



**Our mission** is to protect the natural diversity and rural character of the Prickly Pear Valley and adjoining lands through voluntary and cooperative means. The Land Trust is dedicated to perpetuating the recreational, wildlife, scenic, agricultural and historic values of the land.

# openviews

## Harvest Moon: On The Rise!

### Are you ready to celebrate?

We are fortunate to have much to be thankful for already this year, and we're planning one big party on September 26! Mark your calendar and save the date for our much-anticipated Harvest Moon Banquet and Auction. We're *On The Rise* this year, with a

growing membership base, a robust private lands conservation program and our expanding, first-rate trail system. We'll serve up a hearty dose of Montana hospitality with great food, fabulous items on the block and friends galore! (See the list of generous sponsors on page 4.)

Tickets are only \$65 and go on sale August 21. We sold out in two weeks last year, so be sure to get your tickets early! Visit [pricklypearlt.org](http://pricklypearlt.org) or call us at 406-442-0490 to ensure you're a part of this wonderful celebration of what makes Helena such an amazing place to call home.



**September 26:  
mark your calendar  
and save the date**

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## Trail Workdays Prove Popular Despite the Weather

### The wet and cold spring weather took its toll on a couple of our early volunteer trail workdays.

But when the clouds cleared and the sun returned, we had perfect conditions for building and maintaining our fantastic trail system.

On a blustery Sunday in early May, members of the Headwaters Covenant Church gathered on Nob Hill to help revegetate the old four wheel drive routes that scarred the hill. The Church, led by Pastor Matt Randall, is committed to public service and spends one of its regular Sunday gatherings every

month working in service to the community. We are grateful to Matt and the congregation to donating their time to PPLT and our trails.

When the weather broke on May 18 we had a huge contingent of hearty volunteers come out to repair a severely eroded trail on the lower flanks of Mt. Helena. Re-routing this trail is a testament to building trails sustainably in the first place. The lower Daisy Hill Trail followed

an old jeep road, and although it was not steep, it still followed the fall line of the slope. During heavy spring runoff, the water had

nowhere to go except right down the trail, creating an un-walkable ditch. The re-routed trail now crosses the slope diagonally, allowing water to fall off to the side of the trail preventing future erosion.

Our June trail workday was once again postponed—this time

**The next Trail Walk is August 18. Meet at 7:00 PM at the Arrowroot Trailhead to explore recent PPLT purchases on Mt. Ascension.**

by snow(!). On June 22, a big crew came out to begin work on a new trail connection to PPLT's newest acquisition: the Porter Parcel on the front side of Mt. Ascension. The new trail connects the 2006 Trail along the base of the cliffs to the east flank of the mountain. From here trail users can ascend to the summit creating a loop trail back to the 2006 Trail. Montana Conservation Corps crews are putting the final touches on this route at press time.

In July, the crazy weather continued but the skies parted to allow a contingent of trail workers to begin building another new trail connection on the east side. This project is on another new piece of open space made possible by a land exchange with Tom and Linda Zderick. (See accompanying article on page 2). This trail will connect Crystal Drive (off of east Gold Rush) to South Hills Drive allowing a better connection to the Eddy McClure Trail for east side residents. In addition, a small loop trail will highlight this parcel's forested seclusion. We want to thank Tom and Linda Zderick and the City of Helena for making the land exchange and this new trail possible.

Trail events include: the 2nd Annual High Divide Trails Jamboree (August 8–9) and another trail workday on September 14 (project TBD). Check our website: [pricklypearlt.org](http://pricklypearlt.org) for the most up to date information.

Don't forget about the Trolley To Trails every Saturday! Visit [downtownhelena.com](http://downtownhelena.com) for the schedule.



Andy Baur

July trail workday on the new Zderick land exchange.



