



From the desk of the Executive Director

by Erlene Yentes

Hi everyone, and happy summer!

What a year this has been! A successful Winter Warm-Up 5K and a mild winter allowed Conklin Bay construction to continue. In March, we encountered COVID-19, which brought many hardships on our small community. We are still dealing with the fallout, guidelines and social distancing recommendations.

I moved to Syracuse in April from Auburn. Special shout outs for their assistance to Tony Pawlicki and Kay Young with Todd Realty, LeAnne Francis with Crossroads Bank, Mark Hile with Metropolitan Title Company, my wonderful neighbors and all the people I have met who have helped me along the way! I am so proud to be part of this wonderful, caring, and vibrant community and can see why it is Syracuse Strong!

Yes, it's heartwarming to see how strong and supportive this community is and how everyone seems to work together. Kudos as well to the Town of Syracuse, the Syracuse-Wawasee Chamber of Commerce and the Wawasee High School faculty, staff and administrators as well as the restaurants that provided meals to those in need, residents who purchased carryout meals and shopped locally and the community rallying around the Class of 2020. It is this type of collaboration that will allow our community and trails to grow!

The Tour des Lakes event is postponed until July 17, 2021. It was a difficult decision, being the tenth ride, but was the best decision for the safety of the riders, volunteers, and vendors. Big things are happening for this event in 2021!

I am enjoying biking around Syracuse Lake, Lake Wawasee and the countryside. What a beautiful and vibrant community we live in! It is rewarding and warms my heart to see people of all ages out on the trails.

Now I'm looking forward to the Conklin Bay ribbon cutting, meeting donors, expanding the adopt-a-trail program, overhauling our Website and collaborating with the Syracuse Chamber as they move forward with their placemaking initiatives.

Now that the Conklin Bay trail segment is complete, the question I often get asked is — where is the trail going next? Do we continue at Grandview? What about the trail around the field at Shrock Park, which is relocating due to Polywood's expansion? What about other sections of Lake Wawasee?

Yes, I'm thinking, we are doing future planning. I compare it to a bicycle because a bicycle symbolizes movement. Sometimes that movement is fast and smooth and other times it is slow and more gradual. Albert Einstein said "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep

your balance, you must keep moving."

In a book written by Garry Fitchett called "Life is a Bicycle If You Stop Pedaling, You'll Fall Off," in fact, he talks about the framework of a bicycle. I adapted it to include the focus, vision, purpose, execution, feedback, desire, and commitment of the Syracuse-Wawasee Trails Committee.

Handlebars = Focus: The Syracuse-Wawasee Trail Committee will remain focused and move forward even when obstacles get in our way.

Seat = Vision, Faith and Gratitude: The committee has a vision of a connected trail community and faith in past members and donors who provided the foundation for trail growth. We are extremely grateful for our donors and the support and trust they have provided.

Front Wheel = Purpose: We are motivated by our purpose of providing a network of walking/biking trails that connects the Town of Syracuse, Syracuse Lake, and Lake Wawasee.

Back Wheel = Execution: We are still in the execution part, which is a continuous process. Sometimes the execution is the completion of a new trail while other times it may involve



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less visible but still important matters like strategic planning. Regardless, the wheels continue to move.

Road = Feedback: As we navigate trail expansion, we welcome feedback from the community. Communication, collaboration, and education are vital to continue to move forward.

Pedals = Desire: We have the desire to explore ways to maintain and expand our trails.

Chain = Commitment: We are a committee that is committed to its vision of a connected trail community.

In conclusion, trails play a vital role in our community and Syracuse is fortunate to have 12-plus miles of them. They allow our residents and visitors safe areas to walk, run and bike. They also connect us to various locations throughout our vibrant community to explore and enjoy. We rely on public support to build and maintain our trails.

So, it's our hope that you are impressed with the trail system in Syracuse, especially the new Conklin Bay trail. We trust that this new trail section and boardwalk through the Rolland Wetland Conservation Area is proof that the trails committee is committed to its vision of a connected trail community with minimal disturbance to our wetlands and our lake views.

