

*The voice of bicyclists and pedestrians in Maine*

# MAINE CYCLIST

## ANNUAL REPORT 2018



**BICYCLE  
COALITION  
OF MAINE**





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BCM team



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### ABOUT THE COVER PHOTO

Cyclists participating in the Portland Ride of Silence pedal along the Eastern Promenade on May 15, 2019. The ride, which takes places annually across the world, is held in remembrance of cyclists who were killed or injured while riding.



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Independence and Inspiration

BY PAMELA FISCHER, PRESIDENT

There are more ways than ever now to nurture the freedom that comes with two or more wheels.

IF YOU'RE READING this magazine, chances are pretty good that you consider yourself a cyclist. But have you thought about being a pedestrian?

I walk for exercise and to get from place to place. I'm also a bicycle traveler. I look forward to the random opportunities to connect with others that these forms of locomotion provide. Aside from being kind to the environment, beneficial for health, and a cheap way to get around, these activities are just plain fun. And as my friend Fred Robie likes to say: a bicyclist is just one flat tire away from becoming a pedestrian. That's a funny reminder that although many of us don't actively think about being pedestrians, the fact that we choose to engage in some form of human-powered transportation puts us in that space. The safety and advocacy work we do at the Coalition benefits both activities, and we aim to make more noise about that in the coming year.

Consider the sense of independence a bicycle can provide. My three young neighbor friends—Joe, Sam, and Will—are often found bombing around on their bikes, ditching them on the side

of the road when they need to explore a frog pond or follow their dog into the woods. Those bikes might sit there in the bushes for days, but eventually they will be picked up and pedaled on to the next adventure. That was me when I was a kid. Maybe you, too?

Here's another example of bike = independence. While on a recent early spring bike ride that found me checking out the smooth pavement of a retirement community, I stopped to chat with a woman I encountered slowly cycling in the other direction. She was bundled up in a heavy coat, scarf, wool hat, and gloves, riding a candy apple red cruiser bike along the quiet street that she lived on. This gleaming bike was her new way of getting outside to scope out the neighborhood, and she was proud to show it off to me. I plan to be her when I grow up. Better yet, let's all plan to be her when we grow up. There are more ways than ever now to nurture the freedom that comes with two or more wheels.

I'm excited about the schedule of events and outreach that BCM staff has pulled together for 2019. (Check out our events calendar at [www.bikemaine.org](http://www.bikemaine.org).) I can't wait to join some of the rides, education sessions, fundraisers, and movie nights that bring kindred spirits together to share stories and make new friends. You will find the Bicycle Coalition of Maine at more places than ever before as we partner with some of your favorite rides, including gravel and MTB events. And yes, the rumor is true: The reimagined Lobster Ride is back and under new leadership. Fans, rejoice!

I hope you will be inspired by the pages that follow. Be sure to look for me this season when you get out and about—on foot or on wheels. I'm eager to hear your stories of adventure and freedom! ☺

Pamela Fischer

Got something on your mind? Contact me at [president@bikemaine.org](mailto:president@bikemaine.org)



The Finish Line

BY JOHN WILLIAMS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I had the pleasure of greeting riders as they crossed the BikeMaine finish line in Presque Isle last September. The glee as they finished their sixth remarkable day of riding more than 300 miles across Maine's rooftop was contagious. My exuberance and bell-ringing were greeted with cheers of joy by the riders. But then one rider, a woman about my age, asked me to please be quiet.

"Please, let me savor this moment," she said through tears. "I have just completed the most challenging thing I have ever done, and I made it!" Thanks to my own emotions, I don't remember all that she told me, but she had a serious medical issue a few months before the event, and though she trained and worked to prepare for the ride, she didn't really expect to be able to participate, much less finish. And yet here she was, having completed every mile.

A few years earlier, in 2010, I had a similar experience at the end of my first organized ride—RAGBRAI (The Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa). My wife, Nancy, and I had just ridden 452 miles across the state where my mother was born, and as we turned onto Main Street toward the finish in Dubuque, the street was lined three-deep with cheering locals in their lawn chairs—as encouraging for us as they had been for the first 15,000 riders who had finished several hours earlier. Through my tears I proudly told Nancy as I approached the finish line that this was one of the most incredible things that I had ever accomplished.

Why was I so moved? My story actually starts even earlier, in 2007.

It was our first bike trip, a self-guided three-day adventure starting and ending in Kenmare, Ireland. I had done all the planning. Three 50-mile days, staying in B&Bs, beautiful hillsides, lovely back roads. Who knew it rains in Ireland? Or that many of the back roads aren't paved? Or that the restaurants close at 7:00 p.m., some 45 minutes earlier than our arrival on Day 1? Flexibility is important on a bike trip. Halfway through Day 2, I saw a card advertising a taxi service that would take us back to Kenmare, and an hour later our adventure was over.



Through my tears I proudly told Nancy as I approached the finish line that this was one of the most incredible things that I had ever accomplished.

Still, we were hooked. The next two years brought bike trips to Croatia, Slovenia, and the Netherlands. I started planning our cross-country adventure from Maine to Newport Beach, California. And then, in January 2010, right after registering for RAGBRAI, I had a stroke while at a spin class meant to get me in shape for the ride.

After my stroke, I wondered if I would ever ride again. Seven months later, I crossed the finish line in Dubuque. The ride had been blazingly hot, except for the day of the torrential thunderstorms followed by a 40-degree temperature drop. There was no shade nor shelter to be found in Iowa's endless corn and soybean fields. In contrast to Iowa's reputation, "Iowa Flat" turned out to involve about 15,000 feet of climb. But we had made it—every mile, plus a few extra for a detour to my mother's hometown.

Bicycle tourists have so many of these stories, and we are sharing a few in this edition.

Tell us yours. ☺

John Williams

Where do you see the Coalition going? Tell me at [john@bikemaine.org](mailto:john@bikemaine.org)

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## Ride with Us

### Build Maine

June 5-6, Lewiston

### Vulnerable User Enforcement Day

June 13, Statewide

### Trek Across Maine

June 14-16, Lewiston

### Pride Portland Valet Bike Parking

June 15, Portland

### Women's Ride at the Maine State Museum

June 22, Augusta

### Biking the Borderlands

July 13, Bethel

### Maine Lobster Ride

July 20-21, Camden

### Beach to Beacon Valet Bike Parking

August 3, Cape Elizabeth

### Common Ground Fair Valet Bike Parking

September 20-22, Unity

### Bikes and Beers Ride with Maine Beer Company

September 21, Freeport

### Bradbury 12

September 22, Freeport

### Dempsey Challenge

September 28-29, Lewiston

### Ride with Carol

September 28, Windsor

### Walk to School Day

October 2, Statewide

### Maine Marathon Valet Bike Parking

October 6, Portland

### AMC/BCM Gravel Grind

October 20, Medawisla

### Movie Night at BCM

November 7, Portland



# OUR NEW APPROACH TO EVENTS

## Reviving and Rethinking Rides BY ELIZA CRESS

AS ORGANIZATIONS OFTEN DO, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine came to a crossroads in 2018. With lots of work to be done in education and advocacy, and tons of planning to be executed for events including the Great Maine Bike Swap, the Lobster Ride, the Women's Ride, and BikeMaine, we simply had spread ourselves too thin.

After numerous thoughtful and passionate discussions, the board of directors and staff of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine made the difficult decision to eliminate half of our events with the intention of having greater resources to allocate towards education and advocacy—the true pillars of our mission statement to improve biking and walking conditions across the state of Maine.

We have been humbled by the number of people that have expressed their disappointment in the cancellation of these events, and to those riders we once again extend our apologies. We love these rides and always hoped we'd find a way to see them continue in a slightly different light.

For this reason, we are pleased to report that through the collaboration of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, the Penobscot Bay YMCA, the Camden Snow Bowl, and Sidecountry Sports, the Lobster Ride will roll on in 2019.

From July 20-21, the Lobster Ride will be held at the Camden Snow Bowl and will follow the same routes of varying length that it always has. We are grateful for the tremendous enthusiasm that these like-minded organizations have poured into reviving and hosting this event, and we hope that all past participants will enjoy this phenomenal ride through the Midcoast at an absolutely stunning time of the year.

As for the Women's Ride, although it has not been resurrected quite yet, we have partnered with the Maine State Museum to host Bike Day, an event to celebrate women and cycling in conjunction with their ongoing exhibit "Women's Long Road—100 years to the Vote." The event will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment, which granted women the right to vote, and it will highlight the integral role that the bicycle played in empowering women.

The event will feature a bicycle rodeo, bicycling fashion contest, create your own suffrage sash, access to the exhibit, and a family bike ride along the Kennebec River Trail. We are extremely excited about our partnership with the Maine State Museum and this family-oriented event, and hope that all cyclists will come to learn about the history of the women's movement.

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine will also have a presence at an ever-expanding number of events this summer and fall, including the Trek Across Maine, the Portland Pride Parade, Beach to Beacon race, Bikes and Beers at Maine Beer Company, the Bradbury 12, the Dempsey Challenge, the Maine Marathon, and a gravel grind in collaboration with the AMC.

The board and staff of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine remain dedicated to our mission and strive daily to improve walking and biking conditions throughout the state of Maine. We appreciate your continued support as we re-envision the best way to achieve these goals. We are elated to be working with new partners to make bike/ped education and advocacy as effective as possible, and urge everyone to visit our event calendar and stay tuned for more exciting announcements! ☺

ABOVE The BCM will offer group rides every other Wednesday throughout the summer—including regular women's rides!

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# MEET OUR TEAM

BY MATT SULEM

## SHANNON BELT Education and Outreach Director

I educate, communicate, and connect with bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages on the road, in the woods, and everywhere in between.

HOME: Portland

FAVORITE BOOK: *On the Road*, Jack Kerouac

FAVORITE QUOTE: “Keep on dreaming, boy / ‘Cause when you stop dreaming, it’s time to die.” —Blind Melon, *Change*

## ELIZA CRESS Communications and Development Manager

I work to share the BCM mission, accomplishments, and involvement in making Maine better for cyclists and pedestrians.

HOME: Portland

THE ONE ITEM I WOULD GRAB FROM A BURNING HOUSE: My tent.

MY GREATEST MOMENT ON A BIKE: Reaching the Pacific Ocean after a cross-country trip.

## ERIK DASILVA Safety Education Coordinator

I coordinate the BCM’s statewide education program—more than 10,000 students annually from Kittery to Fort Kent!

HOME: Bangor

HIDDEN TALENT: Championship thumb wrestler

MY GREATEST MOMENT ON A BIKE: Every moment on a bike is the greatest!

