



Trail Tales

The Newsletter of

RAILS TO TRAILS OF THE WITHLACOOCHEE, INC. (RTW)

The Citizen Support Organization for the Withlacoochee State Trail (WST)

The Friendliest Trail in the Country

NEW MURAL UNVEILING : FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2018 1 P.M.

You are cordially invited to the grand unveiling of the new Withlacoochee State Trail mural. Volunteers from RTW Candace McLean, Heather Nagy, and Linda Reiland designed and implemented the new mural; Jim McLean and Dave Nagy will install it, along with a smaller version, which will be displayed at the second most used trailhead, Ridge Manor. The mural has been funded by Rails to Trails of the Withlacoochee to enhance the Trail experience for all users.

The Inverness Trailhead is located at 315 N. Apopka Avenue (near the iconic Red Caboose)

Refreshments will be served, so please RSVP by February 1 to WSTMural@gmail.com



MARCH 4: ANNUAL RIDE

Are you ready to join us for the postponed 23rd Annual Rails to Trails Bike Ride on the Withlacoochee State Trail?

Details will be finalized soon, and sent as a separate announcement to our list members. See our [Web Sites section](#) of the newsletter to join or update your email address if you don't already receive the newsletter.

ALL RIDERS MUST WEAR A HELMET.

- 🚲 The ride begins (rain or shine) and ends at the Inverness Trailhead, 315 N. Apopka Ave, Inverness.
- 🚲 There is no mass start – start when you're ready any time between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m.
- 🚲 While there is no set ride length, Century or Metric Century riders will receive recognition.
- 🚲 Continental breakfast will be available.
- 🚲 Lunch is from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Apopka Trailhead.
- 🚲 Century Riders will find post-ride refreshments at the registration area until 4 p.m. Register TODAY at <http://www.rttwst.org/annual-ride-registration-form.php>.



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A BICYCLE TOUR ALONG THE LAHN AND MOSEL RIVERS OF GERMANY



Thursday, February 15, 2018

5:30 PM

Lakes Regional Library
1511 Druid Rd., Inverness, FL

Ann and Fred Abeles, cycling snowbirds who reside in Inverness in the winter, will present a talk and photo show about their recent bicycle tour along these German Rivers. They chose this area of Germany after reading the book "Constantine's Sword" by James Carroll, about the beginnings of Christianity.

Their adventure began with a day of touring Marburg; then they set off on bicycles down the Lahn River, with overnight stops in several

towns along the way. After reaching the confluence of the Lahn with the Rhine River, they cycled up Rhine to the Lorelei Cliff, and took a river boat cruise back to Koblenz.

From Koblenz, the Abeles went by train to the ancient Celt city of Treuorum. After touring Trier, the Abeles spent a day cycling up the Mosel and Saar Rivers to Sarburg and back to Trier. Over the next few days, they cycled down the Mosel River, through this major wine producing region and ended their journey back in Koblenz.

Join them as they present more details about this region, along with pictures of this beautiful, fascinating, and ancient viticulture region in Germany, settled since prehistoric times!

SAD NEWS: THE PASSING OF LOUIS PATRICK NIPPER

Louis Patrick Nipper, 91, long-time friend of the Trail, passed away on November 24, 2017.

After moving to Hernando, Louis spent his free time building bluebird nesting boxes in his garage workshop to promote the long-term future of the Eastern bluebird, a vulnerable species. This passion for bluebirds motivated him to build and install hundreds of nesting boxes on the Withlacoochee State Trail, as well as in and around the Citrus Hills community. Louis donated bluebird nesting boxes to many of the Audubon Florida chapters.

Louis also volunteered with the Citrus County Sheriff's Office to patrol the trail. He was an active member of the Florida Bluebird Society and continued this work into the last year of his life.

Louis was preceded in death by Elizabeth, his wife of 38 years; siblings and spouses; Russell Nipper (Frances), Bill Nipper (Elsie), and Betsy Smith (George).

Memorial gifts may be made to the American Cancer Society (<https://www.cancer.org>) or the National Audubon Society (<http://www.audubon.org>). Online condolences at legacy.com



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TRAIL REPAIR UPDATE

Recently a contractor completed repairs to our trail, starting at Eden Drive and proceeding south to Ridge Manor. Ninety-seven (97) areas of the trail were repaired.

There were 5.5 tons of asphalt used on this section of trail. Once again railroad ties were found under the pavement in several areas, which necessitated cutting larger holes to remove the pieces. Some of the areas that had several depressions close together were enlarged and repaved to make a smooth edge.

Some previously installed patches were removed and replaced with new asphalt. Down in the areas through the swamps, where the water table is high and trail slump is present, extra work was performed to correct the bad places.

The contractor worked four days on the repair work and did a very good job correcting all of the worst areas. There are additional areas on the entire trail that could be repaired and may be done at a later date with the approval of the Withlacoochee State Trail CSO Board of Directors. Hopefully, trail users will appreciate the repair work done to enhance their experience.

The State is responsible for the repair to the section of trail where the car fire was at Croom Road. Arrangements to have that work done is being made and the repairs will be done prior to the annual bike ride on March 4, 2018.

HERNANDO/CITRUS BICYCLE & TRAILS MASTER PLAN

The Hernando/Citrus MPO has begun a comprehensive project to create a Hernando/Citrus Bicycle and Trails Master Plan. The project wants to collect as much information as possible from all bicycle riders, trail users and all residents. The information will be used to evaluate existing facilities, create new bicycle trails and how they can be connected to new facilities and destinations in both counties. Connections to other counties in the region are also part of the project goals.

The project website is www.hernandocitrusbiketrialplan.com . Please review it and provide as many ideas you have to make the trail system in the two counties much better. There will be two public workshops on the plan.

The one in Citrus will be held on Wednesday, January 31 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Citrus County Transit Center, 1300 County Road 491, Lecanto. The one in Hernando will be held on Wednesday, February 7 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Hernando County Housing Authority, 1661 Blaise Dr., Brooksville, FL. Information for each is on the website. Please share this information with your friends and any interested parties you may know.

The goal is to have a draft report of the master plan available in June this year.



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NEWS FROM LEVY COUNTY

Updates for the Withlacoochee Basin Economic Development Partnership (Levy County) met on Monday, January 8th. During the meeting, the Partnership identified four key projects one which to focus in the near future:

- 🚲 A short connector from Inglis to the Withlacoochee Bay Trail along US 19
- 🚲 A trail connection from Inglis to Dunnellon along SR 40
- 🚲 Closing the Dunnellon Gap at US 41 and CR 39
- 🚲 Paving the road along the Withlacoochee Bay Trail

YAHOO! GROUPS EMAIL ADDRESSES

As an FYI, our Yahoo! Group Administrator can delete subscriber email addresses upon request, but he cannot add people (and so cannot change addresses). He monitors the group for bounce activity, and no such activity is evident for any of our current email addresses.

If you are subscribed, but not actually receiving the newsletter, check your "SPAM" or "Junk" mailbox, and add "railstotrails@yahoo.com" to your list of authorized senders.

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WEB SITES

THE YAHOO! GROUPS WEBSITE
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/railstotrails>

RAILS TO TRAILS OF THE WITHLACOOCHEE, INC.:
<http://www.railstotrailsonline.com>

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) website:
http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/guide/regions/crossflorida/trails/with_state.htm

I Need to Hear from You!

Have a story for the newsletter? Have an idea for one? Send it along to me, the editor, at njnkeefe@yahoo.com

RTW TRAIL TALES	www.rttwst.org
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