

Michigan Trails Movement Loses a Leader

William “Bill” Porteous was frequently dubbed “The Father of the White Pine Trail” and quite frankly, one of the fathers of Michigan’s state trail movement. Mr. Porteous passed away Friday, August 13, 2010 at the age of 90, but his community spirit, passion for trails, and his legendary character traits of hard work, selflessness, and determination will live on forever. He and his wife, Mabel, made wonderful contributions to both the White Pine Trail and the Pere Marquette State Trail which run through their community forming a “crossroads” diamond in the center of downtown. Their trail projects have included such developments as a covered bridge on the White Pine Trail, improvements to the park along the White Pine, a beautiful welcome sign with beautiful perennial gardens at the site of the diamond crossing, restoration of the historic railroad depot as a community center and trail user welcome station and others. Their early belief in the potential of these trails to bring the community together, enhance health and spark economic return spurred their persistent efforts to transform Reed City into one of the most welcoming “trail towns” in the state. The Michigander Bicycle Tour has traveled through on eight occasions, some years as an overnight stop and others as a rest stop, but each time the community’s hospitality has met with rave reviews from the riders. Mr. and Mrs. Porteous’ love for their community, its citizens and its landscape, as well as a foundational support for education was well documented in a biography written by Tim Bazzett entitled Love, War and Polio: The Life and Times of a Young Bill Porteous. It is with great respect and gratitude that MTGA bids him a fond farewell.