



* Volunteer Profile - Bill Boardman

Trails 2000 is an excellent organization for folks who love to live their lives under open sky. Whether you run, hike, bike or horseback ride, all of these activities are perfect answers to the question, "how can I spend less time on the couch?"



For many of us, Durango's treasure trove of trails is THE reason we live here, offering a place to wander in the high country during the flower shows of July, cruise along an aspen-lined singletrack covered

with a million gold coins, or dip in a cool creek on a hot day. For many people, these opportunities happen only two weeks each year. We can enjoy them right after work, since some of our country's most beautiful mountain paths are just past our backyards.

Volunteering for Trails 2000 is a well-spent Wednesday. I'm out on the trails a lot so I feel that what I put back into them is a solid investment in what makes Life Good. To make a switchback sweeter by taking out a wheel/ankle eating rut, all you have to do is grab a pulaski and some water.

I also love the people. It's a wonderful bunch to hang out with on trailwork days. Everyone there does an outstanding job of helping the Great Outdoors. Thanks to Bill Manning & Mary Monroe for being great caretakers of Colorado's crown jewels. I look forward to future days in the dirt!

At Nature's Oasis or on the trail, Bill Boardman can't be missed on one of his multi-colored bikes with glow-in-the-dark tires. He is an integral volunteer, always helping recruit volunteers and coming up with trail ideas. Thanks, Bill!



* I.C.E.

Durango Nature Studies reminds us that along with lots of water, good hiking shoes and sunscreen, it's now common to carry a cell phone into the backcountry. And, even when we aren't in the backcountry, an I.C.E. (In Case of Emergency) number is an important contact to have programmed into your cell phone. If you are in an accident or are taken to the hospital while unconscious, a rescue worker often looks at your cell phone contacts to notify someone of your condition. If the rescue worker sees I.C.E., he or she knows to call that number first. So, even if your spouse, partner, or friend is already entered as a contact, be sure to add him or her as an I.C.E. contact as well.



Shout Outs! *

As a volunteer organization, we're dependant on the community to help us out. And help you have. A BIG Shout Out of appreciation to the following:

- Ed and Patti Zink, and Waterfall Ranch for their help with horsepack on the Colorado Trail.
- Jeff Watson and the Nature's Oasis crew for feeding us fine, healthy style food "out-there-in-the-middle-of-the-Colorado Trail".
- The US Forest Service Trail Crew for their help on the bridge project.
- The Finney/Ogier/Sinton/Oswald crew for a great fundraiser party with Ralph Dinosaur!



And, make sure to thank the Kanakuk Camp for all of their help on the Dry Fork/Hofheins connect! These hard-working kids donated 925 hours on Memorial Day - we loved their fantastic attitudes and dedication.

Thank you, thank you!

The Wall's Gulch Bridge is IN!

You may remember the Animas flowing at around 8000 cfs last fall? Well, all that rain knocked the bridge at Wall's Gulch on the Colorado Trail, originally installed by the Forest Service in 1991, right out from its gabion basket supports.

The bridge weighs 15,000 pounds and its repair required that all 18 of the gabion baskets be emptied and rebuilt, and then the bridge disassembled and put back on the baskets before being re-installed. Conservatively, this work required lifting 40 tons of rock.

Twenty-two brave volunteers made their way to camp on the trail for the weekend, with the intention of getting the project started so that it could be completed in 10 days. Apparently, these are very motivated volunteers – they completed the job in 48 hours.

Here's how we got it done:

6 a.m.: Meet at the Rec Center for a shuttle up to the top of Junction Creek Road at Champion Venture mine, courtesy of Fort Lewis cycling phenom Alex Howard. Breakfast is catered by Katri McFee and the Twilight Café (located at the Tech Center).



Left to Right: Wayne and Sue Caplan, Roger Struss, Katri McFee, Scotty Thompson, Mary Monroe, Connie Wian, Ted Comptom, Tracey Powers, Daryl Crites, Richard Speegle, Moira Compton, Matt Rayes, Ed Zink, Mark Smih, Bill Boardman, Bob Rule, Mark Rosenthal, Matt McFee, Brian Arndt, Don Kelly and Don Cook.
Not pictured: Jana Dietrich, Jim Nichols, Allen McCaw



6:30 a.m.: We're on the road!

8:00 a.m.: Unload bikes, people and bags at the Colorado Trail camp. Ed Zink picks up all camping gear and brings it in by horsepack, and the rest of the crew mountain bikes or hikes in.

10:30 a.m.: We arrive at the worksite, approximately 3 1/2 miles south of High Point on the way to Gudy's Rest.

11:00 a.m.: Eat snacks and change shoes. Crew A begins rock hunting in the river. Crew B begins building gabion baskets, wire baskets about five feet wide and three feet high sewn together with more wire.

