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January 2008, No. 95
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SingleTracks

20th Anniversary Membership Drive
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(details on page 4)
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*Can also be sold as framesets*

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NEMBA, the New England Mountain Bike Association, is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization dedicated to promoting trail access, maintaining trails open for mountain bicyclists, and educating mountain bicyclists to use these trails sensitively and responsibly.

SingleTracks is published six times a year by the New England Mountain Bike Association for the trail community.

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Editor & Publisher: Philip Keyes
Contributing Writer: Jeff Cutler
Copy Editor: Nanyee Keyes
Executive Director: Philip Keyes
pk@nemba.org

NEMBA
PO Box 2221
Acton MA 01720
Voice 800.57.NEMBA
Fax: 717-326-8243
singletracks@nemba.org

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Oregon Mountain Bike Diaries
Gorges, rivers, mountains, beaches ... and plenty of singletrack, Oregon offers plenty of possibilities for offroad exploration. By Elizabeth Pell & Howard Granat

Pimp my 29er
What happens, you ask, when you take a stock 29er and throw a bunch of chi chi part at it? Find out here! By Jeff Palter

Paper Trail
Treadlines — 5
Member Profile — 16
Places to Ride — 22
SideTracks — 24
Basic Biking — 25
Chapter News — 26
NEMBA Rides — 34
Support our Sponsors — 39

SingleTracks Hey, get creative! We welcome submissions, photos and artwork. This is your forum and your magazine. Be nice, and share!

On the Cover: John Isch riding Bigelow Hollow in Union, Connecticut. Photo by Dawn Thompson

Have a pic that would make a good cover shot? Email it to pk@nemba.org

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WHY SKID?

Skidding means you’ve lost traction, and have reduced control. Trek’s new Active Braking Pivot (ABP) places the rear pivot concentric to the rear axle. This patent pending technology creates a bike with the most active suspension under high speed braking. The result - reduced skidding, more control, and better, more effective braking.

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NEMBA Awarded State Contract

NEMBA successfully bid on a Massachusetts’ state contract to provide trail construction and maintenance training for the Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR). The contract is open for the next three years.

On November 8th, NEMBA took part in the DCR’s first training session, along with instructors from the Student Conservation corps and Peter Jensen, a professional trail builder. Tom Grimble, Mike Tabaczynski and Philip Keyes, with help from Harold Green and Bill Boles, led an all day session at Harvard Forest in Petersham, with outdoor clinics held at Wendell State Forest.

DCR is fortifying its focus on trails as a major asset to the Commonwealth, and the training was part of a three-day symposium on trails in the state. NEMBA looks forward to providing any assistance needed to improving DCR capacity to maintain and build trails.

Help NEMBA Get Political

Do you have a passion for politics, mountain biking and trails?

NEMBA plans to set up a Governmental Affairs Committee (GAC), and we seek volunteers who are politically savvy and are looking for a way to get involved with NEMBA and improve mountain biking in New England.

While the final strokes of the committee haven’t dried, we are looking to assemble a small group of mountain bikers who would help NEMBA become more engaged at the local, state and federal level. The GAC would help track legislation that effects mountain biking and trails, identify and develop political allies at the local and state level, help educate legislators about the issues facing mountain bikers, and share this expertise with NEMBA’s chapters.

The GAC will be regionally focused, so we need volunteers from all over New England. The committee will be task-focused, with each member working on specific projects in his or her state. Most communication will be done via email and the occasional conference call.

So if politics is your passion and you wish to get involved, please contact Philip Keyes for details, pk@nemba.org or 800-576-3622.
The second Vietnam trail care day of 2007 was held on September 23. Approximately 15 people attended the event. The crew continued work on the TNT trail. The work included tuning the transition and exit berm on the "Donnie's Demise", continuing work on a berm/hip jump, and improving the transitions on the final two technical trail features. Work is not complete on the TNT trail and the final trail care day is scheduled for Sunday November 4, 2007. The Tuesday Night Trail Crew continued its work throughout the year on the DLS trail. The focus on DLS is on maintaining, tuning, and restoring the landscape around the trail. Dirt pits were filled and collapsed to preserve the natural look of the area. Trails were lined with rock walls to better define trails and to close the many trail braids. Plastic fencing was erected to eliminate traffic in re-vegetation areas. Unauthorized "rogue" building was discovered on what we think is NSTAR land on a feature known as the mushroom drop. The builder(s) brought in lumber and hardware to build a transition and jump. Eammon started a discussion on the BustedSpoke forum highlighting the issues with rogue stunts in the Upper Charles Headwaters Area.

Overall reaction has been very supportive and the thread has been educational to those unaware of building restrictions in the area. There is little progress in creating a trail map and intersection markers for the whole Upper Charles Headwaters Area. We will continue to work with the Holliston Town Forest Committee, Holliston Conservation Commission, and Milford Conservation Commission to create an Upper Charles Headwaters Trail Map and trail marking system. A volunteer has stepped up to help us create a vector map of the area. Overall 2007 has been a productive year.

—Vietnam Land Management Committee (Steve Barnes, Mike DeCristofaro, John Goeller, Don Johnson, Dave Mitchell, and John Vosburg)
The Medfield mountain bike youth program visited Vietnam in Milford for their final ride of the fall session. After enduring six weeks of cross-country riding on the local trails in Medfield, Sherborne and Dover, they hit the trails in ‘Nam and let loose. The ride began with some practice jumping, hucking and drops. Then they hit Dirty Little Secret and the fun began. The boys loved all the work NEMBA has put into the trail. They were ooohing and aaaaaahing over all the changes and the rock lined trail. Big air was to be had off many jumps along the way. The favorite spot of the day was the “step-up”. The boys spent about 45 minutes flying off the rocks and up the step-up! Three flat tires were the only casualties. The ride finished with a fast trip on the banked turns and down the trail by the cell tower. All the boys agreed it was the most fun they have had!

The Medfield Park and Rec department runs the Medfield Mountain bike program. It began six years ago and was offered to children in middle school. It expanded into to 9th and 10th grade, as the first group got older. The older boys then became paid assistant leaders. The program has successfully opened up the world of mountain biking to the Medfield youths. This year there were thirteen high school and eight middle school participants.

Mitch Bovarnick and Ash Burgess, two 10th graders who have been in the program for four years started a Mountain Biking Club at Medfield High School this year. More than 25 boys and girls joined. They are hoping to participate in some local races in the spring. They are also planning some community events. The first thing Mitch, Ash and the club members are planning to do is clean up all the broken glass at the lookout at Noon Hill in Medfield. The group will also help the Lynch family with their annual bike drive for Bikes Not Bombs this spring. —Susan Lynch

Bear Brook Weekend Success

The Southern NH NEMBA chapter hosted its first annual Bear Brook State Park trail maintenance weekend on October 13 and 14. Over 20 volunteers participated in the two days of trail work, riding, and socializing. The hard work paid off as we were able to open a section of the Chipmunk Trail which had become impassable due to previous logging and neglect. Thanks to everyone who participated. Special thanks go out to Greg Previle, the park manager, for all of his help and cooperation for the event. We hope to see everyone again next year! —Kathy Evans
20th Anniversary Membership Drive

Help us celebrate NEMBA’s 20th year by getting 2007 new members!

For each new member* you sign up, your name (and the name of the new member) will be entered to win a Fox Racing Shox Front Suspension Fork!

For every two new members you enlist, you’ll receive a pair of NEMBA socks!*

Cut out the mini-applications, carry them with you on your rides, and pass them out to everyone you know who’s not yet a member. You can make a difference and help make NEMBA stronger! If you need more cards, go to www.nemba.org to download them!

* A “new member” has either (1) never been a member, or (2) has had their membership expire before June 1, 2006. Only memberships received using the mini-applications will be eligible for the drawing. You may receive up to 5 pairs of socks!
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Ride the Trails ~ Save the Trails

NEMBA’s mission is to promote mountain biking and to protect mountain bike trail access on public lands. We hold hundreds of rides, complete scores of trail care projects, and put on many fun cycling events to build a strong community of riders and volunteers.

New Members using this form before 12/31/07 will be entered into a drawing for a FOX Shox Suspension Fork!

Referred by: ____________________________

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What is a “PYT” ride?? The acronym was coined about 8-9 years ago when someone got tired of typing “Practice Your Technique” in email posts. It is a ride where we go out and practice our technique or skills. It will usually start with a short talk about what we know, and what we want to learn, and then everyone goes for bit of a warmup ride. After the warmup ride, it’s usually time to find some places to try skills such as skinnies, steep hills, or log rolls/hops and practice them until we are more comfortable. This type of ride is great for beginner mountain bikers or even experienced riders who may be a little rusty and want to learn something new or improve at riding some challenge that has eluded them in the past. It’s also a great way to meet some fellow riders of similar abilities to ride with in the future.

This fall, GB NEMBA was asked by members of the Northeast Bicycle Club to teach a series on basic MTB skills for riders who are very comfortable on the road but may have had limited experience in the woods. The NEBC/NEMBA Fall MTB PYT Clinic was born and the first clinic was held at the Fells. On October 20th, 17 riders showed up on everything from vintage 1980’s Bridgestone MB-1’s to brand new Specialized Enduro’s. The riders were queried on their experience and almost 1/3 had never been off-road on a bike! The experience levels within the group ranged from “I’ve never been offroad on a bike” to “I used to ride an MTB a decade ago, but need to brush up on my skills” to “I ride all the time, but I just can’t figure out how to (FILL IN THE BLANK).” We started by going over MTB 101 type information: understanding brakes and shifting, learning about weight distribution and traction, and the physics behind keeping a low center of gravity. We then practiced hillclimbs and descents, getting over logs and tackling uneven terrain. After the technical practice, we got a nice 5-6 mile ride in at a mellow pace where everyone was able turn theory into reality while sampling some of the Fell’s most beautiful trails.

