

Trail: Hikers' coalition plans funding campaign

By Scott Verity Stevenson

LENNOXVILLE — Runners, bikers, and walkers will be out supporting *Sentier Massawippi* this weekend in five- and 12-kilometre

fund-raising runs.

The money will help pay for a feasibility study of a recreational trail that the lobby group *Sentier Massawippi* is proposing for the

former Canadian Pacific railway line between Sherbrooke and Beebe.

The study, worth about \$35,000, would look at the cost of the planned trail, how much it would be used, and how it could be integrated into such delicate areas as Lake Massawippi's shoreline.

The goal of the road-running campaign is \$5000. The group has been given \$3000 by the city of Sherbrooke and \$300 from Ascot Township toward the study. Support for the trail has been formally given by the Sherbrooke and Coaticook MRCs and the municipalities of Sherbrooke, Ascot Township, Lennoxville and Compton Station.

ON THE ROAD

Committee co-ordinator Keith Baxter said the run is just to get fund-raising on the road — or trail. He said the group hopes for further funding from other municipalities, as well as from Quebec's regional planning and development agency, the OPDQ. He said *Sentier Massawippi* will organize other fund-raising events, including a concert.

Honorary chairman of the fund-raising campaign is wheelchair athlete André Viger. Viger said his experiences in Europe show Canada is behind in the creation of non-motorized recreational trails.

"If we have this land, we must exploit it to the maximum," Viger said. "The greatest resource we have is health."

Opposition to the trail idea comes mainly from Lake Massawippi property owners, who don't want the public parading between

their homes and the lake, and steam enthusiasts who want to run an old-fashioned steam train along the line.

Property owner Michael Benazon expressed concern over the trail idea at *Sentier Massawippi's* press conference Wednesday morning. He asked whether the trail would cover the full 80 foot wide right-of-way owned by CP, and whether that would mean swamps, front lawns, and cottages would be bulldozed.

Sentier Massawippi's Michael Grayson responded that the trail should cover no more than 15 feet in width, and that there is no reason to disrupt the present environment of cottages, trees, and swampland. "We can accommodate all ac-

tivities in a 15-foot-wide strip, except maybe horses, which don't have to go the whole way along," he said.

Grayson said the feasibility study would look at problems posed by a trail running through front yards and along the lakeshore, but he remained optimistic about solutions. "I think everybody can cohabit and coexist," he said.

"We don't want to run a bulldozer through the land," said Lise Gagnon, lawyer and member of *Sentier Massawippi*. "The feasibility study shows the seriousness of the group."

MORE SCRUTINY

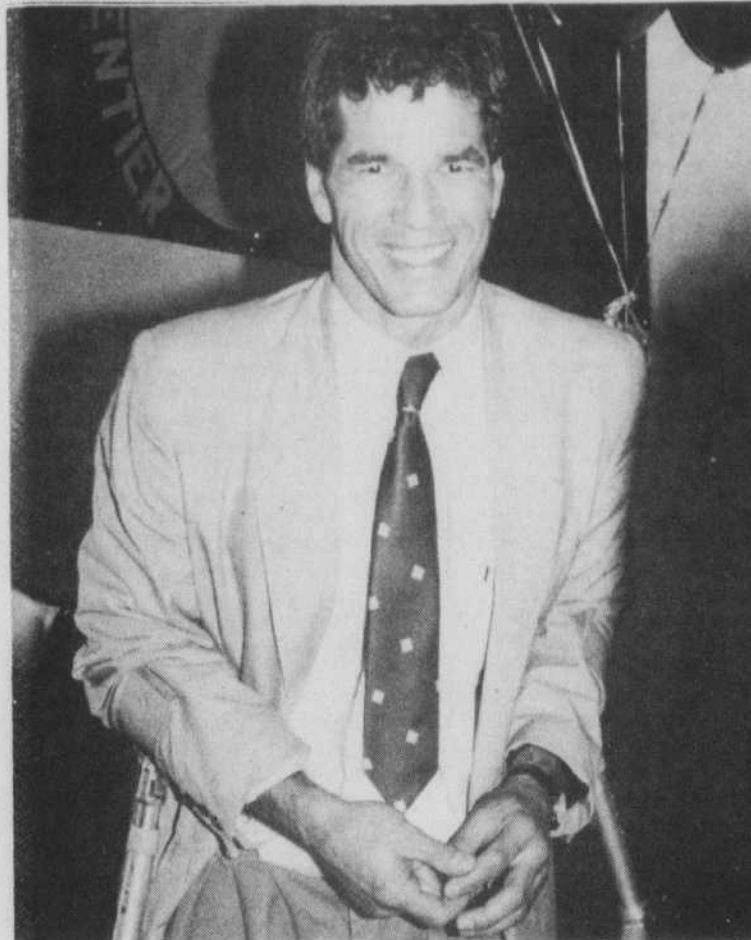
Grayson said the study could include the idea of a steam train, but only if *Nostalgie de la Vapeur*, the

steam enthusiasts, were prepared to help fund the study. So far the two groups have had no formal talks.

