Nancy Grant Named Coalition’s New Director

by John B. Wright Board President

Nancy Grant will begin work this month as the Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s new executive director. Nancy already is well known throughout Maine as an avid cyclist, bicycle advocate and volunteer at coalition events such as the Great Maine Bike Swap and the Women’s Ride.

Nancy joined the coalition’s board of directors in 2005 and she has served as president for the past two years. She has been heavily involved in the rebranding of the coalition’s image and the development of our strategic plan.

Nancy began her bicycle advocacy in 1998, when she led the push for a $2.6 million project to pave road shoulders and build a sidewalk through North Yarmouth. An educational technology consultant at Bowdoin College for the past decade, she served as staff advisor to the college’s bicycle sharing program and as lead organizer of Bowdoin’s Commute Another Way activities. She also has served on the Portland Bicycle Network Advisory Group.

Last October, the coalition’s board learned that Allison Vogt, our second executive director, would be leaving because her husband had accepted a position in Washington, D.C. Allison has led the coalition superbly, and news of her departure caused us great angst. We worried about losing momentum. In bike terms, we didn’t want a slow leak in a tire.

The board advertised the executive director position nationally. A Search Committee composed of four board members, a coalition member and Allison spent countless hours reading resumes and interviewing applicants. The Search Committee should be commended for its diligence. Everyone attended every meeting, and everyone arrived fully prepared. It was a very thorough and rigorous process.

When the committee learned that the coalition’s board president would be a candidate, we took extra steps to ensure the integrity of the process. Nancy rose to the top on her own merits. We probably were tougher on her than on the others because she was an insider.

Nancy resigned from the coalition’s board upon accepting her appointment. As vice president, I moved into the president’s slot. Allison will transition to a consulting role for a few weeks when Nancy takes the helm. We expect this to be a very smooth transition. Welcome, Nancy!

More than 65 people applied for the job, and many would have made excellent executive directors. The tough part was saying no to so many good people.

The board was unanimous and enthusiastic in approving Nancy’s appointment. She brings great collaborative and networking skills. Her energy is matchless. She is a great communicator. She shows unbridled enthusiasm for bicycling in all forms and gut-level passion for the work of the Bicycle Coalition. If you’ve ever biked with her, you may have noticed that she’s smiling the whole time.

PJ Mears, a Bicycle Coalition of Maine member from Auburn, rode from Maine to Florida in three stages during 2009 and 2010 to raise funds and awareness for the Good Shepherd Food Bank. He wore his Bicycle Coalition jersey in nearly every state on his ride of more than 1,700 miles. Mears proudly chose to wear it on the final day to mark the occasion. To see an account of his journey, visit www.crazyguyonabike.com/doc/ME2FL.
New Video Tells All about the Women’s Ride

Registration now is open for the Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s Tenth Annual Women’s Ride on June 5 in Freeport. Known for its supportive atmosphere, the ride welcomes women of all fitness levels. Participants may choose from four distance options, ranging from five to 50 miles.

You can find out all about the ride in a new video posted on the coalition’s Web site (www.BikeMaine.org) and Facebook page. The four-minute video features interviews with several cyclists plus footage and photos of the ride’s beautiful route through Freeport, Brunswick and Harpswell and scenes from the end-of-the-ride celebration at L.L. Bean’s Casco Conference Center.

Please help us spread the word about the Women’s Ride by sending the video link to your bicycling friends and relatives, or embedding the video on your favorite bicycle group’s Web site and/or Facebook page.

Several Bicycle Coalition volunteers helped with the video. Steve Garton created original music. Ron Levere, Rick Smith, Leah Arsenault and Chris Percival contributed photos and Alan Mills helped with logistics. Shoshana Hoose, the coalition’s communications coordinator, took footage and edited the video.

For more information about the Women’s Ride and online registration, please visit www.bikemaine.org.

Maine Bike Rally Returns to Brunswick

by Kirk Kennedy President, Maine Bike Rally Board of Directors

The 23rd Annual Maine Bike Rally will return to Brunswick on July 8-10 for a second year. The first Brunswick rally was a huge success and we’re looking to build on it in 2011.

The rally brings together about 300 bicyclists for three days of cycling fun. Come enjoy on-road and off-road bike rides for all levels of cyclists, plus a full weekend of family entertainment.

Rides from five to 100 miles will showcase the beauty of the Midcoast area. Plans are underway for another chance to ride the Maine Eastern Railroad to Wiscasset and pedal back to Brunswick. If you are coming to the rally from the south, you can take the Amtrak Downeaster to Portland and pedal about 30 miles to the rally.

The rally also features sunrise rides, a colorful bicycle parade, a time trial, an ice cream social, music and other entertainment. A lobster dinner option will be offered on Saturday night for that ultimate Maine experience.

Bicyclists may pitch tents on the campus of Brunswick High School during the weekend’s festivities. RV’s are welcome but there are no hook-ups.

The rally is sponsored by the Maine Bike Rally organization with support from the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, Casco Bay Bicycle Club and Merrymeeting Wheelers Bicycle Club. For more information and updates, check us out on Facebook and on our Web site, www.mainebikerally.org.

Maine Lobster Ride & Roll Celebrates 10th Anniversary

The 10th Annual Maine Lobster Ride & Roll will take place on July 23 at Oceanside High School (formerly Rockland District High School) in Rockland. During its first decade, the ride has won a loyal and growing following with its spectacular route through Midcoast Maine, delicious lobster roll lunch and enthusiastic volunteers.

Participants can choose from four distance options: 16, 30, 50 or 100 miles. All follow beautiful, country roads, past lighthouses and the rock-bound coast.

Tom Gallagher of Illinois described last year’s Lobster Ride as “the best century I have ever experienced. It was well worth the expense to fly from Chicago to be a part of this ride in such a beautiful area!”

Craig Davis of Peaks Island participated in the 2010 ride with his children. “The kids were super proud of themselves for their accomplishment,” he reported. “Your group does great work, and this Rockland event is always an embodiment of the organization’s spirit.”

The Maine Lobster Ride & Roll supports the Bicycle Coalition’s work to improve bicycling in Maine. The registration fee includes a freshly made lobster roll lunch, with tuna and veggie options available.

Preregistration rates are $65 (members) or $85 (public rate, including a six-month trial membership in the Bicycle Coalition of Maine), with lower rates for children. For more information, a video about the ride and online registration, please visit www.BikeMaine.org or call (207) 623-4511.

Join Maine’s Delegation to the National Bike Summit

Learn about bicycling issues from a national perspective, network with other cycling activists from around the country and hone your advocacy skills at the League of American Bicyclists’ National Bike Summit on March 8-10 in Washington, D.C.

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine will organize meetings with Maine’s congressional delegation during the summit. This is a great opportunity to enlist the support of our U.S. senators and representatives for bicycle-friendly legislation.