The weather did not cooperate for two weekends, so we finally reconvened on November 10th at the trails in Belmont’s Rock Meadow and Beaver Brook North Reservation. These trails are very mellow and mostly non-technical, but riders who frequent this wonderful ride spot know of a few challenges and surprises hidden within the classic New England-style singletrack. The 24 new MTB riders that braved the chill on Saturday morning were dedicated to getting the most out of the clinic they could. Everyone absorbed the demonstrations, asked lots of great questions, worked hard to get into the correct body positions, and cheered each other on as we learned how to handle riding up a short steep ascent, down a completely controlled steep descent, and getting over obstacles of various sizes. We even tackled a couple narrow bridges and some tight twisty singletrack that brought all the new skills into play!

In the final clinic at Great Brook State Farm, the format will be slightly more advanced. We will briefly review what we learned in past clinics, and then supplement that with more advanced information such as trail etiquette and techniques on “how to manage the trail” rather than letting the trail manage us. This is still appropriate for first time or rusty riders, but the goal will be to get in a longer practice ride (about 5-6 miles.) After all the great feedback, look for this series to happen again in the Spring! —Tim Post
Alex Leich 16, downhill and cross-country mountain biker. Junior at Kennett High School in Conway, New Hampshire. Kennett MTB team member since 7th grade, ski racer, trail builder and White Mountain NEMBA member.

Alex, a teenager beyond his years, with a plethora of mountain bikes on his porch warmly welcomed me into his home to talk biking…first though the SIDI's had to come off, not to scuff the dining room floor.

Alex spent the majority this past summer donned in high tech gear in the 'zone' maneuvering down the slopes of Attitash. Embracing the "techy" trails and the good mix of terrain, Alex surprised me with the fact that he likes downhillig better than cross country, as I have spent time riding with Alex, cruising both the ups and downs of the White Mountain trails.

Alex has also spent numerous days building trails, making ramps and designing friends' backyard obstacles. During NEMBA trail days, he takes charge, handsomely advising older members how to get the job done right.

Here are his thoughts:

THE FIRST MEMORY OF ME ON A BIKE (smiling) was riding in the neighborhoods with my Mom and Dad. I'd eat it on those sandy corners!

THE LAST TIME I RODE- I hiked up Cranmore with my downhill bike and went into the woods (to go down) about halfway up.

MY FAVORITE TRAIL IS- The Red Tail Trail… going down. (Hesitates)… going up too, on a cross country bike.

MY WORST CRASH- happened at King Pine Ski Area jumping off a deck- this weird thing in the middle of nowhere- when I was 12 years old. I went over the handlebars and cracked my helmet in half.

IF I SPOKE TO A GROUP OF GRADE SCHOOL X GAMES WANNABEES- I'd say to be relaxed, don't get uptight about a single result or crash.

YOUR TYPE OF RACE COURSE IS technical in places, flowing single track the rest of the way.

BIKES OR GIRLS? - Both- WOULD YOU LIKE TO ELABORATE? - Bikes are good but they don't talk.

FINAL THOUGHTS?- Cross Country riding on a single speed is AWESOME… it's simple and quiet and you don't have to think about anything other than riding… you can concentrate more on riding… not shifting… oh yeah- BMX Pump Tracks are cool too, they help me get the most out of my cross country riding....

On my way out he proudly pointed out his latest achievement from his last Kennett MTB race… a trophy (artistically made out of a disk brake, zip ties, and art garb), …. he then proceeded to put back on his SIDI's to head out for another ride. —Jean Lee
You've seen all the shows: "West Cost Chopper," "Rides," "Monster Garage." Custom creations are the deal—the more extreme the better. Well, welcome to this month's column and the inaugural edition of "Pimp My Ride."

We're going to take a perfectly good stock 2008 Gary Fisher HiFi Pro 29er and make it as light as we — within some reason, that is. Why? Do you really even have to ask? Why not? Doesn't everyone just want to these days? But seriously, we're doing this because it's plain fun and creative, and oh by the way, because ever since I hurt my right thumb (see last issue of Single Tracks for that very sad story) I haven't been able to use push activated thumb shifters, opting instead for SRAM grip shifters.

Our obsession with weight comes from the fact that although we really like riding these 29" big wheels, we have to admit that we do still covet the weight savings of a 26"—call us crazy, just be sure to call. Gary Fisher and Co. have done a great deal to improve the han-

Continued on page 14

The Stock 6F HiFi Pro comes out of the box

Ryan ponders what’s gonna stay and what’s gotta go
dling characteristics of the 2008 29er platform with its G2 geometry and exclusive custom 51mm offset Fox RLC fork; we just wish they’d done more regarding the weight—we want to have our cake and to eat it too, you know. And because we really don’t want to wait a whole other year to see what they do in 2000 (can you say carbon fiber 29er full suspension?), we’re going to experiment ourselves. How light can it get without making a mortgage payment? Let’s find out:

For this part of the project, I’m enlisting the help of the Loft’s Service Manager, Ryan DeRoche to assist with the modifications. First step is to build the bike stock out of the box as Gary intended. Fully assembled, without pedals, but with reflectors and cassette pie plate, the bike (17.5”/Medium) weighs 27.09 pounds. Not bad, quite respectable even and still a bit lighter than last year’s Supercaliber 29, but still several pounds shy of some 26” wheeled full suspension rigs. Our weight goal is 25 pounds without pedals—we’ll see if this can be the “biggest loser.” Don’t get me wrong, the stock spec is sweet: a mixture of XT crank, and the new Shimano Shadow front/rear mechanisms and new shifters, Avid Juicy 7 hydraulic brakes, Bontrager Rhythm Elite tubeless wheels with Jones ACX TLR 2.2 tires, Bontrager Race Lite seatpost, saddle, and bar, and Bontrager Xlite stem—good stuff—works really well right out of the box. We’re just going to turn up the heat a bit more and have some fun in the shop. After Ryan strips the bike, the frame, headset assembly, and shock (Fox Float RP23) weigh in at 5.42 pounds. I’m under the impression from the folks at Fisher that this 29er frame is the same weight as the 26er frame—so it’s really just the fork and wheels that are potentially heavier.

We’re leaving the front fork, rear shock, and headset bone stock—we’ll have to cut the steerer tube at some point—just not yet; don’t know how low we can go up front. Also, there’s really no significantly lighter stem than the new Bontrager Xlite aluminum, so might as well stick with that too. The Easton EC70 400mm seatpost is 55gm lighter than the stock one, so we’ll save that handful of paperclips if we can. Who knows about saddles, so for the time being, we’re going to stick with the stock one. We’re going to use some Time ATAC carbon pedals (336gm) for now, although we have a sneaking suspicion that the lovely bits
that something lighter may become available by the end of the year
(hint, hint.)

We hope to achieve the most weight savings from the wheels, then
the crankset and brakes. We'll be using the new Shimano M970 XTR
crankset in 175mm length, with its respective bottom bracket. As for
chainrings, the big one's coming off and will be replaced with a Black
Spire Ring God bashguard. We suspect this will be a weight addition,
but we'll keep searching for a lighter one. It’s either that, or use the
big ring as the guard, and those XTR rings are not cheap, that’s for
sure. The gearing will be in true 2 by 9 fashion with a 32x26 setup-
personally, I’ve found with the big wheels the inner 22T to be too
small-maybe there just aren’t enough insanely steep climbs around
these parts. When I was in Las Vegas at Interbike last month, I
bumped into Travis Brown from Trek, who told me they’re working on
some custom 29er crank/chainring combos that should be just what
the 29er & 69er sets are looking for—but that’s just sheer gossip, so
don’t hold me to it.

Continued on page 16
The bike’s drivetrain is going all to be all SRAM-XO twisties on the bars, Xgen front mech, XO anniversary rear mech (gold ano bolt), PC-991 chain and PG-990 11-34 cassette. Doing the braking duty are Avid Ultimate Carbon (red ano bolts) brakes with 160mm rotors front and rear on Bontrager Xlite tubeless wheels (Ti skewers)-with WTB Velociraptor 29 x 2.1 (blue trim) tires. Doing the steering is the lovely new Salsa Pro Moto Carbon flat bar with an 11 degree bend—the closest bar we could find to the stock 12 degree Bontrager aluminum one. Grips will a new set of Ergons with integrated bar ends. As Ryan continues to hang the new parts, the frame begins to take shape as a bicycle again. Won’t be much longer, then we’ll have another weigh-in to see how close we’re getting. A couple of impromptu additions from Ryan: matching white shifter housing. Bonk clear plastic protective film, blue zip ties, and Ti and aluminum water bottle bolts securing a Ti King cage.

Once everything is hung on the frame, everyone in the shop takes bets on the weight of the modified bike. Don’t know who’s putting up what in the bet, but who cares at this point.

The weight: 25.13 pounds sans pedals—close, really close. We figure that last .13 pounds can easily be shed by cutting the steerer, using carbon fiber spacers, and a lighter bashguard—mission accomplished as far as I’m concerned.

Now, the only thing left to do is screw on a pair of pedals and ride the thing—because as we all know, lighter’s not necessarily better—you still have to have the legs to pedal the darn bike.

Next issue: “the first 60 days”—how’s it really ride, and “rekindling the romance”—what we didn’t get to put on the bike.

All dressed up and ready to go. We’ll let you know how it rides!
PORTLAND

Breaking his personal best build time, Howie clocks 30 minutes building up his bike and 40 on mine. A NYT article titled Portland in 36 hours leads us to South Park Seafood Grill & Wine Bar on Salmon Street. Powell's City of Books next, a store so large the 68,000 square feet are color coded to navigate amongst floors, mezzanines and book types. We lose one another in the orange section between Pulitzer Prize winners and athletics. Cell phones connect us in front of the display of Lance Armstrong's, It's Not About the Bike. Then, off to the Japanese Gardens and transport ourselves into deep beauty. Peaceful, layers of texture yielding impressions of simplicity: moss, sand, stone, trees, reeds, ponds, golden fishes, stone sculpture, bridges painted red. We scramble to take pictures, taking quite nearly the same photographs. The His and Hers competition is on.

Over to the Pearl District - also known as Portland's SoHo. A raw modern industrial milieu mixes with galleries, parks and condos. Paseando the shops and eateries and decide upon Papa Hayden. Relish more outdoor dining. People watch. An Elvis impersonator rants across the street. Light layers the streets until after 9:30.

COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE & HOOD RIVER

The gorge drive begins in Troutdale, a one street town of pioneer buildings east of Portland. Thrown back in time we're treated to a classic car show. Hoods up and engines agleam line both sides of the street. Howie is gaping at old Mustangs, Corvettes, Camaros. Her choice, the Studebaker pick up truck and a 66 Cobra;

A group of lycra-clad men are pounding espressos — on break from a 40+ mile road ride along the gorge. How is it? "Tough climbing and fast descents." We chat biking and places to live. One guy left Boston to live in Portland. They are all rhapsodic about the better climate for outdoor living that Oregon holds over New England.

Begin the designated scenic drive along the Columbia River, considered the most significant environmental force in the Pacific Northwest. We're admiring 800 foot high rock cliffs clad in moss and ferns, the broad blue river, and stopping at random when a waterfall beckons: Latourell Falls, Bridal Veil Falls, Etowah Falls.

Follow the riverbank and railroad tracks, darting through tunnels. River is wide and strong. Wind whips hair sideways. Emerging from the last tunnel a sight of hundreds of colored sails like butterflies hovering over the water. The windsurfers. Pull over, enter the hippie scene of living to ride the top of waters. Sun is setting backlighting the diaphanous beings skimming fast to balanced stillness.

Then cross the drawbridge into Hood River and WOW! Mt. Hood confronts. A Buddha. This mountain stands alone far above the inhabited world at 11,235 feet. Cloud stuck to its spire. Massive.

Fall for Hood River's great mix of old buildings and new renovations. Peer in bike shops, hip clothing, chic restaurants. More upscale than we'd expected. Old brick, new metals, Oh the delicious contrast.

Plan for Monday is to bike near HR, then travel to Bend. At Discover Bicycles we meet Spencer who attends college in Bennington, VT and summers in Hood River. He recommends Post Canyon Trails which he rode that morning; then we can lunch in town. We grab a Freeride Trail Map and head out.

Arrive at Post Canyon trailhead as a foursome of 2 couples about our age pull up in fully loaded pick ups: mountain bikes and sailboards. They ride trails in the morning and waves in the afternoon. They invite us along, relieving us of following a map!

Deep woods skinny singletrack over creeks, up dale and down, and swoopy fast. Thrill stuff we don't often ride back East. A section of trail designed as a trick area for all levels called Family Man. Next a strenuous climb of 7 to 10 minutes. Then a fierce technical descent that requires ducking under a fallen tree at speed. Sandy slide-outs and giggles.

Totally satiated we head to an outdoor café, 3 Rivers Grill, with views of the river. How the wind blows! No one reads newspapers outside. Great food. Great sun. Endorphin high.

BEND

Pass the 45th parallel upon approach; exactly halfway between the North Pole and the equator. Landscape rises. Travel now among fruit orchards. Temperature 54 degrees. Plateau country. Flat top land.
Another level of altitude gained. 68 degrees. Sharp rises of distant plateaus where the layers of geology are visible. Cultivated desert. Farmland where naturally would be dust and rivers. 86 degrees. And noticeably thinner air.

A modern town when an outback waystation was expected. Circumambulating the original 2 streets are neighborhoods of new arts and crafts style homes off roundabouts with bike lanes. The town mall is housed within old factories along the river where outdoor dining and concerts and a bikepath find appreciation of skateboarders, bikers, people strolling. With 3 breweries in town an acrid yeasty smell fills certain neighborhoods. Overhead are stars. Lots of them. Darkness improves our constellation competency.

**McKENZIE RIVER TRAIL**

The McKenzie River National Recreation Trail within the Wild and Scenic River Corridor is the ride we've been most anticipating. Rated as the best ride in Oregon by Mountain Bike magazine (Winter 2004), "One of those trails you'll see in your dreams for years to come: 25 miles of lava fields, spring-fed ponds full of jumping trout and ancient forests all connected by a single, buff line. Much of the trail is straightforward, but even experts should beware of the more tricky bits such as the small canyons of black lava - they'll cut your tires and a whole lot more if you happen to stack".

We reserved a shuttle trip through Cog Wild and are picked up at 8 am by Kirin. Kirin studied forestry in college so she has a lot to convey about trees, clear cutting, fires, and volcanic activity in this area. After half an hour we're climbing from the high desert plateau over the Santiam Pass at 4,617 feet and the mountains transition from arid...
to water saturated life. The Three Sisters (North, South and Middle) sit in all their putative volcanic might around us.

At the trailhead above Clear Lake Kirin hands us a trail map and marks where to rendezvous for a check in. Cell phones don’t work out here. “If you aren’t done by 4pm then I’ll have to call for help. Good luck.” We head out in the chill morning air warming up around the lake after which hard riding ensues. Need lots of attention to manage the tight turns, boulders and rocks, stumps. We move steadily along working each section of trail.

Stop at Sahalie Falls where a viewpoint has been built out. Take pictures of the mighty river blasting out and pounding downhill. Then enter the lava fields, the knarly volcanic rock section of trail. Tough.

We hike bikes in several spots. But all we hear is the sound of the river slaming along and wind blowing in the treetops. No one but ourselves in all this wilderness. Cross and re-cross the river over 18” square cut wood beams. Steep short climbs. Numerous hug-the-side-of-the-cliff or be dashed to your death sections. A few washed out places on these cliff edges. Some scrambling. Concentration, effort and beauty.

Break at Blue Pond for lunch. Aptly named brilliantly blue clear to the bottom circle of still water. The river ducked underground 2 miles back tunneling through the lava and reappears here. But instead of its chortling self, here it is tranquil, not even a bubble or a wake to show the movement of its current. Then it spills over the pond’s edge and resumes its wild-cat ways. After the lava fields the trail is easier. We pick up speed. Sling ourselves up the climbs, along the cliff edges, and down. Although considered a downhill ride, there’s still a lot of climbing.

Continued on page 20
Finally we are on soft terrain twisting through trees. I start to feel confident passing between the trees parted only by a handlebar's breadth plus a smidge. Faster. Faster. We chase one another. And finish exhilarated at Belknap Springs, a hot springs campground.

**SWAMPY LAKES TRAILS**

Today we've ordered a half-day of singletrack. 8:30am and the van arrives. We are dropped off at Swampy Lakes Trail which is 'dusty and fast'.

Lev, whose name means Heart in Hebrew and Lion in Russian, but is neither Jewish nor Russian, is our guide and a co-owner of Cog Wild. It's just the three of us. We learn that Swampy Lakes is where the cross-country skiers play. The trail starts at the top of a mountain at 5600 feet of altitude and slides downhill to 3600 feet. It is very sandy in late summer due to lack of rainfall. Dust kicks up fanwheels. We circle around the top of a mountain and then start descending. Switchbacks on sand is a strange new experience and requires a different technique to slide into a sharp and steep switchback, similar to stopping on skis, and not go over the cliff. Hang on and repeat this 24 times.

We're down to the warming hut built at a point where the view is across the valley to a range of mountains. Tumalo Mtn and its waterfall are directly opposite. Not only can the waterfall be seen from this distance but the sound carries over the valley too. South of Tumalo Mtn stands Mt. Bachelor where locals ski through May. We begin descending again now in the wide open air. No tree cover. I wipe out twice on the sharp switchbacks, but clean two jumps that Howie passes over.

The final stretch of trail is flattened out sashays and just for going flat out. 10 miles of BMX-style berms and chutes. Dart between the omnipresent two trees gracing a 'please God' pass through, all with handlebar gouges. Traverse a section of the famous Phil's Trail. We finish exhilarated after 1pm. Adrenaline running wild.

**TUMALO FALLS TRAIL**

We're picked up by Anka, whose bright blue eyes are ringed with the longest lashes on an adult we've ever seen. She wants to take us to Tumalo Mountain just 11 miles outside of the city center to climb the steep mountain trail with 7 waterfalls. A 3 1/2 mile climb followed by what else, a steep descent. Bend seems to be all about going up or coming down. This 11 mile ride starts at 5400 feet of altitude and heads up another 2000 feet.

We begin climbing up North Trail, traverse on Mrzak and descend on Farewell. On this mountain we're in a pine forest and shaded. It's hard pulling uphill, the air is thinner than Boston's sea level saturated air, so thank goodness for the waterfall view stops. These waterfalls are left unadulterated. No signs. No barriers. Deeply peaceful.

Smooth skinny trail with few technical roots and no technical rock. Dust again is a contender and we spread out to allow it to settle between riders. Stop for a snack at a meadow on top of the mountain and sit on rotting logs. An idyllic view. Absolute quiet. We expect bears and wildlife to be present and strain to see, but Anka says there is little to reckon with.

Anka and her husband Sven Martin are from South Africa and moved to California before Bend. Both are Pro downhill racers and Sven has a photography business specializing in mountain biking images. For the downhill section of trail Anka has us lower our seats and shows us how to tripod around the tight switchbacks in sandy ground that skid out rear tires. This is a great tip and we clean the face of the mountain. A dip in the freezing river to wash some dust off and we're headed back to town around 2pm.

**BANDON BY THE SEA**

Leave by way of the Umpqua National Forest that abuts the Umpqua River. We'd considered riding some of its' trails, but were told they were narrow with many ledges and scary at times - glad we opted out for this trip!

It's downhill to the ocean from the Cascade range. About every 30 minutes we descend 1000 feet. Fly fishing camps and logging trucks are the only distractions from river, road and trees. Arrive late afternoon in Bandon; the beach here is magnificent flat sands far out and gigantic rock formations with names like Elephant Rock. The tide is
going out so we can access many of them. Hard wind. We explore. The sun glints off the sand's water trails, pools around the rocks. We walk in quiet exploration and wonder, exploring with our cameras.

**SILTCOOS LAKE TRAIL**

Today’s ride is the Siltcoos Lake Trail inside the Oregon National Dunes. Leaving Coos Bay we stop at Mo’s Bike Shop, where I’d gotten my taste for mountain biking more than 10 years ago and my first 'mountain' bike a Cannondale M300. Mo is still there running the shop and remembered me. He confirmed that the SLT was a great choice; the shop leads Tuesday night rides there and riders whip around the 3 miles of whoopy track as many times as they can before dark.

