The voice of bicyclists and pedestrians in Maine

MAINE CYCLIST
Deep in the Maine woods

All along the Midcoast And around the world

Then back to the heart of Maine
ABOUT THE COVER PHOTO

BCM Board Secretary Kierie Piccininni gets into the holiday spirit with her cargo bike, The Nostromo. The Nostromo is the 176th bike built by CETMA Cargo in Eugene, Oregon, and features disc brakes, a Co-Motion eccentric bottom bracket, FSA Metropolis parts, and an internal NuVinci hub (infinitely variable transmission).

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It’s been an honor and a privilege to serve this dynamic organization in a leadership capacity.

I covered aid station duty with Molly Mulhern and Jenny Ward, two volunteers from the AMC community, who shared fascinating stories of their outdoor adventures both on and off a bike, and kept riders encouraged for the upcoming hill climb and primed for moose sightings. It was a blast!

I am particularly proud of this new gravel ride because it advances the Coalition’s commitment to be inclusive and support all types of cycling—satisfying an important strategic element that has been talked about for quite some time. The partnership that BCM forged with the Appalachian Mountain Club to bring this ride to fruition is an example of how synergistic relationships allow us to deliver unique event experiences that engage a broader audience, producing layers of benefits for all involved. This is a model that will propel our organization forward.

Am I excited about all of this? You bet.

However, I will be seeing the BCM from a slightly different viewpoint going forward, as my term as board president is now up. It’s been an honor and a privilege to serve this dynamic organization in a leadership capacity, and I’ve truly enjoyed the chance to guide the efforts of our passionate and engaged board, and work more closely with staff, membership, and volunteers.

I had marked this two-year term as a time for me to say “yes” to as many volunteer and outreach opportunities as possible, which, of course, has been great fun and extraordinarily inspiring. Now, I’m overjoyed to welcome Tina West to the role as my successor! With an exciting list of organizational initiatives ahead, there won’t be a dull moment. Tina is well-prepared for this role and has already hit the path in high gear.

Please give Tina a high five and help me cheer her on as she embraces her new responsibility as Board President of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine. 🎉
Getting to Know Each Other
BY TINA WEST, PRESIDENT

I LOVE THE FALL—it’s crisp, fresh air and colors; wearing turtlenecks and sweaters; carving pumpkins and baking apple pies. What could be better? For me, fall begins with BikeMaine, an event hosted by the Bicycle Coalition that I have been involved with since Day 1, when I was invited to be on the ride committee for the inaugural ride in 2013. What an experience! And now, almost seven years later, I still look forward to exploring a different part of Maine, eating great local food, and riding with friends from near and far.

As I begin my first term as President of the Board of Directors, I find that there are lots of important things on which to focus, not the least of which is to hire a new executive director, ensure that BCM’s financials remain stable, and translate new components of the strategic plan into deliverables that support our mission of making Maine better for biking and walking.

So, where do we start? Those who know me know that I’m an organizer, a problem solver, and a doer. I make lists, I love timelines, and I deliver results—not all by myself, of course, but with the invaluable help of the BCM Team. One of the first steps in delivering results is to know your team members. So, in November, the board and staff spent a day on team-building to clarify roles, build skill-set inventories, and acknowledge those things that we are not only good at, but enjoy doing.

How about you? What are you good at? What do you like to do? How would you like to be involved in making Maine better for biking and walking? Please let me know, so your skills and interests can be added to the BCM Team’s inventory.

Having a strong leader is also an important next step to getting the work of the BCM done. And, as you may know, the BCM is partnering with Issacson, Miller in the search for a new executive director. If you know of someone who is interested in learning more about this job opportunity and/or applying for the position, please share the job posting with them.

Since this issue of The Maine Cyclist partially focuses on bike commuting and utility cycling, I thought I’d share the following story with you: After returning from BikeMaine this fall, I noticed a major uptick in the number of kids riding their bikes—all ages, with helmets, to/from school, hanging out with friends, having a blast. I even saw one little guy heading to school on his bike in the pouring rain, a future bike commuter for sure.

I remember when I was a kid, my family didn’t have two cars, so once my dad went to work in the morning, transportation options were limited for my mom and three sisters. Biking became my gateway to freedom and adventure. In retrospect, I never rode very far—just to the local market, library, and neighborhood friends’ houses—but it was way more fun and quicker than walking!

Over the years, life got busier and I lost sight of using my bike to get somewhere. But now, once again, riding is my favorite pastime. I use it for connecting with friends, exploring new places, and, when I venture out on my own, I use it as a time for thinking and problem solving. But using my bike as an alternative form of transportation hasn’t returned just yet. I know that I should and I could, but I don’t.

Do you? Please inspire me by reaching out with your story and helping me break the old habit of using my car to get where I need to be... Or reaching out just to say hi! 🥰

Share your story with me at president@bikemaine.org.

Tina West

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Sometimes, You Need to Shorten the Trip

BY JOHN S. WILLIAMS

THE PACK OF FREE-RANGE CHIHUAHUAS started nipping at my heels two miles into a bike ride from downtown Tucson to the San Xavier del Bac Mission a few years ago. Try as I might, I could not outpace them. For some reason, they had no interest in my wife’s ankles, but they thoroughly enjoyed yipping and nipping at mine, before eventually turning around to wait for their next victim.

I had a bike ride planned for every day of our week-long trip—this was Day 1, and I thought we would warm up with a 22-mile out-and-back. My wife, Nancy, thought we should warm up by the pool with a cup of coffee in our hands. I insisted that the ride would be great, and assured Nancy that we would be back in town for lunch.

Not wanting to stir up the little terrors once again, I now needed to convince Nancy, who is always skeptical of my plans, that rather than go back as we came, we could turn the ride into a 50-mile loop through Saguaro National Park. “It’s an even better plan,” I reassured her, “and we will still be back for cocktail hour.”

After my third flat of the day, we were out of spare tubes and walked the last four miles back to town in darkness. Nancy changed my plans for Days 2-7. Her modifications made all the remaining rides shorter, and, I must admit, more enjoyable.

Very few of my bike trips go as planned ...

Mechanical problems have threatened to shorten some of my trips, but I have found ways around them. Duct tape does not work well to reattach your pedal to the crank when the threads are stripped and the pedal falls off, but it allowed me to complete the ride. When my shifter lever snapped off, I learned how to ride a fixie, and the hills didn’t seem that much worse. But this spring I hit a mechanical issue that really did shorten my trip.

This one did not involve a bike ride, but my job. As you may have heard, I had cardiac bypass surgery in April. The team at Maine Medical did a great repair job fixing my mechanical problem, and I thought I had once again found a way to keep riding. And in one sense I have—pedaling more than 1,000 miles in the past two months—but what the surgeons could not do was fix my desire to take some time for myself. In September, I stepped down as Executive Director of the Bicycle Coalition.

So far, I am as busy as ever, working part-time, helping a bike-ped committee in Damariscotta, and catching up on house projects I could not do while commuting to Portland. I have also resumed planning my next bike trips. The first one, a four-day trip in Quebec’s Eastern Townships, followed my usual pattern when it was cut short by a nor’easter. In December, Nancy and I are off to Arizona, and next spring, I plan to join a friend on part of the Northern Tier Route.

The Bicycle Coalition has been a great place to work, even if it was for a shorter ride than planned. Thank you all for helping me lead the BCM through the yipping Chihuahuas over the past two years as we made Maine better for walking and cycling. ☺
TEAMING WITH THE TREK
BY ELIZA CRESS

EACH YEAR ON FATHER’S DAY WEEKEND, the American Lung Association hosts the Trek Across Maine—a multi-day cycling event that supports the organization’s efforts to save lives by raising awareness and funds to improve lung health and prevent lung disease. Over the last 35 years, the event has raised more than $29 million dollars, annually sees upwards of 1,500 participants, and relies on nearly 700 volunteers.

In 2019, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine and Trek Across Maine established a partnership to promote the event and call attention to the education and advocacy work that the BCM does all year long to make Maine better for biking and walking. Because the Trek Across Maine is hosted on Maine roads—starting and ending at the Brunswick Landing with overnight stops at Bates College in Lewiston and Colby College in Waterville—the BCM sees the partnership as a great opportunity to share its mission with a captive audience.

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through research, education, and advocacy. The BCM is the leading statewide organization doing education and advocacy work to improve conditions for bikers and walkers, and also shares a goal of keeping people healthy. We believe that the nature of this partnership is mutually beneficial and are confident that together we are creating safer and more enjoyable experiences for cyclists in Maine. 😊

Registration for the 2020 Trek Across Maine is now open! Learn more at action.lung.org.
WRAPPING UP THE MAINE WOODS RAMBLER

BY ERIK DASILVA

THE FIRST-EVER MAINE WOODS RAMBLER was a celebration of bicycles, good people, and adventure in the Maine woods. One hundred people of all ages and on bikes of all types rode a collective 3,314 miles through some of the most remote forest in our beautiful state. Some participants commented that they saw only one motor vehicle, many reported having seen none at all. That was of course the goal of this event: to provide folks a fully supported opportunity to travel an area well off the beaten path.

