Historical News Articles that Featured John O'Dell

explained. "In 1988 we actually

LUUIL

Room to hike: Cave in Rock is one of the landmarks

scattered throughout the state

River to River: Battery Rock,

Rock Creek, Camp Cadiz, High

which serve as trail heads for the

Frigg Tower, Camp Ondessonk

Giant City, Makanda, Cedar

Devil's Backbone Park.

Lake, Alto Pass, Bald Knob and

nearest you can be found on the

Illinois State Road Map or call

North: Contra testifies/A5

Southern Illinoisan, February 24, 1989

The society's first meeting, held Thursday in Marion, marked the be-

Take

question is,

"It's fairly level and the trail has kind O'Dell said most of the River to River Trail can be described as easy to moderate. However, some sections are easier than others.

"It's fairly level and the trail has kind of a wide tread," O'Dell said. "The exertion level is not too high. It's all wooded with old growth forest and you can start out with a great vista from Trigg Tower."

To reach Trigg Tower, the last remainance in the Shawnee National forest, take Illinois Route 147 into Simpson and turn north at the post office.

O'Dell said the topography of the trail

He also said that this portion of the trail runs close to

O'Dell said the topography of the trail start this portion of the trail runs close to

O'Dell said the topography of the trail difficult to grade sections medium or difficult.

"An often asked question is, 'Give me all of vistas, but you don't have to dish a color of vistas, but you don't have to dish a color of vistas.

from Springs where a petroglyph of a buffalo can be viewed. O'Dell said the petroglyph of a buffalo can be viewed. O'Dell said the petroglyph of a buffalo can be viewed. O'Dell said the petroglyph of a buffalo can be viewed. O'Dell said the petroglyph of a buffalo can be viewed. O'Dell said the petroglyph of a buffalo can be viewed. O'Dell said the petroglyph of a buffalo can be viewed. O'Dell said the petroglyph of a buffalo can be viewed. O'Dell said the petroglyph o'Dell s

Society has published

The guide includes topographical maps of each section of the trail, plus a narratives written by River to River Society chairman John O'Dell. The guide are available for \$19.95\$, plus shipping and handling, at \$1142 Winkleman Road, Harrisburg, IL, 62946.

The guide includes topographical is a real guide for people to walk the trail, so they can find a place to get on the trail and then what they can expect to see. We tried to put in a few details that might be interesting to people in terms of history."

The guide gives some background according to potential day hikes, but as it turns out it corresponds to the trail, so they can find a place to get on Southern Illinois. This is a real guide for people to walk the rail, so they can find a place to get on Southern Illinois. This is a real guide for people to walk the rail, so they can find a place to get on Southern Illinois. This according to potential day hikes, but as it turns out it corresponds to the trail, so they can expect to see. We tried to put in a few details that might be interesting to people in terms of history."

The guide gives some background according to potential day hikes, but as it turns out it corresponds to the trail, so they can expect to see. We tried to put in a few details that might be interesting to people in terms of history.

The guide is basically grouped according to potential day hikes, but as it turns out it corresponds to the trail, so they can expect to see. We tried to put in a few details that might be interesting to people in terms of history.

The guide is basically according to potential day hikes, but as it turns out it corresponds to the trail, so they can find a place to get on Southern Illinois.

Jul 2, 1995, Southern Illinoisan

Little Cedar

ittle Cedar Lake is really pretty. "Too bad it's not spilling over,"

Trail goes right across the spillway." spilling over. It will once we get the

said. "Deer, turkey, we saw some that portion of the trail features

Actually, spillway is something of tion of the River-to-River Trail is a

lakes. The breeze created just a Most of the trail features slight ripple effect on the smooth walking, although erosion makes

Little Cedar Lake begins at the west

She said that portion of the trail

The Pomona to Cedar Lake por-

reclaimed most of the opening.

Oct 18, 1996, Southern Illinois-

Benton group works on trail

awful lot to value in their home area in terms of wholesome recreation, and it's the trail for horses to use, since horses will straight trail." That means arranging for

to be the Illinois leg of the American Dis"Our biggest problem," O'Dell said, "is Service for passage through the Shawnee

O'Dell said one day the Illinois stretch "We're going to have to have seed mon-

The nationwide trail money, in order to make up a brochure. National Forest.

High school environmental club joins hikers on River to River project

Students Concerned About Their EnviStretches from New Jersey to California. We're applying for a grant." He adds,

O'Dell believes the trail will be a pow-

volved with just environmental issues, will bear signs for both the national trail ey." The brochure design is now being drawing tourists to Southern Illinois.

their focus to include hiking. It is as a run between Battery Rock on the Ohio highlighted, significant historical features palachian Trail has done. They're a good

with the River to River Trail Society to create the trail.

On Sept. 12, sponsors of the American Discovery Trail marked it. The marking Campgrounds along the way will be noted. Historical landmarks along the trail in out, shelters for people and horses can be

been taking trips to areas like Garden of "We've got people marking and exploring Rock (where river pirates once operated) hanced, and signs can be posted to mark

the Gods and Cave In Rock. It is the type different sections of the trail now. We've and Grand Tower, noted landmark for the trail for hikers. O'Dell says they also

SCATE has 25 members who have project extends into Southern Illinois. clude the Anna Bixby home, Cave In built, natural scenic spots can be en-

This year, however, they are broadening and the River to River Trail, a 120-mile prepared. O'Dell said it will have the trail "We'll follow pretty close to what the Ap-

The River to River Trail also happens O'Dell.

hiking group that they will ally themselves River to Grand Tower on the Mississippi. along the trail will be noted, and some model for us."

of exposure that O'Dell believes will lead applied for an enhancement grant to help Mississippi River navigation.

is a favorite among horseback rid-

he edge of the spillway. Kosma said

Good hiking around the lake

The slight autumn breeze created The main part of the River-to-River Kosma said. "It's pretty when it's

come into view until you are direct-

Suc Kosma, a member of the turkey the other day, the whole more rock formations than the trail

Kosma maintains the portion of a misnomer. The spillway is actual-combination of old forest roadways the River-to-River Trail that runs by a rock ledge separating Cedar and a small foot path. The foot path

National Forest, is basically an up-

The lake," she said, almost reve-surface, but the tranquility was in-footing tricky in isolated areas.

flected in clear water of the two

River-to-River Trail Society board flock. I was out the other day, riding leading to the lake.

the path leading to Cedar Lake. The and cardinals seemingly filled the

of directors and owner of Kosmic by myself, I got to the spillway and

"And, we're not even to the lake spillway is a spectacular place to be.

strong enough to fill the air with "We always see wildlife," s

Acres Stables was taking in the per- I saw a bald eagle."

from Pomona to Cedar Lake. The from Little Cedar Lake.

above 70. The sunlight accentuated leaves fade with the approach of The spillway is a regular stop

complete trail guide

Hiking an activity

gaining popularity

Trail Society tells you to. "Take a hike," they're not wanting you to get 'Give me a three-day

In fact, that is the last thing they hike.'I say start from

According to figures released by the American Hiking Society, the popularity of day hikes will increase 163 percent over the next 50 years. The River to River to rail, which stretches from Battery Rock on the Ohio River to Devils Backbone on the Mississippi, will undoubtedly receive additional pressure if these feets.