The Oregon Dunes National Park stretches 40 miles along the coast, wind sculpted giants 500 feet above sea level. $2 buys us a day pass. And then we’re inside where it feels like rain forest. Lush, green, pine tree smelling and soft needle-padded earth singletrack. The tree canopy so dense that it’s dim in here with streams of light beams. Rolling short climbs and descents like a roller coaster. It’s so fun you hardly notice pedaling. Bridges galore, each one unique. No rocks. Few roots. Ferns and streams. A lake. So magic is it in here that one expects to sight leprechauns.

The ride back to Portland is sad. Break down the bikes and pack up — the sun sets at 9:45. Flight back to Boston tomorrow.

For full travel journal with places, people, & links to travel information: web.mac.com/ephgphotography/Web/gbnemba/Blog/Blog.html
Completing an Epic ride, from Ward Hill to Bradley Palmer

By Jim Humphrey

This May, Fred White, Sandy Bray and I began an epic ride, planning to go from Ward Reservation in Andover, MA to Bradley Palmer State Park in Ipswich through state forests and other conservation land. Unfortunately, due to wet trails, some wrong turns, and bad weather, we only made it through Boxford State Forest — a little over 16 miles. I wrote about the trip in July’s Singletracks.

Later in the summer and fall I took a few more trips to scout the remainder of the ride - Boxford Center to Georgetown-Rowley State Forest (G-R), Cleaveland Farm and Willowdale State Forests, and Bradley Palmer State Park (BP). Then I made the complete epic ride on Nov. 10th. It was 28.5 miles from Ward Hill to Bradley Palmer (and, since I had no shuttle car, I went back to Ward Hill on the road - another 15.5 miles). Here is what you will see along the way...and some interesting side trips for you to consider.

Some fixes to the Ward Hill to Boxford State Forest route we took this spring

On my complete epic ride, I retraced (mostly) the route mapped out in the July article. I did change the Ward Hill part, though. I rode the Ward Trail and Margaret’s Trail loop instead of going to Elephant Rock; it’s easier, and a better way to start a 28 mile journey.

Then, as we did earlier in the year, I took the roads to the Delano Pond trail in Harold Parker, took the same ride through Harold Parker State Forest and North Andover’s Cyr conservation property. I saved a lot of time by not having to write it all down, take pictures, correct wrong turns, etc.

Sandy, Fred and I were the victims of a map/trail discrepancy in Boxford State Forest this spring. Basically, the map said we had come to a trail marker (#31), which should have been far from where we found it. For that reason, we ended up taking a long detour through a lot of slow, muddy trails, circling Bald Hill.

To fix this, follow these trail markers: go right at 1, right at 2, right at 6, left at 7, left at 8, ignore 31, right at 18, left at 19. Also, the map does not show Sharpner’s Pond Road; you just need to know that trail #1 is the first marked trail you will see after going through the Sharpner’s Pond Road parking lot and down the wide rocky access road.

On the road from Boxford State Forest to Georgetown-Rowley

Getting through Boxford State Forest correctly left me on Middleton Street in east Boxford. Taking a left, I crossed Main Street, passed the town school and came to Georgetown Road. I had been on the trails since 9:15, had ridden 16.5 miles, and it was now noon. Thankfully, the Boxford Community Store was just to my right on Elm Street, so since 9:15, had ridden 16.5 miles, and it was now noon. Thankfully, the Boxford Community Store was just to my right on Elm Street, so I stopped in for a lunch of carnivore’s pizza (hamburg, pork, bacon, pepperoni and cheese).

About 12:15, I took a left on Elm Street, which becomes Georgetown Road. I passed a large white church, farm fields, and large suburban homes (the rural feeling of Boxford is enhanced by the town’s 2 acre minimum lot size). Locking out my rear shock, I enjoyed the fresh pavement.

At the intersection with Ipswich Road, I went right on Ipswich for a half-mile or so, then left on Kelsey Road to the Kelsey Arboretum. According to the Essex Natural Heritage organization, this small park “features rhododendrons, azaleas, mountain laurel and is in bloom from early April through July”. When you are done, resist the urge to hop on the Bay Circuit trail, which meanders along Kelsey’s border, and continue on Kelsey to Killam Hill Road. A left here will take you, after another mile or so, to Pingree Farm Road. A half-mile down Pingree Farm Road is the gate to Georgetown-Rowley.

Singletrack, doubletrack, and octupletrack: the natural and unnatural wonders of Georgetown-Rowley State Forest

DCR trail maps denote wetlands with icons meant to look like tufts of marsh grass. On the Georgetown-Rowley trail map, these symbols surround all the side trails like misses in a game of “Battleship.” In wet seasons, this can be a ride for waders. Luckily, the trails were relatively dry as I came into G-R at 12:30, having ridden now almost 21 miles.

Pingree Farm Road descends to a spot in the middle of two vast wetlands. Although the surface appears smooth, a couple of narrow but deep gullies cut the road here - be careful or you may end up on your head. Then the road rises and provides a broad panoramic view - of the eight lanes of I-95 and its northbound and southbound truck stops.

After stopping to enjoy the fumes, continue over the bridge to your second right, posted as trail 22. A note here on the G-R trail system - trail numbers are nicely posted in the forest, but unfortunately the map on the DCR site does not show them. This is true of the wetlands icons also; some printed maps have them (Willowdale), some don’t (like G-R’s). Maybe they will in the next printing.

Trail 22 starts up a short hill covered with chunks of branches and laced with roots. G-R used to allow off-road vehicles (ORVs), though it has been closed to them this year; signs still remain in the park indicating which users are allowed on “multi-use” trails. 22 was an ORV trail, and as it flattened out, I enjoyed buzzing through the nice steep bermed corners they had left behind. I went left at Trail 27, around a sweeping bermed right turn, and went left at Trail 28.

Heading up this hill, I took a trail that veers off to the left. It’s not the official trail, but taking it allowed me to avoid the mudholes that were either made or deepened by ORV use. This path shadows the marked trail until it reaches an esker - a long, narrow ridge. I followed the green arrows up to the top of the esker (this is also where the Bay Circuit Trail runs, too).

The ride bumps along the ridge over rocks and roots, and I got nice views through the trees (G-R is mostly hardwood and pine) down to the swamps surrounding the Mill River. Eventually, there is a speedy little downhill as the esker dissolves, which leaves you at the Mill River crossing.

Here I found the infamous bridge; twisted, missing treads, and nearly underwater. NEMBA folks have been working with other organizations to try to replace this catastrophe for many years, with no luck.

Thanks to this summer’s drought, though, the bridge and the low shores that led to it were dry. I stopped and found a coromant standing not more than 20 feet away, who struck a few nonchalant poses while I snapped away. Crossing the bridge, I immediately pushed my bike up the badly-eroded hill, and rode this esker to the edge of the forest (trail marker 29). Across the street I could see the Bay Circuit sign and the marker for Willowdale/Cleaveland Farm trail 84. It was now 1 pm, and I had come 23.3 miles from Ward Hill.

If you decide to make this ride in the spring or after wet weather, and you want to avoid the mud, you can take Pingree Farm Road straight through G-R to Route 133 in Rowley. From there you would take a
right, then a right on Boxford Road, and after a mile or so you will come to Trail 84. There are also side trails to try out here, if you have time. I rode some windy singletrack on the west side of I-95 years ago; this summer I tried Trail 23 on the east side, which rises to a hill and then drops down quickly through some ORV-bermed corners. A fun ride.

Willowdale/Cleaveland Farm State Forest

Willowdale is made up of multiple sections. The DCR's printed map for Willowdale/Cleaveland Farm State Forest contains both sections. Pine Swamp printed on one side, and the Cleaveland Farm/Hood Pond/connector trails on the other side. Having this map guided me the rest of the way to Bradley Palmer. If you want to download maps from the DCR's Willowdale website, be aware you have to print both the Hood Pond and Pine Swamp maps.

Trail 84 took me to the top of another esker, and I followed that doubletrack straight through this area of Willowdale, which was expanded in the early 1990s with the addition of the Cleaveland Farm property, formerly a Christmas tree farm. The path is rocky in the beginning, but as it begins rollercoastering up and down, you can usually find a smooth line on the edges or berms. Look to the right for views to Cleaveland Farm. I took about 15 minutes to go the 1.5 miles of this section, coming out at trail marker 70 on Linebrook Road. NEMBA members have built other trails in this area you may want to try, if you have time.

Hood Pond section of Willowdale

The Hood Pond parking lot (according to the map) is just to the right on Linebrook Road. A couple of trails appear to go down to the water from there.

To continue on to Willowdale, however, I crossed straight over Linebrook, went up a small mound and took a left. The path wound around a short way before rising to a spot where small pines almost enveloped it. This pleasant interlude ended quickly when the trail turned right and dropped me into the remains of an old foundation or dam - too much speed here could land you on your noggin. A short distance after the dam, I forded a low stream (avoiding the nearby bridge which might be useful in wetter conditions) and went up a short steep hill to Rowley Road.

Rowley Road

I went right on Rowley Road a short distance until I found Trail marker 67 on the left. A singletrack leads you to a wide, smooth doubletrack. I proceeded down past the other trail markers; 66, 65, then left at 64. This trail goes by one of those pine forests where the trees were planted so close together that none of the interior branches get any sunlight, and wear only brown needles if they have any at all. The trail ends at marker 62, on Old Right Road.

Old Right Road

The map shows only one trail in this section. The singletrack follows the borders of a couple of horse farms until it brings you to trail marker 61, on the southbound side of Route 1.

It was now a little after 1:30, and I had gone about 26.5 miles.

Crossing Route 1 is always dangerous, but you can see the traffic coming both ways quite well. Just be patient.

Willowdale main forest ("Pine Swamp")

Now I was in the largest part of Willowdale, called the "Pine Swamp" section. It runs from Linebrook Road on the north to Ipswich Road/Topsfield Road on the south.

Immediately after fleeing Route 1, I entered East Street, and saw trail markers on my left. Taking this first trail (still following the route of the Bay Circuit Trail), I wound along the edge of the swamp. Eventually this fun, fast ride ends in a long wooden bridge across the southern end of the wetland. Staying left at trail marker 12 I navigated a series of quick ups-and-downs, and was at trail marker 11. There are many routes to Bradley Palmer from here, most on wide trails or doubletrack. I went right at 11, kept left at 36, right at 48, right at 6, and then straight on to Ipswich Road/Topsfield Road.