To find out more about the summit and to register, please visit www.bikeleague.org. If you plan to attend, please notify the Bicycle Coalition by e-mailing cecelia@BikeMaine.org or calling (207) 623-4511. We expect to drive the coalition’s big yellow “Share the Road” van to the summit and we will provide rides to members as space allows.
Safe Routes to School Goes Year-Round

by Darcy Whittemore and Sarah Cushman Safe Routes to School Encouragement Coordinators

A great way to keep momentum going for walking and biking to school year-round is to hold Walk and/or Bike to School events through the winter months. Here is a partial list of Maine schools planning such activities:

- Biddeford: Biddeford Intermediate & Middle Schools have Walk & Bike to School Day in March. Individual students bike daily year-round.
- Brunswick: Jordan Acres & Longfellow Elementary Schools have monthly Walk & Bike to School Days.
- Hallowell: Hall-Dale Elementary School has monthly Walking Wednesday.
- Portland: Fred P. Hall School has year-round Walk & Bike to School Days on the first Wednesday of the month.
- Scarborough: Pleasant Hill School holds weekly Walk & Bike to School Days.
- South Berwick: Marshwood Great Works School has monthly (and sometimes twice-monthly) Walk & Bike to School Days.
- Windham: Windham Primary School has one Walk to School event this winter.

Students, families and staff members report that they like to embrace Maine winter and they love the adventure of walking and bicycling during the cold months. If you would like technical assistance and help strategizing about how to do events through the winter in your community, please contact us at saferoutes@bikemaine.org or 623-4511. Dress warmly, travel safely and enjoy!

Find Your Dream Bicycle at the Coalition’s Great Maine Bike Swap

by Cecelia Garton Volunteer Coordinator

Each year, thousands of Mainers gather to buy a bike, sell one or do both at the Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s Great Maine Bike Swap in Orono and Portland. If you have not attended one of the swaps, you don’t know what you are missing!

This year’s Orono swap will be held on May 1 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the University of Maine’s Student Recreation and Fitness Center. When “Maine Cyclist” went to press, we had not finalized the date of the Portland swap. Check www.BikeMaine.org for updated information.

Road bikes, mountain bikes, hybrids, tandems, recumbents, children’s bikes and more all are available at the swap. So, dream away about your new spring wheels. Whatever type of bike you want, you’re likely to find it there.

Here is how it works: If you have a bike to sell, drop it off between 8 and 9:30 a.m. on the day of the swap. Fill out a form that describes the bike and how much you are asking for it. If you are not sure about setting the price, we have experts who can advise you. Give us three dollars to put the bike on the floor for you and your part is done. If you choose to leave, we will take care of the selling and paperwork.

If you dropped off a bike, you can check online to see whether it sold. If it has, we will send you a check in the mail within seven to 10 business days for the proceeds minus a 15 percent donation to the Bicycle Coalition of Maine. If your bike has not sold, you may pick it up at the swap’s conclusion - or you may donate it to a recycle-a-bike program.

The swap is a win - win situation. We do the work, you reap the benefits and the coalition uses the funds raised to continue our work making Maine a great place to bicycle. For more details and volunteer opportunities, please check the coalition’s Web site: www.BikeMaine.org.
In Appreciation of Allison

From the Bicycle Coalition Board

As this newsletter goes to press, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine has just hired a new executive director. By the time you receive your copy, we will be preparing to say goodbye to Allison Vogt, who has led the organization since July 2008.

Allison arrived in Maine from Alabama with big shoes to fill. She replaced Jeffrey Miller, the coalition’s founding executive director, who knew many members personally from his 12 years on the job. Although Allison had worked for a Maine congressman in Washington, D.C., she had never lived in Maine - and her recent bicycling experience was limited.

During her second week on the job, Allison survived what might be called boot camp for bicyclists - the League of American Bicyclists’ League Cycling Instructor course taught by Charley LaFlamme. Biking for up to 13 hours a day, she mastered hand signals and rules of the road while growing sore in muscles that she didn’t know she had. Allison’s soft-spoken style belied a steely determination. She successfully completed the Fryeburg class and earned the country’s top road biking credential.

During the past two and a half years, Allison has done an outstanding job tackling other aspects of the job. She has helped the coalition create its first strategic plan to improve bicycling in Maine, and she worked to implement it. Allison led the effort to rebrand the coalition with a new logo that will help us raise our visibility and reach out to new partners. Amid the worst recession in nearly a century, our organization has grown stronger financially and we have been able to add new staff.

Allison has become a respected, statewide leader in the effort to promote sustainable transportation. Under her leadership, the Bicycle Coalition has pushed for a state policy to ensure that Maine’s roads are planned for bicyclists, pedestrians and wheelchair users as well as motorists.

Allison is returning to Washington, D.C. to join her husband, Dan. We appreciate all of the ways that she has helped our organization move forward, and we wish her well in her future endeavors. We will miss you, Allison!

Save the Dates

Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s Great Orono Bike Swap
May 1, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
(drop bikes off between 8 and 9:30 a.m.)
University of Maine Student Recreation and Fitness Center
Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s Great Portland Bike Swap
Tenth Annual Women’s Ride
June 5, 9 a.m.
L.L. Bean’s Casco Conference Center, Freeport

23rd Annual Maine Bike Rally
July 8-10
Brunswick High School, Brunswick
Tenth Annual Maine Lobster Ride & Roll
July 23
Oceanside High School, Rockland
(formerly Rockland High School)

For updated information and registration, please visit www.BikeMaine.org.

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Staff

Nancy Grant
Executive Director
nancy@BikeMaine.org
Jim Tasse
Education Director
jim@BikeMaine.org
Shoshana Hoose
Communications Coordinator
shoshana@BikeMaine.org
Darcy Whitemore
Central Maine Safe Routes Coordinator
saferoutes@BikeMaine.org
Sarah Cushman
Southern Maine Safe Routes Coordinator
sarah@sarahcushman.com
Cecelia Garton
Office Manager
cecelia@BikeMaine.org
First New England Summit Brings Together Bicycle and Pedestrian Advocates

by Shoshana Hoose  Communications Coordinator

Gathering with bicycle advocates from other states offers a great perspective on how we are doing here in Maine. Eleven members of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine also gained a national overview of bicycling issues while attending the first New England Bike Summit, held last fall in Providence, R.I. The coalition joined nearly 20 organizations in co-sponsoring the one-day summit.

Tim Blumenthal, president of the Bikes Belong Coalition, revved up the crowd by giving 20 reasons why bicycling’s time has come. They included:

- Strong support from U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood and members of Congress from both parties, including Maine’s Republican senators, Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins.
- Partnerships with pedestrian advocates and organizations such as the AARP, the Centers for Disease Control and the National Association of Realtors.
- Success in boosting bicycling in cities such as Minneapolis (4 percent of trips are by bike) and Portland, Oregon (7 percent of trips are by bike). The $50 million spent to increase bicycling in Portland over 15 years equates to less than the cost of building a mile of interstate highway, Blumenthal said.
- Increased federal funding for bicycling and walking projects from stimulus legislation.
- Growing recognition that communities become more attractive when they build bicycle paths and other bicycling infrastructure, thus boosting real estate values.