Society's figures are correct, a lot of people will be introduced to hiking in the next few years. A little research and preplanning can make the first experience

OUTDOORS: TRAIL SPOTLIGHT

By Dave DeWitte

Follow the allure on the River to River Trail

"I don't even own a sleeping bag or the trail dates back to the original

exercise. Hiking is to go out and

guide hikes into the woods," he

ontinued. "Other folks are always

but if it is new to someone else and

Trail Society since its conception and

"That's one of the reasons I like to

myself out into the woods to view the

true miracles of the Shawnee Forest.

adventure that it will bring, the

"But I try not to encourage people

to do that," he said. "I say go out over

hallenge of hiking the entire length

started trying to organize a trail

marking the twists and turns that

and paved roads and into the

various state parks that O'Dell

we have a good trail guide so if

nung in accordance with the

Starting at a point near Grand Tower on the Mississippi River and ending near Battery Rock on

Panther's Den, Dutchman Lake,

through some truly wondrous

landscapes," O'Dell said. "It has

become very popular with people

from neighboring states who are

Another aspect of the trail's

overlap to a great degree, making

and western bluebirds, northern

and southern garter snake, blue

allure is the transition zones for

many species of plants and

north, south, east and west

it possible to observe eastern

herons, cypress swamps, and

mosses and lichens that have

animals. The divisions between

ooking for a truly wonderful

want to travel to the western

states to get it.

firection the trail will go.

someone is paying attention they

society and in 1993 we had the

solitude and the challenge.

really enjoy the sights."

Guided hikes Follow the allure

With visions of

the lower section

the state, my mind

scenery, capturing

"Part of the River to River T

ociety's goal is to get folks

ohn O'Dell, a society board

sing this trail. Plain and simple. Part of the society's plan to

ikes each week through the fall.

I truly enjoy getting out with

iid. "It's fun to see what they

ay we can maybe build a core

ch week. But lots of folks will

st drop in to hike a specific

The society even has several

experience by shuttling them

om their car to the starting

"We like to park at the end of

ie trail, then take the people to

Then we hike to where their car

starting point," O'Dell said.

O'Dell said the weekly hikes

Saturday: Rim Rock to High

ave drawn as many as 30

Oct. 27: Max Creek

Nov. 3: Crest Trail

Nov. 10: Secret Canyon

Dec. 8 Jackson Hollow

For more information cal

articipants. The following

cople get started on their hiking

inter along the R 2 R trail.

would race with

anticipation of

iking the width of

Follow the allure on the River to River Trail

By Linda A. Krutsinger linda.krutsinger@southernillinoisan.com

HARRISBURG - For years the lure of the River to River Trail has haunted the most adventurous part of my With visions of the lower section of

would race with anticipation of seeing the breathtaking

scenery, capturing wildlife unaware in their natural state and spending some time lost in my own world of though

challenge of hiking the entire length of the trail which measure 160 miles

The more practical side of me,

method of horseback riding to get myself out into the woods to view the true miracles of the Shawnee Forest. "A lot of people have the idea to hike the entire length of the trail, said John O'Dell, long known as the keeper of the R 2 R. They want the adventure that it will bring, the solitude and the challenge. "But I try not to encourage people

"I don't even own a sleeping bag or

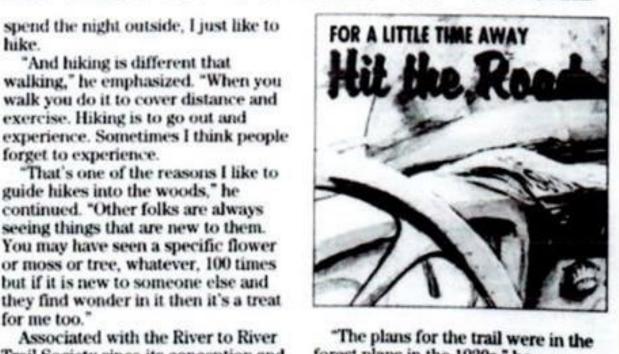
a tent," O'Dell said. "I don't want to

orget to experience. That's one of the reasons I like to guide hikes into the woods," he continued. "Other folks are always seeing things that are new to them. to do that," he said. "I say go out over but if it is new to someone else and O'Dell, who identifies himself as a

"And hiking is different that

exercise. Hiking is to go out and

You may have seen a specific flower or moss or tree, whatever, 100 times they find wonder in it then it's a treat Associated with the River to River Trail Society since its conception and before, O'Dell said that the history of the trail dates back to the original plans for the Shawnee Forest.



Oct 15, 2001, Southern Illinoisan

Tuesday, April 27, 1993

The Southern Illinoisan

Long hike to success

Proponents say little work needed to finish the river-to-river trail

would connect the Mississippi and Ohio rivers could be completed by this summer, if the River to River

formed to promote the completion go to U.S. 45," O'Dell said. of the trail, which would be a permanent, marked trail from Battery Rock near Cave in Rock on the Ohio River to Devil's Backbone at Grand Tower on the Mississippi "It would be a multiuse trail of

about 140 miles," society organizer cypress bayous, wetlands and forest

The trail would pass through the intersect with existing trails. Some Creek. Garden of the Gods. High ciding where to locate, he said. Knob, Giant City State Park, Ferne Clyffe State Park, Chimney Rock, Cedar Lake, Dutchman Lake and tween the Mississippi and Ohio riv- board

Trails are being developed in other parts of the country, and members of the River to River Trail Society

