

THE ARROW

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

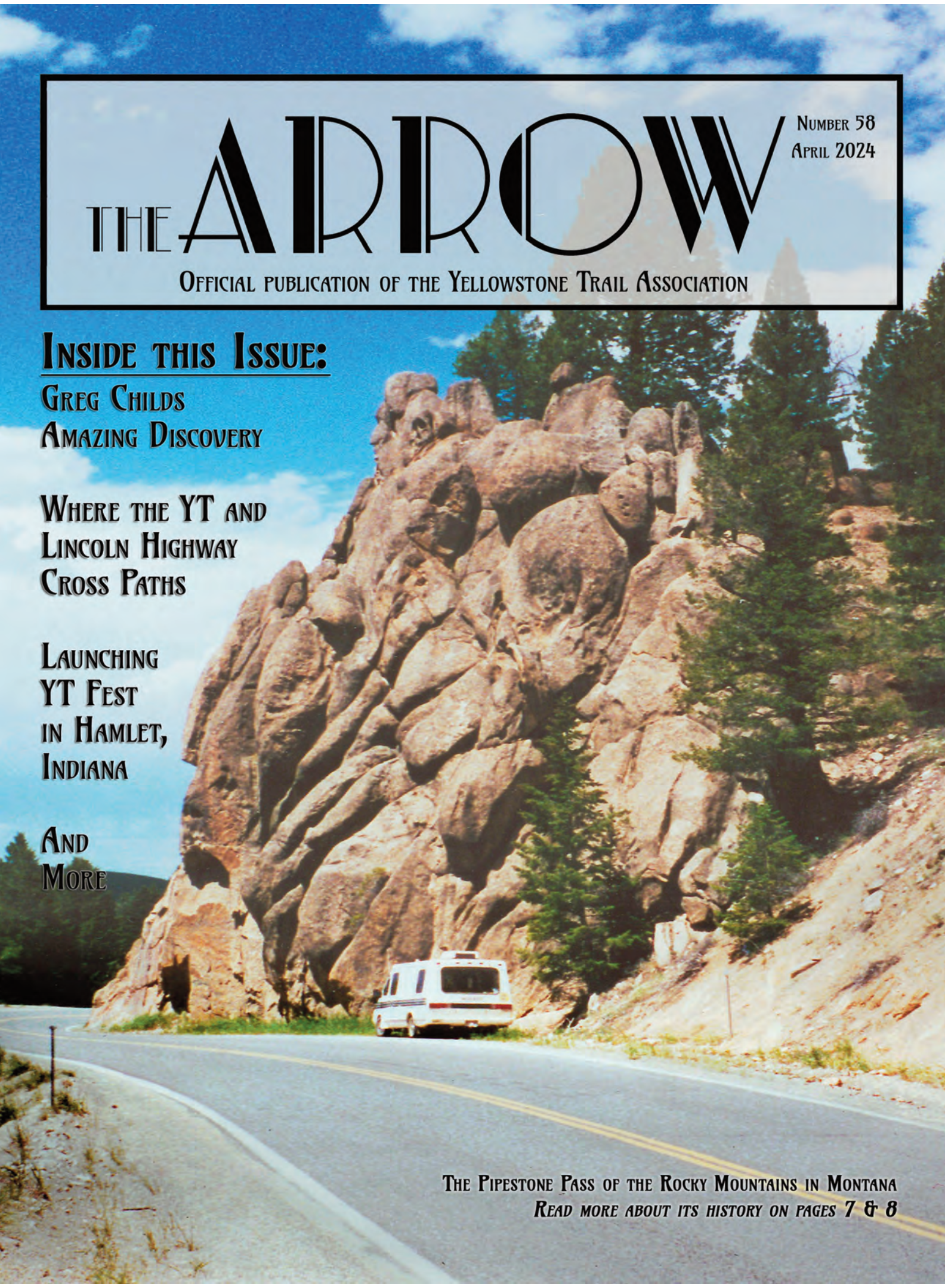
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MORE



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A YTA IN TRANSITION

Happy Spring and welcome to the 58th edition of the *Arrow*. The ensuing pages offer a lot of fun content, from historical discoveries and coming events to “Yellowstone Trail Fest” tutorials.



Thank you to John and Alice Ridge for once again developing and gathering this edition’s content. Additionally, thank you to all the YT enthusiasts who contributed stories and information regarding your respective areas’ past and present YT’s interests and initiatives. In the end, it is the sum of the parts that is greater than the whole. Our organization cannot be effective nor sustainable if individual members are not involved and

working together cooperatively. This was the original spirit of the trail when it was first envisioned by founder Joseph Parmley (*see page 5 for more*); success will result if we stay true to that.