As you read about in Pamela Fischer’s letter earlier in this issue, the Rambler marks the beginning of an awesome partnership between the Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM) and the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC). AMC’s Medawisla Lodge stood as the centerpiece of the event, a place for people to bed or camp for the night, sip a hot beverage, relax on the lakeside beach, or enjoy the wood-fired spa. The lodge’s staff expanded their typical 5-star breakfasts and dinners to feed the hungry appetites of visiting cyclists and ensured that every detail was attended to.

The BCM developed three routes of varying challenge: 30km, 50km, and 100km. All routes included beautiful views of the surrounding streams, lakes, and mountains. The terrain was 100-percent non-paved and ranged from narrow woods trails to wide-open vistas on gravel roads. A few participants lucked out with moose sightings, and one rider mentioned seeing eight of them in a single meadow!

We’d like to extend a big thanks to all the amazing volunteers who came out for this event! We had nearly 20 volunteers from both AMC and BCM that ensured a nearly flawless inaugural ride. Volunteers helped with the four food and water stations, registration, route-flagging, and more. These folks topped off the A+ team that made this event possible.

Better yet: thanks to all who supported this ride in any way; it was a pleasure spending the last days of autumn leaf-peeping weather with you.

This will become an annual event, so stay tuned for details regarding the 2020 Maine Woods Rambler. We’ll be working to increase capacity so everyone can return and bring some friends, too.

Until then, keep the pedals turning!

“Sending a big THANK YOU to you and your team for organizing such a great ride. It provided a new experience for me with a bit of a challenge on a beautiful route. Hope to do it again with you next year.” — Marcy, Lyndeborough, NH
“It was so much fun to be part of a joyous crowd of cyclists and volunteers, all of whom truly enjoy the backcountry experience ... We made new friends and heard repeated pleas for this to become an annual event!” —Pamela, BCM

“You guys did an awesome job ... let me know when you open registration for next year.” —Tim, Owls Head, ME

“Thanks for helping to organize such a great ride. It was as gorgeous as it was challenging. It also had the best vegan options of any ride I’ve ever done.” —Dave, Ellsworth, ME

“Thank you for putting together such a great outdoor event at Medawisla ... It was nice to see everyone came across the finish line with a smile on their face! Many people commented they would sign up for next year right then and there if they could. People raved about the food and friendly staff/volunteers.” —Genevieve, AMC

“Smiles were everywhere ... this felt so different than other group rides.” —Kierie, BCM
ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2019, Mt. Abram hosted OktoberFest. While attendees did have the opportunity to enjoy libations late that afternoon while listening to live music, that wasn’t the main attraction.

The reason for the celebration? The long-awaited preview of three new mountain bike trails built over the summer as part of Mt. Abram’s initiative to provide greater riding opportunities in western Maine. The three trails are the first of several that will ultimately make up the mountain’s bike park. Starting early next June, Mt. Abram plans to provide lift access to this brand new trail network.

While Mt. Abram knew they had a great deal of local support, no one anticipated the number of attendees or the outpouring of support they received that Sunday. Over the course of the seven-hour event, the new trails were visited by more than 700 mountain bikers from across Maine and beyond.

Even more astounding was the age range of participants. That day, I got to take a lap with my friend Preston, who is five years old, and also met a woman named Susan, who was riding singletrack for the first time at the age of 62.

Because bicycle lift access is not yet available at Mt. Abram, a wonderful group of volunteers shuttled riders to the trailheads from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. that day, so participants of all abilities could enjoy downhill riding. Riders could also choose to pedal up a service road, about a 15-minute climb, to access the trailheads.

There was an overwhelming feeling of community and excitement throughout the day of family fun, with the backdrop of peak foliage ranging from red to gold. The enthusiasm and enjoyment surrounding Mt. Abram’s new downhill trails was palpable, it certainly has everyone anxiously awaiting the completion of Mt. Abram’s bike park, and the development bodes well for the growth of Maine’s MTB amenities in the future! 😊
BEING IN THE MIDCOAST FOR BIKE MAINE 2019 naturally conjured up images of the ocean, lighthouses, and seafood—the Maine that people from away picture in their minds. But a new reality quickly became the unofficial theme for this year’s ride: hills!

No one said that biking in the Midcoast would be easy, but riders really worked for their food (and beverages) with some of the toughest elevation gains and longest climbs in BikeMaine history. They were rewarded though, not only with tasty meals each day, but also with plenty of the aforementioned amazing water views, hospitality, and mostly clear weather.

The ride began and ended in Waterville, where we were generously granted the newly redesigned Head of Falls Park to call home. Although rain fell overnight, the first morning brought friendly skies, and also one of the steepest riding days.

The route skirted the Kennebec River and China Lake, before riders were welcomed with a hearty make-your-own-grain-bowl lunch at Palermo Consolidated School—the surprise lunch hit of the week!

The BikeMaine tradition of camp night continued on Sunday, this time at Alford Lake Camp in Hope, one of the oldest girls summer camps in the world. After a big opening day, riders relaxed in the woods, and some even took advantage of Alford Lake for a brisk swim. Many riders conga-lined their way back to their tents that evening, thanks to BikeMaine’s first ever klezmer band performance by the Casco Bay Tumblers.

The Midcoast region has so much to offer both on and off your bike.

The Midcoast region has so much to offer both on and off your bike.
We got the tough days out of the way early this year, as Day 2 saw a nearly 70-mile ride to Damariscotta. To get there, we turned to the coast and the Pemaquid Peninsula—home to some of the earliest and most embattled frontier settlements in New England. And these days, numerous lighthouses dot the ragged coastline.

Riders were greeted by serene views of the Damariscotta River and enjoyed strolls by the banks to see ancient oyster shell middens at our home for the night, Round Top Farm. The historic barn onsite was the perfect location for the Portland Bach Experience to delight riders with short and intimate pieces by their string quartet.

The route turned east to Rockland the next day, and lunch being only two miles away from the starting line didn’t stop anyone from enjoying a heaping strawberry shortcake “snack” at Beth’s Farm Market. Bellies were doubly full after a BBQ lunch at the Warren Masonic Lodge, and legs were sore as this ride challenged the cyclists with more climbs and curvy descents down Shore Road in Nobleboro, and into Rockland Harbor for our rest day.

Now on the coast, riders used the layover location to get out on the water. Local guides took them kayaking and sailing, while others took to the streets of downtown (safely, with the aid of our temporary bike lane installation as part of an Imagine People Here demo) or tried their hand (and feet!) at a BCM-led mountain bike excursion at the Camden Snow Bowl.

Local flavor abounded during tours of the Sail Power and Steam Museum next to the BikeMaine village, and also from our annual lobster dinner. In a BikeMaine first, we were presented with the key to the City of Rockland!

From there, the route wound up the coast along Penobscot Bay, where we stayed two nights at Steamboat Landing, in the heart of downtown Belfast. Riders saw their third lighthouse of the week (Curtis Lighthouse), stretched their legs, had a feast for the eyes at the beautiful Beech Hill Preserve, and rode by nearly a dozen state and local preserves.

From there it was all downhill into Belfast, where we spent two evenings thanks to a loop ride. On the first night, riders gathered in the crisp evening air for another BikeMaine tradition—the Maine Outdoor Film Festival—after a filling dinner of fish cakes and roasted pork at the United Farmers Market of Maine.

The meditative, forested route on Day 6 went up to Monroe and back down Swan Lake on some freshly paved roads. Riders learned a thing or two about the making of apple ladders at our rest stop, and had cookie sundaes in the sun during lunch at the Monroe Community Church before arriving in Belfast and exploring the town over the next two days.

The busy week flew by as we rolled away from the coast and over more hills, turning towards farm-lined roads to connect back to our starting point in Waterville. Riders had different water views as they crossed the Sebasticook River—home to many threatened and endangered species, and a fishing weir that predates the pyramids of ancient Egypt! The rain held off until riders crossed Two Cent Bridge and enjoyed their wood-fired pizza lunches, signaling the close of BikeMaine 2019.

The Midcoast region has so much to offer both on and off your bike. It’s a wonderful introduction to Maine for first-time visitors, and a real pleasure for Mainers looking to dive deeper into the sights and tastes of the region.

We owe so much to the weeklong and local volunteers without whom BikeMaine would not be possible, and wish to extend an enormous thank you to the communities for hosting us, the farms for feeding us, and the schools for being open to bike safety education along the route.