I had gone 28.5 miles and it was now 2 pm, or about 4.5 hours after I started in Ward Hill. This spring, it had taken me about 6 hours to go 16 miles.....

Bradley Palmer - the Moon Hill ride

If you left a shuttle car at the Asbury Street parking lot in Bradley, you can just take the footbridge and proceed up the (freshly-gravelled) hill to the wide dirt road which runs across the broad fields of this park. A right there will take you back to your ride to Ward.

However, a ride in "BP" wouldn't be complete without trying the Moon Hill Trail. This trail, which was constructed by the North Shore NEMBA chapter linking both state and Essex County Greenbelt property, is a tight, speedy chute which ends in a small jump.

Because the trail is new (2006), it does not show up on the Bradley Palmer maps. You can find it, from the footbridge, by going to the wide dirt road, as noted above. Instead of going right, turn left. Take the road to 25, then go left. The next trail on the left should be marked 17 (I didn't see the marker this summer when I was there, though - if you see 18, turn around and go back). Go left at 17 and just a little ways in, the new Moon Hill trail appears on the left.

Beyond Bradley Palmer

If you hate to lie on the beach, but are married to or otherwise involved with people who like nothing better, then try this trip. Have them drop you in east Boxford center (i.e. at the Boxford Community Store), then ride the Boxford to Bradley Palmer trip while they go soak up the sun at Crane's Beach. If you ride all the way through BP, you can exit on Highland Street. Follow Highland, go right on Goodhue, and right again on Waldingfield, all the while passing horse pastures, farms, conservation properties and beautiful estates. On route 1-A, go left, then right on Lakeman's Road. This brings you to Route 133.

Go right here, past more horse farms and Wolf Hollow, and take a left on Northgate. This road takes you past orchards, ending on Argilla Street. A right on Argilla will take you to Crane's Beach. If you arrive late in the day, they may just wave you in without paying an entrance fee. Get a shower and an ice cream at the snack bar.

Note: If you get to the end of Northgate and still want more riding, take a left on Argilla and go to the Trustees of Reservations' Hamlin property. This short singletrack goes over a man-made dyke and loops around Eagle Island, providing a close-up of a tidal salt marsh in action.

Jim Humphrey is a freelance writer and NorthShore NEMBA member. He can be reached at humphrey.jim@comcast.net
Years ago I took a series of dance lessons to prepare for a wedding I was in. I didn't want to be embarrassed on the dance floor by the rest of the wedding party so I signed up for a six-pack of lessons at Arthur Miller Dance Studio.

It was a painful experience for me because I never took part in dances as a kid. Sure, I had prom and junior prom dates, but I chose to just stand around and stare at the girls in pretty dresses instead of dancing. I hugged the wall more than I did my dates and the only dance I was ever good at was the awkward leaning shuffle.

You know this one. It's where the girl and the boy lean together and they shuffle in a circle for about two minutes in one direction and then the boy gets all crazy and switches direction. He's delirious from smelling her hair and she's wondering how someone so scrawny and pimply can be sweating so much and why he keeps exhaling hot breath on her neck.

You get the picture. I grew to really love dances and therefore got really good at dancing…not.

But during my training, the people at Arthur Miller were kind and knew how to work with the physically challenged. I'm not talking about people who have real limitations, I'm talking about people like me whose lineage is devoid of any sense of rhythm, musical appreciation, grace or coordination.

Sure, my brothers both love music and often perform together at parties and family gatherings. Aaron is currently playing the mandolin and Ben used to play the drums. What makes their music enjoyable is often a bottle of vodka or a few bottles of wine-and this is for the people in the audience.

With that in mind you'll understand why Arthur Miller's instructors suggested I finance my dance lessons because I was going to need a whole lot of them before I'd be allowed to step onto a dance floor.

But this mini rant isn't about how well I do the bump or the worm or the waltz, it's about remaining a rider all year long.

After the clocks have been turned back and the temps have dropped, you've got to be careful that you don't forget your titanium, steel, carbon or aluminum dance partner.

Dancing has a striking similarity to attacking the trail. There's a certain sense of flow that a rider tries to achieve when he's riding. And the rhythm between pedals and legs can be astonishingly beautiful—watch the riders in the Tour de France or witness a cyclocross race. Both are essentially a ballet performed astride a bike frame.

Well to me, and probably a lot of you, the next few months could be as painful as my series of dance lessons. With each hour of each day of each week of each month, you'll feel your fitness dwindle and your balance start to fade. Moves that you could do with your eyes closed in August now make you shiver slightly in fear.

Hopping logs will be downgraded substantially into slamming into the side of a log, wrestling the bike wheel upward awkwardly and then grinding the rings over…hoping all the while that you don't tumble sideways in a spectacular heap.

Screaming around berms and bends was the act that put permagrin on your face around Labor Day. Now you'll likely slow to a crawl in each corner, unsure of where to enter or exit the turn. Apex angle? Entry point? Centripetal force? It sounds like pedal, but it means horrible crash.

And don't get me started on what to wear or how to ride on ice.

The ultimate goal this season for me, and I suppose a bunch of you feel the same way, is to maintain some modicum of competence on the bike so that when the trails are opened up again in the Spring, I'll be able to keep up with the Renee Greenes and Philip Keyeses of the world.

SO plan ahead for the weather and ask the Hanukkah Fairy or Santa Claus or Kwanza Bear to get you a balaclava and some Gortex gear. You're going to step away from the wall and take part in this little mixer if you want to be John Travolta or Janet Jackson come springtime.

Don't be shy and don't mind me. I'll be standing over here by the snack table ladling punch into my Camelbak.

Jeff Cutler can be reached via email at jeff@jeffcutler.com and you can read his regular musings at www.bowlofcheese.com. Jeff is the president of Novel Ideas, a small advertising and writing services firm whose proceeds helped pay for the aforementioned dance lessons.
With the Holiday season upon us and the new riding season just ahead many of us are thinking about buying ourselves a new bike. Daydreaming about a new bike is a pretty cool way to spend a very cold winter when you might not be able to get out on your bike as much as you want.

But if you haven't bought a bike for a number of years things have changed. It used to be that most people would lust after a competitive cross country race bike or something that handled similarly but cost a lot less. But with the increasing prevalence of long travel "all mountain" bikes for everyday use, most people now want something that handles a variety of terrains well, rather than something that's designed to maximize performance on a race course.

It used to be that you were advised to buy a frame that left you with 3-5 inches of clearance over the top tube when you stood over it in your riding shoes. But with most mountain bikes now having radically sloping top tubes having enough standover height is no longer much of an issue. Beyond that people less than 5' 5" would look for bikes with 14" or smaller frames. People 5' 5" to 5' 11" would look for a 15" to 18" inch frame. People 6' to 6' 3" a 19" - 20" frame and taller people would try to find something bigger than that.

But times have changed. Suspension has caused us to reevaluate what constitutes a good "fit". You still need to have a bike with adequate standover clearance but beyond that many people are choosing frame sizes about one size bigger than what they used to ride and then setting up their bikes with shorter stems to keep their riding position about the same.

The reasons for that are twofold. First, a longer top tube puts the rider's center of gravity more in the center of the bike. This makes it easier to climb hills and turn corners. It makes it easier to just sit and spin under most trail conditions and it also makes going over the bars less likely. Secondly, a longer top tube also means a longer wheelbase. And a longer wheelbase increases one's control when riding through sketchy terrain, when going fast and when riding down hills.

As a general rule of thumb riding a bike that's too large for you makes riding in a straight line easy, but cornering hard. Riding a frame that's too small for you makes cornering easy, climbing hills very difficult and makes your bike twitchy - even scary when you're riding technical terrain, going fast and going down hills.

The best way to choose the correct frame size for you is to ride a number of bikes until you find one that you like. Then experiment a bit. Try out the same model with a frame one size larger, but ask your dealer to fit it with a shorter stem. If you do you'll probably find that you like the larger frame / smaller stem combination just as much. And as an added bonus your bike will be much easier to ride in our typically technical New England Terrain.

A few years ago one of my friends ordered a frameset from a boutique framebuilder. When he put the bike together he discovered that it was WAY too large for him. The bike went great in a straight line. It would roll oven anything. But it was almost impossible to turn corners. Even with a short stem.

Another friend bought a bike with a frame much too small. She loved the control that she had in tight trails when going slow, loved the way it turned corners. But she was unable to climb most of the hills that she encountered. Hills she never had problems with before. And she was continually scaring herself on fast downhills. Downhills that had never concerned her before.

Everyone likes to ride well. Everyone likes to roll through technical terrain without getting knocked off course. We all like to climb hills without having our rear wheels loose traction. And descend hills with control and aplomb. What if there were a way to make all that happen easier. Well, as it turns out, there is. Try out the larger / smaller combination before you buy or rent your next bike. You'll probably be surprised at the difference that it will make.

Buy the right frame size and your riding will become easier. Get the wrong one, and it will be harder. Choose carefully.

Renew Your Membership for $35 or more and Get a Free Cozy! Beverage not included! While supplies last...

