

TRAIL NEWS

Winter 2024 § ISSUE 86



Barb McGann, President
Eagle, Idaho
208-602-2534
barb@mycpabarb.com

Leonard Messersmith
Vice President
Weiser, Idaho
messerlw@yahoo.com

Pam Haynes, Secretary
Meridian, ID
208-861-8614
weiserrivertrail@gmail.com

Mike Beavers, Treasurer
Wilder, Idaho
mjbeavers@frontiernet.net

Pat Trainor
Past President
Council, ID
208-253-4433
blheron@peak.org

Elsa Freeman
Midvale, Idaho
freemanelsa6292@gmail.com

Kathy Rainwater
Weiser, Idaho
kathyrainwater_7@hotmail.com

J. Alan Stoneman
Weiser, Idaho
jacrhomes@gmail.com

Pam Lakey
Ontario, Oregon
angeleyes731_013@yahoo.com

Glen Carsten
Cambridge, Idaho
glen@americanmechanical.net

Beth Ahrend
Meridian, Idaho
ahrend.beth@gmail.com



Another Great Year!

The 2024 events calendar was book-ended by the 50K run in April and the two day OctoberTrek in October. In the middle we had the four day Wagon Train over Memorial Day weekend and the one day June Bike event. All events went off well, managed by assorted board members, with a total attendance of several hundred participants and a strong cadre of volunteers.

We look forward to hosting the same events in 2025 (for details of each event, check our web site <https://weiserrivertrail.org/events>)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2024:

- ✓ In March, we purchased an upgraded spray truck.
- ✓ In June, the Directors toured the northern end of the trail.
- ✓ We recruited THREE new AWESOME directors!
- ✓ The entire trail was inventoried, assessed, and ranked for repairs.
- ✓ We applied for grants through new to us sources.
- ✓ Grand opening of the Cambridge toilet
- ✓ We sold nearly **one hundred** Trail Guides!

MOTHER NATURE



We continue to face challenges with downed trees, especially on the northern part of the trail

in the forest. New director Glen Carsten has been a tremendous help this year, cutting up and removing many downed trees, which can create a hazard or even complete blockage of the trail. In October, Glen removed a large tree, split it into firewood and donated it to a local senior citizen in Cambridge. Definitely a win/win for all!!!

MEMORIAL BENCHES

John and Becky
Watson memorial
bench north of Starkey



The memorial bench program continues to be successful, adding an average of 2 or 3 benches per year. 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. Note these benches can recognize and honor not only people but organizations.

FUND RAISING 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 Rewards. Click that and follow the steps. We are listed as Friends of **THE** Weiser River Trail, Inc



Idaho Gives. The dates for Idaho Gives 2025 will be April 28, May 1. We will post a donate link on our fund raising page as soon as

it is available.

Albertson's Boise Open:

While the format of ticket sales has changed over the years from



AUGUST 14 - 17, 2025 | HILLCREST COUNTRY CLUB

paper to digital, the Albertson's Boise Open continues to be a great way for us to raise funds. Tickets for the 2025 event will go on sale after the first of the year. Stay tuned to the Fund Raising page of our web site for further details.

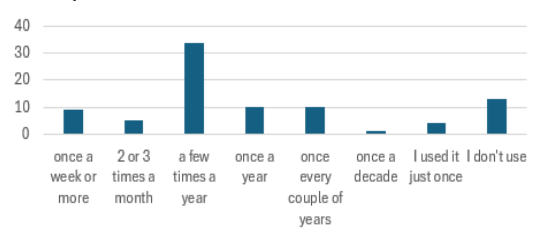
You can also make individual contributions that are project directed (right now for example we are looking to fund repair and re-decking of 57 trestles). There is a grant feature available through PayPal or you can send a check to us directly (FWRT, P. O. Box 191100, Boise, ID 83719). We can also take a credit card payment (call Pam at 208-861-8614).

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>

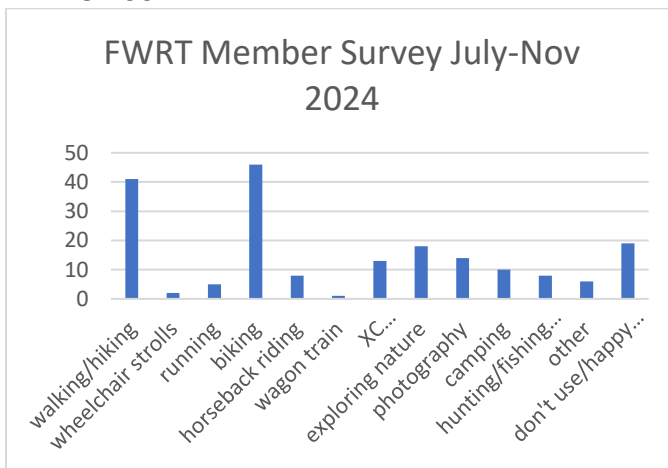
WE ASKED, YOU ANSWERED

A few months ago, the membership renewal committee (Chris O'Brien) started sending a survey, requesting data regarding trail use, frequency, physical distance from the trail and recreational intent. The return rate of nearly 50% is extremely gratifying, and we would like to share the findings to date and respond to some of your comments.

