

Ozaukee County's JEM

As you bike along the Ozaukee Interurban Trail, stop for a rest on the new bench



Riders along the Ozaukee Interurban Trail have a new place to catch their breath, thanks to a bench that honors Chris Kegel and his family. Kegel, a Mequon resident and owner of Wheel & Sprocket bike shops, played a key role in making the bridge a reality. Kegel passed away in February 2017. Members of his family were on hand at the ceremony.

OZAUKEE COUNTY — Ozaukee County is paving the way for a new marketing strategy aimed at promoting the Ozaukee Interurban Trail. This multi-use, year-round trail traverses the entire county and connects to the Brown Deer Recreation and Oak Leaf trails to the south in Milwaukee County and the Sheboygan Interurban Trail in Sheboygan County to the north.

With help from a \$35,000 Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) grant from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, the Ozaukee County Tourism Council, Ozaukee County Planning & Parks Department and area Chambers of Commerce and Tourism Promotion, entities will work together to develop an engaging branding campaign that can be used by the communities along the 30-mile, multi-use trail. The project will run through March 2020.

"We are very pleased and excited by the Wisconsin Department of Tourism's investment in marketing the Ozaukee Interurban Trail through the JEM grant program. We believe that the campaign will attract many new visitors to enjoy our picturesque Trail and Ozaukee area, year-round, in all seasons. It will also provide for significant additional investment by our partners," said Andrew Struck, director of the Ozaukee County Planning and Parks Department, chairman of the Ozaukee Interurban Trail Advisory Council and board member of the Ozaukee County Tourism Council.

The JEM grant will help fund the development and implementation of a new strategy to promote the trail, which includes creating an interactive website, email marketing, as well as advertising and public relations efforts. Grant funds

will go toward print, radio and online advertising to promote the trail to families and outdoor recreational enthusiasts from Wisconsin and the Midwest. The campaign is expected to attract 7,500 visitors to the area, generating an estimated \$654,000 in visitor spending.

In 2018, the tourism economy in Wisconsin totaled \$21.6 billion, supporting 199,073 jobs. Visitors generated \$1.6 billion in state and local revenue. Business sales in Ozaukee County totaled \$210.6 million in 2018, supporting 2,114 jobs and \$12.9 million in state and local taxes.

In fiscal year 2019, the Department funded 62 JEM projects, awarding a total of more than \$1.1 million. Visitor expenditures driven by the marketing from these projects will exceed \$61 million. JEM grant funds are available to nonprofit organizations for the promotion of Wisconsin tourism events and destinations.

The state can fund up to 75 percent of a project's first-year advertising and marketing costs and provide support for second- and third-year projects with decreasing amounts for funding until projects become self-sustaining. For information on the JEM Program and application materials, visit industry.travelwisconsin.com.

The mission of the Wisconsin Department of Tourism is to market Wisconsin as the Midwest's premier travel destination for fun by executing industry-leading marketing programs and establishing strategic partnerships. The Department plays a significant role in generating greater economic impact and jobs for Wisconsin. The portal for traveler information can be found at www.travelwisconsin.com.



The bench dedication at the Ozaukee Trail Bridge Park began with a short bike ride that started at the Grafton Family Aquatic Center, crossed over the Milwaukee River and ended at the park. Riders included cyclists from the Ozaukee Interurban Trail Advisory Council, Ozaukee County Planning and Parks Department, Ozaukee County Tourism Council, Wisconsin Women Cycling and members of the Kegel family. Bike rider David Spiegelberg carried a Joint Effort Management grant check for \$35,000 from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism on the ride.



Photos by Art Dahle

Left, director of the Ozaukee County Planning and Parks Department Andrew Struck praises the Kegel family for everything they've done for cycling and the Ozaukee Interurban Trail.



Right, Cindy Petted, owner of Wisconsin Women Cycling, spoke at the ceremony, saying she's pleased to promote the trail and has great memories of Chris Kegel and his family.

On Oct. 3, the Ozaukee Interurban Trail Advisory Council, Ozaukee County Planning and Parks Department, Ozaukee County Tourism Council, Wisconsin Women Cycling and members of the Kegel Family dedicated a park bench at the Ozaukee County Trail Bridge Park where it crosses over Interstate 43 in Grafton. The event honored Chris Kegel and recognized Chris Kegel Day on the Ozaukee Interurban Trail. Kegel, a Mequon resident and owner of the Wheel & Sprocket bike shops, played a key role in making the I-43 bridge a reality. Kegel died in February 2017.

The State Department of Tourism was also in attendance to present a check to Ozaukee County Planning and Parks for work to promote the Ozaukee Interurban Trail through its Joint Effort Marketing Grant program.

On Oct. 5, 2016, the Ozaukee County Board proclaimed that Oct. 3 each year be declared Chris Kegel Day on the Ozaukee Interurban Trail, stating that Kegel enriched the lives of all Ozaukee County citizens and served as an inspiration for all civic-minded citizens, along with future generations to come with his motto, "Live Life, Ride."



The ribbon is officially cut for the new park bench at the Ozaukee Interurban Trail Park. Holding the oversized scissors are Chris Kegel's grandson, Eamonn Patterson, his daughter, Tessa Kegel and far right, his wife, Mary Hanley Kegel.