

THE CRESCENT

THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

Summer 1999

Vol X No. 3

Message from the Incoming Chair

John Duggar is stepping aside as CCCT Chairperson after several years of outstanding leadership. Last year John, supported by key Board members, guided numerous successful CCCT efforts including: getting the tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue opened and providing funding for improved lighting; finding a donor for the water fountain and getting it installed; funding the fence that screens the dumpsters at Ourisman Honda; designing and ordering a map and information kiosk to be installed at the Bethesda trailhead; and getting the CCT website, www.cctrail.org, up and running. John has personally organized and led several "bells and whistles" events to call attention to safe trail behavior. As head of the interagency trail signage committee John has worked for trail signs and markings that promote safe trail use. John will continue to serve the CCCT as Vice Chair this coming year. In his new position he will continue his work toward improving trail safety and will assist me as I take on the responsibilities of Chair.



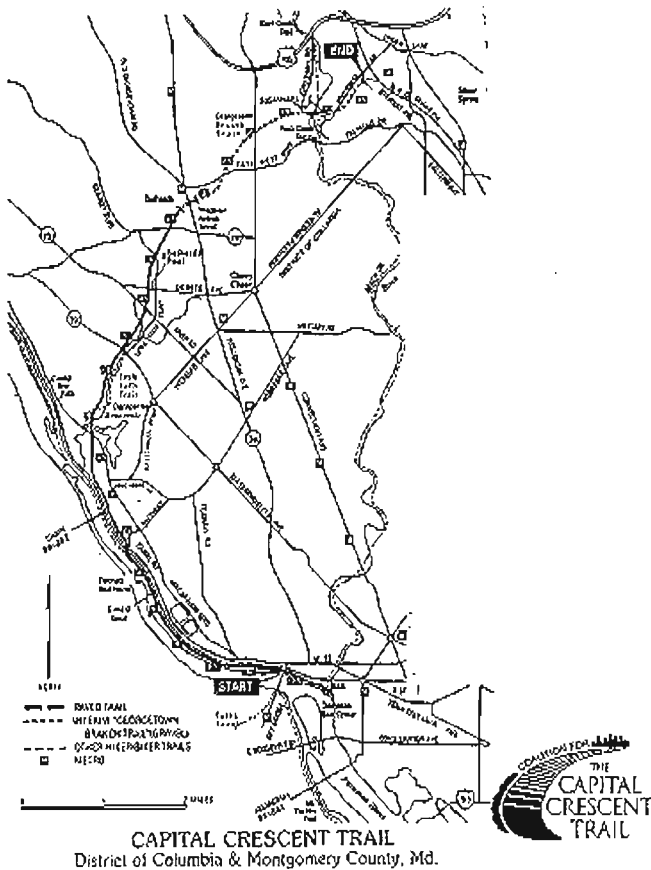
New Coalition chair Wayne Phyllaier, second from left, leading a hike last January.

The ongoing efforts of the CCCT to improve trail safety through better signage and public awareness, to provide amenities such as fountains and kiosks, and to maintain the appearance and character of the Trail will become even more important in the coming year. The Trail is changing. It is becoming ever more heavily used by all kinds of hikers, rollerbladers, and bikers. It is a joy to see the Trail become discovered by more people and to be so well used. I must confess I did not feel this way at first. As a bicyclist I did not like the growing need to slow down for other trail traffic and to regularly give warning when passing. But I do like seeing how much people are enjoying the Trail, especially the families with young children. I remember how much I enjoyed taking my own children for bike rides on other trails years ago before they could ride safely on the road. And I see

Continued on page 4

Check out the Coalition's NEW web site: www.cctrail.org





THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL
BOARD MEMBERS 1999/2000

Officers:

Wayne Phyllaier, Chair
John Dugger, Vice-Chair
Ernie Brooks, Treasurer
David Sproul, Secretary
Charlie Wellander, Asst' Treasurer

At-Large Members:

Pat Baptiste
Henri Bartholomot
John Campanile
Victoria Cordovar
Doug Engle
Scott Hall
Jennifer Longsworth
David Putnam

Editor:

John Campanile

Contributing Editors:

*John Dugger
Wayne Phyllaier
Scott Hall*

Design:

Jane Garrett

Distribution:

*Ellen Jones
Heather Anderson
Washington Area Bicyclist Assn.*

**REACH THE CAPITAL CRESCENT
BY INTERNET**

For those of you who prefer to "surf the net" you can reach the Capital Crescent Trail through Ernie Brooks: "ewbrooks@oasys.dt.navy.mil" he'll process your request.

