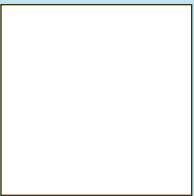




P.O. Box 81
Kalispell, MT 59903
Issue 23, Spring 2021



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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THE CHASE STORY: A FAMILY, ITS FOREST, AND THE TRAIL

By John Chase (as told to Carol Bibler)

The legacy of John Chase and his family is intertwined with Foy's to Blacktail Trails. FTBT entered the picture around 2001, but the story begins almost a century earlier. In 1910 Herman and Dora Scholle, recent German immigrants of modest means, purchased 160 acres of timberland southwest of Kalispell. They lived in a house they built on 10th Avenue West and referred to their timber property as "The Ranch", boasting of their huge forest to relatives back in Germany.

Their daughters grew up, and in 1930 the eldest married Myron Chase and had two sons, John and Myron. The Chase brothers grew up spending the school year in Kalispell and summers in East Glacier where their father worked. During the school year, they would sometimes drive west of town to visit their grandparents' forested "ranch".

After their grandparents passed away in the 1950s, John and Myron's parents deeded the forest property to them. The brothers would occasionally hike on the property, which they accessed by a rough logging road. John graduated high school in 1955 and worked for his father, the Park Service, and the Glacier Park Company while attending MSU, where he majored in Film and TV Production. After graduating in 1962, he was employed by Boeing on the Montana Minuteman project until drafted to the Army later that year. He served in Alabama and Korea. Later, he earned a teaching certificate and taught science in Great Falls until retirement.

Over the decades, John and Myron would visit Kalispell and their forest property, occasionally harvesting timber on a small scale when the opportunity arose. By the late 1990s, they began to think about future plans for the property. Neither of the brothers had children to pass it on to. They knew they didn't want it to be developed or mismanaged.

...continue reading on page 3

THE HERRON PARK MAKEOVER CONTINUES

By Gabe Dillon, Program Coordinator

Last year we saw early snow in October, then warm temps before winter settled in and the fluxuating weather created a mess of our trails! But this provided an opportunity to compare recent drainage improvements on Notch Trail to other trails in the system. The Notch drained correctly, directing water off-trail, while in comparison, the Direct Route left standing water on the trail, creating puddles and watery trenches.

We realize some trail users were not happy about the trail work on Notch, but please be assured we worked with trail professionals and long-term sustainability is the end-goal. The unintended consequence was compromised rideability on a mountain bike for most of summer, especially since we received very little moisture to help "set the tread". This was not ideal, but by September things improved on Notch and this spring it has already started shaping up nicely. We hope you can agree and have had a chance to check it out.

Dirt trails are dynamic surfaces that require routine maintenance. Without touch-ups, every trail has a natural tendency to grow a berm or trough that directs water along the trail rather than off. After last season, the trails in Herron Park needed attention due to clogged drains. In such a high-traffic trail area area, doing nothing was simply not an option.

We are happy to report that drainage improvements for Horse, Family, Direct Route, and Overlook trails this spring is complete! Soil conditions were perfect (we had moisture!) and we are happy with the results. Yes, the trails are different and will take time to settle in. Thank you for your patience as Mother Nature refines our work. We'd like to thank Flathead County Parks for working with us on this project and the Whitefish Community Foundation for providing Community Grant funds to make it possible. We look forward to serving our community for the long haul.