## WILL ELTING BikeMaine Ride Director

I showcase Maine as a world-class cycling destination to people from across the globe, and provide economic stimulation to all the regions of the state through bicycle tourism.

HOME: Portland

RECENT GREAT READ: *A Gentleman in Moscow*, Amor Towles

WHEN I’M NOT RIDING MY BIKE, I’M PROBABLY: Playing board games with my amazing wife and our nerd friends.

## MARIAH HEALY Mission Advancement Director

I oversee BCM’s communications, membership, and all things fundraising.

HOME: Portland

SPIRIT ANIMAL: The giraffe, a fellow long-legged vegetarian

WHEN I’M NOT RIDING MY BIKE, I’M PROBABLY: Trying to finish my book club book the night before book club.

## ANGELA KING Advocacy Manager

I empower and support people in communities around the state to work on projects, policies, and programs that make Maine better for walking and biking.

HOME: Pownal

HIDDEN TALENT: I used to ride a unicycle

FAVORITE QUOTE: “How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.” —Anne Frank



## DAN KNOWLES Accounting Manager

I perform the accounting and grant/contract-tracking duties of the Coalition.

HOME: Topsham

FAMOUS PERSON I’D LIKE TO MEET: Les Claypool of Primus

MOTTO: “People do not decide their futures. They decide their habits, and their habits decide their futures.” —F. Matthias Alexander

## EMILY LOZEAU BikeMaine Event Coordinator

I coordinate logistics for BikeMaine, an annual bike event that showcases the state through bicycle tourism and provides economic stimulation for the regions we tour.

HOME: Portland

SPIRIT ANIMAL: Canada goose; I love a freshly mowed lawn.

WHEN I’M NOT RIDING MY BIKE, I’M PROBABLY: Feeding into my out-of-control houseplant obsession or trying to teach Obi (my cockatiel) tricks.

## MATT SULEM Office and Membership Manager

I oversee all memberships, run our member database, edit communications and *The Maine Cyclist*, and manage the office—including various clerical, HR, IT, and accounting responsibilities. If you don’t know who does something, it’s probably me.

HOME: Westbrook

FAVORITE BOOK: *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, Hunter S. Thompson

MOTTO: “Things turn out best for people who make the best of the way things turn out.”

## JIM TASSÉ Assistant Director

I oversee local and state advocacy, Community Spokes, demonstration projects, pedestrian safety planning, mountain biking, grant writing and contracts, and help out with organizational governance. And probably something else, too.

HOME: Cape Elizabeth

CURRENTLY READING: *Circe*, Madeline Miller; *The Pagan Lord*, Bernard Cromwell; and *Innocents Abroad*, Mark Twain

FAMOUS PERSON I’D LIKE TO MEET: The late Jerry Garcia

## DARCY WHITEMORE Education Program Manager

I work with schools, communities, and local champions to encourage all Mainers—especially schoolchildren through the Maine Safe Routes to School Program—to walk or bicycle to school and around town, and to make it safer for them to do so.

HOME: Readfield

SPIRIT ANIMAL: Loon

FAVORITE VACATION SPOT: Culebra, Puerto Rico

## JOHN WILLIAMS Executive Director

I help the BCM Board of Directors establish policies to make Maine better for biking and walking, implement the policy set by the board, listen to our members to be sure we are meeting their expectations, and take credit for all the great work of my staff.

HOME: Nobleboro

IF I WAS A TV SHOW CHARACTER, I WOULD BE: Maxwell Smart of *Get Smart*.

MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT ON A BIKE: Towing my 50-pound border collie across Ontario, because she did not want to be in a kennel.

FAR LEFT  
Shannon Belt, Eliza Cress,  
Erik daSilva, Will Elting, Mariah Healy,  
and Angela King

LEFT  
Dan Knowles and Emily Lozeau

BELOW  
Matt Sulem, Jim Tassé, Darcy Whittemore,  
and John Williams







## BIKEMAINE 2019 SETS SAIL

BY WILL ELTING

CELEBRATING ITS SEVENTH YEAR, BikeMaine is bound for some of Maine's most iconic locations in 2019. The annual tour sold out in record time this year, and is drawing 450 riders from 37 states and three foreign countries to ride a 350-mile loop through Maine's Southern Kennebec Valley and Midcoast regions. Featuring carefully curated and scenic daily routes paired with unique off-the-saddle activities—and some of the best food in the state—BikeMaine 2019: Coastal Connections is shaping up to be a treat for veterans and newbies alike.

The tour starts in Waterville on Sept. 7 and has overnight stops in Hope (at Alford Lake Camp), Damariscotta, Rockland, and Belfast before finishing back in Waterville on Sept. 14. After a tremendously successful tour of northern Aroostook in 2018, the host communities this year have a tough act to follow, but they are more than up to the task! As always, BikeMaine will showcase local communities in a uniquely authentic way, with local volunteer organizations preparing food and daily activities that highlight the towns' hidden gems.

As the signature event of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, BikeMaine provides an important platform for the organization to reach a wide swath of Maine's communities. As in previous years, BCM staff will be traveling with the tour and conducting educational programming at schools along the

**With a mix of tough climbs, scenic farmland ridges, and quiet coastal byways, the BikeMaine 2019 route has something for everyone.**

route, as well as working with local bicycle and pedestrian activists to install temporary (or possibly permanent) road and sidewalk infrastructure that gives people a glimpse into how small changes can effect positive change in their communities' approach to being bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly. In this way, BikeMaine isn't just a vacation for active travelers, it's a means to further BCM's mission of making Maine better for biking and walking.

With a mix of tough climbs, scenic farmland ridges, and quiet coastal byways, the BikeMaine 2019 route has something for everyone. This is a topographically interesting and culturally rich region of the state—and we will be dishing out a hearty serving of both alongside large quantities of fresh, local food.

I can't wait to welcome all of our new riders to Maine this September, and to our faithful returners, I'll say this: Expect the unexpected. See you soon! ☺

PHOTO Heather Perry Photography

## DURING BIKEMAINE, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY ROLL INTO TOWN

BY ANGELA KING



LEFT Students in Frenchville participate in a bike rodeo with Advocacy Manager Angela King.

RIGHT Curb stops and bollards were installed as part of an Imagine People Here demonstration outside Madawaska Middle/High School.

IT ONLY TOOK ONE DAY for the Bicycle Coalition of Maine's education and advocacy impact to be felt at BikeMaine 2018. In fact, it actually took less than 24 hours.

On the very first day in Presque Isle, the BCM set up a bike rodeo as a community educational event to teach kids the rules of the road. In the days that followed, we went to three schools along the BikeMaine route to give bike/ped safety presentations and set up additional rodeos in school parking lots.

As a result, students at Connor Consolidated School, Madawaska Elementary School, and Dr. Levesque Elementary School in Frenchville—more than 350 kids in total—learned basic bike skills and practiced these skills on the courses.

As part of every BikeMaine event, the Coalition works with the various host communities to make their roads more bike/ped-friendly through our Imagine People Here demonstrations. As part of this program, we consult with

local advocates and town officials to identify areas of safety concern, and install temporary infrastructure to test ways to calm traffic or enhance crosswalks.

During BikeMaine 2018, we set up three demonstrations. The first area of concern was the crosswalk in front of the Madawaska Middle and High School. Curb stops and bollards were placed at the ends of the crosswalk to create safe landings and increase the visibility of the crosswalk.

The high school principal said that prior to the demonstration, cars often did not stop for students trying to cross the road, but after the installation, that completely changed. The demonstration project was deemed a success and the school requested, on the spot, that it stay in place.

Another crosswalk in downtown Madawaska (a popular crossing near a farmers market) was also enhanced with bollards. The third installation along the BikeMaine route was in downtown Fort Kent, where town officials selected a crosswalk that needed greater visibility.

All three demonstrations were considered successful and stayed in place.

Events are fun, but the BCM's advocacy and education work more directly supports the organization's mission of making Maine safer for biking and walking, and we can't wait to bring our team to the Midcoast in September! ☺

**More than 350 kids in total learned basic bike skills and practiced these skills on the courses.**



# SLEEPING WITH STRANGERS

(It's Not What You Think!) BY SARAH CUSHMAN AND ROB LEVIN



“SO WHERE DO YOU SLEEP at night?” is one of the standard questions any touring cyclist fields on an hourly basis.

“With complete strangers!” we answer giddily. Sure, we do plenty of camping at campgrounds and we’re not above splurging for the occasional motel—especially when rain is in the offing—but by far our most memorable and joyful nights on any tour are our Warm Showers nights when we walk up and ring the doorbell of folks we’re meeting for the first time.

On the flip side, we’ve been on the receiving end of that doorbell ring. In our tiny place on Portland’s East End, we’ve played host to some world-class bike tourers from France, Quebec, Italy, and even New Hampshire!

The name “Warm Showers” is actually kind of a strange one, and has thrown people off when we try to explain the concept. No, we don’t shower together with anyone! (Nothing kinky going on here.) And yes, you can usually find a truly hot shower, not just a warm one!

The Warm Showers (WS) community is a free worldwide hospitality exchange for touring cyclists. It’s kind of like CouchSurfing but specifically for bicycle travelers. Currently, there are 126,000 Warm Showers bicycle touring members and 77,000 Warm Showers hosts in 161 countries... which is pretty amazing when you consider the planet has only 195 countries in total!

People who are willing to host touring cyclists sign up and provide some contact information. If you’re in a city on a common touring route, you’ll likely get several requests a year. If you’re off the beaten path, you might receive one per year, if that. It’s totally up to you whether you say yes or no to any given request. Living right near downtown Portland, we typically receive five to 10 requests annually, and say yes to two or three.

We became members of Warm Showers just before our four-month family bicycle trip in 2012 through Maine, the Maritimes, up through Newfoundland, and back through Quebec. We then started hosting other travelers when we returned home that fall. It was a sweet way to return to “real life,” to be able to live a bit vicariously through folks who were still on the road.

We’ve hosted a dozen or so cyclists in the past six years, and we’ve only had good experiences. We’re more likely to host people on long trips, such as cross-country or around-the-world journeys, because they need the most support (and Rob thinks they have the best stories!) We’re also more eager to host travelers who personalize their requests a bit, rather than a two-sentence, dashed-off email. Our guests usually stay one night, but sometimes two nights if they’re just starting or finishing a trip, they need a day off, or if the weather is ominous.

If you live in an urban area, it’s also likely you’ll receive requests from folks who would like to stay more than one night, in order to take a rest day and enjoy some local color.

