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Subject: [Thunderhead] Thunderhead's Weather Report ~ Apr-May. 07
Date: April 27, 2007 1:01:26 PM PDT
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If you can't read the newsletter below, you can view it online at: <http://www.thunderheadalliance.org/WeatherReport/WeatherReport0704.html>



Volume 3, Issue 4

April / May 2007

In This Issue:

- [Thunderhead Training in Louisville, KY July 13-15](#)
- [Invitation for Inclusion in Thunderhead's Benchmarking Report](#)
- [Thunderhead Hiring Member Resources Manager](#)
- [Complete Streets Corner - Unique New York](#)
- [Member News - Bike the Vote 2007](#)
- [More Member News](#)

THUNDERHEAD TRAINING IN LOUISVILLE, KY JULY 13-15

The next Thunderhead Training is right around the corner and our hosts at [Bicycling for Louisville](#) are taking care of the details so attendees can experience their inspiring city. Register today to secure your spot in this fast-paced interactive Training that will send you back with all the tools you need to win powerful campaigns for bicycling and walking as they build your organization. Find the details and registration form here:

<http://www.thunderheadalliance.org/trainings.htm>

A huge thanks to our Louisville Thunderhead Training sponsors who are making this Training possible: [Planet Bike](#), [National Bicycle Dealers Association](#), [National Center for Bicycling and Walking](#), [Saris Cycling Group](#), [Bicycle Retailer & Industry News](#) and the [Local Government Commission](#).

INVITATION FOR INCLUSION IN THUNDERHEAD'S BENCHMARKING REPORT

We are coming to the end of our data collection stage of this project that will compare government endorsed data on bicycling, walking, health and underserved populations in all 50 states and the 50 largest U.S. cities as well as the capacity of our organizations representing these states and cities. We're right on schedule to publish our first full Benchmarking Report this fall. That means we have an opportunity for a bit of fun!

If your organization doesn't represent a whole state or one of the top population cities (you would have been pestered by us by now if it did!) we would like to invite you to send in a Benchmarking organization form so that your organization can be included in the Report. The form will take about ten minutes to fill out and asks for the usual capacity measures: membership number, budget (with some breakdowns), staff number and annual media hits.

One of the topmost goals of Thunderhead's Benchmarking Project is to show that advocacy gets results. Without standardized data that compare cities and states, advocacy organizations lack hard data to prove their work is linked to results. These organization capacity data are meant to measure capacity of Thunderhead organizations so over time we can show that capacity is linked to results on the ground.

The budget question is broken down for events, individual donors, grants, etc. The benefit here is to spot trends among our organizations, opportunities for growth in funding sources, and to set benchmarks for our organizations. For example, a frequent question we get from new organizations is how big they can reasonably hope to grow. Being able to see membership and revenue numbers from organizations in similar size cities may help give them an idea of this, and help other organizations to set new goals or try new methods. Organizations will also be able to see who does really well with events, for example, and these organizations may become models for others when it comes to raising funds through events.

Also, if you choose to participate, you and your organization will be listed in the Report's acknowledgements, which you can then use to tout your national participation to your officials. If you are interested in participating, please email Kristen Steele requesting a Benchmarking Org Form at kristen@thunderheadalliance.org. Then you will need to return your completed form via email to Kristen by May 11th.

And thanks in advance to those who participate! Let's get some small and mid-sized cities in this first Benchmarking Report!

THUNDERHEAD HIRING MEMBER RESOURCES MANAGER

As most of you have heard, David Hoffman is moving on to new adventures. This means Thunderhead has a job opening for someone who adores helping leaders of our member organizations, finding and developing what they need, and upgrading our technology systems to ensure superior

delivery to all leaders of all of our member organizations.

Working closely with leaders of our member organizations, our full-time Member Resources Manager will develop, compile, post and disseminate best practices, guides and other resources for our 128 member organizations in 49 states and Canada. Technology upgrades and problem solving will also be important. The Member Resources Manager will work closely with Thunderhead's Executive Director and other staff to increase our resources and productivity of our programs for our members.