GAME ON FOR SUMMER: FTBT & HERRON PARK EVENTS

- **Thursday, May 20 || Women's MTB Clinic at Herron Park**, 6-8 pm
Register online: flatheadamb.org.
- **Saturday, May 22 || Spirit Bear Gran Fondo** mountain bike race
Register online: bikesignup.com > search Spirit Bear Gran Fondo
- **Sunday, June 6 || Kids MTB clinic at Herron Park**, 10am-1pm. Open to youth ages 8-16. Pre-registration is required, and FAMB membership is required prior to registration. Register online: flatheadamb.org.
- **Sunday, June 13 || Herron Half/10k/5k** *10th year!* This is our largest annual fundraiser to maintain and build trails. Register online: ftbtraces.com.
- **Sunday, June 27 || Kids MTB clinic at Herron Park**, 10am-1pm. Open to youth ages 8-16. Pre-registration is required, and FAMB membership is required prior to registration. Register online: flatheadamb.org.
- **Saturday, July 10 || Jump Derby Day**
More info online: herronparkeq.org.
- **Saturday & Sunday, August 14-15 || 24 Hours of Flathead** bike race
More info online: 24hoursofflathead.org
- **Saturday, August 28 || Jump Derby Day**
As always for equestrian schooling shows, spectating is free.
- **Sunday, September 19 || 3rd annual Foy's to Blacktail Trail Marathon**
Maximum 100 participants. More info online: ftbtraces.com.
- **Friday & Saturday, September 24-25 || Herron Hustle NICA MTB Race**
Montana Interscholastic Cycling League will be hosting this race at Herron Park. The MICL aims to build relationships in Montana communities that help promote healthy lifestyles in middle and high school youth, grades 6-12. More info online: flatheadyouthcycling.com, montanamtb.org.

@foystoblacktail #herronpark

THANK YOU
—FOR—
YOUR SUPPORT!



Follow us online for news and stay tuned to FoystoBlacktailTrails.org

SLOW ZONE IN HERRON PARK?

We conducted an informal trail survey over the winter at Herron Park, asking trail users if they would support the lower trails becoming a "slow zone". Overwhelmingly, the answer was yes. Fortunately, the other common response for this survey was that trail users seldom or never had a bad experience with people moving too fast. Trail courtesy has been the norm, whether we are one mile or ten from the parking lot. So why propose a "slow zone?"

A slow zone designation means that everyone should expect to see a higher density of other trail users in that zone and act accordingly. Think of this area as a social place! The first mile of every trail in Herron Park sees toddlers, hikers, bikers, dog walkers, stroller pushers, wildflower gawkers, bird watchers, and horse riders. Over the past couple of years, trail use has increased significantly, creating more of a need for everyone to go slow and communicate.

Once past that first mile, the trails often become magically empty, even when the parking lot is full. The 12 miles of looping trails up to the Chase Overlook disperse people enough that crowding is rarely an issue. Once there, go ahead; run fast, let your bike feel the joy of gravity! As one survey respondent wrote, "that's what the fun is all about!". But when passing others on the trail, please do it slowly. Talk to them and agree on a way through. Downhill yields to uphill and everyone yields to horses. Usually, a simple gesture and a couple words is all it takes to pass safely.

There are many people new to our outdoor spaces trying out their new outdoor toys that really have no clue about trail rules. We are looking for support from the community while we make map and signage updates for Herron Park enhancing trail safety.

We have some fun sign decals that will be strategically placed on the trails within that first mile. We also propose installing a few larger, brightly colored signs letting folks know they are entering the "slow zone" or a "high use area" along Horse, Notch and Boundary trails and at the junction of the upper kiosk.

Send us an email with your opinion. We're collecting responses to bring to Flathead County Parks for a signage proposal.

HELLO, HORSE PEOPLE!

More horseback riders are moving to the area! Expect to see a noticeable increase in horse activities at Herron Park and thank you for your efforts regarding trail safety for all user groups.

We kindly ask riders, if you use the jumps or arenas, please become a member of Herron Park Equestrians to help maintain these features. Also, a weekly evening trail ride and practice group is in the works. Become a member to stay in the loop and learn about other equestrian meet-ups at herronparkeq.org

IF YOU USE THESE TRAILS, IT'S TIME TO BECOME A MEMBER!

