

UVTA Upcoming Events

Friday, May 8
Trails Alliance Contra
Dance Fundraiser
Tracy Hall, Norwich
\$10/\$8 Students
/under 12 free



Friday, May 15
Bike & Walk to
Work Day
Upper Valley Wide



Saturday, June 6
11th Annual Upper
Valley Trails Day
Upper Valley Wide



Sunday, September 13
3rd Annual Tour de
Taste: A Pedaling Picnic
Fairlee, VT
Online registration
opens May 1, 2009



Please see uvtrails.org for more details on these great events.



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*Promoting Trails,
Connecting Communities*

SPRING 2009



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Better Than Bread Crumbs

by Jonathan Frishtick

Have you ever wanted to show a friend the hiking route you took through the woods or describe the awesome single track ride you've just returned from? With today's GPS (Global Positioning System) technologies and mapping software on your computer or online, you will be surprised how easy it is to collect this information and view your route. If only Hansel and Gretel had a GPS unit they wouldn't have lost their way.

If you haven't bought a GPS unit yet, look at: www.gpstracklog.com and learn from the informative reviews in "Buying a GPS." You'll find a basic introduction to handheld GPS and reviews of specific GPS units for hikers, runners, bicyclists and more.

After you have a GPS unit, you can download the GPS data to the mapping software recommended by the unit's manufacturer, or you can now view your data online.

For those of you with a fast Internet connection, the newest free version of Google Earth (<http://earth.google.com>) lets you view the earth and transfer data from your GPS unit directly into Google Earth. You'll even be able to plan your trip by viewing aerial photographs, maps and historic imagery of the area you are interested in. If you're still on dial-up, check to see if your town library has high-speed Internet access and ask them if you can take advantage of Google Earth on one of their computers.

Once you have figured out how to download your data and view it either on Google Earth or other mapping software, you are on your way to creating an interesting inventory of trails and routes you like.

Now get out there and have some trail fun!

If you want to see wonderful examples of using GPS beyond just collecting your hiking data, read *Fun with GIS* by Donald Cooke. You will be amazed at the variety of activities in which you can use your GPS unit.

Next Newsletter: "GPS Tips and Tricks"

*Jonathan Frishtick is a Geographic Information System consultant.
He lives at 43°46' 53N, 72°18' 09W.*



Collect a digital pathway with GPS.

Celebrate the Return of Spring at Jasper Murdock's Alehouse

Beginning Memorial Day weekend, Jasper Murdock's Alehouse at the Norwich Inn will be offering a beer specially brewed for the Upper Valley Trails Alliance. The Alehouse will give a portion of the proceeds from each beer sold to UVTA to support its mission to advocate for the use, maintenance and development of trails in the region. "Whether as a thirst quencher or a restorative, nothing is better than our ale when you get off the trail," says Ward Watson, Innkeeper at the Norwich Inn. Please support the Trails Alliance by ordering **Bock from the Trail**, the special brew created by Brewmaster, Patrick Dakin.



New Loop Trail Map

This winter the Upper Valley Trails Alliance worked with representatives from Hanover and Lebanon, NH and Hartford and Norwich, VT to form a Steering Committee that will oversee the Upper Valley Loop Trail project. After gathering a decade of information, studies and reports on the Loop Trail concept, UVTA completed a planning map that was presented at the committee's first meeting on February 12th. This spring, subcommittees representing the four population centers are at work, fine-tuning the route and identifying which features and destinations should be accessed from this trail hub. The loop trail we envision will create a wonderful loop system combining parallel and multi-use tracts for walking, biking and hiking. It will form the hub for our communities – providing the base for an interconnected Upper Valley trail network.

If you would like to learn more about this project or share your ideas, visit our recently added BLOG at uvtrails.org.

UPPER VALLEY LOOP TRAIL PLANNING MAP



31 Flavors of Trails...What is Your Favorite Flavor? Continued

By Bob White

In this piece we continue to describe the myriad 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.

Single-track adventure mountain bike and ski trails

A variation of hiking trails without stone steps are the narrow curves and width of trails such as one finds in parts of the Boston Lot and parts of Oak Hill, Goodwin Park and Farnum Hills.

Recreational mountain bike and ski trails

The trails of Bob Green's and the Billings Park feature trails of various grades and challenge with trails graded into the hillsides or taking advantage of snow cover for the trail surface.

Rail Trail conversions

The reclamation of old railroad beds such as the Northern Rail Trail, the old Wells River – Montpelier RR (now the Cross VT Trail) offer highly accessible routes for multipurpose four-season travel.

Shared use trails

Originally called "bike paths" and designed to higher transportation engineering standards, shared use paths include those like the Hartford bike path from Dothan Brook and Wilder Village. These paths are designed for use by both bicycles and pedestrians with safety and mobility in mind.



Youngsters enjoy the firm surface and gentle slopes along the Northern Rail Trail.

If you want to experience this type of trail variety, I highly recommend a visit to **Acadia National Park in Maine**. With the Olmsted inspired system there, the Acadia trail hierarchy ranges from the wide gravel carriage roads that accommodate millions of bike, equestrian and pedestrian travelers, to moderate village walking paths through the nearby forests; from the highly crafted hiking trails with gorgeous stone masonry that scale the mountain heights and cliffs, to the reclusive paths along mossy glens in the lesser traveled reaches of the park. From a management strategy, the system is ingenious: provide for a variety of use, build long-lasting trails that will endure and accommodate the masses while still creating solitude and solace. A scaled-down version of this arrangement can be found at the Mt. Tom reserve in Woodstock.

