

Inside ...

**31 Flavors
of Trails ...
What is your
Favorite
Flavor?**



**2009
PASSPORT
To Winter
Fun! Coming
in January.**



**UVTA
Celebrates
the Opening
of the King
Arthur Trail**



**2008 Tour
de Taste:
A Huge
Success!**



**UPPER VALLEY
TRAILS ALLIANCE**

P.O. BOX 1215
NORWICH, VT 05055

Return Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 57
WRJ VT 05001



TALES

FALL 2008

TRAIL



UPPER VALLEY
TRAILS ALLIANCE

*Promoting Trails,
Connecting Communities*



Printed on recycled paper

You wake up at the break of day and head outside on your favorite neighborhood trail to watch and listen to the Valley come alive. Many birds have already traveled to their winter homes, but you hear blue jays sound out their loud screeches and red squirrels scurrying about the fallen leaves looking for breakfast. You stop along the path to speak to a good friend who's out walking her energy pumped lab and decide on an afternoon lunch date. Jill and Bob are out for a morning run with their gadgets busily collecting performance data like heart rate and speed. As you head for home, walkers with backpacks and warmly bundled bicycle commuters begin to make their morning travels. Life is good in the Upper Valley when there's a great network of trails connecting the fabric of our communities. Ten years ago the founders of the Upper Valley Trails Alliance realized the importance of trails to our cities, towns and villages. Trails for education and recreation, pathways for health improvement, safe routes to school, alternative commuting corridors, and places for community building, "Solace in Nature" and athletics.



UVTA celebrated the official opening of King Arthur Trail on September 27th. Come walk, run, hike or bike along this multi-modal non-motorized trail - a safe and enjoyable route to the new athletic fields in Norwich. Thanks to everyone that helped to make this new community trail possible.

The concept of a trail network that would include an Upper Valley Loop Trail was conceived at that first UVTA meeting and over the years many trail alignment studies have been completed. The vision called for a central trail hub or corridor that would connect Hanover and Lebanon, NH with Norwich and Hartford, VT, with spokes or threads traveling to other communities, "Park and Rides" and conservation lands. Some great sections of trail have been improved, but the trail is not consistently marked or named on the ground.

In the spring of 2008, the Upper Valley Trails Alliance convened a "Trails Connect" forum to assess the need and desire for integrated multi-modal trail enhancements throughout the Upper Valley. After several hours of discussions, the Trails Alliance was asked to lead an effort to improve trail connections throughout the valley and, in particular, begin with a renewed focus on an Upper Valley Loop Trail. This trail, to be located within the current population center of the valley, will form the foundation to which other trails will connect. The group strongly advocated for UVTA to "get it on the ground"!

In the coming months we will be working to mark the Upper Valley Loop Trail. As with some of our nation's famous multi-state trails, many sections of the trail will need to be initially located along or near road corridors. In time, improvements will be made to provide for your preferred trail setting, from walking and nature exploring to multi-modal trails for commuters, athletes and more.

As development of the Route 120 corridor and projects like the Route 4 bridge replacement and Westboro Rail Yard improvements occur, it is of the utmost importance that the Trails Alliance be on the front lines working to promote trails as a priority in our communities. You can rest assured that we will work with trail advocates to provide great trail opportunities for you, your family and your community.

Lake Morey Winter Weekend, January 10th & 11th

Upper Valley Trails Alliance invites you to celebrate the season, come out and play in the snow with your family and friends, try your skills on the Lake Morey Skating Trail, and take the chill out of learning new winter skills or brush up on old ones at the 8th Annual Lake Morey Winter Weekend: January 10th and 11th, 2009. These two days will be filled with opportunities to gain skills that will help you experience all of the joys of active living in the season that tends to hide its secrets.

Join us for either day of the weekend, or both. On Saturday January 10th the annual UVTA benefit Skate-a-thon will be held along the Ice Skating Trail, beginning and ending at the Lake Morey Resort located at the southern end of the lake. On Sunday January 11th, WinterFest at the Hulbert Outdoor Center offers a community celebration filled with family fun,

great food, music, and children's activities indoors and outside. There will be guided ski tours and snowshoe walks, with cross-country skis, ice skates, and snow shoes available to borrow. Plus, you will have many opportunities to share the knowledge and experience of winter fun experts, explaining everything from soup to nuts about winter skills, including topics such as ice cutting, winter survival and first aid, igloo-building, dog sledding, ski waxing, and much, much more!

Celebrate, Don't Hibernate! **Put the Winter Weekend on your calendar.** Visit uvtrails.org to register for Skate-a-thon and learn more about the fun that awaits you at Lake Morey Winter Weekend. Special rates for Trails Alliance members.

Presented by the Upper Valley Trails Alliance, Hulbert Outdoor Center, and the Lake Morey Resort. Food for Skate-a-thon provided by Boloco. Skate rentals provided by Nordic Skater in Norwich, VT.



What is your Favorite Flavor? *Continuing Series*

By Bob White

In this piece we continue to describe the myriad of trail types as described by Bob White of ORW Landscape Architects and Planners in White River Junction, VT. Bob is a UVTA supporter and avid trails enthusiast ...

