



Bangor/South Haven Heritage Water Trail



January 2010

First Heritage Trail Sign Mounted on Dykman Bridge!

The first signs to guide paddlers along the Bangor/South Haven Heritage Water Trail have recently been installed, thanks to a grant from the South Haven Community Foundation. SHCF Executive Director, Jim Marcoux joined B/SH HWT A President, John Mitchell under the Dykman Bridge in South Haven to celebrate the new signs. SHCF sponsored the Dykman Bridge signage. Installation of these first signs marks the fulfillment of 5 years of work by B/SH HWT A. We are a Water "Heritage" Trail, dedicated to celebrating the uniqueness of the

Bangor/South Haven area – aquatic, natural and historic. Now, as an organization, we look forward to marking other bridges along the water trail to enhance the experience of those paddling any portion of the Water Heritage Trail. Like the bridge sign, additional signage on bridges along the trail will give paddlers historic insight relevant to the South Branch of the Black River, mileage and access information. Anyone interested in sponsoring a sign can call John Mitchell at 269-491-4689.



South Haven Community Foundation Executive Director, Jim Marcoux and B/SH HWT A President, John Mitchell under the Dykman Bridge in South Haven with the new sign.

Thanks !

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B/SH HWTA 2009 YEAR END REPORT

Considering the high-water events from last winter, spring and summers and considering the fact that we had to redo some stretches of the River twice, I think we did OK on the river pathway this year.

We only canceled one of the eleven volunteer workdays and that was canceled because we did not want to disturb the salmon fisherman. The other ten days, 128 volunteer hours, were spent opening about 17 of the 21 miles of river pathway. Thank you to all the volunteers who accomplished this fantastic work!

Membership held steady at about 120 for the year with some new memberships coming in, while some let their membership expire. For those new members who have joined in to support and create the river pathway, Welcome and Thank You! To those whose memberships have expired, Thank you for the support you gave and hope to have you rejoin us someday. Until then we hope to see you on the river.

Fundraising was down this year but that was expected given the state of the economy. Raffle sales were good. People still want to win the kayak or one of the other fine prizes we had donated. Adopt-A-Jam donations from Sue Hale, Tom and Lynn Guerne and Sharon Harmsworth from South Haven, William and Sharon Myrkle from Bangor and Beta Sigma Phi-kappa Theta of South Haven along with the generous \$1000 grant from Entergy Power of Covert, MI help support the professional chain saw crew hired to cut the large difficult trees and jams that blocked the river. An unexpected gift came in the mail from the Albemarle Corporation of South Haven in the amount of \$4000. (see separate article). A revised river map was completed and is for sale for a \$3.00 donation. A special Thank You to these supporters!

From the grant money received from the South Haven Community Foundation, we placed the first two heritage water trail signs on the Dyckman Bridge and more heritage signage is under way from other organizations.

A new Power Point program by Don Harrell and was presented to the Bangor Round Table, City of South Haven DDA, The Great Lakes Adventure Club, The Two Rivers Coalition, Michigan Flywheelers Museum, and the Geneva Township Board Meeting with some wonderful returns of interest.



We attended the South Haven Forth of July Art Fair, Blueberry Festival, Labor Day Craft Show, and the Michigan Flywheelers Museum Antique Show. At those events we sold raffle tickets and told folks about B/SH HWTA - who we are and how they can help. Thank you to all of these organizations for letting us spread our message. If you know of a club or organization or government body that we could present our message to, please let us know.

All this made for a very fine year for B/SH HWTA.

Now - this coming year: Mother Nature has given us more work to do already. There are reports of new jams being created and we sure would like to start in the **Think Spring!** "wilderness section" next year.

"Let the River Be Your Guide"

John Mitchell
President
B/SH HWTA

Paddle/Bike/Hike Event a Success



Launching from the Maritime Museum

Saturday, August 1st saw more than two dozen paddlers make a round trip up the Black River and back to the Michigan Maritime Museum. About a dozen folks opted to bicycle the Kal-Haven Trail or hike around the “Celery Pond” nature area.

The event was a public celebration of the Black River and Paw Paw Watersheds. The celebration was jointly planned by the Two Rivers Coalition (TRC) with the South West Michigan Land Conservancy (SWMLC) and the Bangor South Haven Heritage Water Trail Association (B/SH HWTA).

TRC’s President Dave Forester’s welcome at the Michigan Maritime Museum was followed by a brief description of the organization’s goal of protecting the Black River and Paw Paw River Watersheds. Representatives of SWMLC and B/SH HWTA shared information about each organization.