Each Warm Showers host will also let you know their parameters. For example, our family can offer a sofa bed in the living room or an air mattress in Sarah’s back office. Others might have a tent spot in their yard or a guestroom with an ensuite bath. Some might offer bed linens and towels; others might be on a busy cross-country route, get a lot of requests, and ask you to use your own. Most everyone is able to offer laundry facilities.

Some WS hosts may offer to cook you dinner or provide breakfast, others may not. We generally offer to make a meal if we’re not too busy, but we don’t feel bad if we need to say, “You’re most welcome here, and feel free to poke around the fridge and cupboards, but you’re on your own for cooking.”

**We feel such a warm sense of gratitude when we think of all of our Warm Showers hosts who offered us hot showers, warm meals, dry beds, and tons of moral support.**

On a related note, we’re always appreciative of guests who offer to do dishes—and have a bit of bias against some guys of a certain age (sorry, Millennials) who don’t seem to think of it.

When we’re on the road, we often seek out families for our daughter, Cedar, to get a chance to interact with other kids, even if they are much younger or older. We aimed for this on our cross-country family bicycle journey in 2016 as well. Visits with couples and single folks have been lovely, too. After one stay early on with a bachelor who had a grimy place and was also a borderline hoarder, we shied away a bit from solo guys. A complete case of gender bias. However, since then we’ve stayed with other single men with great and welcoming homes.

A good Warm Showers experience feels like being an exchange student for a night. When bicycle touring and staying at a campground, you’re most likely to have conversations with RVers, which certainly can be a rich experience. If you’re splurging on a motel stay, maybe you’ll have a quick conversation with the front office staff or someone at a local diner, but then you’re shut in a charmless square box with 150 cable television channels. And, of course, camping in the wild is its own joy, but staying with a WS host for a night or two offers a special opportunity to ask questions, learn more about the ins and outs of a place, and sink into the local culture.

Bicycle touring can, at times, be a profoundly lonely experience. People everywhere are effusively friendly and eager to hear about your trip, but the typical person doesn’t personally understand the day-to-day joys and heartaches that you’re experiencing. So it’s especially refreshing to walk into a WS home somewhere in Kansas or Montana or New Brunswick or Pennsylvania after a hard day’s pedal and have your host really get it—usually because they’ve somehow experienced the world via bicycle themselves, whether they are commuters, recreational riders, mountain bike racers, or have bike toured, too.

Every stay is not profoundly connecting, but on the whole we’ve probably had 30 wonderful experiences and only a couple of so-so encounters. We feel such a sense of gratitude when we think of all of our Warm Showers hosts who offered us hot showers, warm meals, dry beds, and tons of moral support.

Still on the fence about staying with or hosting strangers? Allow us to borrow and tweak a quote from W.B. Yeats: There are no strangers on Warm Showers, only friends you haven’t met yet.

Please sign up to be a Warm Showers host yourself, so you can meet and help really cool people on really cool journeys! ☺

*For more information, visit [warmshowers.org](http://warmshowers.org).*



## EAST MACHIAS, ME



**5.13.2012** Tonight we stayed with our first Warm Showers family: Paul Molyneaux and Regina Grabrovac, and their two kids, Asher and Oona. They’ve got a great little farmstead in East Machias, where they put us up in the barn loft, after serving us an apple and mango crisp. Having a roof over our heads was key, because it did finally shower in the night.

## HALIFAX, NS



**5.28.2012** We’re staying with some fine Warm Showers hosts, Jane Roycroft, Eric Branton, and their cat Cedar. They served up a fine barbecue dinner for our arrival night and put us up for three whole nights for us to explore Halifax and also wait out some heavy rain!

## QUEBEC CITY, QC



**8.5.2012** Nathalie Veilleux and her boyfriend Martin welcomed us at her sweet apartment in the St. Jean Quarter for six nights. She had apologized for a faulty bathroom sink faucet, so as a thank you to Nathalie, we installed

a new one. We were able to return even more of the hosting favor when Nathalie, Martin, and their new baby came to visit us in Portland a couple years later!







## READFIELD, ME

**8.18.2012** Feeling very at home for the night in Readfield, at Darcy and Henry Whittemore's beautiful farmhouse. Darcy, who works at the Bicycle of Coalition of Maine, has been a devoted reader of our blog, and was prepared with servings of saga cheese appetizer (Sarah's favorite!) and a pesto pasta dinner. We've also been tended to with cozy guest bedrooms, hot showers, freshly cleaned laundry, and bikes in the big dry barn.



## FORT THOMAS, KY



**5.14.2016** We're staying with an awesome Warm Showers family in Fort Thomas, Kentucky—Maria and Brian Bozeman. Brian made Rob an Old Fashioned with Kentucky rye whiskey, bitters, and a dash of maple syrup. Maria cooked up a pot of delicious five-way chili, the local food specialty. When in Kentucky...

## HIAWATHA, KS



**6.14.2016** Here are Kevin and Sandy, our amazing Warm Showers hosts for the night. These guys have been in every kind of bike race, running race, and triathlon you can imagine. Sandy cooked us ribs for dinner, and they made homemade ice cream for us for dessert.

## SIoux CITY, IA

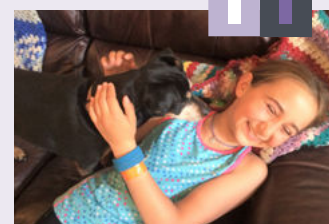


**6.19.2016** Three generations of the Young family. From left to right, it's Susan, Tom, Todd, Mandy, and Jackson. All of them have done some portion of RAGBRAI (Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa) which is host to 20,000 riders crossing Iowa on a different west-to-east route each year.

## PLAINS, MT



**8.25.2016** Bryan is the dessert-maker at he and his partner Kevin's new pizza place. Rob had seen Buttermilk Pie on the menu yesterday afternoon, and Bryan described the most glorious, delectable creation... before informing us that they had run out. But this morning, he whipped one up for us at his house! It was just as delicious as he'd promised.



# FAT BIKING THE WHISTLE-STOP TRAIL

BY WILL ELTING



MAINERS ARE A HARDY BUNCH; this much we can all agree on. Not content to give in to snow, cold, and boredom, and inspired in varying degrees by a range of coffee brandy-based cocktails, the people of Maine have a long history of making the most of the harsh winter months. From building Christmas trees out of lobster traps in Rockland, to creating the world's largest "ice carousel" up in the County (if you haven't heard of this, stop reading immediately and look it up), the Maine winter has inspired people to do a lot of remarkable things over the years. It was in this spirit that four of us decided to strap camping equipment on our fat bikes and head north for a weekend of winter bikepacking.

The Whistle Stop is a rail trail nestled in the foothills of Maine's western mountains. Running 14 miles from Livermore Falls to Farmington, the trail is flat, wide, and scenic. Winding through the towns of Jay and Wilton, it features several trestle bridges and various bits of cast-off railroad infrastructure from its days as a segment of the Androscoggin Railroad, and later Maine Central. The trail is multi-use, meaning everyone from dog walkers and joggers to cross country skiers, ATVs, and snowmobiles are welcome to use it. In the winter, the trail is groomed for snowmobiles by the Woodland Wanderers Snowmobile Club out of Wilton, who do a great job keeping the surface consistent, smooth, and ideal(ish) for fat biking.

Before we get into the account of our adventure, a quick note about bikepacking, and how it differs from traditional bicycle touring. Eschewing the traditional rack-and-pannier setup of road bike touring, bikepacking utilizes bags designed to attach directly to the frame of the bike. This allows for nimble, lightweight setups that are capable of riding deep into the backcountry on dirt roads, singletrack, and any kind of desert goat path or washed-out gully you come across. This niche of the bike world has exploded worldwide in recent years, with the popularization of routes like the Continental Divide, Baja Divide, and French Divide (notice a pattern?),

**The Maine winter has inspired people to do a lot of remarkable things over the years.**

and companies, most notably Salsa and Surly Bikes, releasing lines of bikepacking-specific frames and components. Fat bikes are ideal for bikepacking, as they typically feature rigid forks, a slack geometry, and tires that can roll over just about anything you throw at them.

We arrived at the trailhead in Livermore Falls on a clear, warm Saturday morning in March. The temperature was in the low 30s and climbing. We had driven up the night before and stayed at a quirkily rustic Airbnb in Mercer, allowing us ample time in the morning to double-check gear, have an extra cup or two of coffee, and debate the positive effects of CBD on athletic performance. After a hearty breakfast at the Homestead in Farmington, we were ready to hit the trail.

The plan was simple: ride the 14 miles to Farmington and camp in the vicinity of Titcomb Mountain—the friendly neighborhood ski hill and Nordic center—then ride back the next day. Between the four of us, we sported a range of bikes and bag configurations (*see photo captions for breakdown*).

To a seasoned cyclist, 14 miles sounds like a small warm-up ride, barely enough to warrant throwing on the spandex and cleats. Let me tell you: 14 miles on 5-inch-wide tires through mashed-potato snow carrying 25 pounds of gear might change some minds on the matter.

The trail surface was well-churned by snowmobiles, and the temperature meant that the snow was in that sweet spot between melting and frozen, making traction tough even with low tire pressure. None of us had studs, and it's debatable whether they would have made a difference in the

*Continued >*





mush. Stability was key. The sides of the trail proved to be firmer than the center, but all it took was a slight veer into a soft pocket and it was almost impossible to stay upright without spinning out and losing balance, especially with the weight on the bike. I don't think any of us were prepared for the level of concentration and precision the ride would require, and we were happy to take frequent breaks to admire the scenery and chat with our fellow trail users, the snowmobilers.

Riding on a mixed-use trail will always have its challenges when dealing with other trail users. Etiquette is important, especially when the speed difference between users is so large. As mountain bikers, we get used to being the fastest ones on the trail when riding in state parks and other non-motorized areas, but on snowmobile and ATV trails we sit firmly on the bottom of the food chain. The overwhelming majority of snowmobilers we encountered (and we encountered a lot on the Whistle Stop) were respectful, friendly trail users. They slowed down to go by us, and we received innumerable waves, cheers, and thumbs up. The vibes were good, and my thermos full of coffee proved to be an invaluable asset during multiple scenery-gawking and layer breaks.

Titcomb Mountain is a nonprofit, volunteer-run ski hill in Farmington that has been around since the 1940s. In terms of sheer vertical, Titcomb may leave hardcore downhillers wanting more, but what it lacks in the vert department, it more than makes up for with charm, value (\$10 passes, anyone?), and a huge network of Nordic trails that are fully rigged for lighted night skiing, or, in our case, riding.

