



# Discover America

Newsletter of the American Discovery Trail Society

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[www.discoverytrail.org](http://www.discoverytrail.org)

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ADT Featured Site

## Cape Henlopen State Park



*Gordon's Pond Trail skirts pine forests and a unique saltwater impoundment.*

Photo courtesy of David Bartoo

The scenic beginning (or end) of the American Discovery Trail lies within the boundaries of Cape Henlopen State Park in Delaware. This ADT eastern terminus is found at a site that has long been valued for its natural resources, military defense, commercial shipping, and recreation.

After 1682, when William Penn was granted the lands that eventually became the state of Delaware, he set aside Cape Henlopen and its natural resources for the use and enjoyment of the citizens of the Delaware Colony. Thus, this area was among the first public lands in the 13 colonies, but it did not become an official state park until 1964.

Due to its strategic location at the mouth of Delaware Bay, the remnants of its history in shipping and military uses can be found within the park. The Cape Henlopen Lighthouse, the sixth

lighthouse built on the Atlantic coast, was constructed from 1767–9. It remained in use until 1924, when it was damaged in a storm. It collapsed in 1926 due to the movement of the Great Dune.

The cape played a role in military operations during the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Civil War. With the onset of World War II, the U.S. Army established a military base at Cape Henlopen. Bunkers and gun emplacements were camouflaged among the dunes, and concrete observation towers were built along the coast to spot enemy ships.

Today, you can still climb to the top of a World War II observation tower to catch a 360-degree view of the cape or take a short climb to the top of a former military bunker to view the dynamic action along the Atlantic coastline.

The 5,193-acre park contains a wealth of natural beauty, including dunes, forests, wetlands, and six miles of beaches. Along the coast, the Great Dune rises 80 feet above the beach. Farther inland, the “walking dunes” slowly move across the pine forest, which contains the only stand of pitch pine on the Delmarva Peninsula.

Gordon's Pond Wildlife Area features a unique saltwater impoundment. A broad salt marsh stretches along the park's western boundary. This variety of habitats makes the park a valuable home to many species of birds, reptiles, and mammals. During the summer, the park protects nesting areas along the coastline for piping plovers, a threatened species of shorebird.

Recreational opportunities within the park include 20 miles of hiking or biking trails, scenic overlooks, interpretive displays, a fishing pier, hunting, beaches and a bathhouse, a disc golf course, and campgrounds. With so much to do within Cape Henlopen State Park, American Discovery Trail users may find it hard to leave. Or worth a walk across the country to reach. More information can be found at [www.destateparks.com/chsp/chsp.htm](http://www.destateparks.com/chsp/chsp.htm).



*A World War II observation tower remains on the beach at Cape Henlopen State Park.*

## Western Illinois Relocation Improves Trail Experience

In June, a five-and-one-half-mile trail relocation was scouted and approved between Cahokia and East St. Louis in Illinois. This was necessary for safety reasons because of flooding along the Mississippi River this spring and the closing of some of the levees to public access. The re-route includes a number of scenic points.

Trail users will be able to see a new \$15 million park that is being developed along the riverfront directly across the Mississippi River from the Gateway Arch.

A huge water fountain has already been built and a three-level observation platform and outdoor amphitheater are under construction. The platform affords a dramatic view of the arch with the old St. Louis courthouse perfectly centered beneath it.

The relocation leads directly to the new Eads Bridge pedestrian crossing over the Mississippi River. The pedestrian lane is separated from the roadway by a concrete barrier on the upper level and features three observation points.

Local authorities have stated that the area along Front Street is safe during the day, but that American Discovery Trail travelers should not travel along Front Street, W. Trendley Avenue, or 8th Street after dark or camp anywhere nearby.



The new ADT route passes this Catholic church. Built in 1699, it is the oldest in Illinois.