NEMBA New England Mountain Bike Association
www.nemba.org
Blackstone Valley

President: Eammon Carleton, eammon@gmail.com, 508-987-7655
Treasurer: Rich Kordell
Secretary: Anne Shepard
Ride Coordinator: Jeff Gallo
Callahan SF: Anne Shepard
Douglas SF: Vacant
Hale Reservation: Jack Maxwell
Hodges Village Dam: Eammon Carleton
Vietnam: John Goeller
Westboro/Hopkinton: Vacant
Email List: blackstone@nemba.org
Website: www.bvnemba.org
Webmaster: Mitchell Steinberg

What a season we’ve had here in the Blackstone Valley (and I know it’s not over yet for a lot of us). We’ve hosted rides throughout the season on Wednesday nights that were very popular. We’ve held trail care events every Tuesday night at Vietnam and helped the rangers at Hodges Village Dam to rehabilitate some trails that suffered during recent logging operations in the park. By the time this issue is in your hands we’ll have held our volunteer appreciation barbecue and ride to thank all of the people that came out to lend a hand at one of our trail care events this year. If you’d like an invitation next year, be sure to attend one of our many trail care events throughout the season. We will be having another chapter meeting around the beginning of the year to begin planning for next season so keep an eye on our chapter website (http://www.bvnemba.org) for details. I’d like to thank everyone once more who came out for a ride or to a trail care event. It’s your participation that makes our events successful and I’ve enjoyed riding and working with all of you. Now, mount up those studded tires, give the bike a quick tune and get ready for some fun winter riding. —Eammon Carleton

Connecticut

President: Art Roti, artroti@hotmail.com, 860-875-0682
VP: Mark Lurie
Secretary: Al Tinti
Treasurer: Glenn Vernes
BOD Reps: Eric Mayhew & Tren Spence
At Large: Paula Burton
Email List: ctnemba@nemba.org
CT Web: www.ctnemba.net

Fall and Winter riding have crept up on us again. It seems to happen quicker every year (especially now that I have a newborn son). This past week (the first week of November) has greeted us with winter like temperatures in the mornings. While it is hard to let go of those warm days where you can dress for a ride in about 2 minutes, I really look forward to doing those winter rides with the studded tires while wearing all of the cycling clothes that I own! It is also a great time of year to reflect on the accomplishments of our chapter and plan for next year.

We have had a great fall. The Fall Fiesta was a great success. We had a spectacular day with sunny skies and temps in the 60’s. Over 100 hundred people attended. With a large group interested in the epic ride, we ended up having two led epic rides. Both of the rides had 15+ people. The rides covered different areas of the Gay City and Case Mountain areas and both were about 3.5 hours long. The rest of the riders checked out the beginner and intermediate loops, and after we finished some great riding, we all enjoyed a sub from Subway. To wrap up the day we had a raffle of schwag supplied by several local shops, and our annual meeting where we elected the new Board of directors for 2008. The new board consists of Arthur Roti, Mark Lurie, Eric Mayhew, Glenn Vernes, Tren Spence, Paula Burton, and Al Tinti. It was a great way to wrap up the 2007 season.

On November 7th we had our first meeting with the new board to plan out next year and elect officers. For the 2008 year we have the following:
Arthur Roti - President, IMBA rep.
Mark Lurie - Vice President
Glenn Vernes - Treasurer
Al Tinti - Secretary

Eric Mayhew - NEMBA rep
Tren Spence - NEMBA rep alternate
Paula Burton - At Large

We have many things in store for next year. Since the board is spread over a large part of the state we each plan on championing our respective areas of the state with trail maintenance, the trail ambassador program, and, of course, group rides. Each board member will lead at least 2 TM events and help coordinate TAs in that area. Once again we will have two premier events: The Happening at Huntington and The Fall Fiesta. Shortly you will see an updated website that will be more of an information portal. We are eliminating our forums due to the amount of spam traffic and the challenge of managing it. However, we encourage everyone to use the NEMBA.org forums to communicate rides, TM, TA and everything else.

As always we are open to other events as well. Please contact us with your ideas. —Art Roti
The 2007 season is wrapping up, but it's not over yet! Looking back over the year, GB NEMBA made another statement with its Trail Maintenance Programs at the Middlesex Fells, Great Brook and Lynn Woods, and had a great time with the very successful Weekly Rides Series and the DCR No Child Left Inside program.

Trail Maintenance

Since the last Singletracks issue, GB NEMBA completed two more TM Days at the Fells and one more at Lynn Woods. A group of volunteers showed up at the Fells on Sunday morning October 14th and again on November 11th for some heavy work on the Mountain Bike Loop at Nanepashemet Hill long considered treacherous by some and merely difficult by others. The volunteers built a four new rolling grade dip drainage devices at intervals along the trail starting at the top and all the way down the hill. These will divert water off the trail and will minimize the amount of tread erosion that had been exposing a fair amount of loose and slippery gravel. And to touch things up at the bottom of the hill, a couple of chronically muddy spots were cleared of debris and filled in with all the gravel mined from the hill. Acknowledgement for organizing these efforts goes to Terry Kennedy, Mike Tabaczynski and Tim Post.

On Sunday September 30th, a small crew worked at Lynn Woods doing some well-needed brushback and clearing work. The crew carrying loppers and small saws spent four hours cutting and clearing to brush back limbs and bushes along Ox Pasture Trail starting at the Ballfield parking lot and going towards the distant end near Lynnfield/Rt 1. Time permitted and a shorter singletrack from Ox Pasture to the Wolf's Pit was cleared too. Thanks to Terry Kennedy for putting this together.

All-in-all, the GB NEMBA TM Program has been a total success in 2007. However, none of this would have been possible had it not been for a large group of volunteers willing to give up a few Sunday mornings and their precious time and in most cases their precious sweat. These volunteers were amazing; they were there rain or shine. GB NEMBA thanks each and every volunteer for their help. Their dedicated efforts made a big difference in 2007 and their efforts resulted in a lot of goodwill throughout GB NEMBA's area parks. GB NEMBA appreciates you and looks forward to your continued support in 2008.

GB NEMBA's Weekly Ride Series

And let's not forget our Weekly Ride Series that was finally forced by darkness to wrap up in mid-September. GB NEMBA in partnership with the Massachusetts DCR, jointly presented the Wednesday Night PYT "Practice Your Technique" Rides and Thursday Night Social Rides between April and September. Exceeding our wildest imagination, the rides were a total success having almost 400 participating throughout the season. The lion's share of the success is thanks to the core group of almost 30 trained and enthusiastic volunteer GB NEMBA RideGuides who showed up each week to lead, teach, sweep and generally make sure every participant had a great ride. Also, many thanks go out to the ride series sponsors: JRA Cycles of Medford for underwriting the Wednesday Night PYT ride and to Landay's Bicycle's and Scott Gerstl for underwriting the Thursday Night Social Ride. Next time you're out looking to pick something to wear or a few things for your bike, keep our valued sponsors in mind.

DCR / NEMBA No Child Left Inside Fells Ride

As with the Weekly Ride Series, the monthly "No Child Left Inside" Bike Ride was a season highlight. Earlier in 2007, the Massachusetts DCR created a new program designed to provide an outside supervised activity for children: "No Child Left Inside". GB NEMBA supported the DCR by organizing a series of monthly rides using the NEMBA Explorers Program and designed to introduce children to the fun, excitement, and health benefits that come from riding bikes in the woods. Additionally, it was a perfect forum to teach the kid's respect for the parks, trails, and other trail users. What a success this series became.

The first ride was held at the Middlesex Fells on June 23rd with follow-on rides on July 21st, August 25th and September 15th. Local children ranging in age from 6 to 12 were led by GB NEMBA Ride Guides on a fun-filled trail ride that most had not experienced before. The young riders, chaperones and Ride Guides got to know each other before each ride and covered the need for having good working and safe equipment, knowing the rules of the trails, and were given tips for respecting the park and the environment in general. Once on the trails, the kids had a great time under the watchful supervision of the RideGuides and each rider was coached and taught the proper skills to safely negotiate trail features with care and confidence.

The "No Child Left Inside" MTB series wrapped up at the Fells on October 6th with the nation-wide "Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day" and included VIP guest riders from the Bikes Not Bombs Earn-A-Bike Program. Fun was had by all! Tim Post and Howie Granat did a fabulous job organizing and running this series.

Belmont-McLean Land Management Committee

On September 25th the Belmont-McLean Land Management Committee voted to keep the majority of the former hospital property open to MTB use despite heavy opposition from a group of local anti-bike activists. This success was the result of years of effort on the part of Tom Grimble and Mike Tabaczynski who rallied the MBT community at the final meeting for public presentation of the trail plan and comments on September 20th. The mountain bike community is very pleased with the Belmont LMC's decision to keep a very large part of the property accessible to bikes. The trail plan was well thought out and the LMC did a very thorough job of evaluating the plan and all the user comments. GB NEMBA will be working with the LMC to implement the plan (including trail reroutes, new trail building and maintenance) and has publicly untested to do virtually all of the trail work free of charge to the town of Belmont.

NEBC/GB NEMBA Novice Skills Clinics

In October, GB NEMBA was asked by members of the Northeast Bicycle Club to teach a series on basic MTB skills for riders who are very comfortable on the road but may have had limited experience in the woods. The first clinic was held at the Fells and 17 riders showed up on everything from vintage 1980's Brookstone MB-1's to brand new Specialized Enduro's. The riders were queried on their experience and almost 1/3 had never been off-road on a bike! It was great fun — read Tim Post's account in the front of this 'zine.

Mountain Bike Patrol

With 2007 coming to a close and 2008 quickly approaching, the New England Mountain Bike Patrol remains busy patrolling area parks and supporting local mountain bike events such as the annual Take a Kid Mountain Bike Day on October 6th where the Patrol divided their force and provided First Aid and bike maintenance services for the GB NEMBA Kid's event at the Middlesex Fells and at the SEMASS NEMBA Kid's event at Blue Hills. Later on October 28th you might have seen the Patrol supporting the MBAS "Wicked Ride of the East" at Harold Parker. With a number of new members, the Patrol is increasing its visibility and providing expanded services to NEMBA. In October, GB NEMBA was asked by members of the Northeast Bicycle Club to teach a series on basic MTB skills for riders who are very comfortable on the road but may have had limited experience in the woods. The first clinic was held at the Fells and 17 riders showed up on everything from vintage 1980's Brookstone MB-1's to brand new Specialized Enduro's. The riders were queried on their experience and almost 1/3 had never been off-road on a bike! It was great fun — read Tim Post's account in the front of this 'zine.

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Maine

President: Calvin Weeks, clwsdj@fairpoint.net, 207-650-3702
Treasurer: Brian Condon
Northern ME: Tom Chasse
Bangor Area: Chris Moore
Central ME: Jeff Clarke
Midcoast Area: Rick Nelson
Brunswick/Portland: Timothy Stiles
York County: Tom Noble
Email List: mtb-maine@nemba.org
Website: www.meNEMBA.com

It has been a good summer in Maine for mountain biking. We’ve had some good response from several land trusts who are interested in having Maine NEMBA and other riders help them take care of their trails and, possibly, build some new ones.

