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 SUMMER 2018 NEWSLETTER
ENVIRONMENT ECONOMY COMMUNITY



START HERE, INSPIRE STATEWIDE



We seize every opportunity at Groundwork to leverage our local work to benefit communities across Michigan. Success is contagious – if we make a splash with tangible results in northwest Michigan, the rest of the state will catch the wave.

I am happy to report that our strategy is working.

The example freshest in my mind is 10 Cents a Meal, a state pilot program providing funds for locally grown fruits and vegetables for school lunches. It started in Traverse City in 2013, building on more than a decade of Groundwork's work with farmers, schools, and families to get healthy, local food into cafeterias. We raised funds to supplement local programs, and then appealed to the legislature to create the state 10 Cents pilot program. Last year – 10 Cents' third year – 95,000 students were served by schools receiving funding

from the state budget. The legislature recently expanded the program to include half the Lower Peninsula. We are committed to making 10 Cents available to all students in Michigan – and creating a national model of state policy.

Another terrific example is the Ann Arbor to Traverse City passenger rail project. This big idea was hatched by northwest Michigan residents during a visioning process ten years ago. We engaged state officials and partners in communities along the corridor to create a plan that is on track to make passenger trains a reality.

Lastly, Groundwork was central to launching the campaign to shut down Line 5 oil pipeline under the Mackinac Straits – now a top Michigan issue.

There's a powerful culture of commitment and collaboration up here in the north – and we are connecting it to all of Michigan.

Hans Voss Groundwork
Executive Director

Start with special event trains—a Cherry Festival train from Ann Arbor to Traverse City, or a Big 10 football game train from Petoskey to Ann Arbor—and then build to daily service as demand grows. Those are key recommendations from passenger rail consultants Transportation Economics & Management Systems, which recently completed a study of passenger rail service from Traverse City and Petoskey to Ann Arbor.

Northern Michigan's thin year-round population initially left the consultants skeptical of rail service viability. But that view changed when they saw that six million people visit the region annually.

The passenger rail economic model alters dramatically—and in unexpected ways—with different speed trains. For example, a 60-mph-train between Traverse City and Ann Arbor—which

requires only modest track repairs—would take five hours in travel time; a 110-mph-train would require costly repairs to the existing tracks, but it would cut the trip to 3.5 hours (compared to a car's 4 hours and 40 minutes). Rail ticket buyer data shows, however, that despite more expensive tickets needed to cover the increased cost of a 110-mph-train, passenger numbers surge when a train is notably faster than a car—making the speedier train more feasible than you might expect.

Groundwork rail project lead Jim Bruckbauer hopes to get special event trains running by summer 2019—after repairs are made to the final four-mile run of track into Traverse City. Check out a2tc.org for more details about this exciting project.

Thanks to Bay Area Transportation Authority for being the sponsor for the federal study grant, and to the Traverse Area Association of REALTORS®, National Association of REALTORS®, Rotary Charities of Traverse City, and the Les and Anne Biederman Foundation for additional funding.

WE HEAR THE TRAIN A' COMIN'!



LINDSAY HALL REFLECTS ON HER FOODCORPS STINT AT GROUNDWORK

We are saying so long to Lindsay Hall, who has reached the end of her two-year service term with FoodCorps, a national team of AmeriCorps leaders connecting kids to healthy food in school. Lindsay was essential to expanding Groundwork's farm to school work to Charlevoix and Emmet County schools, and her work also paved the way for opening Groundwork's office in Petoskey.

Throughout her FoodCorps service, Lindsay was guided by a mission of creating a culture of health—an admittedly complex phenomenon to pinpoint, but she saw that culture evolve during her time. Case in point: "We were doing a taste test with students, and I was observing the whole thing—the students, the teachers, the staff, they were all doing everything, and I was

no longer needed. It was really exciting to see that," she says.

Another small but important moment also stands out. Lindsay was working with a teacher on lesson plans, and the teacher was really happy about the ideas and possibilities. The teacher suddenly held up her hand, and Lindsay slapped a high-five. "It was like we are all a team, now!" Lindsay says.

Change in culture means altering things big and small, and Lindsay influenced many points in the system. "We had events, wellness challenges, rewrote health policies, had cooking demonstrations in classrooms, took kids into the hoop house. The summary of all those things is making a big success story," she says.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: GREG CARPENTER

Business owner, baker, teacher, inspiration, Groundwork member ... Greg Carpenter is all of these things, and taps into each when he volunteers for Groundwork in schools in and around Petoskey.

Carpenter is owner of Crooked Tree Breadworks, a Petoskey bakery that built a reputation with a give-no-ground commitment to high quality breads made with healthy whole grains. Proof: he grinds his own flour in the back of the shop because the sweetest flavors of whole wheat must be captured quickly upon breaking open the wheatberry.

That passion and commitment is what Carpenter brings to school classrooms, where he discusses fresh, whole and healthy foods and gives baking demonstrations. Recently, Carpenter spent a day at Bliss Gardens Farm with a group of Pellston high schoolers. He invited them to help him develop a healthy protein bar made with black beans and other produce grown at the farm. Like food entrepreneurs everywhere, the students evaluated the bar for taste, texture and how much the bar filled them up. Before the day was done, talk evolved to selling the protein bar in the school, and students spent time brainstorming names, like Bliss Bar, Hornet Bar (their mascot is a hornet), and Fantastic Fuel.

