We Love Good News...

The Trail Foundation held a press conference on February 28 to announce recent donations to the "Campaign for the Trail," including the largest gift given to date to the Trail—a $1 million donation from the namesake of the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail, Ann Showers Butler. TTF also announced lead gifts of $650,000 from the Moody Foundation and $100,000 from the James M. Cox Foundation, the charitable arm of Cox Enterprises, the owner of the Austin American-Statesman. TTF now has received donations and firm commitments totaling $4.3 million towards our $5 million goal.

Lead donors contributing to the campaign also include: Austin Parks Foundation, Roger Beasley, Jeb Boyt & Nada Lulic, CDK Riverside LLC, Griffin Davis & Heather Keating, the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, Whataburger/Lynne Dobson & Greg Wooldridge, Luci Baines Johnson,
Maggie Lewis tells how she fell in love with the Trail.

The "Campaign for the Trail" is a five million dollar initiative. It includes three million dollars in private funds toward closing the 1.1-mile gap in the Trail, from the east side of the Austin American-Statesman building to Lakeshore Park. The City of Austin estimates that the Trail completion project funded by this public-private partnership will begin in 2012, with an estimated completion at the end of 2013. Two million will go toward much-needed improvements including new riverfront gathering areas, native tree plantings to beautify and diversify the Trail's woodlands, and new and renovated restrooms.

TTF is tremendously grateful to all of our contributors, and we especially thank Ann Showers Butler for her extraordinary gift to this campaign. We encourage everyone to give what they can to help complete the Trail. Thank you!

Why you love the Trail...

I started running at the Trail about 1978 wearing polyester tennis dresses and heavy leather K-Swiss tennis shoes. I thought running would help my tennis skills, but actually, it ruined them forever. I am so very glad!

Running was free and freeing - all you needed was a good pair of shoes. Men's Adidas were all that women could find back then. I remember walking a short distance and then telling myself to run to the next bridge or other landmark. Soon the trail welcomed me daily, no matter the temperature or weather. It was the best place to reflect on my day, plan activities in my mind and enjoy being in nature. A moving meditation. I remember the first time I ran the three-mile loop without stopping to walk. I was thrilled!

I gradually became familiar with the "regulars" in the 4:30 to 6:00PM block. I would recognize their gait and exchange smiles. I ran with my teaching buddy, Karen, and gradually got to know runners in the parking lot, so happy when they invited me to run with them. Austin was smaller then. I would go to a store and someone would say, "I know you from somewhere." It usually was the Trail.
I started running races... coming in last in my first Austin Runner's Club Fun Run, that wasn't fun, but was so very rewarding when I finally crossed the finish line. Then gradually came the longer distances, shocking my parents and myself that I was running marathons. The thrill of my life was qualifying for the Boston Marathon at the Dallas White Rock Marathon in 1987.

None of these life experiences or lifelong friendships would have happened if there wasn't the Trail. Major life decisions were made while running on the Trail. After eight marathons and two foot surgeries, I slowed down and now am a Trail walker. The 2012 Trail is still just as special to me... a slower way to enjoy my friends, cherish the very familiar scenery, see the younger runners enjoying their miles as I did or just a lovely moving meditation.

Trail Tales...

We want to hear from you; **tell us** one of your favorite Trail memories or what makes the Trail a special place for you. We will select a few stories to be featured in our future e-newsletters. Please send a picture along with your tale.

Thank you for making the Trail your Valentine

On February 14th, Gilbert Tuhabonye lead a group of Trail lovers on the world's shortest long run. We started on the Plaza at City Hall and ran a short loop on the Trail between the 1st Street Bridge and the Pfluger
Pedestrian Bridge...whew!

The event was organized by Snoball.com to raise awareness about TTF and encourage Trail lovers to become a member. Didn't get a chance to run? Don't worry; the Trail is still here for you and so are we. Click here to join or renew your TTF membership and then go for a run knowing you are doing your part to support your Trail.

Upcoming Events

BACK TO THE FUTURE
Pub Run Event + Screening

Tonight, February 29 (you can register at the door)

Doors @ 6:00pm | Pub Run @ 6:15pm | Film @ 7:45pm
Pub Run + Screening - $15
Ticket includes:
  film admission
  complimentary Thirsty Planet beer
  Oatmega / Perfect Fit / Austin Marathon goodies
Regular Movie Admission - $10
Online Advance Movie Admission - $8

Register Online

All registrants must read and agree to the waiver to participate in the run.

GREAT SCOTT - you must join us as we continue to celebrate Marathon Month! This time around, our run will take us 1.1 miles from the Paramount Theatre to Luke's Locker. Stop there for a pint of Thirsty Planet beer and some quick shopping. Then, take the fun 1.1-mile run/jog/walk back to the Paramount for more pints and a 7:45 screening of Back to the Future. We will also have goodies from Oatmega, Perfect Fit and Austin Marathon. Event benefits The Trail Foundation and the historic Paramount Theatre. Oh, and... costumes strongly encouraged (50's, 80's, Doc's radiation suit - you get the idea).
*Special Event - Film Fan cards and Flix-Tix not valid for screening.

Cohosted by the LIVESTRONG Austin Marathon and Half Marathon, the Paramount Break-A-Leg 5K, Thirsty Planet Brewery, Conley Sports, Luke's Locker, Oatmega, Perfect Fit, and The Trail Foundation.

Saturday, April 28; noon - 6 p.m. Hops & Grain Fundraiser
TTF and EcoAustin are having a fundraiser at Hops and Grain brewery in east Austin to raise awareness of our organizations. Come join us for beer, bands, food and fun! More details will be available soon on our website and in our March newsletter. Sponsorships available, contact Jenny for more information.

TTF Sunday Run - we will soon be starting weekly a weekly run/walk on Sunday mornings. Why not get in the habit now by wearing your TTF shirt or hat on your Sunday stroll? More details to come...

Volunteer Opportunities

Saturday, April 14; 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. Clean Sweep
Clean Sweep is a city-wide event organized by Keep Austin Beautiful. TTF needs volunteers to help get Lady Bird Lake litter free. More details will be provided in our March newsletter.

Garden Adoptions
We have a few gardens open for adoption along the Trail. Visit our website for more information on our Lady Bird Johnson Adopt-a-Garden program.

Thank you!