Whether you’ve pedaled with us before or are looking to try BikeMaine for the first time, we hope you’ll join us for another unique trip in 2020—a Katahdin Odyssey (or “Katahdyssey,” if you will)—in a rugged and largely untapped part of the state.
THE (KATAHDIN) KIDS ARE ALRIGHT

BY CARILYNN HANSON

LOADING A BUS with enough camping gear for eight students and two chaperones at 6 a.m. in front of Katahdin Middle High School in Stacyville, Maine, was just the beginning of a collaborative effort between the Katahdin Learning Project and the Bicycle Coalition of Maine in 2017.

Previously, Kala Rush, an educator at Katahdin Middle High School, was beginning a groundbreaking curriculum of outdoor education when she was approached by the Bicycle Coalition of Maine looking for a “tent and porter” crew. Kala, always up for a challenge, began the process of putting together a team of students to meet the challenge head on. She partnered with me, a fellow teacher at Katahdin Middle High School who takes pride in providing quality, place-based learning opportunities. The collaborative effort between two great communities began, along with a friendship that has grown stronger over the last three years.

BikeMaine’s annual ride typically takes place in the second week of September, starting on a Saturday and ending the following Saturday. The event consists of 450 riders from across the United States and other countries—of those riders, about 80 individuals or pairs opt for the tent and porter service. To clarify, the object of the tent and porter crew is to ensure that these riders have their tents and luggage ready for them when they complete their daily ride.

The 2017 ride was in the western part of Maine, a place our kids hadn’t ever been, and it required doing something they had never done before. Under the guidance of former Bicycle Coalition of Maine Event Coordinator Rob Mueller, 80 tents were set up in the first local community and luggage bags that were heavier than some of our kids were trolleyed from the back of a travel truck and secured in the tents.

There wasn’t much sound in our camping area that night. The next morning, we took down those tents, headed to our next destination, and prepared to do it all over again for six more days.

2019 was the third year of the collaborative effort between the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters, and Katahdin Middle High School. A total of 27 students comprised the tent and porter crew this year, with me taking the lead, and BikeMaine 2019 shaped up to be better than ever before.

The difference this year was the communication between the cyclists and our team. We became part of the BikeMaine community—not just as a group of volunteers, but as participants and equals. The students were known by name, not just as the “kids carrying the luggage.” The fact that this was the best year yet was evident by the smile on each student’s face when they were invited into breakfast and dinner conversations. Students continued learning after their work was complete through exploration of the area and during educational lessons.

This partnership has benefitted each participant in a different way. Followers have become team leaders, and bonds have been created between students and chaperones. Knowing and understanding the true meaning of responsibility and taking pride in who you are as an individual and what you are capable of doing has been an invaluable asset at Katahdin Middle High School. The tent and porter crew walk with pride when they return, and those who didn’t have a support system now have one.

In 2020, BikeMaine will pass through the Katahdin Region—our home—and a team will return to set up the tent community and carry luggage once again.

Because of the willingness and hard work of the teacher-chaperones, each student is given this opportunity, yet the credit should really be given to the students. Their desire to work hard and become a service-learning volunteer helps make Maine and each location a better place. The riders are able to explore, share their experiences with others, and help revitalize the economy of individual communities as a result. And, in turn, the students receive valuable work experience and become familiar with responsibility, public speaking, and learning through hands-on activity.

Most importantly: they become part of a team, and this is an experience that won’t be forgotten.
I recently returned from visiting a friend in Copenhagen, Denmark, and now I know what heaven looks like.

Heaven looks like 40,000 bike commuters crossing a single bridge every day. It looks like a mom pushing her three children in a cargo bike. (Who needs a minivan?) It looks like crush-worthy vintage cruiser bikes with leather accessories, bike commuters riding in the rain while carrying umbrellas, and 237 miles of dedicated, separated bike lanes. Heaven is also the terrified thrill I felt while riding in rush-hour bike traffic in central Copenhagen, where there are more bicycles than cars.

Initially feeling distraught at how far ahead Denmark is, I comforted myself thinking about how Maine is too spread out and rural to even compare. But then my friend brought me outside Copenhagen one day, where I noticed a completely separated bike lane running parallel to the country road we were traveling.

“Oh yeah,” my friend said, “these bike paths run along pretty much every road here.”

She wasn’t lying: according to the Cycling Embassy of Denmark, there are more than 7,000 miles of dedicated bike paths across Denmark. Swoon.

Since returning to Maine, I’ve done a lot of reflecting about how we could be more like the die-hard Copenhageners. Obviously we’re working with two very different sets of infrastructure, but a cultural shift has to start somewhere. The more of us that commute by bicycle, the more normalized bike commuting will become, and the safer we’ll all be. As with any societal shift, a bigger change can be made by a lot of people participating a little, rather than by a few people participating a lot. Imagine how much gas we would save as a state if everyone commuted by bicycle just once a week!

On a personal level, I know that making the transition to bike commuting can be intimidating. When I started biking to work at the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, it took me a while to figure out the logistics, even though my commute is short. I had to find the most comfortable route, figure out how to carry my lunch without spills, remember to charge my bike lights, etc. One thing is true, though: I always have more fun getting to work when I ride my bike.

Here at the Coalition, we’d love to see more people commuting by bike, and we want to help! Does your employer encourage you to bike to work? Does your workplace have bike racks or bicycle storage? Is there a place to shower? We’d love to talk to you about ways to incorporate bike commuting into your life, and how to make your workplace more bike-friendly.

The Bicycle Coalition offers “Lunch and Learn” presentations to our business members that cover topics ranging from bike commuting logistics, to riding safely in traffic, to our popular “Be Your Own Bike Mechanic” sessions. We’ll even help develop bike routes to your offices from a variety of locations. Sometimes a little information and encouragement is all it takes.

Although Maine won’t be like Copenhagen anytime soon, there’s a lot we can all do to move us a little bit closer. And on the mornings that I wake up and don’t really feel like biking to work, I’ll try to channel the woman I saw in Copenhagen carrying four large Ikea boxes in her cargo bike. And she still had to put together all that furniture! 😊

For more information about business memberships, email mariah@bikemaine.org
COMPETITIVE COMMUTING

Bring It On at Your Workplace!

BY SARAH CUSHMAN
“I’ve learned that I can do this, even at my older age—so anyone can do this.”

“DON’T FORGET TO PACK YOUR UNDERWEAR,” recommended Evelyn Clark, who commutes by bike from South Portland to her job at Hannaford in Scarborough.

Once again this past October, commuters from employers across Maine competed to take the most green trips to work for the Way 2 GO MAINE Business vs. Business Challenge. This fun, free, month-long event encourages Mainers to try commuting to work in a “green” fashion, including walking, bicycling, taking the bus or train, carpooling, and telecommuting rather than driving alone. “The Challenge” is also an opportunity to celebrate those who already get to work another way.

Clark isn’t the only participant eager to offer tips and inspire others through photos and stories from their commutes.

“I’ve learned that I can do this, even at my older age—so anyone can do this,” shared Julie Swann of Brunswick, a Way 2 GO Point Person who no longer owns a car and walks and bikes to the Bowdoin College Museum of Art.

“My walk is 20 minutes,” Swann added. “This will give me more exercise in winter, especially when I can’t bike, so I have to walk. And there are many joys to biking or walking, as one notices more along the way.”

October 2019 was the third year of the Challenge run by GO MAINE, a program of the Maine Turnpike Authority and MaineDOT with a mission to support healthy, economical, and eco-friendly ways to get to work.

“Way 2 GO MAINE can make your commute—often dull, expensive, and stressful—into something fun and different,” said GO MAINE Coordinator Rebecca Grover. “Plus, we can spread the word about our services, including a year-round rewards program for commuting another way, the Emergency Ride Home benefit, and our online carpool matching service.”

“The Challenge is a fun community of people at my office and elsewhere,” said Patricia Collins of Windham, an active Way 2 GO MAINE member who has biked to her job in Portland and also does four 10-hour work days to reduce her drive-alone trips. “I get a sense of comradery, even without knowing everyone involved.”

GO MAINE’s offerings and the Challenge are important as well for the state’s ambitious goals to reduce greenhouse gases. Fifty-four percent of Maine greenhouse emissions are from transportation sources, the largest percentage of those coming from light duty passenger cars and trucks. And while commuting trips are not the only way we use our automobiles, they are the biggest use at 30 percent of the pie.

Forty-nine employers registered for 2019. Way 2 GO MAINE hosts three races and an online leaderboard is updated daily for participants to track their progress among Most New GO MAINE Members (employers who sign up the most people), Most Greener Trips (the most folks taking green commutes), and Most Team Spirit (photos, videos, and stories employers post to show enthusiasm via social media).