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-rail conversion from Georgetown, D.C. to Silver Spring, MD for multi-purpose, recreational use.

@ Copyright 1999 Coalition for The Capital Crescent Trail

Reproduction of information is The Crescent for non-profit use is encouraged. Please use with attribution.

We request that all entries should be sent to the post office box listed above. Submissions should be sent on 3.5" diskette or via e-mail to john_campanile@paramount.com.

Printed by Ecoprint, Silver Spring, Md., using recycled paper and soy based ink.

Coalition Board Members for 1999-2000

The following Board of Directors has been nominated for election at the June 1999 Annual Meeting of the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail. The Board elects its officers at its first meeting after the Annual Meeting, and it is anticipated that the ones listed below will be endorsed.

Officers:		At-Large Members:	
CHAIR	Wayne Phyllaier	Pat Baptiste	Douglas Engle
VICE-CHAIR	John Dugger	Henri Bartholomot	Scott Hall
SECRETARY	David Sproul	John Campanile	Jennifer Longsworth
TREASURER	Ernie Brooks	Victoria Cordova	David Putnam
ASST. TREASURER	Charlie Wellander		

During the annual meeting, the Coalition recognized the following individuals for their outstanding contributions in 1998/99 to the Coalition and towards the overall goals of building a first-class Capital Crescent Trail:

Jane Garrett, Newsletter Design & Layout

For dedicated service to the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail in continuing support for the Coalition's newsletter, giving unstinting effort in her dedication to quality design and layout.

Ellen Jones, The Washington Area Bicyclist Association

For years of distinguished service to the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail and to the bicyclists of the Washington Area. To the Board she has provided wisdom and judgement in policy matters, and through WABA, essential expert support services.

Betty Ann Krahnke, Montgomery County Council

With appreciation for your long support of the Trail.

Phil Lerman, CCCT Board Member 1998-99

For distinguished service to the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail in developing highly effective concepts for programs and events promoting the Coalition and its funding, and carrying them out with skill and grace. His talents and wisdom have been vital to the Coalition's financial well-being.

Jud Reed, CCCT Volunteer

In appreciation of your continuing efforts in support of the Trail.

Boo Law, a long-time Coalition member and supporter, and Alex Tait, of Equator Graphics, were recognized for their contributions to the Coalition with specially produced plaques.

Special thanks to Mr. William DuVall, an accomplished railroad photographer, who narrated a slide presentation on the history of the Georgetown Branch. The 45-minute presentation focused on historic photographs of the rail line, including historic shots of Bethesda and the Glen Echo trolley line dating back to the 1940's and 50's, giving Coalition members a whole new perspective on what we now know as the Capital Crescent Trail.

Wayne Phyllaier

Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail Chair, 1999/00

Mr. Phyllaier has lived in Montgomery County for over 30 years, and has owned a home in Silver Spring for twelve years. He is a member of the Woodside Civic Association and is a member of the Transportation Subcommittee of the Silver Spring Citizens Regional Advisory Board. He recently retired after a 28-year career as a Research Structural Engineer at the Naval Surface Warfare Center (Carderock).

Mr. Phyllaier has been bicycle commuter for over 20 years. He is an active recreational cyclist and has gone on numerous bicycle tours, including Cycle Across Maryland (CAM 94), the Colorado Rockies part of BikeCentennial 1976, and self supported tours to Skyline Drive, Cumberland and Lancaster County. He has been a member of CCCT for several years, and has been active in CCCT advocacy for completing the Capital Crescent Trail into Silver Spring.

that the Capital Crescent Trail was making something exciting happen. Neighborhoods that initially were wary of having the Trail in their back yard are now embracing the Trail. Nearby businesses are seeing how the Trail has stimulated retail activity. People are discovering what a good quality trail like the CCT can give to a community and they want more trails like it. Elected officials are beginning to listen. So I am pleased to see the Trail is busy – its popularity and acceptance is our best assurance that we will be able to complete the Trail, to keep it well maintained, and to complete other connecting trails. But its popularity will challenge us to work hard to keep the Trail safe and fun to use.