Photo courtesy of Reese Lukei



View of the Gateway Arch framing the old St. Louis courthouse from the new platform. Photo courtesy of Reese Lukei

## Garden of the Gods DVD

Garden of the Gods is a scenic rock feature area along the River to River Trail in Illinois on the southern route of the American Discovery Trail. Now the Saline County Tourism Board (chaired by ADT Southern Illinois coordinator John O'Dell) has produced a 30-minute video DVD that highlights the recreational opportunities, scenic attractions, and pioneer history of this area. In addition to those famous rocks, the region is home to the Saline Creek Pioneer Village and Museum (circa 1840), the only bronze statue of Shawnee Chief Tecumseh at Glen O. Jones Lake, and fascinating woodland hideaways in the Shawnee National Forest. For more information, visit [www.shawneetourism.com](http://www.shawneetourism.com). The video can be ordered for \$15 by sending a check to: Garden of the Gods Video, 1600 South Feazel St., Harrisburg, IL 62946.

**Making Connections...**

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## Iowa Trails: Good and Bad

There's good news and bad news in Iowa. First, the good. The Heart of Iowa Trail received two grants totaling \$7,260 for construction of two sections that should close a confusing gap in the trail. These grants will supplement other funding to construct a four-mile section. Work was expected to start this past summer and take one year to complete.

According to Carol Williams, the ranger in charge of special projects, this new segment of the trail will be 20-feet wide with 10 feet for walking and biking and a 10-foot grassy area beside it for equestrian use. Two bridges will take the trail over the Skunk River and the Union Pacific rail tracks. The Heart of Iowa Trail is one of Iowa's earlier rail trails, with the land acquired in the 1980s. The trail, when completed, will be 32 miles long and run from Slater in Story County to Melbourne in Marshall County.

More good news. Twenty-eight miles of former railroad corridor has passed to the Dallas County Conservation Board to be added to the existing Raccoon River

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## Iowa Trails: Good and Bad

(Continued from page 2)

Valley Trail. This will create a 72-mile loop trail, making it one of the longest circular trails in the nation. When completed, hikers and bikers on the Iowa portion of the ADT will one day have the choice of taking either the east or west part of the RRV as they venture across Dallas County.

And now the bad news. Iowa state ADT coordinator Tom Neenan reports that flooding this spring affected not only homes, farm fields, and businesses, but also trails. The Cedar River Trail was severely washed out in places. Efforts are under way to repair the damage.

## West Virginia Trails Strut Their Stuff at Events

The American Discovery Trail was represented at two tourism events in West Virginia this spring. West Virginia state coordinator D.J. Allen put up a display and booth at the visitors center in Williams-town that featured the co-mingling of the ADT and the North Bend Rail Trail as well as Country Trails Bicycle store in Cairo. The town mayor spoke and the event saw visitors from a number of states and Canada. In May, Allen set up another booth at North Bend State Park's "Celebrating Ritchie County" event.

## Nebraska Turns on Lights!

The Omaha *World Herald* ran an article about a party and lighting ceremony on September 13 to celebrate the completion of the new Missouri River pedestrian bridge connecting Nebraska and Iowa that will be the new home of the ADT. Fireworks and a concert added to the festive atmosphere. Although the bridge didn't officially open until late September, it was lit each night after the ceremony.

Lights illuminated each of the 80 bridge cables and separate color LED panels lit the tops of both 204-foot towers.

## Combined Federal Campaign

Federal employees and U.S. armed forces members can designate the ADT Society as the recipient of their charitable pledge for the Combined Federal Campaign. Simply use our code: **11245**.

## Indiana Alive with Activity

It just keeps getting better. The Dearborn trails project between Greendale, Lawrenceburg, and Aurora in Indiana has recently been completed and the American Discovery Trail has been re-routed to take advantage of this off-road opportunity. Don Burrell, ADT member and the bicycle/pedestrian coordinator for OKI (Ohio/Kentucky/Indiana) Regional Council of Governments, was instrumental in effecting this improvement. Reese Lukei, chair of the ADT Trail Management Committee, said, "Many thanks to Don for his expert assistance. Don has been involved with the ADT from the beginning when he helped pathfind the original ADT route and the several route refinements since then."

