Operating Account.

b. Capital accounts. Capital accounts are established to provide funds for construction and/or capital improvements to the trail and/or related amenities as determined appropriate by the Board of Directors. The profits from fund raising activities, donations designated for specific trail related projects and donations designated for specific capital accounts will be deposited in interest bearing accounts. Funds may be transferred from the Operating Account to capital accounts by the Board of Directors. Funds in the Capital accounts may not be deposited or transferred to an Operating account, the Betsie Valley Trail Fund or used to conduct the business or operating functions of the Corporation. It is intended that capital funds will be leveraged as far as possible i.e. used only as a portion of the local match for projects which qualify for grant support, but exceptions may be made by the Board of Directors.

c. Betsie Valley Trail Fund. The Betsie Valley Trail Fund is an operating account established to provide funds to purchase materials, supplies, tools, equipment and/or contracted services as determined appropriate by the Board of Directors. The profits from fund-raising activities and donations specifically designated for ~~this fund~~ trail maintenance will be deposited in ~~an interest bearing account.~~ this Fund and will be used only for the purposes stated above. Funds from the Operating Account may be transferred to this account by the Board of Directors. All expenditures from this account must be approved by the Board of Directors. No part of these funds will be transferred to any other organization except to fund specific projects or purchases as approved by the Board of Directors.

d. William R. Olsen Leadership Endowment Fund. The William R. Olsen Leadership Endowment Fund is established to provide a continuing source of income for physical improvements to the trail and for specific needs as approved by the Board of Directors. The principal will consist of contributions from memorial, honorary, deferred and other gifts specifically designated for the William R. Olsen Leadership Endowment Fund and will be invested in a separate designated interest bearing account. The principal will remain intact. The interest and dividends may be withdrawn and transferred to a capital account or to the Betsie Valley Fund by the Board of Directors.

e. Funds will not be used to operate or maintain any portion of the Betsie Valley Trail or related portions of the Betsie Valley Trailway complex except for funds in the Betsie Valley Trail Fund.

**Approved by the Board of Directors of The Friends of the Betsie Trail June 4, 2008**

## BETSIE VALLEY TRAILBLAZER

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**Top:** Last fall, volunteers constructed seven “bumpouts” to create a flat surface for the benches.

**Bottom:** This spring, Joanne and Terry Herban drilled holes for the bench legs.

## BETSIE VALLEY TRAILBLAZER

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**Top: Bob Appleford, Denis Cannart, Jack DeVries (hidden), Larry Adams, Phil Mix and Moby Benedict (L to R) place the new benches.**

**Bottom: Scrib Sheaffer, Bob Zwink and Tom Davy (L to R) apply the aggregate and finish the project.**

## BETSIE VALLEY TRAILBLAZER

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**Top: The new benches being enjoyed.**

**Bottom: Shelby (age 2) and Parker (6) on the Trail this spring.**

## BETSIE VALLEY TRAILBLAZER

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**Top: Jerry Boyd, Bob Zwink, Doug Green, Dick Robb and Moby Benedict (L to R) clear downed trees and branches early this spring**

**Left: Denis Cannaert, Larry Adams, Bill Olsen and Fred Forsythe (L to R) place "Jim's bench" at the Lewis Bridge Overlook last fall**

**Right: John Hayes, Jerry Powley and Phil Mix (L to R) replace signs**



## **THIRD ANNUAL BETSIE VALLEY RUN OCTOBER 5th**

The Betsie Valley Run, held the first Sunday of every October, shares the natural beauty of **The Betsie Valley Trail** with hundreds of runners and walkers. All proceeds from the run benefit the Betsie Valley District Library in Thompsonville

The Half Marathon course is comprised of 50% asphalt and country roads plus 50% **Betsie Valley Trail**. There is also a 10k Run and Walk, 5k Run and Walk plus a Child's Mile. Both the 10k and Half Marathon begin at Crystal Mountain and finish on Lindy Road just east of M-115. All other events take place at Crystal Mountain. For more information, times of races or to register for the Betsie Valley Run, visit [www.betsievalleyrun.com](http://www.betsievalleyrun.com).

