



# THE CRESCENT

THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

Spring 2004

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## CCCT and DPWT take on Interim Trail Issue

**On** March 9, 2004 CCCT Chair Ernie Brooks and Board Members Andy O'Hare and Wayne Phyllaier had a meeting with Montgomery County DPWT Director AI Genetti and his staff at CCCT's request. Also attending was Ms. Merle Steiner, Legislative Analyst for Councilmember Nancy Floreen. CCCT reiterated its strong interest in:

- Improving the condition of the Georgetown Branch (Interim) Trail, including **providing better access to Silver Spring communities,**
- Improving the trail surface east of Jones Mill Road, and
- Providing improved trail access at Pearl Street in Bethesda.

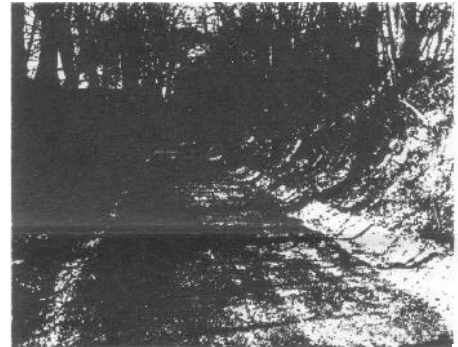
Gail Tait-Nouri, DPWT Bikeways

Coordinator, outlined efforts to provide **public access from the end of the off-road trail at Stewart Avenue to the communities of Lyttonville and Rosemary Hills.** DPWT has learned the County owns the right-of-way needed for a public pathway from the end of Stewart Avenue to Kansas Avenue, and is planning to build a pathway there. They are contacting nearby residents to get public input. Funds are available for this small project, and work could be done this season. Opening this public access would allow the Georgetown Branch Trail to be redirected off dangerous Brookville Road onto quiet neighborhood streets.

Gail also indicated DPWT will perform repairs of the badly eroded stone-dust trail surface east of the trestle. This would be an inexpensive temporary repair, since the storm-water drain system in the area is inadequate and future erosion may occur until the system capacity is expanded. CCCT asked DPWT to develop cost estimates for a range of options for a more permanent fix in this area, and DPWT agreed. (Editor's note - about 10 days after the meeting with CCCT board members DPWT did resurface the Interim Trail east of the trestle.)

A range of other concerns was shared, including the coarse gravel surface on the approaches to the trestle, erosion near mile 3.0, the hazards of the informal path to Pearl Street, and planning for extending the trail east into other Silver Spring neighborhoods. One persistent problem for DPWT has been the absence of funds for trail maintenance. In recent years there has been no money allocated in the Operating Budget for DPWT to maintain any of its trails. Most work to maintain or improve the Interim Trail must come from the Operating Budget. The Trail competes directly with roads for scarce maintenance funds, and the Trail frequently loses. Ms. Steiner indicated Councilmember Floreen is very interested in addressing this issue, and suggested the Council would be interested in hearing from the CCCT on this at the upcoming public hearings.

CCCT will continue working these issues with DPWT, and is preparing to give testimony to the County Council for Operating Budget funding to better support the CCT and the Georgetown Branch (Interim) Trail.

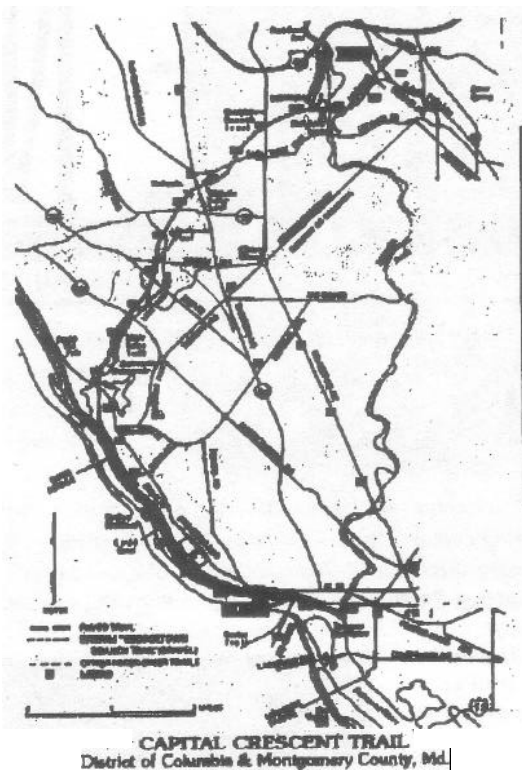


*The resurfaced trail, east of the Rock Creek Trestle.*

*Photo by Wayne Phyllaier*

**ACTION ALERT! Your Comments are needed.**

**See page 3, GU Boathouse Update**



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The Crescent is published three times a board year (June-June) by the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail (CCCT), P.O. Box 30703, Bethesda, MD 20824, phone (202) 234-4874. CCCT is a non-profit citizen's group promoting development of the 11.2 mile rail-to-trail conversion from Georgetown, D.C. to Silver Spring, MD for multi-purpose, recreational use.

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We request that all entries should be sent to the post office box listed above. Submissions should be sent via e-mail to: or by mail to CCCT.

