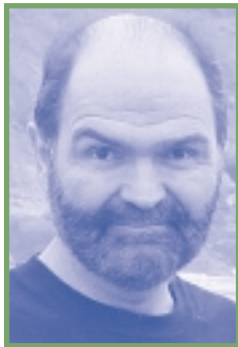




Greenwords: Stay fit with greenways

As I sit in front of my computer, the outside temperature is hovering in the single digits and the wind is howling through the bare tree limbs. Lowest on my list of fun things to do is venturing out into the frigid air and getting some exercise. Having read yet another article on the obesity epidemic and the latest recommendation by the Institute of Medicine to get at least one hour of exercise every day, I still find it difficult to follow Thoreau's brave advice to expose ourselves to nature's harshness to get a "peak" experience.



New GARI chairman Richard Santopietro.

How can we reconcile these conflicting attitudes and feelings? One way to fit physical activity into the crush of our busy life schedules and endless "to do" lists is to have easy access to walking and biking paths. Because it's so easy to put things that are most vital to our health and well being onto the "tomorrow" list, we're more likely to use something that is readily available.

In addition to the obvious physical health benefits, we need to be able to quickly and easily have access to places where we can get a booster shot to renew our relationship with the natural world. Our once- or twice-yearly cam-ping and hiking excursions convince us of their value in our lives, but they don't significantly bring us the day-to-day renewal and nurturing that we crave.

Although automobiles have dominated much of modern development, most of us have lost sight of how dependent we have become on them, and how much time and energy we spend driving and paying for them. Traffic congestion has become an accepted way of life for most of us who live in or near cities. The negative impacts on our environment, health, and overall well being are enormous, but we can't easily find a way to get away from them. In addition to encroaching on farmland and natural woodlands, and generating lots of noise pollution, the automobile has spawned the development of communities that are distinctly hostile to pedestrians and bicyclists.

Another negative factor in the equation of healthy living is the predominance of television and computers on our entertainment menu. We passively sit and watch programs (both awesome and awful), movies, sports, and news, and communicate with friends and search the world for

New features come to West Warwick Greenway

The Friends of the West Warwick Greenway weren't content to just see their nearly 3-mile section of the Washington Secondary Bike Path paved last year. They pursued other improvements that not only made the ride through town nicer, but saluted the heritage of rail travel that once passed through the same corridor.

This past fall the Friends group held a ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the relocation of a 74-year-old caboose near the path. The vintage piece of railroad equipment once had shared space with the former Great House Restaurant in Warwick, and two years ago was moved to a spot immediately adjacent to the path in the town's Riverpoint section. A parking lot was built in connection with the completion of the bike path, and the caboose was relocated closer to Providence Street. There it sits in a small park-like setting and is highly visible to passing motorists. The caboose will serve as a visitor's center and a meeting place for Friends' events.

continued on page 2

In this Issue:

- Winter on the Greenway: Calendar of Events
- East Coast Greenways Alliance Update
- GARI Honored
- Dear Dr. Sprocket
- Webmaster's Corner



This caboose marks the entrance to the West Warwick Greenway.

continued on page 2

Greenwords

continued from page one

knowledge and entertainment - all without getting any significant exercise.

We in Rhode Island are lucky to have so much natural beauty on a small scale at our fingertips. GARI is dedicated to the development and maintenance of convenient riding and walking paths within our everyday environment. It's clear that these wonderful facilities can bring us closer to our natural world and enhance our lives in many ways.

We are pleased to welcome the Rhode Island Trails Advisory Council as a sponsor for this year's issues of Trail Mix, our quarterly newsletter. As the new chair of GARI, I hope to fill the role that Sue Barker has excelled in during the past five years. Please pass this copy of Trail Mix to a friend, colleague, or relative and urge them to join us in promoting these wonderful facilities.

Richard Santopietro
GARI Chair

Trail Mix is the quarterly newsletter of the Rhode Island Greenway Alliance of Rhode Island (GARI).