If you're a routine trail-user please consider donating one dollar for each time you have enjoyed your outside time at Herron Park or Foy's to Blacktail Trails this past year. Your gift supports trail building, stewardship, youth education, signage and way-finding, maps and more! Get involved and support the place you love.



Mail checks and donation form to FTBT, PO Box 81, Kalispell, MT 59903 or donate online on the FTBT website via PayPal at FoystoBlacktailTrails.org. Questions? Contact us at (406) 203.3939 or info@FoystoBlacktailTrails.org

HOW MANY TIMES DID YOU ENJOY FTBT TRAILS THIS YEAR?

WOULD YOU CONSIDER DONATING \$1/DAY?

Become a FTBT Member for as little as \$15 a year and feel great about pitching in! And, even better, please encourage others to get on board when you rock your FTBT membership sticker. All the cool kids do, ya know.

- \$15 Friend
- \$45 Family
- \$100 Supporter
- \$250 Sustainer
- \$500 TrailBlazer
- \$ _____

DONATE ONLINE AT FoystoBlacktailTrails.org

Do NOT send me a membership decal

THE CHASE STORY *Continued*

An important consideration was keeping a part of the land open for others to enjoy; the property had never been closed to public use.

In the late 1990s, John attended a Conservation District seminar on conservation easements. He and Myron began to think about placing a permanent conservation easement on their property to protect it from large scale development. Around 2001, John and Myron heard that a group of hikers and horseback riders (which later became FTBT) was trying to secure permanent public access to forest lands extending from Herron Park to Blacktail Mountain.

John and Myron began thinking that if they provided a public trail easement through their property it could help this group with their vision. They contacted the nascent FTBT group, and while brainstorming with John and Myron, FTBT suggested the brothers contact the Montana Land Reliance, a nonprofit land trust, to learn how they could place a conservation easement on their property.

In 2006, John and Myron finalized their conservation easement agreement with the Montana Land Reliance, limiting development on the property to a small building envelope; the rest is forever protected from development, regardless of who owns the property.

In 2007, the brothers granted a permanent public trail easement through their property to FTBT, and shortly thereafter FTBT built the immensely popular "Chase Trail" through this

forest. It was the first trail FTBT built in what is now an extensive network, and helped launch the effort to expand Herron Park in order to connect to the Chase Property, and ultimately, to adjacent forest lands leading to Blacktail Mountain.

Myron passed away in 2009, but John comes from Great Falls to visit his property when he can. He always tries to stop and visit with trail users. "It certainly pleases me", he told us recently, "to see people enjoying this trail".

John Chase's special property is currently for sale. If you're interested in owning this 160-acre parcel, with a building envelope that allows for a home, contact Wendy Brown at (406) 751-2918.



Tom Esch (center, in vest) and John Chase (left, in green jacket) enjoy meeting a cyclist, runners and four-legged trail user on the Chase Trail.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! REGISTER ON FTBT WEBSITE FOR NEWS.

Noxious Weed Warriors: We are gearing up for our second annual herbicide application and are looking for volunteers that want to learn about weed ID, how to operate a backpack sprayer and safely eradicate weeds.

Pack People: We also need crew support volunteers to carry lunches, extra gear, and act as greeter to oncoming trail users. Sure-footed and strong hikers needed!

Dedicated Diggers: Just want to play in the dirt? We've got the job for you! The new drainage work will need a ton of tamping in early summer. Work out some stress!

National Trails Day: We have June 5 on the calendar to give our trails and parks a little TLC. We'll be at Lone Pine

and Herron Park for the morning. Send us an email or click the volunteer button on our website (bottom left, light blue button) and we'll put you on the volunteer list.



ANOTHER WAY TO SUPPORT FTBT!

Go to smile.amazon.com then select Foy's to Blacktail Trails as your preferred charitable organization. Each time you make an eligible Amazon a portion of your payment will be donated to FTBT. You can also activate AmazonSmile on the Amazon app (on your smart phone). Easy peezy! Thank you for your support.