



TRI-STATE TRAIL VISION VOICE

Bee Branch Railroad Culverts (Tunnel) Project to Start in April

by Kirstin Hall, City of Dubuque Bee Branch Communications Specialist and the City of Dubuque Engineering Department

The Bee Branch Trail will have a new element to enjoy by 2021. A tunnel traveling under the Chicago Pacific Railroad at Garfield Street will connect the Upper Bee Branch Trail to the Lower Bee Branch Detention Basin Trail. The contract has been awarded, and construction will start this spring.

The Railroad Culverts Project is a critical phase of the larger Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project and, once completed, will increase the flood mitigation system’s capacity to protect the area from a 75-year rain event to a 500-year rain event. The railroad culverts project involves using micro-tunneling methods to install six 8-foot diameter culverts under the Canadian Pacific Railway (CP) tracks along Garfield Ave. This will allow stormwater to drain more efficiently from the Upper Bee Branch Creek to the Lower Bee Branch Creek and 16th St. Detention Basin.

When the City sought public input on the design of the Bee Branch Creek improvements, residents voiced a desire for pedestrian passage under the railroad tracks. The proposed plans and specifications include the City assuming ownership of the two existing Bee Branch box culverts and utilizing them for both flood control and as a hike/bike path under the railroad tracks when creek levels permit. This will allow for the direct connection of the trail systems associated with the lower and upper sections of the Bee Branch Creek. (Cont’d p. 2)

Bike to Work Week Activities May 13-19, 2019

Once again Bike to Work Week is coming up May 13-19th, 2019. In preparation for the week, the Bike Coop is holding two Bike Rodeos for students: one is on May 7th from 3:30-5 pm. at Audubon Elementary and the other is May 10th from 3:30-5 p.m. at Bryant Elementary. School students can ride their bikes to school, get a safety check-up, and receive front and rear lights for visibility. An obstacle course will be set up to build skills, and students can visit with Dubuque Police Officers on safe riding techniques.

Prepare for Bike to Work Week!

Upcoming Events



BEE BRANCH BIKE RODEO

May 7 Bee Branch Bike Rodeo Tue 3:30 PM Audubon Elementary School Dubuque, Io... Interested

- May 10 Bryant School Bike Rodeo Friday 3:30 p.m. Bryant Elementary

For the adults, during the week of May 13-19th, try to ride, walk, or do a combo Jule bus/bike ride (see the poster below) to your place of work as many days per week as possible.



Join us during Bike to Work Week!



Ride to a Jule bus stop



Use the bike rack & ride The Jule FREE



Finish your commute on your bike



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Nature Reclaims the Proving Grounds

by Dianne Koch

Despite cooler temperatures, the White Pine Chapter of the Sierra Club sponsored a March 30th hike at the new Dubuque County Conservation park opposite the John Deere factory. The Proving Grounds, as it is called, was the site of testing and development for the John Deere Dubuque Works Factory. Thus the products “proved” themselves or not as the engineers would test the durability of their machinery. Later, John Deere built a new proving grounds northwest of the factory and in 2018 donated the southwestern parcel to the County.

This new facility will be hosting 7.5 miles of mountain bike trails paid for by Tri-State Mountain Bike Riders (TMBR), an advocacy group that has raised money, brought in trail designers, and maintains trails at Asbury’s Cloie Creek Park, Interstate Power Park on Davenport Road, and now the Proving Grounds Park on West John Deere Road. Other state and local grants will cover costs with construction slated to be finished by the end of summer 2020. Bathrooms, a pavilion, signage, and a blacktopped parking area have already been built. In addition, an 18-hole disc golf course is planned.

With the Sierra Club, we found easy hiking as wide grass trails led from the parking lot up to a T-intersection at the top of the bluff. Going west, we saw how the ground was bulldozed and leveled for the John Deere testing. A rim of soil outlined the edge of the bluffs. Grasses filled the open areas, and trees lined the bluffs. As it was early spring yet, the leaves had not popped out, thus wide vistas could be seen from the bluff edges through the trees. Heritage Pond lay west of the first vantage point, and the Little Maquoketa Indian Mounds lie to the northwest. Later, we hiked to a northerly spur trail that was relatively level and looked northeast towards the John Deere factory, the flooded Mississippi, and Wisconsin. Eventually the main trail looped back to the T-intersection.

Going east, another loop trail, although smaller, took us to another spur trail north that ended at the remnants of a television tower for a family that lived behind the bluff and had poor television reception. Back on the eastern loop, the bluff circled around offering good glimpses of the factory, river, and opposite shore through the trees. These vistas are better seen now before the leaf foliage obscures the views.

Imagining this as a mountain bike park as well as a Frisbee golf course is easy with the open spaces, hills, and tree-lined bluffs. Numerous trails cut through the land already. This 137-acre park has much potential and shows how well land can recover after an industrial use. The burr oaks, open prairie, and birds make this a worthy place to visit. The County Conservation staff will be sponsoring a free hike from 1-3 p.m. on May 19th. Consider coming to learn more.

Thanks go to Jim Fahrion and Dick Worm, organizers of this Sierra Club outing.



Proving Grounds
County Park:

May 19th free hike
from 1-3 p.m.

