These photos were of the first trail event, taken in Thompsonville in the spring of 1992. The Friends were just getting organized and had a meeting in this church, followed by a walk on the rails north beside the ball park. Look for a brief history of the Trail in Spring 2016!

Endowment Receives Generous Gift

The Friends have received an extremely generous gift of property from Marie Kuipers to the Wm. R. Olsen Endowment for the Betsie Valley Trail. The lot is on Wild Laurel Lane in the Laurel Ridge development on US-31 east of Beulah, one of the highest points in Benzie County. The spectacular view from the lot (shown above) takes in Crystal Lake, Big Platte and Little Platte Lakes, Empire Bluff and South Manitou Island. It is expected that the lot will sell for near its appraised value of $102,000, which will make a significant addition to the Endowment. Thank you, Marie.
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We’ve had some positive news for our most critical need — growth in the Olsen Endowment Fund. In addition to the real estate gift mentioned on the front page of this newsletter, the Friends just received a $25,000 gift from one generous donor and a legacy gift of stock which is critical need — growth in the Olsen Endowment Fund to preserve it for you and your community. To do that we would need a couple of years like that would put us in major financial difficulty.

When a six-figure expense year such as this past one happens (major repairs), it is a dangerous drain on our operating funds. Which is why we have the goal of $1 million to address that income by special events and other revenue generators.

Please help keep the Trail the community gem it currently is; give a gift this year to the Olsen Endowment Fund to preserve it for you and future generations.

Jim Ryan, President

Willson, John & Melinda
Wozniak, Douglas & Margaret
Wuerthele, Will
Wyckoff, Dennis & Jan
Zachmann, Stephan & Gail

Donations: $1 - $99
Alexander, William & Mary
Appleford, Robert & Molly
Armstrong, Jon & Mary
Austin, Richard & Patricia
Banker, Richard & Beverly
Barnes, Jim
Bartz, Cheryl
Bateman, John & Mary
Baynard, Tony & Susan
Beidler, Robert & Carol
Belden, Priscilla
Birchler, Keith & Ethel M.
Blakely, Stephen & Julia
Blizard, Wes & Sharon
Bloom, Roger & Carol
Bowman, Dan & Barbara
Brief, William & Pennee
Brunner, Gordon & Nadine
Campbell, Bruce & Linda
Campbell, Robert & Mary
Campbell, Robert C.
Chubbs, Elliott & Mary
Churchill, Bob & LuAnn
Clar, Kristine *
Cludo, Timothy & Mary
Cojzen, Rob & Kathy
Crampton, Thomas
Crosen, Jennifer & Joan Callahan
Delamarther, Joyce
Dewey, Robert & Helen
Edwards, John & Barbara
Elliot, Marge
Ely, Robert & June
Engdahl, Tom & Cindy
Ester, John & Char
Fant, Nick & Cindy
 Falkner, Janice
Fischer, Kay
Fisher, Theodore & Barbara
Franklin, Mary Jane *
Freshou, Suzanne
Fryinger, Terry & Linda
Gay, Byron & Sheila
Gilbert, James & Joan
Gilmore, Eames & Paula
Giantz, Al & Jo
Granlund, George & Catherine *
Greene, Madeleine
Gritter, Gary & Barbara
Gyr, Marian
Hale, Larry & Virginia *
Hansen, Lyle
Harsh, Jack & Judy
Harper, Barry & Evelyn
Hawley, David & Dorothy
Hays, John
Heidbreder, Mark & Jennifer
Hentley, Paul & Mia
Herban, Terry & Jo
Hessler, Hugh & Pat *
Hill, Philip & Elizabeth *
Hoban, Tim & Anne
Holaski, Gregory & Rochelle
Holcombe, Dennis & Karen
Hyde, Kim & Kay
Jackson, Tom & Jackie
Jimenez, John & Patricia
Johnson, Barbara
Johnson, Carol
Johnson, David & Kathy
Jones, Bill & Jane
Kadzban, Cyndi
Kamp, Betsy *
Kehr, Charlie & Linda
King, Bob & Susan
Kloskoski, Jack & Beth *
Kropog, Bill & Claire
Laarmann, James & Patricia
Laske, Steve & Mary Lou
Leay, David & Jane
Lee, Robert & Rosemary
Lekovich, Robert & Patricia
Luginbill, Jim & Julie
Lynch, Will & Barbara *
Mackenzie, James & Robin
Mackley, David & Bonnie
Macks, Eric & Suzette Le Vigne
Magnetini, Kathy & Doug
Manke, Patrick & Sally
McCall, Robert & Judith
McEwen, William & Inger
McKinley, Sharon
McLaughlin, Jackie & Susan
McLeinitz, Rosalie
McNutt, Sue
Metzger, James W.
Michael, Maureen
Monteith, Gerald
MOUNTZ, Tom & Julie
Murphy, Sharon & Sharon
Montoume
Nelson, Don & Janet
Nichols, Ray & Paula
Nugent, Ronald & Ruth
Olsen, Dexter & Carolyn
Osborn, Paul & Ann
Peacock, Ted & Margie
Penfold-House, Alma
Peters, Charles
Petritz, George L.
Pierce, Paul & Etta Mae *
Pischke, Alfred & Elaine
Post, Ruth L.
Pray, Barb
Reid, David & Katherine Houston
Reising, Suzanne *
Richardson, Doug & Karen
 Ritchie, Dennis & Trish
Robert, Ed & Marge *
Rodes, John & Katherine
Rodgers, Sue
Rogers, David & Ann
Rowley, John & Kathleen
Scholl, Robert & Mary
Schultz, Jane
Sheafor, Scrib & Patricia *
Shiraki, Clyde & Sarah
Shreiner, Wanda & Steve
Skurdall, Robert & Debra Eller
Slotnick, Diana *
Sosnowski, Richard & Diana
Stephenson, Ross & Diane
Steward, Caroline
Stone, Harriet
Storie, Larry & Carolyn
Thayer, Kelly & Carolyn
Thompson, Ruth
Thornton, Tom & Karen
Vaughn, Beth Ann & David Bruni
Venick, Irwin & Jeanne Bellinger
VerStrat, Scott & Diana
Walline, Eric & Marilyn
Walton, Mark & Julie
Williams, Elizabeth Lee *
Williamson, Nancy E.
Wolfe, Joan *
Wood, David & Ann
Wyatt, Jack & Tammy
Young, Bob & Mary
Zahn, Bennie & Julie
Zwirnck, Robert & Greta