Parts of the trail have been com-"There's bits and pieces of it that would be a boon to tourism, O'Dell

horseback trail, an all-terrain vehicle The trail would give Southern Illinoisans a way to experience the outdoors, O'Dell said. "It would The trail would cover land of un- provide inexpensive recreation for people with a lot of return for it," he

The trail also could be an eco-

"It would raise our quality-of-life Recreation is one of the many of the scenic areas would be Lusk factors industries consider when dehe was a member of the Southern Il-The effort to complete a trail be- linois Tourism Council's executive

Indian dancing to help raise money for river trail

The River to River Society is sponsoring "Native American the trail and develop a brochure Heritage Appreciation," a perfor- or trail guide. on May I at the Grandview Sta-risburg. Take Illinois 145 south bles near Harrisburg. the American Indian Center of St. Louis will perform at 1 and The cost is \$5 per carload. All proceeds will be used to support

The stable is just north of the Pope County line. Signs will be For more information, call the River to River Trail, espe-

"I like to get outdoors," O'Dell said. "I have taken my kids to these

It wouldn't take much effort "The trail is marked on a map." Now the society's main goals are tion right in the Shawnee National O'Dell, who is superintendent of marking the trail and completing Forest," O'Dell said

"With a guide, we can start mar- the trail with," he said. "It's kind of keting the trail," O'Dell said.

"It would be a hiking trail, a "I was working with tourism and ing the trail, which will take about saw the potential and what could be two months. A fund-raiser is Eventually, the trail could grow in

> The River to River Trail Society "There probably will be lodging began in 1989 with a group of people who were dedicated to complet- kinds of stuff that could go along The fund-raiser will feature "It will be held on a hilltop loca-

Oct 15, 2001, Southern Illinoisan

the same outdoor experience as Knob, Garden of the Gods,

Apr 7, 1993, Southern Illinoisan

Thursday, August 11, 1994 If you mark it, they will come

New signs make River to River Trail much easier to find

The River to River Trail has been in existence for upon themselves to do something about that. They recently completed a signing project that clearly marks the trail from its origin at Battery Rock on the Ohio River to Devils Backbone Park on the Mississippi. society are hoping that "If you mark it, they will come." and we were trying to think of some way we could have an attraction in Southern Illinois without spending \$1 billion to do it," said John O'Dell, chairman of the River to River Trail Society, "We thought if we could exsend the trail river to river, that would give us the attraction we needed to develop tourism." about 80 miles, from Battery Rock to U.S. Route 45. wer a period of about eight years, the River to River Trail Society worked to connect the original trail with other existing trails to completely span the state. bly about 1985 or '86. There were a lot of old pioneer

the River to River Trail Society began marking it. The trail is marked by white plywood diamonds overtrail from the beginning. In addition, there are thin layed with a blue "1" that has been the symbol of the brown plastic collapsible signs located throughout the

that particular segment of the trail. Most of the trail is open to hikers as well as equestrians. O'Dell said the U.S. Forest Service is going to build a loop trail that will O'Dell said. "The markers have to be able to stay in place. We've had a little trouble with vandalism." The vandation problem has been minor and the trad

The brown signs depict the type of truffic allowed on

Trail and said we're competitive with that," he said "We have the dense foliage and the valley ecology that "I think that's the advantage that we have. We have the vistas. We have a let more rock formations than

rugged terrain in the state, hikers can experience the solitade of the Shawnee National Forest. "Almost any day that I've been out, I've never seen anyone," O'Dell said. "Very few times have I seen peo-Hikers are more agt to see white tails or wild turkeys to walk up on critters," he said. "For one thing the

paths don't have twigs on them, so you are quieter." Most of the trail is located on state or federal lands. O'Dell said ambitious takers, who camp along the trail, could walk the entire 146 miles in about nine days. time," he said. "I would take it by weekends, it's easily accessible from a number of towns.

On the trails John O'Dell, chairman of the River to River Trail Society, considers the trail one of

Finding the River to River Trail

towns and noted tourist attractions along the route. The trail runs through the Gorden of the Gods area Road, Harrisburg, IL 62945. near Harrisburg. A trailhead is located at the Gurden of the Gods parking fot and travels west to Herod. "I would encourage people not to walk it at one. Other trailhoads are located in Hered, Eddyville, ... The River to River Trail Society is also planning to Tunnel Hill, Ferne Oyffe State Park, Giant City State publish more detailed trail guides later this year.

Aug 11, 1994, Southern Illinoisan

the trail, are available by writing. River to River Trail The brochures will be available soon in post offices at - Les Winkeler

Illinois Trailriders looking to cut path across Shawnee

picked up rakes to try to make the Illinois Trailriders, an advocacy 16-mile portion of a planned river- backs along steeper trails to curt to-river trail through the Shawnee erosion

"adopted" a obliterated old ones and cut switch-\$50,000. The bridge would be high

private organization will clear and

maintain it. Or, in the case of exist-

Frances Land-Ritter (center), vice president of Illinois Trailriders nailing down the missing parts," Shawnee: Building a recreation firm enough that horses could ford Shawnee. Frances Land-Ritter, vice president bridge over the Big Muddy River at the river. Land-Ritter said flood To ensure the trail is used only of the river-to-river trail will have bridge then 10 miles back again. users, each of whom injects an Shawnee, said the agency will seek o cut across private land. And the Land-Ritter said her organiza- average of \$60 a day into the local easements from private landowners U.S. Forest Service has neither the tion plans to apply for federal economy for everything from gas to allow horse riders to cross their manpower nor the money in its rec- matching funds to build the bridge, for their cars to dinner in fancy land. Which is why the agency several enough to let boats and canoes pass and jelly crowd," she said. "These management practices are working Under the program, the Forest there. Rather it was a horse ferry, we are encouraging equestrian users for everyone to use but for us to

Jun 30, 1990, Southern Illinoisan

The Southern Illinoisan Sunday, February 16, 1992 New group could aid river-to-river trail

By Phil Brinkman linois might succeed with the cre-Consolidated High School District. O'Dell spoke at the founding meet-

ing of the River to River Trail Socie-

budget for recreation for the users, Southern Illinois is a frustrat- vate. Shawnee National Forest also should ing experience: Trails are poorly linois Coordinator for the American of trails and byways through 12 Would connect based Tower on the Mississippi River, is the checker-

Recent federal legislation ap- scenic 265,000-acre Shawnee, could many maps as a solid green mass tional funding from the National to-river trail will be stalled if hikers proved supporting trail construction provide a major draw for tourists, connecting the rivers, most of the Trails Fund Act, approved in No- horseback riders and ATV users do and maintenance and an increased organizers say. But for many trail land within the boundaries is pri-vember as part of national transpor- not put aside their differences. the region, said Allan Green, recre- in the Shawnee National Forest, ation staff officer for the Shawnee. Green said.