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## **BENZIE BUS WILL SPOT BIKERS**

Want to ride any part of the Trail one way? Call the Benzie Bus service ((231-325-3000), make a reservation, spot your car, and the bus will pick you up and take you, your friends and your bikes to any road crossing of the Trail. The fee is \$2 per person, \$1 for seniors. While a 24 hour reservation is preferred, sometimes reservations may be made on shorter notice. Office hours are 6:00 am to 10:00 pm Mondays to Fridays and 7:00 am to 6:00 pm on Saturdays. For more information contact [www.BenzieBus.com](http://www.BenzieBus.com).

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## **HELP NEEDED FOR ART FAIRS**

The summer art fairs are a wonderful time for us to show our wares and discuss what we are doing with our members and others who may be interested. They are Great PR for FBVT. This year's schedule: Beulah Art Fair (July 5<sup>th</sup>), CSA Art Fair (July 23<sup>rd</sup>) and Frankfort Art Fair (August 16<sup>th</sup>).

We can always use more volunteers to greet the public, answer questions, etc. Please call Mary Osborn (882-5444) if you can help. Thanks.

## **EDUCATIONAL RAIN GARDEN AT THE BEULAH TRAILHEAD**

Thanks to a \$1,515 grant from the Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail, all elementary children in Benzie County can learn about and participate in planting a rain garden by the Trailhead depot in Beulah on Monday, June 23 from 10 am to noon. The project is named The Garden of Possibilities.

The rain garden will be an attractive addition to the Beulah Trailhead and an important educational tool. The deep roots of a rain garden's native plants soak up about 90% of the pollutants in run-off water they contact, cleansing it before it enters a storm sewer, lake, or river. Other rain gardens have been built in Grand Rapids and Kansas City.

There has been strong community support for this project. Karen Dahman, a retired teacher trained by the National Geographic Society, has spearheaded the project assisted by Carolyn Thayer, landscape architect, Bev Toomey of Ohio State, Judy Groulx with Texas Christian University, and Meredith McNabb of Bayside Printing. Jim Gillison, Bill Huddleston, and Darwin Johnson have prepared the garden bed and have installed some large garden boulders. Tom Hopkins, Honor Building Supply, will supply a fence at low cost and Dean Chamberlain and Neal Boynton will install the fence and garden sign. Sculptor Kevin Short of Honor is donating a flower bouquet sculpture for year round color .

The garden has been arranged by a team of Benzie Central High School students selected by Raquel Huddleston, science teacher. Volunteer high school students and members of the Lakeshore and Periwinkle garden clubs will help the children build the garden. There will be an evening of donor appreciation and public information on Thursday, July 24, 7 pm at the garden.

After the garden planting there will be a series of environmental classes concerned with water on Monday mornings from 10 am to noon, sponsored by the Crystal Lake & Watershed Association. Please call the CLWA at 882-4001 for additional information.

## Many, Many Thanks to:

**Carol and Bob Beidler , Betty Chase, Peter McKnight, Jim Murray, Thelma Rider Novak, Mary Osborn, Bill Parris, Etta Mae Pierce, Suzy Voltz, Charlie Yole and Bonnie Warren**  
for  
folding, stuffing and mailing the fall newsletter and the December President's letter .

**Rob Mummey (Advanced Tree Removal)**  
for  
removing, gratis, a tangle of storm downed trees which required professional expertise

**Moby Benedict, Jerry Boyd, Denis Cannaert, Doug Green, Bob Hawes, Jim Laarman, Bill Olsen, Pete Peterson, Dick Robb and Bob Zwink**  
for  
clearing winter downed trees from the entire Trail this spring

**Dan Remahl and Jane Gary**  
for  
distributing the trail maps

**Betsie Valley Trailway Management Council members**  
**Jim Baltazar, Bob Bishop, Mike Foust, Scott Gest, Bill Olsen, Bill Parris, Tad Peacock, Mary Szwed and Frank Walterhouse**  
for  
serving on the Council and managing the Trail without compensation