“Get Help from GO MAINE offers free services year-round to support your trip to work:

- Get discounts, prize drawings, & other rewards for walking, bicycling, carpooling & telecommuting to work
- Get an Emergency Ride Home, a free authorized taxi or Enterprise car rental in case of illness, family crisis, unscheduled overtime, etc.
- Find a carpool or vanpool: new software, quick registration, & mobile apps make it easier than ever

Learn more and sign up at gomaine.org

“There are many joys to biking or walking as one notices more along the way.”
In addition, weekly prizes are drawn randomly for individual participants—such as $100 to spend at Reny’s. For 2019, GO MAINE added a weekly drawing based on commute type. For example, for Week 3, those who had recorded at least one walking trip were entered to win a gift card to New Balance.

Bangor Savings Bank was a new workplace participant this year. “GO MAINE was great to work with, they made it easy for us and for our employees to participate in the Challenge,” shared Kate Rush, director of community relations.

“Walking to work every day guarantees me some dedicated, mindful time, which helps me mentally set the table for the day ahead,” said Chris Michaud, a Bangor Savings staffer and new GO MAINE member who commutes on foot daily to the bank’s waterfront headquarters overlooking the Penobscot River. “I get to listen to my music, enjoy the outdoors, and clear my head before a busy day. It’s also great exercise!”

Wellness is echoed by Brian Edwards, a Challenge participant who travels from Raymond to his job in Gray by bike or carpool: “It provides a chance to exercise in a time that would normally be wasted in a car.” As a bonus, Edwards said he also commutes across a frozen lake via fatbike on snowmobile trails in the winter.

Being more physically and mentally prepared for the work day are common themes among participants—and valued by employers. Workplaces also appreciate the teamwork nature of the Challenge. “We had fun, and it built staff morale,” said Ellen Grant, Chief Operations Officer for Gulf of Maine Research Institute, during a previous Way 2 GO MAINE. “The challenge got people thinking about their own commuting, and people sought out different ways to get to work.”

“And then we got competitive!” Grant added. “We really wanted to win and people rallied. People were really excited that we won the two races for our size category. It was definitely a team-building activity!”

While encouraging competition, Way 2 GO MAINE is not an “all-or-nothing” endeavor, but an inspiration to try something once—or maybe one to two times a week. Christine of South Portland commutes another way to her job at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute a couple times per month.

“As a parent of two little ones, between things like day care drop-offs and pick-ups, it’s often hard to commute a greener way; I am sure there are lots of parents that feel that way,” Christine shared. This is often made more complicated when her husband, who is a merchant mariner, is away for work.

“One thing I’ve found is that those days where it can work to bike, bus, or carpool, I have to really give myself that extra nudge to do it,” she added. “The Way 2 GO MAINE Challenge and our staff champion are awesome little nudges. Whenever I make it work to go the greener way, I celebrate it. When I don’t, I don’t beat myself up. I remind myself that when the kids are older, I can be the regular bike commuter I want to be.”

“Walking to work every day guarantees me some dedicated, mindful time, which helps me mentally set the table for the day ahead.”

**Going the Distance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
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<tr>
<td>Calories Burned</td>
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Patrick Downing of North Berwick recommended starting small “and build[ing] up to your comfort level.” Downing is one of the Point People for Way 2 GO Maine at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery and commutes by bicycle or e-bike four to five times per week. “An e-bike has a very small carbon footprint but still allows a workout to the level you control,” Downing added.

“Just commit to doing it once and then when you can,” said Brian Edwards. “Once you get started, it is easier than you think.”

John Brooking of Westbrook, who happens to be a BCM instructor, has commuted by bike for years to his position at Sappi in South Portland. “Riding as an equal driver to motorists, using the same rules and being assertive of your space, is really the safest and easiest way to go,” Brooking said. “It’s worth taking a class such as CyclingSavvy or Smart Cycling to gain knowledge and confidence.”

“Get equipped,” was the advice from Chris Michaud, who walks. “Good sneakers are a must. Invest in a high-quality umbrella; this will help keep you going on those days when it’s just a light drizzle. A good backpack can help you carry things like your lunch, clothes, or other important items.” Bike lights and other rain gear are also key.

“Even when it gets colder, it’s really not that bad,” said Rick Harbison, a Way 2 GO MAINE Point Person who drops his daughter off at daycare by bike and then heads to his job at the Greater Portland Council of Governments. “If you can go cross-country skiing, or snowshoeing, or downhill skiing all day, there’s no reason you can’t bike to work. You just need to layer up.”

Of course, at the end of it all, there are the Way 2 GO MAINE winners! For 2019, these were:

**Most New GO MAINE Members:**
- XXL Organization - University of New England (Winner in 2018)
- XL Organization - Bowdoin College
- Large Organization - Bangor Savings Bank
- Medium Organization - Coastal Enterprises, Inc.
- Small Organization - VETRO FiberMap

**Most Greener Trips:**
- XXL Organization - Maine Medical Center/MaineHealth (Winner in 2018 as well)
- XL Organization - Tyler Technologies (Winner in 2017 & 2018)
- Large Organization - CIEE
- Medium Organization - Gulf of Maine Research Institute (Winner in 2017 & 2018)
- Small Organization - VETRO FiberMap

**Most Team Spirit:**
- University of New England
“GO MAINE made a donation in the name of the winning employers to the Maine Cancer Foundation’s Access to Care Program, helping people get to their cancer treatments,” Grover said. “So, employers are doing good twice, by participating in Way 2 GO and also by winning.”

“Plus,” she added with a smile, “They’ll receive a framed award and have bragging rights.”

The statewide benefit is in the numbers. 17,245 greener trips were taken during the Challenge in 2019 and 626 new members signed up (GO MAINE has 8,532 members statewide). 25 percent of trips were on foot, 17 percent by bike, and 24 percent via public transportation, which of course involves walking or biking to and from the bus or train. In all, Way 2 GO MAINE participants saved 10,028 gallons of gas, $129,728, and burned 743,810 calories.

“We’re thrilled to have so many returning and new businesses compete this year,” Grover gushed. “And Maine is a big state. We’re excited to make it even bigger next year.”

Meanwhile, participants look forward to the 2020 Challenge, too. “It’s a fun little nudge to get on my bike instead of getting in the car,” shared Christine of GMRI. “It’s a competition, but it’s also a celebration of the efforts we are all making to be greener.”

What about your workplace—have you participated in Way 2 GO MAINE? If not, here’s your challenge to join in 2020. Register at gomaine.org/Programs/Way-2-GO-MAINE

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Quick Tips for Commuting

Convert almost any bike into a commuter by wearing a backpack and carrying a lock. We suggest getting a bike with fenders, racks, baskets or storage bins (front or back), or even a coffee-holder. Even with repairs and accessories, a used bike can cost as little as $200.

Pannier bags hang on your racks and enable you to carry your briefcase, laptop, lunch, extra clothes, groceries, and more. You can also use trailers for larger loads!

Fenders can stop water, mud, and anything else from being splashed onto your clothes.

Bike lights are an easy way to become more visible—day or night.

Dress “bright and tight” for visibility, and in layers that enable you to adjust how warm/cool you are. In cold weather, dress warm, but remember you might work up a sweat. Bring a change of clothes for longer commutes, and to help with perspiration, consider keeping a container of wet wipes at your destination.

Organize with fellow workers to get showers, bike parking and storage, and commuter tax credits.

To inspire your colleagues, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine offers worksite trainings on bike safety, choosing bikes and accessories, and improving facilities to support bike commuting.

Be sure to plan your route, follow the rules of the road, and have fun!
MOTHER LOAD
A CARGO BIKE MOVEMENT ON THE RISE

BY ELIZA CRESS
Cargo bikes, designed specifically for passengers or heavy loads, have been imagined, designed, and put to use out of necessity in locations all across the globe.

In 2008, Liz Canning gave birth to twins. It wasn’t long after having her babies that she began to feel isolated and disconnected from her community. The need for a car to transport her children and accomplish daily tasks became mundane, as well as personally and environmentally unsustainable. Seeking an alternative, Liz searched Google for a “family bike” and discovered the cargo bike. Cargo bikes, designed specifically for passengers or heavy loads, have been imagined, designed, and put to use out of necessity in locations all across the globe.

Not long after discovering the cargo bike, Liz obtained one of her own and created a Facebook group to convene cargo bike owners, enthusiasts, and interested individuals that now make up the international cargo bike community. While many folks in the community will attest to the fact that the movement has not always been a strong one, “MOTHERLOAD” spotlights the current momentum behind cargo bikes as a means of viable transportation, sustainable business practice, disaster relief, and healthcare in a way that has not existed since the dawn of the motor vehicle.

But let’s take a step back.