Blumenthal also cited some of the challenges facing bicycling, including the federal transportation bill that’s stalled in Congress, the growing federal deficits, suburban sprawl and a rise in obesity caused by Americans’ sedentary lifestyle. He said about 60 percent of Americans would like to ride bikes but worry about safety.

Richard Fries, advisor to the Bikes Belong Foundation, said bicycle advocates need to embrace the full spectrum of people who ride bikes, from Spandex-clad racers to Moms getting groceries on bike. Even the cyclist without a helmet riding the wrong way down the street is part of the bicycling family, akin to the crazy uncle who shows up at weddings, Fries said. He stressed that the best way to improve safety for bicyclists is to increase the number of people on bikes.

I attended a workshop on building trails that pass through many communities. The presenters included Bob Hamblen, a Saco city planner and president of the Eastern Trail Management District. He described how 12 communities in York and Cumberland counties have worked with MaineDOT officials on plans for the trail extending from Kittery to South Portland. I left the workshop feeling fortunate that our state transportation officials are partners with municipalities on such projects. By contrast, Connecticut’s transportation department didn’t contribute a penny toward a major trail project in that state; each community along the route had to raise the full 20 percent match for federal funds.

The summit brought together 178 people from all over New England and several nearby states. While we spent most of the time talking, we also had the opportunity to explore downtown Providence on foot and bicycle. I joined a group riding on a new trail built alongside a once heavily polluted river in an area of abandoned factories. We borrowed bikes from a community bicycle shop at one end of the trail and pedaled past colorful murals with bicycle designs.

Plans already are beginning for the second annual New England Bike-Walk Summit, tentatively set for October 7. Stay tuned for details.
Pedaling Off Extra Pounds

by Shoshana Hoose Communications Coordinator

Darryl Prue of Auburn tried lots of diet and exercise programs over many years, but none of them helped her lose weight. So Prue took a bold step two years ago: she signed up for the Dempsey Challenge bike ride.

“I was morbidly obese,” she says. “…I thought if I committed to riding 25 miles in October, I would have to train throughout the summer to be successful.”

Prue enrolled in Weight Watchers to help get her eating under control, and she recruited some friends to join her on Sunday bicycle rides. She slowly built up her endurance, and the pounds began disappearing.

“I love everything about riding - with friends or alone, long leisurely rides or short intense rides,” says Prue, who works as a nurse at Central Maine Medical Center in Lewiston. “I love trying new routes and have a few favorites, too. I love to hate the uphills - and my favorite part is downhill!”

About a third of Maine children and two-thirds of the state’s adults are overweight or obese, the “Maine Sunday Telegram” reported last July. That report said that childhood obesity rates have tripled in the last three decades. A 2009 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that obese patients spend an average of $1,429 more for their medical care than people within a normal weight range.

While the weight loss industry peddles everything from jaw wiring to diet drinks at an annual cost of as much as $10,000 per person, a decent bicycle costs a fraction of that amount. Bicycling can help overweight people make the lifestyle changes that will help them lose weight and keep it off.

According to a long-term study of more than 18,000 women, bicycling as little as five minutes per day can help women lose weight. The study, reported in the “Archives of Internal Medicine” last June, showed that overweight and obese women, especially, benefited from bicycling.

Men also use bicycling to shed extra pounds. Just ask Derek Morin of Bath.

Morin rode his bike a lot as a child, but he stopped doing so after he started gaining weight in his teens. About five years ago, he weighed more than 400 pounds. “I honestly don’t know what my heaviest was,” says Morin, who works as a supervisor at Miles Memorial Hospital in Damariscotta.

Morin went through gastric bypass surgery in May 2007. After the operation, he was determined to return to cycling. He started on a stationary bicycle at home, and gradually increased his endurance. The following spring, he bought a road bike. Since then, he’s completed rides of several hundred miles and he’s competed in the Maine Time Trial Series.

Morin noted that cycling is a good type of exercise for overweight people because they aren’t putting a lot of pressure on their lower extremities.

But he initially faced a lot of challenges, from finding bicycle clothes in large enough sizes to getting enough nutrition after his stomach shrank as a result of the surgery. He learned tricks, such as eating flatbread with peanut butter to keep up his energy during long rides.

Morin has joined with his wife and a friend to start a cycling group called Team Velo Grand. “We want others who don’t fit the cycling stereotype to be able to fall in love with the sport the way that we have and make it their own,” he said. They have a Web site (http://teamvelogrande.com) with a blog about their bicycling experiences. They hope to start group rides in southern Maine during 2011.

Prue, the Auburn nurse, struggled through her first bicycle rides in the spring of 2009. Looking back on that time before she began shedding pounds, she likens it to huffing up hills with 70 pounds of dog food strapped on her back.

But bicycling gradually became easier. Prue enjoyed riding with a growing group of biking buddies. “I was able to see that I was getting better and going faster and longer distances,” she says. By the time of the first Dempsey Challenge, she had lost 40 pounds and could ride the 25-mile course easily.

Prue joined a gym to stay in shape last winter. She hopped back on her bicycle last spring and rode at least 700 miles, including the coalition’s Women’s Ride in Freeport and the 50-mile route of the Maine Lobster Ride & Roll. She has set a goal of biking 1,000 miles in 2011.

“I have lost 70 pounds so far,” she says, “and found a whole new me.”
Help Us Make New Friends at the Legislature

by Allison Vogt Outgoing Executive Director

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine's new executive director, Nancy Grant, will spend many of her first hours on the job educating our state legislators about the importance of biking and walking to Maine's families, communities and the statewide economy.

It's a big job to rise above the cacophony of competing priorities making headlines in Augusta. Moreover, there are lots of new faces at the Statehouse this winter. In the Maine House of Representatives, 53 of the 151 members are freshman legislators. Forty percent of Maine senators are serving in their first terms. The Transportation Committee that hears most bicycle-related legislation has a new House chair - and all of the Senate members are new.

With so many special interests in Maine competing for the attention of our legislators, what can we do to ensure that the importance of a bike-friendly Maine is crystal clear?

The good news is that the bicycling community in Maine has a secret weapon: our members. Each of you can become an important resource to your state representative and senator.

Join the Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s Trek Across Maine Team

The Trek Across Maine promotes a healthy lifestyle while boasting great food and fun. Last year, 2,400 cyclists and 685 volunteers joined in what has become a three-day traveling party that promotes a good cause: raising money for the American Lung Association.

This year’s Trek takes place on June 17-19. The ride begins in the mountains of the Sunday River Ski Resort and ends 180 miles later in the coastal town of Belfast.

Cyclists of all levels are invited to join the Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s team riding in the Trek. To sign up or to find out more, please contact Charley LaFlamme, team leader, at chazbikeed@maine.rr.com.

Trek veterans look forward to traditions such as the baked potato bar at the end of the first day’s ride, the pizza and ice cream awaiting their arrival at Colby College on day two and the spectators cheering on cyclists as they approach the finish line in Belfast.

The Trek also has a serious purpose. Since its inception, the Trek has raised more than $15 million for the American Lung Association.

