

April 24, 2007

## Celebrating With Your Your "Invisible" President

My sincerest apologies for falling off the face of the earth over the past 6 weeks or so, but your president has been somewhat overwhelmed by his "real" job. 55 hour work weeks have put the kibosh on all the fun activities and my blog has definitely suffered. So sorry. And on top of that, my riding time has suffered.

But for now, I'm back! And there is so much to celebrate!

Jerry Adams, the vice president of the Trailblazers, has led a small team of trail builders toward the completion of the trail system at Sherman Branch. At 10.6 miles, this has got to be the fastest trail of any significant length that has ever been built. And the rave reviews reflect its popularity. Jerry has taken a dream, that of constructing a trail from the bottom up, to reality. He dug in, fought the bureaucratic red tape, went through the process of neighborhood meetings, meetings with Park and Rec advisory committees, environmental impact studies, you name it. And the fruits of Jerry's labor are the trails at Sherman Branch. Thanks Jerry, you've earned it!

To celebrate the completion of Sherman Branch, the Trailblazers invite you to attend the grand opening celebration, as we kick off BIKE! Charlottee on May 5<sup>th</sup>. We will be leading group rides of the park from 9:00 - 11:00 with hot dogs, hamburgers and drinks from 11:30 - 1:00! We are in need of some volunteers to step up to assist. If interested, please contact me at [president@tarheeltrailblazers.com](mailto:president@tarheeltrailblazers.com).

The big news in the Lake Norman area is the opening of the Monbo Trail at Lake Norman State Park. At 900 feet shy of 6 miles, the Monbo is the longest continuous trail in our system, bringing the total trail length at the park to 12.8 miles! And talk about red tape! This is the first trail built in a state park and WaterBOB Karriker and Jeff Archer have been through the ringer, writing the book as they go. And the result is a sustainable trail that will be assured of a long life. This is a trail that our great grandchildren will be able to enjoy. Built to standards like no other trail in the region the Monbo offers a totally different feel from the Itusi. Fast descents are punctuated with quick drops, sudden turns and a climb that will have you calling UNCLE! The recent addition of bOb and Jeff (otherwise known as "Crossroads Cycle Club") brings us to a new level in trail construction. We owe these two a tremendous debt of gratitude! Thanks guys!

At the USNWC, the completion of the "Figure 8" marks the final piece of the re-connect of our beloved "Catawba". Frankie Pietras has spearheaded the effort to re-connect the trail and has been instrumental in garnering a working relationship between the Trailblazers and the USNWC staff, led by Mike Kafsky. Learning to talk the same language came slow at first, but Frank has led the charge to educate the white water leadership on the intricacies of trail construction and maintenance. Many individuals have devoted countless hours to seeing that the trail maintained its high standard for being the challenging jewel in the Trailblazer crown. Many naysayer's now see that the vision has indeed become a reality and that the Trailblazers' open mindedness has brought a new standard to Catawba. Many thanks to the individuals that are too numerous to name, for their efforts at returning the USNWC to a challenging destination.

And while we're discussing celebrations, what better way to celebrate than uniting two of our most loyal and dedicated mountain bikers, Dirt Diva/Trailblazer Jennifer Dilworth and Trailblazer Bryan Hines this weekend (April 28) in the Great Smoky Mountains! Jennifer is the former secretary of the Trailblazers and is the current ride leader of the Dirt Divas. Bryan has been heavily involved with the grant process and helping to steer the club through the maze at Mount Holly. We all have grown to know these guys over the past several years and their marriage will be a celebration of all that is good in our sport. Two good, solid people, moving forth together as husband and wife and as cycling's dynamic duo. Congratulations Bryan and Jennifer!

Posted At : 6:02 PM. | Posted By : tom