The next year will be a big year for CCCT efforts to complete the Trail to Silver Spring. Several important planning activities will be completed, including Silver Spring master plans and the M-NCPPC trail implementation study. These will define the future alignment of the Capital Crescent Trail into Silver Spring and its connection to the Metropolitan Branch Trail and the Silver Spring Green Trail. The CCCT Board and members will continue to participate vigorously in these planning activities to make sure planners understand the importance of a direct, level, off-road trail for completing this critical link in the regional trail network. But we do not need to wait for completed planning documents to know that the CCT Interim Trail is in such poor condition east of Rock Creek that it is not serving Silver Spring at all. We will work now for getting a good trail crossing of Rock Creek and getting the Trail onto quieter streets in North Silver Spring. This will require getting a funding commitment in the next Montgomery County budget to open the trestle over Rock Creek Park, getting a right-of-way at Stewart Avenue for access to the Talbot Avenue Bridge and Grace Church Road, and improving the condition of the Trail surface east of Grubb Road.

I look forward to working with the CCCT Board and membership on these issues in the coming year. John Dugger enjoyed the strong support of a very hard working and capable Board, and I take the position of Chairperson with the reassurance that comes from knowing that John and the CCCT Board continue to be deeply committed to making the Capital Crescent Trail safe and inviting for everyone.

Wayne Phyllaier



A YEAR OF PROGRESS FOR THE COALITION

The By-Laws of the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail directs the Chair to submit to the Board and the Coalition's membership an annual Statement of Affairs. These comments were delivered by outgoing Chair John Dugger at the CCCT's Annual Meeting, June 14, 1999.

The Coalition completed its 1998 fiscal year in sound financial condition. Resources were sufficient to meet outstanding obligations and to fund essential projects in progress. A major drain on the Coalition treasury resulted from an expenditure of more than \$40 thousand for improved Trail routing and lighting in the tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue, but a substantial portion of this amount was recouped as a result of a fund-raising effort recognizing what had been accomplished with the tunnel. The Coalition has a strong and loyal membership base of organization and of individual members, and a capable Board.

1998 saw the achievement of a key objective - - the opening of a long-closed tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue for Trail use, permitting users to avoid the dangerous crossing of Wisconsin Avenue through traffic. The tunnel was officially opened on August 15 by County Executive Douglas Duncan together with other officials and a large crowd. The Coalition supported by other groups had worked intensively for two years to persuade the County Council to fund paving, fencing, and lighting the tunnel; when that funding proved inadequate for the first-rate trail routing and lighting needed for safety and appearance, the Coalition provided the additional funds needed.

Continue on page 5

A Year of Progress for the Coalition - (page 4 continued)

The Coalition has focused on achieving optimum routing of the Trail into Silver Spring, through the planned Transit Center there, and connection to the Metropolitan Branch Trail currently under development. The replacement or rebuilding of the trestle over Rock Creek Park is also an essential element of this effort; obtaining approval, funding, and construction of these elements will require several years.

Over the year, the Coalition has worked extensively and successfully with County and National Park Service officials to get a trail which is safer, more attractive, and more enjoyable for users. The Trail became even more popular in 1998, with a proliferation of users of all ages on foot, bicycle, or rollerblades, leading to safety and congestion problems. A Management Plan, developed in a committee including representatives of the Coalition and of the three jurisdictions responsible for the Trail, is designed to improve safety, maintenance, and user-friendly amenities.

Other noteworthy accomplishments in 1998 include development of an internet web site for the Trail, including information on use, access, parking, history, safety, and other matters of interest to users. The site became fully operational early in 1999 accessible at www.cctrail.org.

To remedy an unsightly perspective from the Trail near the Bethesda Avenue trailhead, the Coalition funded construction of a board fence to conceal dumpsters and industrial equipment in use at the Honda dealership.

In mid-1998, to remedy the lack of drinking water on long stretches of the Trail, the Coalition arranged with Washington Aqueduct authority for a supply of water to the Trail from its adjacent facility. Since the County was unable to fund the approximately \$6600 required for purchase and installation, the Coalition found a donor for the fountain and hydrant, and the Coalition funded installation costs; the fountain went into service in the spring of 1999.

The Coalition is continuing to develop a trailhead kiosk and historic "wayside" exhibits, and to improve safety through brochures and better signage. The Coalition has continued to sponsor a variety of weekend Trail rides to promote enjoyable and safe use of the Trail, to organize nature-oriented Trail hikes, to conduct maintenance activities to preserve the natural environment, and to publish newsletters and brochures to keep the public informed and involved in the outdoor activities on the Trail.