To register, please visit www.biketreknewengland.org or contact Chrystal at ctoner@lungne.org. To find out about volunteer opportunities, please visit http://biketreknewengland.org or contact Kim at kdenbow@lungne.org.

You can make a big difference by simply reaching out to your elected officials and letting them know about the important role that safe bicycling and walking play in your community. Invite them to take a walk or a bike ride on a local trail, path, sidewalk or bike lane. Show them safety issues near your local school. Discuss opportunities to improve the health of area residents with more or better walking and biking facilities. Talk about the impact that bicycle tourism could have on your town or county.

Meanwhile, we'll be doing our part. Stay tuned to your e-updates for information on planned coalition events to connect our members with their legislators. Working together, we can make sure that bicycling and walking remain an important part of the agenda for a healthy and prosperous Maine.

Volunteers Needed

by Cecelia Garton Volunteer Coordinator

If I had a bulletin board for all Bicycle Coalition members, it would say, “YOU are the Bicycle Coalition of Maine! Get Involved! Make Maine a Great Place to Bicycle.”

I think coalition members know that things will be better because of their membership and they know that it is the right thing to do... but I really don’t think they know how much fun it can be.

The more you are involved with any organization, the more you feel like you belong, that you understand what makes it tick and how you fit into the “purpose” of it all. That is the way it is with belonging to the Bicycle Coalition of Maine. The more you are involved and contribute, the more you understand and feel the role you play as a member.

Volunteers are needed year-round to plan and prepare for events, teach bicycle safety, serve as a “spokes folk” and represent the coalition at festivals, fairs or bike rodeos. Once you volunteer, you’ll be hooked. You’ll recognize people from event to event and they will recognize you.

You’ll have fun, cycling in Maine will become better because of your contributions and you will realize the purpose of it all. “YOU are the Bicycle Coalition of Maine! Get involved! Make Maine a Great Place to Bicycle.”
Hometowns program in Aroostook County

Mike Smith
Director of the Maine Winter Sports Center’s Healthy Hometowns program in Aroostook County

Mike Smith is a driving force behind the growth of mountain biking in northern Maine, especially among young people. He helps community outing clubs start weekly youth rides and other programs that use trail systems supported by the Maine Winter Sports Center.

“As event director for the annual Fat Tire Festival in Presque Isle, I also help coordinate a slate of youth-oriented activities,” said Smith. “Last summer, that included youth races, games, obstacle courses and a mountain bike biathlon.”

Smith gets young people interested in mountain biking by making it fun and accessible rather than stressing its health benefits. “I try to relate with what gets them excited,” he said. “If that means taking jumps, we take jumps. If it means exploring the woods, we do that. And if means hanging out, talking and laughing, that works, too!”

“Some young people are fearless, but I think it’s a mistake to assume all kids relate to sports that way,” he says. “Sometimes kids are just as timid, insecure and fearful as adults can be when learning a new activity. So I try to make sure what I’m offering appeals to the full spectrum of interests, abilities and comfort levels.”

Before joining the Maine Winter Sports Center, Smith worked for two years at Mojo, a Presque Isle bicycle and ski shop. He launched the shop’s beginning mountain bike rides. “Seeing the excitement for a sport I love take hold around Northern Maine is really exciting,” says Smith, “and always pushes me to want to do more.”

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Business for Better Bicycling Award

Chris Carleton and Mike Davies
Owners of Allspeed Cyclery & Snow in Portland

As teens, Chris Carleton and Mike Davies raced on a mountain bike team based at Allspeed, and Mike also worked there. A year ago, they purchased the business. Since then, they have made a concerted effort to involve Allspeed in the community.

Carleton and Davies partnered with the Bicycle Coalition and Go Maine to help promote Commute Another Way Week last spring. Allspeed employees rode around the city and chased down bicycle commuters, rewarding them with gift cards to the shop.

Carleton, Davies and their staff did safety checks and repairs on bicycles at events such as the North Deering Neighborhood Association block party and the Falmouth Bike Fair. They participated in a forum organized by the coalition’s Safe Routes to School Program to create a school travel plan that will encourage more students to walk and bike to two Portland schools. They also provided technical support at major events such as the Dempsey Challenge and the Tri for a Cure.

An event called Cranksgiving that took place the weekend before Thanksgiving embodies the shop’s community spirit. Cyclists took off from Allspeed with a list of five items that they needed to get from five grocery stores in Portland. They gathered roughly $300 of food that was donated to a local food pantry.

“I personally like to support community cycling events because I’d like to encourage people to participate in the activity of cycling,” said Carleton. “Whether it’s mountain bike racing, road riding or just simply commuting to work, I want more people to ride bikes.”

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Jeff Miller Spirit of Cycling Award

Julie Fitzgerald
Founder of Portland Slow Ride

On the first Friday of every month, dozens of cyclists of all ages and abilities gather at Portland’s Monument Square riding bikes adorned with everything from bird feathers to Christmas lights. They attract cheers from onlookers as they slowly bike through the downtown area during the city’s popular First Friday Art Walk.

Julie Fitzgerald started Portland Slow Ride last spring and spread the word through a Facebook page. As many as 50 people show up each month, riding recumbents, fixies, tandems, 29ers and all kinds of other bicycles. They decorate themselves and their bikes to suit themes such as Red Light Dance Party, United States of Awesome (for July Fourth), Oktoberfest and Hunting Season.

When the rides end, they tell Fitzgerald, “That was so much fun. . . I can’t wait for the next one.”

Fitzgerald and friends are making plans for their 2011 ride themes. She also hopes to create Portland Kidical Mass, patterned after an event for children and families that is happening in other U.S. cities. “What we all have in common is a desire to celebrate cycling on our roadways, making it visible and encouraging more people to get out and try it for themselves,” she says.

When Fitzgerald isn’t planning creative bicycle events, she teaches Pilates and indoor cycling classes, makes cycling caps and jerseys and shuttles her children to school on bicycle.

“Jeff Miller was the Bicycle Coalition’s first executive director, serving from 1996 to 2008.”
Just Do It Award for Leadership in Public Service

Edward Googins
South Portland Police Chief

South Portland Police Chief Edward Googins wins high marks from cyclists for responding quickly to their concerns. A South Portland resident who commutes by bicycle contacted the chief after a police officer told him that he should not be in the center lane when taking a left turn near the Casco Bay Bridge. “He told me that bicycles do not belong in the lane of traffic and that I should use the crosswalk to approach the bridge,” the cyclist wrote, in an e-mail to the Bicycle Coalition of Maine.

The cyclist recounted the incident to Googins and cited the Maine statute that allows cyclists to move out of the right side of the road when making a left turn. Googins replied within a day. “Chief Googins informed me that I was indeed following the rules of the law,” the cyclist recalled. “As a proactive measure, he forwarded my e-mail, in its entirety, to his supervisors, asking that the message get to the right person.”

John Brooking, a Bicycle Coalition board member, also received a prompt reply from Googins about a bicycling issue in South Portland. “I had an incident with a taxicab driver harassing me about being in the travel lane around the Maine Mall,” Brooking said. He wrote to the cab company and copied the South Portland police. “Chief Googins responded by e-mail, thanking me for sharing the information, and said that he had forwarded my letter to the department’s supervisors,” Brooking said.