The Montgomery County Executive has submitted his Operating Budget request to the County Council. The proposed Operating Budget falls short of what is needed to keep our CCT and Georgetown Branch (Interim) Trail in good shape.

The Montgomery County Parks Department would have a modest increase in its Parks Fund. This fund supports maintenance of the CCT from Bethesda to D.C. ones. But the increase hardly covers inflation. The CCT is starting to show some age, and needs maintenance to keep it at the good standard we enjoy. We have already lost trash pickup service on the Trail and at all of our parks. This spring we will lose the flowers alongside the Bethesda Trailhead and at the Map kiosk, to be replaced with grass or mulch. Has Montgomery County become so poor that we can only afford grass at the Trailhead to the region's signature trail, where as many as 500 persons use the trail hourly and more drive or walk by along Bethesda's most pedestrian active street?

**CONTACT:**

**Telephone: 240-777-7900**

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## Off the Beaten Trail

The C&O Canal Association is planning a through-hike of the entire 184.5 miles of the C&O Canal National Historical Park this spring. "The Hike that Created a Park" will commemorate the 50th anniversary of Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas's 1954 trek to save the canal with its scenic vistas and natural resources from being paved over to become a road.

This two-week hike will begin in Cumberland, Maryland on April 18 and finish in Georgetown, Washington, DC on May 1. Each day, a different structure, historic event or special attraction will be featured. The number of people participating in the entire through-hike is limited due to the size of available camping areas but we welcome any and all that wish to join us in hiking on a daily basis. Our schedule for the entire hike is here for anyone interested in bringing some water, lunch, good hiking boots, a camera and hiking along with us.

Day hikers are responsible for their own transportation. Access to the areas listed above is explained in several publications about the C&O Canal towpath and the official Park Service brochure about the park includes a map. **The Capital Crescent Trail runs parallel to the Georgetown portion of the towpath, from the Arizona Ave. trestle to Georgetown, mile 7.5 to mile 10.5.**

If you have any questions or need additional information, please call the C&O Canal NHP at 301-739-4200.



### **Improved access at Mass. Ave.**

*The Montgomery County Park Department has constructed a paved access ramp from the Trail, near milepost 5.0 to the sidewalk on the south side of Massachusetts Avenue. The Park Dept. has plans to construct another paved access ramp from the Trail, near milepost 3.5, to the sidewalk on the north side of Bradley Blvd. Photo at right shows this access as it exists now.*



## **Prescription: CCT, taken regularly.**

Officials at the Center For Disease Control, citing a recent Journal of the American Medical Association study, have announced that "the widespread pattern of physical inactivity combined with unhealthful diets is poised to become No. 1" to overtake smoking as the most avoidable cause of death in the U.S. [The Washington Post, front page, March 10, 2004] The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the nation's largest foundation dedicated to improving the health and health care of Americans, thinks that it has found a health remedy in our Capital Crescent Trail. Their own study affirmed the importance of regular physical activity for maintaining health, and they have cited the CCT as an outstanding example of how to design activity into our daily lives. You can see their interesting website feature on the CCT by going to our [www.cctrail.org](http://www.cctrail.org) website "News and Events" page and following the link in the announcements section.

## ***Along the Trail...***

### ***5 Years Ago:***

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission begins a trail alignment study for the CCT and the Metropolitan Branch Trail through Silver Spring.

On another front, a drinking fountain with water supplied by the Washington Aqueduct is completed near the Dalecarlia Bridge. The purchase of the fountain was funded by a friend of the Trail and installation funded by the CCCT.

### ***10 Years Ago:***

Montgomery County Councilmember Isaiah Leggett proposes the creation of a County task force to study the feasibility of establishing an interim trail between Bethesda and Silver Spring (the portion of the Capital Crescent Trail now known as the Georgetown Branch Trail).

### ***18 Years Ago:***

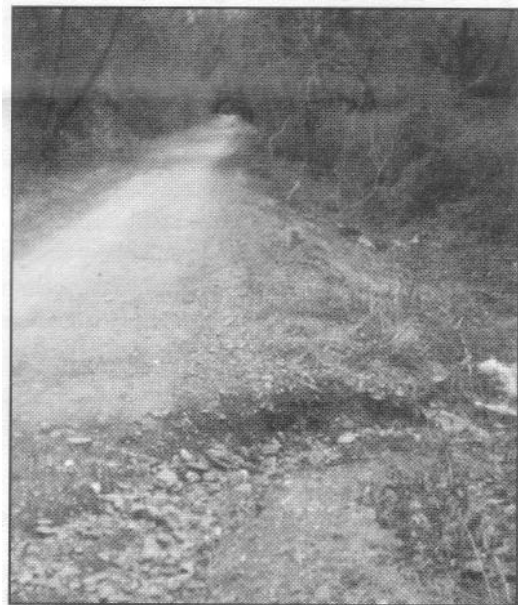
CSX Railroad files notice of abandonment of Silver Spring to Georgetown spur with the Interstate Commerce Commission.

The recently formed Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail prints its first brochure.