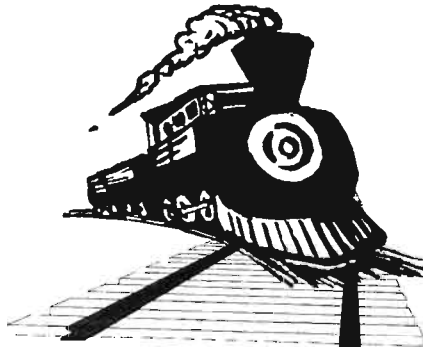
In 1999 the Coalition plans to continue to pursue vigorously its efforts to complete a safe, user-friendly, and beautiful trail along the right-of-way from Georgetown to Silver Spring, and to promote connections in Silver Spring which will enhance the Trail as a recreational and commuting asset.



Coalition Sponsors Another “Bells & Whistles” Safety Event

Going on the assumption that you cannot have enough of a good thing, members of the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail set up shop at the Bethesda Avenue Trailhead on two Saturdays last spring: May 1 and June 5. Armed with screwdrivers and fueled by donuts from a nearby shop, Coalition volunteers installed a number of bicycle bells on *bell-less* bikes and gave whistles to rollerbladers as well (Conspiracy buffs, see article below).

As in previous “Bell & Whistles”, the Coalition’s aim is to promote safety on the Trail by reminding all users that bicyclists and rollerbladers should give an audible warning when passing slower moving users, as required by regulations both in Montgomery County and D.C.



Following is an excerpt from Dr. Gridlock in The Washington Post, Monday, May 3, 1999 from a Chevy Chase resident.

Mystery Train Whistle

Dear Dr. Gridlock:

I live a short distance from the Capital Crescent Trail, which, as you know, was built on an old railroad bed. I am frequently awakened in the wee hours of the morning by the mournful sound of a steam engine train whistle. What am I hearing?

The Metro Red Line between Friendship Heights and Bethesda runs underground, and I am miles away from the CSX or Amtrak lines. Besides, this doesn’t sound like a modern train whistle. Is it the ghost of trains past, chugging along with their loads of coal for the power plant in Georgetown? Or am I dreaming?

DIAL UP TRAIL CONDITIONS AND EVENTS

Be the Coalition’s eyes and ears the next time you’re out on the Trail – Call the CCCT Information Line at 202-234-4874 and press “8” when prompted. Leave a message on trail conditions that you’ve encountered, or on any issue which might impact the Trail. The hotline message provides trail users with weekly updates on trail conditions and Coalition events.

If you’re new to the Capital Crescent Trail, leave your name and address to receive a membership brochure and our latest newsletter. After consideration, we hope you’ll support the CCT and become a member of the Coalition.

CCCT INFORMATION LINE, 202-234-4874

Use your touch-tone phone to access one of our mailboxes:

1. Background of the CCT
2. Coalition meeting dates
3. Membership information
4. Obtain a CCT map
5. Volunteer activities
6. Other messages
7. [Inactive]
8. Trail hotline and events

COALITION RECEIVES \$5,000 DONATION FROM CRYSTAL LIGHT

By Scott Hall

On June 19, the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail was the recipient of a generous \$5,000 donation from the Crystal Light company. Crystal Light has become a major supporter of the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy (RTC) and is donating 5 cents from the purchase of every canister of its drink mix to RTC and its affiliates. The CCCT plans to use the donation on its ongoing campaign to open the Rock Creek trestle and establish a better trail connection into Silver Spring.

The donation was made at the FDR Memorial to kick-off a group bike ride from Washington to Pittsburgh organized by the RTC and World T.E.A.M. Sports. The event highlighted the need to interconnect rail-trail projects into regional and national networks of trails and greenways. The Capital Crescent Trail was the first of a number of rail-trails the riders would use on their five-day journey to Pittsburgh. The group's arrival in Pittsburgh will coincide with the 2nd International Trails and Greenways Conference from June 23-26.

NEW RAMPS AT FLETCHER'S BOATHOUSE



Walking or biking around Fletcher's Boathouse is a little more user-friendly these days. At left, a new pedestrian bridge crosses the C&O Canal. The photo at right shows the new pedestrian ramp from the Capital Crescent Trail to the boathouse and river. Fletcher's is located at the Trail's 8-mile marker.

