



Don't Let Winter Keep You from the Greenways

Winter is a quiet time on the greenways in Rhode Island, but is still a good time to enjoy being outdoors and getting fresh air and exercise. Even in cold weather, paths stay open and are a good place to find that solitude we all long for.

On frosty still days you can appreciate the value of our greenways in new ways. Take your children for a walk before or after a family gathering, try a new wheeled sport like roller blading when you have the trails to yourself, or walk in western Rhode Island and look for squirrels and birds. Now that there are no leaves on the trees, you can easily spot the nests of birds and other small animals along the trail.

Try walking along the paths through your community instead of driving. Take some time to walk into your town to a historic site, one that you may have not taken the time to visit. Now is a good time to explore the natural and historic sites along the trail that you have passed in your car but have always been too busy to visit.

When it snows most trails are left unplowed and are great for cross-country skiing buffs. What a great way to follow animal tracks to see if you can find their

destination. Just remember to wear your day glow orange hat or jacket in the state management areas. It's hunting season!

This winter seems darker than any we have ever known. We look for ways to lift our spirits and the sadness of our national loss of security. The simple act of being outdoors, of walking along a quiet tree-lined path provides relief from new worries. It gives us an excuse to be happy. Try it - it works!

Spring will be here before we know it. Now is the time to plan for the summer of 2002. GARI has plans for events along the trails when the warm weather returns and always

welcomes new members, new energy and ideas.

Join us at our monthly meetings and be a part of the planning for new trails and events all over the state.

Sue Barker,
GARI State chair



First Ever Greenway Challenge is a Hit

By Charles St. Martin

The concept of biking, running and paddling from Worcester, Mass. to Pawtucket, R.I. on the surface seemed a daunting task, but for the 47 teams in this year's first Blackstone River Valley Greenway Challenge, the journey was well worth the effort.

The 46-mile course was tackled by the teams in stages, starting and ending with biking segments. In between those stages, teams ran

along proposed and existing sections of the Blackstone Bike Path and paddled canoes and kayaks on the

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Cyclists start the Blackstone River Valley Greenway Challenge. More photos inside.

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The Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island
announces its First Annual Meeting

Thursday, Jan. 31, 2002 5:30 p.m.

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First Ever Greenway Challenge is a Hit

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Blackstone River. The breezy, slightly chilly day on Sept. 29 was perfect for the athletes, although it wasn't warm enough for the few that took an unexpected dip in the Blackstone.

The event was promoted as an adventure challenge, but some teams approached it as a serious competition. When it came time for the last



transfer from a runner on the Blackstone Bike Path to a cyclist, first place biker Dan

Langlois took off like a shot. His team, Great Canadian, recorded a final time of 3:42:35. The average time to complete the course was about four and a half hours. There also were numerous "iron man"

competitors who completed the whole challenge by themselves. Kevin McCann finished in first place in the iron man category with a time of 4:53:39.

The event wrapped up with food and music from the LeeRon Zydeco Band from New York City on the sun-drenched grounds of Slater Mill in Pawtucket. Many of the teams excitedly talked about how they did, and swapped war stories with other teams. The question on everyone's lips was when the event would take place again. Michael Creasey, Director of the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission, promised that there would be an equally exciting event next year.

The challenge proved a great team-building exercise, and many corporations, organizations and businesses (including Rhode Island's Department of Transportation and Department of Environmental Management) sent teams of employees to compete. For many of the teams it was a chance to see places of Rhode Island and Massachusetts that they didn't think existed. The experience even was unique for the team from Vanasse Hangen Brustlin Inc. of Providence, a company that specializes in transportation planning.



Contestants rounded this curve at full speed.

"It [the Greenway Challenge] was really well organized and gave participants an appreciation of the ongoing investment in the corridor – bike paths, walking trails, increased water quality, canoe put-in areas, etc. – as well as a glimpse of the history of the Blackstone River Valley,"



A kayaker races down the Blackstone River.

remarked Stephen J. O'Neill, a project manager at VHB. "The starting line at the newly renovated Union Station in Worcester and finish line at Slater Mill certainly reinforced this sense of history and ongoing investments. We are

looking forward to next year's Challenge."

