**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

**Benefits not so obvious:**
Greetings from the living, breathing, beautiful David Canny Rountree Branch Trail in Platteville. As always, I would like to start by saying thank you to all those who have been involved in the ongoing volunteer work, gardening, planning, education and philanthropy that make up our trail. Even though it is snow covered and cold now, all of these things are still happening on a daily basis. Again, thank you for all you do.

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**PCA Splits/Announces Coordinator Positions**

The PCA is thrilled to welcome Grace Milanowski and Clay Shaffer into their new coordinator roles. Grace will be the PCA’s Lead Coordinator with assistance from Clay as Deputy Coordinator. Grace will manage the overall coordination of the PCA throughout the year; while Clay will serve on a seasonal basis coordinating the PCA’s wonderful volunteers and maintenance of the trail. The potential of this duo to move the PCA forward is vast and exciting indeed. Grace has a degree in Environmental Science and has extensive experience with non-profits, conservation, environmental education, and volunteering. Clay has been an active member of the Platteville community for 42 years as a high school teacher, basketball coach, president of the Mining Museum, and PCA volunteer. For an organization to be able to tap into such an impressive combination of experiences, connections, and vision is truly inspiring. Welcome aboard Grace and Clay!
The PCA held its first annual Monster Dash 5k run/walk and 10k run on November 2, 2019. We considered this event a tremendous success for an inaugural year. 88 people registered for the event and braved cooler than expected weather to support our cause. The Halloween themed run had numerous participants dressed in costume. Feedback for the event was very positive. In total, the Monster Dash raised over $2500 for the arboretum. Join us next year for a family fun event!

We are identifying areas along the Rountree Trail to clear out invasive vegetation and less desirable trees in order to plant additional trees as well as native flowers and grasses. The recently planted trees will add beauty and shade for trail users, as well as habitat for wildlife, for decades or perhaps even centuries. This may be hard to imagine, but we’ve done something that will create benefits for people living in, or visiting, Platteville long after the year 2100… and that is a good thing.

Thanking Our 2020 TRAIL BLAZERS

$2,000 +
Anderson, Max
Platteville Community Fund
Tang, Cindy
Woodward Foundation

$1000+
Canny, David
Betts, Carol Sue
Community First Bank
Edward Jones - Reeves Ben
High Vibe Fitness
L & M Corrugated
Mound City Bank
Platteville Development Group
VanDeWeil, Stephen
Wisconsin Bank and Trust

$750 - $999
Dupaco

$500 - $749
Builders First Source
Digman Construction - Bob, Chad and Jay
Driftless Market
Gates, Robert
Heartland Credit Union
Honkamp Kruger & Co
Kunes Country
Medical Associates
Midwest One Bank
Peters, James
Samuels, Jeffrey
Steve Fizza
Thrivent
Weber, Gene and Jan
Weier, Ron & Jan

$250 - $499
Applied Micro
Baker Iron Works
Banfield, Greg
Bard Materials
Bill’s Plumbing & Heating
Boll, James
Burger King
Clare Bank
Country Inn & Suites
Dairy Queen
Driftless Market
Duesbury, John
Eastman Cartwright
Edward Jones - Brad Mootz
Edward Jones - Hundhausen Bob
Fiesta Cancun
Gobin & Allion Flooring
H&R Block
Holiday Inn Express
Izzard, Dave and Toni
J&N Stone/Rural Excavating
Jentz, Ron and Dianne
Jevison, Joe and Gina
Karpinskie Enterprises
KFC/Taco Bell
Milio’s
Momentum Bikes
and Boards, LLC
Morrisset Printing
Mound View Inn
Nelson, Tom and Carol
Pizza Hut
Platteville Chamber of Commerce
Platteville Dental
Platteville McDonalds
Platteville Optimists Club
Pluemer, Julie and Don
Southwest Landscaping
Super 8
TC Networks, Inc.

TREES... continued from page 1
and hackberry. We hope to also plant shagbark hickories and native shrubs in the near future. Note that we are not only planting trees immediately adjacent to the Rountree Branch Trail, but also on the PCA owned floodplain property behind Menards and Wal-Mart. Additionally, through an agreement with the Department of Natural Resources, we are planting trees along the Mound View State Trail which extends to Belmont.

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Donors add $10,000 to PCA Endowment

Anonymous (13)
Addison, Steven W. and Pelucchi Addison, Bruna
Andrews, Sandy
Boll, James R and Judith R
Carl, Alleine L.
Carnahan, David and Ellen M.
Clare, Patrick M. and Barbara Jean
Cramer, Robert G. and Susan C.
Dalecki, Michael G. and Brenda L.
Day, Susan L. and William J.
Farina, Lee A.
Gottschalk, Roger and Marilyn
Hauser, Roger E. and Ann K.
Hoffman, Cecile
Huck, Mary Claire
Johansen, A. Nick and Beverly J.
Kenealy, David A. and Janet C.
Kingeter, Jacqueline Kay
Klaas, Jeanette J.
Little Creek Press
Major Christopher Splinter
Memorial Auxiliary 5274
Markee, David J. and Lou Ann
McGinley, Lawrence E. and Mary A.
Mckihan, Mac A.
Mergen, Michael J. and Janet L.
Meyers, Mark S. and Lynn M.
Oomens, Fred W. and Catherine L.
Paynter, Charles
Peters, Rebecca
Richardson, Bruce N.
Risc Enterprises
Samuels, Jeffrey R.
Schewe, Jerry
Schilling, William F.
Schulenburg, Mr Chris T. and Sprenger Schulenburg, Mrs Jessica A.
Steger, Velma
Stuckey, Gloria J.
Stuaires, Thomas R. and Nancy A.
Tang, Cynthia J. - Revocable Trust
Tessmann, Ronald
Thiele, Shawn R. and Alecia K.
Tri-State Porta Potty
Urniss, John and M. Ellen
Vosberg, Mary Pat
Wachuta, Valerie
Weber, Eloise R.
Yurs, LLC Management

