



William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail

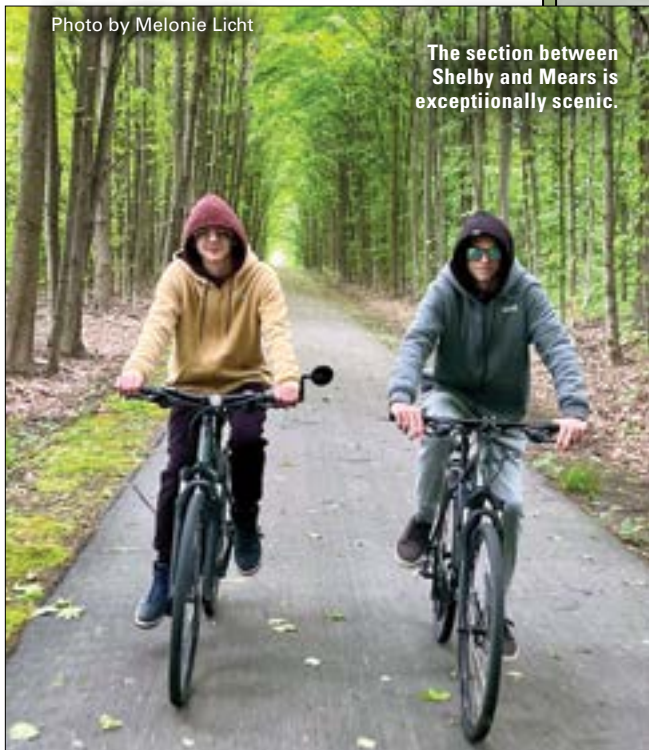
Michigan's first paved rail trail, the 22-mile William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail was completely rebuilt back in 2016 and remains in good condition. The asphalt surface was widened to 10 feet and several of the bridges, road crossings and other infrastructure were rebuilt to meet federal ADA standards.

The name of the trail was also changed to honor the late William Field, a local asparagus and cherry farmer who was the unstoppable force behind the creation of the trail.

Originally part of the Chicago and West Michigan Railroad, the rail corridor was built in 1872 to connect Pentwater to Grand Rapids. In 1982, William Field led an effort to convert the defunct C&O Railroad line into a recreational trail. After facing local opposition, he spent \$175,000 of his own money to purchase the 22-mile strip of land between Hart and Montague, and then donated it to the Michigan DNR for use as a linear state park. His determination finally paid off, and in 1989, the first 11 miles of the trail was opened for the enjoyment of all.

Photo by Melonie Licht

The section between Shelby and Mears is exceptionally scenic.



This classic American rail trail travels by cherry and apple orchards, picture-postcard farms, woodlands and waterways, connecting John Gurney Park in Hart to the twin cities of Montague and Whitehall. Along the way, you'll encounter colorful clusters of wildflowers, fields of asparagus, historic train depots and inviting ice cream stands.

You'll find campgrounds and lodging at both ends of the trail and restaurants, stores and ice cream shops in the towns along the way.