Feb 2, 1992, Southern Illinoisan

tation legislation. The act will divert "If we don't all work together management plan, due out next raised by the purchase of fuel for going to get anywhere on trails. plans over the next 10 years to build ational vehicles from roads to trails. Individuals or groups interested in Discovery Trail, a 5,500-mile system construction of the trail, which pected to place more emphasis on \$30 million over six years, Green working with state legislators about will receive \$300,000 of that plus a O'Dell at 439-3103. "We're going to go from a small percentage of the rest based on the "This is a lifetime project," O'Dell to do the project. The Forest Service board pattern of land ownership in trail program to a large trail program number of recreational vehicle li-said. "It's not going to be done this Trails, especially through the Although the Shawnee appears on Green said the state will see addi- Green said progress toward a river- times."

The legislation is expected to raise helping locate and build the trail or said. Each state, including Illinois, obtaining funding for it may call Despite the infusion of cash, done over a lifetime or several life-

year or next year. It's going to be

students to value the trail, as well, O'Dell us in marking the trail." Still another grant is being sought, this to handle the upkeep of their segment. has been with the trail project as a society

The state transportation department is time from the Secretary of State's office.

Maybe SCATE will take part in that activ-Dec 14, 1992, Southern Illinoisan

and improve a multi-use River to River

REGION

Feb 24, 1989, Southern Illinoisan

short distances until a trail through wild areas can be fully developed.

by the local sponsoring groups.

wild areas can be fully developed.

by the local sponsoring groups.

or short distances until a trail through portions can be created be marking trail system.

The key to the society's plans is loss of the society plans is loss of the

Trail society 12/22/96

Economic development, trail towns and the hall of fame will be

subjects discussed at the River to

River Trail Society general membership meeting Jan. 5 at the Marion Holiday Inn.

Society president John O'Dell has invited mayors from

146-mile trail to the meeting to

discuss how the trail can be used to the economic advantage of

Joining Carbondale Mayor
Dillard, Harrisburg Mayor John
D. Cummins, Vienna Mayor Paul
Gage and other mayors will be
Steve Frattini, executive director
of the Southern Illinois Tourism
Council. Frattini will be on hand

to offer suggestions, listen to

One facet of economic

ideas, and discuss possibilities.

development that will be explored

towns in the communities that are

During the January meeting the first members of the River to

River Trail Society Hall of Fame

The board of directors of the

Trail Society will recognize and honor the people who have

helped establish mile-stones that

Among those being inducted are the late L.O. Trigg, the late Dan Malkovich, the late Wayman Presley, Ray Morris, Scott Curray from the U.S. Forest Service, Ned

Enrietto and Don Coale from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and Wade Flake, one of the first two individuals to

Dec 22, 1995,

Southern Illinoisan

walk the entire River to River

have been important in the

development of the River to

will be inducted.

will be the establishment of trail

communities all along the

their communities.

meeting set

Hard work main requirement for river-to-river trail

is good

River To River

Not major changes, the trail still begins at Bat-tery Rock on the Ohio River and ends at the Mis-The dedication and determination of community volunteers might determine the success of efforts to credit and of the physical task of t guides may be obsolete, or at least a bit outdated. In addition, a \$20,000 grant obtained from the afe a 120-mile recreation trail from the Mississippi River to the Ohio River, said the organizer of the River and the State Park.

State Park.

State Park.

State Park.

Building the western part of the recreational opportunity for Souther are encouraging, but cautioned volunteers that the work will not be "a gentle walk through the woods."

O'Dell said of the physical task of the phy Symns Trail Act will allow improvements on the existing trail. John O'Dell, chairman of the River To River Trail Society, said the money will be utilized to the state of the

ginning of work that could take decades to complete.

Organizer John O'Dell hopes the group will be able to mark and promote a patchwork trail connecting the two rivers in a much shorter two rivers in a much shorter the trail could be ready been completed in the eastern. Shawnee National Forest Manage ment Plan call for 236 miles of trails to be created for all-terrain vehicles. Some of the routes might be used in the river-to-river trail.

An environmental assessment on the river-to-river trail.

An environmental assessment on the river-to-river trail.

An environmental assessment on the proposed routes will be present a two the proposed routes will be present and the trail will cross is officially wilderness. O'Dell said the sead in the sead in the trail or assist in other ways may contact O'Dell, superintendent of the development of a specific There will also be other changes of note. "We've got a major relocation going on t Trail will go close to Bald Knob. It comes out at Clear Springs and joins the old trail at that point." Hikers will also notice changes in the trail near Ferne Clyffe and Giant City state parks. Some

> The River To River Trail Guide has nearly sold out its 20,000 original printing. O'Dell said an up-coming article in Backpacker magazine highlight-ing the River To River Trail will probably create nough interest to deplete the existing supply. The timing is excellent, considering the "Part of these changes are growing pains, but the Appalachian Trail does the same thing," O'Dell said. "It's called a living trail. I guess that's a euphemism for being able to make changes



hikes, such as the May 17 excursion down Lusk
Creek Canyon. The hike begins at about 10 a.m.

"It has to be a fantastic view," said O'Dell, who has yet to go to the top of the tower. "The steps

Store hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m Monday

May 2, 1997, Southern Illinoisan

NATIONAL MAGAZINE, TV SHOW PLAN FEATURES River to River Trail in the spotlight

meandering through the hills, hollows and small towns of Southern Illinois, the River

said John O'Dell, chairman of the finding fault only with an abundance of 1,500-member River to River Trail Society. horseback riders such as those portraye The trail has been open for four years in the PBS program. A spread in Backpacker magazine and an upcoming episode of the PBS program "Trailside Make Your Own Adventure" are part of the coast-to-coast American Discovery Trail. Supporters say the trail deserves the recognition and the increased ride, said he believes the segment with the Shawnee National Forest.