The complex series of transitions were generally handled best by larger teams, but doing well in the event was as much a feat of logistics as it was skill and speed. Most of the complaints about bugs in the Challenge were in regard to making the transitions easier to find and easier to handle.

While the teams competed and volunteers checked in athletes and

continued on next page

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www.geocities.com/rigreenway



Help Make Greenways in Rhode Island Happen:

used a network of cell phones to relay progress reports, numerous other events were underway. A series of walks, historic tours, hikes and bike rides took place over the weekend. These even included concerts, trips on the Blackstone Valley Explorer, a water quality work shop, and a raptor show.

Sponsors for the event included the Providence & Worcester Railroad, John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, East Coast Greenway Alliance, Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce, and Mass Highway. GARI chair Sue Barker was one of the key organizers of the event, and said she was excited about the Challenge and the awareness it created for the Blackstone corridor – part of the East Coast Greenway.

"The Blackstone Bikeway has so much to offer us, all in one 46-mile trail that passes by historic mills and through woodland areas, all rich in history and beautiful scenery," she said. "The Blackstone River Valley is a jewel that the ECGA is proud to include in our national system of trails. It is the first designated link that connects two major cities in the ECG chain. The Greenway Challenge gave all of us the chance to become better acquainted with the recreational opportunities in the Valley and to have a lot of fun!"



The winning teams hold still for the camera.

Dear Dr. Sprocket,

Dr. Sprocket will answer questions in each issue of Trail Mix. The question answered in this issue has been heard throughout the greenways of Rhode Island, especially during blue moons.

Q What do I do if I am headed for a crash?

Sincerely, Greenway Rider

A Dear Green:

Obviously, the best way to deal with a crash is to avoid it altogether, and my previous article on bike safety is a good place to start. Most bike accidents can be avoided by following these safety guidelines. It also is a good idea to ride defensively, constantly imagining how a situation could cause an accident, and what you would do to avoid it.

Some of the more common accident facilitators are road sand, huge pot holes, objects on the road, open driver-side car doors, cars turning into you, large dogs, excessive speed, slippery roads, and wide sewer grates. By keeping a watchful eye out for these, you can do a lot of crash-free riding. It is, however, a challenge to keep a watchful, careful attitude after riding accident-free for years.

Unfortunately, no matter how careful we try to be, it seems that anyone who does enough riding eventually finds themselves at the point of this question. However, by

the time we perceive an accident happening, it's usually too late to do much about it. Wearing proper equipment (especially a helmet) can minimize much serious damage.

Because our reaction time is relatively slow (2/3 to 3/4 second), we simply don't have enough time to do too much.

Most crash scenes appear to play by us in slow motion, with us playing an even slower, passive role.

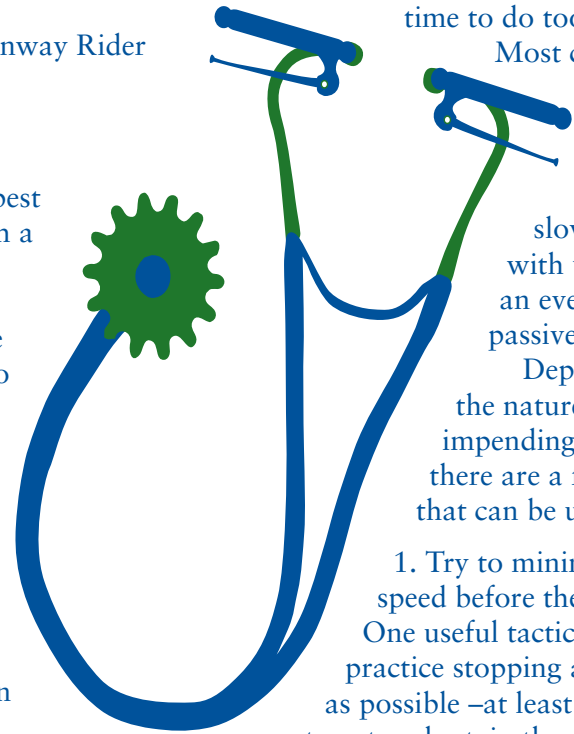
Depending on the nature of the impending crash, there are a few tips that can be useful:

1. Try to minimize your speed before the collision. One useful tactic is to practice stopping as quickly as possible – at least weekly – to get and retain the control and feel of rapid deceleration.