BIKES BELONG COALITION AWARDS GRANT TO WASHINGTON AREA BICYCLIST ASSOCIATION

Funding will help create the Metropolitan Branch Trail

Rich Olken, Executive Director of Bikes Belong Coalition, announced last month that Bikes Belong is funding a grant to the Washington Area Bicyclist Association to support their initiative to build the Metropolitan Branch Trail. The MBT will connect Northeast Washington and suburban Maryland communities to Capitol Hill and downtown, providing access along the way to schools, universities, neighborhoods, commercial centers, and seven Metrorail stations. It will connect over 100 miles of trails in DC, northern Virginia, and suburban Maryland, including the Capital Crescent Trail in downtown Silver Spring. The trail will also connect with Amtrak, Virginia Railway Express and Maryland Rail Commuter trains at Union Station and will pass the Greyhound and Trailways Peter Pan bus stations.

Olken called the Washington Area Bicyclist Association's proposal "brilliant" noting that "by developing the Metropolitan Branch Trail a number of trails are linked to become a huge uninterrupted bicycling network."

The main section of the Metropolitan Branch Trail will run 7.7 miles from Union Station in Washington, DC to the Silver Spring Metro station in Montgomery County, Maryland, at times adjacent to a rail line and at times leaving the rail corridor to travel along city streets. Additionally, the Prince George's County Connector section of the MBT will link the main section with Prince George's County, Maryland. Trail construction costs are estimated at \$9.54 million. Significant additional costs will be incurred for land acquisition. \$8.5 million of the total project cost will be TEA-21 funds. The grant from Bikes Belong Coalition is the first phase of a proposed three-phase program and will be used to develop and distribute a Concept Plan for the trail and informational materials to garner, maintain, and solidify local support for the project

Heather Andersen, Washington Area Bicyclist Association's Project Manager, said "We are thrilled to be working with the bicycle industry through the Bikes Belong Coalition to complete the Metropolitan Branch Trail. It is going to be a national showcase for urban bikeways as well as a great resource for the area's many bicycle commuters and recreational riders. This will encourage people of all abilities to make bikes their primary mode of transportation."

Bikes Belong Coalition is a foundation established and supported by the leaders of the bicycle industry. Its mission is "putting more people on bikes more often through the implementation of TEA-21." For more information about Bikes Belong Coalition, its mission, and how your company can be a part of it, call Rich Olken at 617-734-2800 or email Bikes Belong Coalition at TEA21@bikesbelong.org. Visit their web site at www.bikesbelong.org.



The Metropolitan Branch Trail along Brookland Avenue Near Catholic University

In remembrance of Brooks Sido

June 7, 1999

I am extremely sad to announce the passing of Brooks Sido this morning at 7am in Chatham, MA. Brooks worked with us at Bicycle Exchange/BIKES USA from 1992 to last summer. He embodied the spirit of the true cyclist. He commuted nearly every day to work and was always very active in advocacy for cyclists. I will miss him a lot.

The family has requested that no flowers be sent. Instead, donations may be made in Brooks' name to the Ronald McDonald House or C&O Canal. The company will be making a donation to the C&O Canal on his behalf.

Any correspondence may be sent to the family at the following address:

165 Steppingstone Rd.
Chatham, MA 02633

Jim Helwig
Bikes USA

Brooks Sido has had a history of brain tumors since 1987, with a number of surgeries in the past twelve years. In April of this year, the tumor type he had changed to a highly aggressive and highly malignant form.

Brooks was well known and respected within the Washington D.C. bicycling community. He worked in various DC-area bike shops before creating the position of Community Relations Coordinator (in-house bicycling advocate) for Bikes USA. In that capacity Brooks supported a wide variety of bicycling organizations and events, including the CCCT on our circuit bike rides and in the distribution of our brochures and newsletters in Bikes USA shops. He moved to the Cape Cod area less than one year ago.

He is generally acknowledged by his peers as a good and gentle man who gave wholly and freely of himself and his talents for the furtherance of other peoples' enjoyment of the sport he loved. That he made a difference for so many is his legacy. The Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail, having benefited from his talents and dedication, joins the many other individuals and organizations in remembering the contributions Brooks made for our community.



Brooks Sido on a CCCT bike ride, Spring 1997

Along The Trail...

5 YEARS AGO:

Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan suggests that the Trail be subordinated to transitway in Bethesda. If the proposed transitway uses the Wisconsin Avenue tunnel, the Trail will be excluded and forced to cross Wisconsin Avenue at-grade. CCCT opposes this plan and pushes for a Pearl Street alignment option for the proposed transitway. (Tunnel is opened to Trail users in August 1998, one year ago, following an intense lobbying campaign by the CCCT and concerned citizens.)

