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Larry Frank Memorial Bench under the highway 95 overpass north of Council

Remembering Larry Frank

A new memorial bench was installed in the summer of 2023 on the Weiser River Trail (WRT) at milepost 74, where you can take a seat and admire the picturesque views. If you brought a fishing pole you might get lucky and catch a trout or two in the river just below it. This was one of Larry Frank's favorite places to fish in the years that he worked for the Union Pacific Railroad and after retiring when he volunteered for the WRT.

A bench on the trail was the perfect way to honor and remember such an incredible man. Larry was one of the trail's biggest supporters and advocates from day one. Larry worked on the railroad for many years as a track inspector from Cambridge to New Meadows patrolling various rail sections for train and motorist safety, so when the tracks were removed in the 1990s, he knew the ins and outs and legal jurisdictions of converting the old railroad bed into a trail. (continued on page 2)

REMEMBERING LARRY FRANK

(continued from page 1)

Larry served on the trail board of directors for six years and spent that time researching, filing paperwork, making phone calls and attending meetings. He had a vision for local communities and visitors to have access to the trail to reap the benefits of the beauty and recreation it has to offer. In addition, he contributed physically by helping to build trestles, spray weeds, and run the roller as the trail came to fruition.

Larry bought an old beat up truck that he nicknamed Bessie to use for trail maintenance. Once his volunteering days came to an end, he donated Bessie to the WRT for continued use. (Editor’s note: Bessie has since been purchased by our habitat manager, Dan Haynes, and is being lovingly restored to her once pristine condition).

Larry was a big guy with a big heart and a BIG tease! He was a devoted husband, dad and papa to his wife, Judy, favorite daughters Theresa, Kelli and Melissa, and grandsons, Kellan and Ryan. When Larry inspected the track for the railroad his daughters were fortunate enough to ride in his rail truck and fish some of the prime holes along the tracks. One day, to their delight, he took them out of school and gave them the opportunity of a lifetime: to drive a train from Weiser to Council! He coordinated a couple of other rides for family and close friends over the years as well.

Larry’s parents loved camping at Lost Valley Reservoir, just north of where the bench is located, and during the summers Larry would hop off the tracks to say hi and deliver the weekly newspapers to them.

After the WRT was formed, his family enjoyed many bike rides, walks, runs, maintenance projects and fishing on it. Larry and Judy’s place is a short distance from the trail in Cambridge so Larry would shuttle everyone up to Goodrich to ride back towards the house. The family can remember times

of flat bike tires or tired dogs and Larry would come to the rescue!

We hope you will take a few minutes or more to sit and enjoy one of Larry’s favorite places and appreciate the passion he had to make the WRT a reality to be enjoyed by all who travel this path. The family would like to thank Guy Amadon and Kevin Papineau for their time and energy in installing this memorial bench.

DIRECTOR ELECTIONS/ANNUAL MEETING MAY 2024

We have not yet set the date but we will be holding annual director elections and hosting our annual meeting in May 2024. We are always on the lookout for new directors and if you are interested in serving as a director (three year term), please contact any of the officers or directors listed on page 1.

MEMORIAL BENCHES

The memorial bench program has been an unqualified success, thanks to the vision of former Director Dan Dickerson and the hard work of current Director Pam Lakey. We currently have approximately 16 benches across the length of the trail. Unfortunately, we did have to raise the price for 2024, due to increased cost of materials and labor. The benches are handmade with quality materials. The cost includes a plaque with wording of your choice, installation in the location of your choice, and lifetime maintenance. For more information on ordering a bench, please contact Pam Lakey at (208) 739-3366.

THE GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP

If you are think about the perfect gift that gives all year long, perhaps giving a Weiser River Trail membership is the answer. The membership includes the newsletter, notifications about trail

events and most importantly knowing that your membership is helping to maintain and improve the trail for the future. If you would like to know more, check our web site:
<https://weiserrivertrail.org/membership-%2F-donations>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2024

January 24 – February 1: Idaho Sled Dog Challenge
<https://idahosleddogchallenge.com>

April 27: Weiser River 50K Ultra and Relay
<https://www.pulserunning.com/weiser-river-50k>

May 24-27: 22nd annual Wagon Train event
<https://weiserrivertrail.org/wagontrain>


June 1: June Bike Event
<https://www.bikereg.com/june-bike-ride>

October 5-6: October Trek
<https://www.bikereg.com/october-trek>

DONATION OPPORTUNITIES!

You now have multiple ways to help the trail! We so appreciate the generosity of our members and we keep trying to find new and EASY ways for you to donate to the trail. Every dollar you donate allows us to keep the beautiful 86 mile trail open, do necessary maintenance like re-planking the trestles (yes, the trestles are now 20+ years old and needing replacing/repairing), and to find new and exciting events on the trail so you can come use it!