Future home for
mountain biking
and disc golf

Picnic and hiking

Paved parking and
new bathrooms

The Challenge of Biking in a Car-Dependent Community

by Renee Tyler, City of Dubuque Transportation Services

Dubuque is a community rich in culture, located in the Driftless region of the Midwest. Unlike many areas of Iowa, our city is hilly, and some of our streets are narrow, leaving us with very few bike paths and lanes to encourage the use of bikes as an alternate option for travel throughout the city. As the Director of Transportation for the City of Dubuque, I grapple daily with the challenge of promoting bike riding as more than just a pastime in the world of transportation management.

So what can we do to turn the concept of walkable communities, high-quality bike lanes, and a strong public transportation system from a host of pipe dreams into attainable goals that will make our region more sustainable, healthier, and more equitable?

Let's look at some fun options that will incentivize people to ride bikes. Beginning with organizing a walk audit, this audit allows bike enthusiasts to band together to assess street conditions. Your audit can assist in identifying bike lanes and areas that are most suitable to build biking routes throughout the city.

Engage your council members, and invite them out to meet with you. Have a plan of action that is workable.

Encourage your employer to use incentives to get people to bike to work. These incentives can include free lunch, monetary stipends, gym memberships, etc. Don't forget to ask for bike racks at your place of employment to secure your bikes.

From the City side, I encourage you to participate in Bike to Work Week. This is the week that you can ride to work, and you have the opportunity to ride the bus back to your neighborhood for free. Your bike will ride safely on the bike rack affixed to the front of the bus. Participation in one bike to work day can garner enough support for a bike to work week, month, or when weather permits year-round. Who knows? You might just like the concept of riding your bike and riding the bus!

Our community is a great community. We are constantly looking for ways to improve and maintain the wonderful quality of life that is offered here. In order for me to do my part in supporting this initiative, I need your help, your input, and your support. Please share your ideas and suggestions with me. My contact information is: Rtyler@cityofdubuque.org and my office number is 563.589.4341.



Take a Hike:

- Along the Flood Wall from 16th Street to The Yardarm
- Along the River Walk
- Through the Millwork District
- Mines of Spain trails
- Swiss Valley trails
- Whitewater Canyon southwest of Bernard
- Maquoketa Caves State Park
- Pohlman Prairie near Durango

Bike Commuting

by Dianne Koch

Spring is finally here after a brutal six weeks of winter from mid-January to the end of February. March was colder than normal but spring finally started showing itself by the middle of the month. I was back commuting to Senior High School where I work by March 18th.

This is the tenth year I've been commuting to school. My self-imposed rules are simple: 1) no wet, icy, or snowy streets; and 2) it has to be above 20 degrees including the windchill. I live 1.9 miles from school, so I scouted out the flattest route because my bookbag can easily add another 5-10 pounds of weight. I live south of Washington Middle School, so Grandview is easy. But since Grandview narrows after Allison-Henderson Park, I take Custer Street for a block, and then Auburn, Delaware, and Avoca. I come back to Grandview at the Avoca-Rosedale corner, go up to Clarke Drive, and ride over to the Nora Parking Lot bike racks.

I use my only bike, a Trek 2.1 Women's Specific Design 2009 model. I wear my regular clothes but I do use ankle biter Velcro straps to keep my pants legs from getting greasy or eaten by the gears.

I lock my bike to the rack via a large U-clamp lock that I keep on the school rack. I carry in my helmet, bike straps, headband, front light, and bike computer to store in my classroom during the day.

In cold weather, defined as windchill below 35 degrees, I wear my winter coat and a headband under my helmet. To be honest, I am warmer biking than riding in my car where the heater takes forever to warm up. Between 35-50 degrees, I usually go with a spring jacket but keep the headband.

In addition, I invested in strong head and rear (USB rechargeable) lights to cut through the dark mornings and be visible to other motorists.

My pedals have a dual combination function where they clip on one side and are flat on the other side. Initially designed as trainer pedal for those transitioning to clip pedals, these work perfectly for commuting. I can wear regular shoes to work using the flat side and flip it around when I am using my clips for longer recreational rides.

Regarding weather, I check weather reports for 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. If either time has a 70% prediction of rain or higher, I drive. But with anything less than that, I've beaten the odds for the most part. Okay, I've gotten a bit wet a couple of times on my way home but not soaked. Not bad for ten years of bike commuting from March to December. The wind is really the most aggravating factor, but most days are joyful riding days.

As Bike-to-Work Week is coming May 13-19th, it is a good time to consider riding one, two, or maybe all five days. Making it a priority was easy for me, and it's turned into a great healthy habit; it impresses the high school kids (so I literally have "street credibility"), it efficiently uses 17-18 minutes of time exercising every day that I would normally be sitting in the car, and it racks up the miles. I gain nearly 20 miles per week riding from mid-March to early December.

Consider biking or walking to work to create a new habit that can truly be rewarding. Feel free to contact me at diannekoch@msn.com if you have any questions regarding bike commuting.

Canoe and Kayak Trails and Accesses:

Mississippi River from A. Y. McDonald Park to Massey Marina (various take-out points along the way)

Mines of Spain Canoe Launch

John Deere Marsh Boat Ramp (behind John Deere on River Road)

City of Galena Boat Ramp (under the Highway 20 Bridge), Galena, Illinois

Sunfish Lake Ramp at O'Leary's Lake in Wisconsin

Banfield Bridge on Indian Creek Road west of Dickeyville, Wisconsin