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*Erosion remains a problem on the trail just east of the Wisconsin Ave. tunnel.*



*The Sumner Citizens Association would like to see Montgomery County Parks provide residents with an improved access path to the CCT at Brookway Ave., near mile 5.5 on the trail. Current conditions, as can be seen in the left photo, are very rugged especially for those with children in strollers.*

## Calendar of Events

**CCCT Monthly Board Meetings**, second Mondays of each month (April 12 and May 10), starting at 7pm.

**LOCATION:** Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, 4805 Edgemoor Lane, 2nd Floor, Bethesda, one block west of Bethesda Metro, at the corner of Old Georgetown Rd. and Edgemoor.

**May 7th - BIKE TO WORK DAY:** The Washington Bicyclist Association (WABA) annual Bike to Work Day will feature several routes along the Capital Crescent Trail. There will be 'pit stops' with entertainment and refreshments for riders to gather in North Bethesda, Bethesda and Silver Spring, and several bike convoys will start from these locations and ride along the CCT or the Georgetown Branch (Interim) Trail. If you have ever considered riding to work on the CCT, this is an excellent opportunity to join a group-supported ride for your first commute. See the WABA website at [www.waba.org](http://www.waba.org) for the ride schedules and registration.

**Monday, June 14.** CCCT Annual Membership Meeting. Our annual awards presentation. Food and drink provided. Details to follow in a special mailing.

## Safety on the Trail

Parents with small children, walkers and joggers, elderly people, some of whom are hearing-impaired – These are among the trail users we hear from that tell us stories of bicyclists and rollerbladers who pass without giving any audible warning. Besides being required by law in Montgomery County and D.C., warnings are important for safety and are the courteous thing to do, appreciated by those being overtaken.

The Capital Crescent Trail has been an enormous success and with the advance of warmer weather and longer days can be very crowded with users of all sorts. Toddlers and children present a whole new set of concerns, as their actions can be unpredictable.

For the past fourteen years, the Coalition has led efforts to create this wonderful greenway and to achieve the best possible amenities to make the Trail safe and attractive. As part of our commitment, we regularly sponsor "Bells & Whistles" events throughout the year. One will be held on April 24 – Look for us at the Bethesda trailhead.



### **Trail safety and courtesy means:**

*ALL USERS should stay to the right side of the trail except when passing.*

*Passing other trail users to their left, allowing at least two feet clearance.*

*Always look ahead and behind before passing.*

*Give an **audible voice or bell warning** at least two seconds before passing.*

*Travel at reasonable speed in a consistent and predictable manner.*

*Keep all pets on a short leash (required by law).*

*Move off the trail when stopped to allow others to pass.*

*Yield to others when entering or crossing the trail.*

*Use lights and reflectors after dusk or before dawn.*



The largest project along the trail this spring may be at River Road. Construction is poised to begin for a trail rest stop and plaza on the north side of River Road, at milepost 4.5. Minkoff Company, Inc. is building this rest stop under the guidance of the Park Dept., in exchange for a lease to use a part of the trail easement to park its vehicles. The rest stop will include a map kiosk and bulletin board (donated by the CCCT), a waterfountain, benches, bike racks, a pathway to the River Road sidewalk and plantings to screen the Trail from the commercial storage building on the west side. A few parking spaces will be dedicated exclusively for trail users on all days, and more will be available to trail users on weekends. County and State permits are pending, and construction could begin in April.

**Yes! I want to help complete the Capital Crescent Trail and make it safer and more pleasant to use!**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. ....

City \_\_\_\_\_ State . Z i p \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **NEW MEMBER**

RENEWING MEMBER

**Individual Contributions:**

- ☐ \$10 Basic Individual
- ☐ \$30 Contributor
- ☐ \$60 Path Finder
- ☐ \$100 Patron
- ☐ \$200 Trail Blazer
- ☐ \$500 Benefactor

**A DETAILED FOUR-COLOR MAP OF THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL WITH HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES IS FREE TO ALL NEW MEMBERS. DONORS OF \$60 OR MORE WILL RECEIVE A CCCT T-SHIRT UPON REQUEST (IF DESIRED, PLEASE CIRCLE SIZE: S M L XL).**

**Make your tax-deductible contribution checks payable to: The Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail.  
Mail to CCCT, PO. Box 30703, Bethesda, MD. 20824.**

**Thanks for your efforts on behalf of the Trail! Here's an additional contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_.**

*Membership is good for one **year** from the 15th day of the month that you join.*

**We are an all-volunteer organization. \_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in volunteering, contact me for:**  
\_\_\_\_\_ Advocacy \_\_\_\_\_ Events \_\_\_\_\_ Trail Maintenance

We do not share our membership list with any organization except our affiliate organization, the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. CCCT is exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code and is qualified to receive tax-deductible contributions. VISIT OUR WEB SITE, [www.cctrail.org](http://www.cctrail.org), FOR ACTION ALERTS **and** TRAIL UPDATES.



***Why are these people smiling?***

*They attended last year's CCCT Annual Membership Meeting! Plan on attending this year's food and fun-fest on Monday, June 14. Look for a special mailing as the date approaches.*

CCCT  
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