Bradbury Mountain State Park continues to increase in popularity, and this year had three major events in the park: the Bradbury Mountain Enduro, our own Kona Bicycles-Kenda MTB Adventure Series ride, and a Twelve Hour race. Next year we are hoping to finish expansion onto Tryon Mountain which is part of the future to move toward Pine Land Center.

There is also in the discussion for future development Range Pond State Park. The state is looking in to multi-use for part of the new trail system.

We’ve also been working closely with Cape Elizabeth Land Trust which is allowing the Portland RAGE group to keep an eye on the trails, and talks are ongoing with the Camden Land Trust to increase the involvement of mountain bikers on their property. Several people in the Camden-Rockport area are getting involved, and Kevin Davis has been talking about working with the land owners in the area, possibly setting up a local NEMBA chapter to mobilize mountain bikers. Good Luck, Kevin!

On the downside, there is a crisis ongoing at Hinckley Park in South Portland. Land managers were viewing mountain biking as an “active” form of recreation that shouldn’t be allowed in a park that focuses on “passive” recreation. We gathered some information about how “passive vs. active recreation” is defined and presented in to the city land manager. Mountain biking is clearly passive recreation since it doesn’t require the infrastructure needed for active recreation: ball fields, courts, etc. We also mapped out the trails at Hinckley and will be submitting a proposal that defines the area that we would like to ride in to the manager for his approval. At this time it looks positive for the Mountain bikers. As part of the proposal, mountain bikers will be helping take care of the trails we ride, and will help educate riders on responsible riding and trail etiquette for shared-use trails.

Would also like to thank EMS Store 29 for all of their support that they have given us through the summer. Also working on our new web site which will be at www.meNEMBA.com.

Merrimack Valley

President: Norman Blanchette, 978 455-3605, n.blanchette@comcast.net
VP Groton Town: Mike Andersen
Lowell-Dracut SF VP: Bob Giunta
Treasurer: Hugh Folsom, (978) 244-0633
Email List: mtb-merrimackvalley@nemba.org
Website: www.mv-nemba.org

Looking back at 2007 I felt our biggest challenge would be to develop a successful relationship with our new team at the DCR in Carlisle. Our previous liaison was reassigned, and we now had the task of selling ourselves, and NEMBA all over again. We quickly discovered they were not about to give us a blank check.

Early on we were held in check while dealing with political issues with other user groups. The DCR played it safe and allowed us to keep busy with plenty of trail maintenance work at the Lowell Dracut Tyngsboro state forest. A request came in from an unlikely source at the Greater Lowell Vocational School to cut a new section of trail that would create a short loop for walkers from the parking lot. We were able to finish that in late spring.

Now fast forward to late summer / early fall. We were asked to do a trail relocation project for the DCR at Great Brook Farm. That turned into a joint project with the Greater Boston Chapter. That project was flawless and set the tone for future joint ventures with Greater Boston. I also think it went a long way in getting the DCR more comfortable with us. We hope to carry that momentum into the new year.

The Tuesday ride series, “Two for Tuesday” (as in two separate starting times), continues to build momentum from last year. Judging from the buzz on the forum, it is one of the better organized and attended rides in the Merrimack Valley. Many thanks go out to Lionel for his promoting and arm-twisting techniques to see that this ride stays viable. My work schedule doesn’t allow me to make many of those rides but trust me: I’m usually there in spirit.
We had a very unusual event this past fall with Eastern Mountain Sports. They closed several of their shops for the day and sent a small army of volunteers to the Dracut state forest for some trail work. Bob Giunta put them to work on a major boardwalk project that was started and completed on that same day. That was followed up with a BBQ on site and a ride. This might have slid under the radar a bit because it was held on a Tuesday. But regardless, it was pretty well attended. I have a feeling we may see more events like this with EMS in the years to come.

We continue to look towards the Tyngsboro part of the forest for possible future new trail development. That will take a lot of hard work and a bit of luck on our part. But with our strong core of volunteers, I wouldn’t bet against us. Speaking of volunteers this would be a good time to give a tip of the helmet and a Merry Christmas wish to our hard working and dedicated bunch here in the Merrimack Valley. Big thanks go out to Bob Giunta, Kirk Goldsworthy, Lionel Chapman, James Vogh, Barry Moore, Stuart McDonald, Bob Paolillo, Hugh Folsom, and Jack Cooper. —Norman Blanchette

Barry Moore riding Lowell-Dracut. Photo by Norman Blanchette

Join NEMBA to protect the trails. Join to become part of a vibrant community of riders. Join to add your voice to the largest regional advocacy group in the country. Join because it’s the right thing to do!

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Many of our members enjoyed some fine mountain biking throughout the fall season; hopefully you were one of them. The weather was dry and the trails have been in great shape. Along with riding the many great miles of trails here on the North Shore many members have traveled to other New England hot spots, including trips to the Kingdom Trails and the White Mountains. The MTB Adventure Series was also well attended by local folks. Singletrack trails were explored at Bradbury up in Maine and Bear Brook NH, and still others attended the NEMBAfest at Wompatuck down in SE MA. New England certainly has a lot to offer when it comes to trails for the mountain biker.

Closer to home the Wicked Ride was bigger and better than ever! The rainy Saturday gave way to brisk but clear Sunday. Over 300 registered riders enjoyed two marked loops totaling over 27 miles of biking pleasure. The advance course featured over 20 miles of challenging single track, and the beginner ride had great views as it weaved its way around the many ponds of the area. A great job was done by Sandy Bray the wicked ride chairperson and all the other behind the scene people that helped with the trail marking and parking. Thanks to all the vendors that pitched their tents and gave it the festival look.

A special thanks goes out to Lee Hollenbeck for spending the week before making more gallons of chili than one can count.

On September 15th the chapter installed two bridges in Harold Parker. The first boardwalk crosses a beaver caused mud section of the trail near Bear Pond. The second wooden crossing environmentally replaces the old tire bridge near the site of the former Jenkin's Mill. The steady rains did not slow the work crew of a dozen or more before completion of both projects. The second trail day on October 14th was canceled to allow members to attend some of the other scheduled trail days in surrounding areas. Projects were also scheduled in Lynn Woods and Bear Brook that weekend and the North Shore chapter showed presence at both events. Several big projects are in the plans for the spring so please plan to help.

The final chapter event of the season took place on November 11th with a ride through Bradley Palmer State Park and Willowdale State Forest followed by a cookout and meeting. Over twenty folks took part in the tour of the parks; it was great to see some new faces. Chapter elections are always held on the final meeting of the year. The following were elected for the 2008.

President Frank Lane
Vice-President Fred White
Treasurer Ron Corporon
Secretary Jim Humphrey
BOD Reps: Dan Streeter & Frank Lane
Email List: northshore@nemba.org
Finally, the colder weather has arrived (though today-Nov 14th was pretty nice!) and this really great fall season is ebbing into the winter riding months.

The biggest news item is that we’ve brokered a deal that reopens the singletrack of Northfield Mountain to biking. For those who don’t know, Northfield Mountain, a popular hiking and XC skiing spot right off of rte 63 in Northfield, used to host a number of mountain bike races and still houses a beautiful network of pretty hilly and moderately challenging trails. A few years ago, these trails became off limits to bikers. But thanks to some good work by our regional leaders, the land managers at Northfield Mountain have graciously agreed to allow biking once again. In return, PV NEMBA will take over trail maintenance duties (of course). These trails will probably be subject to seasonal closures (Nov-April) to bikes. So please obey all posted signs if you visit.

In other news, our man on the scene in Hamden County (Steve Rossi) has continued his successful kids mountain bike ride series at Robinson SF. The final one of the season was Nov 18th. You can find listings for these rides on the nemba.org forums and on the mtbr.com forums in the Massachusetts threads.

Of note, there is a really impressive memorial stone bench at the top of Far East at Batchelor St. The bench memorializes Chuck Tanguay, one of the original architects of the incomparable Batchelor Street trails. Chuck passed away this summer and his longtime friends and fellow mountain riders put this together. Next time you ride Batchelor Street, please take a little time to stop by Chuck’s bench, read the inscriptions, take a rest on it and pay your respects to one of the men who made it all happen here.

We’ve been spending a good deal of time sprucing up the trails and from Batchelor St to Wendell to the DAR everything is looking pretty good, so keep getting out and enjoying it before the snow flies.

The annual chapter meeting will be December 9th at the Notch Visitor Center on rte 116 in South Hadley/ Granby (Holyoke and Skinner SF Headquarters). We’ll meet at 10am, talk shop, elect officers and ride afterwards. Hope to see all of you there.

That’s it—enjoy the Holidays and try not to fall too far out of biking shape during the winter! —Liam O’Brien
Rhode Island

On September 16, 2007 RI-NEMBA held another successful Fun Ride at a new location in Arcadia. Thanks to Jim Grimley for putting together an awesome ride and introducing RI mountain bikers to Beach Pond riding. This different location was a little bit further to drive to but definitely worth it. The success of the ride can be measured in a number of ways. First, we had a great turn out and everyone had positive things to say. Second, 33 riders renewed or signed up for NEMBA including 27 RI-NEMBA members-increasing our total membership significantly. Finally, we were able to raise $500 to donate to the Cycle for Life Foundation (we'll report what the money was used for in a later addition).

Our biggest thank you for putting on this successful event goes to Jim Grimley without whom it would not have happened. Jim took care of the needed permits (both in CT and RI), designed the route and then pretty much arrowed it by himself by working until sunset the night before and then getting up as soon as the sun rose to finish arrowing before riders showed up. He then got stuck taking most of the arrows down as well (Jeff Hatz gave him some help doing this- Thanks Jeff.) So next time you see Jim be sure to thank him for all his work and next year consider giving him a hand.

Other people do deserve a thank you for helping out in other ways. Thanks goes to Lennon Schroeder for spending a few hours manning the water stop, to Craig Mello’s wife for designing posters to advertise this event, to Randy Williams for helping people safely cross Route 165, to Bart Angelo, Sara Grimley and Tina Williams for working the registration table, and to Tina Williams to buying the food for the cookout and then for cooking the food (with some help from Randy and a kind gentleman who jumped in to give me a break so I could award the raffle prizes.).