Ron Ward of Herrin, who went on the serves the recognition and the increased ride, said he believes the segment with the Shawnee National Forest. devoted to the 146-mile route, which runs between Battery Rock on the Ohio River The five-page Backpacker article spotand Devils Backbone on the Mississippi. lights the trail as a place where hikers can tana, Colorado and Arizona to ride, but a Trail organizers say inquiries are pourforget they're in the "Prairie State."

and, until now, has catered largely to In that show, which will begin airing lo But the publicity could help create a whole new market for the trail, which is local horse enthusiasts on a ride through ing in, some from as far away as Hawaii. It touts the trail's "wondrous rock for- "It's probably as pretty a place as I'v

Dec 30, 1997, Southern Illinoisan

Hikers team up to spur Illinois trail development

mately two to three hours.

By Michael Pearson The Associated Press

HEROD - In Europe, hiking is a way of life. On the East Coast, the Appalachian Trail breeds hikers. And in the West, the mountains becken to backpackers aching for

among states in public land for recreation — there's not much of a hiking culture. That leaves many would-be nature walkers wondering where and how to hit the trails. John O'Dell of the new Illinois Hiking Society is hoping to change

nois, is creating the new group to foster hiking clubs in every town in

"We need advocates for outdoor recreation," he said. "There are opportunities, but the biggest probwho can help you." There are a few hiking clubs

few are well-organized or have any-

thing to do with one another, said

the American Discovery Trail - done two segments of which run through Illinois. "They don't tend

ear, then move the hiking society ness areas to Springfield, where it could lobby

healthy that families can do togeth-

self-sufficiency, yet somehow it's a 650-mile circuit with Chicago in our feet to the fire, but at the same The association will also teach Legislation recently passed by We rely on them to augment our rehiking and backpacking skills and Congress expands the pool of mon-sources to get the job done," he

Two events scheduled The River-to-River Trail Societing part in this hike should meet ty will be sponsoring two Natalana Alto Vineyards. Information

tional Trails Days events on the River-to-River Trail Society will also be available at this five years ago as a way to con- Both these hikes are free. past five years the River-to-Riv- the U.S. Forest Service will take er Trail Society has sponsored place at Millstone Bluff near workshops, lectures and hikes Glendale. Interpreters will be on er Trail Society has sponsored hand to lead hikes at this Native American site. The first event is scheduled for 11 a.m. at Herod. There will

be information on the River-to-River Trail Society, information noon and 2 p.m. The cost is \$3 on how to help maintain trails, per person. schedules of hikes, a trail main- In addition, there will be ar tenance workshop and a list of organizational meeting of the ll-scheduled trail work days. organizational meeting of the ll-linois Hiking Society at the Days There will also be a guided in- Inn Motel in Muddy, June 12-13. terpretive hike to Jackson Hol- The two-day seminar will fo

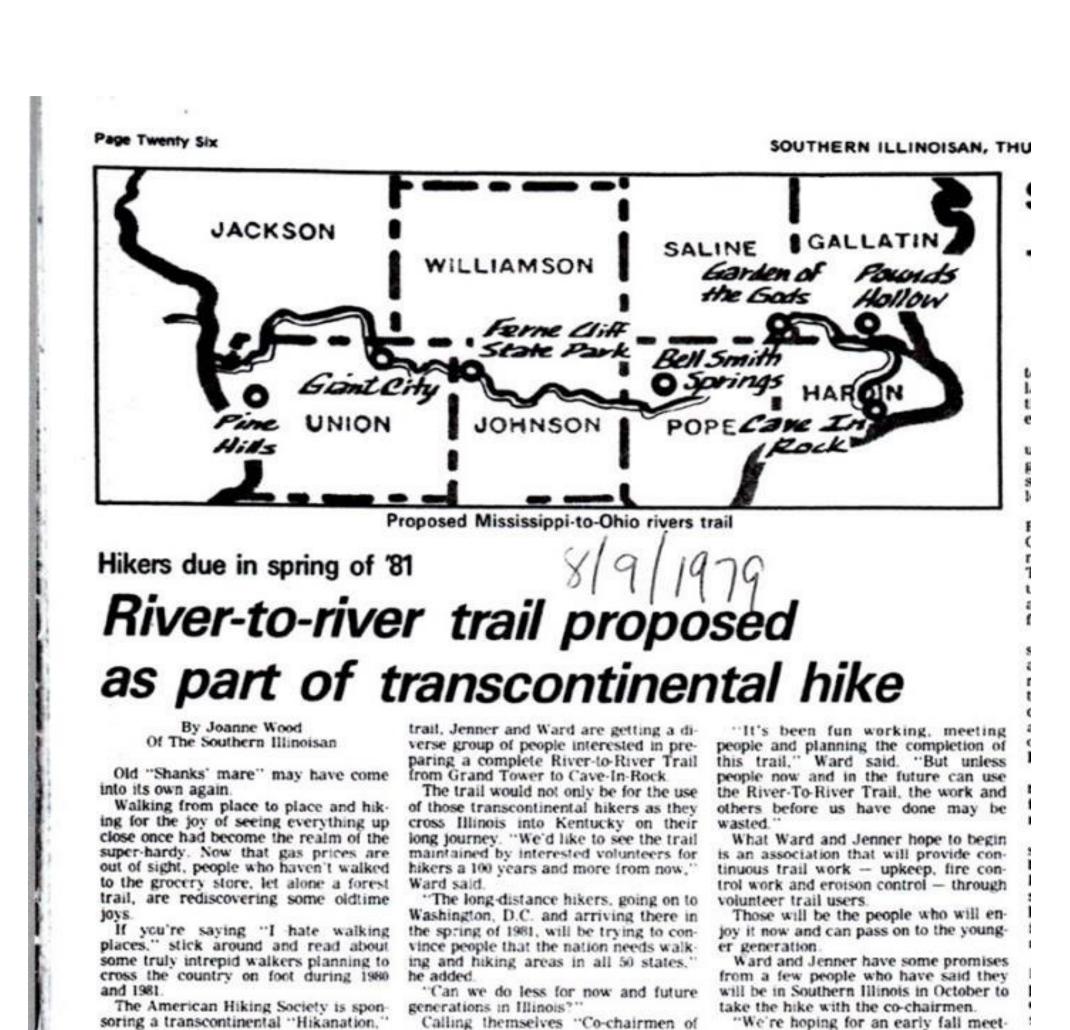
low, led by River-to-River Trail cus on organizing hiking groups society founder John O'Dell. and fundraising opportunities The hike will take approxi- for trails. At 2 p.m. there will be a hike John O'Dell 252-6789, or the Illion the Godwin Trail, near Alto nois Hiking Society 264-5555. Pass. Anyone interested in tak-

There's a lot going on with all the federal and state money available. As a result, state policymakers Groups like this sort of hold our feet to rarely hear hikers speaking in a unthe fire, but at the same time they work "Hikers are the silent majority," with us as partners. We rely on them to Beach, Va., based coordinator of augment our resources to get the job

Illinois has spent a lot of money coming into its own just in time to on behalf of back-country recrea- on trails since 1991. Dick Westfall, influence that spending.