2. Try to turn away from a direct collision. A good tactic is to practice turning as sharply as possible at various speeds.

By repeating these practices, you will be able to do them more quickly and effectively if the time comes when they may help.

Send your Dr. Sprocket questions to gariweb@hotmail.com



Join the Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island Today!

Look to the Greenway for Good Health

Take a look at the greenway. What does it mean to you? Some see recreation, transportation, an asset to the community, landscaping, a place for kids to play, a place to relieve stress and exercise. The greenway can mean many things to you, but we hope that you see it as a path to good health.

The Surgeon General after all recommends that everyone, young and old alike, do 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity every week, which is about 1,000 calories per week. That means doing something almost everyday for 30 minutes, and doing it at an intensity level similar to walking at a brisk pace. But do not let that hold you back from exercising at any pace. Even a stroll down the path can benefit your health.

If you are looking to improve your health, try gradually working up to 150 minutes per week or 1,000 calories. Here are two rules of thumb to help you figure out calories. For walking and running, one mile on the greenway is about 100 calories. For biking, one mile on the greenway is about 40 calories. The following is an estimate of the number of calories burned per hour doing some favorite greenway activities:

- Walking at a rate of 3 mph is 230 calories.
- Walking at a rate of 4 mph (very brisk) is 400 calories.
- Hiking up hills is 490 calories. Add a 20-pound pack and it's 570 calories.
- Bicycling at a rate of 9.4 mph is 350 calories.
- Running at a rate of 11 min. per mile is 550 calories.
- Running at a rate of 8 min. per mile is 850 calories.
- Cross-country skiing at a moderate pace is 490 while uphill is 1,180 calories.

Those looking to lose weight or prevent weight from creeping up should aim for more than 1,000 calories per week. Successful weight losers usually burn closer to 2,500 calories per week (that is 25 miles walking or running). That's a lot. Those who are just beginning an exercise program should start slowly and gradually work up to 2,500 calories per week. Start with 10 or 15 minutes per day and add about 10 percent more each week. Doing a small amount each day can help you get into the habit of regular exercise.

Keep in mind that doing a little today is a lot more than nothing at all. Cheers to the greenway!

What's Happening on

Winter on the Greenway

The Greenways Alliance wants you to enjoy all four seasons on our greenways. On the first Saturday of each month, beginning in February, a series of events will look to explore the entire East Coast Greenway network of trails, starting at the Connecticut border and moving east and north toward the Massachusetts border. All activities will begin at 10 a.m. and conclude close to noon. Check the GARI website for any updates or changes (www.geocities.com/rigreenway). For more information, drop an e-mail to gariweb@hotmail.com. Come and explore the greenway with us!

February 2: A cross-country ski trip of about 8 km is on tap, providing Mother Nature brings the white stuff. Tentative meeting place is Greene Public Library in western Coventry. We'll make tracks on the Trestle Trail west to the Connecticut border and back. If the snow's too lean, we'll try again the following Saturday, Feb. 9. All participants are responsible for their equipment and for bringing a fluorescent orange vest and/or cap as it will still be hunting season. Please RSVP to the above e-mail address. Pray for snow!

March 2: A hike in western Coventry along the ECGA route and the North South Trail. Approximately 5 miles, mostly level terrain. We'll meet in the village of Greene, head west on the old rail line, then head north on the NST to Spencer's Rocks on the Moosup River. Return is roughly the same route after a detour to Carbuncle Pond. Led by Ginny Leslie,

Please Join Us!

To become a member, please complete the following form and return with your membership donation to GARI, 31 Stanchion Street, Jamestown, RI 02835

Please make checks payable to: Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State, Zip _____

E-mail _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

Organization _____

Annual Membership enclosed

- Individual \$15
- Family \$25
- National* \$50
- Supporting Organization: \$100
- Other: _____

* Dual membership in the East Coast Greenway Alliance and GARI.

Questions? Contact Sue Barker, state chair 401 423-2623 sueb4@home.com
www.geocities.com/rigreenway



Help Make Greenways in

Our Trails:

Rhode Island Greenways and Blueways

Calendar of Events

"Queen of the North South Trail." Advance registration requested to facilitate communications in case of bad weather (401-781-8117).