1:00 p.m.: (Cue Gunsmoke Music.) Ed Zink and Don Cook come down the trail with our bags and our LUNCH. After yummy organic turkey and ham from Nature's Oasis, we're set to continue our work.

5:00 p.m.: 10 gabion baskets are completed.

USFS Engineer Allen McCaw left for the night to tend to his farm. I joked that the bridge would be back in place when he hiked back in on Sunday. His response: "I would be the happiest man in the world if you finished this project by Sunday morning. In fact, I'll pick up donuts for you."

Apparently, he didn't know us that well. Never wave a challenge like that out there—you might get what you ask for. And have to bring us donuts.

Saturday morning, we awake to the smell of cowboy coffee, tea, oatmeal with ginger and nuts and lots of great breakfast foods.

By noon we are rejuvenated by the arrival of five hearty volunteers, and the dynamics improve tremendously. We fix the tread on the switchback, move rock and sing songs while operating in overdrive. We hear the booming voice of crew leader Bob Rule telling us 'you have 30 minutes to finish the last gabion before lunch!' and all hands are on deck, both to please BR and in anticipation of another tasty organic lunch from Nature's Oasis.



Matt McFee Rides the Great Divide

I had the opportunity to compete in this year's Great Divide Race, a 2,490-mile solo, unsupported mountain bike race from Canada to Mexico. It would take 20 newsletters to tell the whole story, but suffice to say, this event was an incredible adventure.

I endured inclement weather, a bent bike frame, a roller coaster of emotions and even a visit to the hospital for dehydration that ended my race in Northern New Mexico nearly 2000 miles in.

And, there were many highlights. So many interesting and kind people along the route were quick to lend a helping hand. I was on my bike for nearly every sunrise and sunset for 19 days. I saw deer, moose, fox, coyote and more antelope than I thought possible. Between Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico, I explored some of this country's most beautiful landscapes.

What struck me most was the freedom of traveling so far on my bike with only my tent, sleeping bag, food and other essentials. It made me think long and hard about what is important in life. I thought less of material things and more about finding a nice place to sleep, a warm meal and the importance of good weather! I even had trouble re-entering to normal society!

Finally, I learned that I should spend less time in a car and more time traveling under my own power. That's probably a good lesson for all of us, especially with so much special country to explore right here in Durango.

The Great Divide Race is a self-supported, solo competition following the 2,490-mile Great Divide Mountain Bike Route. Traversing Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico, the demanding route features 200,000 feet of climbing along its length. Competitors carry all equipment necessary to negotiate the backcountry, restocking on food and other supplies from the small towns along the route.



Matt McFee raised over \$2500 for Trails 2000 in this amazing feat from supporters all over the country and we are grateful for his efforts!

* Continental Divide Trail Update

The 3,100-mile Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST) is truly a unique resource for the trails community. Running the spine of the Rockies from Canada to Mexico, the CDNST is largely open to bikes in non-Wilderness areas.

However, bike access to the CDNST, the country's longest shared-use trail, is now in jeopardy. The Forest Service recently released a draft rule that encourages land managers to kick bikes off existing routes, and not include them as users on future segments.

With 40 million participants, mountain biking is the second most popular trail activity in the country (Outdoor Industry Foundation, 2007). This large constituency helps lobby for public lands funding and donates nearly one million volunteer hours each year to trail construction and maintenance. Mountain bikers can be valuable partners for the CDNST by helping build and maintain trail, and by lobbying for its completion.

The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) believes that the Forest Service directive should not discriminate against bicycling on the CDNST, and wants the Forest Service to include bicycling as a central focus and purpose for the trail.

IMBA respects the ban on bicycling in existing Wilderness areas, and is not asking for access to the entire CDNST. Some non-Wilderness sections may be suitable as hiking and/or horse-only, but along 3,100 miles, there is ample room for multiple uses in most areas.

Want to get involved? Submit your written comments to the U.S. Forest Service ATTN: CDNST, P.O. Box 25127 Lakewood, CO 80225 by the deadline Friday, October 12.

Bike to Work Day Commuter Challenge Winners Announced

The First Annual Trails 2000 Commuter Challenge winners were announced in June at the annual Bike to Work Day event held on 10th and Main Street.

Challenge scores were based on percentage of participation, and included categories for large companies (more than 25 employees) and small companies (less than 25 employees).

In the large company category, Durango Orthopedic won with 64-percent participation. Lore International was the runner-up with 63-percent and First National Bank was third, with 53-percent participation.