Hiking Trails

The hiking trails of the 21st century follow the contours of the land, while borrowing the techniques of rock steps, stone cribbing and rock bars for steeper ascents. They still offer a challenge and rugged terrain, but never re-create the "trail as power line". These trails might still scale dramatic heights and access fantastic and challenging topography, but can be better maintained and enjoyed.

Walking Paths

The original parks of Olmsted created paths for ladies in long dresses, and wandered through the parkland on moderate grades - say between 5-10% causing more "mist" than sweat, with some removal of rugged obstacles and trip hazards to create a strolling path more for enjoyment than just exercise.

ADA Trails

A further variation of the walking path is the ADA path, built more rigorously to criteria as defined by the Federal Access Board. Surfaced with materials to create a firm and stable surface, typically hardpack gravel, with running grades of 5%, 8% and even 10% for limited sections. These trails are a whole new art form and technology in trail design and construction. ADA trails will be more and more a part of the Upper Valley trail lexicon, as future public recreational trails must integrate some level of ADA accessibility for new trails as they develop, and old trails are grandfathered. (Go to johndillonpark.org for an Adirondack example.)

Editor's note: This is a continued excerpt from a longer article. The first installment was featured in our spring 2008 newsletter and the final piece will be featured in our spring 2009 newsletter. The full text is also available at uvtrails.org.

Dear Friends of UVTA,

The ground has dried out, the leaves have changed, and the conditions are great for getting outside and spending time on trails. I recently returned from a 3 day backpacking trip in the White Mountains. As my wife and I slogged along the Franconia and Garfield Ridge Trails, summiting Mounts Liberty, Lafayette, Lincoln, and Garfield, I began to wonder why I was doing it ... especially since we had no views due to a thick cloud and fog cover. So, with no outstanding panoramas to occupy my mind, I was drawn to an article I recently read in National Geographic:

"A trail, at its most basic, simply connects two places. Yet, trails, both ancient and new are living reminders of how our land was discovered and our culture built. Native Americans and, later, settlers wore the first trails into the landscape with moccasins, boots, and bare feet, hiking along rivers and coasts, through forests and over mountains."

40 years ago, the US Congress enacted the National Trails System; today, more than 66,000 miles of national trails exist in the US. Data shows that nine out of ten Americans live within 35 miles of a National Trail. In the Upper Valley region alone, we have the oldest and most famous National Trail, the AT, which runs through our community, plus a huge variety of hundreds of miles of trails and recreation corridors at our disposal.

So this brings me back to why I was carrying a large heavy pack, hiking long miles. For me, I did it because I wanted to know that I could. I wanted to "unplug" from the world for a few days. No TV, no cell phone, no email, newspaper, election, or financial crisis.

At UVTA we often ask the same question: Why do people get outside? The responses are as varied as the trails that are out there: healthy living, exercise, transportation, meditation, education, and so on and so on. As the Trails Alliance prepares to celebrate its 10th year, we know that we need to encompass all of these users and trail types. We have grand plans to help connect everyone to their trails and then connect those trails to other communities, providing an opportunity for all users to enjoy trails.

On behalf of UVTA and the entire community, I thank you for your continued support of our work.

Happy Trails!



Russell Hirschler, Executive Director



2009 PASSPORT To Winter Fun!

Coming in January

Motivating children and their families to learn new skills and experience winter's wonderland.

Adopt an Active Lifestyle!

www.uvtrails.org

2008 Tour de Taste:

A Huge Success

At 10 in the morning on Sunday September 7th, the first of many riders arrived at the Samuel Morey Elementary School in Fairlee, VT under cool gray skies. By 11am the temps had risen and more than 300 riders had checked in and embarked on the 2nd Annual Tour de Taste – UVTA's pedaling picnic fundraiser. The weather forecasters had calculated this day's weather just right - by 4pm, under sunny skies, all riders headed home with full bellies and wonderful memories of a great late summer day in the Upper Valley.

The 2008 Tour de Taste was a huge success. In addition to increased ridership over the 2007 event, we also added two additional loops to offer a greater variety of rides for the attendees. The routes included the



17 mile classic tour (Fairlee through Thetford, across the river into Lyme and Orford, and back to Fairlee) plus optional routes around Lake Morey (6 miles designed for families with children) and the Post Mills Meander (a 12 mile out and back designed for more advanced riders). Food stops included harvest soup at Cedar Circle Farm in Thetford, zucchini bread

at Crossroad Farm in Post Mills, fresh corn at River Valley Farm in Orford, pizza or BBQ at the Fairlee Green, and ice cream from WhippiDip in Fairlee.

The event's success was due in large part to the hundreds of individuals and families that rode, plus the generosity of all of our partners and food stops. A special thanks to our cadre of dedicated volunteers and to our sponsors: Martha Diebold Real Estate, and



Omer and Bob's.

Thanks to all of the tour participants who shared their experiences on our survey. We'll continue to improve next year's progressive picnic. Please be sure to mark your calendars! The 2009 Tour de Taste is scheduled for September 13.

