

Kansas Trails Council

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Newsletter

December 2014

2014 Was A Busy Year!

We've been busy at the KTC this year! We expanded the Trail in a Box project from one to three trailers stocked with all the essential hand tools and power equipment needed for building natural surface trails. Volunteers using Trail in a Box have been building trails in Fredonia, Iola, Pomona, Manhattan, at Douglas Fishing Lake near Baldwin, at Tuttle Creek and Ft. Riley. This could not have been possible without the continuing support of the Mosby Lincoln Foundation and the Sunflower Foundation: Health Care For Kansans, a Topeka-based philanthropic organization with the mission to serve as a catalyst for improving the health of Kansans. Any group interested in building natural surface hiking, biking or equestrian trails can apply to use Trail in a Box. Application forms and more information may be found at: <http://www.kansastrailscouncil.org/about/trail-in-a-box/>

The KTC has also teamed up with the Wildscape Foundation to build the www.getoutdoorskansas.org website which went live on Nov. 19. GetOutdoorsKansas partners can post their upcoming outdoor activities and trail GPS tracks and other information. Trail managers can



become a partner and upload their GPS tracks or our GPS team will record the track for you. So far over 300 miles of trails are on-line and we're adding trails every day. If you know about a trail that isn't on the website yet, just send an email to trails@getoutdoorskansas.org and we'll add it to the growing inventory of Kansas trails.

In the meantime, we continue to maintain and improve over 250 miles of trails across the state. Thanks to all of our members and volunteers who are dedicated to Kansas trails! We look forward to another busy year in 2015!

AMP UP!

Motivating the Unpaid Volunteer

What drives us to volunteer? KTC members and others put in thousands of hours voluntarily working for no pay on Kansas trails every year. This is true of most trails organizations; ours is based on the benefit of unpaid volunteers. Others such as the *International Mountain Bicycling Association*, although legally a not-for-profit organization, retain a paid staff that is funded by donations and membership fees.

The KTC is a not-for-profit with an unpaid Board of Directors and a staff of unpaid Trail Coordinators. Both organizations use unpaid volunteer day workers. Like *IMBA*, we also exist on donations and memberships, but none of our funds are used as salary.

In the workplace, pay is the traditional positive feedback incentive and pay bonus is the incentive to reward good work. Reduction in pay is sometimes deployed as a negative feedback mechanism, although it is prone to poison workplace relationships.

These pay mechanisms are often idiomatically referred to as carrot and stick. If we're thinking about **volunteer** workers or managers, neither monetary reward nor monetary punishment is rational. Besides productivity and efficiency in the workplace, pay issues are also important in recruitment and retention of employees.

Like the workplace, we need alternatives to the traditional carrot vs stick approach in our environment where work-for-pay simply does not exist. We need incentives to be able to recruit and retain great volunteers and get good results out on the ground.

A few years ago I read the book **Drive**, by career analyst Daniel Pink. He consults and writes about the traditional workplace and advocates the importance of incentives other than monetary rewards. At this point I'd highly recommend that you watch this animation of a short 10-minute talk given by Dan Pink.

<http://youtu.be/u6XAPnuFjJc>

Trail News

What is AMP?

I wondered if this would apply to our trail volunteer situation where by default we are driven only by incentives other than monetary rewards. He says there are three components that drive an effective reward system in the workplace:

Autonomy
Mastery
Purpose



Here's a phrase that succinctly states the basic concept: "the freedom to become better and better at something that matters and serves a cause larger than yourself".

And yes, I think it applies to about any situation related to incipient or existing trails — ranging from negotiating trail access and grant writing, to trail design, construction, maintenance and rehab. Volunteers involved can range from those with thousands of hours of experience to the first time participant on a trail day event.

Because a trail needs regular, expert, dependable, and sustained attention, I think it applies particularly to those of us who systematically donate time on one or more trails. Maybe all situations don't require all three of Pink's drive components, but I suspect that in most situations where we have quality long-term trail work getting done by a volunteer, there is a healthy portion of all three (well, at least one or two)! Thus my article is primarily applicable to the unpaid trail manager/steward/coordinator rather than the day worker volunteer.