# Land Exchange Makes New Trail Possible

IN A SECLUDED GULLY on Helena's Eastside sits a fantastic and seldom-viewed example of an important monument to our history—a huge stone limekiln. Up until several weeks ago, this beautiful artifact sat on private property. Working in partnership with the landowners, Tom and Linda Zderick, and the City of Helena, PPLT led the effort to exchange this parcel with a piece of existing public land in order for this great amenity to become public. The parcel that the City traded away was steep and less conducive to building a sustainable trail and had little connectivity to the rest of the system but provided an opportunity to create a small buffer for the landowners in that area.



**To get there:  
Go east on Gold Rush and then south on Crystal Drive.  
Follow the trail up the gully.  
As of this writing, the trail is still being constructed.  
Please stay on the trail as there is private property in the area.**

This exchange proved especially challenging to complete because it covered three jurisdictions: the City, and both Lewis & Clark and Jefferson counties. Each one has its own rules and approval processes

for adjusting boundary lines, which made for a lengthy approval process. In addition, the survey costs and associated fees were nearly \$7,000. The City of Helena and PPLT shared those expenses.

We want to thank the City of Helena and Tom and Linda Zderick for working through this process patiently. We now have a wonderful new addition to the trail and open lands system.

*The land exchange opens this historical artifact to public access.*

Andy Baur

## Open Space Bond Committee Begins Work

AFTER A GRUELING CAMPAIGN to pass the \$10 million Lewis & Clark County open space bond, the real work now begins. In early 2009 the County Commissioners appointed a 13-member committee to oversee the open space bond process. Since then, the committee has been getting up to speed on its responsibilities and the technical details of similar measures in other communities. This included eight hours of training by one of the nation's experts on the subject, Sandra Tassel. In the coming months, the group will develop criteria and acceptance policies with the goal of accepting its first proposals by the end of the year.

Once this process is established, it is envisioned that landowners will team up with land trusts to develop projects to protect wildlife habitat, agricultural land and open space. The bond funds will go toward purchasing conservation easements on these parcels to protect their essential values forever. The land trusts will be looking to sweeten the pot by bringing other funding partners into these deals, thus making the bond funds go farther.

We at PPLT are excited that this incredible opportunity now exists to protect the rural heritage of Lewis & Clark County's amazingly diverse landscape.



Tom Likens

## Don't Fence Me In Breaks Records in 2009

THIS WAS A BANNER YEAR for Prickly Pear Land Trust's annual trail run, Don't Fence Me In! We saw participation increase more than 52% with runners coming from seven states! Word must be out about our world-class trail system we're so fortunate to enjoy here in Helena. This event is only possible thanks to the army of volunteers who come together,

before, during and after the race to ensure it is safe and well-run.

In addition, **we thank our business sponsors** who play a big role in making this event a success. Please thank them next time you're shopping to let them know how much they mean to our work and our greater community!

## Weed, Seed, and Feed!

THE FIRST ANNUAL Noxious Weed Pull and BBQ Social brought together PPLT members and friends for some weed education and integrated weed management at the Old Archery Range Trailhead.

This event was a joint project of the Trails Committee and the Membership & Outreach Committee. After a stormy afternoon, committee chairs Dawn North and Bob Person had faith that the skies would clear and that conditions would be just right for weed pulling. They were right! The weather stayed pleasantly cool, and the ground had softened, making the pulling easy. Many bags of weeds were pulled, and disturbed ground was reseeded with native grass.

Greta Digge, Code Enforcement Officer for the City of Helena, instructed the group on weed recognition and explained various

weed management strategies. Integrated weed management uses several different techniques, including spraying herbicide, releasing beneficial insects, and ... pulling weeds!

**We hope to see this annual event get bigger and better every year.**

After the weed pull, participants gathered round for burgers, side dishes and dessert prepared by committee members, plus wine and soft drinks, and lots of good conversation.

Thanks to all who attended and the PPLT committees who made it happen! A special thanks to Marilyn Grant for all her slicing and dicing of hamburger fixings!

We hope to see this annual event get bigger and better every year. Plan to attend next year and be surprised by how much fun it can be to pull weeds with friends.