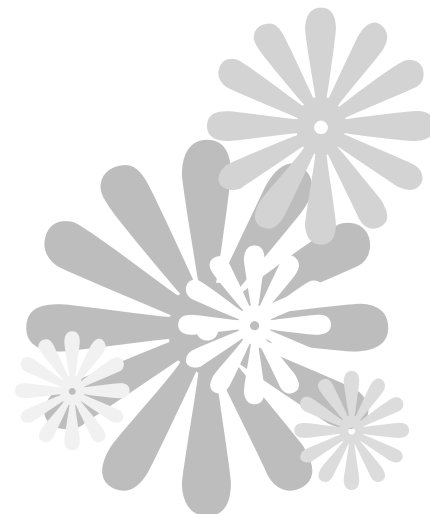
In the small company category, there was a five-way tie between Habitat for Humanity (5 of 5); Columbine Landscape (5 of 5); Sugnet Environmental (7 of 7); Southwest Conservation Corp (9 of 9); and Russell Engineering (the largest in the small companies with 18 of 18 employees riding to work).

The top awards incorporated a pedal and actual shoe mounted onto a piece of door paneling. The 5-way-tie winners were honored with awards featuring a deodorant can mounted on door panel. Ron Andrews, owner of King Cage, designed and created both awards. Durango Joe's will be providing breakfast to all the winners.

In addition, a Trek Cruiser was raffled off and won by an excited Charlie Kieneck.



"I actually do ride my bike to work every day, so this new cruiser is awesome!"



Community Column

By Nancy Berry



The Four Corners area is home to an intriguing array of landscapes and natural beauty. Access for much of the area surrounding the community is by trail, some of which have been recently built and many that are vestiges of an era that relied on trail access for simple survival.

When humans pushed their way into the fertile valleys and mineral rich mountains of the west, they created trails for transporting humans and supplies, usually by horseback and wagons. Many of the trails we travel today were created by miners, cowboys, cattle, old wagon roads and wildlife. Part of the current-day Pinkerton-Flagstaff trail was the wagon road accessing Scotch Creek and the Rico area during the late 1800's. Parts of the Pine and the Vallecito trails were stock driveways that allowed ranchers to access the high country with their cattle or sheep. Sections of the existing Needle Creek trail were once a wagon road from the ore mining operations in Chicago Basin to the railway, and pieces of the Colorado Trail were the original trail from Silverton to Rico.

Over the years, the uses of many trails in the area have changed. However, the trails that modern society uses are as important to us today as they were more than 100 years ago. Although many different types of people use the trails for many diverse reasons, a need to experience the natural world is an underlying common thread.

Trails are the unsung heroes of both historic and modern life. They provide a travel corridor for humans and animals through difficult terrain. For animals, the trails are often access routes to search for food or perhaps escape prey. For humans, trails are used to view scenery and experience solitude and clean air, important qualities of life that become more and more critical every day. Trails provide moments of tranquility and inspiration, helping us confront the reality of our daily lives when we head back down the mountain.

Trails also provide our community with a way to explore the vast amount of public lands and are one of the many reasons many of us live here. For me, it's a time of quiet, exercise, solitude and an immersion into the natural beauty of this incredible country we call home. Over the years, through work and play, I've been very fortunate to hike or ride many of the trails in the four corners area.

And if those trails could talk, what story would they tell? (Besides "drain me, drain me, and please maintain me.")

Nancy Berry works as a Recreation/Wilderness Forester for the Columbine District of the San Juan National Forest. The photo was taken on the trail up to Twin Lakes above Chicago Basin in the Weminuche Wilderness.

The Annual Volunteer Picnic

Thanks for attending our annual Volunteer picnic at the Rec Center. Our new location accommodated more foot and bike traffic, and we even had a small bike parking lot set up off the Animas River Trail.

Last year, you requested a 'greener' picnic and this year that was our goal. After much research, we were able to produce an almost zero-waste event, one of the first in Durango. We provided recycling containers for the plastic bottles and cans, but the big news was the corn plates, 100-percent recycled napkins and plates made from bagasse, a sugarcane byproduct.

As the title sponsor, First National Bank helped us make this year's event closer to town, making it easier to attend by foot, bike or carpool.

We dined on 300 tasty burritos, chips, salsa and guac from Nini's; beverages from Steamworks, Durango Brewing, Ska and Carver's (who also provided their very own Mike Hurst to serve); energy drinks like PowerAde, water and soda from Coca-Cola and delicious cookies from Bread.

And, after much searching, we even found a way to compost all the waste! Vanessa and Lance Roberts attended the picnic, helped us clean up and then took our compost out to their farm on Florida Mesa where the plates, cups and forks will compost in 45-60 days.

Dale Garland provided sound and Beth Warren from KSUT showed up to help us celebrate our volunteers, hand out swag and present the winner of the cruiser, Juli Angle, with her brand-new Trek bike.

We're already thinking about how to make next year's event even better -- let us know what you want to see in 2008!



* County Trailwork



In June, we worked on drainages along the Rim Trail with the County's Summit Program. The Summit Program provides educational, therapeutic, recreational, and related services to adolescents and their families through a collaborative effort between La Plata County Department of Health Services, Durango 9-R School District, BOCS and SWCMHC.