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New features come to West Warwick

Greenway continued from page one

Cabooses such as this one once operated as part of the New Haven Railroad. Friends President David Perry said it's not certain whether this exact caboose was operating on this line, but it is typical of the type that did. The caboose has been repainted and marked appropriately, with the Friends getting some help from Boy Scout Troop 2, Arctic.

Also new to the area is a sign affixed to the steel trestle that runs over East Main Street, not far from the caboose. The sign was paid for by the Friends and various legislative grants.

The sign depicts the old caboose, along with a steam engine and a coal car, all set amongst the backdrop of the old Riverpoint train station. The sign's design was influenced by the sign erected on a similar-looking trestle that carries the Cranston Bike Path (also a part of the old Washington Secondary line) through the Oaklawn section of that city. The Washington Secondary also is comprised of the Warwick Greenway, the Coventry Greenway and the Trestle Trail.

Pavement of the West Warwick and Warwick sections last year connected to the start of the Cranston Bike Path. This creates a continuous 10-mile bike path from the Brewery Parkade near the Providence-Cranston line to just over the Coventry border. An existing 3-mile section of the Coventry Greenway is isolated from this stretch because of three closed bridges. The state and town are working to re-deck these bridges, possibly starting this year. This will allow riders to

use a gravel surface between the bridges and the existing stretch of the Coventry Greenway to extend their ride to Central Coventry - almost 15 miles in total. The state Department of Environmental Management is working on a plan to build a combination bike path and equestrian trail from the end of the Coventry

Greenway westward all the way to the Connecticut border. When fully complete, the Washington Secondary will be the longest bike path in the state, 25

miles each way. GARI and the East Coast Greenway Alliance have identified on-road routes enabling people to access the Blackstone Bike Path, the East Bay Bike and the Woonasquatucket Greenway from the Washington Secondary path.

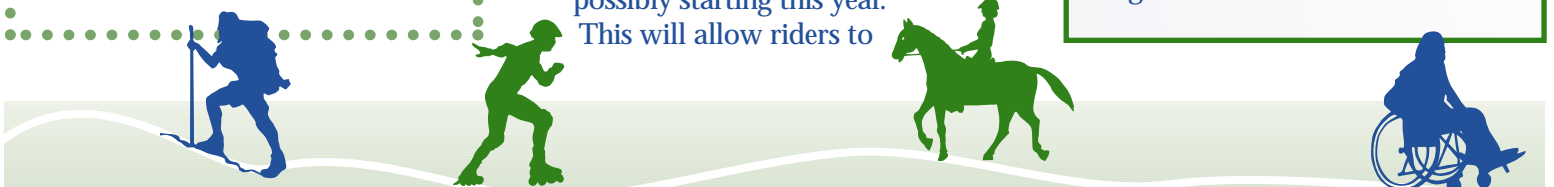


URI working to become bike-friendly

Students needing to get around the campus of the University of Rhode Island may soon do so on a fleet of bicycles that can be used by anyone.

The university long has been dominated by the car. A group of freshman are hoping to change that with a bike sharing program.

The idea is to create a "culture of bike use and sustainable transportation alternatives," according to Lorraine Keeney, coordinator of URI's sustainability initiative, as quoted in URI's Quad Angles magazine.



Help Make Greenways in Rhode Island Happen:

Dear Dr. Sprocket,

Dr. Sprocket will answer questions in each issue of Trail Mix.

Q I read your last column about using biking to help control my weight, and after overcoming my initial skepticism, I began following your training suggestions. After I had been on the program for about a month, I actually began to see some progress! With all this bitter cold weather we've been having, I can't bring myself to go out riding. Other than waiting until spring (and losing the progress I've made), what can I do to continue my biking?

Shivering Lass

A Dear Shivering:

Good for you for beginning a new chapter in your activity lifestyle! The most difficult part of any new behavior is overcoming initial doubts, then forcing your way through the initiation period. You've managed to do both. However, with our sometimes very harsh winter weather, it's impossible to stay in shape if you are limited to riding outdoors. Fortunately, even without any outdoors riding, there are many things you can do to stay in shape and be ready to ride when the warm weather arrives.