> tion of the River-to-River trail, current 1,600 miles of trails, and which links the Ohio and Mississip- build new ones. pi Rivers in Southern Illinois, and "There's a lot going on with all

promote the preservation of natu- ey available for such projects over said. Jun 5, 1998, Southern Illinoisan



Aug 9, 1979, Southern Illinoisan

Hikers will head from Independence. Illinois, with townspeople and forest their Harrisburg homes.

southern Colorado in the early summer other. Jenner and Ward talked with Hikers, 410 E. Church St., Harrisburg

and through the Great Plains of Kansas people whose kitchen windows look out 1L 62946, or by calling Jenner at 252

beginning in San Francisco in the the possibility-probability committee."

will put the group across the Sierras in trail twice and intend to make the

Nev., and then across the Rockies of As they traveled from one end to the

Kans., to Devil's Den State Park and service staff people, with Illinois De-

Ozark Natioal Forest in Arkansas, up partment of Conservation officials and

brough Mark Twain National Forest on men like Tim Merriman, naturalist and

The group will gather at Wittenburg, Mo., across the Misissippi River from Grand Tower in the fall, say Bob Jenner and Bob Ward of Harrisburg

Permission t has been received to create the hiking trail trough forest service and state park lands, down back-country dirt roads in a few spots

Members of the Shawnee Hills Hikers and across some privately owned

a month, across the desert to Tonapah, journey again in October.

group, sponsors of a potential hiking farmland.



May 27, 2007, Southern Illinoisan

Spending much of his life in Decatur,

try to keep things as natural as possible, but

sometimes there are allowances that need to treatment@beauten.com/351-5074

Historical News Articles About the River to River Trail

River to River Trail 3/20/2001

By Les Winkeler les.winkeler@ southernillinoisan.com

Tt's not as heralded as the Appalachian Trail Land only a fraction as long, but the River to River Trail that traverses Southern Illinois presents an interesting challenge for hikers. From east to west, the trail

begins at Battery Rock on the

Ohio River, dips up and down, over and around Southern Illinois, until it emerges on the Mississippi River at Devils Backbone Park in Grand Tower. The trail is roughly 175 miles of paths twisting through the Shawnee National Forest, passing such Southern Illinois landmarks

as Lusk Creek Canyon,

good clip for day after day after day." Sixteen miles may not sound overwhelming, but the distance gets longer when

Garden of the Gods, Ferne

Clyffe and Giant City state

Since the trail officially

opened in 1993, more than

150 people have through-

development director for

Camp Ondessonk, has hiked

the entire trail, although he

hasn't through-hiked it. He

covered the trail in 17 seg-

ments, covering a 22-month

12 to 17 days," he said. "At

12 days, you're talking 16-17

miles a day, which is a pretty

you consider the terrain. A

have to carry several days worth of water and supplies. Although the region is criss-crossed by highways and is dotted by state and Lee Smith, marketing and federal parks, the River to

River to River Trail would

"The trail takes you through Eddyville, Goreville and Makanda," Smith said. "Actually, you would need Unfortunately, there aren't a

River Trail and civilization

A through-hike requires sitting down with a map and planning. The trail is marked

with white wooden dia-

monds, marked with a blue "i." Usually, the diamond will be pointed in the proper direction when the trail turns

"The trail is well marked and well blazed, but maps and a compass are a necessity," Smith said. "You still have to have a sense of the woods and the outdoors.

"If the weather changes, you need to look at the terrain. To have a good sense of what is up ahead is a real

As for shelter, through-

lot of places to buy backpackhikers carry their own tents. er food. People have used the "Since it is in the national post offices in these towns as forest, with the exception of natural areas, you can camp right off the trail," Smith said. "The rocks provide numerous shelters from the elements."

May 20, 2001, Southern

Illinoisan

Forest Service buys Panther Den

By Cindy Humphreys 7/3/1996
The Southern Illinoisan Forest Service officials are breathing a sigh of relief after finally being able to buy the heart of the Panther Den wilderness area.

"The actual rock formation that the wilder-

Gaping

A quick visit confirms the obvi-

The Herod to Concord Cemetery

burg). While there are several access points along gravel roads in the Williams Hill-One Horse

at the Gap

River-to-River Trail

Even if you've never been there, it doesn't take a genius to figure out how One Horse Gap got its name.

The area is excellent for birding, and deer and wild turkey are abundant in the area.

"There is a gap in the rock and you can only take one horse through at a time," said Lee Smith of Vienna, a member of the River-to-River Trail Section 1 beautiful for the said. "They put too many constraints upon themselves and don't take the time to enjoy what's along the trail."

Smith has hiked the length of the River-to-River Trail and the One Horse Gap trail is popular with equestrians. In fact, the Cap segment of the trail, from popular with equestrians. In fact, the contract of the construction of

Herod to Concord Cemetery is one hitching posts have been constructed

going up from Herod you're going under a lot of caropy and bluff lines, then you go up tarough the gap and you're on top of the bluffs. Smath

The view atop the bluff during the summer is hinted by the forest canopy. Smith said the view and the entire tike is particularly stunning in the fall when the leaves are turning.

The trail begins near Williams Hill, which with an elevation of 1 064 feet, which is the second highest point in Blimois. Virtually the entire trail less within the Shawner Chapet, an old flantist church, along

hike covers about six miles. Smith categorizes the hike as easy to moderate, but suggests hikers alkot theme-

selves at least half a day to enjoy the mile from the gap, a hike that should area.

the trail. There is a general top of the bluffs at One Horse store in Herod where last min-

formal camperounds along this segment of trail, however, camping is permitted throughout the Shawnee National Forest, Camping is permitted on about a mile away.

trail lies within the Shawnee Chapel, an old Baptist church, along the way. The church has a registry which dates back to the 1920s.

The view atop the bluff during the along the trail.

TRAIL FACTS

a favorite for hikers

940-acre Panther Den wilderness area, in Union County near the Williamson County The former owner had allowed the wilderness designation. But Forest Service officials after developers bought property next door.
"The waterfall and the cliffs, it was all on

tion recently was released by the federal government for the purchase.