Transitioning to a new YTA Board that is no longer under the direction of the leadership of John and Alice Ridge has only served to emphasize this point. Their decades of dedication, hard work and vision has reinvigorated the Yellowstone Trail and prepared its ongoing return to prominence. Their legacy deserves great admiration, and we intend to see that it is carried forward.

A big thank you to Ernie Schirmer and Bill Von Tagen who recently resigned from the board. Their passion for the Trail’s history and organization is palatable, and we hope to remain connected as they direct more of their energies to other endeavors. Overall, I don’t think it can be overstated how difficult it is to get people on the same page these days, and particularly in a manner that engages communities over a 3,600 mile stretch across the nation. Furthermore, fulfilling all of the functions that John and Alice have so dutifully performed on behalf of the organization can appear daunting in its own right. Then again, many hands make for light lifting.

Looking forward, the YTA will seek to continue to serve its members in new and meaningful ways while utilizing the upcoming 250th Anniversary of America as a rallying call to motivate YT communities to share their stories.

Please let us know if you’d like to contribute or be involved in our organizational efforts in any capacity.

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CONTACT THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

To join, make membership payments, or donate:
 Web: go directly to our membership service:
<https://yta.clubexpress.com>
 USPS: Send to administrator, Yellowstone Trail Association
 Box 65, Altoona, WI 54720
 There is a printable application form at:
www.yellowstonetrail.org/Docs/MemberApplication.pdf

For questions about membership, address changes, or Arrow receipt questions:
 Email: Administrator@yellowstonetrail.org
 USPS: Yellowstone Trail Association, PO Box 65 Altoona, WI 54720

For Trail information and editorial communications (our corporate office):
 Email: YTA@yellowstonetrail.org
 USPS: Yellowstone Trail Association
 PO Box 65 Altoona, WI 54720

For YT related signs and merchandise (not part of the YTA):
 Web: www.yellowstonetrail.org
 Email: YTP@yellowstonetrail.org
 USPS: Yellowstone Trail Publishers
 PO Box 65, Altoona, WI 54720-0065

TRANSCONTINENTAL COMMUNICATIONS OF THE YTA

Greg Childs makes fantastic historical discovery

By Greg Childs & Alice Ridge

Greg Childs has been a member and special sponsor of the YTA for a long time, and is now



Greg Childs

serving on the YTA Board of Directors. He has gathered an impressive collection of antique cars, which he

makes run again. Greg is a "straight shooter" from Laurel, Montana and is not given to wild tales. So this tale is true.

Last fall Greg wrote to us saying, "Yesterday I found a torn envelope under the seat of one of my cars addressed to Mr. John F. Webber, Laurel, Montana (no PO or street number). The envelope bore the insignia of the Yellowstone Trail and it also said Office of the Secretary.

Inside the envelope was a cover letter from M.H. Doyle of Aberdeen, South Dakota, dated 1916. The main letter was a solicitation of community membership in the Trail Association. Included was a membership application and a copy of the original Articles of Incorporation. I have no idea who slipped that letter into my car. The Community or organization's suggested dues were \$10 annually."

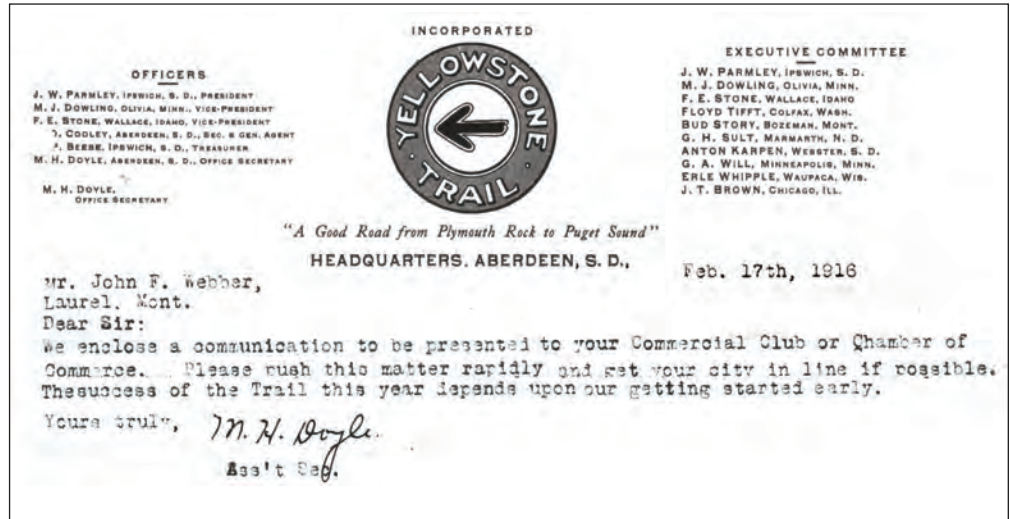
We include a picture of the cover letter above and excerpts from the long letter of solicitation below.