Fantastic Fuel ... that could also describe how Carpenter’s work influenced students that day!

PROGRAM UPDATES

LINE 5 OIL PIPELINE

When, on April 1, 2018, a ship anchor struck Enbridge’s Line 5 oil pipeline in the Mackinac Straits and dented it in three places, the likelihood of a devastating oil spill became frighteningly, viscerally real. Some business people in the Straits quickly upped their disaster insurance, and the event prompted Governor Snyder to say Line 5 must be shut down. But his ‘shut down’ proposal is actually a pipeline replacement in a tunnel under the Straits – and not in Michigan’s interest.

Groundwork has been out front on the Line 5 issue for five years, and in a recent report clearly documented that the Line 5 oil pipeline is no longer necessary for Michigan, but instead functions as a shortcut for Canada by transporting crude oil from western Canada to refineries in eastern Canada. Michigan’s oil needs are adequately served by other pipelines, so instead of proposing a tunnel under the Straits that primarily benefits Canada, Michigan’s governor should be implementing solutions for Upper Peninsula residents to receive critical propane that is currently delivered by Line 5.

The Groundwork report, “Canadian Profits, Michigan Risk” (which received strong media coverage) supports the opinions of many members of the Great Lakes Business Network, that Michigan’s leaders should put the protection of the Great Lakes, the state’s greatest natural resource and economic asset, ahead of short-term, foreign business interests.



CLEAN ENERGY

MICHIGAN CLEAN ENERGY CONFERENCE & EXPO

At summer solstice, June 21–23, Groundwork sponsored its second annual Michigan Clean Energy Conference & Expo. Friday’s conference headliners included international thought leaders like Ken Davies, director of renewable energy for Microsoft, Al Hildreth, General Motors global manager of energy efficiency, and Carla Walker-Miller, who pivoted her company, Walker-Miller Energy Services, to become a now-leading energy efficiency business during the depths of the 2008 recession in Detroit. Regional and local innovators added up-close and on-the-ground perspective. Saturday’s Expo was a touch-it, feel-it day to get up close to energy gear, and included fun energy experiments for kids from the Ann Arbor Hands on Museum. Attendees went home inspired by big ideas and possibilities, and well-armed with practical solutions to propel clean energy now.

GREEN RATE

Groundwork has taken a leading role in promoting a new electric rate offered by Traverse City Light & Power that, for a small premium, enables homeowners and business owners to purchase 25, 50, 75 or 100 percent of their electricity from clean sources like solar and wind. It’s powerful because all customers can live their clean energy ethic, without, say, needing space for a solar installation or having to finance a system. (Groundwork offices in TC and Petoskey have gone 100% clean energy!)



TEN CENTS A MEAL

Incubating ideas, nurturing them, expanding their reach... these are essential ways in which Groundwork achieves results and brings about change that spreads, that endures. No better example of this exists than the 10 Cents a Meal program that Groundwork launched in Traverse City in 2013.

The heart of the program is an understanding that adding just 10 cents to a school lunch can dramatically increase the amount of fresh, locally grown food on a child’s plate. Also important: the food is purchased from local farmers, so farm families are helped with financial stability, and the local economy is made more resilient overall.

Because this program makes so much sense and is such a unifying idea, Michigan Republicans and Democrats have backed it, and 10 Cents a Meal is spreading across the state. For fiscal year 2019, Michigan added \$200,000 to the program, increasing funding to \$575,000, and expanded the reach to cover half the Lower Peninsula, notably adding three important urban areas: Flint, Kalamazoo and Battle Creek. Learn more about 10 Cents a Meal: tencentsmichigan.org.



STAFF UPDATES

We are excited to announce the addition of three new Groundwork staff.

CILE PLUMSTEAD, DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT

Cile and her husband, Norm, first engaged with Groundwork after they learned the organization worked for many of the things they also believe in. They were drawn in by the passion of the people they met here and decided to donate 1% of the profits of their business to our organization. Eventually, Cile applied for the development assistant position here, and she came on board earlier this year. During her time here she continues to enjoy and be inspired by the commitment she sees within her colleagues.

RIC EVANS, CLEAN ENERGY POLICY SPECIALIST

“I’ve always been a huge fan of Groundwork’s inspiring work, and its ability to move the dial on issues that are dear to me,” Ric says. For over 12 years, Ric ran an energy efficiency and renewable energy consulting company helping hundreds of homeowners and businesses reduce energy use and transition to clean energy. He is excited to use these experiences to encourage smart energy policy.

JEFF SMITH, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Jeff comes to Groundwork after 21 years as editor of Traverse Magazine. “I’ve long admired the people and mission of Groundwork and look forward to doing my part,” he says. Jeff also spent a decade writing about hazardous waste policy and recently wrote a book, “Becoming Amish,” about two friends who made that journey. He sees Groundwork as a place where policy, community and storytelling converge.



Save the Date! October 13, 2018
HARVEST DINNER AND DANCE PARTY
at GT Commons, Traverse City

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