



Kenney honored with his own trail

BY LES WINKELER, THE SOUTHERN | Posted: Sunday, June 27, 2010 3:00 am

CARBONDALE - Green Earth Inc. honored longtime board member David Kenney by dedicating a trail in his honor Saturday. The brief dedication ceremony was held at the Life Community Center.

Kenney, who now lives in the St. Louis area, attended the dedication. The trailhead is on the south side of West Sunset, opposite the Life Community Center. The trail winds its way through the Chautauqua Bottoms Nature Preserve to Chautauqua Road.

Although flattered to have the trail named in his honor, Kenney voiced one good-natured complaint.

"The sign is too darned big," he said. "I'm very proud of it, and I had nothing to do with designing the sign."

Kenney, a former director of the Illinois Department of Conservation, joined the Green Earth Inc. board in 1991. He served as president of the organization from 1995 to 1997. He was secretary of the group from 2000 to 2007.

"We wanted to honor David who has been a long time board member, a person who has done a lot of things for the community and the state of Illinois," said Green Earth president Katherine Poulos. "One of the things David has always tried to do for Green Earth was to keep in mind the acquisition of land."

"It was a pleasure to work with Green Earth," Kenney said. "I found that Green Earth was doing very well in preserving open space and making it available to the public. I appreciated that work."

Current Green Earth board member Craig Hinde provided some background information. Kenney is a Carbondale native. He received two degrees from SIU and a doctorate in political science from the University of Illinois. A teacher and author, Kenney was a delegate to the Illinois Constitutional Convention and director of the Illinois Historical Preservation Agency.

"If I were to do an accounting of the treasures of Southern Illinois, that list would certainly include David Kenney," he said.

Kenney was accompanied to Carbondale by two nieces. He said he enjoyed riding through the Southern Illinois countryside again.

"Think often of what natural beauty you have around you," Kenney told the audience. "We're surrounded by beautiful lakes. I wish I could enjoy this environment all the time as I did frequently when I lived here."

After the dedication ceremonies, Poulos said she would lead a hike on the newly named David Kenney Trail. She offered the caveat that a hike might be more enjoyable on a cooler day. Kenney agreed.

"I'm not going to walk that trail today," he said. "I walked it many times. It's a pleasure. If you want to walk the trail today, that's OK, but don't expect to see me."

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