The new route begins at U.S. 50 and connects to the Lawrenceburg trailhead of the Dearborn Trail. Still included is Ridge Road, a pleasant residential street with a

sidewalk and a few convenience businesses. It also passes near the Schenly distillery for some local olfactory interest.

New ADT stickers have been placed along the revised ADT route with the stickers mainly on the backs of traffic signs, assuming hikers will be on the left side of the street. Some are also on utility poles at corners and a few on guard rails next to the street. Bikers and hikers on the right will need to know to look across the street or perhaps behind them. At turns, the stickers are turned so that the top point of the triangle is pointing at the new direction of travel.

You can view a colorful brochure with map of the Dearborn trails at [www.visitsoutheastindiana.com/pdf/DearTrailsBrochure.pdf](http://www.visitsoutheastindiana.com/pdf/DearTrailsBrochure.pdf). Hopefully future editions of the brochure will reference the ADT being a part of their trail.



Plantings and sculpture add interest to a Dearborn Trail trailhead.

Photo courtesy of Don Burrell

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## 2008 Long-Distance ADT Travelers      As of September 29

*Out for the long haul, these adventurers have experienced extremes in weather and terrain but what they universally talk about is the wonderful people they have met along the way. For more up-to-date information, the ADT Society website ([www.discoverytrail.org](http://www.discoverytrail.org)) has links to many of their journals.*

| Traveler                                | Start Date | Mode      | Heading | Miles | Last Location       |
|---|------------|-----------|---------|-------|---------------------|
| <b>Michael Daniel</b>                   | 6/17/07    | Hike      | E       | 5,600 | Fallon, Nev.        |
| <b>Josh James</b>                       | 4/12/07    | Hike/Bike | W       | 4,668 | Point Reyes, Calif. |
| <b>Jim Shaner</b>                       | 2002       | Walk      | W       | 825   | Pike Lake, Ohio     |
| <b>Jodi Harrington</b>                  | 3/1/08     | Hike      | W       | 3,466 | Eureka, Nev.        |
| <b>Josh Howell</b>                      | 3/1/08     | Hike      | W       | 3,466 | Eureka, Nev.        |
| <b>Ron Kessler</b>                      | 3/1/08     | Hike      | W       | 3,430 | Sacramento, Calif.  |
| <b>Lory Mitchell &amp; John Wingate</b> | 3/31/08    | Hike      | W       | 2,575 | Torrey, Utah        |

### Long Distance Musings

Josh James did it his own way. One of the goals of the American Discovery Trail is to help link various trails in the United States together by becoming an east-west “spine” that crosses the mostly north-south long distance trails. Josh did just that. Starting on the Appalachian Trail in March 2007, he hiked 450 miles of that before he took a hard left and got on the ADT. The following excerpts from his journal give a feel for his experiences.

4/11/07 My adventure is going to change significantly from walking up and down a protected sliver of wooded mountains along the east coast to crossing a much broader spectrum of what this land we call America is. I’m also going into this next exploration much more blind than the well-documented and heavily traveled Appalachian Trail, and that’s what I really want to throw myself into. Something even less predictable.

6/11/07 I paid off all my debts, saved up a little, and took off. I have no plans when I reach the other coast. My feet work, I’m healthy, my family is healthy, I’m not married, or have any kids. I just want to explore while I can. I’m pretty lucky.

I’ve walked beautiful old forests, and devastating clear cuts. I’ve been hungry



*Capitol Reef National Park from Josh James’ campsite.*      Photo courtesy of Josh James

and full. I’ve seen lots of trash and dead animals. I’ve met people that have shown me that there are a lot of good people all over. I’ve met some mean dogs and some friendly ones. I’ve walked till my legs felt like they were having a stroke. I’ve been drenched from rain and sweat. I’ve picked berries in the sunshine.