We had reached out to the manager at Titcomb when we were planning the trip, and he generously said we could camp on site, provided we were out of the way. So it was, that we found ourselves setting up camp in the corner of a muddy, icy, auxiliary parking lot off the mountain's access road, and we couldn't have been happier about it. The ground was flat, and we had packed enough cold-weather

camping gear to keep us warm the night through. We spent the evening riding the Nordic trails under the lights, and relaxing by the campfire outside the lodge with some lightly seasoned quinoa and hot chocolate. It was everything we wanted out of a bike camping experience, just 30 degrees colder than we were used to doing it in.

We awoke on Sunday to slightly cooler temperatures, which boded well for trail conditions. We departed Titcomb Mountain with a hearty thanks to the manager and started the 14 miles back to our cars in Livermore Falls. The ride was slightly easier than it had been the day before, and we encountered just as many (if not more) snowmobiles. We also got to see the Woodland Wanderers' trail groomer in action, which was an impressive sight.

The ride really got us thinking about the relationship between motorized and non-motorized recreation, and the ways that we, as cyclists, can try to bridge the gap. With fat bike sales increasing year after year, the question will only gain relevance as more of us venture onto snowmobile trails all over the state and beyond. Snowmobile clubs put a lot of time, energy, and money into maintaining their trail networks, and without their efforts, our little adventure wouldn't have been possible.

I'd recommend anyone interested in planning an excursion like ours reach out to the snowmobile club in their area and find ways to support and assist. That way, we can start to garner some respect for our crazy hobby, and maybe even get some converts from gas power to pedal power! ☺

PHOTOS Kyle, on a Surly Wednesday, sporting a full set of frame bags from Revelate Designs; Seth, on a Specialized Fatboy, also with a full set of Revelate frame bags; Will, your humble author, on a Rocky Mountain Blizzard with a Wald "Pizza Rack" on the front, a Blackburn seat bag, and Salsa Everything Cage; and Ivan, on a Specialized Fatboy, with Nashbar rear rack and panniers.

# MY 'SHORT' TOUR DE FRANCE

BY PATRICK GABRION

AS CYCLISTS, we've all heard of the Tour de France, an event that especially captured most Americans' attention in the late 1990s and early 2000s when Lance Armstrong supposedly raced to glory for seven straight years.

I, too, have cycled in France, but I never made it to Paris and I certainly didn't pedal a total of 2,200 miles over three weeks. No, my "short" tour lasted four or five days and covered a distance of nearly 130 miles from Calais to Dieppe, a part of the coastal Normandy region.

Needless to say, it was a great experience and memorable, for a lot of reasons. While Lance ended up dethroned years later because of a doping scandal, my tour "troubles" were mostly minor in nature.

It all started with the ferry voyage from England, when my bike and I were dispatched to the bowels of the giant vessel, along with all the tractor-trailers spewing fumes of diesel fuel. Next, upon my arrival in France, I cycled toward the border checkpoint with my passport at the ready. But there was no one there, not a soul. I even turned back after a mile or so and returned to the same darkened booth, thinking surely I'd entered the country illegally. Half expecting to encounter armed guards on my second attempt, I was again surprised to find the entry area vacant of any human activity. So I headed toward Calais.

And don't even ask me how I slept during my brief French fling. My plan was to camp, but because it was springtime, most places weren't open yet. That first night in Calais I curled up on a park bench, but was woken up by a highly intoxicated individual. On another night, somewhere in the countryside, I was comfortably snoozing when, at around 2 a.m., a pair of policemen shook me awake, only to return to their vehicle muttering to each other: "An American!"

That proclamation was the only English I heard the whole time I was in France, thus causing another problem when it came to obtaining something very important to me—food! My thought process on any language barrier prior to the cycling trip had been, "Hey, what's the big deal? I took two years of French in school." Well, excusez-moi, because I really messed up and almost went hungry, but not really.

I stopped by a cafe one morning, but it only did a continental breakfast, which made sense considering I was on the Continent. And thank God for pictures on packages. It made my hunt for familiar foods quite successful at any supermarkets I came across. While today I might be more conscious of what I put in my body while cycling, back then I didn't care. I just wanted anything that looked appetizing. And obviously, it was easy picking out fruit, even in a foreign land.



Endless shouts of "Bonjour" were exchanged by everyone ... bonding with others through the international brotherhood of bicycle riding.

But I did actually communicate on one occasion and, wouldn't you know it, this involved cyclists. I was cruising along a road with little traffic, when all of a sudden I was completely surrounded by a Sunday morning group ride of nearly 50 people. Endless shouts of "Bonjour" were exchanged by everyone, and I felt better for that tiny accomplishment—bonding with others through the international brotherhood of bicycle riding.

So that was my "short" tour of France and some of the little wrinkles I encountered. Besides that, the roads were good, the motorists were mindful, and the scenery was very pleasant indeed.

I ended up taking a ferry back to England, got run over by a truck in London, and while in the hospital I met a nurse, who would later become my wife.

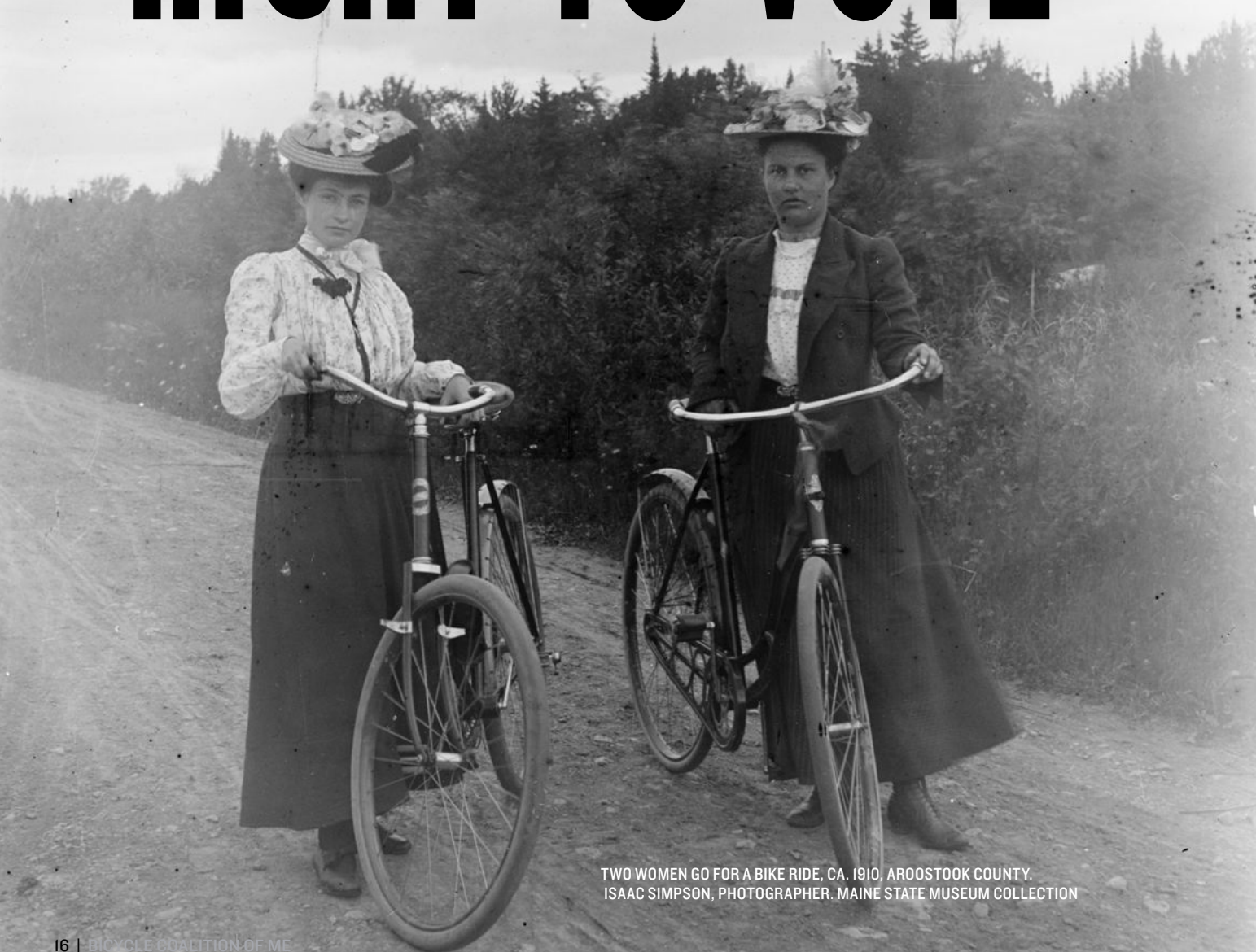
But that's another story. ☺

*Patrick Gabrion lives in Hallowell, Maine, and recently retired after a 44-year career as a newspaper editor. His passion for riding bicycles remains strong, and you can check out more writings on his cycling blog at [pedal2page.com](http://pedal2page.com). (Even the story about meeting his sweetheart.)*



BY ELIZA CRESS

# WOMEN, BIKES, AND THE RIGHT TO VOTE



TWO WOMEN GO FOR A BIKE RIDE, CA. 1910, AROOSTOOK COUNTY.  
ISAAC SIMPSON, PHOTOGRAPHER. MAINE STATE MUSEUM COLLECTION

IT WAS 171 YEARS AGO that the woman's suffrage movement began, in 1848, at the first women's rights convention held in Seneca Falls, New York. Just 37 years later, in the latter part of the Victorian Era, the hottest new consumer item hit the market.

Referred to initially as a "safety bike," and later as the "wheel" by enthusiasts, these slick new modes of transportation became the best way for just about anyone to travel around urban areas without the burden of a horse and buggy, while also allowing people to travel great distances much more quickly in more rural settings.

The importance of these newly designed machines was not lost on the suffragettes of that time. Despite less-than-ideal attire that was tight, hot, heavy, and cumbersome—including things like corsets, tall button-up boots, and long flowing skirts—women took to the streets on their wheels in droves. In the 1890s, one woman, the English rider Helena Swanwick, refused to wear a skirt while riding after an experience where she was "hurled onto [the ground]" and found that her skirt had been "so tightly wound around the pedal that [she could not] even get up to unwind it." Other women soon followed her example.

As could be expected at that time, women were also warned of the harm bicycle riding could cause them. It was said that the constant jostling of the bike over the road could exhaust the frail female figure, rattle their insides, and lend themselves to any ailment from tuberculosis and gout to infertility. Other threats women allegedly faced as a result of cycling included bow-leggedness from too much pedaling, or, my personal favorite, the inevitable "bicycle face": the permanent expression that could ruin a woman's beauty as a direct result of the tense concentration required for dodging traffic and potholes.