Grayson said the steam train's costs needs more scrutiny. "They've put in some strange figures on annual maintenance costs," he said, adding that repairs to the track are needed and railway signals along the line have all been removed.

"If they're willing to put money into the study, it will include their idea," Grayson said. "But the \$30,000 to \$35,000 doesn't include the train part."

Saturday's race will begin at Bishop's University's Sports and Recreation Centre. Registration is between 9 and 9:30.



'The greatest resource we have is health,' says super-healthy Sherbrooke athlete André Viger.



Sentier Massawippi leaders Michael Sudlow, André Viger, Lise Gagnon, Daniel Fricker and Michael Grayson: Roadrunners for the railway trail.

Bilodeau: A second day of skid-mark talk

By Dan Hawaleshka

HAVERRHILL, N.H. — Coaticook trucker Richard Bilodeau was driving too fast and had lost control when two state troopers and their prisoner died in a crash, says the head of the New Hampshire accident investigation team.

"He entered that curve too fast, based on the tire marks I saw on the highway," said Sgt. Roger Hartwell, commander of the state police Technical Accident Reconstruction Team.

"The truck started to lean so that it was ready to tip over," Hartwell said in testimony Wednesday, the trial's third day.

"It was sheer ill luck that the cruiser happened to drive by an accident that was already happening," he said under questioning by state attorney John Eames.

SKID MARKS

Hartwell also said a series of contested skid marks, known as weight transfer marks, and some gouges are clearly from Bilodeau's truck.

"At the end of the marks that were very heavy, there suddenly appeared a long groove in the asphalt surface. This type of groove is seen at the end of a weight transfer mark," Hartwell said.

He said he believes the groove was made by a wheel rim from the

trailer of the rig.

Bilodeau, 30, faces three counts of negligent homicide. On Nov. 29, 1989 his flatbed tractor-trailer lost its load of lumber at the same time a state cruiser carrying three men was passing in the opposite direction. All three died.

There are no eye-witnesses to the crash. Bilodeau is being tried in Grafton County Superior Court and faces a jury of 15 men and women, including three alternates.

Bilodeau's New Hampshire defence lawyer Peter Decato has relied heavily on discrediting the significance of a series of tire marks and gouges.

Decato says he will prove the first set of skid marks were made by someone else.

WITNESS BULLIED?

Decato's most dramatic cross examination of Hartwell came when he accused the trooper of trying to bully area resident Kenneth 'Pete' Peterson into signing an affidavit supporting the state's case.

Reading from an affidavit made to the defence by Peterson, a trucker himself, Decato said Hartwell used strong profanity to get Peterson to testify.

"We're going to hang that cocksucker. He killed two of my buddies," said Decato, quoting Hartwell from Peterson's sworn

statement. "We're going to crucify (him)."

Continuing to read, Decato said Hartwell continued the threats. "Remember Pete, you've got to live in this neighborhood."

IT ISN'T SO

Hartwell called the statement an "outright, flagrant, unabashed lie." He described Peterson as an untrustworthy "story-teller." He agreed he had had a discussion with Peterson, but said it had no such tone.

"I don't believe there was any emotionalism. I can assure you I made no such comments as has been alleged," Hartwell said.

Outside court state prosecutor John Eames said the state trooper would never have threatened anyone. "I've known Roger Hartwell a long, long time. I would be the most surprised person to find out."

Decato said he expects Peterson to repeat statements in his affidavit and that the jury will judge for itself who is lying.

"I think Mr. Peterson will establish his own credibility," Decato said.

THEY SAW THEM

The court also heard two law enforcement officers say they witnessed tire marks allegedly showing Bilodeau had crossed well into the wrong lane of traffic.

The investigators said they saw tire marks leading several hundred metres from the scene of the Nov. 29 crash in which a load of lumber slid off the truck and crushed a state police cruiser on Route 25 in Warren.

Cpl. James Player said there was "a tire mark, if memory serves, which started at the double yellow line, and went into the west-bound lane," in which the cruiser was travelling.

Lt. Gary Sloper, who worked from the other side of the road. He said "there's no question in my mind" that the marks extended into the east-bound lane."

THE BOSS

Player was the duty supervisor the night the three died, and the last to see them alive.

The three victims left him at Plymouth, N.H. police station. Troopers Gary Parker, 30, and Joseph Gearty, 28, were taking prisoner Brian Goodwin, 26, to Grafton County jail.

Player followed them on his way home. Player's car was the second of two cruisers which state witness Timothy Chartier, 19 said passed him that night. Player turned onto another road and never saw the accident.