One good alternative to consider is a stationary bike. There are many different types available, so it's important to get one that can be adjusted to fit your body type, and feels good to ride. They range in cost from about \$100 to more than \$600, with the more expensive models offering better control and instrumentation. Some models have handlebars that are connected to the power system and move, working the arms and giving you an upper body workout while



riding. I would give them preference over those that are strictly bikes – all other things being equal. (In general, the more muscle groups you put into action, the better your workout.) Although I find stationary bikes much less fun to ride than a real bike, they can keep leg muscles and cardiovascular systems in good condition throughout our long winters. I find it less taxing to ride if I can look at a favorite TV program or read the daily comics section of the newspaper.

A bicycle trainer unit is another good alternative if you really dislike riding a stationary bike. These gadgets (from \$100 to \$500) have a stand that balances your outdoor bike and holds it against a resistance roller that contacts your rear wheel. You can just sit on your bike and ride in your normal stance. Most units allow you to vary the speed and load, and some models can connect to your computer and simulate actual outdoor riding conditions.

A stair-climbing unit is yet another gadget that can be used. Although they use leg muscles in a different way than biking, they can provide excellent aerobic workouts. Most good units are very expensive, so you should try out a number of them at a gym before you purchase any. You also may have a stairway in your house that could be used as an alternative to a machine.

Another alternative is an elliptical trainer. A cross between a stationary bike and a stair climber, they allow you to exercise leg muscles with low impact. Some models have moving handlebars and various amounts of instrumentation and control systems. Ranging in price from under \$100 to over \$2000, they can augment any casual or serious workout program.

Information on all types of indoor trainers can be found on the Internet and at good bike and sporting shops.

The best way to stay in shape is to use any of these units on a regular basis. No mechanical device can help you maintain your hard-won conditioning unless you actually use them. Be selecting and using them, you can continue to build on your program with as little as a half hour per day (not including warm up and cool down time). Gyms and health clubs are a good alternative if you live near one, or don't have enough room to have one in your home. I find I can get a good aerobic workout at home in the same amount of time it takes to travel to/from those facilities. Of course, if you are starting from scratch, make sure you're fit enough to do so, and if you have any questions, call your doctor. When warmer weather finally arrives, you'll be ready to jump on your bike and have even more fun.

Send your Dr. Sprocket questions to righreenways@righreenways.org



The Albion Mills Bridge offers a nice river view.

Join the Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island Today!

News from ECGA

The following is a collection of news items from the East Coast Greenway Alliance, which has established an electronic newsletter. The items are listed by region along the proposed 2,500-mile trail from Maine to Florida:

Northeast:

- > The Sunrise Trails Coalition has received a grant from the Maine Department of Transportation to incorporate and become a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. The coalition is advocating for establishment of the Downeast Trail, the northernmost segment of the ECG connecting Brewer to Calais, at the Canadian border. Work is slated to begin this year on a 2.5-mile section connecting the Calais Waterfront Pathway with the trail through Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge.
- > Seabrook, N.H. is embracing the East Coast Greenway concept and is moving ahead with the conversion of the abandoned Boston & Maine Railroad right-of-way through the town. One third of the 16-mile right-of-way sought for trail use is publicly owned, and the remainder is used for light freight traffic.
- > Work on creating a Greenway from Boston to the New Hampshire border got a boost recently thanks to Newburyport, Mass., where a license has been obtained to a right-of-way that was once part of the B & M Railroad. The trail already sees use by walkers and bicyclists, and local Boy Scouts have been installing benches and landscaping the trail, which has a compacted cinder-and-earth surface.
- > Focus groups have formed in northern New Jersey's Hudson, Essex and Union counties to bring public and political attention to the Greenway,

and to determine the alignment of the ECG from Jersey City through Newark and rejoining the current



ECG route near New Brunswick. Work on the Hudson River Waterfront Walkway - which affords great views of the Manhattan skyline - has spurred a great interest in trail development in this highly

congested part of the country.