**GETTING THE WHEELS TURNING**

One of the most prominent cargo bike companies in the United States is Xtracycles, which was founded back in 1997 by Ross Evan with a mission to empower people using transformational tools that move the body and spirit and reconnect them with the real world. Inspired by his experiences in war-torn Nicaragua during the mid-1990s, Ross, then an engineering student at Stanford University, designed and welded his first cargo bike in an effort to help local farmers more easily transport their goods to markets. This longtail cargo bike served as a practical tool for improving vitality and connectivity initially in Nicaragua but would ultimately serve as a catalyst in the global cargo bike movement.

Today, the folks at Xtracycles are self-proclaimed “edgerunners”—courageous people who care enough to fight for lasting positive change, have bucked the status quo, and are willing to do the hard work of aligning their actions with their values in order to build something of enduring beauty. Today, Xtracycles manufactures five different bicycles suited for various uses.

Another business built on the back of a cargo bike is Rock the Bike. Founded in 2003 by Paul Freedman, Rock the Bike is a company focused on making a lasting impact in the ongoing climate crisis through pedal-powered events and activities. Freedman’s belief that guilt trips are not the most effective way to inspire change propelled him to instead spread the positive “spirit of the bike” through entertainment, education, and engagement.

Since its inception, the Oakland-based Rock the Bike has worked with event planners to rent and provide activities and amenities like bicycle-powered blenders, ice cream makers, loudspeakers, charging stations, generators, and utility boxes—and they do all their deliveries via cargo bike. Rock the Bike is a cargo bike company making a statement about what is possible when committed to alternatives to fossil fuel.

**THROWING THE BRAKES ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

As CO2 emissions climb with our growing global dependence on fossil fuels, the frequency and severity of natural disasters will also increase. These disasters decimate communities and require tremendous relief efforts that are frequently inhibited by fuel shortages, clogged and damaged roads, electricity outages, and water and food scarcity.
Disaster Relief Trials, a movement and event established in 2012 by former FEMA employee Mike Cobb, aims to implement the cargo bike as an antidote for slow relief efforts in disaster-stricken areas. Aligned with the sentiments of the cargo bike movement, Cobb knows that the paradigm must be flipped so that bikes, specifically cargo bikes, are no longer seen as “toys” but rather as “tools.” Cargo bikes are light, small, and can be inexpensive, yet are highly capable of hauling big loads with relative ease. They operate efficiently without any power or sophisticated transportation infrastructure. They not only transport relief goods, but also people and messages.

The Disaster Relief Trial is a disaster drill in the form of cargo bike competition simulating a four-day supply run. The competition was born with two missions: to showcase the relevance of cargo bikes to disaster relief in a dramatically entertaining, authentic way, as well as to stimulate the development of technique and equipment for the most effective cargo bike-based relief. Over the last seven years, the event has influenced the way that cities plan for disaster relief and even inspired a change in official disaster protocol in Portland, Oregon.

**A MOVEMENT OF MOTHERS (AND GRANDMOTHERS)**

Perhaps the most joyous use of the cargo bikes belongs to those who use them for transporting other people. “MOTHERLOAD” features several mothers from around the world that have adopted cargo bikes as the primary mode of transportation for their families. While biking may seem to add more work to an already hectic daily schedule, the overwhelming response is that life outside of a car is quite simply more fun, and the extra energy is worth it, even energizing!

Stacy Bisker, a mother of four young children, describes the cargo bike as transforming daily tasks from “mundane to extraordinary.” Similarly, mother Emily Finch talks about the overwhelming joy of riding with her five kids through the pouring rain—an experience that should be miserable.

At the beginning of “MOTHERLOAD,” Liz Canning shares video footage of her young twins giggling with delight as they sit at the front of her cargo bike. Ole Kassow, founder of Cycling Without Age, refers to this joyous sentiment as “the right to wind in your hair.”

Cycling Without Age began in Copenhagen in 2012 as an organization dedicated to seeing the smiles and rosy cheeks of elderly passengers after a cargo bike ride full of adventure and stories. Cycling Without Age is currently represented in 42 countries, is made up of 1,643 chapters, operates 2,200 passenger-style cargo bikes, includes 29,270 trained pilots, and has served 114,000 passengers. There is no shortage of evidence throughout this documentary that the simple joy of a bike ride is ageless.

**CHASING HAPPINESS**

Canning’s intention with “MOTHERLOAD” was to make adults question what makes them happy and what makes them uncomfortable. It is clear that she and the members of the cargo bike movement are compelled to make their lives a little bit harder in order to live more joyfully.

The cargo bike movement is one for families, environmentally conscious businesses, climate change fighters, and those committed to living healthier lives. Liz says the biggest surprise following the release of “MOTHERLOAD” has been the deeply emotional response that audience members have had to the film—acknowledging how important it is to connect with your body and surroundings. The cargo bike movement is all about these connections, as well as the creation of more vibrant and resilient communities propelled by the joy of pedal power! 😊
COMMUTING REKINDLES MEMORIES OF MY YOUTH  
BY PATRICK GABRION

I FINALLY HAVE a job, albeit part-time, that’s located close enough for me to commute from home by bicycle. For me, this is a big deal.

While doing my best to lessen the impact on our planet Earth’s precious resources—recycling trash, utilizing reusable bags, and even paying more for clothing from retailers who practice my like-minded ethos—being unable to cycle to work never sat well with me.

Throughout most of my professional career, it just wasn’t practical. My last full-time job involved traveling nearly 35 miles each way. Because I had to arrive early, I would leave home in the dark. My responsibilities were deadline-driven every single day, so it was important to be on time. There was no room for error, so any bike trouble—even just a flat tire—wouldn’t have been in my favor. And to top all that off, my place of employment didn’t have showers.

But these are excuses I can now leave behind. I enjoy riding my bike so much that I even take the long way. While I could walk to work on the Kennebec River Rail Trail, which would be a mile-and-a-half in each direction, my cycling route ends up being seven miles roundtrip.

The benefits are many. The obvious ones include better health, both mental and physical; one less vehicle on the road; and the feel-good impact I receive because it’s the right thing to do. In addition, there is one other consequence linked to my youth that brings me much pleasure.

It occurs at work, where I often find myself glancing over at my bicycle. That trusty two-wheeled machine leaning against the wall, just waiting to take me home after an eight-hour day. It brings back memories of cruising on my bike to grade school in rural Michigan; a different type of commuting that I believe helped foster my love for riding.

I remember sitting in class, the anticipation building throughout the day; freedom was idling outside at my school’s lone bike rack. When the last bell sounded, I was more than eager to blast off on my bike. I couldn’t run fast enough to feast my eyes on my red and white Skyrider.

Jumping on the seat brought pure joy. Joining other kids who rode to school added to the merriment. Leaving behind those unfortunate schoolmates who had to wait for buses, we cranked our pedals so fast our legs could hardly keep up. We dashed through our little farming village, splintering off one-by-one as we each headed to our separate homes.

I lived on a gravel road, so avoiding small rocks and the vibrating chatter bumps was a constant battle. It was hard to pick up any speed, but it didn’t matter. I was on my bike, gliding past corn and bean fields as far as the eye could see. And I arrived at my house long before the bus that I wasn’t on.

I recall that old bike had wide tires, an oversized handlebar, full fenders, and a bulky, heavy frame—but I adored it. And what I was doing probably wasn’t readily referred to as commuting back in the 1960s; I was just riding a bicycle and having fun.

And where is my part-time gig that I now commute to two days per week? At a bike shop. How cool is that?!

Patrick Gabrion, a cyclist and blogger, lives in Hallowell, Maine. His passion for riding bicycles remains strong, and you can check out more writings on his cycling blog at www.pedal2page.com.
HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED the treat of having police officers stop car traffic so you can pedal through an intersection without braking?

One Saturday morning in June, cyclists in Sanford got the VIP treatment all morning long. Police managed traffic at five intersections, making possible an uninterrupted ride from one end of the city to the other—four miles altogether.

Not even Mrs. Mallard and her family got that kind of service.

Sanford Bike Fest attracted 150 riders on a rainbow of rigs: sleek bikes, beater bikes, antique cycles, BMXs, recumbents, fixies, and e-bikes. Kids were everywhere. The event was both a fun outing and a firsthand demonstration of the practicality of getting back and forth in town without a car.

And it all started with some spray paint, traffic cones, and string.

The idea was to improve Sanford’s cycling infrastructure and culture. We had started in a bad place. We’ve had six cyclists or pedestrians killed on Main Street in 30 years. Not only is bicycle infrastructure virtually non-existent, but until recently, the Sanford City Council was hostile to it—even going so far as instructing the MaineDOT against painting fog lines on Main Street. (I concede that fog lines are no substitute for bike lane striping, but any paint would have been an improvement.)