Fortunately, many women ignored these warnings and proceeded to ride with vigor, embracing the feeling of freedom, self-reliance, independent travel, and the novelty of exercise. Because Victorian women had been expected to remain out of the public eye and were relegated to domestic affairs and motherhood, the opportunity to move about when and where they pleased was liberating.

By 1895, *The San Francisco Call* remarked that women were "gliding along to better health of mind and body," despite the earlier opinions that women were far too fragile for the activity. By this time, health experts actually began recommending that women ride bikes. Chicago physician Dr. Edwin Kuh even stated that his colleagues "should advise their bachelor clients not to marry any girl who doesn't ride a bicycle."

*Continued >*

SHARPSHOOTER ANNIE  
OAKLEY SHOWS OFF HER  
TRUSTY BICYCLE, CA. 1894.  
PHOTOGRAPH FROM THE  
1894 JOURNAL  
"THE BEARINGS."



**Women took to the streets on their wheels in droves ... embracing the feeling of freedom, self-reliance, independent travel, and the novelty of exercise.**



In fact, historians say the “New Women” era was the direct result of their ability to ride bicycles. By bike, women gained a greater understanding of the public climate and took the opportunity to socialize more readily, giving them the chance to organize in a way that was previously impossible. The “New Woman” was deemed to be young, college educated, active, interested in pursuing a career, and looking for a marriage based on equality. Frequently, these women were depicted on bikes and photos of women with their wheels were declarations of their independence and progressive attitudes.

New Women like Helena Swanwick also encouraged a shift in what was deemed appropriate dress for women of that time, opting for bifurcated skirts or the original bloomers: long, wide-legged pants that tapered at the ankle for safer riding. They also ditched the corsets for greater ease of breathing and range of motion.

These women further pushed the boundaries of equality by joining wheelmen clubs when they were allowed or starting their own exclusive wheelwomen clubs that gathered for scheduled rides and races, printed newsletters, and sometimes even donned uniforms.

This outstanding and outspoken group of New Women also included American sharpshooter Annie Oakley, who learned to ride her bike with no hands in order to shoot while pedaling.

“I am delighted with my wheel,” she once reported. “I am equally as fond of it as my horse.”

Another woman by the name of Annie Londonderry left her home, husband, and children in 1895 to ride her bike around the world in a fifteen-month trip that began on the East Coast and took her through France, the Middle East, Asia, and back to the West Coast before pedaling east across the United States to complete the trip.

It may sound far-fetched to the modern reader, but even Elizabeth Cady Stanton believed this two-wheeled invention was truly the embodiment of the American Suffragette.

“[The bicycle] will inspire women with more courage, self-respect, and self-reliance,” Stanton said.

In her book, *A Wheel Within a Wheel: How I learned to Ride the Bicycle*, author and cyclist Frances E. Willard stated, “I began to feel that myself plus the bicycle equaled myself plus the world.”

It was precisely these sentiments and feelings of empowerment that bound women together in their effort to pursue greater equality in society and ultimately the right to vote. In 2019, we celebrate the 100th year of that right and recognize the important

role that bicycles played in inspiring that monumental movement.

So the next time you have the chance to go out for a spin, think fondly of our foremothers and their determination, perseverance, and commitment to achieving greater equality for themselves and all women.

And most importantly, don’t take for granted the pure joy and undeniable sense of independence we all experience while riding a bike. In the poignant words of Susan B. Anthony, “Let me tell you what I think of bicycling. I think it has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. It gives women a feeling of freedom and self-reliance. I stand and rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel—the picture of free, untrammelled womanhood.”

After centuries (or more) of oppression, women would soon reach a defining moment in history. On June 4, 1919, Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment, finally granting women the right to vote.

TWO WOMEN STOP DURING A BICYCLE RIDE AROUND THE SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK, AREA, CA. 1900.



**“Let me tell you what I think of bicycling. I think it has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world.”**

—SUSAN B. ANTHONY



## WOMAN IS RIDING TO SUFFRAGE ON A BICYCLE

THE MAINE STATE MUSEUM in Augusta opened its newest exhibition, “Women’s Long Road—100 Years to the Vote,” on March 23, and it will be on view at the museum through Jan. 25, 2020.

The museum’s exhibition tells the story of the 100-year effort to expand voting rights to include women through the people who lived the struggle. Historical photographs, artifacts, and documents on display give dimension to these stories as they played out in newspaper headlines, parades, cartoons, products, and petitions. The work of Maine activists, and the ‘antis’ who were against opening the vote to women, are seen alongside the passions of the national struggle. The museum exhibit also looks at women’s lives generally over the century.

As you read on the preceding pages, cycling had an important role in empowering the women’s rights movement. In celebration of bicycling, the centennial of women’s suffrage, and the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine is partnering with the museum to present “Bike Day at the Maine State Museum” on June 22, 2019, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The event will feature a family ride and bicycle rodeo highlighting safety for young riders, a 19th-century bicycling fashion contest, and free admission to the museum. More details will be available soon through the museum’s website at [www.maine statemuseum.org](http://www.maine statemuseum.org).

“Women’s Long Road – 100 Years to the Vote” is also a project of Maine’s Suffrage Centennial Collaborative, a diverse group of organizations that, through 2020, will feature a variety of programs about the centennial of women’s suffrage and the Nineteenth Amendment.

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For more information, see the collaborative’s website [www.mainesuffragecentennial.org](http://www.mainesuffragecentennial.org).



## 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

# EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine enjoyed many adventures in 2018. From exploring the northernmost parts of our state during BikeMaine, to finding a new office space to call home, here are some of the highlights of the year, made possible by you.



### WALK AND BIKE TO SCHOOL ENCOURAGEMENT EVENTS

# 25 SCHOOLS

registered their walk & bike to school events with us in the 2017-2018 school year. Nearly 5,000 students participated in the events.



**IN 2018, WE REACHED  
5,279 CHILDREN**

**IN KINDERGARTEN  
THROUGH EIGHTH GRADE  
AT 104 UNIQUE EVENTS.**

**WE REACHED 4,685 ADULTS  
(GRADES 9 AND UP) IN 2018  
AT 108 UNIQUE EVENTS.**

**WE ALSO REACHED  
197 PEOPLE**

**AT 11 DISTINCT ALL-AGES  
EDUCATIONAL EVENTS.**



### OFF ROAD BICYCLE EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine's Off Road Bicycling Education Program (ORBE) is a statewide initiative that provides two basic services: 1) technical assistance in designing and creating environmentally sustainable, non-motorized, multi-use trails, and 2) instruction in basic off-road bicycle riding. In 2018, with support from the Quimby Family Foundation, the ORBE Program expanded its mountain bike education and trail technical assistance services.

**IN 2018, THE ORBE  
PROGRAM OFFERED**

# 35

**OFF-ROAD BICYCLE  
SKILLS CLINICS,  
SERVING 289 RIDERS.**



In 2018, the ORBE Program helped Bangor, Millinocket, Orono, Hebron, Greenwood, and Cape Elizabeth develop or expand trail systems for off-road riding and walking.

In 2018, the ORBE Program coordinated the construction of the first machine-built trail south of Augusta: the Winnick Wander, in Cape Elizabeth.

### BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY EDUCATION

The Bicycle Coalition reaches thousands of children across the state every year, teaching students how to be safe bikers and walkers and encouraging them to enjoy biking and



walking as healthy activities they can enjoy with their friends and families. BCM staff make safety presentations in classrooms, provide hands-on and on-bike skills instruction, and set up bike rodeos so students can practice traffic safety skills in a safe, controlled environment.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Education is for adults, too! Whether it's providing a traffic safety presentation at a local community event, providing worksite commuting promotion and on-bike skills, or partnering with the Portland Gear Hub on the Bikes for All Mainers program, the Bicycle Coalition encourages adults and children alike to get on a bike.



### BIKE SWAP

For more than 15 years, the Great Maine Bike Swap has been a reliable source for pre-loved bicycles in Southern Maine. We're proud to bring this event to the community each year and love watching the excitement on children and adult faces alike when they find their new bike.

# IN 2018, 1,500

**PEOPLE ATTENDED THE BIKE  
SWAP, WHERE MORE THAN  
100 VOLUNTEERS HELPED  
FACILITATE THE SALE  
OF MORE THAN 500 BIKES!**



### WHERE TO RIDE

In 2018, the BCM launched its Where to Ride tool to help riders find great places to ride on roads, singletrack, and multi-use paths. Featuring

# 145 SELECTED RIDES,

the resource quickly became one of the most highly used pages on the BCM website. For 2019, we plan to add local business partners to the resource!





## BY THE NUMBERS

5

IMAGINE PEOPLE HERE DEMONSTRATIONS

20

NEW COMMUNITY SPOKES TRAINED

161

TOTAL COMMUNITY SPOKES REPRESENTING ALL 16 COUNTIES

10

SAFE WALKING BEHAVIORAL FORUMS



## COMMUNITY SPOKES

Our nationally recognized Community Spokes program trains Maine residents to engage with the municipal processes that envision and create more walkable, bike-able, and just plain livable communities. Our family of Community Spokes continues to grow and advocate for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects in their home communities around the state.

According to the 2018 survey of all of our Community Spokes, 100-percent of responding Spokes are currently involved in infrastructure projects. More than 40-percent of responding Spokes are currently in leadership roles for bicycle and/or pedestrian initiatives.

WE TRAINED  
20  
NEW SPOKES

IN 2018, BRINGING OUR TOTAL NUMBER TO 161 SPOKES. WE HAVE COMMUNITY SPOKES WORKING IN ALL 16 MAINE COUNTIES!



## LAW ENFORCEMENT COLLABORATIVE

The members of the Bicycle Coalition's Law Enforcement Collaborative (LEC) work together to strategize how law enforcement can better support vulnerable users (pedestrians and people on bicycles) on the streets. The LEC met nine times throughout 2018, with one to four law enforcement officers present at each meeting. The LEC also coordinated a statewide Vulnerable User Enforcement Day on June 14, and began the process of instating mandatory training for students at the police academy in 2020.

## IMAGINE PEOPLE HERE

Imagine People Here demonstrations allow communities to see how simple, low-cost infrastructure changes can drastically improve safety conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians. In many cases, seeing is believing, and towns end up adopting the recommended changes with permanent infrastructure. In 2018, we completed five Imagine People Here demonstrations in Lewiston, Madawaska, Fort Kent, Brunswick, and Sanford.

