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MCT REWARDS CITIZEN FOR PROVIDING VIDEO LEADING TO IDENTIFICATION OF TRAIL VANDALS

PONTOON BEACH, ILL., Aug. 15, 2022 . . . In a brief presentation last week, Madison County Transit (MCT) Managing Director SJ Morrison presented Glen Carbon resident Loren Strahm with a reward check for \$1,000 for providing information which enabled the Edwardsville Police Department to identify and apprehend two individuals who were vandalizing the MCT Trails. Also on hand for the presentation, which took place on the MCT Nickel Plate Trail, were Edwardsville Police Lieutenant Charlie Kohlberg and Madison County State's Attorney Tom Haine. In recent months, vandalism and graffiti on the MCT Trails has increased significantly. In June, MCT issued a public reminder about its commitment to investigate incidents of vandalism along the trails. MCT also reiterated its long-standing offer of a \$1,000 reward for information which leads to the apprehending and conviction of any individuals or groups defacing the MCT Trails.

While on a bike ride in July, Strahm encountered two juveniles spray-painting graffiti along the MCT Goshen Trail under New Poag Road in Edwardsville. Strahm captured the scene on video and submitted it to the Edwardsville Police Department, who were able to swiftly identify the offenders, and they have since been charged.

"Because much of the graffiti is obscene or offensive, we work to get it removed right away," said MCT Managing Director SJ Morrison. "What may seem like a minor prank is actually very destructive, and is a major expense for MCT."

Keeping the MCT Trails safe, clean, and welcoming for all trailgoers is a top priority for MCT.

"We're extremely grateful to Mr. Strahm for his quick action, and thankful for the hard work of the Edwardsville Police Department and Madison County State's Attorney Tom Haine," said Morrison.

"We hope this incident acts as a deterrent to prevent future vandalism on the MCT Trails."

MCT encourages the community to report vandalism, graffiti, or even downed trees or other issues on the MCT Trails by e-mailing trails@mct.org. Anyone with information about the source of graffiti/vandalism on the MCT Trails, is encouraged to call the Edwardsville Police Department at 618-656-2131. To learn more about the MCT Trails, visit www.mcttrails.org.

Attached Photo: (from left to right): MCT Managing Director SJ Morrison, Loren Strahm, Edwardsville Police Lt. Charlie Kohlberg, Madison County State's Attorney Tom Haine

Madison County Transit (MCT) provides multi-modal transportation services for Madison County, Illinois. MCT operates a fixed-route bus service, connecting to MetroLink; express weekday commuter service directly to and from downtown St. Louis; and seasonal express service to the Muni. For elderly and disabled residents who are unable to use the fixed-route buses, MCT provides complementary paratransit service. MCT is also responsible for the construction and maintenance of more than 138 miles of bikeways that comprise the MCT Trails system, as well as overseeing RideFinders, the St. Louis region's FREE carpooling and vanpooling program.

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