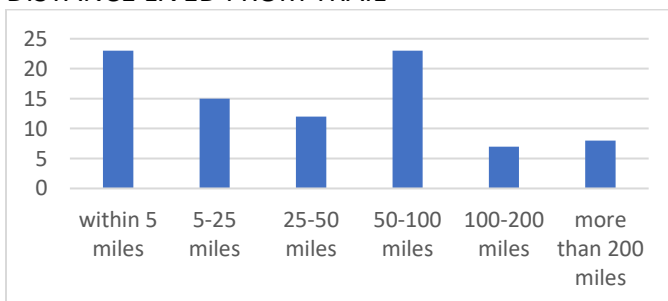
FREQUENCY OF USE



TYPE OF USE



DISTANCE LIVED FROM TRAIL



YOU COMMENTED, WE ARE RESPONDING

This is a random sampling of comments, not all of them (we will address more in future newsletters):

"Info on shuttles." Info on a shuttle service is posted on our web site on the local resources page. Currently the only shuttle service is offered by the Frontier Motel in Cambridge. Remember you can always reach out to us from links on the web site or by posting to Facebook, and we will respond quickly.

"Extend to New Meadows." The reason the trail does not currently extend to New Meadows is because that section of trail was abandoned prior to our acquisition of the current trail. Unfortunately, that stretch of trail reverted to the land owners. We reached out to them over the years but they are not interested in re-establishing that section of corridor. We also spent several years in discussion with the State of Idaho in hopes of obtaining a right of way along highway 95. Equally unfortunately, that hope was ultimately abandoned.

"Signage pointing out the trail." We ordered several hundred dollars worth of signs this year, including access signage. If you know of a specific location, please let us know and we can evaluate the logistics. Keep in mind, we have to be mindful of location of the sign, we cannot put signage up on state or county right of way without permission and it quickly can get complicated, but we do the best we can.

"More benches within a mile or two of the towns." *"Rest bench located about ½ mile from end of paved part of Weiser trailhead."* The memorial bench locations are selected by the family or person who purchase them. Given the cost of the benches and our need to prioritize our repair projects, we are unable to

fund benches at this time. We appreciate everyone who has purchased one of over 15 benches located along the trail!

"Too rough for young ones on bikes." We agree that the majority of the trail is too challenging for the youngest users, but there are paved sections in each town that they can access.

"More active enforcement with known motor trespass with sheriff's department." This is a super sensitive subject for all. We DO have a strict nonmotorized policy but it is up to the public to respect it. Obviously neither we nor the sheriffs can be everywhere at once and even when we confront a trespasser, it can quickly escalate into an uncomfortable situation. We appreciate users who gently educate trespassers to the nonmotorized policy. It is unfortunate that many trespassers do not grant us the same respect due any land owner, in that they do not perceive us as having equal rights with respect to trespass.

"Heavy roller to make a more uniform surface." For over 20 years, the trail was religiously compacted twice a year. Unfortunately, with the retirement of Guy Amidon a few years back, we have struggled to source a contractor who has the skillset, knowledge and equipment to do our spring and fall maintenance. Please know we are aggressively searching for a solution.

"More gates and fencing to keep the cows out." We have an obligation to work with adjacent land owners to control cattle on the trail. Unfortunately cows will do what cows do and this is wander through fences where they do not belong. This is an ongoing issue for anyone running cattle and anyone with adjacent property. We work very hard to maintain a balance of not too many gates and the ranchers work hard to keep the fences repaired.

"Fall bike ride (one day.)" If you would like to manage such an event, PLEASE reach out to us. The directors are already pretty tapped out managing existing events but we would be happy to work with you to make another event happen.

"New paint for the green concrete picnic table at the Weiser trailhead." This would be a great opportunity for a volunteer group!

These are only a few of the comments. We will look at more in the next newsletter. Again, we



are always happy to hear your ideas and your SOLUTIONS! Meanwhile, Happy Trails!

NEW CONTACT ADDRESS

Some of you may have noticed our official address is now a PO Box in Boise and may be wondering why we did that. The answer is simple. We hired an accountant who lives in Boise and we obtained a PO box close to where she lives to make it easier for her to pick up mail, including the bills. We have had to adjust our mailing address multiple times over the years and we may do so again in the future, but for now we have landed with the PO box in Boise. (P O Box 191100, Boise, ID 83719). Mail sent to the most recent address of Grandmason goes directly to Barb and will still get where it needs to go. Thank you for your understanding!

NOTE TO THE MEMBERSHIP

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 and on-line voting in the annual election, we would greatly appreciate you sending us your E-mail and we will update our database. There is also a blog on the home page of our web site. To subscribe, just go to the home page <https://weiserrivertrail.org>, click into the blog and follow the prompts.