## HEADS UP! PEDESTRIAN SAFETY INITIATIVE

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine has been under contract with the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) since 2017 to conduct community assessments of pedestrian safety and recommend measures to improve conditions for pedestrians in 21 municipalities across the state. In 2018, the BCM and the MaineDOT completed site visits in eight different communities, during which engineers developed recommendations for infrastructure changes to improve pedestrian safety. Ten Safer Walking Behavioral Forums were also completed across the state in 2018, during which specific educational and law enforcement interventions for improved driver and pedestrian behavior were discussed.



## ADVENTURE AND COMMUNITY BUILDING COME TOGETHER

It was clear from early in the planning process that BikeMaine 2018 was going to be special. We were bringing 450 riders—our largest number to date—to northern Aroostook County and the Saint John Valley, a legendary region of the state known primarily for its geographic isolation, large-scale agriculture, and strong Acadian traditions. We learned it should also be renowned for its generous spirit, serene vistas, and world-class cycling routes.

BikeMaine came to northern Aroostook not just to provide a unique outdoor travel experience for the riders, but to demonstrate that bicycle tourism has innumerable benefits for the communities it serves. Partnering with local towns and organizations allows BikeMaine to provide riders with unique opportunities—such as tours of the Twin

SINCE 2013, BIKEMAINE HAS BROUGHT

\$3  
MILLION+

INTO LOCAL ECONOMIES ACROSS THE STATE, AND IN 2018 ALONE IT BROUGHT AN IMPACT OF \$745,000 TO THE COUNTY.



Rivers paper mill in Madawaska and the Pineland Farms potato processing facility in St. Agatha—and gives locals the chance to show off their communities in ways only they can. We partner with community groups to prepare and serve our meals, lending local flavors and ingredients to the ride that you can't find anywhere else, and giving those serving it a sense of pride, as well as an economic boost to their organization.

We couldn't have made BikeMaine 2018 happen without the hundreds of Aroostook County residents who came together to plan activities, cook, drive shuttles, do laundry, play music, make ice cream, tell jokes, and so much more. We're already looking forward to five or six years from now, when we get to bring the ride back to the region and fall in love all over again.

## BIKEMAINE COMMUNITY GRANTS

The Community Grant program is at the core of BikeMaine's statewide mission. Every community that has hosted BikeMaine as an overnight village location or lunch stop are eligible, and the funds can be used for any project related to bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure. The program not only provides direct assistance to these important projects, but also keeps BikeMaine, and the Bicycle Coalition as a whole, in the minds of local governments and nonprofits across the state.

2018 was an exciting year with lots of interesting proposals from all over Maine. We heard from nearly a dozen of our former host communities, making our decision process quite challenging. In the end, we chose to fund three projects that are ambitious, impactful, and speak to the broadening scope of the BCM's mission to include off-road riding and pedestrian initiatives.



## 2018 COMMUNITY GRANT WINNERS

**MAIN STREET SKOWHEGAN** to build a 5k bicycle and pedestrian loop as part of the future Run of River Whitewater Recreation Area. **GRANT AMOUNT: \$10,000**

**MAHOOSUC PATHWAYS IN BETHEL** to connect Crescent Park Elementary School to a network of mountain biking trails. **GRANT AMOUNT: \$3,250**

**KINGFIELD TRAIL BUILDERS** to strengthen bike safety measures through their downtown corridor. **GRANT AMOUNT: \$3,025**



## BY THE NUMBERS

450

RIDERS

80

WEEK-LONG VOLUNTEERS

100+

VOLUNTEERS FROM THE HOST COMMUNITIES

\$16K+

IN COMMUNITY GRANT FUNDING AWARDED TO PREVIOUS HOST COMMUNITIES

\$745K

SPENT IN 2018 HOST REGION BY BIKEMAINE AND RIDERS



BOARD AND STAFF UPDATES

Our staff grew in 2018 as we welcomed three highly motivated new employees. Will Elting joined as Event Coordinator in February 2018 and was promoted to BikeMaine Ride Director in December. Matt Sulem joined the team in February 2018 as Membership and Office Manager and took over production of *The Maine Cyclist* in October, and Eliza Cress joined us as Communications and Development Manager in November. We also began a search for a Mission Advancement Director at the end of 2018 and hired Mariah Healy for the position in January of 2019.

Our Board of Directors remains a steady and engaged group of leaders. All board members have now served for at least a year and a half.



MEMBERSHIP

We welcomed 196 new members to the Bicycle Coalition in 2018! As a non-profit organization, we rely on our members to support and advance our mission of making Maine better for cyclists and pedestrians. Our members make our voice stronger in Augusta, and help us widen our reach across the state of Maine.



NEW OFFICE

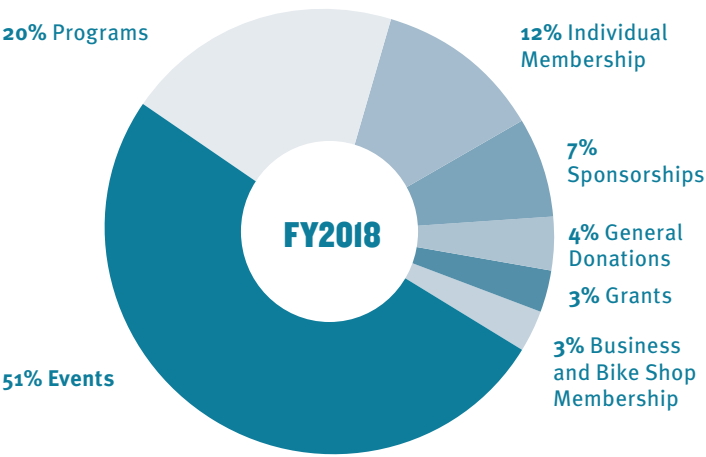
2018 saw an exciting transition for our home base. We moved to our new office space at 38 Diamond Street in East Bayside, Portland, in October of 2018. The location of our new office, directly on the multi-use Bayside Trail, connects us in a new and exciting way to the cycling community here in Portland.

The BCM will be leading group bike rides from our office every other Wednesday throughout the 2019 cycling season. These rides will be fun and social community rides open to absolutely everyone! Check out our event calendar for more details at [bikemaine.org/events](http://bikemaine.org/events).

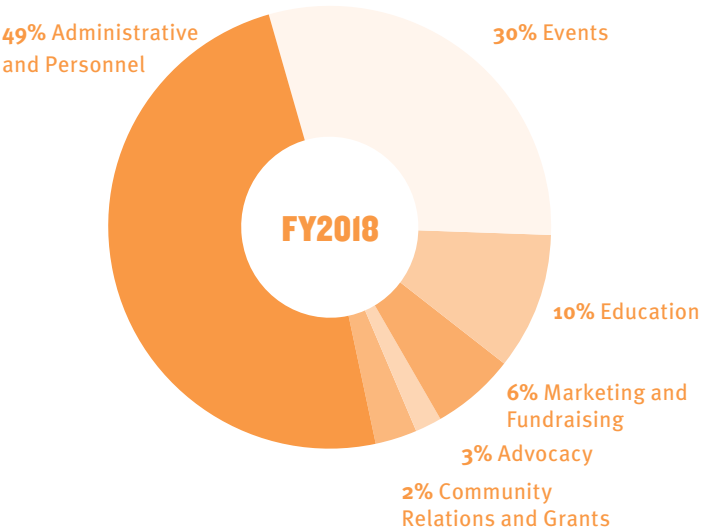


THANK YOU FOR ALL THE WAYS YOU HELP US TO SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN CYCLING AND WALKING IN MAINE!

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EXPENSES





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Join the Bicycle Coalition of Maine at the Yellow Jersey Club level and a 1/8-page ad is included with your membership!

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## KATAHDIN GEAR LIBRARY

BY PAMELA FISCHER

MATT DELANEY AND EMILIE TISCH are people who make things happen. Spend some time with them and you will quickly determine that Matt is a dreamer—a big picture guy—and Emilie knows how to manage details and call on creativity in order to pull off an audacious plan. They are supremely suited partners. Their energy is infectious.

When Matt accepted a new job as Director for the Millinocket Memorial Library and Emilie took a position as an accountant for the Baxter State Park Authority in 2016, the pair arrived in town eager to become part of a rural community where they could put down roots and influence the future. Empty storefronts and faded reflections of the glory days of the pulp and paper industry only added to their sense of a good challenge. With Mt. Katahdin and a four-season north woods playground as a backdrop, they set to work getting to know the people who live, work, and visit the area while exploring the outdoor recreation scene. Mountain biking and gravel riding opportunities, along with quiet

**The community response has been amazement, melding into excitement, blooming into pride.**

stretches of scenic pavement for road biking, could be found in every direction. But to their surprise, when Matt bought a mountain bike frame and tried to build his own bike, it became evident that the resources for those activities didn't exist in this corner of Maine.

With no bike shops in the area, a lack of trail maps, and no cohesive network of cyclists, there was a missing link. That fact nagged at them both.

Fast forward two years and Matt and Emilie opened the Katahdin Gear Library, an outreach program of the Millinocket Memorial Library. Truly a community effort, the pair worked their neighborhood making connections and generating the buzz that would get the concept off the ground. Partnerships were established with the Bicycle Coalition of Maine and Outdoor Sport Institute. Grants from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the Maine Community Foundation, as well as funding from numerous private donors, help support the endeavor. All that is needed to borrow equipment from the Gear Library is a library card.

The small shop on 96 Penobscot Ave sports a funky sidewalk sign inviting the public to come in and see what's going on. Staffed by volunteers, KGL has become a magnet for youth and families, local people, and seasonal visitors. The space not only offers bicycles, helmets, and other sporting gear to loan (KGL also offers ski and snowshoe equipment during the winter), but provides tools, a workspace, and a gathering spot for workshops and events.

During three months of the inaugural summer in 2018, the Katahdin Gear Library was open two evenings per week and Saturday mornings. In that short first season, 135 bikes were loaned and 71 more were repaired or serviced. Several workshops were held and countless people stopped in to say "hi" and chat about bikes. Best of all, kids showed up wanting to ride and work on bikes. And volunteer. Now that's something.

The community response to the Katahdin Gear Library has been amazement, melding into excitement, blooming into pride. It's filling a need in the community and has quickly shown what can be achieved simply by providing access to equipment and knowledge that is completely untethered to income or ability.

