Greetings from the David Canny Rountree Branch trail,

From Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening - Robert Frost

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep

It is a little cooler and the shadows are longer on the trail in the evening right now. To me, this is the most beautiful time and my favorite part of the year - jeans and flannel shirt, warm during the day and cool in the evening. As with everything, this year is a little different.

Path Wins the Race With Paynter by Sue Leamy Kies

“I thought it was out of the way and no one would use it, including me,” says Charlie Paynter about the PCA trail being put in on the south side of Platteville. “But, I was pleasantly surprised. It’s busy all the time, and now it’s my favorite place to run.”

Paynter, a local pharmacist, has always enjoyed running. He joined the cross country team in high school and as the years went by he continued to tick off two or three miles in an outing. However, he upped the ante when a former co-worker shared her exhilaration after participating in a half marathon one weekend. Always up for a challenge, Paynter began training and at age fifty-five ran his first half marathon from Plymouth to Sheboygan. He has run several since and plans to give it another go when

Bruce and I have enjoyed the entire Platteville portion of the trail, during all seasons and weather conditions …

from the early morning to after darkness fell. We’ve shared it with our grandchildren, and now their families and friends enjoy it with them too. We’ve met many nice people on the trail – including the volunteers who make it possible. It’s not just Platteville residents that enjoy the trail, we’ve talked with people from

When I am Among the Trees by Mary Oliver (2006)

When I am among the trees, especially the willow and the honey locust, equally the beech, the oak, and the pines, they give off such hints of gladness. I would almost say that they save me, and daily.

I am so distant from the hope of myself, in which I have goodness, discernment, and never hurry through the world but walk slowly and bow often.

Around me the trees stir in their leaves And call out, “Stay awhile.” The light flows from their branches.

And they call again, “It’s simple,” they say. “and you, too have come into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled with light, and to shine.”
races resume after the pandemic subsides.

“I like running on the trail because I don’t have to worry about traffic. It’s safer,” he says. “And the sound of running water adds so much to the experience.”

His favorite resting stop is the bench by the stream at the fork in the path in recognition of Max Anderson where, in the middle of his seven-mile loop, he allows himself a few minutes respite to take in nature, which, he says, is “good for mental health.”

This summer Paynter spied a doe and two fawns in the stream, and a few years ago he looked up to see a bald eagle in a tree along the trail behind Culver’s. He thought that was quite something, until a crane rose from the water behind him and doubled his big bird-watching experience.

Paynter says he appreciates the upgrades on the trail, like the new trees and the informative kiosks along the way. He is glad he was wrong about the trail being under utilized by the community and is thankful for the PCA Board and all the volunteers who work to make it a safe, beautiful, fun place to run.

Bruce and Tammy... continued from page 1

every community that surrounds us, and with those from all over the country who, while staying at our local hotels, had heard about the trail. All share our feelings about the trail: or: beautiful, clean, well-kept, and the portions that stay close to the Rountree Branch are especially beautiful. It’s such an impressive addition to our Platteville hometown. To us personally, it’s really the best thing that has ever happened here.

We talk about the past, the present, and the future as we walk or bike along this “old friend.” Bruce and his friends enjoyed exploring the “tracks area” growing up, from the “blood factory - and it’s legendary stench,” to several miles out of town to hunt rabbits and watch for the trains. We enjoy the animal and bird-watching: lately, cedar waxwings, and the usual cardinals, red-winged blackbirds, goldfinches, nuthatches, and an occasional warbler, turkeys, and owls hooting near the edge of the woods. We wonder where the bald eagle went, who was often perched on the high tree, near the picnic table by the fork in the trail – the unpaved part that goes to Mound View park? We’ve had a close encounter with a long-legged coyote who strolled slowly across our path while walking our dog at dusk. We’ve watched a herd of loose cows, and were in awe at the albino deer that frequented the college grounds a few years ago. We also enjoy the deer and chipmunks, muskrat, fox, and even the signs of pesky beaver.

Will people keep supporting the trail? We’d love to see its continuing, and further development. There are lots of invasive plants to keep contained, trees to remove and trim, areas that hold such potential to be better developed for enjoyment and beauty, and more native flowers to plant. To every single one who has invested in the vision, creation, and maintenance of this monument to the natural beauty of our rural city, thank you.