Acquiring AMP

Autonomy must be entrusted by an authority over: budget control, creative license, perquisites, institutional support, and inventory. It can also be engendered by acquiring grant funding and donors. Given that here we are talking about trails on public lands, the assigning authority is a park manager or similar government agent.

Mastery is acquired by: training, retraining, and time on task. Here again is positive feedback where the better we become at something, the more we like it.

Purpose is driven by: positive feedback; a sense of accomplishment that engenders self-esteem without vanity, by giving, serving, helping, sharing, contributing, and building something that others will appreciate and leaving something that will endure.

AMP Applied

Autonomy – a sense of independence in routine activities, e.g., designing new routes and reroutes, choosing when and how to work, expressing creativity, discovering new techniques, and control of a budget and volunteer help.

Mastery – become more and more proficient, e.g., producing/maintaining more and better trails in less time on task

Purpose – producing results that matter and are larger than one's self, e.g., a trail that is effective, esthetic, kinesthetic, sustainable, and popular with the users for which it was designed. Also all volunteers feel a sense of "ownership" of sections of trail where they've contributed effort.

I am certain in my case on the Switchgrass Trail at Wilson State Park, I am motivated by all three of the drive components. Yes, some of the work is hard, boring, frustrating, and nasty, none of which are criteria that drive any of us. But the Pink drive components more than compensate to keep me coming back season after season. The Urban Dictionary defines amp up as turn up the volume or intensity. I think it is not entirely unrelated to the Pink drive components.

Pink says that traditional monetary workplace rewards can actually have the opposite of the intended effect by among other things, encouraging shortcuts and short term thinking, stifling creativity, reducing cooperation, and inducing unhealthy inter-worker competition.

So we don't have to sacrifice or be an altruist to do trail work, but we do need to get a buzz when it happens. Of course I also love to ride my mountain bike and enjoy the fruits of my labor as much as anyone. Furthermore, my skills as a mountain biker make me a better at every phase of my trail work.

A quick look at the tenure of most of our volunteer trail coordinators reveals a group that are driven to take care of trails (in years): 30+, 25+, 20, 20, 20, 15, 10+, 10, 5, 5, 5. I think the KTC model encourages volunteer drive and is why KTC has an amazing 40-year record of success helping to provide one of the greatest outdoor activities available in Kansas.

A version of this article was presented as a paper at the IMBA 2012 World Summit in Santa Fe ~ Bob Nicholson

Trail News

Clinton Lake – North Shore Trails

Not too much to report. Had a lot of trees down late this fall. Rick and Pam Wilkens tracked the trail with GPS for Get Outdoors Kansas. The Green Team came out to look at doing a boardwalk trail at boat ramp 3. We are still working on this project feasibility. We still need approval from the Park but there is a possibility that we will begin in the spring. It would be an elevated wood walkway that would extend from the asphalt walkway that is already there along the shore to the first cove that you come to after the boat ramp. It would connect with the Blue trail at the water's edge. More info to come.

Neil Taylor (medic1@sunflower.com)

Eisenhower State Park – Crooked Knee Trail

Another successful benefit trail ride was held at Eisenhower State Park this past October and raised \$5,000 for the equestrian camps and trails. Almost 80 riders participated in the weekend, which included Saturday and Sunday rides, two hot meals, and a live auction. Once again, the Friends of Eisenhower State Park generously donated the Saturday evening meal and a hot breakfast Sunday morning, which allows for 100% of the proceeds from this ride to go toward improvements. Plans for this year's proceeds include purchasing panels that will be used to build a round pen in the West Point Equestrian Camp area and provide additional portable corrals. Corrals can also be set up in the Cowboy Camp area. We are also looking into adding potable water to the Cowboy Camp. This is the third year for this annual event, and proceeds from these rides have exceeded \$15,000!