Another place to visit is the recently completed trail system at Mt. Independence State historic site at Orwell on Lake Champlain. New trails there accommodate ADA access for almost 2.5 miles with interpretive signage and overlooks.

As you hike locally think of how these ranges of trail types could better fit the landscape of the Upper Valley to serve our communities in the future. Think trail flavors - ola!!!

Editor's note: This is a continued excerpt from a longer article. The first and second installments were featured in our previous newsletters. This is the final installment. The full text is also available at uvtrails.org.

From the Executive Director

Dear Friend of UVTA,

Spring is here and summer is not too far off. As we dust off and tune our bikes, and store our skis and snowshoes, it is important to remember that winter is one of the reasons the Upper Valley is such a great place to live. There are myriad activities to engage in, and when the conditions deteriorate for one sport, they improve for another. Such was the case this past winter. We had a February warm-up that made ski conditions challenging but the Lake Morey Skating Trail spectacular.

The Lake Morey Skating Trail, at approximately 4.5 miles, is the longest groomed ice skating trail in the country (thanks to the unique partnership of UVTA, Lake Morey Resort, and Hulbert Outdoor Center). On Presidents' Day Weekend I made my first trip on the trail. This was big for me. Not only was this my first trip on the trail, it was my first time on ice skates, and I used Nordic Skates as well. As I skated with my colleagues, sun warming my back and the wind stinging my face, I saw many people enjoying this wonderful community resource and I was reminded of what the Upper Valley has to offer. In any season, any weather condition, residents and visitors can take advantage of being outside. This is what has drawn me here.

As we look to the future, the Trails Alliance will engage in a process to identify and build on its strengths, plan for long term sustainability, and strive to meet the diverse trails and recreation needs of our region. Our work will be wide ranging. From working on the Upper Valley Loop Trail and the Mascoma River Greenway, to expanding our Passport to Winter Fun, to developing new technologies to allow our constituents to access trail information, we will continue to be a part of shaping the Upper Valley for years to come.

We greatly appreciate your past and continued support and look forward to bringing you more trails, more safe fun outdoor opportunities, and more stories.

Happy Trails!

Russell Hirschler
Executive Director

Upper Valley Trails Alliance
is a member of the



www.uvtrails.org

Snowshoe Hares and Winter Foxes and Polar Bears- Oh, My...

Did you hear? Polar Bears roamed the Upper Valley this winter! From Sunapee to Fairlee, and from Canaan to South Royalton, there were sightings of Polar Bears on skis, on skates, and even some building snow forts. No need for alarm, however; these energetic cubs engaged in a variety of winter activities all as part of the UVTA's annual Passport to Winter Fun program.

Over 3,000 students in 25 local schools received Passports and took the journey to Winter Fun this year.

Beginning as Snow Geese, the children in Kindergarten through 6th grade became a different winter animal with every ten days of physical activity they completed. As they reached the levels of Snowshoe Hare, Winter Fox, and finally, Polar Bear, they were rewarded with healthful incentive prizes.

In addition to the healthful incentive prizes, children who made it all the way to 30 days also received a special "Polar Bear Achiever" t-shirt and were entered to win one of several fabulous grand prizes. Those students who completed at least 20 days of activity with a family member received a special prize to share with their families.

A new addition to the 2009 Passport to Winter Fun was a website devoted to the program. Parents and guardians of Passport participants were encouraged to sign up on the website to receive e-mail updates about special Passport events. Offerings included a Treasure Hunt at the Lake Morey Resort as well as a day of free rentals and trail passes for Passport holders at the Wilderness Trails in Quechee, VT. Thank you to all those who attended and to both businesses for hosting the events!

The Trails Alliance would also like to acknowledge the many local businesses who generously offered the healthy incentives to students along their journey to Winter Fun. Please see our website for a complete listing of all those who donated: uvtrails.org

This year's Passport to Winter Fun program was made possible by support from the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation, the Ottauquechee Health Foundation, and the Byrne Foundation. Of course, the foundation of the program's success is the support of the schools and the families who participate- congratulations and thank you to all for taking the journey to Winter Fun!



Winter Celebration Hits Record Numbers

January 10 started out very cold, -12°F to be exact. What a great start for the Annual Lake Morey Skate-a-thon and Winter Weekend.

UVTA had more than 200 skaters make their way around the 4.5 mile skating trail, and despite the cold temperatures we had near record turnout.

The annual event and ice trail was envisioned by Jamie Hess of Nordic Skater, Inc., many years ago and has become a staple of ice enthusiasts as well as local families every January. This year, the Lake Morey Resort took on the primary responsibility of maintaining the trail, with financial support from the Trails Alliance and the Hulbert Outdoor Center. Using some of their maintenance equipment, Resort staff did an amazing job keeping the ice clear after each snowfall.

A huge thanks to all of the attendees as well as Boloco of Hanover for their generous donation of burritos for the skaters, and to Hanover Outdoors and the Lake Morey Resort for offering raffle prizes.

Please mark your calendars for next year. The Annual Skate-a-thon will take place on Saturday, January 9, 2010.

