

Trails Day & Walktober

Marketing Connecticut's Trails

Introduction

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Trails Day



Trails Day - What

- First weekend of June
- National event – American Hiking Society
- 250 diverse events in two days, largest in the country
- Over 5,000 participants in two days
- Booklet – 12,000 pieces
- Website – 31,943 page views the week before Trails Day



Trails Day – Having fun

Trails Day - Who

- All volunteer
- Variety of activities
- Variety of organizations
 - Organizations use TD to promote their cause
 - They capture names and emails
 - Gain members, donors and FANS!
- Participants are families & kids, old and young



Trails Day - Variety

Trails Day - How

- Planning starts after Thanksgiving
- Eight Constant Contact email blasts go to all past leaders, starting 12/20
- Online registration – Online form
- Help everyone register successfully – personal touch
- Thank leaders with REI summit – fun, food, beer and prizes
- Provide promotional materials – graphics, press releases, posters
- Provide links to resources – AHS, DEEP,
- Share photos

Trails Day –
Have more
fun!



Trails Day – Observations & Ideas

- Target a demographic
 - Women, kids, adaptive, runners, climbers, etc.
- Engage partners early
- Use a hike to promote your cause
 - Your venue is your platform
- You'll find loyal leaders and members
- Remember leaders only see their event, share suggestions

Trails Day — Kids and Families



Trails Day – Some examples

- People of all ages and abilities including wheelchair and adaptive bike users are invited to participate in a "Rolling Museum" on the ADA compliant Hop River Trail. Bolton
- Not 1, not 2, but 3 rivers in one paddle!! Amazing you say, unbelievable? Well, come along and you shall have bragging rights. You will see beautiful rivers, likely lots of birds and trees, possibly a beaver home, the mind boggles! – Cromwell
- Guests will join a Phelps-Hatheway guide on a short walk in the town's historic district. - Suffield



Trails Day –
Include
Everyone

Trails Day - Success

- Unique events get high attendance
- Success comes from
 - Good practices
 - Good media
 - Good website
 - Good people
- Have fun

Walktober



Walktober - What

- 29 Years and counting
- Designed to share the best of a region & it still does
- Was a weekend – now starts around the autumnal equinox thru the first weekend of November
- About 215 unique events – more than 300 opportunities to participate. Not all events are trail based.
- 80,000 annual attendance
- Walktober Guide – 15,000 printed and distributed
- Web version for download

Walktober - Explore The Last Green Valley



Walktober - Who

- One staff member to organize – the rest is volunteer
- More than 200 volunteers from more than 70 organizations
- Sign in sheets allow organizations and TLGV to capture contacts
- Programs they are proud of get a boost
- Walktober events hit almost every age range. Attract participants from all over the world – this year Berlin, Germany

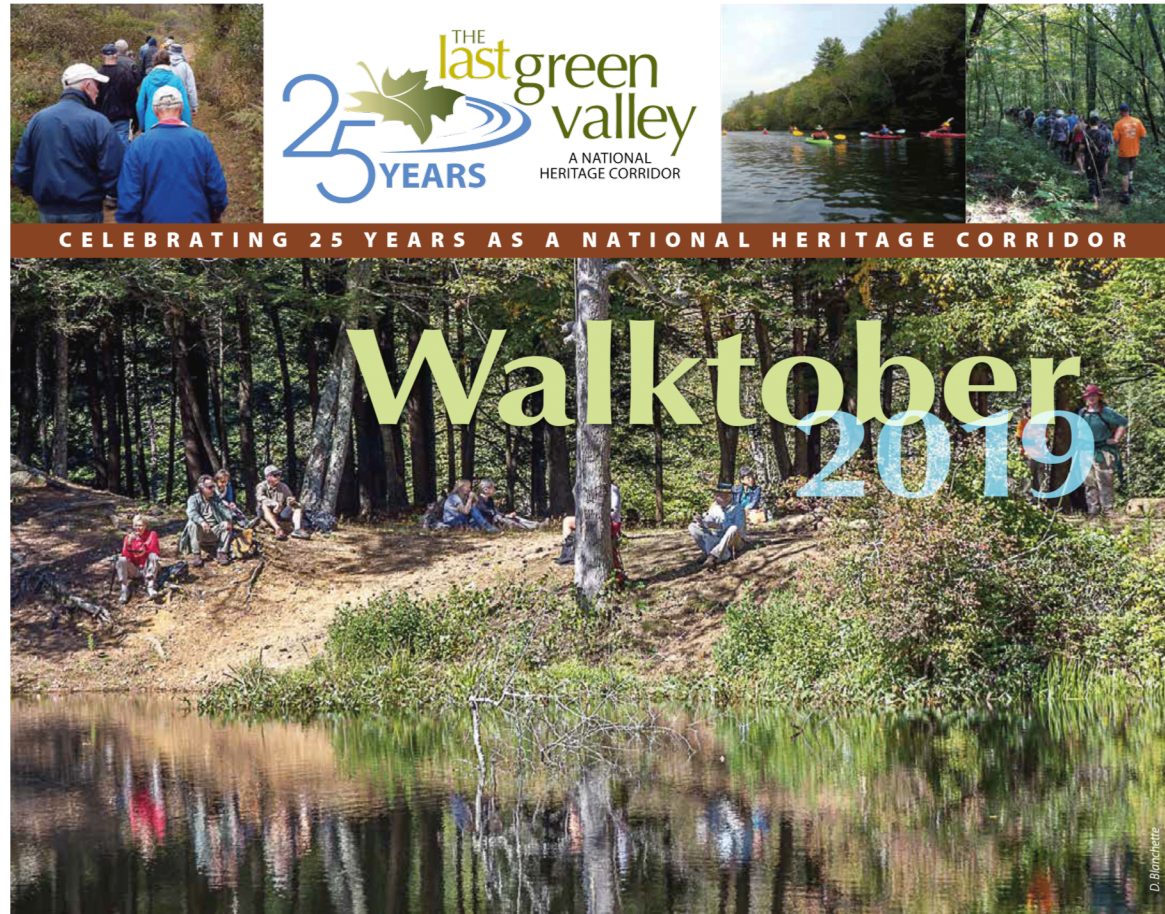
Walktober –
Volunteers
make it
happen



Walktober - How

- Walktober has longevity
- Planning is almost constant
- Thank you to leaders kicks off the next round of planning.
- TLGV provides all materials needed, signs, t-shirts, press releases.
- TLGV Promotes organizers, partnership constantly
- Walktober guide is full-color and beautiful. People want to pick it up. It fits into a full menu of options to get people to Explore!
- Spring Outdoors offers an opportunity to “practice”

Walkober Calendar



Walktober – Observations & Ideas

- Be consistent – and give it time
- Believe in your location, believe in your program
- Recognize your place in the world
- Trails = Tourism, Tourism = Economic Development
- Gain champions thru partnerships – What happens when people are off the trails?
- Social Media extends reach cheaply – More than Facebook



Walktober – Its Ours To Share!

Questions? - Thank You!