Jim Thomas (thomasjc68@gmail.com)

Elk River Trail (Elk City Lake)

Greetings from the Elk River trail in Southeast Kansas. What a busy year for the trail and a good one. The trail logs from last year are full of names and places from all over the state, the country and even the world! California, Alaska, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, all parts of Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri and Canada. There were many backpackers, mostly day hikers, lots of runners, several Boy Scout troops and a cross country team. Some came on their birthday, some came alone or with dogs, some came in families, others in large or small groups, there were horseback groups and two Hills and a Meir that hiked the whole trail with backpacks in 6 hours on Christmas!! Today there were even two ice skaters on one of the many inlets along the upper end of the trail.

This coming year we hope that more and more people can come and visit the trail and that they will come back and see different parts of this 15 mile long hike. Winter is a wonderful time when the rock outcrops and ledges take over the scenery. Spring is amazing with the redbuds and early leaves. Summer is wildflowers and wildlife and wading in the streams, and Fall is perfect with color and long hikes and great views. So this year make it a point come to the trail for an hour, a day, or a weekend and enjoy yourselves and the great outdoors. There are three good trail heads with parking and several other access points along the way. The trail is well marked with blue blazes and it is well maintained and clear. There is always water in the lake and river and most of the times in the many crossing streams. If you can make it down here, one thing is guaranteed, you will come back again.

Steve Siegele (steveshardware@twinmounds.com)

Fall River Lake Badger Creek Trail

Activity at Fall River slows down after cooling off in the fall due to Deer season in the shared use area of Badger Creek. I spent a day stockpiling material to armor a short stretch of trail along a hillside that tends to seep water through the latter part of winter and into spring due to snow melt and seasonal rains. I plan to get out after the first of the year to place the rock into the tread in that section. The trail mostly handles moisture pretty well and stays pretty firm except for a few places. We have a New Year's Day ride planned to celebrate the January 1st holiday. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy 2015.

Terry Plenert (PPLENERT@aol.com)

Ford County Lake Trail – Dodge City

December 2014, Ford County Lake Trail is open. A few weeks ago several friends of the trail mowed and cleared the first five miles of trail know as Fred's Loop. The trail path is rough in some areas from the county mowing the large open areas but frequent Ford County Trail riders are accustomed to a challenging ride. No definite date has been set to mow the back side but the date and time will be posted on our Facebook page, Ford County Lake Trail. The trail head is located on the southwest corner of the lake. For additional information regarding the trail, I can be reached at jwentling@buyggaautos.com

John Wentling (jwentling@buyggaautos.com)

Trail News

Perry Lake Bike Trails

Most or all the trails of the system are open and in good shape for the winter. We are in planning stages of making some changes to the Daisy Point trail to avoid a snow drifting issue along one stretch and a re-route section to avoid a potential wet area that seems to have a seep once the dry years have passed.

Lyle Riedy (lriedy@usd345.com)

Perry Lake Hiking Trails

Looking back over the fall of 2014 we had a few busy days on the Perry Hiking Trail. One short afternoon for a quick recon of the area, then the work began. The first workday resulted in a mow, lop, and blaze of 2.5 miles of mostly lespedeza in section 1. The second workday, rescheduled one week due to snow, had one of the largest turnouts in years – eleven volunteers – including two from a local running club and two others from Meetup posts. It would appear that getting the word out to other trail users and groups certainly helps the turnout. With the eleven, we split into two crews and hit section 4: mowed tall grass, lopped and trimmed trees and brush, and installed highly visible carsonite posts in the field areas over a combined 2.5 miles. On other days, section 2 had a few fallen trees removed and trail brush cleared.

Looking ahead into 2015, we see a variety of “non-mow and lop” tasks to add to the usual work: bridge rail repairs; studies for two reroutes (fall line and earth movement); kiosk repairs as wind and weather have taken their toll; install the last mile-markers; replace our Perry trail website with Facebook or similar; and, just maybe, undertake a spraying program for the lespedeza areas. Hello 2015!

Dave Brackey (dbrackey@att.net)

Topeka Trails

Dornwood Park Trails

Dornwood is cleared. The leaves have been blown. However, the recent rains have created muddy conditions. Once we get some sustained freezing conditions the trail will harden up. Hiking and biking will then be more ideal.