- > Across the river in New York, there is interest in upgrading 10 miles of dirt trail along-side the Hutchinson River Parkway in Westchester County. This would connect trails in New York City and the proposed Merritt Parkway Trail in southwestern Connecticut. That trail has been used by equestrians.

North Central:

The Pennsylvania House and Senate have both passed a bill allocating \$42.5 million for developing the East Coast Greenway in Pennsylvania, including the construction of 50 miles of multi-use trail. As of yet there are no designated East Coast Greenway segments in Pennsylvania, and if the bill is signed into law, the state will make significant strides in catching up to other states.

South:

- > The Florida Department of Transportation is working to get approval for the Ludlam Trail, a 7-mile north-south connector in Miami-Dade County. This rail-

trail passes numerous bus stops and train stations and would serve as a bike-ped connector between the South Dade Greenway and Miami International Airport. It also has the potential to link with five other county trails. In north Florida, near Jacksonville, a "beaches bikeway" is being planned to connect many Atlantic beach communities.

- > The Revolutionary War Trail in the southern coastal area of South Carolina is coming together. A gazebo is being built at the Lowcountry Visitors Center and trailside signage and markers will be installed. Here a 22.5-mile trail will follow roads that date back to Revolutionary times, taking riders near the sites of four skirmishes between American militia and British forces.

- > Last June the Dunn-Erwin Trail in North Carolina opened, a 5.3-mile path running on an abandoned rail line. The two blue collar industrial towns, once connected by rail and strong manufacturing, are joined again and using the bike path to help promote tourism in the central part of the state.



- > The Coastal Georgia Greenway, a planned 300-mile network of paths along Georgia's coast, is coming together.

Approximately 140 miles of the greenway will become the East Coast Greenway route from the South Carolina border to Florida. Demonstration projects have been selected for each of the six coastal counties through which the greenway passes and money is being raised to match state and federal grants to get the projects going.



Help Make Greenways in Rhode Island Happen: Join the Gre

What's Happening on Our Trails:

Rhode Island Greenways and Blueways

Winter on the Greenway Calendar of Events

Winter isn't a big time for activities on local greenways, but it is a great time to make plans for events in the spring and summer. Below is a sampling of upcoming events in the area. If you have an event you'd like mentioned here, please send e-mail to rigreenways@rigreenways.org.



> **Flytying Classes:** Beginning on Feb. 6 and running for six weeks, the United Fly Tyers of RI and the Blackstone Valley Flyfishers will conduct flytying clinics. All materials and tools will be provided for beginners. Classes start at 7 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, Federal Street (next to YMCA) in Woonsocket. Call 762-0250 for more information.

> **Challenge Cycling:** Saturday morning "muffin rides" resume on March 1. Every Saturday at 9 a.m. from Haines Park in East Providence to Independence Park in Bristol (where the muffins are) and back. Handcyclists and traditional cyclists are welcome. Contact scott@challengecycling.org for more information.

> **The League of American Bicyclists 2003 National Bike Summit:** On March 5-7 in Washington, DC, a conference to focus on a number of bike issues such as a national Safe Routes to School program and reauthorization of TEA-21, the federal transportation bill. Visit www.bikeleague.org for more information.



> **North-South Trail Trek:** A series of six hikes designed to traverse the entire 75-mile trail along the western spine of Rhode Island from Charlestown to Burrillville. The hikes start on March 8 and will continue every other Saturday through May. For more information, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: N-S Trail Hikes, 27 Post Road, Warwick, RI 02889. The hikes range from 11 to 17 miles, and traverse eight Department of Environmental Management areas. Hikers also take low-traffic scenic town roads, passing through historic villages and small family farms, one-room school houses, tiny walled cemeteries and quaint country churches.

> **National Wildlife Refuge Centennial Celebration:** Celebrate 100 years of conservation with the grand re-opening of the Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center in Middletown. Time capsule dedication, official cancellation of the



Centennial First Class Postal Stamp, refreshments and more. From 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. on March 16. Call 847-5511 for more information.

> **Conservation Week:** School vacation week from April 14-18 is the time for celebrating Roger Williams Park Zoo's year-round mission of conservation of habitat, wildlife, and other important natural resources. Programming focuses on careers in conservation and runs from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. each day. Call 785-3510 or visit www.rogerwilliamsparkzoo.com for more information.

