



Anderson  
Bluffs &  
River Trails

FOUNDATION

3RD ISSUE - NOV 2022



## A Message from the President

As I write this, I am enjoying the spectacular fall color in the UP. But soon we will be into our favorite season and celebrating the very best snow in the Midwest. We are finishing the new trails and other summer projects, as well as mowing and clearing existing trails. We are getting the grooming equipment ready for the season and preparing the store. Can't wait to be out there grooming and watch you all arrive!

I sure can't see it, but I must be looking old, because people keep asking about my retirement plans. Angela and I love what we do, but we have made some decisions and will use the newsletter to keep you informed of our vision, our plans, and our progress. Unfortunately, no one does anything new without a few tumbles, so we will probably have some of those to share, too. However, be assured we will continue to do whatever is necessary for ABR to be the source of smiling faces for years to come.

Many of you started coming to ABR when my dad and I first started creating trails, and my mom was still baking cookies for the trail head. You helped our business grow from its original 8 km of trails to our current 101 km. We could not have done it without you. We met many of you when we were all young; you brought your kids; then you brought your grandkids. Our vision is that your grandkids will also bring their grandkids to ski at ABR.

In 1895, my ancestors immigrated from Finland to settle on land that virtually adjoins today's ABR. Angela's Santini family has been here nearly as long. Generations of our grandparents and parents and aunts and uncles and siblings and cousins grew up in this place. So, it just feels right to us that ABR belongs to this community, as a legacy to silent sports.

In 2019 we established Andersen Bluff and River Trails Foundation (Foundation) to own and operate the ABR Ski Area as a non-profit after we retire. [HTTPS://ANDERSONBLUFFSRIVERTRAILSFOUNDATION.ORG/](https://andersonbluffsrivertrailsfoundation.org/). We will be donating the land and the business to the Foundation, over the next few years.

Over the last 3 years, the Foundation Board of Directors has worked with other dedicated community volunteers on Project Connect. This project will network ABR's world class trail into a trail system that will link all Gogebic Range communities for silent sports enthusiasts and casual users alike. Over the next 3 years, the Board and other volunteers will focus on preparing to own and operate the ski area when Angela and I retire April 1, 2025. This gives us plenty of time to keep things operating smoothly after we retire.

While we will no longer do ALL the things we have done these last 30 years, you will still see both Angela and me around the trail head. I'm not about to give up my time in the Pisten Bully, so I will continue as Chief Groomer even after the Foundation Board is running the business. And neither Angela nor I will ever be ready to give up the relationships we have formed with so many of you. Over the next few years there will be some new faces, but there will be no change in the commitment to provide the Midwest's Premier Nordic Ski destination.

We always look forward to seeing you as customers and friends, but soon we will also be asking your help to sustain what ABR has become for you and our community. We will need your support in time, in donations, and in skills. The best way to keep up with what's happening is to sign up for our newsletter. [HTTPS://ANDERSONBLUFFSRIVERTRAILSFOUNDATION.ORG/](https://andersonbluffsrivertrailsfoundation.org/). We hope you will continue to join us in the journey. See you when the snow flies!



Hei Hei  
(It's Finnish; look it up!!)



**“Sustain ABR Legacy as the Midwest’s Premier Nordic Ski destination for generations to come and connect ABR Trails to the larger community.”**

## OUR VISION

## Project Connect *Connecting People*

While the foundation continues to piece together the organizational and financial elements to sustain the ABR legacy in perpetuity, it is also collaborating with regional partners to realize its second vision of connecting ABR to the greater community. This spring, in collaboration with the Gogebic Range Health Foundation, the Anderson Bluff and River Trail Foundation created “Project Connect: Our Vision, Our Future” as a way to publicly display the shared vision of both local foundations for creating a regionally connected trail system in the greater Ironwood community. The dream is simple: To allow people of all ages easy access to a trail in their neighborhood that connects to trails throughout

the regional community - from Montreal, Wisconsin to Wakefield, Michigan. Already ABR and the Foundation have taken two major steps in the ABR neighborhood toward implementing this vision. First, they partnered with the City of Ironwood in the development of the expanded White Pine Trail through Norrie Park (Project Connect #7). Not only will this trail become a new favorite with its rolling terrain among stately White Pines, but it will better connect ABR and Norrie Park to the City of Ironwood’s Miners Memorial Heritage Park and the Iron Belle Trail and beyond. Second, ABR partnered with the Erwin Township Historical Society to build a new trail connecting ABR to their new paved and unpaved nature trails (Project Connect #8). To help us realize this vision of not only sustaining the ABR legacy into the future but building a truly connected, fun and healthy regional trail experience, please consider donating to the Foundation with your skills/ time or financially.

— Will Andresen

## Highlight Director Missi King - Did You Know?

Melissa (Missi) King recently joined the Foundation as Executive Director and Secretary. Missi’s personality and energy make her a natural leader and doer. Missi and her husband Leighton moved to Erwin Township from Kentucky two years ago and set up residency on the Pumula Ski Trails. The quality of life here prompted them to make Ironwood their full-time home. They enjoy many silent sports and spending time with their Huskies.

She has travelled extensively domestically and internationally but is glad to leave that behind and settle into Ironwood. Self-sufficiency is a fundamental part of her make-up, as evidenced by her solo backpacking trip around the world when she was in her 30s! She and Leighton are learning more about foraging as part of the joy of living on their 90 acres adjoining ABR.

Missi and Leighton moved here “to contribute to the community, not just take up space and buy land. Serving on the Foundation Board is an excellent way for them to help sustain the special kind of community they are so glad they found.