Thank you, Gene, for all that YOU do,
Bruce and Tammy Bradley

Volunteers are the backbone of the PCA. Our volunteers maintain the trail and gardens and put on recreational, educational and fundraising events. There are countless ways volunteers can get involved at the PCA. We’d love to put your expertise to work! Please get in touch below if you’d like to join one of our volunteer teams or have other skills to contribute. Our volunteers love the social networking and healthy activities.

VOlunteer ROles:
Join our Green Team: Maintenance teams meet at recurring 2-hour weekly workdays to restore habitat, remove invasive species, plant native species. Current teams meet Tuesdays 8:30 a.m., Wednesdays 9 a.m. or Wednesdays 5:30 p.m.

Join our Brown Team: Meets at recurring 2-hour weekly workdays to work on bigger projects like construction projects or tree removal. Current team meets at 8 a.m. Mondays.

Gardening Team: Gardeners maintain garden plots along the trail.

Join a Committee:
- Activities Committee
- Ecology Committee
- Finance Committee
- Marketing & Membership Committee
- Planning Committee

Get in touch if you’d like to start volunteering with us at https://www.plattevillearboretum.org/volunteer

PCA Wish List
- Treeregators to water trees - $300
- Stihl Brushcutter - $900
- Pole Saw - $600
- Battery Operated Chain Saw - $200
- Trees - $7,000
- Replacement for worn/damaged tools - $250
- Assortment of tools - Drills, hammers, pliers, screw drivers - $750
- Volunteers interested in 2 hour/week work teams, committees, board member or one-time tasks
- PCA Map Coordinator
- Estate Gifts
- Endowment Gifts

Interested? Please email: plattevillearboretum@gmail.com
PCA Map Coordinator

PCA provides exposure for our 50+ wonderful local business PCA Trail Blazing Sponsors by listing their name on 10,000 maps distributed throughout the Tri-State area. Our PCA Membership and Marketing Committee is searching for a new PCA Map Coordinator. The responsibilities include:

- Attend a PCA Membership and Marketing Committee meeting once in the fall to obtain input for changes in the current map.
- At the end of December, request PCA Finance Chair to provide additions or deletions to list of Trail Blazing Sponsors on current map.
- January, meet with our PCA Graphic Design from UWP and provide changes.
- Proof final map PDF.
- Email to PCA membership and marketing committee along with PCA board the final map PDF for approval.
- Authorize 10,000-piece order (8000 for PCA and 2000 for UWP) to be printed and made available by 1 April for distribution.
- When 8,000 copies received, provide 1,000 to Clay Shaffer, Deputy PCA Coordinator, for trail map holders, coordinate volunteers delivery of 2,000 total to 50+ businesses and 5,000 to Museum for museum volunteer (David Ralph) to deliver throughout Tri-state area.

Gene Weber and Kris Wright will provide you support as needed.

Optional: Join in the fun as member of Membership and Marketing Committee if you so choose (means meeting 3-5 times a year at 5:15PM for an hour with the wonderful Sue Kies, Dena Nechkash, Robin Fatzinger, Kris Wright, and others.

Please email Gene Weber at geneweber4@gmail.com or call 608-778-6914 if interested.
Dear Gene,

it was such an honor to meet you today! I am submitting some of the jewels of joy that I encounter on my daily walks. As we discussed, I grew up on a farm. I moved from country life to city living. Both my large dogs miss the country lifestyle. I thought I would go stir crazy even in a small town. Then I discovered your magical trail. The ribbon of trout stream that bubbles merrily along the entire trail not only soothes my soul but offers crystal cool water for the dogs and my bare feet!! It is a nostalgic reminder of my childhood wading in creeks. Along the way are canopies of dappled tree leaves and dense foliage that surround me and shield me from life’s worries. The gentle bellow of cattle and a horse’s whinny further calms my spirit. Through peaks of foliage I’m rewarded by an Amish horse and foal as well as Amish using horsepower in their tobacco fields. It is testimony to the simple hard work that my grandfather did. Furthermore, I’m in awe of the tremendous volume of hard work volunteers do to contain the spread of weeds, clearing fallen trees, mowing, planting new trees, keeping the trail litter free and many more. I always stop to thank them for their passionate dedication. Now I’ve walked many multi-use trails in Wisconsin, but this trail limited to bikes, dog walkers, runners and strollers is so quiet you can hear every bird’s trill, deer scampering and critters rustling in deep thickets. The pristine beauty of each step is a gift of love from all volunteers. In addition, there are mini flower gardens flashing color and memorial benches to contemplate upon. Again, all due to volunteers and donations. I want all the people involved in this trail to know the healthy impact you’ve made on my life.