If Matt and Emilie get their next wish, the Katahdin Gear Library will be the seed that sprouts like-minded small businesses, further revitalizes the Katahdin region, and makes it even more of a vacation destination. Squint your eyes and you might just see a new bike shop, a few brew-pubs, and maybe a new pie and coffee shop. For certain, you will see more people enjoying the camaraderie and health benefits of outdoor activity in a region that beckons exploration. ☺

*Please note that The Katahdin Gear Library is about to move to a temporary location while MML undergoes major renovations this year. Join the Facebook group and follow them on Instagram for the current location and hours!*

PHOTO Matt Delaney and Emilie Tisch

## THE GLOBE-GIRDLING GHOST

BY MATT SULEM

### Reflections on Frank Lenz's ill-fated around-the-world trip on the 125th anniversary of the cyclist's disappearance



PHOTO The last photo of Frank Lenz

BACK IN THE 1880s, the very action of getting on a bike was seen as dangerous by many otherwise level-headed individuals. You can't blame these skeptics too much. After all, the first thing ever to be called a "bicycle" (also known as a "penny farthing") had only been invented two decades prior, and that two-wheeled contraption forced riders to mount a large front wheel measuring up to five feet in diameter and went by the intimidating nicknames of "velocipede" and "boneshaker."

Even when the prototype for the modern bike was invented in the late 1870s—complete with two equal-sized wheels—it was dubbed the "safety bicycle." I don't know about you, but there's something about having "safety" in the name that makes it seem... well, unsafe.

Although the safety bicycle would quickly become incredibly popular, it initially took something of a daredevil to routinely ride one. Thankfully for the progression of mankind (and the literal progression of people from one location to another), America had produced a healthy supply of bicycle-riding thrill-seekers in the late nineteenth century—folks like William Sachtleben, Thomas Allen Jr., and Frank Lenz.

Inspired by the earlier cycling adventures of Englishman Thomas Stevens, who became the first person to circumnavigate the world by bicycle from 1884-1887, Lenz decided to

embark on his own globe-girdling trip on May 15, 1892.

Lenz absolutely idolized Stevens for his world-famous 13,500-mile trip, his later efforts to locate explorer Henry Morton Stanley in Africa, and the 25 countries he visited along the way. But on Lenz's trip, he vowed to ride a Victor safety bicycle (instead of a penny farthing), completely cross Asia (Stevens took a detour after he was turned away at the Afghanistan border), and avoid trains and ferries at all costs (which Stevens overused, in Lenz's opinion).

The task was tall, but Lenz was no slouch.

#### The Starting Line

A Pittsburgh native, Lenz was a skilled cyclist, an accomplished racer, and an adventurer who completed numerous long-distance rides across the United States to destinations like New York, New Orleans, and St. Louis. After planning his around-the-world route, securing funding from *Outing Magazine* (which would print regular updates on Lenz's progress), and equipping himself with the latest photography equipment, tools, spare bike parts, and a few other items, Lenz began his journey in his hometown.

To cover some extra ground in America, the 25-year-old cyclist first pointed his wheels southeast toward Baltimore before cutting back north through New Jersey to New York City, on to Buffalo, and into the Canadian cities of Hamilton, Toronto, and London. Re-entering the states via ferry, Lenz next pedaled from Michigan through Indiana, Illinois, and Minnesota on his way to the western states of North and South Dakota, Montana, Washington, Oregon, and California. By the time Lenz reached San Francisco—where he would hop a steamer to Japan after a brief layover in Hawaii—he had already covered 5,000 miles in five months.

Following a month of cycling in Japan, Lenz next traveled to China, where he anticipated facing hardships in a land where he knew next to nothing of the language, cuisine, and people. After a month in China, he had only ventured 500 miles and had already faced unsanitary living conditions, uncertain routes, harsh winter weather, a distrusting reception from the locals, and even had a few stones hurled his way. But to Lenz's surprise, both the weather and his reception warmed as he completed the remaining 2,000 miles to Burma, and eventually India and Persia.

Confident he could overcome anything, Lenz ignored repeated recommendations that he reach Europe by crossing through Russia instead of Turkey, as the headstrong cyclist was determined to take the shortest route.

In the 1890s, Turkey was a dangerous place. Armenians were already being slaughtered en masse by the Ottoman government in what would later be known as the Armenian



Genocide. Additionally, in the 300 miles between Tabriz and Erzurum that was rife with narrow mountain passes and deep, raging rivers, it was not uncommon for travelers (especially foreigners) to be ambushed and left for dead by the lawless local Kurds.

Eschewing the advice of government officials, locals, and fellow cyclists who had previously traveled through Turkey, Lenz continued on, entered the country, and was never heard from again.

### Aftermath

Despite his tragic fate, the accomplishments and victories of Frank Lenz on his globe-girdling trip were beyond impressive. His list of hurdles included everything from flat tires and numerous illnesses to falling victim to hostility from locals, petty theft, and a misunderstanding that ended with Lenz spending a night in a California jail. I urge you to read more on Lenz (the novel *The Lost Cyclist* by David V. Herlihy is a perfect place to start) for specific stories of his adventures as well as a deeper dive into all the possible explanations for his disappearance, because that’s not the direction in which I am currently headed.

When I first conceived of this story, I imagined myself fascinated by the murky details of Lenz’s disappearance and planned to document the evidence here—but, as I eventually found, Lenz’s fate is not completely ambiguous.

He didn’t get lost in the jungle. He wasn’t jailed. He didn’t decide to assimilate with the locals and start a new life.

Pieced together from numerous accounts of varying credibility, historians have concluded that Frank Lenz was attacked, killed, robbed, and buried somewhere in Turkey—most likely along the 80-mile stretch known as the Deli Baba Pass. His assailants were almost certainly Kurdish, and the ringleader was almost certainly a notoriously violent Kurdish chief named Moostoe Niseh, who was eventually arrested for the crime, but broke out of jail and fled while awaiting trial.

One might find this conclusion somewhat anticlimactic, but upon doing my research for this article, I found myself less interested by the mystery of his disappearance, and instead fascinated by the prospect of undertaking such a trip.

In other words, I eventually stopped questioning what happened to Lenz, and started questioning if it was a good idea to try to bike around the world in the first place.

Given Lenz’s ultimate fate, the answer to the latter question seems like an obvious “no.” But the more I read about the cyclist’s story, the more my opinion changed.

### Conclusions

If you’re waiting to hear whether or not I, personally, would ever undertake a trip like Lenz, allow me to provide a spoiler before the end of this article: I wouldn’t. Besides the road-blocks of financing a trip like this and being away from my job, home, and loved ones, I am also an average cyclist who prefers mountain biking. Simply put, and please pardon the bicycle pun: a trip like this is simply not in my wheelhouse.

The moment I came to terms with this was the moment I realized it was pointless to ponder whether the average

cyclist should embark on a round-the-world bicycle adventure, because Lenz was not an average person.

“I actually doubt if he knew the meaning of fear,” a former travelmate of Lenz once said of the cyclist, who was always revved for action. “There was nothing in his mental or physical makeup corresponding to the timidity most men feel in the presence of danger.”

After all, this is a man who believed he could face and defeat any obstacle with his knowhow, his wit, and his bicycle—regardless of his coordinates on a globe.

“The whole world is man’s heritage,” Lenz said. “And as long as I am on this earth, I shall feel as much at home by the banks of the Euphrates as by the Monongahela [in Pittsburgh].”

Even during his ill-fated trip, in which he encountered enough hazards and potholes (both figurative and literal) to send almost any cyclist packing, Lenz told acquaintances that he was not shaken and would not be deterred.

“Maybe you fellows think that I am tired of this kind of life,” he said along the way. “Well, I am not. I enjoy it hugely.”

So perhaps the ultimate question is a different hypothetical: would Frank Lenz himself regret his decision to embark on his trip knowing that it would eventually lead to his untimely death?

Strange as it sounds, I don’t think Lenz would alter his route, switch up his schedule, or prepare differently in any way whatsoever. Even when it came to crossing paths with Moostoe (if he was, in fact, Lenz’s killer), I don’t think the cyclist would change a thing.

Because Lenz knew—and his fellow adventure-seekers and daredevils know—that every important decision, every master plan, and every challenge that needs to be conquered comes with its share of inherent dangers.

They also know, simply put, that the greatest risks usually lead to the greatest rewards. Not monetary rewards (not primarily, at least), but the kind of reward that only comes with fending off a foe, beating the odds, and being able to proclaim victory—and knowing you did it yourself.

They know this because they have made this kind of a decision countless times in their lives and rationalized those choices with a hard but obvious truth that allows them to climb mountains, cross deserts, weather storms, test their will, and become better versions of themselves.

They know that if you lose your willingness to face enormous risks—including death—then you’re taking an even bigger risk: missing out on some of the best moments of your life.

Although he ultimately died on the voyage, Lenz also lived more during his two-year trip than most people would if they had 100 years on this earth.

If you have any lingering doubts that Lenz would not regret his decision to circumnavigate the world on his bicycle, it’s worth noting that during his trip, when he had already traversed thousands of miles, another cyclist frankly (and accurately) told Frank that he’d surely be killed in Asia.

Without hesitation, without fear, and with the kind of attitude only the most daring of individuals can possess, Lenz simply replied: “I expect to be.” ☺

# GROWING UP WALKING

BY ISABEL CLAYTER



WIND WHIPS HAIR into my eyes and chunks of ice strike my cheeks. Snowbanks on either side of me reach my ears, and through my knitted hat I can hear the whoosh of cars as they speed through slush. I wiggle my toes—numb even beneath two pairs of socks—and roll my eyes as my mom describes a sun-drenched beach. She is trying to

convince me that visualizing a hot summer day will ward off the bitter winter morning that she has dragged me into.

Before she can finish her narrative of a season that seems a million years away, I look up, blinking to clear the tears that have formed in the corner of my eyes from the chill. Suddenly the destination of my walk is in sight, and in anticipation of entering the warm hallways of my elementary school, I quicken my pace.

Approximately 10 years, 600 miles, and 70 degrees later, I am strolling through the streets of our nation’s capital, wiping sweat off my neck and imagining my mom describing a wintry snowfall. She is not beside me; while I wanted to tour the neighborhoods and monuments, she chose to catch up with old friends.

The sun beats down and I can feel my cheeks begin to burn, so I duck into a subway station. A manufactured breeze swirls my hair—stale but welcome.

The whoosh of a train as it approaches the platform is full of possibility, although it reminds me of cars that spray cold slush onto the sidewalk. When I emerge from the cool station, the heat is more intense, but now I feel light and free. It has dawned on me that I am casually strolling the streets of one of the nation’s biggest, busiest cities. Alone.