8/14/07 To put it in perspective. On the A.T., the mountains of Virginia follow the ridges northeast close to the New River and then the Shenandoah to the Potomac.

Going west on the ADT, I traveled along the north side of the Potomac through Maryland, crossing it into West Virginia...the beautiful lush ridges of West Virginia Appalachia and across the Ohio River into Ohio.

I followed hills and flood plains north of the Ohio River all the way through into Indiana, crossing the Wabash into Illinois, and cutting across the bluffs of the Shawnee National Forest to the floodplains of the Mississippi River.

Then, up the Mississippi to the gates of the West (St. Louis), following the Missouri River to Kansas City. There were villages, towns, rural country, abandoned places, cities, wilderness, and suburbia. It was a broad cross section of America.

It’s been hot, I guess it’s been hot everywhere. Some days I try to conjure clouds to come and give a little shade. Or wish that the prevailing winds would come from the west instead of the east. Every once in a while I get a puff on my face and it’s the best feeling in the world.

Over 320 miles in Missouri in about 14 days in 90–100 degrees and thick rivers of humidity, but I almost every night had a place to rinse off and drink as much water as I wanted.

*(Continued on page 5, column 1)*

## Long Distance Musings

*(Continued from page 4)*

10/31/07 I have made it to the Rockies. I'm stopping here for the year in this beautiful area to find a home and a job for about six months. High mesas covered with cactus, some grasses, bushes, and stunted cedars (and lots of rattle snakes).....narrow wooded river canyons now with beautiful yellow fall colors, occasional small green valleys, and towering snow capped mountains.

6/13/08 From Leadville I hiked six days (seeing hardly a soul) around Twin Lakes, to the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness, over a difficult snowy pass to another snowy timberline trail, down to the Taylor River, west across the Gunnison National Forest down to Clear Creek Canyon, and north to Crested Butte.

6/25/08 From Crested Butte to the Grand Mesa was a large variety of terrains—a first view of the end of the Rockies, several stream crossings with fast springtime water, sagebrush mesas, and more snow than expected on the Grand Mesa (snowshoed quite a bit up there).

There were saturated places like I had never seen on the “flat tops,” high altitude lakes, lots of elk, signs of bear, flowers, and signs of summer. Then, dropping of more than 5,000 feet to Grand Junction in a day's walk to the desert.

8/14/08 So, I'm finishing the last 100 miles on foot. This makes me happy. For me hiking is far more rich than any other way of moving. But I've gotten a well-rounded trip: hiking (trails of all sorts all climates and terrains), snowshoeing, biking (on roads and trails where a bike should never go again). Crossing the Sierra and descending to the coast is the most rapid change of environments I've had the whole trip. From desert to alpine to dense forests of evergreens to the California Delta at 10 feet above sea level, and then steep rolling golden grassy hills dotted with hardy twisted oaks to the foggy cool Bay Area (where I picked bunches of ripe plums growing wild). Two or three more days till I reach the trail's end.

## Historic Foundations Support Trail Route

*By Harv Hisgen, ADT Society Vice President for Discovery & Education*

The American Discovery Trail follows in the footprints of many historic persons, routes, and trails tracing back to American, Spanish, British, and French roots. The first explorers followed paths on which they could survive, namely where native Americans and the flora and fauna before them found the necessities for life.

Natural corridors like water routes were explored early because game was drawn to rivers and streams for food and water. The trappers, explorers, and pioneers who followed found ready supplies of water, grazing for livestock, wood for shelter and fuel, and game for food.

When the ADT was being laid out, the planners not only considered historic routes but also where points of interest were located. The designers sought to bring the hiker near interesting locations which naturally fall where people have explored and traveled.

The northern route of the ADT, for example, follows thousands of pioneers, on or near the Mormon, Oregon, and California trails following the Platte River. The Pony Express Trail is noted on a great deal of our route, not just along the Platte, but also in Nevada.