*By Peggy Likens of the Membership & Outreach Committee*

<b>Keller, Reynolds, Drake, Johnson &amp; Gillespie, PC</b>	<b>Mosaic Architecture Robert Peccia &amp; Associates</b>	<b>The Placer Center Van's Thriftway The Windbag</b>

# Innovative Program Asks Travelers to Help Protect Montana's Treasures

## Want to help Montana travelers protect open land? Want to try a new great-tasting pizza?

The connection in the answers to both those questions is Travelers for Open Land, a new program that seeks small voluntary contributions from people—visitors and residents—traveling in Montana. Travelers for Open Land (TFOL) is a new program and the only statewide program of its type in the nation. TFOL is a partnership among the Montana Association of Land Trusts (PPLT is a member), the Montana Innkeepers Association, Travel Montana, the Montana Community Foundation, other tourism-related businesses and the traveling public.

Open land defines the Montana outdoor experience, and TFOL seeks small voluntary contributions from those who enjoy and treasure that outdoor experience. The voluntary contributions are pooled into a fund that will provide grants to land trusts to help acquire conservation easements. TFOL allows Montana visitors the chance to “give back” to the people and landscape that made their travels and experience here so special. It's the same landscape all of us appreciate because it makes Montana such a terrific place to live, work and recreate.

The response to the program thus far has been outstanding. Close to 115 Montana lodging facilities and outdoor-related business—hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, lodges, dude ranches, outfitter and guide services, fly fishing shops and other businesses—have signed up for



the program. The Helena area has been particularly supportive.

Participating properties include: Best Western Great Northern, Red Lion Colonial Inn, Comfort Inn, Days Inn, Fairfield Inn, Hampton Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Jorgenson's, PRO Outfitters, Sanders Bed & Breakfast, Wingate Inn, Lawdog's Saloon over in Elliston, the Blacktail Ranch and Montana River Outfitters in Wolf Creek and Missouri River Cabins in Cascade. Land trusts very much appreciate the participation and efforts of these businesses; please let them know you appreciate their support of private land conservation and their participation in the Travelers for Open Land program.

TFOL is continuing to seek new participating properties. Any tourism-related or outdoor-related business is eligible and welcome. The goal is to expose travelers to TFOL as often as possible, and the best way to do that is with abundant participating properties. We want to educate the traveler about the value of open land, then motivate that traveler to contribute to open land protection.

For more information about the program, go online at [www.travelersforopenland.org](http://www.travelersforopenland.org) or call Glenn Marx at 406-490-1659.

Another important partner in TFOL is MacKenzie River Pizza (with a location in Helena). MacKenzie River created a new pizza named the High Plains to help promote the Montana High Plains area (the central and eastern portion of the state). Pizza ingredients include pheasant sausage, red potatoes and sage. MacKenzie River is donating one dollar from the sale of each High Plains pizza to the TFOL program for land conservation work in the High Plains area. Give the High Plains Pizza a try. It's tasty.

Travelers for Open Land has the potential to be of great value to Montana land trusts. The program can raise awareness about the value of open land and serve as a new source of funds to protect those lands.

*By Glenn Marx, Executive Director of the Montana Association of Land Trusts*

## PPLT BOARD NEWS

### New Board Member Welcomed

Prickly Pear Land Trust welcomes **Jonathan Krauss** as its newest board member.



Jonathan is an enthusiastic long-time supporter of PPLT. He has done an incredible job as the chair of the auction sub-committee for Harvest Moon and has agreed to be the event chair this year. Jonathan's passion for the trail system is reflected in his work as a volunteer crew leader on the “Corps of Pulaski” and in assisting staff by organizing trail workdays.

Jonathan is an assistant attorney general in the Department of Justice. He has first-hand experience with conservation easements and land use planning issues. We are delighted that Jonathan has joined the Board.

### Service Honored

PPLT Board member **Dawn North** is always busy. But her schedule just got a little clearer this month as she finished her nearly six year term as a member of the Helena Open Lands Management Advisory Committee (HOLMAC). Dawn's tenure on the committee included a two year stint as chair during which she led HOLMAC to important decisions regarding Helena's growing pine bark beetle problem. Dawn was also instrumental in drafting the HOLMAC plan which still stands today as a key living document guiding the management of our precious open space system. Thanks, Dawn, for all of your hard work!

