

June 5, 2006

What's Going On?!?!

Sorry, your pres kinda went into hiding for a little rest following **Bike! Charlotte**. We have a lot of interesting projects on the table, here's an update and answers to a few recent inquiries....

MountHolly - We have recently cleared one hurdle on a **\$50K RTP grant**. The grant has been recommended for approval and is now onto the second step in the process. We are hopeful of receiving more information in the near future. If successful, we will probably receive the approval in late fall, early winter. Plans focus on a trail construction company to punch the corridor trail and the Trailblazers perform the grooming. On the down side, we were turned down on our request for a \$5K, Adopt-A-Trail grant. You win some, you lose some.

Sherman Branch - Trail construction has started at Sherman Branch and 2 miles of completed trail by the end of June is a possibility. We still have a hurdle to overcome, as there is a grave site on the property that needs to be researched by the Historical Society. Hopefully we can overcome this bump in the near future and get things up and running, soon.

Holbrook's "Dump" Trail - We have recently received a contract to construct trails adjacent to the Huntersville landfill, off of Hwy 115. We have been modifying the contract as presented to establish an advanced level trail system on this property. We are hopeful that the remote location will assist us in our quest to provide an advanced trail.

USNWC (Catawba) - We are working with the white water staff to put together a contract that will cover both parties and allow us to start the reconnect. Recent road wrangling has hurt the progress of the part and has also shifted USNWC priorities. We'll know something soon.

Jetton Park - The Trailblazers are on the PRC agenda, June 13, 6:00 PM at the Administrative Office Building on Brookshire Blvd. It is hopeful that the proposed trail will receive final approval and we can start construction this fall on a beginner 1.5 - 2.0 mile trail, that may be the first handicapped accessible mountain bike trails in the region!

Trailblazer Maps - Ivan Konermann has been working diligently to assemble as much GPS information as possible to provide website accessible, downloadable maps of all the trails in our system and additional popular trails in the region. Anyone with updated GPS data of the trails should forward their shape files to Ivan at: ivankonermann@hotmail.com. This will be quite an undertaking by Ivan and anyone else interested in assisting should contact Ivan.

Finances - We have recently had a few questions about club funding and where those dues ultimately end up. Here is some insight paraphrased with special thanks to Paul Bellin):

The club is required to maintain a \$2 million liability insurance policy and of course we insure our tools and equipment.

We own and maintain many tools (as a matter of fact, we recently purchased 12 new McCleods). We own and continue to purchase items such as chainsaws, bus hogs, and the club recently received a Bobcat through a donation from Ingersol Rand. That piece of equipment will not be cheap to maintain. We are looking into the purchase of a used trailer to transport the Bobcat and are pursuing an articulating blade for the unit. If you've ever attempted to bench cut without one, you'll understand the need. We also have a covered trailer that hauls our tools and ATV (with dump trailer(s)); lots of landscape types of hand tools, enough to be able distribute to various trail crews and help do large projects that require a lot of bodies; chainsaws, leaf blower etc. We rely on a lot of volunteer or in-kind efforts to fix and maintain some things but it takes money too. We also have some promotional materials we need and use (flyers, forms, banners etc). Not to mention the social things we do to try to increase awareness of the mtn bike community as a whole (cookouts, Bike Summit pizza nights, etc). No, your membership doesn't get any more access to the trails than if you were just some random rider, but it does help build those trails, maintain them, repair things like broken bridges or downed trees, and continually improve things out there for all riders. Not to mention all the new additions. Every time you see a new little section of trail open up, it's because of the above and the volunteers. The club officers and steering committees spend a lot of time together planning where we're going and what we want to take on.

Which brings us to the best part. Most of all, we rely on you, the volunteers and members, to support the club and what we do, to show up and put in some hours on any of the above and our special events, help find sponsors or donors (some leftover lumber or bags of concrete mix can go a long way), and hopefully help the club function forever. Somewhere we're keeping track of most of the volunteer hours and it's a big number, but we want to see it get bigger. Look at all the new trails on the horizon; we'll need all the help we can get. We'd love it if everyone who rides would just put a few hours into their favorite trail, and sign up so our numbers and voice keep growing.

Our 2006 budget (prior to the gift of the Bobcat) can be found [here](#):

Posted At : 11:02 AM. | Posted By : tom