• Donation to the Wm. R. Olsen Endowment for the Betsie Valley Trail
Mel Pierce mowing the shoulders between Frankfort and Elberta, taking great care between signs, mailboxes, etc.

On September 19, Bryce and Paula Dreeszen led a Benzie Audubon field trip by bike, checking and cleaning bluebird boxes along the Trail between Beulah and Thompsonville.

Kris and Daylene Welty with Melanie and Bryce at the raffle at the Betsie River Campsite after Big Al’s Skunk Run. The event netted $4,500, all of which the Weltys donated to the Trail!

The Frankfort Triathlon, taking advantage of the Trail, held on September 12th.
Meet Carol Kraak, Trail Ambassador Extraordinaire!

Carol Kraak seems to always have a smile on her face, though most of the time it is masking the (hip, knee, back) pain & fatigue from disabilities from birth. Most people would never know that she suffers. Carol has found one thing that gives her energy, a positive outlook, and a happy disposition; bicycle riding, mostly on the Betsie Valley Trail. Carol seems to absorb the beauty of nature around her, taking many pictures along the way. She shares these wonderful photos on her Facebook page, and with the Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail as well.

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A: Not really. I always had a bike but wasn’t a major rider. I grew up in Frankfort but since it is a small town, I usually walked everywhere! I have ridden the Trail since it was created but especially in the last 3 years since my disability has limited me more. Standing and walking any distance now causes pain, but biking does not! I feel happier riding like I know no disability! I ride as soon as the snow is mostly gone on the trail in March or so until it gets too cold and snowy, and in 3 years have ridden over 3000 miles on the Trail, mostly between Frankfort and Beulah alone! I pride myself on the fact that a person does not have to “look the part” if you will, to do something you love. It’s about finding what you CAN do and then do it without worry of “how you look”. I don’t have fancy gear or clothes. I wear my knee brace and my rainbow shoes and worry of “how you look”. I don’t have fancy gear or clothes. I wear my knee brace and my rainbow shoes and don’t have time to REALLY breathe it all in, take notice of all the many “little” amazing things out there that make the Betsie Valley Trail so timeless and special. It might be a beautiful dragonfly that zips across your path, or maybe a sunbathing turtle family on a log, or a sweet scene that you don’t even notice.