## Looking for Summer Reading?

THE CINNABAR FOUNDATION supports PPLT with a general operations grant almost every year. The Foundation was started by Len & Sandy Sargent in 1983, and works to foster environmental protection and wildlife conservation in Montana and the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem. The Cinnabar Foundation is pleased to announce the publication of **Len and Sandy Sargent: A Legacy of Activist Philanthropy**. This book reviews the groundwork that enabled Montana's conservation ethic to flourish, as it tells the story of two people who unflinchingly

gave of their time and resources to keep Montana an uncommon place. Author Robin Tawney Nichols, with a contribution from Scott McMillion, captured both the essence and spirit of this exceptional couple. Copies are \$9.95 and are available at Mountain Press Publishing in Missoula. Call 1-800-234-5308. All proceeds go to the Cinnabar Foundation.

**Leonard Schonberg's** new book, **Blackfeet Eyes**, has been published! This thriller, based on an Indian reservation in Montana, is the first of three in the Blackfoot

Mystery Series. It's available at Montana Book Company, who is generously donating 20% of the purchase price to Prickly Pear Land Trust! Leonard Schonberg and his wife, Anne O'Leary, completed a conservation easement on their property in the Elkhorn Mountains in the late 1990's. *Blackfeet Eyes* was published after his untimely death in November 2008. Anne is carrying on Leonard's great love of our landscape by using his great work to support ours. Montana Book Company is located at 331 Last Chance Gulch.

## Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival

### Prickly Pear Land Trust and The Base Camp are co-hosting the Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival.

The WSEFF is a unique festival with short films ranging from adventure to conservation to wildlife protection. This film festival has been on tour since 2004 and we are fortunate to be able to bring it to Helena this year!

The South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) in Nevada started the film festival to promote awareness of environmental issues in the South Yuba community.

Just like PPLT, the SYRCL was started by a group of concerned citizens who did not like the way their environment was being altered. In their case, it was the proposal of several dams along the Yuba River; for PPLT it was the loss of open spaces in and around Helena. The WSEFF is a great way to get re-connected to environmental issues that we face not only within our own community, but world-wide.

Whether you are an avid hiker, biker,

skier, or just enjoy the beauty of the outdoors, you'll be sure to leave this festival inspired and excited to help make a difference in the community. Bring your family and friends and join us on Friday, October 23, 2009 at Helena Middle School to celebrate the grandeur of our environment!

Please visit our website to find details about ticket sales as well as other information as it becomes available.



## THANK YOU

to all who joined us so far in 2009!

Barbara LaRue	Lawrence and Carol McEvoy
Richard and Nancy Tuber	Tara Thompson
Harry Israel and Mary Madison	Anna Miller & Lyle Manley
Jim Munoz	Mark Hall
Jim Wheelis	Gregory Messenger
Ed and Rebecca Warner	Ann Purcell
Jerome and Therese Chart	Fred Offenkranz
Linda and Tom Hutchison	Joel Felix
Mike and Janice Day	Daniel Kelly
Steph Knisley	Ann Kron
Joan D' Aoust	Liz Murray
Charles Fricke	Staci Stolp
Carolyn and James Knuckles	Karla Bachmeier
Roy & Cynthia Mulvaney	Kerry & Laurie Neils
Joy Ritter	Donci Bardash
Judge John & Ethel Harrison	Darlene Edge
Carole Massman	Maribeth Goodrich
Krista and Jay Partridge	Thomas Regan
Terry and Sharon Copenhaver	Bill & Jan Lombardi
Sue Hawthorne & Adel Johnson	Jerry Woodring
Debbie Brackman	James Gietzen
Ralph and Linda Nelson	Pam Langve-Davis
	Kim Kradolfer & Rich Misplon
	Collin Watters
	Shannon and Tim Lewis
	James Carney
	Chris Buslee & Mary Maddox