To Cities, Commercial Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, Automobile Clubs and Friends of the Yellowstone Trail:

Reports from along the Trail indicate that 1915 was by far the biggest and best year that the Yellowstone Trail has known. Not only has its financial condition materially improved, but it is more widely known, and has a better organization than at any time in its history.

At the annual meeting, the Trail was extended east from Chicago to the Atlantic coast at Plymouth, Mass. This section of the road is now being organized through local representatives, and by June of this year the Yellowstone Trail will be definitely fixed from one coast to the other. The carrying out of a closely allied effort, from one coast to the other, is a monumental undertaking, and requires the exclusive services of a thoroughly organized and equipped office.

..... the Yellowstone Trail Association adopted Articles of Incorporation which provide for a membership both by cities through their public organization, and by individuals. As soon as you take out a membership in the name of your organization, you should elect a number of representatives for your city which is shown by the Articles of Incorporation as your voting strength.



A Feb. 17, 1916 date cover letter of YTA communications by Secretary H.O. Cooley.

The representatives elected by you will receive all of the general communications and data, including the magazine, sent out regarding the Trail or its plans, and will be the means of keeping your community in touch with the organization. These representatives should elect one of their number to act as Trail Councilor [Trailman] to whom communications will be addressed.

Suffice it to say that if plans are carried out, the Yellowstone Trail will not only be the best, but the best known transcontinental highway. I want you to forward the application for organization membership that is enclosed with the check in the amount of your fee at once.

In the magazine will be carried the list of towns which take out organization memberships in the order which they are taken out. Get the name of your city near the top of the column, and it will show such an interest on your part that by your doing so, you will lead other towns to follow in the procession, even though they are 2,000 miles away from you.

Any information that you may want, kindly write and I will be glad to furnish it to you.... As it now stands it is the unanimous endorsement of the Executive Committee as being the best possible business arrangement from a Trail stand point that can be made. Awaiting an early reply with your signed application and check, I am

*Very cordially yours,
H.O. Cooley*

A note from John & Alice:

We sincerely thank Greg for forwarding to us those original papers and assure him that they will join other original documents related to the Yellowstone Trail Association in an archive yet to be established. We are actively searching for a permanent archival spot for such YTA papers. Anybody have any ideas of such a place? Let us know.

TRAIL-O-GRAMS

UPCOMING EVENTS

MODEL T TIME: Rev up your Model T and enjoy the fun. Details in next Arrow

YELLOWSTONE TRAIL DAYS in Ipswich, South Dakota - June 14-16

YELLOWSTONE TRAIL DAY in Hudson, Wisconsin - August 10

YELLOWSTONE TRAIL FEST in Hamlet, Indiana - August 16-18 (see story in this Arrow)



Hudson, Wi. YT Days logo.



SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Olivia, Minnesota, was the home of Michael Dowling, third president of the fledgling YT and a leader in many other venues, including education ambassador to the Phillipines. He lived on Depue Street. In recognition of the man, and because of the growing awareness of the Yellowstone Trail in the community, the city fathers appended the YT logo to the street sign that you see in the accompanying picture.

MURDER ON YT

You say you missed Paul Warshauer's latest production? His "Murders4Fun" struck again in early February, this time in Owen, Wisconsin. This was the second time Paul has "murdered" and regaled Owenites. If any reader wishes to contact Paul for a custom-made, family-oriented play about the YT as a fund raiser for their organization, go to www.murders4fun.com for fun pictures, or murders4fun@gmail.com.