Despite the hazards, cyclists are here. We have two bike shops in town, an after-school bike repair program, and group rides posted weekly. We also have a pretty ideal street layout. The town is very linear, so a route parallel to Main Street accesses most destinations. A through route—a series of linked bike paths developed by the city’s trails committee—is nearing completion. The challenge would be to link it all up using quiet city streets in the downtown.

Enter the traffic-calming guerillas—citizen activists who use low-cost, temporary installations to create immediate changes.
Some things we learned along the way:

**IN CRITICISM, THERE MAY BE WISDOM.** Anger and frustration with Sanford City Council’s adamant opposition to bike lane striping on Main Street prompted new thinking. We came to appreciate the possibilities of an alternate through route, which accesses most destinations while also being better integrated with existing bike paths and neighborhoods. Utilizing quieter city streets holds the potential to invite greater use by less adventurous cyclists. We’re not giving up on Main Street, though.

**LITTLE CHANGES CAN HAVE AN IMMEDIATE IMPACT.** At the necked-down intersection, average car speed dropped by two miles an hour (from 30 mph down to 28 mph). That’s still dangerously fast in a downtown setting (the posted speed limit is 25 mph), but it was a noticeable improvement.

**THE PURPOSE OF TACTICAL URBANISM IS DISCUSSION AND REFINEMENT.** Sanford’s fire chief opposed any permanent change to tighten the downtown intersection as an obstacle to the turning radius of very large fire trucks. But the ensuing discussion was revealing. Both the fire chief and public works chief were open to instituting a four-way stop at that location—a proven traffic-calming intervention and a much less expensive fix. I call that a win.

**PAINT ON PAVEMENT IS INSUFFICIENT ON BUSY STREETS.** Unless you are a bold bike rider, people are not going to be persuaded to ride in traffic just because of some painted bike lanes or shared lane stencils. People need more than that to feel safe.

**PARKING-PROTECTED LANES ARE THE WAY TO GO IN DOWNTOWN AREAS.** Just as curbside parking makes sidewalks feel safer and better used, it can work wonders for cycling. Moving parallel parking spaces off the curb creates a lane for cyclists and shields them from moving cars. Portland is the first community in Maine to try it, and the city discovered that cyclists and car drivers adapted to the change on Park Avenue almost overnight, which was not at all expected. It’s amazing to me that it was never tried before because it’s so inexpensive. We’re following Portland’s lead.

**GOOD VISUALS EXCITE.** Thanks to a happy connection through the National Park Service, we received some pro bono design assistance from Aceto Landscape Architects. Their before/after comparison renderings of several streetscape scenes definitely wowed us into seeing our project as not just a quality-of-life improvement, but as community beautification, too.

**THERE’S NO SUBSTITUTE FOR A GREAT PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR.** Sanford Public Works Director Matt Hill not only embraced the goals of the Downtown Connector, but he’s rolled it into his road-building plan, which will be getting a huge financial infusion thanks to the road bond approved by voters in November. We are so lucky.

**NOTHING BUILDS SUPPORT LIKE DIRECT EXPERIENCE.** Getting people to discover the new route would be a challenge. We organized an event that would close city streets, necessitating the barricading of a dozen side streets and hiring police officers to manage cross-traffic at five intersections. We worried about a backlash from angry car drivers, but it never came. Instead, we basked in the smiles and exclamations of people experiencing their community in a brand new way. 😊

ABOVE Riders of all kinds enjoy the newly designed streets in Sanford.
CONGESTION COMPLICATIONS IN KITTERY

BY STEVE GERHARTZ

AFTER 40 YEARS IN THE WASHINGTON D.C. AREA, where traffic congestion is legend, we retired to Maine to enjoy the quiet, slower, less congested, and more gentle pace of life and outdoor activities, like riding our e-bikes in this beautiful part of the world.

Sometimes when out for a ride, I stop on the bridge on Route 236 as it crosses I-95 in Kittery. As I watch traffic crawl along, I can’t help but think, “It’s just like D.C.”

Kittery, often called “The Gateway to Maine,” is gaining the dubious distinction of having some of the worst vehicle traffic congestion anywhere in New England, and it doesn’t appear it will be getting better any time soon.

That’s not good news for area bicyclists or pedestrians, many of whom commute all year long in a variety of weather conditions.

During several months of the year, it’s not uncommon to see day-long traffic backups for miles on I-95 in both directions, pushing overflow traffic to alternate routes like US-1, Route 236, and Route 103, the latter of which winds narrowly along the coast and is enjoyed by a large number of bike riders and even pedestrians in some sections.

The bulk of the estimated 37 million annual visitors to Maine both enter and exit the state via I-95 across the Piscataqua River Bridge, which is now in the very early stages of a three-plus-year, multi-million dollar rehabilitation project.

Adding to this congestion are the 8,000-plus (and growing) daily commuters to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard—which is in the area known as Kittery Foreside, and not, as the name suggests, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

A recent study revealed that most of these 8,000 commuters are single individuals in cars, SUVs, or pickup trucks, and they often arrive at the base two hours before their 7:30 a.m. shifts just to find a parking space. When the shift ends at 2:30 p.m., the line of cars and trucks stretches from either of the two shipyard gates all the way to the Thresher Circle—nearly two miles away—where Route 236, US-1, and I-95 meet up.

Is there a way to reduce this congestion? Unfortunately, the current state of the local bike/ped infrastructure does not easily lend itself to alternative transportation, and talks about improving mass transportation or introducing shuttles have gone nowhere.

Additionally, it seems most regional, state, and local planning agencies continue to give bike/ped infrastructure and mass transportation improvements very low priority and very little funding, even though much is available.

Until there are major grass roots efforts to encourage projects like mass transit, separated bike/ped lanes, more and better signage to improve safety, sharrows to meld traffic in tight spaces like the Foreside, and other infrastructure that can help reduce the amount of traditional vehicle traffic, biking and walking Kittery’s roads will become less enjoyable and more dangerous than it already is.

If you would like to help solve this problem, please contact the Bicycle Coalition of Maine or Seacoast Area Bicycle Riders (SABR), two local non-profit bike/ped advocacy organizations. Ride safe!
ON MEMORIAL DAY IN 2019, my father and I went to the University of Maine at Orono to go on a biking trip. We parked at the New Balance Recreation Center on Hilltop Road in Orono, then got the bikes off of our car and started our trip. We went down the hill in front of the Recreation Center, then headed to the center of campus to the mall, to the right of the New Balance Field House. We were heading straight toward the Folger Library on the roadside of the mall.

Once we got to the parking lot of the library, I felt my father’s front tire skim the back of my tire. I looked back and saw him in the air heading headfirst toward the ground. I hit the brakes so hard that I almost went over the handlebars, and pretty much threw my bike on the ground and ran toward him. He was bleeding from his head because he wasn’t wearing a helmet. He said that he was fine at first, but when he tried to get up, he sat right back down.

I wasn’t hurt. I was wearing a helmet.

Luckily, there was a car driving by, and I was able to flag them down. They helped me contact the campus police and the ambulance by using a nearby call box on campus. I was on the phone with my mother the entire time, and she was trying to comfort me.

I went with my father in the ambulance to the hospital and he got treated at Eastern Maine Medical Center. He was able to go home that night. There wasn’t any long-term damage. When I went back with my mother to the crash site, I saw that neither of the bikes had sustained any damage at all.

In the weeks after, my father and I went out and bought a helmet so that if things like this happen again, he wouldn’t be in such bad shape. All three of us—my father, my mother, and I—talked about what happened and how we can keep things like this from happening again.

All of my family thinks that my father was either messing around or following way too close to me... or possibly both. No matter your skill level, you need to leave some room to make sure that if the person in front of you has an issue, they can stop safely and not cause an accident. I said that wearing a helmet would’ve helped keep him from getting to the condition that he did. We all agreed that ANYBODY, no matter their skill level or how well they think they can ride a bike, needs to wear a helmet, no matter what. We also went out to get my mother a helmet because she didn’t have one, either.

Jonah Bean is an eighth-grade student at Dedham School. He loves his bike and rides at least once every week.

He said that he was fine at first, but when he tried to get up, he sat right back down.
PHOTO: Jonah and his father pose with their bikes—and helmets!

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MAINE CYCLIST FALL/WINTER 2020 | 27
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The following individuals and businesses support the work of the Bicycle Council of Maine with annual memberships.