Please see the full job announcement:

<http://www.thunderheadalliance.org/jobs.htm>

Closing is June 18th.

COMPLETE STREETS CORNER: UNIQUE NEW YORK

by Dominic Liberatore, Complete Streets Campaign Coordinator

One of the many advantages of my job as the go-to person for Thunderhead's National Complete the Streets Campaign is that I get to travel the country to meet many leaders of our wonderful member organizations.

This month, I had the opportunity to spend some time in central New York with leaders of the [New York Bicycle Coalition](#) (NYBC). The NYBC is a growing advocacy organization that has by far the most unique complete streets campaign that I have encountered! Lois Chaplin, a board member for NYBC, has a partnership with Cornell University. She spends her time traveling the state setting up complete streets workshops.

As Lois found out, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) only controls 10% of all roads within the state of New York. In order to get things done, she and NYBC have to work with the many local municipalities. This, along with their continued policy work with NYSDOT, will result in complete streets across the state. So if I may, I would like to tip my hat to Lois and Joshua Poppel, NYBC's Executive Director. Keep up the good work!

MEMBER NEWS: BIKE THE VOTE 2007

How do you effectively lobby for positive bicycle and pedestrian changes during an election without putting your 501(c)(3) status in jeopardy? Easy. The tools that you need are likely already being used by your organization; telephone, email, and your website. Member organization [Bike Pittsburgh](#) has successfully engaged nearly all of the candidates for their upcoming local election. We caught up with [Bike Pittsburgh's](#) Executive Director, Scott Bricker:

Thunderhead: Why is bicycling and walking a political issue for your organization?

Scott Bricker: Anything tied to public funding is always a political issue, and cycling and walking are no exception. In order for money to be allocated in the city budget towards bicycling, the political will must exist to make it happen. That's the power of a grassroots organization comprised of politically active, vocal supporters of cycling. We can make it known that lots of voters care about these issues and therefore so should the candidates.

T: How did you contact all of the candidates?

SB: One of our volunteers works for an environmental organization that had a listing of all the candidates and their contact info. We opted to send them the questions via email to expedite the process.

T: Tell us what you've done with all of your responses.

SB: We set a two-week deadline for the candidates to respond to our questionnaire. On the date we set, we published all the responses we received on our website. We also sent the link to the responses in our email newsletter, which reaches close to 2000 people in and around Pittsburgh. What's great is other blogs and organizations in Pittsburgh have also linked to our Bike the Vote page bringing even more attention to these issues.

See for yourself; follow [this link](#).

Here's another great example of a member organization, the [San Francisco Bicycle Coalition](#), effectively influencing the political process:

<http://sfgate.com/cqi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2007/04/27/MNGJIPGO321.DTL>

MORE MEMBER NEWS

SABA Makes A Difference

The [Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates](#) (SABA) reports that: "It was a strange night in Rancho Cordova. Bicycle and pedestrian advocates argued against bicycle/pedestrian overcrossings. Cycling and walking advocates agreed with developers. Cats and dogs were living together." Intrigued? Find out more on page 6 of SABA's [Squeaky Wheel](#) newsletter.

Thunderhead Organizations Are Hiring!

Our member organizations are hiring! Check out all of the fantastic job opportunities on the [Thunderhead Jobs page](#). If your organization is hiring, be sure to let us know! We'll list your job posting. Simply send an email to: `jobs "at" thunderheadalliance.org`.

This monthly Thunderhead Alliance Weather Report is for the leaders of our member organizations and our supporters. The Thunderhead Alliance, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is the only coalition of state and local bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations working in unison to break down the barriers to safe bicycling and walking in North American communities. Find more info at: www.thunderheadalliance.org.

Thunderhead mailing list

<http://mailman.listserve.com/listmanager/listinfo/thunderhead>

Thunderhead Archive: <http://mailman.listserve.com/listmanager/private/thunderhead>