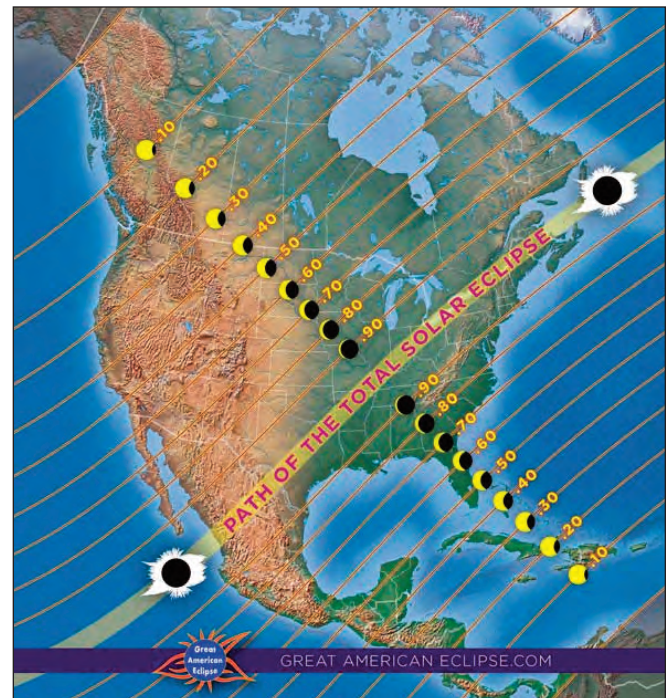
AN ANONYMOUS GIFT

The YTA wishes to thank someone if we only knew who that someone is. A kind soul has sent the YTA a donation in cash. No name, no address, no ID. Well, Mr. or Ms. Anonymous, know that your thoughtfulness is appreciated and will be put to good use.

A big 'thank you' also goes out to the many who have gone beyond membership dues to help the organization.

YT TRAIL-ERS

YELLOWSTONE TRAIL-ERS: Dal Smilie of Helena, MT, writes that his vintage trailer friends in Milbank, SD are calling their trailer club Yellowstone Trail-ers.



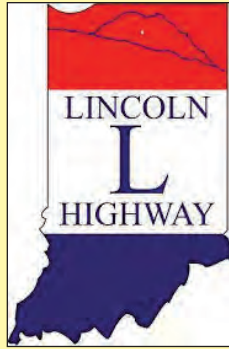
WHERE THE GREAT AMERICAN ECLIPSE CROSSES THE GREAT THE AMERICAN YT

The eastern Yellowstone Trail will be treated to a good view of the solar eclipse April 8. The 124 mile-wide swath will swing diagonally from Texas to Maine. Around mid-day, our Trail friends in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and western New York will be the place to be to see the complete eclipse. The duration of totality is estimated to be up to 4 minutes, 27 seconds. See the many eclipse sites on the Internet to find "your time in the dark." And remember to wear eye protection!

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE LINCOLN HWY. & YT

Where the Yellowstone Trail and Lincoln Hwy. meet

Editor's Note: The Lincoln Highway Association will hold its 2024 National LHA Conference in Elkhart, Indiana. While Elkhart is on the original route of the Lincoln Highway, beginning in 1928 the Valparaiso-Elkhart-Ft. Wayne section was moved to the more southernly, long-established route of the Yellowstone Trail which, by 1928, had also been designated US30. Knowing the conference will give some attention and possibly a group tour along that route, we reviewed our previous information about the 1915-1930 route of the Yellowstone Trail in that area and located several previously unfound Indiana newspaper articles from that time period which clarified the relationships among the Yellowstone Trail, the Lincoln, and US 30.



By John Ridge

Here is the story: Once upon a time, well actually in 1912, thereabouts, many, many Americans discovered a magnificent problem. Automobiles poured from factories, jumped on a train and made their way to millions of Americans waiting to show them off and, for some, use them to actually go somewhere.

The country had seen something like this before: the railroads. But the railroads captured (albeit somewhat indirectly but effectively through land grants) the Federal government's purse. Not only did railroads provide the engines and railcars they provided their own roads as part of the deal: tracks.

NEW SHORT ROUTE TO CHICAGO SOON

Second Letting of Road Bids Announced.

A new short route between Indianapolis and Chicago will be completed by the end of the highway construction season. State Highway Director John D. Williams announced today, in issuing a call for bids for 80.75 miles of paving and 4.5 miles of grading.

The new route will be provided by paving 23.5 miles in the unpaved gaps on United States Rd. 30, the national Yellowstone trail. United States Rd. 30 is reached from Indianapolis via No. 31 to Plymouth and provides a short cut to Chicago through Valparaiso.

United States Road No. 30, from Plymouth to Warsaw, in Marshall and Kosciusko Counties, 23.5 miles; from Hamlet to Plymouth, in Starke and Marshall Counties, 17.1 miles.

When autos arrived to homes and farms across the county by railroad, in huge numbers, some would be used on existing wagon roads or even bicycle roads, but most just got stuck in the mud. Then, if useable roads were created or improved, it was the limited and varying efforts of city and county governments that did it. Coast to coast "improved roads" were a dream.

But there were dreamers. Two very productive ones. Carl Fisher and J.W. Parmley

are central to this story. Each firmly American. One with an industrialist's American dream and perspective and the other with an idealist's dream and the cooperative's perspective. They could hardly be more unlike.