On Monday Chartier told the jury two cruiser had passed him at what he estimated to be 75 to 80

miles per hour.

Wednesday Player said he isn't sure. "I couldn't tell you my exact speed — around 60-65, no more than 70."

Lt. Paul Davis testified that the cruiser was in good mechanical condition prior to the crash.

George Faran, an emergency medical technician testified that prisoner Goodwin had his seatbelt on and was handcuffed behind his back.

The defence will suggest to the jury that Goodwin could have caused a disturbance which may have led to the accident.

TRANSLATOR

Cpt. Robert Bouchard testified he acted as a translator for Bilodeau that night. His testimony was interrupted and put off until today because the defence wanted to listen to the tape he made with Bilodeau.

John Deery, a highway safety officer, testified that Bilodeau's truck was 5700 pounds overweight. The limit is 80,000 pounds, Deery said, but Bilodeau's rig weighed 85,700.

Deery said he weighed Bilodeau's truck and trailer with portable scales. He said he weighed the discharged lumber with the help of a crane.

In cross examination, Deery agreed that under the right condi-

tions, the truck's capacity could be raised to 88,000 lb.

LOAD GOT WET

Decato also suggested that snow and wet lumber which fell in a nearby river could have increased the load weight after the crash. The defence lawyer will have to wait until prosecutor Eames is finished before introducing proof to back this up.

Trooper Russell Boyton testified that he drew the scale diagram used in the trial.

It shows the suspect road marks and the final resting position of the truck, trailer and cruiser.

Prosecutor Eames then showed the jury about 15 black and white photographs of the marks taken a few days later. None showed the skid marks alleged to have started at the yellow line.

So far the prosecution has relied exclusively on police testimony about the marks. A video tape taken a few hours after the crash fails to support that.

No photographs were taken of the skid marks, which police say began at the centre line.

Thursday for the first time Bilodeau had his own translator.

Today the prosecution is expected to introduce Bilodeau's log books. Eames should wrap up Friday, with the defence presenting its case beginning Monday.

Visiting: Old and new friends meet at Wales Home

By Claudia Villemaire

THE WALES HOME — For the 71st consecutive year, the Wales Home near Richmond opened its doors for an annual Open House.

Formerly known far and wide as the Field Day, the celebration welcomed visitors from as far away as Nova Scotia — renewing acquaintance with friends from every cor-

ner of the Eastern Townships.

The event, once a day-long picnic designed to bring more people into contact with the function of the Wales Home, a residence for Protestant seniors, is now held indoors — complete with one or more guest speakers, usually a musician or singer, and presided over by the president of the home's board of

governors.

SPIRIT CATCHING

It all sounds a bit pompous, but the spirit of getting together with old friends and relations catches on quickly. Wednesday, residents joined visitors in the 'big sitting room' to listen to piano music composed and played by long-time Home supporter O.H. Sevigny.

Then Marjorie Goodfellow, a familiar figure and writer of repute both in and beyond the Eastern Townships, spoke about the ups and downs of studying genealogy.

Doug Smith, president of the board, welcomed and introduced guests, and local clergymen looked after religious amenities.

Then it was time for tea and the whole crowd trooped to the cafeteria where serious visiting began.

The Wales Home is well known for its excellent care and facilities for senior citizens. But general manager Rod MacIver said he is worried that rising costs could affect the service given by this type of non-profit institution.

"We depend entirely on bequests and donations," MacIver said. "Up till now, we haven't been subsidized by the government, but I'm afraid that will eventually have to happen."

MacIver emphasized that the rising cost of maintaining sufficient qualified personnel is a large part of the problem. He said the home is well known and admired for its work in the region, "but most people don't realize we operate this way, actually depending on the goodwill of the public to keep us solvent."

"We are proud of the care and

facilities we have to offer," he said, adding that everything possible will be done to maintain the residence's present standards.

FAMILY FARM

Located about two miles from Richmond on the Trenholmville highway, the Home was originally the family residence on the large Wales farm. Today the farm is still considered one of the finest dairy operations in the area. Producers can buy quality replacement cattle

there with confidence.

The original farm home, still recognizable in the centre portion of the building, was a bequest of the Wales family, stipulating the house should be used as a residence for Protestant old people.

That was in 1920. A corporation was founded at that time and since its first years, the original house has been expanded many times to provide accommodation and medical facilities for more than 200 resi-

dents. There is now an apartment wing and future plans include a day-care department for outside patients.

Wednesday's open house was Wales Home management and supporters' way of saying "Come on down and visit us. We'll have a bit of music, a social time and roll out the welcome mat for one and all. It's our way of saying thanks on a grand scale for your support these past 71 years."



Marjorie Goodfellow and O.H. 'Bud' Sevigny talk over old times after their guest appearance at The Wales Home open house on Wednesday.



Doug Smith chats with Bing and Wendy MacIver at Wednesday's Wales Home open house.

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