Here are the current funding opportunities:

 **Ridley's.** They have a points program, and all you need to do is the next time you are in a Ridley's store, tell the cashier that you want to donate your points to Friends. To date, Ridley's has paid us over \$89,000 in the 15+ years. Please consider us if you shop at Ridley's!!



Fred Meyer. If you don't shop at Ridley's but you do shop at Fred Meyer, they have the same program...Fred Meyer

Community Rewards. If you have a rewards card, you can tell the cashier that you want to give your points to us, or you can go online, create an account and at the bottom of the home page, you will see Fred Meyer Community Awards. Click that and follow the steps. We are listed as Friends of **THE** Weiser River Trail, Inc in their listings.

Idaho Gives. April 29 - May 2, 2024. Last year we again raised over \$7000 with a 100% match from a generous sponsor. Thank you for your support!!!



AUGUST 22 - 25, 2024 | HILLCREST COUNTRY CLUB

Albertson's Boise Open: Tickets go on sale spring 2024. We will post the direct link on the web site as soon as available.

You can also make individual contributions that are project directed (right now for example we are looking to fund extension of the water line at the Weiser trailhead and re-decking of 80+ trestles).

Another way to support the trail is to donate directly to the Idaho Community Foundation. For more information, visit their web site at <https://tinyurl.com/4pft7fpb>

MIDVALE TRAILHEAD “LITTLE BUILDING”

Many people have asked about the little building that is now sitting at the entrance to Midvale. It has a lovely yet sad story that I’d like to share.

In the fall of 2022, the Midvale Marketplace nonprofit, which was started by the late Lane Williams, voted to have a small building built to be used as a visitor information center.

I spoke to Vic Mann, who was the Midvale High School shop teacher, about the project. He loved the idea and offered to have his students build it for us as their project for the year. We agreed that our nonprofit would pay for all materials and he would design the building,

We met several times over the course of the school year to see and discuss the progress. He put much of his own time and materials into it; unfortunately, in the spring of 2023 he became ill and was no longer able to teach. He told me that his students would not be able to finish building and attaching the porch or complete some of the finish work. I promised him that our nonprofit would see that the building was moved to its present location and that we would have it finished according to his specifications. He had me come to his home to make notes and take pictures of a similar building he had build for his late wife. He was very particular about how it should be done, and it has been important that we honor his wishes.

Sadly, Mr. Mann passed away this past summer. I am blessed to have gotten to know him, and to appreciate his love for his craft. He began teaching in Midvale in 2002 and I know that many of his students gained valuable knowledge and skill from working under his supervision. I’m sure they also gained an appreciation for a job well done.

We have gotten his “little building” moved to its present location at the Midvale trailhead, next to the kiosk. Thanks goes out to the Friends of the

Weiser River Trail for allowing us to place it on Trail property. We have also gotten the porch and trim work completed.

Tyler Boyle is doing a Midvale Museum display as his senior project. We are hoping to have it in the building along with visitor information by spring of 2024. This building was built with love for the community and we welcome any ideas about other uses for it as well.

The photo is of Mr. Mann and his students in front of our building.

Submitted by Elsa Freeman, FWRT Director



NOTE TO THE MEMBERSHIP

As we move more and faster into the digital age, we strive to keep up with real time information to our membership. While we absolutely will continue to honor your preference for a paper newsletter, if you have E-mail and have no objection to receiving occasional E-mails from us, we would greatly appreciate you sending us that information and we will update our database.

You can E-mail weiserrivertrail@gmail.com with your E-mail address and state your preference to switch from paper to digital. **WE WILL NEVER SHARE YOUR INFORMATION.**

Another way of supporting the trail at renewal time is to up your membership level, or even consider joining at the \$1000 lifetime level. We currently have TWENTY-EIGHT LIFETIME MEMBERS! For more information, see the application form in the newsletter or the web site at

<https://weiserrivertrail.org/membership-%2F-donations>

MIDVALE KIOSK IMPROVEMENTS

Submitted by Elsa Freeman

The amazing Weiser River Trail, which is on the abandoned Union Pacific railroad bed, runs through the towns of Weiser, Midvale, Cambridge and Council. For years Midvale was the only town along the 84 mile trail that did not have an information kiosk beside the Trail, but now it does, due to much planning and hard work.

Thanks goes out to Kyle Dotson, a Midvale building contractor, for building the structure according to the old original design. Joe Rutledge and Guy Amidon did the site preparation and concrete. The Midvale High School received a grant to landscape the site which was completed as the Senior Project Class for 2022/2023, under Tyler Waggoner’s supervision.

The Midvale kiosk is now complete and is a wonderful addition to the Weiser River Trail and to the entrance into Midvale. One side of the signage describes and maps the trail. The other side outlines the history of Midvale and the importance the railroad played in the establishment of Midvale, as well as the entire area.