Recently, a plot of land adjacent to the south end of the park has been donated to the county. This will most likely allow us to expand the trail system. More news to follow.

Russ Rupp (russ11@cox.net)

MacLennan Park (Cedar Crest)

A new trailhead map has been added to the kiosk at the main trailhead on the west side of the Governor's Residence. We are in the process of installing small mid-trail maps at various locations throughout the trail system. Trail map brochures will also be available soon.



The new maps can be downloaded from the KTC website at:

www.kansastrailsCouncil.org/trails/macLennan-park-trails/

Honeysuckle removal has continued this winter along the park road on the west side of the park. Our spraying in late fall when other plants have gone dormant combined with cutting the large plants is slowly returning the forest to a pre-honeysuckle state. Translated, that means you can now see the trees in the forest!

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Skyline Park

A new trailhead map has been installed to show the latest trail development. This map can be downloaded from the KTC website at: www.kansastrailsCouncil.org/trails/skyline/

Trail News



A small version of the sign has been installed at a key intersection in the center of the trail system. We plan to begin working on the southwest section of the park this spring and will likely add another mile of trail to the three miles completed thus far.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Tuttle Creek Trails

Randolph State Park

Not much going on with the Tuttle Creek Lake Trails this time of the year. The gate to Randolph South is shut, but vehicles and trailers can park on the north side of Highway 16 and use the trails. There is one water hydrant in this area and should be available all year around. We have notices a few places that need work and will be spending time removing some debris or rocks weather permitting.

Carnahan

Carnahan Camp Trail Loops are available for winter hiking and horseback riding. This park is leased to Pottawatomie County and does not require a parking fee. There are restroom facilities but no people water. Take advantage of nice winter weather and visit our trails.

Olivia Huddleston (kayakkid346@gmail.com)

Switchgrass Mountain Bike Trail (Wilson Lake)

October features our 2nd sanctioned mountain bike race of the year, HELL creek ON WHEELS. We had great weather, super fast trail conditions, a good turnout, although every year we face more and more competition with cyclocross events in the KC region. Unfortunately cyclocross does not require a trail with courses flagged out on grass, dirt, mud, etc. so races can be conducted just



about anywhere. Required mowing went late into the season with good rains throughout the late summer and fall. Another reroute was deployed just before the October race, which eliminated one of our fall lines that just could not be persuaded to do anything but get deeper and deeper. The reroute won't have quite the speed buzz of the fall line, but it does have a couple of nice turns and a fair bit of whoop.

Trail running is our most popular racing--with a half dozen or so events each year. November featured the last event in the 2014 racing series, HELL creek on HEELS, with the 50 km trail run. This event fits the trail nicely with only about 7 miles of repeat. By running the repeat in reverse, the runners get to see new trail for the entire race. Of course short laps are easier to set up, but event organizer WildWithinYou.com is always willing to go the extra mile (so to speak).

December is a bit quieter on the trail, but as long as trail conditions are good, we have mountain bikers. As the winter wears on, we'll see migrants from the cold Rockies and north country and slimy Ozarks enjoying dry, open trails in Wilson State Park. As the year ends, it is important to express a sincere and huge thanks to all fans, users, and patrons who've contributed time and resources to the trail.

Bob Nicholson (bob.44.nicholson@gmail.com)

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes December 7, 2014

Call to order

- The KTC Board met at Bluestem Bistro in Manhattan, KS.
- Board members present were Lyle Riedy, President; Olivia Huddleston, Vice President; Mike Goodwin, Treasurer; Susan Haynes, Secretary; John Haynes; Bob Nicholson; Kevin Otterman; Doug Palen; Russ Rupp; and Jim Thomas. Not present: Terry Plenert and Neil Taylor.
- The meeting was called to order at 12:50 PM by President Lyle Riedy.

