

CHAMPIONS of Trails - Showcase 2021

1. Michael Ryba

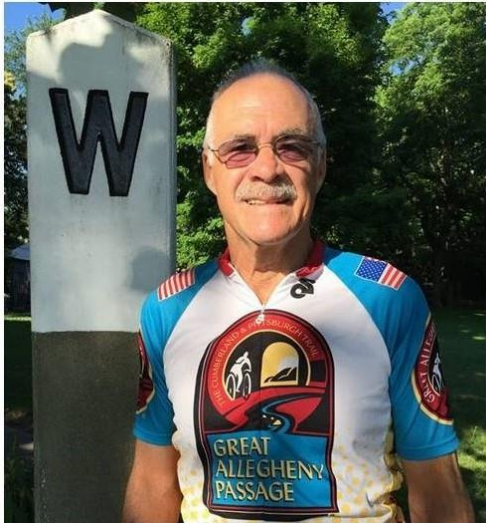
This Champion has worked tirelessly the past twenty years for the mountain bike access initiative in the Cleveland, Ohio area and has been the treasurer of the Cleveland Mountain Bike Association, CAMBA, nearly as long. Attending numerous trail building seminars, he not only helps design and build mountain biking trails, he educates trail users and mountain bike riders on proper trail use and etiquette. He advocates, at his own expense, with Washington legislators for mountain bike access. Recently, this Champion partnered with Geauga Park District to build three miles of singletrack trail, with more to come, in Big Creek Park.



With gratitude....

Nominated by William Braum, we recognize **Mike Ryba** of CAMBA as a 2021 Champion of Trails!

2. Keith Workman



This Champion is the founder of Rails-to-Trails of Wayne County, Ohio. In 1994 he launched efforts to build the Sippo Valley Trail in Dalton to connect into Stark County. It opened in 2002. He volunteers tirelessly for all events, regular maintenance and trail monitoring. He helps with future trail development, scouting opportunities to acquire old railroad right of way. He organizes fundraising rides, documents the organization's history and keeps records of efforts and successes. Because he rides trails everywhere, he learns and shares a wide range of rail-trail history.

With gratitude....

Nominated by Rails-to-Trails of Wayne County, we recognize **Keith Workman** of Rails-to-Trails, Wayne County, as a 2021 Champion of Trails!

3. Jim Sheehan

An instrumental leader in the founding, growth and evolution of the Ohio City Bicycle Co-op, this Champion serves youth and adults alike in promoting bicycling, bike safety and bike maintenance skills in the Cleveland region. He works tirelessly leading rides, running the “Earn a Bike” program for youth, teaching bicycle maintenance and coordinating a huge team of volunteers to run all of the above. His leadership has transformed Ohio City Bike Co-op into a “Public Library for Bikes” and his efforts drive their mission to promote bicycling in greater Cleveland and engage youth and adults in cycling activities that foster independence, resourcefulness, and good health.



With gratitude....

Nominated by Spoke Sisters, we recognize **Jim Sheehan** of Ohio City Bicycle Co-op, as a 2021 Champion of Trails!

4. Marlane Weslian



For over forty years, this Champion has promoted trail, economic and social development in the Slavic Village neighborhood of Cleveland. She was a driving force of the Morgana Run Trail, Cleveland's first rail trail. This 2.5 mile trail provides an east-west connection for the neighborhood and positions Slavic Village for regional connections to downtown Cleveland, the Towpath, and the Metropark's Garfield Reservation. To compliment the trail, she spearheaded the installation of nearly a dozen public art pieces along the path and later assisted in converting the adjacent, former Woolen Mills

property into the Morgana Bluffs Nature Preserve. Her contributions to this neighborhood, trails and greenspace are too numerous to list.

With gratitude....

Nominated by Slavic Village Development Corporation, we recognize **Marlane Weslian**, recently retired from Slavic Village Development Corporation, as a 2021 Champion of Trails!

5. Tim Donovan

For three decades this Champion shepherded the idea of a trail following the historic path of the Ohio & Erie Canal. That vision blossomed into a National Heritage Area that preserves and interprets the natural, cultural, and historic resources of the region. This trail is nearly realized with the substantial completion of the Towpath Trail Extension and the initiation of site improvements for Canal Basin Park. This Champion created the blueprint for public engagement in driving of a project. Marathon races, river sweeps and a menagerie of events drove thousands of citizens into the trail spaces generating a passionate public demand, second to none, to “finish the Towpath!” Trail project leaders near and far are copying this approach.



With gratitude....

Nominated by Canalway Partners, we recognize **Tim Donovan**, trying to retire from Canalway Partners, as a 2021 Champion of Trails!

6. Dave Vasarhelyi



This Champion’s passion for greenspace combined with his natural ability to connect with others made a lasting impression on countless people throughout his life. His career began with the National Park Service, ultimately leading him home with Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Over the course of his career, he helped both the National Park Service and later, Trust for Public Land acquire and protect thousands of acres. To protect from commercial development his boyhood playground, Parma’s West Creek valley, he founded what is today the West Creek Conservancy, activated citizens and successfully advocated for the creation of a

park, now the West Creek Reservation of Cleveland Metroparks with more than seven miles of trails. He formed the vision of the West Creek Greenway, recently adopted into the Cuyahoga Greenway Plan, to tie the new park to the Towpath Trail. He played a key role in the development of the City of Independence’s recently opened Hemlock Creek Trail as part of this greenway.

With gratitude....and in memoriam.....

Nominated by Cuyahoga Valley National Park, we recognize **Dave Vasarhelyi**, as a **FOREVER** Champion of Trails!