Travelers on Highway 95 and trail users who stop in Midvale and at the other information kiosks, are fascinated by the rich history of this area. Even some of the local residents are surprised when they see the photos and read about the history of their little towns.

When the railroad was gone so went some of the thriving business communities along its path. Change continues to happen, but these kiosks help us remember and appreciate our past. They also help us share information about the amazing Weiser River Trail that connects our communities to each other.

The kiosk has been years in the making and has truly been not only a labor of love but a community effort. The picture below is the Midvale Senior Class of 2023. Many thanks to this group for the beautiful landscaping at the kiosk!



EATON DEPOT PROGRESS

Many of you may have seen the rather small, dilapidated white building at the Weiser trailhead. This building was moved there almost ten years ago. At one time it was a “whistle stop” on the original rail line south of Weiser, near where Eaton Road crosses the tracks at Weiser Flat. The long-term plan is to refurbish and restore the building and one small step was taken in the fall of 2024 when the building was moved onto a concrete slab parallel to the trail. Many thanks to trail member Tony Edmondson for spearheading this project!



WEISER TRAILHEAD IMPROVEMENTS

In the fall of 2023, Barb McGann and the Board of Directors organized a work party. Funded by generous donations from Barb McGann and FWRT member Jerry Sproule of Weiser, with matching funds from FWRT, four 16x16 horse corrals were

erected on the east side of the trailhead. Future plans call for extending the water line and adding two frost free spigots.



REPORTING TRAIL DAMAGE/ISSUES



Obviously we cannot be everywhere at once and we depend on you, the trail users, to be our eyes and ears. Please report trail blockage/damage/issues on our Facebook page, by calling President Barb at 208-286-7279 or E-mail weiserrivertrail@gmail.com

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



Greetings from the President!

We had an absolute banner kick-ass year in 2023! We

received a grant from Idaho Parks and Recreation for our normal spring and fall cleanup. Our new contractor, Dustin, graded, rolled and compacted the trail twice.. Our full-time employee, Dan Haynes, has been a champion in removing trees that have fallen and blocked the trail.

We were approved by IDPR for our grant that allowed us to install a permanent double vault restroom in Cambridge, which . What a

beauty! It is just like the one in Midvale, which everyone loves!! We will be looking for a part time person in Cambridge to clean it daily (or 3-4 x a week, depending on usage). If something like that would fit in your schedule (retired, looking for a few extra bucks each month?), give me a call. The restroom was only partially funded by IDPR because we had a match, AND between the time we submitted our grant, and the time it was approved, inflation had almost doubled the cost. Thankfully, we appealed to our members in their annual renewal letters, and they came through in a big way! We were able to cover the entire cost overrun! Thank you so much!

Next year, we have big plans to start repairing and replacing trestles. They are over 25 years old and starting to show some real wear and tear.

Also, we would like to appeal to you to step up and volunteer. We are looking for someone who would like to go around to bike shops, recreations outlets (REI, Dicks, etc.) and see if we can get our brochures in them. Or a volunteer to go to hotels and motels adjacent to the trail and put them in their lobby racks. I’m sure our members can brainstorm and come up with other places they should be put. A retired person who wants to spend some time chatting with folks about the trail would be ideal!

We will be holding work party days and we will send email blasts to let you know when and where. One member suggested we have “Goathead days” in each section. That would be a really appreciated thing for the bikers!

If you have any suggestions, ideas, want to volunteer your time, please contact me at 208-602-2534 or barb@mycpabarb.com .

Barb McGann,
President and
Treasurer, FWRT



Become a Member

The Weiser River Trail is owned and managed by the Friends of the Weiser River Trail, a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. The mission of FWRT is to preserve the integrity of the rail corridor, manage it as a public trail, and conserve the natural habitats along its length. FWRT is a self-funding membership organization that depends heavily upon funds raised through membership dues, grants, and fund-raising efforts to cover ongoing maintenance and operational costs.

We welcome your support!

- o \$15 Basic Member
- o \$25 Trail Blazer
- o \$50 Pioneer
- o \$100 & Up Bridge Builder
- o \$1000 Life Member

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State / Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

I prefer to receive my newsletter via (check one): E-mail snail mail

Please Send your contribution and membership information to:

Friends of Weiser River Trail
9201 Grandmason
Eagle, ID 83616

If you would like to help work on the trail or serve on a committee, please call 208-602-2534. Your help would be greatly appreciated!

If you would like more information about the Weiser River Trail, visit us on the web at: www.weiserrivertrail.org
or
call (208) 602-2534

FRIENDS OF THE WEISER RIVER TRAIL

9201 Grandmason Place

Eagle, ID 83616

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

TRAIL NEWS