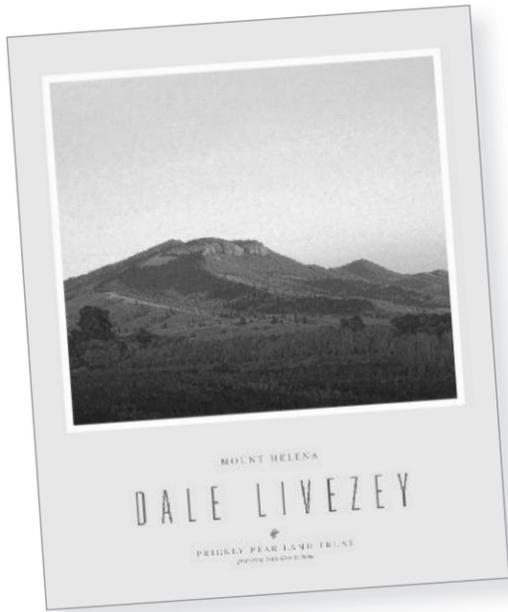
## COMING THIS FALL IN OPEN VIEWS

In our next issue, we'll address the Pine Beetle infestation and what we're doing to ensure safe trails and healthy forests.



## Albertsons Creates a Community Partnership with PPLT

Thanks to a tip from one of our members, Prickly Pear Land Trust has been approved to receive contributions from Albertsons Grocery Store through their Community Partners Program! This is a great way to support our work just by stocking up on groceries. Simply visit [albertsons.com/cp](http://albertsons.com/cp) and designate PPLT as a beneficiary of a percentage of your shopping dollars. You'll need your Preferred Savings Card number to make it easy. Additionally, it's important that your card is scanned every time you shop to ensure your purchase is linked to us, so be sure to take it with you. This is an easy way for you to support your favorite land trust! Happy shopping!



## Stay Informed with E-News

Want to receive our newsletter through email or receive periodic news updates from PPLT? Send your email address to [joanne@pricklypearlt.org](mailto:joanne@pricklypearlt.org) and please let us know if you want just the e-newsletter, the updates, or both! By getting your PPLT information electronically you will be helping the Land Trust save money and trees.

## Taboo Topics

In what is probably bad form, we're going to mention both money and death in the same sentence. There, we did it. We want to remind you of three truths: 1. We all die. 2. You can't take your money with you. 3. It goes one of three places: your heirs, the IRS, or a charitable organization like Prickly Pear Land Trust. Before you take that final hike, please remember us in your will. Your great-grandchildren will thank you! And so will we.

## Need A Gift?

Support PPLT by giving a gift of a hat, tote bag, or a beautiful poster of Mt. Helena. This great poster, features a striking print of Dale Livezey's painting of Mt. Helena and makes a great present for any occasion. All proceeds go directly to PPLT so not only will you be giving a great gift but you will also be supporting the Land Trust! Posters are available at the office for only \$28. Come get yours today!

## Cactus Club Makes Giving Easy!

PPLT has a monthly giving program that enables automatic donations every month in an amount that you specify. It is a simple way to increase your giving, without having to think about membership dues and renewal dates. You can be a \$100 annual giver for only \$8 a month! That's just two venti frappuccinos at your favorite coffee shop. Consider enrolling today. Call us at 406-442-0490 and we'll take care of the rest!

## The Common Market, An Uncommon Way to Give

The Common Market, a new consignment store, has recently opened at 326 Fuller Street. The owner of The Common Market, Bill Rule, has included PPLT in his new venture. Any items that are not picked up in the allotted consignment period are considered abandoned and sold. Bill will then give 50% of these proceeds to PPLT! Bill also accepts straight donations of items in which 50% of the proceeds from selling these items will also go to PPLT. If you have not checked out this new store yet, be sure to do so soon. You'll find great items from house wares to outdoor gear!

## Shop Online?

Be sure to go through [igive.com](http://igive.com) to send a percentage of your shopping dollars to PPLT!

## We thank our Harvest Moon business sponsors

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