April 6: We will gather at the Station Street parking area on the Coventry Greenway for an update on the progress of the greenway through town. Cyclists, roller bladers and walkers will start here and head in different directions along the greenway. Cyclists and roller bladers will head west to the end of the paved trail, 5.4 miles. Walkers will tour the Whipple Conservation Area, Hope Meadows and Sandy Acres along the South Branch of the Pawtuxet River. There will be many opportunities to view wildlife and discover new connections to the greenway. In case of rain, the trips will be rescheduled for the following Saturday, April 13. Call 822-9107 to register or for more information.

May 4: We will meet at the caboose at River Point Park in West Warwick for coffee and donuts then head west on the paved section of the greenway across the Bradford Soap Works Bridge to the Warwick line. Heading back past the caboose, we will explore the greenway-to-be to the Coventry town line. Returning to the caboose, we will be treated to clam cakes and chowder courtesy of the Friends of the West Warwick Greenway.

June 1: A special celebration on tap to coincide with National Trails Day. Watch for more details in early 2002.

continued on last page

Greenways Construction Update

Bike paths

Blackstone River Bikeway

Construction underway on 3-mile leg of path from Route 116 in Lincoln (at the Ashton Viaduct) to Manville Hill Road in Cumberland. This will nearly double the length of the existing trail, which begins on Route 123 in Lincoln. Construction is beginning on bridge spanning the Blackstone to connect these sections. Four more miles in three separate construction projects expected to start in 2002. Remainder of path to go to construction by 2004.

East Bay Bicycle Path Section of bike path from Riverside Square to County Road in Barrington was resurfaced this fall. Town of Warren has hired consultant to complete design for spur to Massachusetts line.

South County Bicycle Path \$2.6 million bid awarded for second phase of project that will add two miles to the 3.5-mile segment that runs from Kingston Station to Rodman Street in Peace Dale. Construction should wrap up by Fall 2002, extending the path to Route 108. The last section of the project, a 1.3-mile trail with connections to Route 1A and Narragansett Beach is in design.

Washington Secondary Bicycle Path Repairs complete on washed out section of Cranston Bike Path, north of Park Avenue.

Entire 5-mile path complete. West Warwick Greenway section has one mile open. Two-mile section in West Warwick and Coventry beginning construction soon. Warwick Greenway section, 1.5 miles under construction. R.I. National Guard completed re-decking of long bridge spanning the Pawtuxet River. Town of Coventry working on design of 2.5-mile section, including decking of three bridges, that eventually will connect the existing 3.5-mile Coventry Greenway with West Warwick, Warwick and Cranston paths. Dept. of Environmental Management in design of 10-mile Trestle Trail, extending to Connecticut border.

Ten Mile River Greenway First 1.5-mile segment in Slater Memorial Park in Pawtucket completed last summer. Design work nearly complete on section from Slater Memorial Park to East Providence.

Woonasquatucket River Bikeway/ Northwest Bike Trail Series of on-road and off-road paths originating at Providence Place Mall. Additional study of former railroad right-of-way in Johnston set for this spring, as well as construction of 1,800-foot bike path spur within Button Hole Golf Course property in Johnston. 1.3-mile on-road segment advertised for construction from Providence Place Mall to Donigian Park. Spring 2003 will see 3-mile extension west from Donigian Park, and

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10 Years and Counting:

East Coast Greenway Alliance's Birthday

The East Coast Greenway Alliance, the parent organization of the Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island, had a special birthday party this fall, with federal, state and local officials on hand to celebrate 10 years of supporting and pushing the vision of an interstate bike path from Maine to Florida.

This year's annual meeting took place in Providence, right on the East Bay Bike Path at the Radisson Hotel at India Point. The event was a huge success by all accounts, and brought together people from all of the 15 states though which the 2,600-mile path will eventually pass. From designating new trails to hands-on exploration of the capital city and the Ocean State's greenways, there was plenty to see and do.

The meeting drew a wide audience, with guest speakers including Congressman James Langevin, Lt. Governor Charles Fogarty, Department of Environmental Management Director Jan Reitsma, Department of Transportation Bicycle Program Coordinator Steven C. Church, and even his honor, Providence Mayor Vincent "Buddy" Cianci. The event drew an impressive amount of media coverage of well, an important thing that helps put the greenway name and the idea before more people. The Providence Journal even dubbed the effort "Appalachian Trail east" in a lead editorial.

