

TRAIL TALES

UPPER VALLEY TRAILS ALLIANCE

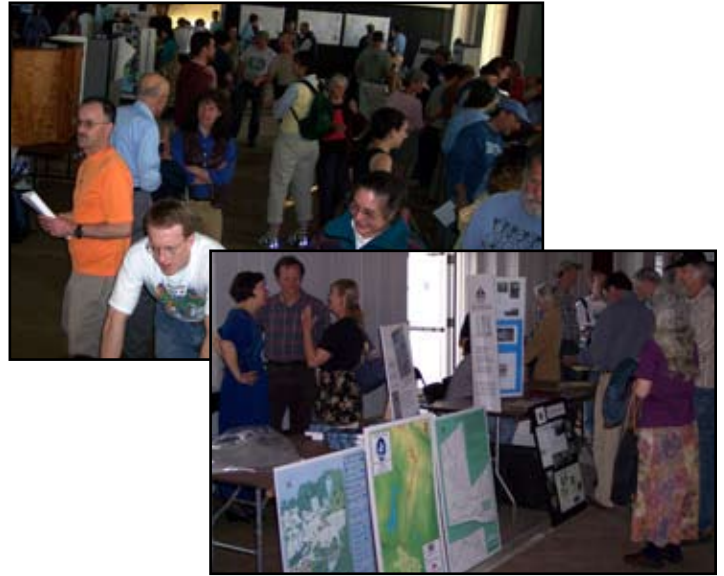
P.O. BOX 1215, NORWICH, VT 05055 · 802/649-9075 · WWW.UVTRAILS.ORG

spring/summer 2006

Upper Valley Trails Fair Draws A Crowd

The first Upper Valley Trails Fair was a big success, with about 100 people stopping by to learn about local trails, pick up maps and information, check out gear, and talk with individuals about packing for extended hiking trips, climbing peaks, competing in ski marathons, and more.

Thanks to all the organizations and individuals who participated in event. Special thanks go to Jetboil, Ibox, EMS, and John Morton for donating door prizes, as well as the Town of Norwich for the use of Tracy Hall.☺



Gear Up for Spring Bike/ Walk to Work Day

As the spring season brings warmer temperatures, commuters can look forward to the annual Bike/Walk to Work Day on Friday, May 19. Leave the car at home and save gas, decrease air pollution, and get some exercise. UVTA and event partner Upper Valley Rideshare organize the celebration, which corresponds with National Bike-to-Work Day and statewide events. Free breakfasts will be offered at the Richard W. Black Recreation and Senior Center in Hanover from 7:00-9:00am, the City Green (Colburn Park) in Lebanon from 7:00-8:30am, and in front of the Municipal Building in White River Junction from 7:00-8:30am. Breakfasts are also being arranged by participating businesses for their employees. Ask your employer or town to support Bike/Walk to Work Day, and feel free to contact us if you would like help getting an event started. Bike and pedestrian commuters who stop at one of the

breakfasts will receive free T-shirts and giveaways, and will be entered into a drawing for larger prizes donated by local businesses. For more information, visit www.bike2work-day.com.☺

Trails Day is Saturday, June 3rd!

The 2006 Upper Valley Trails Day will once again coincide with National Trails Day on Saturday, June 3. The national theme this year is "Experience Your Outdoors," and UVTD will offer a variety of trails-related activities ranging from easy family hikes to light trail work to building new trails. Last year about 200 people participated. Come out and join us in experiencing the outdoors! Watch for details in the newspapers or visit our website (www.uvtrails.org).☺

Lake Morey Winter Events Keep Growing

Our annual events in January, WinterFest and Skate-athon, continue to attract more and more participants each year. Both events provide Upper Valley residents with a chance to get outdoors and enjoy some fun activities.

This year, over 550 people attended WinterFest at the Hulbert Outdoor Center in Fairlee. Participants enjoyed a variety of outdoor activities, ranging from skating and cross-country skiing to snowshoeing and sledding, and took in informative demonstrations of skijoring (cross-country skiing with dogs) and old-fashioned ice cutting and removal. The Trails Alliance and Connecticut RiverFest organized the festivities together with the Hulbert Outdoor Center. Many participants enjoyed trying new activities, such as cross-country skiing or Nordic skating, with free loaner equipment provided by Hulbert, the Nordic Skater, and EMS. In the lodge, there were arts and crafts tables for smaller children, music and storytelling, and lots of warm food and drinks. This year, WinterFest was preceded by a more specialized Winter Skills Day, with day-long and half-day workshops on such topics as winter camping skills, wilderness first aid, and outdoor cooking in winter. The Saturday event was so popular that it is almost certain to become a regular feature of WinterFest.

The third annual Lake Morey Skate-athon at the Lake Morey Resort drew over 200 people this year. The event, which is a fundraiser for UVTA and Connecticut RiverFest, focuses on the 2-mile ice skating trail, which UVTA maintained this year with funds from the Davis Conservation Foundation. Participants borrowed Nordic skates, filled up on hot chocolate and warm food provided by the Hanover Inn and Panera, and headed out on the ice. For every lap around the lake, participants received a rubber stamp on their card, allowing them to keep track of how far they had skated. At the far end of the lake was a rest stop, with hot chocolate and snacks in a tent on the ice. At the end of the day, participants could exchange their stamp cards for certificates stating how far they had gone. While the event was geared toward children and their families, many adults came, too, and proudly carried their certificates home! The record holder, rumor has it, completed over 17 laps during the day, amounting to more than 30 miles total!

