

12/9/02

Say You Saw It In The Halls Shopper



**Greenway is open**

Called "crooked as a dog's hind leg" by one grumpy letter-writer, the Powell Greenway was officially opened Dec. 7.

Blaise Burch, senior manager with the Public Building Authority, said the project came in under budget with a total cost of approximately \$700,000 for the one-mile trail which connects Powell High School with Powell Middle School.

The construction itself was about \$560,000 with the balance going for design and right-of-way acquisition. Burch said the PBA hopes to carry through the theme with the new branch library, now under design by architect Michael Brady.

"We'd like to put it on the road with the sidewalk in front," he said. "We want an open, inviting facility with parking in the rear. ... We'll carry the theme of the urban street lights, landscaping and crooked sidewalk.."

Doug Bataille, director of Parks and Recreation for Knox County, said the opening was a long time coming. He said the greenway will give Powell a "sense of center, a sense of community," and said funding was possible because of grants from the Tennessee Department of Transportation and Levi's.

"Powell is noted as a great community with wonderful schools and athletic teams," said county executive Mike Ragsdale. "This greenway is just one more thing that makes Powell a great place."

Susan Kerr, who directed the project before resigning as greenways coordinator to move to Colorado, came to the ribbon-cutting. "Susan put her heart and soul into this project," said Bataille. Karen Nolt is the present greenways coordinator.

Artist Jessie Calder of Strawberry Plains helped Powell High students in the Ecology Club and Americorps volunteers design and construct a large mosaic of broken glass and pennies in front of the school. Ragsdale and community representative Laura Bailey placed symbolic keys into cement at the mosaic. Then the ribbon was cut and a "push parade" of kids, bicyclists and even a few pets began. It was led by the Chick-fil-A cow.

Bailey said 600 feet of artwork from students at Powell Elementary and Copper Ridge was hung with clothes pins along the greenway starting at Ann's Kitchen. There were 640 candles in sand and paper bags illuminating the greenway after dark, lighting the way for the annual Powell Christmas Parade.

- S. Clark