If you have enjoyed what has been built and if you want to see our trail system continue to grow, please show your support by making a contribution by perhaps using the contribution form included in this newsletter to donate by check or visit syracusewawaseetrails.com and click the Donate Today button to use a credit card. Thank you for your continued support. Please feel free to reach out to me at ed@syracusewawaseetrails.com or at (574) 675-6433. Enjoy your summer and remember our motto: "Life is better on the trail!"



Important Safety Reminder

More and more people are outside walking and biking. It is important for walkers, bicyclist, and drivers to share the road for everyone's safety. The trails office has small brochures on how to Share the Road from Drive Safe Michiana. I thought I would include some of their information as reminders for everyone.

Biking Reminders

- Bike right when on trails
- Yield to pedestrians and provide a warning before passing on trails
- Bike with traffic on roadways
- Obey all traffic laws – just like a motorist
- Use proper hand signals when turning, changing lanes or merging
- Always come to a complete stop before crossing a street
- Pay attention at intersections
- Use front and rear lights when necessary
- Be visible by wearing light colored clothing and reflective material
- Wear a helmet



Photos by Jamie Plack Photography

Walking Reminders:

- When walking on a roadway, walk left facing traffic
- When walking on a trail, walk on the right side to allow bicycles and others to pass
- Pedestrians have the right-of-way in crosswalks; however always look both ways before crossing
- Be visible by wearing light colored clothing and reflective material
- Carry a flashlight when walking at night
- Always pay attention! Use extra precautions at intersections and driveways

Driving Reminders:

- Slow down and give bicyclist at least three feet of clearance when passing
- Be patient and wait until it is safe to pass
- Drive cautiously especially at intersections
- Do not litter – it creates hazards for pedestrians and bicyclists

For Tips, Videos and Resources, visit driversafemichiana.com
Stop in and pick up a brochure at the Trails Office, 801 N. Huntington Street, Syracuse, IN 46567

Reflections of the Conklin Bay Boardwalk & Trail Project

Now that Conklin Bay is complete, let's reflect on the project from a contractor's perspective. They did an excellent job on the project that involved a lot of unforeseen challenges such as: easements, permits, a bog, realignment of trails as well as trail improvements and trail extensions. Plus, the unknowns of constructing a boardwalk through the Rolland Wetland Conservation Area.

Earth Source Inc. was the engineering firm selected for this project. They were part of this project from the very beginning – over 5 years ago! They have also been involved with previous trail projects. Dan Ernst, VP, shared the following thoughts: "Earth Source and A&Z began work on this project back in 2008 with the Trail Feasibility Study. The design, engineering and permitting began in 2015. This has been a long road for us, and it is great to see everything finally come together. During design and engineering, we could not find any geotechnical consultant who was crazy enough to attempt soil borings anywhere close to where the boardwalks are now. We were able to get borings at the edge of the wetlands, but nothing in the middle. As a result, the final depth of the augured piers that support the boardwalk was a bit of a wildcard that caused me just a few sleepless nights. Ultimately, we had very few augured piers that exceeded our anticipated depth limit. The IDNR limited construction work in certain areas, during certain times of the year, due to Osprey nesting sites. It is not funny, but there were simply so many hoops and challenges to this project. From coordination with property owners and WACF to all the permitting and requirements from INDOT, IDNR, ACOE and IDEM, along with re-permitting as well as local requirements."

Selge Construction Company was the contractor selected for this project. Christian Baybutt and his crew were wonderful to work with! I asked Christian to provide some "fun stories" and memories of the project and he shared the following thoughts: "Waiting in anticipation as the mini excavator crawled up onto the first boardwalk section and breathing a sigh of relief when nothing collapsed underneath it. Seeing the creativity of the crew members as they devised creative and efficient ways to move boardwalk sections, install the railing, and even built a boat with leftover pipe. Walking the path with my family after the project was finished and enjoying the views and our time together."