Q: What is your favorite stretch of the Trail? 
A: Besides biking and my camera, my husband and I have about 100 chickens and turkeys. We ended up rescuing 13 chickens some years ago and got the fever! We now raise meat birds, egg layers, & turkeys and find such peace and simplicity with them plus just good ole’ eggs and meat! I also work at the Benzie County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau and have been there 16 years. I get many chances to “sell” the Betsie Valley Trail to visitors! I am also on the Board of the Animal Welfare League, and am the daughter of one of its original leaders.

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REMINDER ABOUT TRAIL ETIQUETTE AND SAFETY

On a beautiful fall week-day this September, it looked like my wife and I had the Trail to ourselves, riding back to the Elberta trailhead from Beulah. We were riding single file through one of the little “S”-turns over by Crystal Lake. As we completed the curve my wife moved to the left to ride alongside me — and almost got run over by a speedy biker who had come up behind us silently. A squeal of brakes, a mumbled apology, and then he was passing us and gone. Which reminded me that we need to all keep in mind some basic rules of trail etiquette, such as these:

Keep Right: Stay as near to the right side of the trail as is safe, except when passing another user.

Pass On The Left: Pass others, going your direction, on their left. YIELD TO SLOWER AND ONCOMING TRAFFIC. Use hand signals to alert those behind you of your moves. Look ahead and back to make sure the lane is clear before you pull out and pass. Pass with ample separation and do not move back to the right until safely past. REMEMBER: KIDS AND PETS CAN BE UNPREDICTABLE.

Give An Audible Warning BEFORE Passing: Call out; “On your left” (or “right” where circumstances make it appropriate) in a loud voice from at least ten yards back. Give the person you are passing time to respond. Watch for their reaction. So that you can hear these signals, don’t wear headphones on the trail.

These simple rules will keep all trail users safer and more comfortable.

VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE - AND LIKE US! facebook.com/betsievalleytrail

WE WELCOME ALL FRIENDS AND TRAIL PHOTOS!

VIEW OUR WEBSITE: betsievalleytrail.org

THANK YOU TO SPRING 2015 NEWSLETTER MAILING VOLUNTEERS:
Janet Copher, Holly Loring, Betsy Nowak, Jan Robb, Mary Scholl, Gretchen Staub, Bea Stone, John Walthorn, and Kathy Walthorn

To receive our monthly e-newsletter, please send your e-mail address to: FBVTMI@gmail.com

REMEMBER ABOUT TRAIL ETIQUETTE AND SAFETY

Q: What is the most surprising or unusual site you’ve encountered on the Trail? 
A: The most interesting thing was probably this past spring! I encountered a game of “my turn” played by a coyote and two turkey vultures, over a dead deer. The vultures would sit high in the tree while the coyote was working at the deer. They’d swoop down to a lower branch to scare the coyote away, and then down to the deer to take their turn. After a short while the coyote would rush in close enough to scare the vultures back up into the trees and go back at the deer. This happened about 6 times, before I decided to move on down the trail, at which point they all left but I bet they didn’t go far, and started back in once I was out of sight!

Q: What do you do other than bike?  
A: Besides biking and my camera, my husband and I have about 100 chickens and turkeys. We ended up rescuing 13 chickens some years ago and got the fever! We now raise meat birds, egg layers, & turkeys and find such peace and simplicity with them plus just good ole’ eggs and meat! I also work at the Benzie County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau and have been there 16 years. I get many chances to “sell” the Betsie Valley Trail to visitors! I am also on the Board of the Animal Welfare League, and am the daughter of one of its original leaders.

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The William R. Olsen Endowment Fund
for the Betsie Valley Trail

Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail (FBVT) is a 501 (c) 3 Michigan not for profit corporation, EIN 38-3092450. Since its inception in 1993 the purpose of FBVT has been “to advocate, promote and encourage the development and successful operation of a recreational trail on the former Ann Arbor Railroad corridor in Benzie County”.