The meeting began as all annual meetings do with the East Coast Greenway Alliance Board of Trustees Meeting in which many trail segments were designated. In Rhode Island, the sole designation was for the Trestle Trail in western Coventry, using Route 117 as an on-road temporary route. Massachusetts had four trail segments designated, including: The Worcester to Plummers Landing on-road route, pending a satisfactory inspection, the Uxbridge to Rhode Island line on-road route, pending a satisfactory inspec-

tion, the Blackstone River and Canal Path as a Class B trail, and the Everett Bike Path as a Class A trail. Two Connecticut sections were designated, including the New Haven to New York State border on-road route and an on-road route from the Rhode Island border to New Haven.

The focus of the afternoon was the annual meeting itself, before a packed room at the Radisson. Lead off by David Dionne, chair of the ECGA board, and Sue Barker, chairwoman of GARI, several speakers addressed members, talking about the work that has been done and all that remains to

"Bikeways are great for exercise but they also bring people together," he said. "You people make it happen, you bring the vision to the table and you don't give up."

Fogarty recalled a time when things weren't so rosy with bike path development and how some projects, the East Bay Bike Path among them, were opposed at their inception. Today it's a different story, he said, and noted that many people selling their homes in the East Bay list their proximity to the bike path as a selling point.

Coventry Parks and Recreation Director Guy Lefebvre, who later that evening was presented with an award from the East Coast Greenway Alliance for "outstanding contribution by a local agency or employee," gave people a unique perspective on his pet project. The Town of Coventry owns five miles of abandoned rail corridor, of which three and a half miles have been paved to become the Coventry Greenway. He noted that when the town has having trouble financing the project, he came across a salvage company that proved to be a savior. The town not only had the old rails hauled away for free and all the wooden ties dug up and placed as fences along the route, but the town made \$40,000 in the process. The money was combined with other funds to pave the bike path.

The meeting featured somewhat of a sobering look at the future prospect for bike path funding by Tom Ross, assistant director of the National Park Service. He noted how tough financial times, and the economic fall out from the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, will likely hinder his department's ability to support such projects.

The meeting came alive when Cianci took the podium and talked almost non-stop about Providence and the work that has taken place to revitalize it. Many members said they were amazed at the frankness in which Cianci spoke and his drive and

EAST * COAST



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do. A central theme was a realization that the vision of the greenway is fast becoming a reality, and in many places, especially Rhode Island, the vision of a border-to-border bike path is within sight.

One person who is very excited about that prospect is Reitsma. An avid cyclist who participated in the recent Greenway Challenge along the Blackstone Valley Heritage Corridor, he talked about how the state is committed to these types of projects. He also gave kudos to the ECG for keeping up its resolve to see these types of projects complete.

enthusiasm for projects aimed at creating new economic opportunities in the city while creating unique spaces for public recreation.

Dionne and ECG Executive Director Karen Votava reported on the progress in the past year. It was a busy one for the organization, with a "gateways" event on National Trail Days last June. This included simultaneous events at the ends of the trail in Calais, Maine and Key West, Fla. The group also worked with Amtrak to expand the Bikes on Board program that makes it easy for people to tour the East Coast with a bicycle.

The greenway really showed its place in society during the terrorist attacks, Votava said. Both in New York and in Washington D.C., ECG segment trails proved to be a vital link for people to move about each city. Ironically, the new ECGA brochure mailed out this fall pictures one of these trails, with the former twin towers of the World Trade Center in the background.

Dionne noted that in the coming years as the ECGA continues to push toward its goal of the trail's completion by 2010, it is important for people to stay busy. He noted that many sections of trail, even those undeveloped and those using on-road routes, still need to be designated. He urged people to support the cause in whatever way they could.

"The East Coast Greenway has tremendous momentum," he said. "It exists in the capital budgets and planning documents of many cities and towns. It is here."

