

Towpath Times



Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association

www.meccainc.org

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Walkpath Dedicated During Trails Day Ceremony

More than 30 canal trail supporters attended the dedication of a one-mile compacted stone walkpath during a National Trails Day ceremony Saturday, June 4 in St. Marys.

The trail extends north from downtown St. Marys one mile to the U.S. 33 overpass.

The Towpath Walkpath was dedicated by Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water officials in memory of Carl Chiles, a long time Canal Maintenance Superintendent of the Miami and Erie Canal.

Executive Director Neal Brady emceed the ceremony and presented opening and closing remarks concerning the efforts of MECCA and the future potential development in the canal corridor.

Dick Bartz, Chief of the Division of Water of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources commented on the great partnerships that have been created with the local organizations and governmental entities in the



St. Marys Mayor Greg Freewalt speaks at walkpath dedication.

protection and preservation of the canal corridor.

St. Marys Major Greg Freewalt discussed the future development in the canal corridor in the St. Marys community and stressed the important of building a vision for the canal and working together to achieve the desired results.

MECCA Trustee and President of the Board of Commissioners of the Heritage Trails Park District, Dave Stilwell, commented on the importance of this section of improved trail as it is also designated as the Buckeye Trail and the North Country National Scenic Trail.

Leroy Goodwin, retired Canal Supervisor and workplace friend of Carl Chiles spoke of the lessons and work techniques that were gained in his workplace experiences with Carl Chiles.

Steve Dorsten, Canal Supervisory with the Division of Water, St. Marys' office discussed the construction work of the Walkpath and how Carl Chiles influenced the protection and development of the Canal towpath trail.

Mrs. Mary Chiles, with the assistance of family members unveiled the signage designating the trail as the Carl Chiles Walkpath.



Section of the newly dedicated walkpath is still under construction.



Members of the Ohio Water Advisory Council tour the recent renovations at Lock 14.

Ohio Water Advisory Council Visits Corridor

On June 10, 2005, MECCA hosted the quarterly meeting of the ODNR, Division of Water meeting with the Ohio Water Advisory Council (OWAC).

In attendance were five of the seven members of the Council. OWAC Members are appointed by the Governor to advise the ODNR Division of Water on matters involving water related matters such as dam safety, floodplain regulations, canal lands administration and ground water management.

The meeting was conducted at the MECCA Office in New Bremen and MECCA had the opportunity to be part of the agenda and present information and plans of the numerous projects and activities in the Canal Corridor.

MECCA Trustee Steve Stilwell presented information on the development of the walkpath and trail on the Sidney Feeder extending south from downtown Sidney.

MECCA Trustee Tom Fledderjohann discussed three major projects in the New Bremen area. These included

Lock 1 North rehabilitation and restoration, Rotary Centennial Project, and Lock 2 land donation for natural park area adjacent to the Miami and Erie Canal Towpath Trail.

MECCA Trustee and President of the Heritage Trail Park District Board of Commissioners, Dave Stilwell spoke of the partnerships at Lock 14 Park and the construction of the two-mile compacted stone trail extending from Glenwood Road to Lock 14. The project is planned for completion in 2006.

MECCA Trustee and Executive Director of the St. Marys Chamber of

Commerce, Nick Van Schoyck spoke of the projects in the St. Marys and connectivity with other trail networks in this region of the state.

MECCA Volunteer and Spencerville resident, Don Wiechart discussed the condition of the canal in the Spencerville area.

The hosting of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water Staff and OWAC members included a catered lunch at the MECCA office and a bus tour of the Miami and Erie Canal from New Bremen to Deep Cut, south of Spencerville.



Ohio Water Advisory Council members at 6-Mile Creek Aqueduct.

Plans Set for Annual Delphos Canal Cleanup

The 7th Canal Cleanup is to be held in Delphos on August 20, 2005. Four organizations are coming together to coordinate this two-mile cleanup of the Miami and Erie Canal through Delphos. They are The Delphos Canal Commission Cleanup Committee, The City of Delphos, MECCA and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water.

These organizations will coordinate the efforts of the volunteers in a cleanup extending from Lock 24 in Stadium Park to Clime Street in South Delphos. Volunteers are needed and can register at 8 a.m. at the Hanser Pavilion in Stadium Park.

The cleanup begins promptly at 9 a.m. and will include trash,

litter, debris, weed, brush and tree removal.

All volunteers will receive a free t-shirt, food, and beverages. Come on out and see what a difference you can make. Bring a friend and dress appropriately including work gloves and long pants and long sleeved shirts if susceptible to poison ivy. Weed wackers and weed pullers are needed.

Major sponsors of this event are the Delphos Canal Commission, The Delphos Herald, Edward Jones Investments, The Delphos Rotary, Rita and Elmer Scherger and McDonalds.

For information contact Sue Lang at 419-695-2636.

Ohio's 126th General Assembly Honors MECCA

On National Trails Day, June 4, 2005, State Senator Jim Jordan (R-12th District) sponsored a Certificate of Honor and extended special recognition to the Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association.

The Certificate of Honor states;
On behalf of the members of the Senate of the 126th General assembly of Ohio, we are pleased to extend special recognition to the Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association on the occasion of National Trails Day, June 4, 2005.

National Trails Day is a fitting time to pay tribute to the Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association for this fine organization has achieved a praiseworthy record of service to the community. Over the years, the Association has enhanced the quality of life within the area, and through their generous contributions, its

members have earned the respect and gratitude of many.