After lunch, Ed Zink motivates the forces to physically move the bridge. Literally. I knew the man could move mountains but prior to this weekend, I hadn't witnessed this kind of miracle firsthand. As the rest of the crew was loading the gabions, Ed had another crew take the bridge apart. When the bridge was down to the steel girders, Don Kelly authorized that it would be a safe move and 20 hearty souls stood underneath and moved in unison on Ed's command, "Ready. Move!" I can still hear his voice echoing through my head late at night, and remain in disbelief that this project was completed so quickly.

Saturday night we all share a delicious camp meal of fajitas, celebrating our hardwork before a torrential downpour continues until early morning.

By Sunday morning, the bridge is in place except for the handrails, and the crew is ready to hike or ride out.

What an accomplishment! This is a testament to the true spirit of volunteerism. I have tremendous gratitude and respect for this Bridge Crew and for all our volunteers who give up just a little bit of time to become stewards of the land, and give back to the places they love—outdoors and on the trail.



Mail this form with your check to:
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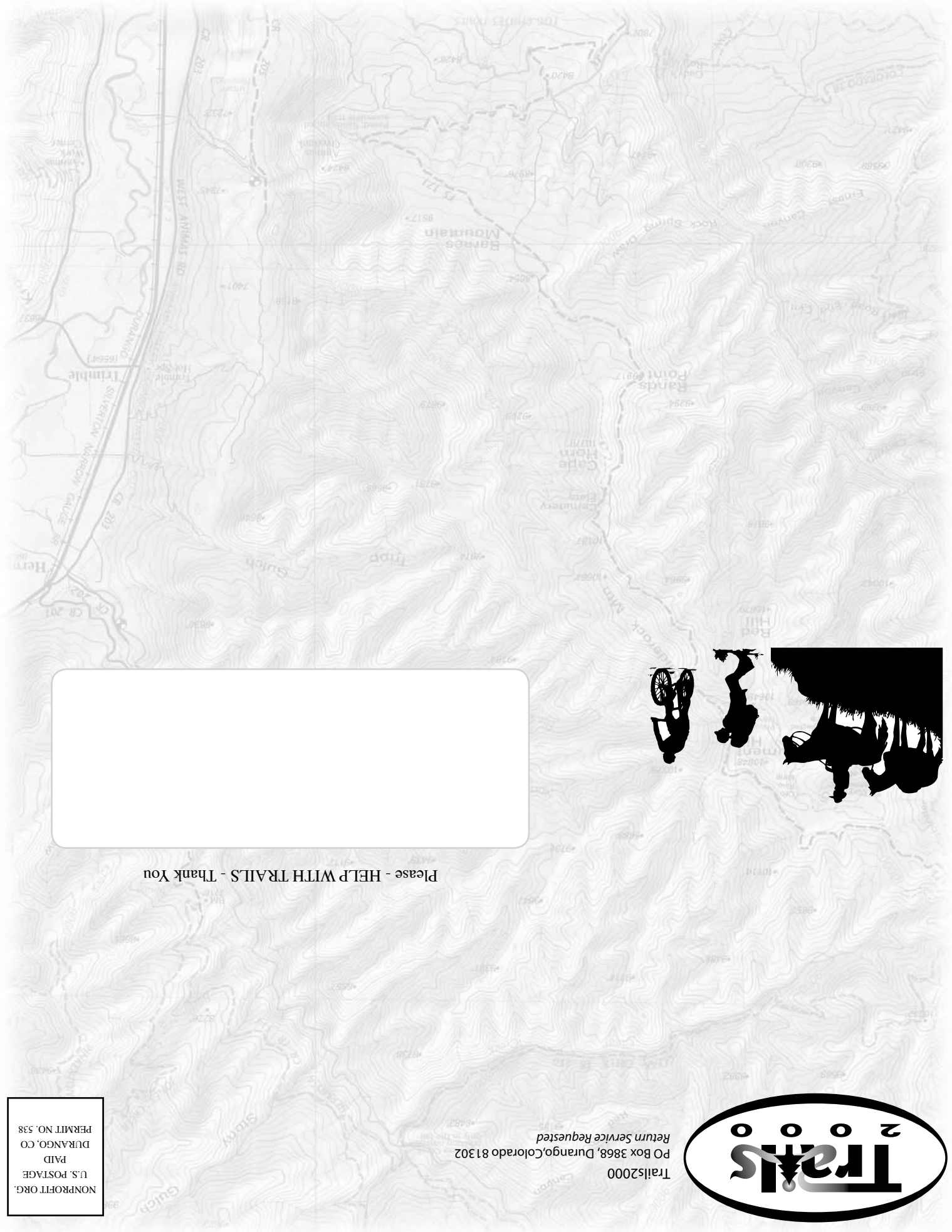
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