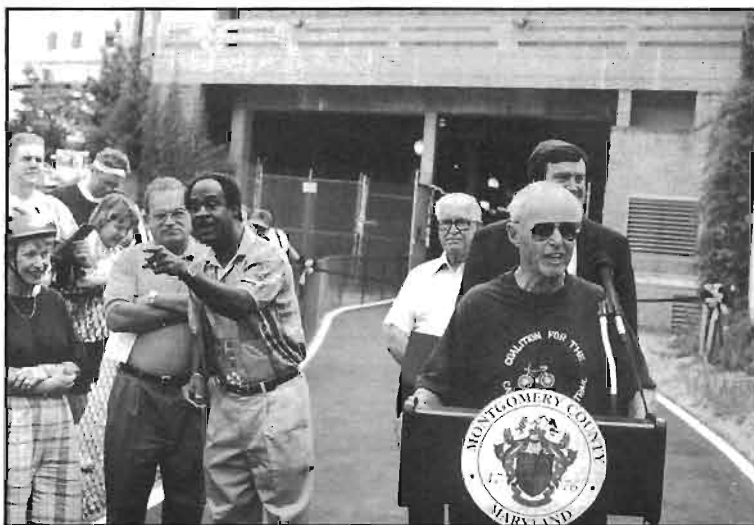
10 YEARS AGO:

Twenty-nine Bethesda property owners adjacent to the Trail's right-of-way file suit for quiet title claims to portions of the corridor east of Wisconsin Avenue, based on "adverse possession" argument.

Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission publishes its final draft *Georgetown Branch Master Plan Amendment* which outlines the proposed transitway and trail alignment options.

34 YEARS AGO:

1965 - First phase of Air Rights Building is constructed over the Georgetown Branch right-of-way in central Bethesda after the developer acquires the "air rights" over the rail line.



One year ago - The Wisconsin Avenue dedication ceremony, August 15, 1998. CCCT Chair John Dugger is at the podium.

107 YEARS AGO:

1892 - Metropolitan Central Railroad Company completes construction of a two-mile section of rail line from the junction with the B&O Railroad main line to Chevy Chase. B&O carries coal and building supplies on this line. Financial problems delay the extension of the line for more than a decade.

NEW DEVELOPMENT PLANNED AT TUNNEL

Trail users who regularly use the Wisconsin Avenue tunnel will soon see a new development at Woodmont Avenue between Elm Street and Bethesda Avenue. The Federal Realty Investment Trust plans to build an 8-screen cinema specializing in European Art films and 50,000 square feet of retail and restaurants, plus offices in a four-story building. Additionally, the plan calls for benches and outdoor cafes that will take advantage of heavy pedestrian volume from both the street and trail.

The area is now a privately owned parking lot. Federal Realty plans to open another project nearby with more shops, cafes and office space this summer. When it finishes that one, it will break ground near the tunnel. The new project, named "Woodmont East," should be up at the end of next year.



From days gone by -- The Rock Creek Trestle



The Arizona Avenue trestle

Photos provided to the Coalition by David Lepkowski.



P.O. Box 30703
Bethesda, MD 20824

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #4468
Wash., DC

Yes! I Want To Help Complete The Capital Crescent Trail!

Name(s) _____ (H) _____ (W) _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

\$100* SPECIAL HONOR MEMBERSHIP

Commemorative rail spike, your name on our
annual report, action alerts and subscription to
our newsletter. [Rail spike: yes no]

\$30 SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP

Newsletter subscription, action alerts.

\$10 INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

Newsletter subscription, action alerts.

\$60 * SPONSORING MEMBERSHIP

*T-shirt, if desired. Circle size: M L XL

Newsletter subscription, action alerts.

New member Renewing Member Additional contribution, \$ _____


Make checks payable to: The Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail, P.O. Box 30703, Bethesda, MD. 20824

Detailed four-color map of the Capital Crescent Trail with historical perspectives is free to new members.

All contributions are tax-deductible.

Calendar of Events

All events are rain or shine, unless noted. To confirm any event, call the CCCT User & Events Hotline,
202-234-4874, box 8; or on our WEB SITE: <www.cctrail.org>

CCCT MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS, Mondays, July 12, August 9 and September 13, 7:00 p.m. in the Bethesda
Regional Library, Arlington Rd. Closest Metrorail: Bethesda. Bike parking indoors. Guests are welcome! 

Saturday/Sunday, July 31/Aug 1, 10K CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL HIKE, Sponsored by Northern Virginia
Volksmarchers. Location: Silver Spring. 703-820-3535.