> **Earth Day At Roger Williams Park Zoo:** As the finale to Conservation Week, an environmental fair with over 50 area organization will show ways that people can help protect the planet (April 19, from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.). Use Zoo contact information above for more information.

continued on page 7

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 R. Santopietro, state chair (401) 782-6179, GARI442@cox.net
www.rigreenways.org





Bike path closure notice

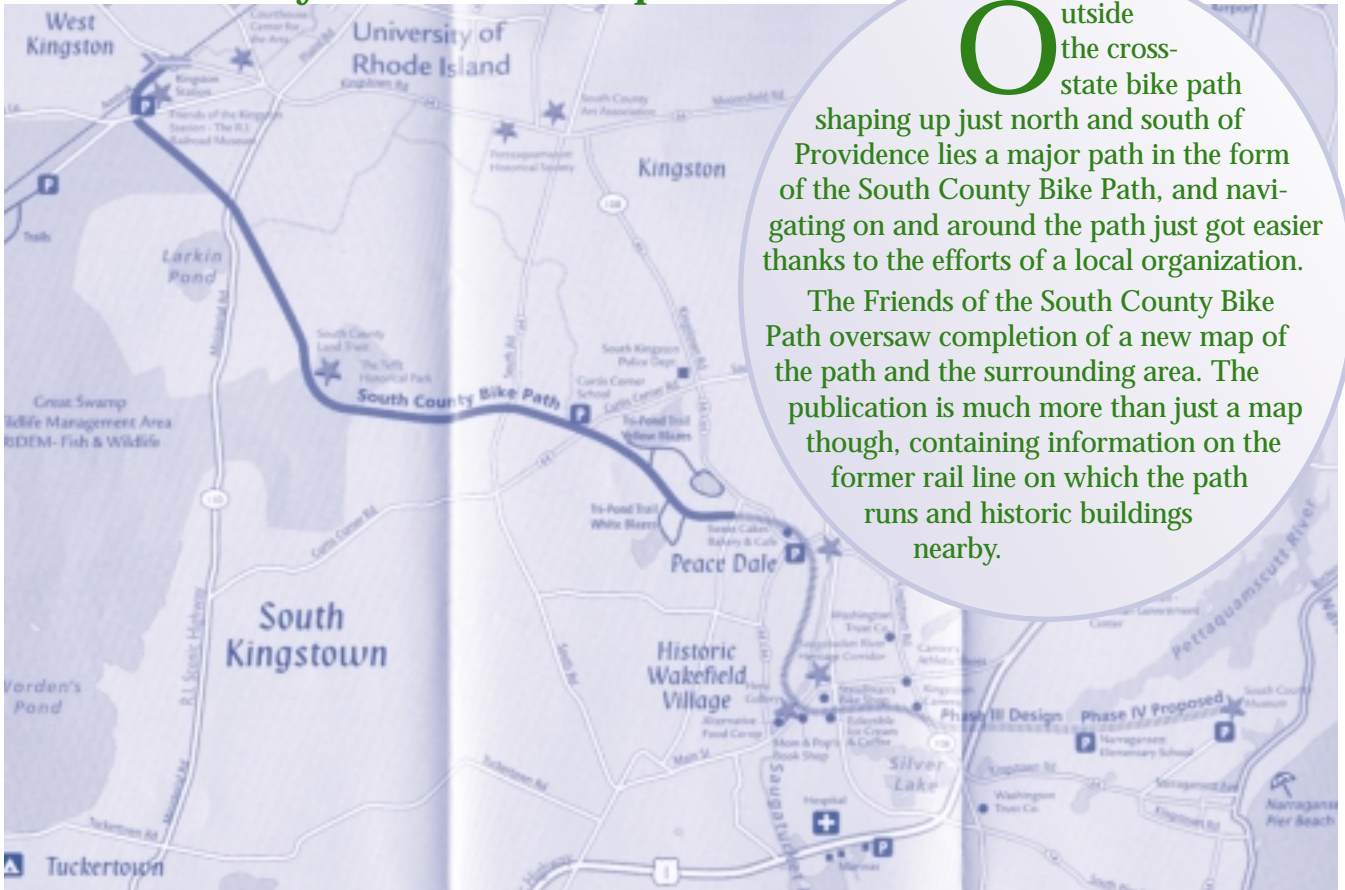
Riders braving the snow and chill of winter on the Washington Secondary Bike Path will find their ride shortened due to a construction project.