## Upcoming Events

- Dec 10- Wolverine Ski Club is hosting 5th Annual Ladies Lunch & Ski Lessons
- December - Friends of MMHP has an annual Candlelight Snowshoe event during Christmas week
- Jan 6-8 - SISU SkiFest
- January 28 - GRHF & Mecca Ski Club collaborating on the WinterFest
- Feb 4-25 - Wolverine Ski Club is hosting 3rd Annual Snowshoe Challenge
- Feb 11 - Anderson Bluff & River Trail Foundation is hosting the 3rd Annual Project Connect Nordic Day

## What's Next

### The 3rd Annual Foundation Project Connect Nordic Day will be held on Saturday February 11, 2023, 9am-3pm.

Once per year we celebrate ALL 4 trail systems being connected & GROOMED! Ski the Iron Belle Trail (Ramsay), Miner's Memorial Heritage Park, Wolverine, & ABR contiguously. Our primary objective was to provide a unique day that families could ski any or all four of the Ironwood Nordic trails in one day. It was also to demonstrate how close the community is getting to completing these connections. Everyone will be a winner, as this is not a competition. Afterwards, congregate with fellow skiers at Cold Iron. The generous gifts by local business sponsors will be raffled off throughout the event.

Skiers can pick up wooden commemorative tokens along the ski trail and exchange them for raffle tickets.

***SAVE THE DATE!!!***

Eric Anderson and Angela Santini (Founders of the Foundation) really appreciated the 200 skiers coming out in 2022 and supporting the Foundation's Project Connect.

***"I've learned Project Connect is so much more than physically connecting trails ... it's about connecting all the groups and people too. We are working with Miners, Wolverine, Iron Belle and all these volunteers that have come forward. It's just so neat."***

– Eric Anderson

**"Create & sustain the organizational foundation to ensure a lasting legacy for Nordic skiing in the Ironwood area"**

**OUR MISSION**



# Dave Anderson Skis into the Sunset with a Twinkle

by Will Andresen

Dave Anderson, co-founder of ABR, passed away this summer. Many people have their own stories about Dave. Mine starts fresh into our recent move to Ironwood, a place where we knew no one, but relished playing in the abundant snow. While trying to decide if snow before Halloween was a trick or a treat, a stranger calls and invites us to his home for their annual Thanksgiving Day run. Of course, that stranger was Dave Anderson, and we soon knew everyone. Dave was a connector, connecting people and their passions. That's his legacy in my mind. Connecting people to each other, and to shared passions for running, kayaking and skiing. The next year, he and Eric established ABR and together created one of the best Nordic ski trail systems in the Midwest. I always enjoyed visiting with Dave before and after every ABR ski, when he would ask how my family was doing, and with that infectious smile and twinkle in his eye ask all about the day's skiing. Some would say that Dave Anderson's legacy is building a strong regional economy through the creation of ABR. But I wouldn't go that small. Dave's legacy is that twinkle in his eye, loving his people and his place. The world is a better place because Dave ran, paddled and skied on it. In those footprints, ripples and pole plants, he left a lasting legacy for the rest of us to enjoy. To sustain the legacy of Dave Anderson, please consider donating to his memorial fund.



Above: Sunset Trail - one of the first trails ever built on Anderson property. This is the Trail for Dave's Memorial.

Lower Left: Dave Anderson skiing with son Eric .



Want to help with a special skill or in-kind donation?

- Graphics arts or website work
- Grant writer
- Social media updates
- Accounting work



The non-profit Anderson Bluffs & River Trails Foundation was created by ABR Ski Inc. with a vision to sustain ABR's legacy as the Midwest's premier Nordic Ski destination for generations to come, and connect the ABR trails to the larger community.



## Be looking for our next newsletter for:

- o Details on February Nordic Event 2/11/2023
- o Launching our New Legacy / Capital Projects
- o Updates on the Transition

## What is Project Connect?

We are excited to share our vision for a truly connected trail community with you. The Anderson Bluffs & River Trails Foundation and Gogebic Range Health Foundation are working together to create the kind of community where residents and visitors can ski, hike, bike, and run from their front porch, from city to city, and into the wilds. Release your spirit and join the adventure. Leave your worries and car at home.

### Give To Connect

Join our journey and make a donation to help make the vision of a connected community a reality. For focused giving, The Anderson Bluffs & River Trails Foundation's priority is connecting ABR to the Iron Belle Trail (Projects 6-9 on the map), while the Gogebic Range Health Foundation's priority is creating connections along the Iron Belle Trail from Montreal, Wisconsin to Wakefield, Michigan (Projects 1-5, 10-11 on the map).

### Donate to Anderson Bluffs & River Trails Foundation

In support of funding the following projects:  
**#6** CCC Camp Interpretive Center at Norrie Park  
**#7** Woodward Trail Enhancements from Norrie Park to MMHP  
**#8** Erwin Historical Society Park & Trail Connector  
**#9** Trail lighting at MMHP

- Make a donation on our website by scanning the QR code.
- Mail a check to our office at E5299 West Pioneer Road, Ironwood, MI, 49938.
- Use a donor advised fund. Our 501(c)3 EIN # is 84-2267605 at above address.
- Make a stock transfer, IRA distribution, or for a larger donation, contact us.



### Donate to Gogebic Range Health Foundation

In support of funding the following projects:  
**#1** Montreal Trail Head - IBT  
**#2** Trestle Interpretive Center  
**#3** Interstate Falls Trail Connector  
**#4** Riverside Cemetery Trail Connector  
**#5** Mt Zion Trails  
**#10** Bessemer Trail Head - IBT  
**#11** Wakefield Trail Head - IBT

- Make a donation on our website by scanning the QR code.
- Mail a check to E 6112 Bluff View Rd Ironwood, MI 49938.
- Make a stock transfer, IRA distribution, or for a large donation contact us at 906-364-7527 or info@gogebicrangehf.org.



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SCAN HERE