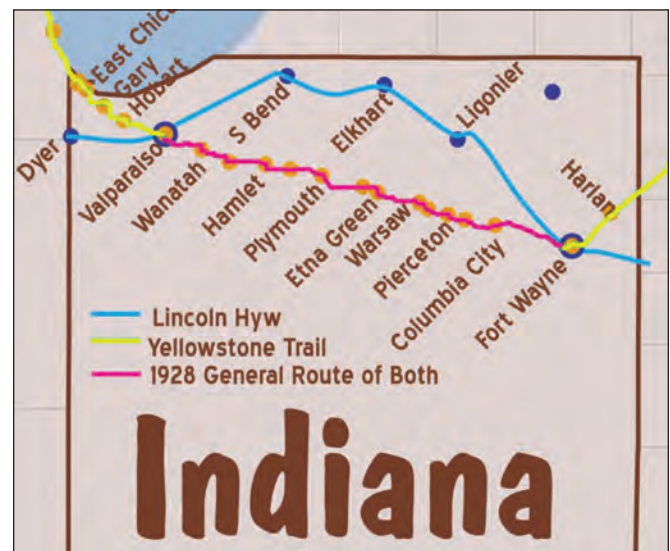
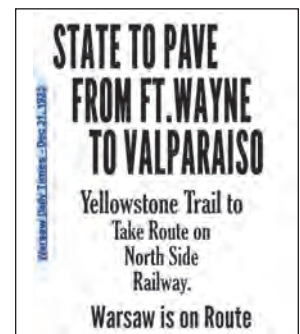
The first would plan to raise money and build the damn road. The second would draw on a characteristic of Americans, based on shared democratic ideals and a belief that we, to-

gether, can do it. The Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville identified that characteristic during his research travels in the USA in 1831-32. He found it nearly unique in the world, a world more apt to be run by authoritarian governments. He praised the American ethic to work together for the common good. That characteristic resulted in Chambers of Commerce, social fraternities, and similar organizations which undertook actions to "get it done." Legislative action or allocations were not sought.

Well, Fisher's plan resulted in the Lincoln Highway, albeit with government spending rather than that of Fisher and friends. And Parmley's efforts resulted in the Yellowstone Trail. In the end, both depended on local and county governments to build the road. And, by happenstance, their routes met only in Indiana. Twice.

Almost at its founding in the sparsely settled upper Midwest, the Yellowstone Trail Association adopted the motto, "A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound." During the year 1915, the route was specified and implemented in detail from Seattle through Chicago, with only allusions to the potential route on to Plymouth Rock. The incredibly successful "relay race" from Chicago to Seattle in 1915 demanded a "relay race" over the entire distance in 1916 for the immense additional publicity potential. The officers of the YTA undertook the locating of the eastern route, seemingly choosing the shortest path possible to Plymouth, ran the race, and then fell to work on the 1919 final route through New York and Massachusetts.

Back to Indiana: The dirt and gravel Yellowstone Trail followed a lot of section lines with right angles joining them. As time moved on road improvements and straightening resulted in the designation of the route as US 30 and the Lincoln Highway joined the Yellowstone Trail to become one between Valparaiso and Fort Wayne.



The map shows where the two trails meet.

CREATING AN ANNUAL CELEBRATION

How Hamlet launched its Yellowstone Trail Fest

Editor's Note: Actually, it started with the doctor's birthday. Juanita Ketcham, chief Trail mover and shaker in Hamlet, Indiana, and awarded "Trailperson" of 2018, tells the backstory of the remarkable success of Hamlet's annual Yellowstone Trail Fest. We asked her to do this to, perhaps, present readers with a 'model' and advice to create their own YT Days celebration. If they can do this with a population of 764, you can too. Her slightly edited story follows.

By Juanita Ketcham
Arrow contributor

There once was a beloved doctor, Dr. Leinbach, in Hamlet whose birthday the community celebrated on each third weekend in August beginning in 1976.

They called that annual festival "Zucchini Fest." Some years later, the good doctor died, as did the Zucchini Fest. Years went by and then a resident, Marilyn Goodrich, spoke up. She had been studying the Yellowstone Trail and even caused some home-made YT signs to be posted on the Trail through town. The time had come, she thought, to coalesce the community, so why not around the Yellowstone Trail? So she started the first Yellowstone Trail Fest in 2008. Wisely, she selected that same weekend formerly celebrated, the third weekend in August.

An interested group sought legal help in incorporating as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Why? Because now they were able to apply for grants such as from Indiana Arts, or The Northwest Foundation, or Indiana State Festival Association. They soon discovered that advertising for businesses for support worked better with a non-profit designation.

Next came the banners and yard signs. By 2015 we found that promotion as advertising helped businesses get on board as opposed to just sponsoring. It is easier for them to deduct the cost on their taxes. We rewarded them with special t-shirts. With our parade trailer offering large logo sticker placements, this has helped us get business sponsors at the \$1,000 level - a unique feat in our history. We plastered our parade trailer with YT logos, maps, and signs. Hard to miss.