Then, paddlers, bikers, and hikers departed for their planned activity. Remarkably, rain held off until mid-afternoon as everyone was safe and dry under the picnic shelter at Stanley Johnston Park overlooking the Maritime Museum for a hotdog roast and folk music.



Paddlers on the Black River



Don Harrell & John Mitchell Enjoy Refreshments

What a nice surprise.....

THANK YOU ALBEMARLE!

This last Fall, while going through the mail, we came upon a letter from the Albemarle Corporation. In the letter was a check for \$4,000 and an explanation of why it had been sent to the Bangor / South Haven Heritage Water Trail Association.

Someone that works at Albemarle submitted B/SHHWTA as a charitable organization to receive a monetary donation. This money came directly from the 125 employees at the Albemarle site in South Haven with a matching amount from the Albemarle Corporate Unit. We would like to thank each one of the 125 employees along with everyone at corporate office for this generous gift.

The Albemarle gift was received after the work in the Black River was done for the 2009 season. However, come Spring 2010, when the chainsaws are started and work in the river has begun again, this gift will be put into use. \$4,000 equals 8 days of professional chainsaw work, which is over half the amount we have budgeted for this coming year. If the Adopt-a-Jam donations come in higher than last year's donations, we could possibly make it through the entire water trail this Summer!

Albemarle and its employees have put a tremendous start to the 2010 work season.

Thank you Albemarle employees of South Haven from all the member of B/SHHWTA and the members of the surrounding communities who enjoy the river!

Annual meeting

On October 10th 2009 B/SH HWTA hosted its annual meeting and at the Peace Lutheran Church in South Haven. While enjoying coffee, cider and desserts, we listened to interesting presentations by Kevin Haight of the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy and by Al Baerren of the Two Rivers Coalition. The evening was capped off with the raffle prize drawing.

Raffle prizes and 2009 Winners!

- First Prize: Kayak & Paddle - Amy Lehman**
- 2nd. Prize, Bent Willow Chair - Abby Harrell**
- 3rd. Prize, Handcrafted Ceramic Pottery - Robert Miller**
- 4th. Prize, Wild Flower Painting - James Mitchell**



Membership Request

It has been brought to our attention that not everyone who receives this newsletter has been asked to become a member! Let's fix that!

Membership in B/SH HWTA is like becoming a member in any other non-profit organization, such as "The Nature Conservancy", "Audubon" or "American Rivers". Membership means you believe in what the organization is doing. Membership means that you are willing to help in some way.

B/SH HWTA sends out by mail over 300 "River Ramblings" newsletters with each mailing. This cost, along with printing, adds up to quite a sum. Annual Membership and renewal dues are what support this newsletter. With rising postage and printing costs, we are no longer able to provide "free" newsletters to non-members. One of the many benefits of membership in B/SH HWTA is receiving "River Ramblings".

Membership Levels:

- \$10 Student and Seniors
- \$15 Individual
- \$30 Couple/Family
- \$50 Contributing
- \$100 Supporting
- \$500 Life

Send a check payable to Bangor/South Haven Heritage Water Trail Assn and mail it to:

B/SH HWTA, PO Box 676, South Haven, MI 49090

Please be sure to include your name and full mailing address. Your *email address* would be helpful too, as we transition to email as a less expensive way to distribute news and information about the water heritage trail.

Please, if you believe in what B/SH HWTA is doing you can help, become a member, tell paddling friends about B/SH HWTA and support this great cause.

B/SH HWTA Membership Application

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone _____ e-mail address _____

Annual Membership Level (Circle One) **New** **Renewal** \$10 Student and Senior (60+)
\$15 Individual \$30 Couple / Family \$50 Contributing \$100 Supporting \$500 Life

Please return form to: B/SH HWTA, P.O. Box 676 South Haven, MI 49090

Bangor/South Haven Heritage Water Trail Association

POB 676
South Haven MI 49090

E-mail: h2o_trail@yahoo.com
<http://www.vbco.org/watertrail.asp>

Presort Standard
US Postage
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Calendar of Events

Check our website for more information on these events.

WORK DAYS

May 8th
May 22nd
June 5th
June 19th
July 10th
August 7th
August 21st
September 7

PADDLE TRIPS

September 17 (Members and guest only)

BOARD MEETINGS

Meetings are held at 7:p.m.
At the Bangor City Hall
257 W. Monroe.
All interested are
welcome to attend.
No February Meeting
March 11th
April 1st
May 6th
June 3rd
July 8th

OTHER EVENTS

BSH/HWTA Annual Meeting
October 9th