### YJC CHAMPIONS $5,000+
- Thomas + Evon Cooper, Seal Cove, Portland, OR
- Fritz + Susan Onion, Wayne, Scarborough

### YJC LEADERS $2,500+
- Jonathan Ayers, Scarborough, Portland
- Joan Cirillo + Roger Cooke, Portland, OR
- Dan Emery, North Yarmouth, West Vancouver, BC
- Jacob Heilbron + Heidi Castle

### YJC TEAM $1,000+
- Joseph + Susan Alexander, Falmouth, Cape Elizabeth
- Cindy Andrews + Thomas Whyte, Cumberland Foreside, South Portland, ME
- David + Susan Beattie, Eliot, ME
- Henry Beeuwkes + Margaret Mills, Saco, ME
- Paula + Stephen Birmingham, South Portland, ME
- Moe + Loraine Bisson, Brunswick, ME
- Bill + Marcy Black, Yarmouth, ME
- Ethan + Lauri Boxer-Macomber, Portland, ME
- Butler Conservation Fund, Great Neck, NY
- Anne Carney + David Wennberg, Cape Elizabeth, ME
- Alan Chebuske + Melissa Hewey, Portland, ME
- James + Susan Chlebowski, New Berlin, PA
- Phil Coffin + Susan Peck, Portland, ME
- Tom Cromwell, Wiscasset, Maine
- Robert Dawson + Evelyn Landry, Cape Elizabeth, ME
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- Pamela Fischer + Scott Spaulding, New Gloucester, ME
- Lisa Gorman, Yarmouth, ME
- Irwin Gross + Martha Fogler, Brunswick, ME

### YJC BUSINESS CHAMPIONS $5,000+
- L. L. Bean, Freeport, ME
- Maine Beer Company, Freeport, ME

### YJC BUSINESS LEADERS $2,500+
- Turning Point Cycle & Fitness Studio, Scarborough, ME

### YJC BUSINESS TEAM $1,000+
- Anderson Insulation, Saco, ME
- Frame Media Strategies, Portland, ME
- Kona Bicycles, Ferndale, ME
- Lipman & Katz, Augusta, ME
- Martin’s Point Healthcare, Inc., Portland, ME
- Ransom Consulting Engineers and Scientists, Portland, ME
- Scott & Sunny Townsend Team, Scarborough, ME

### BUSINESS MEMBERS $500+
- Atayne/VOMax, Brunswick, ME
- Basham & Scott, LLC, Brunswick, ME
- Maine Bay Canvas, Portland, ME
- Maine Integrative Dentistry, Portland, ME
- Naomi Mermin Consulting, Portland, ME
- New England Parkinson’s Ride, Merrimack, NH
- New Height Group, Portland, ME
- Press Hotel MT, LLC, Portland, ME
- Rand Dentistry, Brewer, ME

### BUSINESS MEMBERS $250+
- Berman & Simmons, Portland, ME
- Downeast Windjammer Cruise Lines, Cherryfield, ME
- John Dargis Associates, Inc., Bar Harbor, ME
- Kettle Cove Enterprises, South Portland, ME
- Legacy Properties Sotheby’s International Realty, Portland, ME
- Maine Integrative Dentistry, Portland, ME
- Naomi Mermin Consulting, Portland, ME
- New England Parkinson’s Ride, Merrimack, NH
- Rose Foods, Portland, ME

### BUSINESS MEMBERS
- Carpe Diem Tech Support, Brunswick, ME
- Galyn’s Galley, Bar Harbor, ME
- Terrence J. DeWan & Assoc., Yarmouth, ME
Business Members and Partners

MEMBER CLUBS
Casco Bay Cycle Club
Portland
cascobaycycleclub.org
Community Cycling Club of Portland
Portland
BikeCCCP.org
Kennebec Valley Bicycle Club
Mt. Vernon
KennebecValleyBicycleClub (Facebook)
Maine Coast Cycling Club
Kennebunkport
mainecoastcycling.com
Maine Cycling Club
Lewiston
mainecyclingclub.com
Merrymeeting Wheelers
Brunswick
merrymeetingwheelers.org
Portland Velo Club
Portland
portlandvelo.com

MEMBER BIKE SHOPS
Allspeed Cyclery and Snow
Portland
(207) 878-8741
Bar Harbor Bicycle Shop
Bar Harbor
(207) 288-3886
Bike Board and Ski
Presque Isle
(207) 769-2453
BNS Bike Shop
Portland
(207) 541-7438
Brad & Wyatt’s Island Bike Rental, Inc.
Peaks Island
(207) 766-5631
Central Maine Powersports
Lewiston
(207) 689-2345
CG Bikes
Belfast
(207) 218-1206
CycleMania
Portland
(207) 774-2933
Ernie’s Cycle Shop
Westbrook
(207) 854-4090
Fast & Happy Bicycles
Springvale
(207) 502-2280
Goodrich’s Cycle Shop
Sanford
(207) 324-1381
Gorham Bike & Ski
Saco (207) 283-2453
Portland (207) 773-1700
Brunswick (207) 725-1100
Kennebunk (207) 604-1136
Kingdom Bikes
Blue Hill
(207) 374-3230
L.L.Bean Bike, Boat & Ski Store
Freeport (877) 755-2326
Mathieu’s Cycle & Fitness
Oakland (207) 465-7564
Farmingdale (207) 582-0646
Pat’s Bike Shop
Brewer
(207) 989-2900
Port City Bikes
Portland
(207) 775-6125
Rainbow Bicycle & Fitness
Lewiston
(207) 784-7576
Rideable, Inc.
Cape Elizabeth
(207) 221-5151
Rose Bike
Orono
(207) 866-3525
Rusty Crank
Brunswick
(207) 844-8392
Ski Rack Sports
Bangor
(207) 945-6474
Slipping Gears Cycling
Bangor
(207) 307-7403
The Local Gear
Cornish
(207) 625-9400
Wildfire Human Powered Vehicles
Arundel
(207) 423-7360

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS
Adventure Cycling Association
Alliance for Biking and Walking
Appalachian Mountain Club
Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals
Bicycle Tour Network
Colorgraphics!
The Dempsey Challenge
Dero Bike Racks
East Coast Greenway
Eastern Trail
Friends of Acadia
League of American Bicyclists
MaineShare
Maine Association of Nonprofits
Maine Better Transportation Association
Maine Department of Transportation
Maine Farm and Sea Cooperative
Maine Office of Tourism
Maine Outdoor Brands
Maine Public Health Association
Maine Tourism Association
New England Mountain Bike Association
Penobscot Bay YMCA
People for Bikes
The Portland Gear Hub
Portland Trails
Rails to Trails Conservancy
Seacoast Area Bicycle Riders
Trek Across Maine
Youth Cycle Project
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEW MEMBERS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AARP Maine, Portland</td>
<td>Steve Gerhartz, Kittery Point</td>
<td>Donald Musacchio, Norfolk, VA</td>
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<td>Basham &amp; Scott, LLC, Brunswick</td>
<td>Richard Gilbane, Cape Elizabeth</td>
<td>Kirk Newcomb, Portland</td>
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<td>Karen Benbrook, Enterprise, OR</td>
<td>Seth Gill, Portland</td>
<td>Michael Nieman, Dover, NH</td>
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<td>Abe Borenstein, New York, NY</td>
<td>Peter Goldman, Portland</td>
<td>Michael Pateneaude, Standish</td>
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<td>Dennis Boyd, Damariscotta</td>
<td>Paula Greenlee, West Bath</td>
<td>Sandra Poole, Lincoln, MA</td>
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<td>Rene Braun, Windham</td>
<td>Thomas Hambrick, Portland</td>
<td>Eileen Purdy, Portland</td>
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<td>Sally Brown, York</td>
<td>Scott Hamilton, Falmouth</td>
<td>Sam Rinaldi, Scarborough</td>
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<td>David Burggraaf, Charlotte</td>
<td>Kristian Haralson, Brunswick</td>
<td>Carolyn Ross, Buxton</td>
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<td>Donald Cloutier, Exeter, NH</td>
<td>Nicholas Herold, Portland</td>
<td>Alice Shea, Portland</td>
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<td>David Connally, Tyngsboro, MA</td>
<td>Peggy Horner, Vassalboro</td>
<td>Mary Shea, Portland</td>
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<td>Joel Cooke, Rockland</td>
<td>James Houle, Scarborough</td>
<td>Christine Slusarek, Boulder, CO</td>
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<td>Josh Cridler, Portland</td>
<td>Stephen Huntress, Kittery Point</td>
<td>Legacy Properties Sotheby’s International Realty, Portland</td>
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<td>John Decker + Linda Shorey,</td>
<td>James Kurek, Bellbrook, OH</td>
<td>Jim Stano, Round Pond</td>
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<td>Harrisburg, PA</td>
<td>John Lappen, New Harbor</td>
<td>Jeff Stoddard, South Portland, ME</td>
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<td>Lauri Dugas, Scarborough</td>
<td>Jennifer Laurita, Airmont, NY</td>
<td>Christopher Tullman, Cape Elizabeth</td>
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<td>George Dunbar IV, Portland</td>
<td>Catherine Lee, Westbrook</td>
<td>Art Tumolo, Phippsburg</td>
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<td>Tomas + Mya Dundzila, Eliot</td>
<td>Tracy Libby, North Yarmouth</td>
<td>Cary Tyson, Westbrook</td>
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<td>Mary + David Dunn, South Portland</td>
<td>Lipman &amp; Katz, Augusta</td>
<td>Paul Vinsel, West Bath</td>
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<td>Peter Ellis, Portland</td>
<td>Margaret Littlefield, Cape Elizabeth</td>
<td>Tanya Willow, Norton, MA</td>
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<td>Vincent Falcone, Peterborough, NH</td>
<td>Alex Lyscars, Portland</td>
<td>Cal, Janet, + Brad Yates, Nobleboro,</td>
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<td>Matthew Faulkner, Cape Elizabeth</td>
<td>Ellen Mallory, Orono</td>
<td>Jerry Ann Yoder + James G. Good, Yarmouth</td>
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<td>Frame Media Strategies, Portland</td>
<td>Ian McAbee, York Beach</td>
<td>Shigeru K Yokoyama, Hallowell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tim Fuller, South Portland</td>
<td>Patricia McCaffrey, Auburndale, MA</td>
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AARP MAINE
A Yellow Jersey Club Business