Our Chamber of Commerce helps with details of our parade and annual event. The historical society is not in a position to offer financial help. [Ed. Note: Chambers of Commerce support YT events in several towns.]



YT merchandise available at Hamlet's Trail Days.



Juanita Ketcham named Trailperson of the Year in 2018.

Our county has started a convention and tourism bureau. It collects tourist taxes from hotels and disperses the funds. In 2022 and 2023 the Yellowstone Trail Fest was given \$1,000. This year they were awarded \$2,000. Expenditures include such things as fireworks and the rental of a traveling historical showcase from the Indiana Historical Society, "History on Wheels."

Part of the success seems to come from our "theme" structure. We choose historical topics related to the Trail years of 1912-1930 on odd-numbered years, and a modern theme on even-numbered years. Thus we had bootlegging, Roaring '20s, 1916 YT auto race, hobo history, and traveling circus alternate with the modern hippie fest, Back to the Future movie (parts of the movie were shot here), mischief and magic, Dr. Leinbach Zucchini reunion. Adding auto shows, rock and roll concerts and fireworks certainly helped. We have also done some geocaching along the Trail.

In the years with modern themes, we still educate about the Trail with an area specializing in YT stories, maps, a quiz show, books and t-shirts and auto tours along the Trail.

It has taken a lot of work getting people on board, but that is what it has taken in our county, and it has grown easier each year. I was thrilled with receiving six sponsor checks arriving just a couple of weeks ago. Surrounding businesses have seen the value of supporting this community event. Small business still rules, as in the days of the founding of the Trail.

I hope that these words explaining some of what we do in Hamlet will help others understand that it is possible to celebrate the Trail and benefit your community by creating Trail Days, or piggybacking on an already known civic celebration. Everyone needs to appreciate the Slow Route across our great United States and the Yellowstone Trail provides a great northern exposure to this scenery.

HISTORY OF THE PIPESTONE PASS

Rich men, roughnecks and visionary efforts

Editor's Note: After receiving this article from the author, news was received that part of the route discussed by Cunningham has been nominated by the Montana Historical Society and Montana State Historic Preservation Office for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

"A five-mile stretch of scenic highway that used to be part of the Yellowstone Trail in Silver Bow County is known as the Harding Way Historic District near Pipestone Pass. With its steep switchbacks and small pull-out areas, it represents the transition from wagons to automobiles in the 1920s, and provided a needed link between Butte and Whitehall."

A full copy of the 87 page nomination document with pictures can be viewed at: <https://mths.mt.gov/Shpo/docs/NRnoms/Harding-Way-Historic-District-Amended-for-jan-RB-2024.pdf>

By Curt Cunningham

Pipestone Pass is located in Montana's Rocky Mountains on the Continental Divide in Silver Bow county 10 miles south of Butte. The Yellowstone Trail crosses over this 6,347 ft pass.

Pipestone is a hard, reddish stone which was quarried by Indians to make prayer pipes, commonly known by non-Indians as the peace pipe. The quarry where the stone was mined was located in Minnesota, 39 miles NW of Sioux Falls, SD. The Indians who lived west of the Continental Divide crossed over at Pipestone Pass while on their way to the quarry. This is most likely how the pass got its name. Early travelers knew the trail as the travel route of Indian, trapper and prospector.

Gradually the beaten track through the wilderness widened into a wagon road, which scarcely deserved that description until 1866 when Nelson M. Parsons built a sort of roadway over the hill. This road then became known as Eighteen Mile hill -18 miles from the stage depot near Silver Bow.

The primitive road was purchased from Parsons a few years later by Judge Andrew J. Davis (1819-1890), reputedly to have been Montana's first millionaire. He then began to charge tolls on his newly acquired road. The tollhouse was located on the east side of the pass and was known as the Eighteen Mile hill.

In 1877 and 1878 Deer Lodge county, (Silver Bow county was not established until 1881) under the direction of William Owsley, road supervisor and reported founder of Butte, built a free road known as the Hill road, on the other side of the creek from Davis' toll road. Judge Davis was then forced to stop charging travelers for the privilege of using his highway.

In 1909 The Milwaukee Road Railroad completed its line between Chicago and Seattle. The railroad crossed the divide at Pipestone and tunneled under the summit, the route used until 1980. Today, the old grade through the tunnel is a pedestrian and bicycle trail.

The Old Davis Grade

Judge Davis' nephew, Andrew Davis, had vision and money which helped in the making of a new road over the pass a reality. In 1911 with a vision of a bigger Butte and a realization of the imperative need of good roads leading to the city, Davis tried unsuccessfully to get the county commissioners to build a new road over Pipestone Pass.

