

Gunter's first ultralight aircraft. daughter, Samantha, 15, get the men to shore. Marie
 experience, his younger "They went to take off and David's wife, Stephanie. Gunter ran to the house to

Trail to start in Metamora

Debbie Blank

Assistant Editor

Washington, D.C., boasts the C&O Canal Towpath. Indianapolis has its Monon Trail.

Now determined Franklin County residents want to establish an eight-mile Whitewater Canal Trail, allowing local nature lovers and tourists to hike and bike between Metamora and Brookville.

According to Mick Wilz, who heads up the steering committee, "This trail will be a source of pride for our community and a way to incorporate nature, history and wellness."

The canal corridor, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, was vital to pioneers, serving as a link for goods and travel in southeastern Indiana in the 1800s.

Committee member Paul Baudendistel wrote on the trail's Web site, www.whitewatercanaltrail.com, "The canal was completed between Brookville and Lawrenceburg in 1839, to Laurel in 1843, to Connersville in 1845 and to Cambridge City in 1846. The final canal went from Cincinnati through a tunnel in Cleves into the state of Indiana and ended in Hagerstown; it also had a branch to Lawrenceburg for a total of 101 miles."

Boats transported people, lumber, livestock and grains until the early 1860s, then the towpath was laid with



Enjoying the scenery: Twins Brian (left) and Dennis MacDonald, 5, Brookville, frolic near the proposed Whitewater Canal Trail.

Contributed photo

rails, according to the Web site. The Whitewater Valley Railroad purchased 62 miles of the canal from Hagerstown to Harrison, Ohio, in 1863.

Today the nonprofit group Whitewater Valley Railroad operates a tourist train between Metamora and Connersville. To the

south of Brookville, Indiana & Ohio Railroad trains transport goods to and from Owens Corning, Brookville. Rails between Brookville and Metamora on land primarily owned by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources were removed in the 1980s, paving the way for this trail.

Committee members, who have been meeting for several years, are concerned because the towpath is deteriorating. The chairman explains, "Nobody's taken loving care of it. It has to be cleaned up and used and maintained."

See TRAIL, page 3

Hutson spreads the good

Debbie McIntyre

Staff Writer

Jim Hutson has found that a follower of Christ does not have to go to fr



School graduate attended Freewill Baptist Church at Negangard's Corner near Sunman. His father was the late James Hutson Sr., who

When he was 14, he formed a quartet with his brother, Bryan, a cousin and an uncle called New Generation and started per-

W sale late care in a

Trail

Continued from page 1

Perhaps the most major repair is the replacement of a missing bridge near Brookville. Funding is crucial to the project. According to Wilz, "depending upon how elegant" the bridge is, the cost will be between \$30,000 and \$100,000.

The chairman cannot pinpoint the exact cost to rehabilitate the entire trail. He reflects, "Money (in the form of state and federal grants) is not available like it used to be ... We're going to really look in the private sector" for financial contributions.

Organizations and individuals may donate tax-deductible checks to the nonprofit group, too. "Every little bit will help."

For the trail to be completed, manpower also will be essential. He explains, "Initially, volunteers will be used to complete the basic trail work. Volunteers are always welcome. From the steering committee to the labor of clearing brush, Franklin County citizens will be involved in every step of the planning."

Persons who would like to donate funds or volunteer to build the Whitewater Canal Trail may write to P.O. Box

126, Brookville, IN 47012.

Wilz reports that the committee realizes this project may take years. "In fact, the idea of a canal trail has been in existence since two months before Pearl Harbor. The maps were created, but fighting World War II put the dream on hold."

According to him, "The trail will be completed in several stages." The first one begins in Metamora and goes east for about two and a half miles. The chairman does not have a completion date for that stage, noting volunteers will spend "as long as it takes to do it right."

Future stages are dependent on the condition of the pathway, volunteers and funding.

Wilz believes the "unspoiled landscape" of this part of Franklin County would make the new recreational area "one of the most scenic biking and hiking trails in the state, if not the country."

He says creating the trail is important because it will preserve county history. "If it sits there and nature takes its course, it will more or less disappear."

Hutson

until last year, when he moved to Columbus and began working for WYG. He puts in a full day, arriving at the at 5 a.m. Hutson is on the air from 5:30 until 11 a.m., then goes on satellite calls across a wide territory until late afternoon.

The lead and baritone singer's first love remains Southern gospel music and he still performs, and sometimes emcees concerts. Last month he was singing in church in Anderson and looked up to see his uncle Tim Woods, and his wife in the audience. "Tim taught me how to sing so there is the teacher and the student is singing. I was so scared."

Despite his lifelong church attendance, gospel singing and even working for a Christian radio station, Hutson says he did not have a personal relationship with God until about six years ago. "I knew a lot about him, but did not know him. He led me to my wife, then she lived a life in front of me so that I knew she had something I didn't - and I wanted it. Then she led me back to him."

His job helps keep his Christian walk in focus. "I

Weary Women Warriors



Janie
Jasin!



Free!



R.S.V.P. to:
(317) 421-5680



Presented by:
Major Hospital's "Center For
Women's Health"

Focusing On YOU!