The work affects the Cranston Bike Path, which is closed from Warfield Street south to West Natick Road. Work is progressing on an highway overpass and is slated to be completed by mid April, according to state Department of Transportation officials. Given the cold weather though, it's likely this may take a bit longer.

According to a post on the Narragansett Bay Wheelmen listserv, the path may be a good place to avoid in winter anyway (unless you've got skis or snowshoes). Rider Alan Barta noted that the reason why people like riding the path in the summer is its "winter shortcoming." Shady spots don't promote a lot of melting, leaving sheets of bumpy ice when Barta rode it in January.

South County Bike Path Map Available

To get a copy of the map, contact the Friends at 783-9140, send e-mail to bvotava158@aol.com or drop a letter to Friends of the South County Bike Path, 481 Post Road, Wakefield, RI, 02879.



Outside the cross-state bike path shaping up just north and south of Providence lies a major path in the form of the South County Bike Path, and navigating on and around the path just got easier thanks to the efforts of a local organization.

The Friends of the South County Bike Path oversaw completion of a new map of the path and the surrounding area. The publication is much more than just a map though, containing information on the former rail line on which the path runs and historic buildings nearby.

The Narragansett Pier Railroad started the line in 1876. The line served a dual purpose in its heyday, handling the movement of goods inland and the movement of tourists to Narragansett Pier, where they could catch a steamboat to Newport.

The map itself outlines the path of the 8.5-mile trail, including the existing 3.9-mile section from the Kingston Train Station to the village of Peace Dale. A new 1.9-mile section is being built now, and will pass through Wakefield before ending at Route 108. It should be open this year. In design is the third stage of the path, which is facing opposition from abutting residents in nearby Narragansett. (GARI encourages people to attend any meetings on this topic and advocate for the bike path. Details on any meetings will be posted at GARI's web page, www.rigreenways.org, as they become available.)

The Friends group is pushing for a fourth phase that would take the path to the property of the South County Museum, across the street from Narragansett Town Beach. At this point riders would have access to miles of bike-friendly roads, south to Point Judith and the fishing village of Galilee and north to Wickford village in North Kingstown.

Calendar of Events

continued from page 5



> **Audubon Society of RI's Earth Day Celebration:** Celebrate Earth Day with environmental games, activities, hikes, animal discoveries, food and entertainment. Event runs from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. on April 26 at the society's Environmental Education Center, 1401 Hope St. (Rte. 114) in Bristol. Call 245-7500 or visit www.asri.org for more information.

> **Kayak Demo Days:** Great ways to sample kayaks and develop a love for paddle sports. On the west side of Narragansett Bay, visit The Kayak Centre's event on Phillips Street in Wickford on May 6 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Call 295-4400 or visit www.kayakcentre.com for more information. In the East Bay, the Sakonnet Boathouse demo day is May 17 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at Tiverton Town Beach, off Main Rd. (Rte. 77), Tiverton. Call 624-1440 or visit www.sakonnetboathouse.com for more information.

> **Riverfest Canoe and Kayak Races:**

Several divisions of canoe and kayak races, entertainment, food and exhibits along the Blackstone River on May 17 from 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. at River Island Park, Bernon Street, Woonsocket. Pre-registration required. Call 766-6262 or visit www.tourblackstone.com for more information.



rise to the ECG vision in 1991. Look to the ECG web page, www.greenway.org, for more information.