The accomplishments of the Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association are a justifiable source of pride and an excellent reflection not only on the group itself but also on its dedicated members. We are proud to note that it is through the unflagging efforts of agencies such as this that the State of Ohio continues to grow and prosper and remains a pleasant place to live and work.

Thus with great pleasure, we salute the Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association on National Trails Day and extend best wishes for the future.

The Certificate of Honor is signed by Senator Bill Harris, President of the Ohio Senate and Senator Jim Jordan.



Glimpse From the Past

The banks of the Miami-Erie Canal in downtown Fort Loramie. Today much of the canal is no longer visible in Fort Loramie.

Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association 2005-2007 Board of Trustees

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MECCA Contact information

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Schedule of Corridor Events

- Auglaize County Fair August 1-6, 2005
- St. Marys SummerFest August 12-14, 2005
- New Bremen German Heritage Festival August 19-21, 2005
- Delphos Canal Cleanup Event August 20, 2005
- Minster Octoberfest, September 30-October 1, 2005
- Sidney Applefest September 10-11, 2005
- Delphos Canal Days September 16-18, 2005
- MECCA Board of Trustees Meeting, September 21, 2005 7:00 p.m., MECCA Office
- Fort Loramie German Heritage Days September 23 24, 2005

MECCA Wish List

The following is needed for the operation of the Organization.

- Financial support for monthly operating expenses
- Stackable or folding chairs for Office
- Office Signage
- Canal Educational Display

MECCA "Thank You"

- RE/MAX Select, Barbara and Lowell Ziegenbusch - printing of the "Towpath Times" newsletter
- Eagles Lodge, St. Marys - Operation funding support.

Exploratory Excavation Conducted at Lock 1

On Friday July 15, 2005 Representatives from the Village of New Bremen, the New Bremen Historical Association, MECCA and the engineering firm of Mote and Associates were on hand to observe an exploratory excavation east side of Lock 1 in New Bremen.

The excavation was completed to gain additional information on the construction methods utilized when the lock structure was rebuilt in 1910. The original lock built around 1845 was constructed of massive wood timbers with extensive wood foundation and bracing.

The replacement lock structure was built with concrete. The use of a concrete mixture was relatively new at the time when this lock structure was rebuilt.

Several wood timbers of the original lock were located and identified as the foundation and bracing of the pre-concrete lock structure. These timbers are currently being cleaned and restored by the New Bremen Historical Association. The Association members plan to make the wood timbers available for public display in the near future.

Pumpkin Weigh-Off Planned

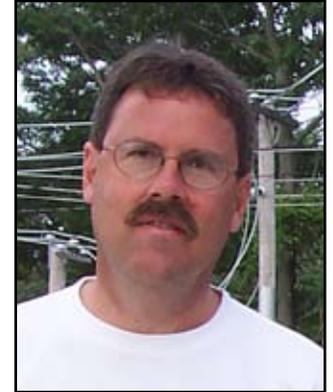
The New Bremen Community and the New Bremen Giant Pumpkin Growers have teamed up to bake the world's largest pumpkin pie.

The October 8th record attempt will be held in conjunction with the 2nd Annual New Bremen Giant Pumpkin Weigh-Off at the Crown Pavilion, located adjacent to the Miami and Erie Canal.

A Pumpkin Pancake Breakfast will be available from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. and various other foods including pumpkin specialties will be available during the event. Games and air rides will provide a fun time for the kids. The giant pumpkin weigh-off starts at 3:30 p.m. with the official weighing of the world record pie soon after. Live entertainment will be provided from 7:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. in the Pavilion. Don't miss this unique opportunity to see, eat and be part of the world's largest pumpkin pie.

MECCA Board Member Spotlight

"I grew up in Troy, Ohio but never really understood the uniqueness of the Miami Erie Canal. As with most people, we only appreciate the historic assets when you get a little older.



Steve Stilwell

"Between 1984 and 1993, I served two communities in Michigan and while there worked on a number of lineal paths, boardwalks, vacated railroad, etc., all designed to celebrate man made and natural assets as well as providing handicapped accessible linkages between neighborhoods and communities. The improvement of the Sidney Feeder of the Miami Erie Canal provides an opportunity for me to mix my personal interest with my professional responsibilities and work with a number of community-minded partners to make a lasting contribution to the area. I look upon my work with MECCA as a decade long challenge of working with the interests of both public and private entities toward a wonderful community goal."

Steve Stilwell is the City Manager of the city of Sidney. Prior coming to Sidney, he held similar positions at the city of Big Rapids, Michigan and the village of Elk Rapids, Michigan. He is a board member at large for the Miami-Erie Canal Corridor Association.

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIVING TO MECCA

Many people consider making charitable contributions for income tax purposes. Remember, MECCA is a tax-exempt entity and contributions to it are tax deductible. Contributions can be in cash or "in kind". Appreciated stock can be given to a charity and the donor gets a charitable deduction for the fair market value of the stock on the date of the gift. If you are considering charitable gifts please consider a contribution to MECCA to help it continue promoting the historic canal corridor.

Miami Erie Canal Corridor Association (MECCA) Membership/Donation Form



Please check membership or donation level desired

\$10 Individual..... _____ \$20 Family..... _____

\$50 Sponsor..... _____ \$100 Partner..... _____

\$250 Corridor Partner..... _____

One-time tax deductible contribution of..... _____

Total amount enclosed..... _____

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ email _____

Clip and Mail This Form to: MECCA • P.O. Box 722 • St. Marys, Ohio • 45885

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