Business

- Minutes: Olivia moved and Doug seconded to accept the minutes as presented. Motion passed.
- Treasurer's Report: Mike explained points of the report. Insurance covered most of the equipment stolen at Wilson. Fuel is now listed as a separate account. John moved and Bob seconded to approve the treasurer's report. Motion carried.
- Committee assignments: Lyle explained that the purpose of the committees is to expedite business in these three major areas between regular quarterly Board meetings. Each committee will consist of three or more members, one of which will be the President. After discussion the following assignments were made:
 - Trail in a Box – Mike, Terry and President Lyle
 - Equipment Purchases – Neil, Treasurer Mike, and President Lyle
 - Events and membership activities – John, Russ, President Lyle, and KTC member at large

Equipment purchases:

- Jim discussed the need for a large pull-behind mower for restoring and maintaining trails at Pomona and John Redmond, as well as other areas. Mike proposed looking into filing a grant for this equipment.
- Jim also asked about replacing his current chainsaw, which has stopped working. Jim moved and John seconded a motion to purchase a 16" Stihl 271 and that Mike make the purchase. Motion passed.
- Lyle led discussion regarding replacement of the quad that was stolen from the state park in October. Olivia moved and Russ seconded a motion to allow Lyle up to \$3,000 total, including the \$2,000 received from insurance, for the ATV replacement. The motion carried.
- Cabela's grant update: Mike was contacted regarding a possible grant from Cabela's. He quickly put together a proposal for Clinton and Perry trails. The Perry proposal was accepted. The grant offers \$2,000 to purchase a DR mower and Cabela's will donate a trailer. John moved and Olivia seconded to accept Cabela's offer of a \$2,000 check to be used for the purchase of a DR mower and the trailer donation. Motion passed.

- Trail in a Box update: Mike reported that the #1 trailer is currently at Manhattan with Aaron Apel and work is continuing at the Fort Riley project. The #2 trailer that had been in Fredonia is now in Lola where they are building trail in a city park. The #3 trailer moved from Baldwin to Pomona, where trail is being built in cooperation with the Corp. The operations budget for the TIAB project is \$2,500 for this year and \$2,500 for next year, much of which is used for insurance.

- GetOutdoorsKansas.org update: Mike said that the website officially launched on November 19, 2014. The events calendar is active and functional. A media campaign is in the offing to make the public aware of the website. Work is progressing on the trail feature. KTC (via Mike) and KDWP have made large contributions in kind. Board members had many positive comments regarding the website.

- Insurance update: In regard to the recent insurance monies received for stolen equipment, Mike shared that insurance pays the amount the equipment is insured for, even if the real value is more. The Board discussed various ways to make equipment more secure. Mike also recently learned that state parks no longer cover any possible volunteer injuries on work days under Workers Comp. The Board agreed that a volunteer waiver form needs to be developed.

- Next meeting: The first quarter meeting is proposed to be near the end of February, details to be announced.
- Olivia moved and John seconded that we adjourn. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 2:59 PM.
Susan Haynes, Secretary



Wilson Lake – Switchback on Switchgrass Trail

It's Time to Join or Renew Your KTC Membership to Support Kansas Trails in 2015!

Our annual memberships begin in January so we hope you will join or renew your membership in the KTC for 2015. Memberships and donations make it possible to do all the work the KTC and our volunteers do every day of the year. If you would you like to support Kansas trails you can make a donation to the KTC Friends of the Trail program. ***Thanks to the Burnet's and the Trail Nerds for their continued generous Friend of the Trail donations!*** While our on-line PayPal membership feature is easy to use, if you would rather send a check, please fill out and print the on-line membership form and mail it to: KTC, PO Box 695, Topeka, KS 66601-0695. Click here to join the KTC and support your favorite trails: <http://www.kansastrailsCouncil.org/join/ktc-membership-sign-up/>

Thanks Cabela's!

We would like to thank Tanner Tenbrink for Cabela's generous trail grant to support the Perry Lake Hiking Trails. Cabela's donation of a trailer and \$2,000 for a new DR mower is greatly appreciated. Our Perry Lake trail team will put this to good use this spring! We really appreciate your support of area trails.

Board of Directors Change

Doug Palen (Glen Elder) has resigned from the Board after serving for many years. We wish Doug the best as family and farm require more of his time and thank him for his dedication to the KTC and service on the Board of Directors. His counsel and insights will be missed!