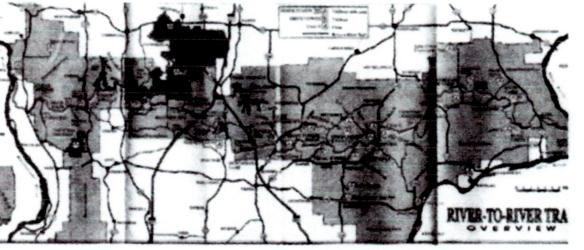
Of those 262 acres, 89 are inside the of the Shawnee Forest.

areas on public lands.

In fact, ATVs are prohibited from all areas of the Shawnee Forest.

Jul 3, 1996, Southern Illinoisan

River to River continued from page 29



to River Trail requires physical conditioning and a commitment. However, if a hiker lization is never too far from

from east to west because the eastern portion is the most

from High Knob to Garden of the Gods," Smith said. "You're doing a lot of ups and downs through the

hollers. A lot of people think Most people hike the trail it's similar to walking along

is the most complete guide to what's happening in

entertainment and the arts in Southern Ellinois.

Are you a Southern Fun Person?



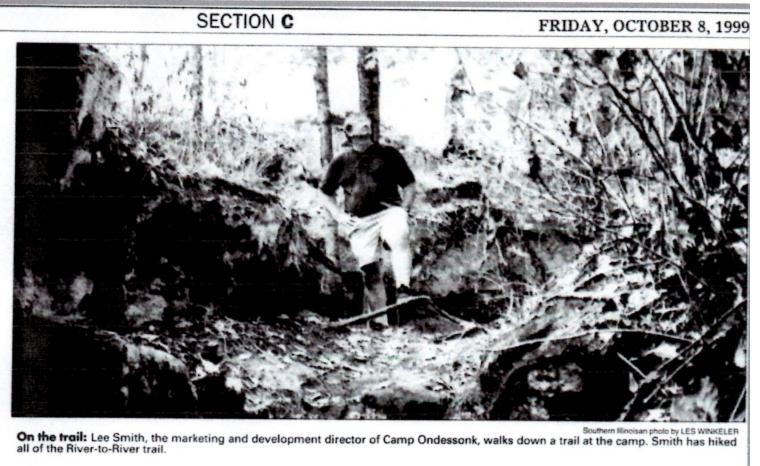
Your life can depend on how well you use a compass



* * * * * * * * * *

Marcury Contact

Oct 12, 1996, Southern Illinoisan



Going River to River



Oct 8, 1996, Southern Illinoisan

New CD attempts to capture heart of Illinois' River to River Trail

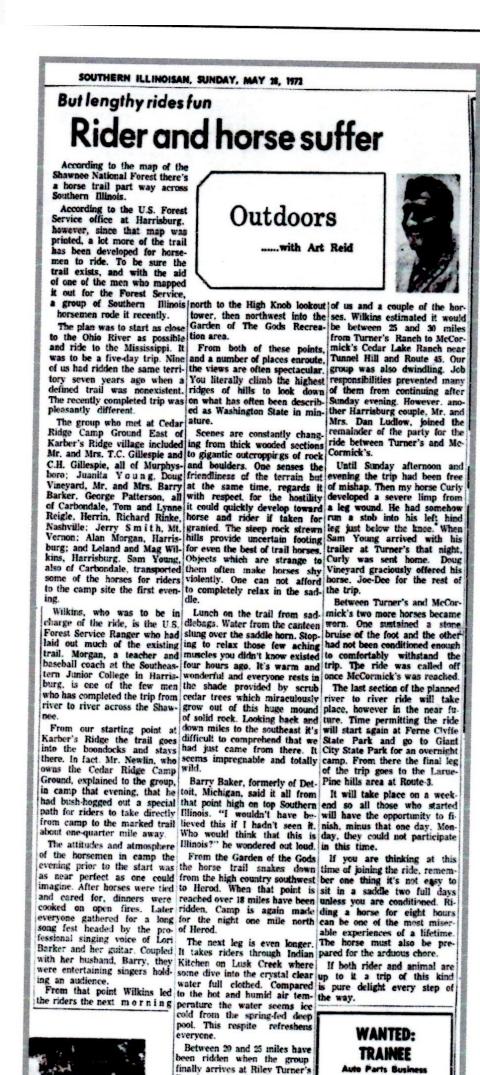
The River to River Trail winds 176 miles through Southern Illi-nois, from Battery Rock on the Ohio River to Devil's Backbone on the Mississippi. Van hikes the

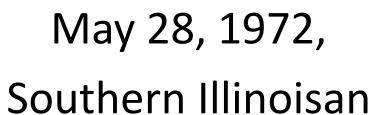
just sitting at my piano bench, or wherever I am," said Van. "It's on Indian petroglyph of a thunder-bird, when inspiration for her

Dance' when I was watching my daughters dance. Then I saw that

photographs taken by Jack Van. Service headquarters in Harr-Zola Van grew up in Johnston burg, and most of the region