FOUNDED IN 1958, AARP (formerly the American Association of Retired Persons) recently joined forces with the Bicycle Coalition of Maine as a Yellow Jersey Club Business. AARP Maine State Director Lori K. Parham took some time to chat with the Coalition about this new relationship.

What exactly does the AARP do?
AARP is a non-profit, non-partisan, social mission organization with 38 million members nationwide and around 230,000 in Maine. We advocate on behalf of people 50+ and their families on issues such as health and retirement security and livable communities. Regarding livable communities, we believe that communities should provide safe, walkable streets; age-friendly housing and transportation options; access to needed services; and opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in community life. In Maine, we are working with 69 communities and the State of Maine to support each entity’s efforts to become livable for all ages.

How does cycling and walking fit into the mission of the AARP?
Our members tell us time and again that they want to age in place in the communities they love. As the nation ages, Complete Streets or bike/ped planning presents an opportunity to increase the safety and availability of older adults’ travel options.

Why did you choose to partner with the Bicycle Coalition of Maine?
The Coalition has a strong history and reputation regarding advocacy and education on bike and ped issues in Maine. We view the Coalition as an important partner that will allow us to support the many communities across Maine that have joined our network of age-friendly communities. This collaboration allows AARP Maine to expand its reach while also supporting the mission of the Coalition.

What does the AARP/BCM partnership look like in 2020?
In 2020, we hope to build on our work from 2019 to offer joint advocacy training sessions through Community Spokes and implement tactical projects in up to five Maine communities that support bike and pedestrian safety. And look for AARP at BCM-sponsored events across Maine!

For more information, visit AARP.org.

At AARP Maine, we don’t limit our goals and dreams based on age. Find out more at www.aarp.org/me and @aarpmaine.

CYCLE ON!

AARPI 
Real Possibilities

Maine

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FROM MY CORNER of the office, it is probably not an overstatement to say that 2019 was one of, if not the, busiest year on the advocacy front for the Bicycle Coalition of Maine. Our work this year extended from the halls of the Maine State House to the streets of multiple communities in Maine. Here’s a recap of some advocacy highlights from 2019.

**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

The Coalition was very active in the legislature this year, tracking 33 bills that had implications for persons walking or bicycling, and providing written and/or in-person testimony on 18 bills.

The Coalition proudly supported passage of the ban on using electronic devices while driving (LD 165), which went into effect on September 19 and has been a focus of recent law enforcement efforts.

The Coalition also supported multiple bills that addressed funding for transportation infrastructure (LDs 778, 938, 990, 1034) and we consistently advocated for increases in the share allocated for bicycle and walking facilities. One outcome of this advocacy was my appointment by Gov. Janet Mills to a Blue Ribbon Commission to study and propose strategies for transportation funding. My role has thus far focused on reminding the group that bike lanes, sidewalks, and multi-use paths are, in fact, transportation infrastructure!

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The Coalition also supported revisions to the Traffic Movement Permit process, which assesses the impact that a development project may have on traffic in an area. The current rules require no consideration of bike/ped impacts, but the new rules will mandate that impacts on persons walking or bicycling be considered, and if necessary, mitigated. I have been invited by the MaineDOT to join the team rewriting the process rules, and I am pleased at how many of my suggested revisions have been included in the new working draft. This effort is an example of how the BCM is working to change the policy environment to make sure that the needs of all users—not just motorists—are considered when a construction project is expected to impact roadway traffic.

**ELECTRIC BIKES AND TRAFFIC SAFETY EDUCATION**

The Coalition also spearheaded the passage of two bills: LD 1222, the Act Concerning Low Speed Electric-Assist Bicycles, and LD 470, the Traffic Safety Education Act.

LD 1222, the Act Regarding Electric Bicycles, was sponsored by BCM Policy and Legislation Committee member and State Representative Deane Rykerson. The BCM’s effort was financially supported by People for Bikes, which reached out to the Coalition for assistance passing the law. The new law follows model legislation adopted by 20 other states and establishes three types, or “classes,” of electric-assist bicycles, as well as clarifying where they can be legally operated.

Class I (pedal-assist only) and Class II (pedal-assist or throttle) e-bikes have top motor speeds of 20mph. Class III (pedal-assist only) has a top speed of 28mph.

In addition, the law:

- Permits Class I and Class II e-bikes on all roads, road facilities, and shared-use paths (e.g. the Eastern Trail, Kennebec River Trail, Narrow Gauge, etc.) where normal bikes may ride unless a trail manager chooses to prohibit them. In other words, Class I and II e-bikes would be permitted everywhere a bicycle can be used unless they are explicitly banned.

- Prohibits Class III e-bikes from all single-track trails unless a trail manager chooses to permit them. In other words, e-bikes would be banned on single-track trails unless explicitly permitted by the trail manager.

For more info on e-bikes, please reach out to me at Jim@bikemaine.org.
The other bill the Coalition worked to pass was the Traffic Safety Education Act (LD 1222) sponsored by Policy and Legislation Committee member and State Representative Matthea Daughtry. This bill, which largely duplicated a similar bill the Coalition supported in 2017, requires that all Maine school students receive a minimum of four hours of basic instruction on how to safely walk and ride bicycles on Maine roadways.

Although the bill sailed through the committee and both chambers of the Legislature, a fiscal note of approximately $70,000 needs to be funded before the bill can become law. The bill has been “carried over” by the Appropriations Committee, and it will be up for consideration again in the Spring of 2020. Stay tuned to learn how you may be able to help move this critical educational bill across the finish line!

**ADVOCACY UPDATE**

In addition to the Coalition’s legislative efforts this year, the advocacy team pursued several other initiatives. Of particular note is some of the work that Advocacy Manager Angela King did this year, which resulted in information about the “Dutch reach” (opening a driver’s door from the inside with the right hand, helping the driver to look back and see if a bike rider is in the door zone) being included in the Maine Driving Handbook.

Angela followed up this success by looking into what the effect of lowering speeding fines had on the number of tickets issued—the hope being that police would issue more tickets if the fines were lower. Unfortunately, Angela’s investigation found that considerably fewer tickets have been issued in the year since the fine amounts were lowered. We are continuing to look into this situation, and expect to raise this issue with law enforcement in 2020 as part of a planned general campaign against speeding.

In addition to offering technical assistance and ideas on how to implement bike/ped supportive infrastructure changes in more than twenty communities across the state, the Coalition’s “Imagine People Here” demonstration program installed nine projects this year. This was the greatest number of projects installed since the program began in 2015. Projects this year included a nearly two-mile bikeway in Sanford; curb extensions in Brunswick, Berwick, and Bangor; and an ambitious half-mile-long traffic-calming installation on Route 115 in North Yarmouth.

This last project made a huge impact on speeding. Prior to the installation, 67 percent of drivers were speeding, but after the installation, 80 percent of drivers operated at or below the speed limit! Slower speeds improve the safety for all roadway users, and this demonstration project showed that significant reductions in speed can be achieved using low cost measures.

We are also proud to announce a new partner for the Coalition’s demonstration project work: Maine AARP! The overlap between the work AARP and the Coalition do around making streets safer and accessible to persons of all ages made this a natural partnership to pursue. Look for more Imagine People Here projects in Maine’s 65 AARP Age Friendly Communities during the coming year! Thanks for the support, and please stay involved! 😊
JOIN US! Supporting cyclist and pedestrian safety is heaps of fun — become a member today!

bikemaine.org/donate