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.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In June 2023, the board entrusted me with the great privilege of being

president and what a busy and productive 18 months!!

Early on, our renewal person, Chris O'Brien said to me, "Barb, you've got to find ways to get more volunteers involved with the trail." That set the tone for 2024. In February, we had Facebook messages saying we had a downed tree. Glen Carsten answered that and said he would love to volunteer to go get that tree out of the trail. I got a key to him and he went up the trail, got the tree down, chopped up and moved. That started a relationship with Glen getting 4 or 5 more trees that spring and ultimately led him to join the Board of Directors in August!! He is enthusiastic, has wonderful ideas for improving the trail and trail maintenance. Glen is particularly concerned about the trees and brush that is piling up

under the trestles. He will be working on that in 2025.

Paul Kingsbury, a local contractor from Annex, has done a bunch of volunteer work inventorying and ranking the trestles for which ones are in urgent need of repair/re-decking. Paul will also be doing the Spring and Fall cleanups in 2025 with his grader.

The board took a tour of the top half of the trail in June. For some board members it was the first time they had traveled the trail. Very eye opening and I think it gave the board a sense of urgency as to the deferred maintenance that needs to be addressed!

In July 2024, we appointed long-time 50K event manager, Beth Ahrend, to an open board position. Beth has filled a much needed niche, being a runner and able to provide perspective for another group of users.

We will continue to look for volunteer opportunities in 2025. It's a great way to get involved.

Now for the not so great news...I have end stage metastatic breast cancer that has progressed despite our best efforts to beat it back. I am on hospice and of course, no one knows how long I might be kicking. Luckily for the trail, in January 2024, we appointed a wonderful board member, our current Vice President, Leonard Messersmith, who brings all sorts of talents to the board and who is willing and able to step up to the presidency. He has great ideas, a can-do attitude, people skills, and a passion for the trail. He lives in Weiser and since he's been on the board has cleaned up all along the trail in Weiser, including overseeing the removal of almost 100 dead trees! Currently, he is coordinating construction of a privacy fence on the west side of Highway 95 where the trail terminates in Weiser near the

fishing pond, with the Trail partnering with an adjacent land owner.

Plans for 2025 include making a big push to fund raise for re-decking/repairing the trestles. It has been 25 years since they were decked, and all of them need replacing or repairing. At \$225 a linear foot, they are not cheap to replace, but we have to do it. We have trestles from 14 feet to over 212 feet long. We would like to introduce sponsorships of trestles, \$2,250 would buy you that 10 foot trestle with a permanent plaque with your name on it saying this trestle sponsored by Jane Doe!! Please contact Leonard Messersmith or Pam Haynes if you're interested (contact info on page one).

I can safely say that this has been my best year with the trail. I got a bunch of projects started and in progress; accomplished some projects like cleaning up the graffiti at Weiser; and brought on 3 new enthusiastic board members!!! Thank you, one and all, who helped me make those goals!!

Barb McGann, President, FWRT

WYE CAMPGROUND

We had a very successful year with the Wye Campground. The camp hosts worked very hard and we wish they could return in 2025, but they have made the difficult decision not to return, so we will be recruiting for the camp host position and looking ahead to opening in mid-May, as snow permits.

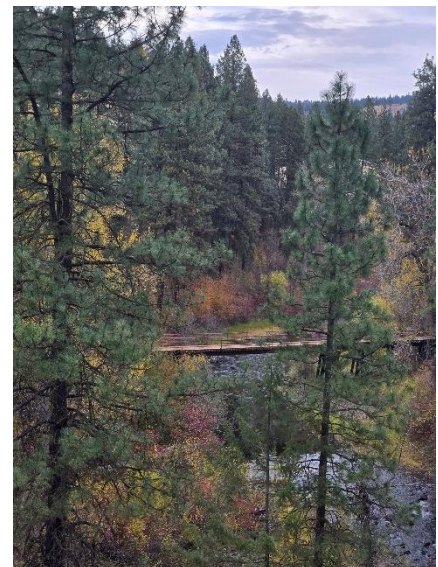
PROPERTY ACQUISITION IN MIDVALE

As discussed in the last newsletter, the seven acre riverfront property in Midvale is in the process of being deeded to Friends of Weiser

River Trail. We look forward to developing the property in the years to come, envisioning some primitive tent camping sites and a nature park type environment, with easy access to the river.



Freshly Redecked Trestle



Fall Colors Photo by Diana Gillum



Wise Owl Photo by Diana Gillum

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
P O Box 191100
Boise, ID 83719

If you would like to help work on the trail or serve on a committee, please call 208-550-0388. 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) 550-0388

FRIENDS OF THE WEISER RIVER TRAIL

9201 Grandmason Place

Eagle, ID 83616

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

TRAIL NEWS



The first picture is the Weiser Trailhead in 2007. The second photo was taken shortly after the lot was completely overhauled.