Our final thanks goes to the Cycle for Life Foundation, Ski Market and Victory Cycles for donating prizes for the raffle, which helps to pay for the food and to increase our donation to the Cycle for Life Foundation. Many great prizes were donated, which makes it easy to convince people to buy tickets! Hopefully we’ll be able to continue to hold our fun rides and to raise money for the Cycle for Life Foundation and next year when we do, sign up to help out. There are plenty of jobs for everyone to do and it would be nice to spread the work out a little more, especially for Jim’s sake.

On October 6, 2007, RI-NEMBA joined groups across the country in holding a Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day. This event was held at Ryan Park in North Kingston, a great location for beginning riders. It was attended by 13 kids and 12 adults resulting in the signing of 1 new member. Thanks to Jim Hoard and Leo Corrigan for organizing this event. Due to some unforeseen glitches getting permission, this event was delayed so we are very pleased with the attendance without a large amount of advertising and hope that next year we can build on it and turn this into a really spectacular event.

We will continue to hold meetings at Famous Pizza throughout the winter months in preparation for a successful 2008 riding season. Please check the website, rinemba.org for details and join us as we always could use more help in improving mountain biking in RI. Thanks. —Tina Williams

SE Mass

The weather has started to get cold and perhaps we’ll have a more normal winter this year. We held a productive meeting last night and discussed goings on in the various parks.

Chris Patrick reported on the trail day at Borderland that was lightly attended but productive as we managed to get a trail rerouted around a washed out section as well as some rock armoring over a very muddy section.

Steve Cobble reported that they had a very productive trail day at Wompatuck on October 14. They built a new connector trail which they are encouraging people to use to wear in.

At Blue Hills Joe Sloane reported on another very successful “Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day”. Attendance was good and all the kids had a great time. We have the Blue Hills Toy ride scheduled for December 2nd - a little snow would be nice. Other exciting news is that Steve Cobble has been hired by the Friends of Blue Hills to due a detailed trail assessment of the entire park. Steve rides extensively in the Blue Hills and Wompatuck and will take a hard look at the trails on foot and on bike and write up a report. A lot of trails in the Blue Hills are severely eroded, having been built straight down the fall line. It’s our hope that this will lead to NEMBA being given the green light to do some trail work in the Blue Hills.

Tim Scholz reports that he and others are working on a biking trail around a pond at Myles Standish State park. Tim reports that they are trying to control an ATV problem in the park also.

At our meeting we agreed that the SEMASS NEMBA trailer needed a minor overhaul - new tires and a new vent cap in the roof.

We elected chapter officers - Steve Cobble will be taking over as president and all other park VPs, treasurer and secretary will remain as is. Happy Holidays to all and see you on the trails. —Rich Higgins
As the year comes to a close, it is beneficial to look back at the chapters’ accomplishments and look ahead to see what can be improved.

We had a very successful Bear Brook Boogie MBAS ride in June. A good number of volunteers spent many hours preparing the start area and trails even before the day of the event. We raised 1300 dollars that was used in the park this fall to build 150 feet of boardwalk. We plan on hosting this ride again next year while adding some new “extras” that will improve the event.

Our fall trail weekend at Bear Brook was a huge success. Thirty people over the two days got an incredible amount of work done. We re-opened three quarters of a mile of abandoned trail. Our work in the Park continues to improve one of the best riding areas in the State.

The chapter merger between the Seacoast and South-Central chapters has been successful. We made better use of our volunteers while continuing trail improvement and development. A goal for next year is to find a way of attracting new people to help with chapter duties and emphasize the benefit of giving back to the trails.

Next year, we plan on holding some chapter activities other than trail days. We have a great bunch of people and would like to do some more social events, along with scheduled day trips, such as Kingdom Trails.

Thanks again to all those who made 2007 another successful year. —Peter DeSantis

The White Mountain chapter had a busy and productive 2007. After a decade of improving existing trails and building some of the best new trails in the Saco River valley, our chapter membership has significantly increased and seems to be building momentum for the future.

Group rides may have accounted for some of the chapter growth. The Monday Mellow rides and Friday night rides were very well attended (initially perhaps a little too well attended) and Nancy Cavalieri deserves major thanks for taking on what was sometimes an overwhelming task akin to herding cats.

The White Mountain portion of New Hampshire’s Jamis Bicycles Trail Care Series consisted of four “formal” trail maintenance days attended by 45 different individuals who put in a total of 270 hours of labor. Many hours of informal trail work was also completed, pruning and trimming trails and removing deadfall. Thank you to all who helped keep our trails in fine condition!

The ladies of the White Mountain Chapter, sponsored by the Mt. Washington Valley Velo Club, put in a strong performance at the 24 hours of Great Glen, taking 3rd place in the women’s sport category, but taking first place in having the most fun. Longtime member Pete Ostroski cleaned up on the local race circuit this year, winning the men’s solo categories at Great Glen and the 12 hours of Bradbury Mountain, as well as winning the Porky Gulch Classic stage race. Only 18 years old, Pete has been building trails with us since he was 11.

Our 7th annual White Mountain Weekend was held August 25th & 26th. An amazing amount of trail work was accomplished in just a few hours. We enjoyed excellent rides both Saturday and Sunday, a free beer and barbeque bash held in conjunction with the Mt. Washington Valley Velo Club, swimming in Echo Lake and the Saco River, and an incredible lighting show Saturday night.

We contributed to community events more this year than ever before. Besides co-sponsoring and helping out at the Red Jersey Cyclery Summer Race Series, we introduced a mountain bike segment at the Jen’s Friends Climb Against Cancer fundraiser at Mt. Cranmore, replaced over 250’ of bog bridges on National Public Lands Day, and helped put on the North Conway Library’s annual Bike for Books fundraising mountain bike tour.

Road trips were also in the works on many weekends. Besides attending the Bear Brook Boogie and Wicked Ride of the East, we sampled the goods in Plymouth and Franklin, New Hampshire and at Millstone Hill, Catamount Outdoor Family Center, Kingdom Trails and Millstone Hill in Vermont. High on the list for 2008 is to score local tours of Franconia and Littleton, New Hampshire.

Have any ideas for 2008? If so, please let us know! —Rob Adair
NEMBA rides are led by individual NEMBA members for other members and prospective members. So if you haven’t yet joined NEMBA, please do. Rides are usually for small numbers of people and vary with the location and the personal style of the host. Rides have been known to change location or time at the last moment. So be sure to call the ride’s leader, both to sign up, and to find out more about the ride. **Be sure to contact the ride leader a couple of days before the ride takes place. That way you will be sure that the ride is on.

If you commit to a ride, go, since space is limited. That way the rides will stay manageable and will be enjoyable for everyone. Helmets are required on all NEMBA rides. Contact your ride’s leader if the weather looks questionable.

**HEY!**  - Why not lead a NEMBA ride yourself? Contact Bill Boles at 508-583-0067 or nembabill@yahoo.com for more information.

| (T/FR) | Indicates a technical or freeride |
| (MBA)  | Indicates a Mountain Bike Adventure Series Ride |
| (EN)   | Indicates an EFTA/NEMBA Fun Ride. |
| (AM)   | Indicates a weekday daytime ride. |
| (DB)   | Indicates a daybreak or early morning ride. |
| (BHTW) | Indicates a Blue Hills Trail Watch ride. |
| (Dog)  | Indicates you can bring your dog. |
| (W)    | Indicates a WOMBATs ride. |
| (K)    | Indicates a Kids & Family ride. |
| (TBA)  | Indicates location to be determined. |
| (U)    | Indicates an urban ride. |
| (SS)   | Indicates Single Speed bicycles are OK. |
| (SShoe) | Indicates Snowshoeing |
| (SKILLS) | Indicates a skills training session |
| (SSP)  | Indicates a singlespeed ride |
| (BorS) | Indicates Bike or Ski |

The following ride categories are only general guidelines. You should ask the ride’s leader exactly what type of ride he or she is planning in terms of distance, pace and technicality. Also, be realistic about your level of riding skills and don’t join a ride that is beyond your present ability or fitness level.

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### MBAS

Topeak-Kenda Adventure Series ride. 10-20 miles. A ride on a marked course for all ability levels. Normally includes short and long loops. Call for more information.

### EFTA/NEMBA

10-25 miles. Marked loops for all ability levels. Normally includes multiple loops. Call for more information.

### Kids/Family

2-10 miles, usually easy pace & terrain. These rides are aimed at parents with young children.

### Beginner

2-7 miles, easy terrain, easy pace. These rides are aimed at riders with little or no riding experience.

### Novice

4-9 miles, mellow pace, easy terrain, frequent stops.

### Advanced Novice

6-10 miles, mellow pace, either mostly easy terrain, or could be technical terrain done slowly, frequent stops.

### Intermediate

10-20 miles, moderately technical, somewhat faster pace, occasional stops and bail out points. Intermediate rides are designed for people who ride frequently, and have some skills, but who probably don't enter races.

### Advanced Intermediate

The same as intermediate, except faster and harder terrain.

### Advanced

20-30 miles, high technical difficulty, fast pace, few stops or chances to bail out. These rides are intended for advanced riders or, racers who would like to go for a challenging ride at less than all out race pace.

### Women's Ride

Can be any level of difficulty. Call for more information.
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<td><a href="mailto:jjwright@princeton-ma.us">jjwright@princeton-ma.us</a></td>
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**Connecticut**

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**Maine, New Hampshire & Vermont**

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**Metro Boston, Merrimack & North Shore**

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<td>Lynn Woods</td>
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<td>Shawn Malloy</td>
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**Southeastern Mass, Blackstone Valley & Rhode Island**

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<td>Dartmouth</td>
<td>Beginner - Adv. Novice</td>
<td>Mark Frias</td>
<td><a href="mailto:konarocky@comcast.net">konarocky@comcast.net</a></td>
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<td>Burlingame RI</td>
<td>Adv. Beginner</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:zel@cox.net">zel@cox.net</a></td>
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<td>Abington Beginner- Adv. Nov.</td>
<td>Malcolm Neilson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:malcrider@yahoo.com">malcrider@yahoo.com</a></td>
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