The Syracuse-Wawasee Trail Committee greatly appreciates all the hard work Christian and his crew put into this project. The following Selge employees worked onsite: Aaron Beckwith, Andy Boyle, Brett Gentry, Brett Poorman, Christian Baybutt, Cruz



Macias, Donny Defreez, Dylan Swartz, Eric Hanson, Francisco Villicana, Fredy Arevalo, Jeremy Hanson, Jim Carpenter, Josh Mills, Leonard Baldwin, Matt Huss, Matt Lowe, Miguel Ramirez, Oscar Loza, Reuben Maine, Robyn Grounds, Tom Lents, and Zack Combs. Thank you, for your hard work on this project!

The committee appreciates Earth Source Inc., A&Z Engineering, Selge Construction Company and Robert Smith, project manager, for completing the project on time. Kudos to all for adapting to problems, changes and completing a wonderful boardwalk and trail!



Conklin Bay Boardwalk and Trail is open

WOW! What a difference a year makes! May 2, 2019, Syracuse-Wawasee Trail Committee received a grant from Next Level Trails for the Conklin Bay Boardwalk and Trail. Groundbreaking took place on June 10, 2019 and construction began on October 13, 2019. On March 4, 2020, the last section of boardwalk was completed and on May 20, 2020, Conklin Bay Boardwalk and Trail officially opened! A huge thank you to our Conklin Bay donors for their support during this project that spans over 5 years. We deeply appreciate their generosity, collaboration, encouragement, and trust as we continue to make a connected community a reality! It has been awesome to see the flurry of activity on this new section of trail.

This trail is unique because it includes a one-third of a mile boardwalk that goes through the Rolland Wetland Conservation Area. There are three overlook areas and a large observatory that goes further into the wetlands which allows nature enthusiasts the opportunity to observe and enjoy a natural lake ecosystem. The trail continues south, with two-thirds of a mile concrete sidewalk, along State Road 13, Wawasee Area Conservancy Foundation (WACF) nature preserve and ends at North Grandview Drive. An additional feature of this trail is it connects users to WACF's Levison-LaBrosse Education Center where users can explore three walking trails through preserved and reclaimed wetlands.

The new trail adds approximately 1.37 miles to the existing 11-miles of trails continuing our vision of a connected trail throughout our vibrant community. Please be respectful of this new boardwalk and trail by remembering no motorized vehicle are allowed on the Conklin Bay Trail and Boardwalk which includes golf carts. This will help ensure the safety of all users who walk, bike, and run on this trail. Thank you in advance for your cooperation. Parking is available at the entrance to WACF.

The committee is still finalizing trail amenities such as signage, bicycle racks and dog waste



Photos by Tony Pawlicki

stations. There's still time for you to be part of the Conklin Bay Project! Donor opportunities are still available and appreciated! Please visit www.syracusewawaseetrails.com for a complete listing of these opportunities. You can contact Erlene Yentes at (574) 675-6433 or email ed@syracusewawaseetrails.com or contact any committee member for more information on how you can be part of this new and unique trail!

A ribbon cutting is being planned for July 30, 2020 at 11:00 am. Stay tuned for more information that will be shared on Facebook and our Website.



On the Conklin Bay Trail:



(L to R): Gina Gray, Joe Gray, Lucy Gray, Ann Godsey, Geoffrey Federspiel, and Dan Federspiel. (Photo by Dan Federspiel)



Heather Harwood and her dog Hazel



Welcome to Conklin Bay, photo by Tony Pawlicki



Diana and Jane at the overlook along the trail



Ken starting his ride from Grandview

OAKWOOD RESORT &
SYRACUSE WAWASEE PARK FOUNDATION
CRUISE-IN
SUNDAY, AUGUST 2, 2020 11-2

Pre-Registration \$20 per car

Day of Registration \$25 per car

All proceeds go to the Syracuse-Wawasee Park Foundation to fund the continuance of the trails around Lake Wawasee