Both of these events were very successful in drawing residents outdoors for some healthy exercise and fun. We hope to be able to keep the Lake Morey and Deweys Pond skating trails plowed in winters to come (see related article, inset). Though you cannot rent skates there normally and food might be harder to find when we aren't hosting an event, there's no reason not to head out and have more fun all winter long. ☺

Our Wish List

UVTA appreciates donations of supplies, equipment, and expertise. Some of our current wishes reflect the expansion of our staff and include:

- + a vacuum cleaner
- + a heavy-duty 3-hole punch
- + ruler(s) and tape measure(s)
- + general office supplies
- + colored 8 ½ x 11" inkjet/copy paper
- + coffee maker
- + computer support
- + software (Acrobat Elements, InDesign)

Walking: It Goes to Your Head!

by Phyllis Lee

You probably know about the major health benefits of walking and other forms of physical activity including weight control and disease prevention. But beyond the bodily perks, exercise is crucial for the brain as well. "When you're actively exercising, you're not only using your heart and muscles, but you're exercising your brain, too," explains Maurizio Fava, MD, director of the Depression Clinical and Research Program at Massachusetts General Hospital. "You're thinking and responding quickly. You may be increasing the growth of brain cells. You're strengthening your system as a whole."

Brisk walking facilitates fundamental brain activities by increasing circulation, which helps transport more glucose to brain cells to fuel mental functioning. The brain's capillary network also expands to increase the number of blood vessels feeding the brain. In addi-

Bike Safety Kit Available For Loan

UVTA has a bike safety kit for schools and other organizations to borrow. This is a great time to think about bicycle safety, which goes beyond a helmet and a bike tune-up. Call us if you are interested in borrowing the kit at (802) 649-9075. ☎

Thank You!

Thanks to the many individual and organization members, business sponsors, and foundations that make our activities possible. Special thanks to Warren Thayer and to Trylon Data Management for responding to our last wish list with a number of items for the UVTA office!

Walking: It Goes to Your Head, continued from p. 2

tion, physical activity assists the growth of new brain cells, especially important for learning and memory, and it improves brain plasticity so the brain can change its structure and processes to adapt to new situations, ensuring optimal brain functioning.

Besides the basics, exercise increases the brain's processing power by strengthening neural connections. These enhanced connections along with increased oxygen flow to the brain may improve cognitive performance as suggested by research on joggers who scored significantly higher on complex tests after running for 30 minutes on a regular basis than when these people discontinued their running regimen.

Walking can do wonders to mental health as well by thwarting cortisol and other stress-related hormones, which can damage brain cells over time. It also lifts mood and helps stave off depression, which can result in lower cognitive functioning and memory problems. Of course, exercise enhances overall health by preventing cardiovascular disease, obesity, and other health problems that also may negatively affect the brain.

Fortunately, you don't need to partake in vigorous long runs to sharpen your brain. A simple, brisk half-hour walk three times a week can improve learning ability and abstract reasoning by 15 percent. And what better way to enjoy the outdoors than on local trails—so get out to boost your body and brain! ☎

Support Wild Skating Trails!

This past winter, UVTA, in collaboration with the Montshire Skating Club and the Nordic Skater, obtained a grant from the Davis Conservation Foundation to hire Rob Kristoff of Fairlee to plow ice skating trails on Lake Morey in Fairlee and Deweys Pond in Quechee. The Lake Morey trail, previously open for just two weeks of the winter, is now the longest skating trail in the U.S. that is open throughout the winter. These skating trails were an integral part of "Winter Trails for Fun and Health," our project to encourage more Upper Valley families to get outdoors and active during the cold winter months. The increasing popularity of wild skating trails is evidenced by the record number of participants in both the 2006 WinterFest and Skate-athon, both held at Lake Morey. In response to this surge in interest, UVTA is establishing a fund to maintain both trails in the future. If you wish to contribute to this fund, please mail your tax-deductible donation (payable to "UVTA") to our office. Thank you! ☎

Join us in Supporting Trails in the Upper Valley!

Use this form to join UVTA, to renew your membership, or to send us the name of someone who might want to join. (We'll send them a free newsletter.)

Name _____
Street _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____
E-mail _____

Membership Levels:

Trail Angel.....	\$500
Trail Benefactor.....	\$200
Trail Partner.....	\$75
Trail Builder.....	\$40
Basic.....	\$20



Please make check payable and mail to:

Upper Valley Trails Alliance
P.O. Box 1215
Norwich, VT 05055

Cross Rivendell Trail Nears Completion

by Phyllis Lee

The Cross Rivendell Trail linking the four towns of the Rivendell Interstate School District will soon be complete, opening up an expansive 38 miles of picturesque private lands for hikers and students to enjoy. In order to facilitate the use of this new trail, the Rivendell Trail Association (RTA) has recently received generous contributions from two local businesses to create a trail map and guidebook to be released this summer.

The Wells River Savings Bank donated \$1,000 and TeleAtlas North America offered expert staff volunteers to help produce the map. The trail connects the towns of Vershire, West Fairlee and Fairlee, VT, and Orford, NH, extending from Flagpole Hill in Vershire to Mt. Cube in Orford.

In addition to allowing hiking by the public, the school district plans to integrate the trail into the school program for exercise and education. The trail crew consists primarily of Rivendell High School students who have spent the past several summers clearing the trails under the direction of David Hooke, the trails coordinator.

Currently, the RTA is looking toward other grants for necessary funds to complete production of the trail guide and map. Tax-deductible donations to help with the publication are welcome; please contact Heather Toulmin at 802-333-3731. The RTA is a private non-profit organization. ♻️



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