Sincerely,

Julie Burkhalter

One of the best parts of the David Canny Rountree Branch Trail is sharing in its beauty, its flora and fauna, in whatever way we choose: walking, running, biking, wading, skateboarding, etc. Some of you grew up in the area and have memories of the stream before the trail was officially established and others continue to create memories with your friends and family members every day, especially since the coronavirus pandemic arrived.

We, the editors, would like you to share your stories, poems, essays, photos or drawings relating to the trail or ecology with us for possible publication in this newsletter. Recording one’s experiences in nature can double the original pleasure, and sharing these experiences with others can triple it. If you have a photo or drawing and write something to go with it, all the better.

To get us started, I am sharing a haiku. A haiku is a style of poem that originated in Japan. It has twelve syllables: five in the first line, seven in the second, and five again in the third. Some people choose to disregard this and write three lines without counting the syllables. However, the aim of a haiku is to use one or more of the five senses in observing nature to convey an idea.

For example, I wrote this in memory of my dad:

Father loved the trees
And watching the seasons change
The sun warms his soul

Please submit stories, poems or essays to sueleamykies@gmail.com and photos and artwork to ricgenthe@gmail.com.
Shortly after she moved to the area, Grace Milanowski was fortunate to find the Lead Coordinator position posted for the Platteville Community Arboretum. She and her husband, now living in Dubuque, Iowa, visited the PCA trail a few times and “could tell it was a special spot with extraordinary community support,” Milanowski said.

The PCA created two new positions, Lead Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator, both of which were filled early in 2020. “We thought [Milanowski’s] extensive experience with trails, conservation and non-profits would really help PCA move forward,” Bob Hundhausen, president of PCA, said. “Also, we thought that Clay [Shaffer] would be well-suited for directing boots on the ground, hence the complimentary dual positions.”

Milanowski grew up mostly in Middleton, but as a child and a college student spent time in Michigan, too. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science from the University of Michigan and also works part-time as a biological technician with an environmental consulting firm. “Having experience working with various environmental non-profits, I was excited to find a position that combines a lot of my interests: being outside, helping to connect people to nature and facilitating good stewardship of our community resources,” Milanowski said.

As Lead Coordinator, Milanowski handles many aspects of the organization. “Along with Clay Shaffer, we manage volunteers and volunteer teams and trail projects and maintenance,” Milanowski said. “Since starting, I’ve set up a lot of background logistical things for the organization, like updating our website, making sure we’re tracking volunteer hours and maintaining databases. I’ve enjoyed working with the volunteer crews and helping to increase our volunteers’ knowledge about the importance of habitat restoration and plant identification too.”

Milanowski hopes to implement on-trail educational opportunities for the public once COVID-19 safety concerns are lifted. “I hope soon that we’ll be able to do regular nature walks to educate folks on the flora and fauna along the trail and convey the benefits of restoring and protecting the area,” Milanowski said.

In her free time, she enjoys bird watching or spending time in her garden where she likes to experiment with growing unusual veggies. She also loves to spend time with her two cute nieces.

Garage Addition Set for 2021

**Anderson provides $5,000 Challenge Match**

PCA thanks recently-retired Dr. Rick Bockhop, UW-P Ag Structures, for building our ‘Coal Bin Garage’ in 2006 and many kiosks since then. Our garage addition planned for fall 2020 has been moved back to the fall of 2021 due to Rick’s retirement, a new Ag Structures instructor coming on stream and the potential impact of Covid 19.

The new addition is needed to house recently purchased trailers and a trail blower as well as enable room for work benches to use for chain saw and small tool maintenance along with new kiosk painting. The cost is estimated at $15,000 for materials plus $5,000 to hook the building up to electricity for the first time.