Googins has served as South Portland’s police chief for 16 years, and he is president of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association. He has noticed a “considerable increase in bicycling in the city during the past two years.”

“We have to make sure that officers are aware of the applicable laws,” he said, “and that everyone gets to share the roadways and sidewalks…We don’t always get it right, but we try. When we do make errors, we address them.”

Community SpokesPerson Award for Outstanding Citizen Advocacy

Sally Jacobs
Founding president of the Sunrise Trail Coalition

Sally Jacobs used to ride around Orono in the mid-1970s with her two preschool children strapped to baskets on her bike. Her neighbors asked her to help organize a town bicycle committee.

In 1976, Jacobs led the effort to build Maine’s first paved bicycle path between Orono and Old Town as a demonstration project for the Federal Highway Administration. She also worked for passage of bicycling ordinances in Orono.

In the late 1980s, Jacobs and several others began advocating for the creation of a trail on a rail corridor recently purchased by the state of Maine in Washington and Hancock counties. Jacobs realized that they needed an organization to spearhead the effort, so she created the Sunrise Trail Coalition and became its first president.

For more than 20 years, Jacobs worked tirelessly to build support for the Down East Sunrise Trail, persevering despite many challenges. Her efforts came to fruition last October, when the final section of the 85-mile, multi-use trail opened. A retired biochemistry professor, Jacobs continues her involvement in the coalition’s work to help manage the trail.

Jacobs offers this advice for other bicycle advocates: “Try not to be confrontational…Do your research…Be patient…We waited through all these studies and we were ready when the moment arrived.”

Harry Faust* Leadership Award

Maine Lobster Ride & Roll Event Committee

Forty-five bicyclists showed up for the first Maine Lobster Ride & Roll a decade ago. The annual event now draws 700 or more cyclists from more than two dozen states, Canada and other countries.

The ride raises thousands of dollars for the Bicycle Coalition of Maine. Cyclists rave about the beautiful route through Midcoast Maine, the delicious lobster roll lunch and the enthusiastic volunteers who give the ride its unique character.

The Maine Lobster Ride & Roll Event Committee meets every month throughout the year to plan the event. Between meetings, committee members devote hundreds of hours to securing sponsorships, planning routes, arranging for food and handling other tasks.

Seven of the 14 people serving on the event committee have been involved since the beginning. They feel proud of how the event has evolved, said Joel Fishman, one of the ride’s founders. “There’s certainly a lot of work,” he said, “but we have fun.”

In addition to Fishman, the original committee members who continue to serve are David Auclair, Jon McMath, Ken Pote, Jane Self, Maggie Warren and Dave Wood. Other committee members include Melissa Arndt, Cindy Bryant, Cindy Charlson, James Gregg, Joe Patten and Chris Wells.

*The late Harry Faust was the second president of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine.
Stay Visible in Winter

The dark days of winter are upon us. While many recreational cyclists have hung up their road bikes and switched to an indoor trainer, a surprising number of commuter and utility bicyclists continue to ride.

With dusk coming on by late afternoon, it is important to know what is required, legally and functionally, to see and be seen in the dark. Remember that just because you can see where you’re going doesn’t mean that others can see you!

First, what are Maine’s legal requirements? These are listed in Title 29-A §2084:

A. A white front light visible from at least 200 feet;
B. A red or amber rear light or reflector visible from at least 200 feet; and
C. Reflective material on the pedals, feet, or ankles.

Many people riding under streetlights may not think much about needing a headlight. Riding correctly on the right means the cars nearest you are approaching from behind, with their headlights on you, and bikes come standard with a white front reflector. So why is a headlight legally required?

The answer is that there are many situations in which your approach needs to be noted by a motorist, but the car’s headlights are not shining on you. For example, a motorist could be back ing out of a driveway, or waiting to turn from a side street or parking lot onto a road on which you are approaching.

In the dull light of nighttime, even under streetlights, colors and outlines are subdued and contrast is low. A motorist might miss you, and the car could pull out in front of you. Even a motorist waiting to turn left as you are approaching the intersection opposite him may not see you in time, because his headlights are aimed at his side of the street, not yours.

In addition to frame-mounted lights, you might consider a helmet-mounted headlight. That has the advantage of allowing you to see in different directions by turning your head. If you are riding in the country at night, you can use a helmet light to scan the sides of roads for animals.

It is important to have a handlebar-mounted light in addition to your helmet-mounted light for several reasons. The first is that a single light source doesn’t help other road users gauge your position accurately. Also, a helmet-mounted light doesn’t show pavement undulations very well. You need a light mounted at lower height to help you avoid potholes.

In the rear, a reflector alone is legally acceptable in Maine. But we think it is still a good idea to have a light as well. Bicycle writer John Schubert has compiled a list of reasons that a reflector may not be effective - for example, if it is dirty, improperly aligned or there is fog. Even a car having one headlight out can compromise your reflector’s visibility to the driver. A taillight is an improvement in all of these situations.

Most lights need batteries, which can go dead. So, a reflector is a good backup of last resort. In addition to the reflector that probably came with your bike, you can buy supplemental reflectors in larger sizes or different shapes. Reflective products with lots of surface area work much better than small bits of reflectivity, such as the trim on many articles of clothing and equipment.

If all of this isn’t enough visibility for you, some commuters supplement with white and/or red reflective tape available at most hardware or automotive supply stores. Some cycling shoes come with reflective squares on the heels, or you can add them. Reflective ankle straps are available from most bike shops. And of course there is always the fluorescent jacket.

Bicycle lighting technology has advanced greatly in the last several decades. Lights now are available in any bicycle shop or online. Standard alkaline batteries (such as AAA batteries) power the cheapest lights. More powerful lights use custom rechargeable batteries that attach to the frame, hold a charge for several hours and recharge in about the same time.

Generator lights also are available. Newer hub generator lights can approach battery lights in power, without the battery! There are even lights available that can be recharged by solar panels or a computer’s USB cable, and lights powered by electricity induced by magnets on the spokes.

Manufacturers use a variety of measures for light output, such as watts, candela (or candespower) and lumens. That can make it confusing if you are trying to compare lights. For more discussion of this and other aspects of bicycle lighting, visit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bicycle_lighting.

Now for the big question: Blinking or steady? Many people prefer blinking to increase the chance of being noticed among all the other lights in the nighttime environment. A steady light makes it easier for an observer to track the movement, and a quickly blinking light may be distracting, especially to epileptic or impaired drivers. The best approach is to combine the two. Add a couple of reflectors and reflective ankle bands, and you present an easy-to-discern picture to other road users.

If you are riding through an unlit area, a strong, steady headlight is much better to see by than a blinking one. Your headlight should be focused far enough in front of you that you have sufficient time to react to anything unexpected entering its beam. But too far out may diffuse it too much to be practical, so you may just need to ride a little more slowly to avoid overrunning your headlight, especially with the smaller and cheaper lights.