So, in the name of good roads, Andrew Davis spent about \$10,000 of his own money on that road, which came to be known as the Davis grade.

The work done by him was virtually the last of the early road building methods when steam shovels, ditching machines

and team-hauled graders were unheard of. Construction crews at that time took particular pride in having their camps designated as "roughneck camps." On the very first night that Davis' crew settled in before beginning its road work, one of the members attempted a holdup and in the ensuing fracas one man was killed. The entire crew of 60 was then taken into custody by the sheriff. After this interlude, road construction commenced in earnest, and was done with shovel and pick, the only tools of modern invention at the time.

In 1915 when the Yellowstone Trail reached Seattle, the route over Pipestone Pass used the old Davis grade. It was very dangerous for those early autos and there were a few who accidentally drove off the edge and fell to their demise a thousand feet below.

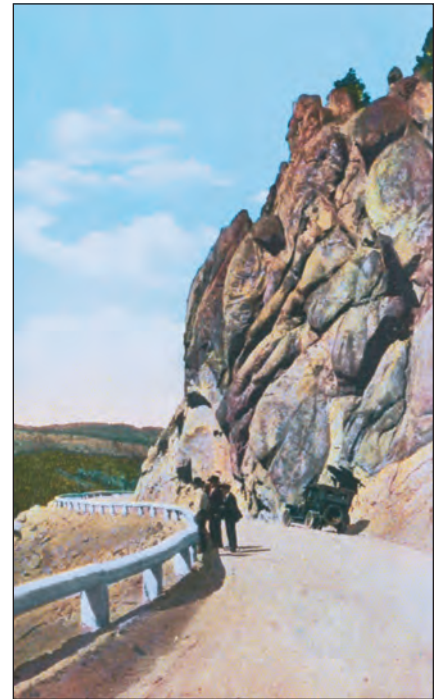
In the spring of 1919, the Silver Bow county commissioners took a ride over Eighteen Mile hill and vowed that they would install railings composed of heavy timbers at a height of 18 inches above the highway at all dangerous curves. Whether nets would be installed on the side hills to catch the bodies of the occupants whose cars are stopped suddenly by the railings, was not mentioned.

On the eastern side of the pass, traveling eastward, the Yellowstone Trail followed the old wagon road and it veered off the border between Jefferson and Silver Bow counties. This intersection is close to the location where the tollhouse and roadhouse once stood. This place is called Nineteen Mile on the 1963 USGS Grace Quadrangle map. The old dirt road then ran south then eastward and traveled through Piedmont before reaching Whitehall, MT.

The New Davis Grade

In the middle of August 1921 a contract was awarded to the Heiselt Construction Company of Salt Lake City to construct a new road over Pipestone Pass. The cost of the grade under contract as a federal aid project was \$73,000, divided equally between the federal and county governments.

The state was not very interested in constructing a new Davis grade over the pass and a strenuous fight ensued for it to become a reality. Civic and commercial organizations got into the melee, and the smoke of battle was raised over the sanctuary of the state highway commission at Helena. Agitation for improvement of the old Eighteen Mile



The Pipestone Pass is known for its reddish aggregate.



hill was made so insistent that completion of the concrete highway to Anaconda was temporarily suspended and authorization was given to use the unspent money of a road bond issue for construction of the new Davis grade.

The new highway over Pipestone Pass was completed in 1922 and instead of the feeling of sliding off the roof of a tall building while descending on the old wagon road, travelers could “shimmy” right along without fear of being dumped on their heads into a canyon a thousand feet below.

The new road made safe and comfortable the scenic trips from the city, and made the hauling by trucks from the ranch country and beyond an easy matter.

At its steepest point the new road does not exceed a 5% grade, compared with a 16% slant at one place in the old road. Hundreds began to travel over the new route of the Yellowstone Trail via the Davis grade each year, which gave a great boost in tourist business for Butte.

The Vigilante trail, (see; Arrow #48 Fall 2020) which joined with the Yellowstone trail 22 miles