The ADT southern route from Elizabethtown, Ohio, follows the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, which were paths of choice for military expeditions, explorers, travelers, and later commerce.

One such example of historic footprints is the ADT route from St. Louis to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Our route follows the Missouri River on the KATY trail (the Missouri-Kansas-Texas [MKT] Railroad, built in the 1870s), along the Missouri River flyway used by migrating songbirds and waterfowl.

Daniel Boone lived near Defiance, Mo., from 1799 until he died at 85 in 1820. In fact, west of St. Louis, the ADT, KATY, Lewis and Clark, and Zebulon Pike trails pass under the Daniel Boone Bridge on U.S. 40 at Weldon Spring. Twelve miles

northwest of Boonville and three miles east of Arrow Rock State Historic Site, Nathan and Daniel Morgan Boone, sons of Daniel Boone, formed a partnership in 1805 to produce salt for food preservation.

Along the Missouri, the ADT follows the route of the Lewis and Clark Expedition from St. Charles to Boonville for 149 miles. The ADT follows the path of explorer Zebulon Montgomery Pike (1806) from St. Charles to Osage City for 100 miles. It follows Pike's path again from Great Bend, Kan., to Cripple Creek, Colo., for 489 miles and yet again for 36 miles from Buena Vista to Leadville, Colo., on an ADT bike alternative route. All in all, we follow Pike for 625 miles.

As the ADT traveler approaches the Rocky Mountains, three 14,000-foot mountains are viewed: Pikes Peak, Mt. Evans, and Longs Peak. Pike tried to climb the peak that now is named for him, whereas Emma and John Wesley Powell successfully climbed it in July 1867. Steven Long explored much of the “Great American Desert” we now call the Great Plains as well as the border with Canada.

The trail steps in many of the footprints of John C. Frémont, whose name has been affixed to locations on the Arkansas River, in Colorado, and in California. He followed and expanded Pike's exploration three times, going all the way to San Francisco in 1844, 1845, and 1848. His guide all three times was none other than Kit Carson. It seems they loved the Pueblo, Colo., area, especially Hardscrapple, a long-gone settlement 20 miles west of Pueblo, in today's Fremont county.

The ADT also crosses early Spanish paths. In 1720, Lt. Gen. Pedro de Villasur was appointed to lead a Spanish army from Santa Fe into Nebraska to determine French activities. His force went down the Arkansas River from today's Manzanola to Las Animas and then toward Grand Island, Neb. At dawn on August 14, 1720, a huge force of Oto and Pawnee warriors, possibly with French traders, attacked the Spanish camp near Grand Island on the Platte River and killed Villasur.

Today's explorers can not only lay down their own footsteps but also experience the history of our country through an understanding of who came before.

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*Scenes from Josh James' hike. Left: Mt. Hope rises above Twin Lakes area of Colorado. Right: Josh walks near Inspiration Point in San Francisco Bay Area of California. (See page 4 for journal excerpts from his trip.)* Photos courtesy of Josh James

### **New Northern Indiana State Coordinator Signs On**

Jeff Edmondson came “back home to Indiana” after retiring in 2004 from the U.S. Department of Energy, where he had served 33 years, 12 in Chicago and 21 in Washington, D.C.

He grew up in southern Indiana where his love of hiking began on the roads and hills with his Boy Scout troop.

Edmondson went to Purdue University where he received BS and MS degrees.

When he retired, he and his wife moved to the Indianapolis area where they joined the Indianapolis Hiking Club. That is how he met Ron Craig and Swati Gunale, past Indiana state coordinators.

He has been active in the club for two years, hiking more than 2,000 miles with the club in 2007 and recently becoming an officer.

### **Attention Federal Employees**

Federal employees and U.S. Armed Forces members can designate the American Discovery Trail Society in their charitable pledge for the Combined Federal Campaign.

It's an easy way to give and contributions are tax-deductible. Simply include our new five-digit code when filling out your pledge card: **11245**.



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