With proper care, you can be as visible or more so at night than in the daytime, and you should be! Your visibility when riding through Maine’s cold dark winters should be no cause for concern if you take some common sense precautions.

Charley LaFlamme, the coalition’s founder and a longtime board member, is a League Cycling Instructor (LCI) with more than 35 years of experience teaching bicycle safety to children and adults. John Brooking also is an LCI and serves on the coalition board. Send your questions about safe bicycle driving to chazbikeed@maine.rr.com.
Doug Moore of Downeast Bicycle Specialists in Fryeburg

Doug Moore worked in the hardware industry for several years, until he lost his job after his company was bought out. Moore decided to pursue his dream of running his own business.

"After an exhaustive search and personal visits to many companies, I stumbled upon Downeast Bicycle Specialists on the Internet," he recalled. "I immediately became interested because I saw the business as both viable and fun."

Moore purchased the company in 1999. He commutes each week from his home in Fairfield, Connecticut to his job in Fryeburg. Downeast Bicycle Specialists sells bicycles, parts, accessories, apparel and related items to independent bicycle dealers.

As one huge perk of the job, Moore has attended both the Tour de France and the Giro. "Because our suppliers were sponsors," he says, "I was able to visit the U.S. Postal Team bus at the Tour and to ride in one of the support cars during a mountain stage at the Giro."

Moore rides his bicycle four or five times a week in the warmer months, spending about half of his time on trails and the rest on roads. "I have four bikes: a Time carbon fiber road bike, a Ted Wojcik steel road bike, a Giant Trance mountain bike and a Soma 29-inch, single-speed mountain bike," he says. "In the winter, I like to cross-country ski before work and get an occasional road ride in on the weekend if the weather is nice."

Moore joined the Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s delegation to the National Bike Summit a few years ago and met with Maine’s congressional representatives to talk about bicycling issues. He helped organize the Maine Bike Rally in Fryeburg in 2008 and 2009. He serves on the Fryeburg Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee and he supports several bicycle advocacy organizations such as the Bicycle Coalition of Maine.

"I really appreciate the Bicycle Coalition’s mission to make Maine a better place to cycle and to promote a healthy, active lifestyle," says Moore. "It is a good feeling to be part of such a positive organization."

Our Yellow Jersey Club is a community of members who have chosen to support better bicycling in Maine at the incredibly generous level of $1,000 or more. Members who choose to give at the Yellow Jersey Club level believe that a significant contribution to the Bicycle Coalition of Maine is a worthy investment in our past, present and future successes.

In addition to receiving the special yellow jersey featuring our new logo, members of the Yellow Jersey Club are invited to special rides and events and also to lead the rides at the Maine Lobster Ride & Roll. Yellow Jersey Club members also receive invitations to special events from Nancy Grant, the coalition’s executive director.

For more information about joining the Yellow Jersey Club, please contact Nancy Grant at 623-4511 or nancy@BikeMaine.org.

Yellow Jersey Club Members

Harry Ankers Chelsea
Mary Breen Ogunquit
David Brink & Ed Quinn Portland
Cadillac Challenge Mount Desert Island
Philip Coffin & Susan Peck Carrabassett Valley
Tim Downing Vassalboro
Janika Eckert & Rob Johnston Albion
Dan & Lauren Emery North Yarmouth
Dillon Gillies Bethel
Leon & Lisa Gorman Yarmouth
Ellen Grant & Kevin Carley Kolonia
Nancy Grant & Mike Boyson Portland
Ralph Hamill & Susan Akers
Karen Herold & Mark Isaacson Cumberland
Mark & Ginger Ishkanian Readfield
Harold & Brigitte Kingsbury Cape Elizabeth
Richard Long Orono
John & Anne Marshall Addison
Gregg & Caroline Marston Bristol, VT
Laurie McReel & John Poirier Oakland
Jeffrey Miller & Lotte Schlegel Washington, D.C.
Doug Moore Fryeburg
Scott & Ponee Roberts Gorham
Cathy & Fred Robie Freeport
Larry & Robin Rubinstein Scarborough
Peter & Jerry Rubinstein New York, NY
Jeff Saffer Cape Elizabeth
Robert Satter Avon, CT
Jane Self & Ken Pote Camden
Cynthia Sortwell South Portland
Austin & Manny Watts Bowdoin
Mark & Kitty Wheeler Woolwich
Nancy & Bill White Bethel
Garth & Nancy Wilbanks Winterport
Scott & Kelly Withers South Portland
John & Loren Wright Woolwich
Richard Bartlett opened Kingdom Bikes in 2008 in a shop adjoining his Blue Hill home. The shop is a business member of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine.

“My shop grew out of a combination of a lifelong love of biking and wanting to work close to home after years of commuting,” Bartlett said. “The love of biking I think was instigated by my mother. She was an avid bicycle tourer when she was younger. While I was growing up, she made sure we always had good bikes that fit us properly.”

Bartlett runs the shop alone. He focuses on repairs – making bikes work smoothly and efficiently. “A bike that works well is more enjoyable to ride and is more likely to be used,” he says.

The shop also provides parts and accessories. “This is a rural area and people appreciate having a local source for these services,” Bartlett says. “...I keep changing and adding to my stock, tailoring it to what people are looking for.”

Bartlett has seen a growing number of customers who pull out bikes that they haven’t ridden in years and bring them in for repairs. “I’ve also noticed an increase in cyclists using recreational riding in pursuit of self-challenging exercise, such as ex-runners transferring to road biking,” he says.

In his free time, Bartlett rides cyclocross bikes. He also enjoys riding at Acadia National Park and on local roads when the traffic is light.

Kingdom Bikes is located at 219 Kingdom Road, Blue Hill. The shop can be reached at (207) 374-3230 or by e-mailing kingdombikes@live.com.

Welcome to the Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s New Members

We welcome these new household members joining from September through mid-December.

Gail York Belgrade
Kristen McGovern Orono
Anita Brosius-Scott Camden
Dave Eddy South Portland
Ryan Wight Gorham
Harry Brown South Portland
Jeffrey Scher Portland
Bob Jones Springvale
Jim McCarthy Orono
Julie Fitzgerald Portland
Walter Estrella Saco
Deborah Heath Brunswick
Joshua Morris Waldoboro
Mark Dyar Lebanon
Thomas Pulling Portland
Jeff Cunningham Walham MA
David Marchese Portland
Denise Grautigam Augusta
Sarah and Ryan Littlefield Scarborough
Anne Chamberlain Rumford
Jeff Chandler Cambridge MA
Phil Coupe Portland

Maine Time Trial Series Draws More than 350 Competitors

by Carol Meader Maine Time Trial Series Coordinator

The 2010 Maine Time Trial Series co-sponsored by the Bicycle Coalition of Maine wrapped up its season in September. For the fourth consecutive year, Fred Thomas of Cape Elizabeth claimed the overall men’s title. Chessell McGee of Cumberland took her first women’s title in the series. Each was awarded a perpetual trophy along with a $500 cash prize.