Checks made payable to:

Syracuse-Wawasee Park Foundation, Trail Committee

Registration on Site 10:00 am – 11:00 am

Cruise-In 11:00 am – 2:00 pm



Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Body Type/Model/Year: _____

Exterior/Interior Color: _____

Description/History: _____

Terms and Conditions Accepted:

Registration forms are also available at
syracusewawaseetrails.com

Signature

Release of Liability: The undersigned, desiring to enter the Car Show, does hereby tender his/her application for registration. In consideration of the acceptance by the sponsoring committee of the application of the undersigned to participate in said event, the undersigned does hereby agree to release the sponsoring committee, agents, assigns, volunteers, organizations, sponsors, property owner and tenants, and all other participants from any and all liability arising out of the show. The undersigned also: (1) Hereby releases, waives, discharges, and covenants not to sue the organizers, sponsors, advertisers, agents, assigns, organizations, participants, property owners and lessee of the premises (herein referred to as the Releases) used to conduct the show. (2) Hereby agrees to indemnify and defend and hold harmless the Releasers and each of them from any loss, liability and damage, or cost they may incur out of the show whether caused by negligence of the Releases otherwise. (3) Hereby agrees that this Release and Waiver of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement extends to all acts of negligence by the releases. If any portion thereof is held to be invalid, it is agreed the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

Volunteer Opportunities

- Adopt a Trail
- While enjoying the trails, please notify the trails office of any maintenance issues or concerns
- Volunteer to help with events



Matching Gift Programs

Many employers sponsor matching gift programs and will match any charitable contributions made by their employees. To find out if your donation can be doubled, check with your HR department today.

Committee Members

Kay Young, Chairman
Dr. Tom Edington,
Treasurer

C. Todd Binning
Sherman Goldenberg
Chad Jonsson
Tony Pawlicki
Angie Racolta
Bob Smith
LuAnn Wojtczak
Jerry Wright

In order to make a donation



Please send checks with the donation slip provided below.
If you would prefer to use your credit card, you can go to the trail's website: syracusewawaseetrails.com and click on the Donate Today button.

Trail Contribution Form

Please show your support with your tax-deductible contribution.

We need your help to build and to maintain our 12-plus miles of trail. Contributions are appreciated.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Make checks payable to "Syracuse-Wawasee Park Foundation, Trail Committee". Your gifts are tax deductible and we will furnish a receipt.

Send checks with this form to: Syracuse-Wawasee Trail,
Syracuse Community Center
1013 N. Long Drive
Syracuse, IN 46567

- Check here if your company matches funds.
- Check here to receive information about planned giving.
- Check here if you would like to volunteer.

The Syracuse-Wawasee Trail system is a network of walking/biking trails that connects the Town of Syracuse, Syracuse Lake, and part of Lake Wawasee. The trail system is administered by a Trail Committee of the Syracuse-Wawasee Park Foundation, a non-profit organization. Our vision is to have a connected trail community. The new trail section adds 1.37 miles to the existing 11-miles of trails continuing the vision of a connected trail throughout or vibrant community. We reply on public support to build and maintain our 12-plus miles of trails.

Events Along the Trail

Upcoming Events for 2020

- 07/18/2020** Tour des Lakes is postponed until July 17, 2021
- 07/30/2020** Conklin Bay Ribbon Cutting at 11 am. Entrance to WACF
- 08/02/2020** Car Show at Oakwood Resort 11 am – 2 pm
- 10/24/2020** Tails and Trails

Wednesday morning walks starting at the Library at 9:00.

This is a weekly walk until September 23, 2020.

Event Calendar Updates on our Website - <http://www.syracusewawaseetrails.com/>



Wednesday Walk — (L-R): Molly, Rhett, Margo and Becky

Syracuse-Wawasee Trail
Syracuse Parks and Recreation
Syracuse Community Center
1013 N. Long Drive
Syracuse, IN 46567



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