Our wonderful supporter, Dr. Max Anderson, has pledged $5,000 challenge match toward this $20,000 project. Naming rights to the addition will go to anyone choosing to contribute $10,000. Anyone choosing to contribute can send checks to: **PCA, Box 302, Platteville, Wi 53818 noting ‘Garage Addition’ in check memo.**
After a substantial delay due to Covid 19, our volunteers have been working tirelessly to get caught up on the trail. Challenges this year have come regularly and our volunteers have knocked them down.

El Derecho plowed right thru the heart of Platteville and really was like nothing I have ever seen. Day turned into night and rain came down literally with the force of a hurricane. We had debris and flooding all over Platteville. While the city went to work cleaning up the streets, our teams went to work on the trail. Within days the trail was back in shape. Many runners and bikers let me know how appreciative of our efforts they were. Par for the trail even at the end of the world.

I would like to say again how proud I am and how much I appreciate the daily work of our weekly volunteers, our gardeners, and our board. I would also like to point out the leadership of our volunteer coordinators Grace Milanowski and leader of our teams on the trail Clay Shaffer. They have been doing a tremendous job.

I hope that if you love the trail, you can make time to get to it, watch the colors change and enjoy the cooler weather. It is a great place to escape the insanity of elections, virus and social unrest, say hello to a neighbor, a stranger a volunteer.

We have miles to go before we sleep.

Best,
Bob Hundhausen
PCA President

Little bits of color are popping up along the trail with painted rocks becoming popular to both make and relocate. To accommodate the influx of moveable artwork, the Platteville Regional Chamber and gardeners at Katie’s Garden have created a space to collect and trade decorated stones: Katie’s Kindness Canal.

Located at the very western portion of Katie’s Garden, adjacent to the Platteville Community Arboretum Trail, a section of rocks in the embankment is marked to collect others’ painted stones for viewing and trading. Look for the sign explaining the rules for the painted rocks in the garden.

“The painted rocks add color to the flower beds, but we need to protect the flowers in the beds,” Carley Borcherding, a volunteer gardener and Crawford County Master Gardener, said. “We want to make a collection location at Katie’s Garden to encourage people to make and leave painted rocks at Katie’s Garden.”

If you would like to create rock art pieces to add to the garden, choose a few rocks from the bucket on the porch of the Platteville Regional Chamber (or feel free to find your own rocks), take them home and paint them with abstract, animal, plant or pattern designs. Please keep all designs family-friendly. If you don’t know what to create, add an inspirational message to a colored rock. There are lots of ideas on Pinterest, too.

Borcherding recommends using outdoor acrylic paints and sealing your designs with a clear coat. She also suggested cleaning your rock before painting to ensure the design lasts.

If you want to move painted rocks, only place them at the edge of the flower gardens. “As tempting as it is to put them in trees in the gardens, please don’t,” Borcherding said.

See how many painted rocks you can spot on your next trek along the PCA Trail.

In these past months of this difficult year of 2020, we have lost some beloved members of our PCA trail family: Tom Nelson, was a dedicated past PCA board member; also PCA’s Construction Manager for the Moving Platteville Outdoors paving and lighting project, and all around community philanthropist. Jack Tiedemann was a DCRBT trail supporter and father to Kay and (husband) Tom Young, who do so much for the trail on an annual basis. Our sympathy and best wishes go out to these families. I am sure that Jack and Tom are onto even better trails.

Every day, we encounter new trail users from near and far. Folks from Big Patch, Rewey, Kieler, Cuba City, etc have incorporated a Platteville trail walk into their daily routine combining it with shopping and dining.

Trail Use Spikes in 2020

Based on recent surveys coordinated by Grace Milanowski, PCA Coordinator, our estimate of the number of daily trail users has grown from ~125 to ~400 per day. Kudos to our Volunteers and donors for helping make this a ‘go-to amenity’.

Tim Ingram of Momentum Bike recently shared that two Des Moines bikers were just in his shop. Since 2016, they have come to Platteville for a week and biked our trail and the surrounding area. Now it is their every-year trip using Platteville as their hub!!