The evening event included an awards ceremony to recognize communities and individuals who have contributed to the progress of the East Coast Greenway. Along with Lefebvre, the City of Cranston was singled out for recognition with the Local Trail of Merit award. The Providence engineering firm of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin was recognized with an award too, both for the engineering work it has done on sections of the Greenway in Rhode Island and for the personal commit-

ment of many of its employees to the progress of the trail in New England.

The weekend of activity closed out with many fun activities pulled together by GARI. Starting out at

some of the state's best diners, meeting attendees took advantage of the mild weather to explore the bike paths and even take a trip down the Blackstone River in an English canal boat.

Greenways Construction Update *continued from page 5*

Fall 2003 design complete on another 0.6 miles. Smithfield rejected two bike path routes, and segment in that town has been eliminated because of the non-supportive position.

Bike routes

City of Providence: Allens Ave. Re-Surfacing Project/Bicycle Lanes – Road re-striped and bike lanes added on Allens Avenue and Narragansett Boulevard this summer. More striping on Allens Avenue planned when re-surfacing project is complete.

Cranston Cross-City Bikeway On-road route network complete from Allens Avenue to Cranston Bike Path to Western Cranston.

Warwick/East Greenwich Bicycle Network Work ongoing for 40-mile network through both communities, including three short sections of independent paths.

Tiverton/Sakonnet River Bikeway – Town is completing final design for an on-road, signed bike route between Fogland Point and Fort Barton Hiking Area.

Time to Celebrate!

The Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island
First Annual Meeting

Thursday, Jan. 31, 2002

Social Hour: 5:30 p.m. Dinner: 6 p.m.

The West Valley Inn

4 Blossom Street, West Warwick, RI

Donation: Members \$15, Non-members: \$20

Please RSVP by Jan. 28, 2002

To reserve your place, please complete the following form and return with a check payable to GARI, 31 Stanchion Street, Jamestown, RI 02835

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State, Zip _____

E-mail _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

Organization _____

Program:

- > Ginny Leslie, Former Planner, RIDEM: Historic Treasures along the North-South Trail
- > Stephen Devine, Chief, Program Development RIDOT Div. of Intermodal Transportation Planning: Present & future plans for RI Greenways

Questions? Call 401 423-2623

Webmaster's Corner

By Charles St. Martin

The winter is the perfect time for armchair travelling to far off places, and what a better place to do that than at the web site of the American Discovery Trail (www.discoverytrail.org). This east-

west version of the East

Coast Greenway would be three times as long as the ECG, 6,300 miles from Cape

Henlopen State Park, Del. to

Point Reyes National Seashore, Calif. This trail will traverse some serious terrain, through open prairie land, over some of the steepest mountain passes in the country and even across deserts! The trail would connect many existing trails, including the ECG, and many national parks and cities. ADT supporters say it could be the backbone for a national trails system. Here's hoping we're all in good enough shape and have the time to ride the whole thing!

Closer to home a great network of trails awaits. To check out progress on Rhode Island trails, visit RIDOT's web site at (www.dot.state.ri.us/WebTran/bikeri.html) and Mass Highway's web site at (www.state.ma.us/mhd/paths/bikep.htm).

Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island



Winter on the Greenway Calendar of Events

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Also on tap ...

Ranger Dan Meharg of the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission will lead a series of winter tracking programs in the Blackstone Valley and along the Blackstone Bikeway beginning in January. For more information, give Dan a call at 401 762-0250.

North South Trail Trek - Hike the whole state over 6 spring weekends! Day hikes explore western Rhode Island from Charlestown to Burrillville, covering between 11 and 17 miles every other Saturday. The NST links eight state management areas and one state park, and is on scenic back-country roads in

between. Dates: March 9 & 23; April 6 & 20, and May 4 & 18. Hikes meet at 8:30 a.m. Advance registration required, \$15 per person for the whole Trek. For registration form and fact sheet, call Ginny Leslie at 401-781-8117.

Other events on the greenways, trails and roads in Rhode Island and New England can be found directly at the following web pages:

- > Narragansett Bay Wheelmen
www.nbwclub.org/ride-table.html
- > Appalachian Mountain Club, Narragansett Chapter:
<http://users.ids.net/~amcri/gazette.htm>
- > The GARI website:
www.geocities.com/rigreenway

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 116
WAKEFIELD, RI

www.geocities.com/rigreenway

135 Main Street
Wakefield, RI 02879-3511