As I wait for a traffic light to change, I smile to myself, remembering long walks to school; walks that began when I was in a stroller and punctuated my entire childhood.

Rainy elementary commutes, met not with windshield wipers but rain boots, jackets, and the youthful joy of jumping in puddles. Rebellious adolescent years spent hitching rides with friends in an attempt to avoid walking. Solitary high school journeys occupied by playlists and podcasts instead of conversation.

My years of walking were studded with symbols of newfound independence. First, a key. Blue and emblazoned with little yellow stars, my first house key granted me the ability to walk home alone from the fourth grade. Then, a cell phone, and with it, unspoken permission to travel further outside my neighborhood, to friends’ houses and local haunts. More recently, a bus pass that served as my school ID allowed me to tour my hometown. Over time, I crammed other cards in my wallet, metro passes that granted me unrestricted access to cities along the east coast.

The whoosh of cars comes to an end, and as the static orange hand changes to a glowing silver shape of a person, I repeat the same motion that has carried me from place to place throughout my life.

Seeing the iconic skyline of Downtown D.C. reminds me of a conversation with my mom, early in my middle school years. A discussion in class about the Pledge of Allegiance had prompted us to talk about our personal relationship with the flag, a relationship muddled by dual citizenship and agnostic beliefs.

In my head, I replay our dialogue and reflect on how my views on politics and citizenship have changed as I have become more informed. Although I have ventured independently into cities before, this trip seems more meaningful. It has revealed to me that my ability to confidently explore unfamiliar streets stems from hundreds of journeys to and from school— thousands of steps that have taken me through childhood and instilled within me a sense of freedom and ambition. ☺

*Isabel Clayter is currently a senior at Portland High School and will be attending the University of Michigan in the fall. She is looking forward to exploring Ann Arbor by foot, or bike.*





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Julian Rogers + James Beverage, Ogunquit  
David + Cindy Kneeland, Brewer  
Richard + Danielle LaFlamme, Kittery  
David LeBlanc, Ogunquit  
Michael Loomis ,Dover Foxcroft  
Daniel Lyons, Kennebunk  
Ian MacLellan, Lincoln MA  
Mark MacLeod, Ogunquit  
Maine Integrative Dentistry, Portland  
William McAnirlin, Newport  
Brian + Heather McNiff, Portland  
Suzanne Menard, Wells  
Lisa Morin, Turner  
Sherb Naulty, Bath  
Bob Nesheim, Grand Marais MN  
Paul Rehkopf, Kalamazoo MI  
Carol Peterson, Caledonia NY  
Brian Pierce, Camden  
Press Hotel, Portland  
Marion Puglisi, Portland  
Dan Reardon, Ogunquit  
Ray Richard, Portland  
Steve Rodman, Watertown MA  
Ryan Rumsey, Portland  
Robin + Joseph Rushlau, Dresden  
Eric Sanderson, Westbrook  
Susan Stewart + Rob Schreiber, South Portland  
Dave Seddon, Cumberland  
Jason M Simpson, Portland  
Rosemarie Smith + Sam Dudek, Gray  
Mary Tedesco-Schneck, Bangor  
Elliott Thomas, Yarmouth  
Stephen P. Thomas, Cumberland Center  
Romaine Turyn, Readfield  
Stephanie Vary, Windham  
Jen Walker, Ogunquit  
Donald Warming, South Portland  
Winston Whitney, Rockport  
Lois Winter, Portland



## JIM'S CORNER BY JIM TASSÉ



You may not have thought too much about bike season during the long and snowy winter, but at the BCM, we've been busy working on a variety of initiatives all devoted to making Maine better for bicycling and walking! We're in the legislature, we're planning events, we're teaching people to ride (and walk) safely,

we're getting ready to install traffic-calming demonstration projects, and so much more! Here's a brief overview of things that I've been working on since the beginning of the year.

### LEGISLATIVE WORK

Advocacy Manager Angela King and I have had a full slate of work to do in the Maine legislature. The BCM is working closely with legislators on several important pieces of legislation.

**LD 470**, sponsored by Representative Daughtry of Brunswick, would require that Maine students get at least four hours of basic traffic safety education between kindergarten and grade eight. As of this writing, the bill passed the Maine House and Senate, and is moving on to the Appropriations Committee.

**LD 1222**, sponsored by Representative Deane Rykerson of Kittery, is a bill that would define electric-assist bicycles under Maine law, and clarify where they can be legally operated. There is currently no language in Maine law referring to low-speed, electric pedal-assist bicycles, but they are becoming more and more common on Maine roads. This bill is important to provide legal clarity for both bike shop owners who sell the devices, as well as for the persons who buy them and ride them on Maine roads. It is currently heading to a vote in both chambers.

**Other Legislation** In addition to these priority bills, the BCM has been monitoring more than 32 other bills, and offered written or oral testimony on 22 bills. We supported eight pieces of legislation that would increase funding for transportation needs (including bicycle and pedestrian facilities), we supported two bills that would ban the use of handheld devices while driving, and we supported bills that would increase investment in multi-use paths, permit the use of traffic cameras in Maine, and change the scope of "traffic movement permits" associated with construction projects to ensure that the needs of persons walking and bicycling were considered in the transportation planning for such projects.

### HEADS UP! PEDESTRIAN SAFETY WORK

2019 sees the Bicycle Coalition of Maine entering its third year working with the MaineDOT on the Heads Up! Pedestrian Safety Planning initiative. Focusing on the 21 communities with the highest rates of pedestrian crashes, the Head's Up! effort includes public forums to identify problem locations, site visits to plan for possible changes in road design to improve pedestrian access, and additional discussions on how education and enforcement interventions can improve safety.

In addition to helping the communities directly served by the initiative, the Heads Up! project has deepened the relationship between the Coalition and the MaineDOT and drawn us into more conversations about improving bicycle and pedestrian safety across the state.

### IMAGINE PEOPLE HERE DEMONSTRATION CAMPAIGNS

2019 is shaping up to be a very busy year for the BCM "tactical urbanism" demonstration project campaign. We have installed traffic-calming infrastructure in Brunswick, a temporary bike way in Sanford, and will soon install traffic-calming treatments in Old Orchard Beach and Lewiston. Preliminary conversations are also ongoing about a bike lane project in Bangor and curb extensions in South Portland. Stay tuned for more details!

### EDUCATION

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Education program serves nearly 10,000 people in Maine annually, and the curriculum presented by our instructors is at the core of the content that LD 470 seeks to mandate in Maine schools. To learn more, contact Erik daSilva at Erik@bikemaine.org.

### MOUNTAIN BIKE PLANNING

With support from the Quimby Foundation, the BCM plans to expand the Off Road Bicycle Education (ORBE) Program in 2019 with trail projects lined up in Bangor and Cape Elizabeth, as well as numerous teaching clinics. Mark July 13 on your calendars and plan to join us in Bethel to ride on the Bethel Village Trails for a fundraising ride event in partnership with Mahoosuc Pathways.

### REBRANDING SOFT ROLLOUT

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine added pedestrian work to its mission officially in 2014, but our branding has never changed to reflect that expansion of our work. In 2019, you will begin to see more references to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Coalition of Maine as we conduct a "soft rollout" of our new identity. Nothing inside the organization has changed under the label, but this new name lets us conduct pedestrian-flavored work under a name that reflects our commitment to this user group. Tell your walking and running friends that it's time for them to become members, too! 📍

## Scott & Sunny Townsend A Yellow Jersey Club Business



### Tell us a little about your business, the Scott & Sunny Townsend Team.

Scott: We actually have a few businesses that all involve real estate and bikes! For more than 18 years, Sunny, myself, and our team have specialized in residential, vacation, and luxury real estate sales and rentals in the Greater Portland area. We help people buy or sell, whether it's for a vacation or for a lifetime. We are fortunate to live, work, and cycle in the Higgins Beach area! This is where most of our rentals are, and we are actively involved in the community.

### How does cycling play a role in your lives?

Scott: For me, cycling is how I like to experience life. Ever since I learned how to ride a bike (I still remember that day), all I have wanted to do was ride. I like to explore new areas while traveling by bike as it allows me to cover a lot of ground at a comfortable speed to soak it all in. I ride to reduce stress and get exercise. I ride with friends, and every Thursday night can

be found riding the local trails.

### Does cycling tie into your business, too?

Scott: Of course! The best part of living in the area where you do most of your work is that you can ride your bike. We often joke that we are off "peddling" properties! Sunny: We take our bikes on appointments at the beach as well as to all the social events in the community. We have one bike that has a trailer to haul beach toys or yoga mats for our weekly beach yoga class, another bike that hauls our stand-up paddle boards to the beach, and a couple of cruisers for just riding around. Cycling is also a great way to work through challenges. Whenever Scott is working through an issue, he hops on his bike and usually after an hour's ride, has some solutions.

### What do you like about being a Bicycle Coalition of Maine business member?

Scott: The short answer is that it's always great to support something that supports your passion. The longer answer is that the Bicycle Coalition

is involved in great projects all over the state and played an integral role in bridging the gap on the Eastern Trail. They help coordinate funding to connect Scarborough to South Portland. The projects the talented team at the BCM work on take time and money—they need the support of the cycling community not only to survive, but to thrive.

### What's next for the Scott and Sunny Townsend Team?

Sunny: In addition to increasing the number of people we help buy and sell real estate in the Greater Portland area, we are putting our efforts into growing our Wheelhouse brand of vacation rentals. It started last year after purchasing a house in Carrabassett Valley that is known as the "Carrabassett Wheelhouse." The trail network in Carrabassett Valley is growing every year and is the top-rated trail system in Maine. We had been searching for about three years for the right property and we finally found it! The Wheelhouse is located in the heart of the trail network with 300 feet of river frontage. Once you arrive for your vacation, you really don't have to get in the car again until you leave. You can access the entire trail network by riding on only 100 yards of pavement.

We wanted to create a rental that catered to the needs and likes of mountain bikers. From unique mountain bike artwork and the bike wash stand, to hammocks down by the river, you can truly ride and relax at the house. The highlight is the outdoor fireplace and dining area complete with a cooking grate for the fire. A post-ride swim is a must when staying at the house. For more details, check out carrabassettwheelhouse.com. In the coming years, we plan to buy more rental houses in mountain biking and outdoor recreation-specific areas. 📍





# **BICYCLE COALITION OF MAINE**

38 Diamond Street, Portland, ME 04101

The only organization in the state advocating  
for better conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.



## **JOIN US!**

Become a member today and invest in making Maine a great place to walk and ride a bike!

[bikemaine.org/joinrenew](http://bikemaine.org/joinrenew)