Second-place winners Doug Chiasson and Erin Brennan were awarded $250 and third-place finishers Dan Hickey and Kathy Fleury received $100. Gold, silver and bronze medals were awarded to the top three winners in each division.

The Maine Time Trial Series continues to grow. During 2010, more than 350 cyclists from 14 to 78 years old competed in all types of weather from early May to late September in venues that took them across the state of Maine. The series saw a number of highly talented and dedicated athletes who did not miss a single event as well as recreational cyclists who came out to test themselves against the clock.

Fred Thomas of Cape Elizabeth won the overall men’s title in the 2010 Maine Time Trial Series.

Chessell McGee of Cumberland won her first women’s title in the 2010 Maine Time Trial Series.

Plans are underway for the 2011 season. We will offer 12 to 15 races, combining favorite courses with some beautiful, new routes. For detailed information and a schedule, please visit MaineTTSeries.com.
Walking Environments: The Economic Benefits

by Dan Stewart  MDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager

Communities and organizations throughout the state are working hard at improving the transportation system in general, including walking and biking infrastructure. There are many reasons improvements are needed. The most important reason is of course to improve safety. In the last ten years, 24 bicyclists and 123 pedestrians have died in Maine in crashes involving motor vehicles. In the fall of 2010, three pedestrians were killed in separate incidents in Augusta (the State Capital), the city that I work in. The city should be commended for convening a committee to examine pedestrian safety issues in response to these tragedies.

Another major reason that so many communities are working on improving safety and mobility for pedestrians and bicyclists relates to economic development and the related positive effects on businesses. Improving walking conditions in a community significantly increases retail sales, promotes tourism, boosts property values, and promotes economic development. Bicycle tourism is estimated to bring in $66.8 million to the Maine Economy each year. Throughout the recession, home values have remained higher and there have been fewer home foreclosures in walkable communities.

If a community has a walkable village area, people are much more likely to stop and visit the shops and eat in a restaurant. In Maine, examples abound of communities that are thriving and attracting economic investment in part because of improved pedestrian and cycling environments. Portland has continued to grow with new businesses and buildings throughout the recession. Take a drive through the city on I 295 and notice the new skyline developing. People want to live in areas with sidewalks, bicycle and pedestrian trails, bike lanes, vibrant restaurants, green spaces, and quality places—and they want to move businesses there. There are other communities throughout Maine that benefit economically from improvements for walking and bicycling. A small sampling includes Auburn, Richmond, Waterville, Rockland, Camden, Belfast, Houlton, Presque Isle, Machias, and Brunswick.

The cost of health care is another major factor in economic development and business growth related to the built environment. There is a direct correlation between the overall health of a workforce and the costs of healthcare. Inactive lifestyles in general contribute to the obesity epidemic and related chronic conditions and diseases. Often, businesses cite the increasing costs of healthcare as reasons for not hiring new employees. Increased health care costs associated with inactivity (due in part to whether people are walking or biking as part of their daily lives) result from the actual increase in associated illnesses and related claims. This increases costs and rates of insurance for employers, leading to a decrease in hiring.

If you are concerned about economic development and jobs in your town or neighborhood, join the communities statewide that are including improvements to the pedestrian and bicycling environment as integral components of attracting and sustaining a vibrant economy. People will be more likely to move to your community, stay in your community, and move their business (both large and small) to your community.

Dan Stewart can be reached at 624-3252.

Ideas from Away

Separated Bike Lanes

A growing number of U.S. cities are building bike lanes that are physically separated from vehicular traffic by barriers such as curbs, short posts and traffic cones.

Sometimes called “cycle tracks,” these lanes make bicyclists feel safer—and that encourages more people to bike. They protect cyclists from dangers such as car doors opening suddenly.

European cities such as London, Amsterdam and Copenhagen were among the first to build separated bike lanes. New York City, Minneapolis and Portland, Oregon have done so in recent years. Danish research shows that separated bike lanes can boost bicycle ridership by 18 to 20 percent, compared to a 5 to 7 percent increase for bike lanes in the roads.

San Francisco opened its first separated bike lanes this year on Market Street. “We are hearing over and over again how it feels so much safer to ride a bike” there, reports Andy Thornley, program director of the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition. “We’re also hearing from so many new people who are now riding this stretch of Market Street for the first time, mothers who are now comfortable riding with their children in tow.”

Cities have used various methods to separate bike lanes from motorized vehicles. One method is to position the bike lane on the very outside of the road, with a lane of parked cars separating it from traffic. In other cases, cities have installed concrete barriers or landscaping between the bike lane and the road. Often, the bike lane is raised a few inches above the road to make it more visible.

Intersections pose a challenge, since cars aren’t always aware of the nearby, separated bike lane. A 2009 report by Alta Planning + Design of Oregon advises using signals and clear markings that show cyclists and pedestrians how to proceed through intersections. The report also advises prohibiting right turns on red when roads meet separated bike lanes.

A video titled “The Case for Separated Bike Lanes” can be found at www.streetfilms.org/physically-separated-bike-lanes.
These bike shops support the Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s work with annual memberships of $250 or above. Please thank them for their support of the coalition when you’re in their shop. A complete list of member bike shops is posted on our Web site: www.BikeMaine.org.

- Auclair Cycle & Ski
  Augusta 800-734-7171
- Cycle Mania*
  Portland 774-2933
- FreeMan’s Bicycle Service
  Portland 347-1577
- Freeport Ski & Bike
  Freeport 865-0523
- Gorham Bike & Ski
  Portland 773-1700
  Saco 283-2453
- Jerry’s Bike Barn
  Bath 752-0580
- Kingdom Bikes
  Yarmouth 846-0757
- LL Bean Bike, Boat & Ski Store
  Freeport 877-755-2326
- L.L.Bean
  www.376-9500
- Pat’s Bike Shop
  Brewer 989-2000
- Rainbow Bicycle & Fitness
  Auburn 784-7576
- Rose Bicycle
  Orono 800-656-3525
*Yellow Jersey Club member

You can support our member bike shops by getting your bicycle tuned during the winter. That helps shops stay busy during the quieter months, and it ensures that your bike will be ready to ride as soon as the snow melts.

These businesses support the Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s work with annual memberships of $250 or above. A complete list of member businesses is posted on our Web site: www.BikeMaine.org.

