



## NEWS ADVISORY

Sept. 20, 2011

For immediate release

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### **HEART ASSOCIATION DESIGNATES WALKING PATHS** **Public Invited to Celebrate Two Missoula Trails Thursday**

The Missoula region of the American Heart Association has designated two Missoula trails as official AHA Walking Paths. All are invited to bring walking shoes at lunchtime Thursday to celebrate the trails and take a walk. The event will begin at noon at Currents Aquatics Center in McCormick Park. Mayor John Engen and Bill Mathews, the director of the AHA for Missoula, will announce the walking paths.

“Walking is one of the best exercises there is for getting healthier and cutting your risk of heart disease and stroke,” Mathews said. “It’s free, and it’s easy, and just 30 minutes a day can help you look and feel better.”

To promote walking, the Heart Association has designated AHA Walking Paths across the country. Anyone can go to [www.startwalkingnow.org](http://www.startwalkingnow.org), click on Find a Walking Path, select a state, enter a zip code and find an AHA-designated walk. The trails must meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, have access for emergency vehicles and have benches for the occasional rest. Missoula’s first two AHA-designated paths are a 0.6-mile walk in Playfair Park and a 2.16-mile stretch of the Ron MacDonald Riverfront Trail.

The City of Missoula has long been devoted to creating and improving its network of trails in the urban area and on its publicly owned conservation lands.

“Parks and Recreation is pleased to partner with the American Heart Association to provide quality programs, services and facilities to enhance our heart health,” said Parks Director Donna Gaukler. “Active lifestyles, including heart-healthy exercise in parks and on trails, are important to achieving high quality of life for all.”

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