Oct 11, 2000, Southern Illinoisan



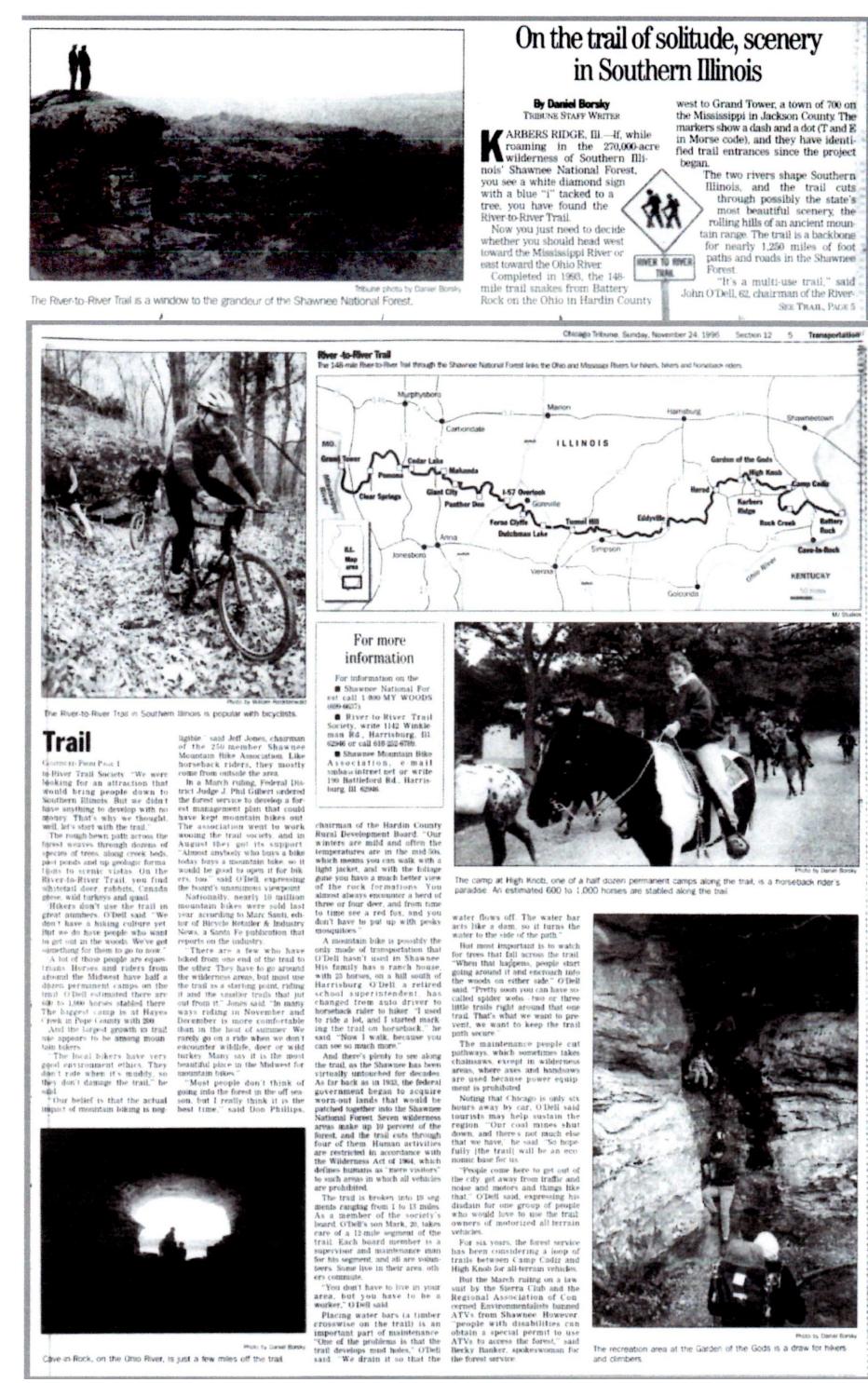


ed the guest ranch near the river to river trail for the con-

venience of he and his friends
when riding that country.

The third day was to be the Merien, III. 62959

GOOD BENEFITS



www.newspapers.com/image/168960695

Chicago Tribune (Chicago, Illinois) · Sun, Nov 24, 1996 · Main Edition · Page

Nov 24, 1996, Chicago Tribune



Follow Voigts as he through-hikes the River to River Trail in September 2007

Editor's note: John Voigts of Springfield throughhiked the River to River Trail in September 2007. He kept a journal of his hike. Here are excerpts rom his adventure. The second half of the journal will be published next week Day 1 — Sunday, Sept. 23, 2007 The owner of Circle B Ranch, where we staved Saturday night, shuttled Joel Johnson and me to

About mid-morning we arrived at the road rossing near from Furnace Joel had never seen the Iron Furnace so we hiked the extra quarter unile off the main trail to see it. This i a very interesting part of local history Informational displays describe and depict how charcoal was produced at the site for the purpose of firing the 50 foot tall furnace to produce pig iron which was then shipped to mills which turned the pig iron into steel

We stayed our first night on the trail at the High Knob Ranch campground. We enjoyed a hot shower and some snacks from the little store There were few campers. The one we spoke with had just broken his arm when his horse spooked First day mileage: 17.36 miles

ampground there. Some visitors gave me

Day 2 - Monday, Sept. 24 Garden of the Gods We made it to Garden of the Gods by mid morning. We walked through the scenic area. I had seen it before. In fact, my very first hil on the River to River had started at the

The River to River Trail by passes some of the for Joel and me as there is no longer water available at this site. Then I discovered that most beautiful scenery in the Shawnee had left my two towels at High Knob Ranch National Forest as it travels through Lusk in the shower. I called and Rick, the owner. Creek Wilderness Our goal was to hike the agreed to drive them to me, which was very entire trail and time was limited so we did generous of him. And he wouldn't take any not take time for any side trips. I have since money for his trouble, just wished us well with taken some of these and highly recommend visiting Salt Peter Cave and Secret Canyon when you can. We arrived at Circle B Ranch about 3 p m where we stayed the night and resupplied from Approaching One Horse Gap from the east, our waiting vehicle the trail is mostly rocky and narrow with hird day mileage: 13.77 miles

steep cliffs and caves on the right hand side. the uphill slope. A tree had fallen immediately next to the trail on the downhill slope exposing a tangle of roots and dark empty spaces happened to look down into this just as I passed by and, startled, found myself looking into the eyes of a copperhead. His head was no more than six inches from where my leg was passing by him I kept moving steadily until I was clear and then stopped. His camouflage was very effective against the background of tangled roots and dark cavities. He had ambush. He was kinked and coiled, ready to strike but we were out of range and we gave him no reason to think that we meant him any

Day 3 — Tuesday, Sept. 25 Concord Cemetery We got to Concord Cemetery late morning We sat by the road in front of a house for a while in the shade of a tree eating some early lunch. No one answered my knock at the door and I decided to take the liberty of

Just as we were getting ready to hike from Circle B I noticed the van had a flat tire. A friend had generously agreed to get the van while we were gone and park it at Giant City State Park I needed to deal with the flat tire now. Thanks to the kindness of a complete stranger whose office was next to the only garage in Eddyville (but which was unmanner that morning) I was able to plug the flat myself and use an air hose and we were able to get

Day 4 — Wednesday, Sept. 26

We discussed staying at Millistone Lake for the night but I suggested pushing on in order to sta at Dutchman Lake. So we pressed on and put in Fourth day mileage: 14.17 miles Day 5 -- Thursday, Sept. 27

> We camped by Dutchman Lake for the night. Joel went swimming in the evening. Fifth day mileage: 18.02 miles

Feb 6, 2009, Southern Illinoisan

helping myself to some water from their outside

Mar 12, 1996, Southern Illinoisan