

Mayor Abramson in Winchester

On February 19, Louisville's Mayor Jerry Abramson spoke on the benefits of biking and walking to an enthusiastic crowd of over 200 in Winchester's historic Leeds Arts Center. "Biking brings a community together," said the Mayor, pointing to Louisville's many miles of trails and bike lanes and how Louisville has embraced this opportunity for togetherness and healthy living. "You (the audience) need to tell your public officials that you want bike lanes and trails for biking and walking. They (the public officials) need to know that you think this is important."

After Mayor Abramson urged the audience to action, Bluegrass Cycling Club President Peggy Littrell presented him with a Bluegrass Cycling Club jersey.

The turnout was very large for a weekday afternoon, especially since the event went from 12:30 until 2 PM. Peggy Littrell, President of the Bluegrass Cycling Club, referred to Mayor Abramson as a visionary who has put action to his thoughts and has made incredible strides to improve the health and well being of the citizens of Louisville through bike and walking opportunities.

In his comments he brought out that baby boomers have historically set the stage for emerging trends. For example, when they started jogging the number of running paths, running gear, and running events exploded. Now that many of the boomers have older joints and bodies they are embracing cycling and walking and communities should be ready to take advantage of that.

Cycling can expand the territory an individual can cover so much more than running. It allows travel into more diverse areas in and around town, it promotes cultural ex-



(Mayor Abramson, Photo courtesy of the Winchester Sun, 3/09)

change and it provides a chance for something as simple but profound as eye contact between folks who may otherwise not have met. The Mayor also emphasized that law enforcement needs to be on board, and laws must be enforced for both vehicles and cyclists.

The Mayor cited "Studies show 67% of people choose a place to live and then look for work there." This means that community leaders need to begin realize that "regionalism is the future of America". Elected officials need to throw away the concept of lines on a map and artificial boundaries and begin to focus on entire metropolitan/regional areas. The Mayor gave Louisville as an example which considers 26 counties to be in their area. Some may live in Bullitt Co. but work in Louisville, and vice-versa. Or maybe they live and work in Elizabethtown but they come to Louisville to shop. If the region doesn't meet the needs of all of those categories of people then the benefits to all are shortchanged. "I'd rather have a 500 job business locate in Bullitt Co. than lose it to Memphis or Indianapolis." The event was sponsored by Bluegrass Rails to Trails and Winchester First. Many thanks to Mindy Taylor, Peggy Littrell and Bill Fortune who wrote down their impressions of this impressive talk. The Winchester Sun article is at http://www.winchestersun.com/public_html/?module=displaystory&story_id=18443



(Leeds Theatre, Mindy Taylor, 3/10/09)



News from Morehead

Over the past 15 years the local volunteer citizens group, Daniel Boone Rails to Trails (DBRT), has been working many hours to bring a much needed multi-use trail to the City of Morehead and Rowan County. In the summer of 2008 there was the construction of the first bridge in the initial two mile segment of the railtrail in Morehead. It was built with grant money from the Recreational Trails Program. The grant was written for the City of Morehead by members of the DBRT and Morehead Tomorrow six years ago. The bridge was located just west of the old train depot near the US 60 and Highway 32 intersection. The approximate cost of the bridge was \$26,000 coming from a combination of cash donations, materials, in kind match of services, labor and a \$10,000 grant. Volunteers worked at cutting lumber, filling around abutments, setting post, positioning drainage ditches, moving excess rock and fastening trusses. This endeavor required much planning, volunteer work, perseverance and individual financial contributions to make the bridge a reality. The DBRT believed the bridge was soundly constructed with the assistance of volunteers.

Plans for a festive ribbon cutting ceremony were brought to an end after the Department of Transportation withdrew its verbal permissions last fall. The City of Morehead followed with plans to dismantle the bridge citing that it could not be insured under the city's policy. Although the removal of the bridge was a huge blow to the DBRT, they remain motivated to see rails to trails and similar greenways/linear parks constructed in the county and across the state.

"We were disappointed in the response from the city council members, but believe that they will support future rails to trails efforts," says April Haight. Since the dismantling of the bridge, Daniel Boone Rails to Trails has formally requested the city council to provide feedback on the following issues: 1.) Better coordination of recreational improvements among the city and county governments, the NewCities initiative, Morehead Tourism, Parks and Recreation, DOT and DBRT 2.) Short- and long-term plans for walking and biking paths and supportive infrastructure such as replacement of the dismantled bridge. Haight adds, "Based on public input during the Lakeview-Morehead-Rowan County Planning Process and the New City Initiative it is clear that members of the community want a more walkable community with greenways."

Morehead is in a position to enhance their recreational infrastructure by implementing several initiatives for intra-city trails and intra-county trails. A very beneficial development would be a trail from the city park to Cave Run Lake built in cooperation with organizations wanting a trail system around the lake. Other communities are beginning to see the benefits of developing trail systems for their recreational/health benefits.

Update from Hopkinsville

The annual Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving Day 2008 had good weather and a large turnout of 150 participants; \$600 was collected in donations for rail trails.

Fort Campbell still retains the deed to the 5 mile railroad spur that Hopkinsville trail supporters want to become a multi use trail. Fort Campbell is identifying any environmental problems and wants to get them resolved before turning it over to the city. The Pennyryle Rail Trail Foundation has started talks with a landscape designer, Darren Henson. The Pennyryle Rail Trail Foundation is a 501 (c) 3 organization and donations would be tax deductible. If you would like to donate please contact Kim Schippers, (270) 839-3676, jkschippers@hotmail.com.



(Turkey Trot, Hopkinsville, 11/2008, K. Schippers)

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Calloway County Abandonment

The Division of Planning in Kentucky's Transportation Department has received notification that the Murray-Calloway Economic Development Corporation proposes to abandon a segment of the former Hardin Southern Railroad which runs 7.5 miles through Calloway County. An initial local contact is Dr. Kelly Rogers at (270) 809-3144 or kelly.rogers@murraystate.edu.



Phone: (270) 442-0751
info@bikeworldky.com
 809 Joe Clifton Dr., Paducah, KY 42001

Thanks to Kentucky Rails to Trails Council Members

It was heartwarming to see the donation letters come rolling in at the first of the year. The Council will use your contributions to continue to do the many tasks of advocacy and education that is the hallmark of KRTC. If you have not sent in your membership renewal or contribution please visit us online at www.Kyrailtrail.org or mail in your donation.

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Kentucky Rails To Trails Council, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3)
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The Kentucky Rails to Trails Council promotes and advocates for the establishment and use of rail trails and associated greenways and multi use trails in Kentucky.

Contributions and dues are tax deductible
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