> **Rhode Island Rivers Day:** The Blackstone River Watershed Council is organizing a 30th anniversary celebration of Project ZAP to be held on June 21 in Lincoln at the Kelley House (on the Blackstone Bike Path). The festival is designed to be a family-centered event with free admission and will include programs of interest for all. Plans for paddling and cycling events are in the works. More details to come in our spring newsletter. Contact Tammy Gilpatrick, 724-2200, or tgilpatrick@tourblackstone.com for more information

> **TrailLink 2003: Designing for the Future:** This is the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's International Trails and Greenways Conference, taking place on June 26-29 in Providence. This is the first time this event has been held in New England, and upwards of 800 people are expected. A variety of speakers and programs are planned to discuss the issue of converting abandoned rail corridors into multi-use paths. Visit www.railtrails.org for more information.

Events on the web

Other events on the greenways, blueways, trails and roads can be found at these following web pages (\$ = fee)

In Rhode Island:

- > Narragansett Bay Wheelmen: www.nbwclub.org/ride-table.html
- > Friends of the Pawtuxet River: www.friendsofthepawtuxet.org

- > R.I. Canoe and Kayak Association: www.ricka.org
- > Appalachian Mountain Club, Narragansett Chapter: <http://users.ids.net/~amcri/gazette.htm>
- > Blackstone Valley Visitor Center: www.tourblackstone.com
- > GARI website: www.rigreenways.org
- > Save The Bay (\$): www.savebay.org/events
- > Sakonnet Boathouse (\$): www.sakonnetboathouse.com
- > The Kayak Centre (\$): www.kayakcentre.com
- > Audubon Society of Rhode Island (\$): www.asri.org

In Massachusetts:

- > Bike Rides For Ordinary People: www.geocities.com/BikeRidesFOP/BikeRidesUpComing.htm
- > Charles River Wheelmen: www.crw.org/ThisMonth.htm
- > Nashoba Valley Peddlers: www.ultranet.com/~nvp/
- > North Shore Cyclists: www.astseals.com/nsc/sunday.htm
- > Seven Hills Wheelmen: www.sevenhillswheelmen.org/rides.htm



A cross country skier enjoys some solitude and some deep snow on a wintry day.

Webmaster's Corner

Sunny thoughts just a click away

By Charles St. Martin

Given the sub-freezing conditions gripping Rhode Island this winter, it's a perfect time to sit back and think of warm summer days riding on local greenways. Thanks to the Internet, one can expand on this daydreaming by visiting web sites detailing information on bike paths in warmer environs, and even if you can't break away to visit them, it's interesting to take a look.

In the near future, frozen northerners can pack their bike and head to the Florida Keys, the southern-most terminus of the East Coast Greenway. Officially called The Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail, the future 106-mile path will stretch from Key Largo to Key West. It was officially designated as part of the East Coast Greenway on April 27, 2002.

Work on the trail began last year and will take about five years to complete. The trail will use on-road

GARI honored for Trail Mix



Photo: Al Riccio Photography, Warwick

The Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island was honored in November at the Pawtuxet River Watershed Council's Third Annual River Heritage Celebration at Rhodes-on-the-Pawtuxet in Cranston. The Recreation Award

was given to GARI in recognition of its "inspiring newsletter, Trail Mix; for their efforts to foster the development of the East Coast Greenway through the Pawtuxet River Watershed and the State of Rhode Island; and for mobilizing local groups and activities statewide toward realizing their vision of connecting every Rhode Island city and town by greenways and safe, well-marked on-road bike routes." Pictured (from left), are GARI Chairman Richard Santopietro, Council Chairman Charles Obert, Council Treasurer Robert Fleury, GARI Secretary Sue Barker and GARI Treasurer Ginny Leslie.

routes and dedicated paths and bridges to take cyclists through the Keys. For those who haven't been, the Keys is a lot like Cape Cod, with clogged, touristy sections like Hyannis and Yarmouth, but beautiful, pristine areas like the Cape Cod National Seashore. The view along the ride to Key West is spectacular - one will literally feel like he or she is peddling on the water. A fishermen's paradise and miles of ocean reefs to explore, there is plenty to do here.

Plenty of details, maps and progress information can be found at www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/keystrail.



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