- American Diabetes Association
  Portland 888-DIABETES
- American Lung Association of Maine
  Augusta 624-0302
- Apogee Adventures
  Brunswick 725-7025
- Bay Wrap of Augusta
  Augusta 338-0757
- Body Symmetry
  Brunswick 729-1122
- Bread & Roses Bakery*
  Ogunquit 646-4227
- Downeast Bicycle Specialists*
  Fryeburg 935-4242
- Duratherm Window
  Vassalboro 872-5558
- Flatbread Company
  Portland 772-8777
- GoMaine Commuter Connections
  Portland 774-9891
- Kennebec Savings Bank
  Augusta 622-3801
- Maine Bike Rally Organization
  www.mainebikerally.org
- Maine MS Society
  Portland 774-7960
- Penobscot Environmental Consulting
  Yarmouth 653-2452
- R.D. Foundation
  New York, NY
- ReVision Energy
  Portland 232-6595
- Summer Feet Maine Coast
  Portland 866-857-9544
- Terrance J. DeVan and Assoc.
  Yarmouth 846-0757
- T.Y. Lin International
  Falmouth 781-4721
- VBT Bicycling Vacations*
  Bristol VT 800-245-3868
*Yellow Jersey Club member

INVEST IN BETTER BICYCLING TODAY!
Please show your support and contribute to the Bicycle Coalition of Maine

☐ New Member  ☐ Renewal  ☐ Gift Membership____________ (Your Name)  ☐ $75 Advocate (choose water bottle___ or shirt size:  ___)
☐ Name __________________________________________
☐ Address ________________________________________
☐ Phone_____________ email ________________________
☐ Credit Card #__________________ Exp________________
☐ Signature ________________________________________

Send with contribution to:
Bicycle Coalition of Maine, PO Box 5275, Augusta, ME 04332

Give $75 and receive our T-shirt
SHIRT SIZE:  □ mens  □ women's  □ S  □ M  □ L  □ XL

Get Your Newsletter the “Green” Way
Receive Newsletter Electronically?
☐ YES  ☐ NO

These bicycle clubs support the Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s work with annual memberships of $150 or above.

- Belfast Bicycle Club
  www.belfastbicycleclub.org
- Casco Bay Bicycle Club
  Portland, cascobaybicycleclub.org
- Community Cycling Club of Portland
  www.BikeCCC.org
- Downeast Bicycle Club
  Bar Harbor, www.downeastbicycleclub.com
- Maine Cycling Club
  Auburn, www.maineyclingclub.com
- Portland Velo Club
  www.portlandvelo.com
Bicycle Coalition Produces New Public Service Announcements

A new public service announcement (PSA) produced by the Bicycle Coalition of Maine shows a bicyclist veering around obstacles such as a metal grate, a discarded tire and other road debris. “When you see bicyclists riding in the travel lane,” the narrator explains, “it’s usually because they’re avoiding unsafe situations at the road’s edge.”

The PSA reminds motorists that cyclists have a legal right to use the roadways just as other slow-moving vehicles do, and that motorists should give at least three feet of clearance when passing cyclists. “It’s safe,” says the narrator. “It’s courteous. And it’s the law.”

A second PSA shows a teenage boy handing a keychain to his mother. “I’m trusting you with the keys,” he says. “Drive safe.” The mother promises, then unlocks her bicycle and takes off. She demonstrates safe cycling behaviors such as signaling turns, obeying traffic signs and using lights at night.

Both PSAs will be distributed on the Web, on social media sites such as Facebook and Youtube and to Maine’s public access television stations. The coalition also is seeking funding to air the PSAs on commercial television.

Craig Saddlemire, a Bicycle Coalition member from Lewiston and founder of Round Point Movies, created the three-foot PSA. Saddlemire lives without a car. He walks or bicycles to video jobs, the farm where he buys vegetables and nearly everywhere else.

“I’ve frequently been harassed by drivers in Lewiston for biking on the road,” said Saddlemire. “Some of them yell that I should get on the sidewalk or in ‘the bike lane,’ no matter how far to the right side of the road I try to ride. Then they drive away, before I can explain that the road is a ‘bike lane’ as much as it is a ‘car lane.’ Hopefully, this PSA will help inform some of those same drivers.”

Saddlemire shot most of the footage in Lewiston and Lisbon Falls. He videotaped part of it while crammed into a bike cart pedaled by his friend Ryan.

“The bike cart is supposedly able to carry up to 100 pounds,” Saddlemire said. “I weigh 125, so I was a little nervous about it… I had to awkwardly fold my body to fully fit in the trailer, and my arm was getting tired from holding the camera at an odd angle as low to the ground as I could get.” But after three tries, he had the shot.

Shoshana Hoose, the coalition’s communications coordinator, created the bicycle safety PSA. Dimitri Lekas, a senior at Deering High School in Portland and a member of the school’s drama group, appears as the teenager. Dana McEwan, a coalition board member from Portland, plays his mother. They met for the first time on the day of the shoot. Brett Plymale shot the footage at various sites in Portland.

Funding from the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety covered production costs for both PSAs. They can be viewed on the coalition’s Web site: http://www.bikemaine.org/news-room/share-the-road-media-campaign.

Please help us disseminate these important safety messages by sending the link to your friends and family members and by posting them on community listserves, Web sites and Facebook pages.

Coalition’s New Logo Adorns Jerseys, Baseball Cap

Outfit yourself for spring with bicycling apparel featuring the Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s stylish new logo.

Our popular Lighthouse Jerseys are available for $75 each from the coalition’s online store (www.BikeMaine.org/store) or by phoning (207) 623-4511. You can choose a jersey with set-in sleeves and a navy background, or a sky-blue, sleeveless women’s cut jersey.

The coalition’s gold bicycle wheel logo stands out against an azure blue background on our new Share the Road jerseys ($75 each). All three jerseys feature club cuts, high collars and hidden zippers.

The coalition’s new baseball caps ($15) come in charcoal and our logo adorns the front. On the back, you’ll find the coalition’s slogan, “Better bicycling since 1992.”

For more information, please visit www.BikeMaine.org/store.
Win A Tuscany Bicycle Tour in Coalition’s Super Raffle!

Just six weeks remain to purchase one of the 200 available tickets in the Bicycle Coalition of Maine’s 2011 Super Raffle. The grand prize is a VBT Bicycling and Walking Vacations trip to Tuscany, Italy valued at as much as $3,145. The 10-day trip includes roundtrip airfare from New York to Italy plus accommodations, sightseeing and world-famous Italian cuisine.

The lucky winner may choose one of VBT’s 2011 Tuscan Coast or Tuscany by the Sea tours. Both trips feature:

- Small groups (14-20 people).
- Eight nights at comfortable hotels and unique accommodations such as a country resort or an agriturismo with a private wine cellar.
- Excursions to places such as an ancient castle, an olive oil mill or a pastry-making lesson.
- Free use of a VBT custom bicycle and helmet.

Both trips are rated as easy to moderate bike rides, with daily distances ranging from 15 to 45 miles. VBT provides bilingual guides, maps and a fully equipped support van.

The raffle will be held on the first day of spring, March 20. The winner may choose departure dates between March and November, subject to availability. More information about the tours is available at www.vbt.com. Everyone who purchases a raffle ticket ends up a winner, because the coalition will give one of our new T-shirts for each ticket purchased. The T-shirts, featuring the Bicycle Coalition’s new logo, are available in cardinal (men’s sizes) and teal (women’s sizes).

Tickets may be purchased for $50 each at the Bicycle Coalition’s online store (www.BikeMaine.org) or by calling the coalition office at (207) 623-4511.

Raffle tickets make great Valentine’s Day gifts - and you’ll have the T-shirt to wrap up for your special someone. Best of all, you’ll be supporting the coalition’s work to make Maine a better place to bicycle.