Flooding, bridge update, and stream bank stabilization of the Rountree Branch

It’s hard to deny, catastrophic flooding events have been occurring with more frequency the past several years. In 2018, two separate events washed out the bridge that crosses the Rountree Branch Stream near Country Kitchen. The first of these washouts occurred on September 20th when we received 3.58 inches of rain in less than 24 hours. Replacing the bridge after this event was a relatively straightforward process. Digman Construction brought in a crane and simply set and anchored the bridge back on its original abutment. This work was donated by Digman Construction – Bob, Chad and Jay. The second washout occurred just two weeks later, on October 2nd. During this second event we received 4.35 inches of rain, again in a very short amount of time. The replacement process following the second event was more complex since the abutment on the south side of the stream was destroyed, requiring a redesign team which involved the City of Platteville, Delta 3, and Digman Construction. New pilings had to be designed, approved, and installed before the bridge could be reset.

To help prevent future washouts, it was decided that the bridge should be installed higher than its original placement.

As part of the city’s commitment to the Moving Platteville Outdoors Steering Committee that led the $1.67 million trail paving and lighting project completed in 2016, the city periodically hires someone to study the stream to identify areas that need rip rapping.

Just downstream from the bridge, a future improvement is planned for 2020 by light pole #5 and #6 – this improvement will occur in April 2020 (several month delay necessary to assure they do not disturb the cricket frog habitat). Stream bank stabilization will occur on the banks near Katie’s Garden. The bank will be reshaped to allow the installation of a permanent erosion mat which will then be covered in black dirt and vegetation planted to reduce future erosion. This project was made possible by a matching grant from the Department of Natural Resources in 2018.

The DNR has identified streamside honeysuckle as a cause for streambank erosion. Platteville Community Arboretum volunteers have been working on this for two years now. Last fall, a PCA donor funded effort by the UW-Platteville Reclamation Club removed honeysuckle on the PCA Keystone property. That partnership has just been renewed, and this spring the club will remove streamside honeysuckle replacing it with vegetation.

While we can’t predict the future, these changes are a step towards helping to better protect the bridge and trail from future catastrophic flooding events.

Our PCA team leaders, volunteers and donors reported several new areas of concern in the fall of 2019, and our city had Delta 3 working with UW-Platteville on a second study just completed. Twelve areas were identified for final consideration. Howard Crofoot, City Public Works Director, shared that Delta 3 and he would determine any of these areas needing rip rapping to protect the trail asset. Also the city will be applying for another DNR streamside stabilization grant in April 2020 to repair these areas. These grants are only available every two years, so timing is critical.

PCA (and we are sure past MPO leadership group) is very appreciative of city’s due diligence in protecting the $1.67 million trail asset.
2019 was a challenging year. With some of the heaviest rainfall in years, Platteville had multiple floods. We lost one of our main connector bridges behind Katie’s Garden more than once, and the bridge was out for months as we waited for engineers to let us know the best way to replace it so that it would stay in place. After each flood, volunteers stepped up even more than usual, cleaning the trail, removing layers of soil, repairing areas of erosion and replacing lost beautiful gardens. As the river (which makes the trail so beautiful and tranquil) gets closer to the paved trail, it is endangering the trail itself. Luckily, the city and PCA have partnered in a plan to riprap the riverbank as necessary to help preserve this trail for a long time. Also let’s hope for a little dryer weather this year.

Of course, all these efforts cost time and money. As our volunteers and master gardeners work tirelessly, PCA stepped up its fund-raising activities in 2019. They held a successful raffle that offered cash prizes and raised substantial dollars for PCA. Joe Jacquinot led a PCA race committee that put on a 1st annual PCA 5K at Halloween that was very profitable in its first year. PCA members also sold kettle corn in partnership with Vesperman Farms and Dairy Days to raise funds as well. We hope to grow all these activities in coming years to keep supporting the upkeep, beautification and equipment needs of our trail.

I would like to tell you about not so obvious benefits of our trail. The trail is definitely a community effort. But the trail itself has created communities within community. When we celebrate a successful fundraiser there is comradery and satisfaction that those fundraisers feel afterward. As our gardener’s plan and work side by side and complain about conditions, like flooding there is pride in overcoming hardships and the success of their efforts. As retiree groups meet weekly to fight endlessly against invasive species and construct beautiful things on the trail, they sometimes work side by side with students who may benefit from not looking at a screen for an hour. As runners and bikers stop for a water break or to have a conversation, they sweat out the pressure and drudgery of their work week. All of these communities within a community is what our trail is about, keeping us younger, giving us pride in a common goal, helping us cope and come together. This trail is a unique and precious thing that we have created and keep creating every day. If you have actually read this far into this corny letter, I would like to say thank you again...

Hope to see you on the trail in 2020.

Best,

Bob Hundhausen