**Karen Dahman and all who participated in the Garden of Possibilities at the Beulah Trailhead**

### **Our Adopt-a-Trail volunteers**

**Friends of Betsie Bay members**  
for  
clearing trash from 10<sup>th</sup> St. in Frankfort to M-22 in Elberta

**Elberta United Methodist Church members**  
for  
clearing trash and caring for the stairways on the Elberta Causeway

**Benzie Bicycle Club members**  
**Mark and Jan Copher, Dennis and Karen Holcombe, Darrell and Shirley Kinnan, Lucie Kinzel, Peg Lawrenson, Bob McQuilkin, Dick and Dianne Munt, Bob and Mary Schell, Richard Sosnowski, Steve Wentworth, and Doug and Margaret Wozniak**  
for  
clearing trash from the Elberta causeway to River Rd.

**Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail members**  
**Marjie Anderson, Bob Beidler, Ralph Dean, Alice Hollenbeck, Ruth Lints, Bill and Joan Olsen and Ray Nichols**  
for  
clearing trash from River Rd. to Mollineaux Rd.

**Crystal Mountain employees**  
**Susan and Tony Banynard, Michael and Nancy Call, Staci DeBoer and Kathy and Doug Maginity**  
for  
clearing trash from Beulah to Thompsonville

### ***And a very Special Thanks to:***

**Larry Adams, Chuck Anderson, Bob Appleford, Moby Benedict, Jerry Boyd, Jim Brian, Denis Cannaert, Bob Condon, Tom Davy, Jack DeVries, Fred Forsythe, Bob Hawes, Joanne and Terry Herban, Jim Laarman, Phil Mix, Bill Olsen, Pete Peterson, Dick Robb, Scrib Sheaffer and Bob Zwinck**  
who  
put in over 200 volunteer hours to construct the railroad tie "bumpouts" and place the eight new benches

**THE BETSIE VALLEY TRAILBLAZER**

Hey Partner...

In the beginning... the DNR partnered with Benzie County to establish the Betsie Valley Trail. The DNR provided the rail bed for the Trail, and the County agreed to maintain and operate it. As the County took on this responsibility, they created the Betsie Valley Trail Management Council – an agency of the Board of Commissioners charged with managing, operating and maintaining the Trail. A new partnership was created.

The Betsie Valley Trail Management regularly partners with our group – the Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail, to make things happen on the Trail. Our Trail Care Coordinator coordinates volunteers for construction projects, Trail cleanup, and a range of other activities. And, for some projects, the Friends group supports the County financially when grant requests for special projects are submitted and approved by the Friends Board. As an example, look for the improved and enlarged parking areas to be completed at Mollineaux & River Roads.

Every one of you is a partner through your membership investment, and many of you have also pitched in by working on Trail projects or participating in events. Thank you! For those who are interested, opportunities for being a Trail partner abound. Maybe you'd like to help us mail newsletters, or man our booth for a few hours at an art fair. Perhaps you'd like to be called upon for Trail project work, or maybe you'd like to help organize an event (see the Tour De' Tykes article elsewhere in this newsletter). As we move into the busy summer season, I hope you'll use and enjoy the Trail often. Share it with your family & friends, and let us know if there's a Trail activity in which you'd like to become involved.

Happy Trails, partners!

Nancy Mullen Call, President



**We need your help to continue to develop and maintain the Betsie Valley Trail. Contributions are appreciated.**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Membership levels: Single (\$10) Family (\$15) Donor (\$25) Patron (50) Benefactor (\$100) Sponsor (\$250)

**Operating Account** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Betsie Valley Trail Capital Account** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL CONTRIBUTION** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form and your tax deductible contribution to:  
**Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail, P.O. Box 474, Beulah, MI 49617**

## ANNUAL MEETING

10:00 am, Saturday, July 19, 2008  
Best Western Scenic Hill Motel  
Beulah, MI

### AGENDA

Financial report  
Progress and planning reports  
Comments from members  
Election of three Directors  
Vote to amend the Bylaws



P.O. BOX 474  
BEULAH, MICHIGAN  
49617-0474

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Non-Profit  
Bulk Rate  
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Permit No. 22

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A green line on your address  
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2008 dues have been paid  
Thank you!!!

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## NEW BENCHES, MORE PARKING