In 2013 the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail established the Friends of Betsie Valley Trail Endowment Fund with Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation (GTRCF) to receive all contributions to FBVT’s William R. Olsen Endowment Fund. Deposits in this Fund will remain with and be managed by GTRCF. The principal will remain intact and income will be granted to FBVT annually for Trail construction and maintenance, assuring that the Trail will remain an important asset to the community forever. GTRCF is a 501 (c) 3 tax exempt organization, EIN 38-3096434.

Ways to Give:

Cash: Write a check to Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation (GTRCF), write FBVT Endowment Fund on the memo line and mail it to GTRCF, 250 E. Front St., Traverse City, MI 49684. Pledges of cash, usually a stated amount every year for up to three years, are always appreciated.

Securities: Appreciated securities are the most common type of non-cash gift. Publicly traded stocks are preferred because they can be sold easily. Contact the Community Foundation for assistance with a stock gift and they will work with you and your broker to facilitate a gift to the Endowment Fund.

Real Estate and Personal Property: A gift to FBVT of real estate is an attractive option for the donor because capital gains tax is avoided thanks to FBVT’s tax-exempt status. Gifts such as airplanes, automobiles, antiques, boats, furniture and equipment also may be accepted if the property can be readily sold. FBVT policy requires Board approval before accepting these kinds of gifts.

Expectancies: Expectancies are promises by a donor to make a gift at some future date. Since the gift is not a completed gift during the donor’s lifetime, the donor does not enjoy the benefit of a charitable income tax deduction. Contact the Community Foundation and they will help facilitate a gift to the Endowment Fund. The most common types of expectancies are:

Estate gifts: Monetary gifts from estates are the most common planned giving method and do not require the donor to part with assets during life. They may be disbursed when the estate is settled, distributed over a period of time or both. They require a written statement in the donors will indicating that specific assets will be transferred to the Grand Traverse Regional Community
Foundation to be deposited in the Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail Endowment Fund. If the donor has specific recommendations regarding how the bequest is to be used, that request should be made in the will and in a separate written document to the Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail.

**Retirement Plans and IRAs:** Another type of expectancy involves naming the Grand Traverse Region Community Foundation as a beneficiary of a retirement plan and specifying that funds are to be deposited in the Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail Endowment Fund upon the owner’s death.

**Life Insurance:** Similar to a retirement plan designation, a gift of life insurance is accomplished by naming the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation’s Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail Endowment Fund as a beneficiary of the policy on the beneficiary designation form. The donor is entitled to a charitable income tax deduction equal to the cash surrender value of the policy.

**Create your own fund with the Foundation:** Working directly with the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation, donors may establish their own endowment fund which will make a contribution to the Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail, in his and/or her name, each year, in perpetuity. The minimum required to create Named Fund with the Community Foundation is $10,000.

**Contacts:**

Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail  
P.O. Box 474, Beulah MI 49617

FBVT’s web page, www.btesievallytrail.org, has information about the Trail and the names and phone numbers of members of the Board of Directors

Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation  
250 East Front St., Traverse City, MI 49684  
231-935-4066  
pellis@gtrcf.org

This publication provides general gift planning information only and is not meant as legal, tax or investment advice. Please consult your own legal and financial advisors before making a sizable gift.
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Bea Stone, Dave Lyon, Jim Ryan, Gretchen Staub and Jan Robb, helping to get spring newsletter ready.

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Why is the endowment so critical? Some of the local Not-For-Profit organizations are blessed with revenue streams — continuing source of income that support their operational expenses. For others, ongoing governmental grants provide strong financial underpinnings. Like the Trail, there are several other local NFPs which are outstanding community resources and draw many visitors to the area. They, however, are able to generate income to support ongoing operations from admissions, merchandise sales, space rentals and even weddings. And yet they too are trying to build endowments to assist with building income to support operations.

Unlike these examples, the Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail receives no millage and is not supported by state or federal monies. We have no built-in sources of ongoing revenue. We rely on our members and other donors for the income to fund operations. And that’s why the Endowment is so important!

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