



Andover Fish and Game's Kids' Spring Fishing Derby offers a nice day on Highland Lake for (l-r) Ryan Barton, age 8; his niece, Emily Fisher, age 6, from Pittsfield; and Ryan's dad, Steve Barton. Photo: Bob Bussey

Kids' Spring Fishing Derby

By Amanda Gross
Beacon staff

The Andover Fish and Game Club's annual Kids' Spring Fishing Derby was held on Saturday, May 12, which turned out to be a beautiful day for 112 upbeat kids. This is the most participants AF&G has ever had for either the Spring or Ice Derby. Ninety-eight trout

were caught.

The longest trout trophy went to Marie Kendrick, the second longest to Patrick Barton, and the third longest to Jason Thompson. The trophy for total length of all fish caught went to George Barton. The trophy for the longest non-category fish, a sucker, went to Monica Newton.

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Friends of the Northern Rail Trail

By Lindy Heim, Charles Martin, and Myra Mayman

Friends of the Northern Rail Trail

The Friends of the Northern Rail Trail in Merrimack County (FNRT) has a lot to boast about since its founding in 2004. Over three miles of smooth trail have been completed from Potter Place to East Andover at Switch Road in the last year, and funding to complete the Danbury to Potter Place section is approved and construction planned for 2010. Additional funding has been raised to extend the trail to East Andover.

Skiers and snowmobilers used the trail all winter. Now that the snows are gone, folks can be seen bicycling, running, riding horseback, and walking their dogs. Everyone celebrates this re-dedication of the old Northern Railroad to modern year-round uses.

Two events coming up on June 19 will focus on trail plans and the history of the railroad.

On Tuesday, June 19, at noon at the Wilmot Community Association's red barn building in Wilmot Flat, Charles Martin will talk about FNRT's plans for extending the rail trail through Wilmot and Danbury at the WCA's monthly luncheon. Charles is the Treasurer of the Friends of the Northern Rail Trail and author of *New Hampshire Rail Trails*, to be published in 2008. Reservations can be made by calling Kate at 526-4540.

Also, that evening at 7 PM the Friends of the Northern Rail Trail will hold its annual meeting in the Community Center in Danbury. Railroad historian Kenneth Cushing from Grafton will speak about the Northern Railroad. His talk will address why and how the railroad was built and what it was like when the Northern Railway served our area carrying passengers and freight from Boston to Montreal. There will be time for questions and answers.

Ken grew up in Malden, Massachusetts, where he was an avid fan of model railroads. He moved to Grafton in 1952 and has lived there since. He currently operates the Wild Meadows Auto Body shop in Grafton while furthering

his passion for history on evenings and weekends.

In 1992, Ken authored *Isinglass, Timber, and Wool*, a 398-page history of the town of Grafton. For the past four years he has been researching and developing a book on the history of the Northern Railroad.

In addition to the guest speaker, there will be an election of officers and review of Northern Rail Trail business. The meeting will be held June 19 from 7 PM to 9 PM at the Danbury Community Center on High Street, just north of the intersection of Route 4 and Route 104. Refreshments will be served.

Other news from FNRT includes:

Tom Frantz and Marilyn Paige of The Village House Bed and Breakfast in Sutton Mills are organizing a foot race, The Andover Fourth of July Firecracker 5K, as part of Andover's Fourth of July celebration. It will start at 9 AM at Blackwater Park. Its route is entirely on the rail trail.

The Andover Fourth of July Committee awarded FNRT a grant of \$500 for prize money at its recent meeting.

There will be a Clean Up and Rail Trail Walk on Saturday, June 2, at 9 AM starting at Blackwater Park. The event is open to all.

We are currently working to identify a municipal manager for our \$206,000 Transportation Enhancement grant, awarded a year and a half ago. The grant project is to extend the rail trail 8.3 miles from Potter Place to the Danbury town garage. Meetings have taken place with the Danbury and Andover Selectmen and Merrimack County to inform them of our progress and to garner support. A meeting with the Wilmot Selectmen is being planned.

Pecco Beaufays, Innkeeper of the Highland Lake Inn, has agreed to head an effort to connect with the New Hampshire tourism industry. As a member of the Tilton Rotary Club, he arranged for Charles Martin to tell the Club about our plans.

Alex Bernhard reported on meeting, along with Bob Ward, Charles Martin, and Myra Mayman, with President Keith Laughlin of the national Rails to Trails Conservancy. We requested that RTC sponsor a state-wide meeting of rail trail groups in the fall.

The Blazing Star Grange in Danbury has contributed \$265, the proceeds from its recent Pot Roast Supper at the Grange Hall, to our efforts. FNRT Board member Phyllis Taylor and member Donna Sprague of the Huntoon Farm in Danbury were key to this effort.

Craig and Lindy Heim, owners of the Take It For Granite Bed and Breakfast, were elected to the FNRT Board of Directors.

A subcommittee is meeting about signage, aiming to ensure uniform signage on both the Grafton and Merrimack sections of the Northern Rail Trail.

To learn more about the trail, visit FNRT.org.

Cooks Wanted

Tracy Merriman, the *Beacon's Food, Friends, and Merriment* columnist, is looking for recipes from our readers.

Dust off those recipe files and contribute an old family tradition or a holiday favorite.

Beacon readers tell Tracy they really enjoy reading other readers' recipes!

For more info, call Tracy at 735-4198.