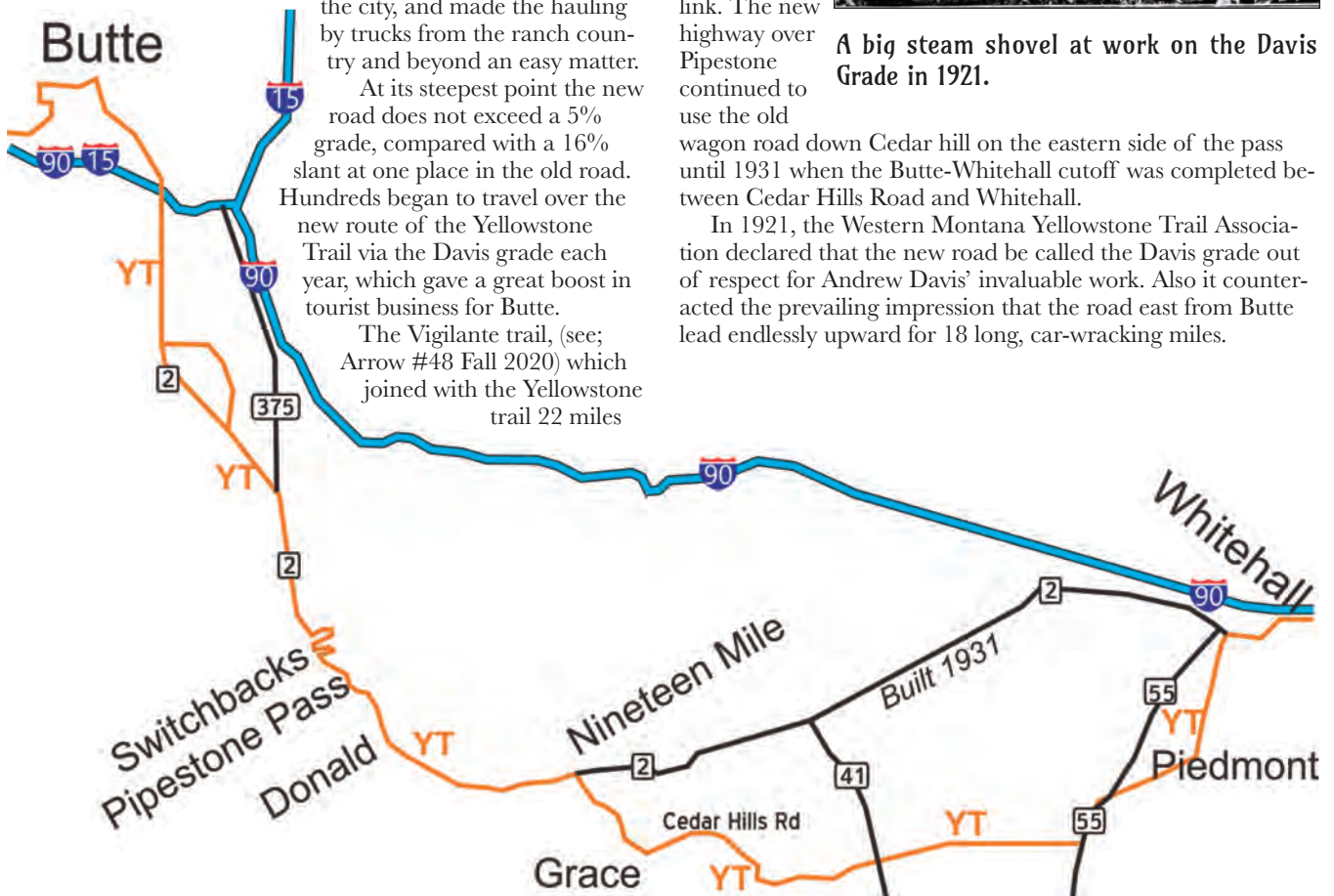
from Butte, became one of the most heavily traveled tourist routes to Yellowstone Park, and the Davis grade was a perfect connecting link. The new highway over Pipestone continued to use the old

wagon road down Cedar hill on the eastern side of the pass until 1931 when the Butte-Whitehall cutoff was completed between Cedar Hills Road and Whitehall.

In 1921, the Western Montana Yellowstone Trail Association declared that the new road be called the Davis grade out of respect for Andrew Davis’ invaluable work. Also it counteracted the prevailing impression that the road east from Butte lead endlessly upward for 18 long, car-wracking miles.



A big steam shovel at work on the Davis Grade in 1921.



THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL ASSOCIATION IS:

a charitable and educational organization within the meaning of 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code with the following purposes:

- 1) Public Education:** to increase public knowledge of the Trail and its importance in both local and national history,
- 2) Historical Research:** to acquire information and stories about the Trail and its historical context,

Troubleshooting?
If you are a member but not now receiving the printed version of the Arrow and you would like a printed booklet-style copy of this Arrow mail \$5 (or \$11 for the next year of issues) to YT Association, Box 65, Altoona, WI 54720-0065. Use your credit card by paying through PayPal. (In PayPal, use: Actions, send money, Treasurer@

- 3) Historical Preservation:** to promote the preservation of appropriate sections of the Yellowstone Trail and buildings or other artifacts along the Trail,
- 4) Communication:** to provide a medium of communication and support among its members,



- 5) Heritage Tourism:** to promote heritage tourism along the Trail to support the above purposes, and
- 6) Related Events:** to sponsor or support various events related to the history of the Trail to support the above purposes