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The Weather Report

The official newsletter of
Thunderhead Alliance for Biking and Walking
Strengthening and Uniting Coalitions Across North America

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THE LAST WEATHER REPORT

As you've probably heard, the Thunderhead Alliance is changing its name. With the help of [Smart Meme Studios](#), we have undertaken a rebranding process and have taken in loads of ideas and feedback from Alliance members and stakeholders. After months of brainstorming, collecting input, and multiple creative rounds, we have chosen our new name and will be unveiling it and our new logo very soon! While we won't reveal our new name here, we will say it has no inference to weather. Therefore, we will be changing the name of our e-newsletter. You are reading the last [Weather Report!](#)

We'll be sure you are among the first to receive the announcement of our new name and hope you'll be on the lookout for our fresh new e-newsletter next month.

2009 WINNING CAMPAIGNS® TRAININGS ANNOUNCED

After reviewing 12 excellent applications, the Alliance has finalized locations for our 2009 Winning Campaigns® Training schedule. This signature Alliance training assists advocacy leaders in planning campaigns that win victories for biking and walking while increasing their organization's capacity to take on even greater challenges. The 2009 schedule is as follows:

- Indianapolis, IN: February 27 through March 1
- Toronto, Ontario: March 27-29
- Miami, FL: May 15-17
- Denver CO: September/TBA
- Little Rock, AR: October/TBA
- Richmond, VA: November 13-15

In addition, we are working out the details for a Membership Training slated for September in San Francisco. We will have the details and specific dates regarding upcoming fall trainings in our March e-newsletter; however, you can always find information on upcoming trainings and Mutual Aid Calls at www.thunderheadalliance.org/events.

ALLIANCE MEMBER PARTY AT THE NATIONAL BIKE SUMMIT

The Alliance will host a member party and award presentation on **Tuesday, March 10th** immediately after the opening session of the National Bike Summit. Please join us at the **Elephant & Castle at 1201 Pennsylvania Ave NW** (corner of Pennsylvania and 12th St, a block from the site of the National Bike Summit) **between 8-11pm**. Around 9 we will announce the winners of the Alliance's first annual Advocacy Awards. We will also be using the occasion to celebrate our new name and announce a brand new grant program. Besides these exciting announcements we'll promise you a free drink, snacks, and a chance to hang with the best biking and walking advocates from around North America. Please join us and your friends as we get into the swing of a very exciting and important week.

GET A PIECE OF THE STIMULUS PIE FOR BIKE/PED PROJECTS

Since last fall we've been reaching out to you to submit projects, call Congress, and meet with your DOT to ensure that funding for biking and walking was included in the Economic Stimulus bill. [Thanks to your action, significant funding for biking and walking made the final bill.](#) Now the real work begins! The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 has four pots of funding of interest to bicycle and pedestrian advocates:

- Highway Funding and Transportation Enhancements - \$26.8 billion is being distributed to states with 3 percent allocated to Enhancements - this is a base line as highway \$ can include bike / ped projects.
- School Modernization - \$9.7 billion of this funding can go to repairs, renovations, or modernization of K-12 schools and "institutions of higher education" to meet green standards...which include bike and ped facilities and access.
- Energy Efficiency - \$3.1 billion for Energy Efficiency Block Grants to cities, counties and states...one of the eligible uses is for bike and ped infrastructure.
- Community Development Block Grants - \$1 billion for a wide range of unique community development needs to cities and counties.

The highest priority should be the highway funding, as it includes specific funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects through Transportation Enhancements and opportunities to apply Complete Streets principles to the rest of the highway funding. The likelihood other funding sources will include significant spending on bike / ped projects is more remote given the large number of competing demands.

Alliance organizations must get to work right away to ensure that our state and community leaders are aware of ready-to-go bicycle and pedestrian projects. Time is of the essence as states and communities are already making decisions about how to spend their stimulus funds. While there are 120 days before unobligated funds can be rescinded, states are required to give their spending plan to the Feds in just 30 days. If you haven't already held meetings and gotten commitments from your governor, mayor, and state DOT, please schedule meetings immediately to present your case to these key officials. Please review these recommended actions at <http://www.americabikes.org/take-action/> and find answers to frequently asked questions at [America Bikes](#).

ALLIANCE TO ANNOUNCE NEW GRANT PROGRAM

Bicycle industry leaders SRAM, Cannondale, Bikes Belong, and Planet Bike have recently given big bucks to the Alliance to help us realize our vision of strengthening state and local advocacy organizations. There are three primary ways the Alliance is going to dedicate resources:

1. Dramatically increase Winning Campaigns Trainings with six regional trainings, while simultaneously reducing registration cost and providing stipends to hosting organizations.
2. New coaching, training, and research assistance. Working with the League of American Bicyclists, we will have a team of staff dedicated to assisting state and local organizations.
3. A new grants program that will be announced next month.

We don't want to give away the big surprise, but on March 10th at the Alliance Member Party and through our website, we will be making a major announcement about start-up and innovation grants for emerging and established organizations. [Stay tuned](#) for the announcement of this major new program!

2009 MUTUAL AID CALENDAR OFFERS PLENTY

"Give help, get help" is the aim behind the Alliance's [Mutual Aid Call](#) series. These monthly conference calls bring together bicycle and pedestrian advocacy leaders to discuss topics relevant to you. On the calls leaders share expertise in a particular topic, ask questions of others, and talk about challenges they face. In our 2009 Member Survey we asked you what topics you'd like to talk about this year. After pouring over [results](#), we have finalized our complete 2009 Mutual Aid conference call schedule.

2009 Mutual Aid Call Calendar:

March 19 - Bring the Ciclovia to Your Streets: Lessons from Experts
April 2 - Fundraising Strategies - Introductory
April 16 - Fundraising Strategies - Advanced
April 30 - The Pros and Cons of Interns and How to Make Them Work
May 14 - Membership Development and Retention - Introductory
May 28 - Media Relations
June 11 - Membership Development and Retention - Advanced
June 25 - Using the Web to Grow Your Organization
July 23 - The Power of Partnerships
August 6 - Complete Streets
August 20 - Working with City Hall: Tips from the Field
September 10 - Effectively working with State Legislatures
September 24 - Annual Appeals Success
October 22 - Put the Benchmarking Report to Use for You
November 19 - Annual Reports: Why Bother?
December 10 - Communications: Telling Your Organization's story

Mutual Aid Calls are free for leaders of Alliance member organizations. To learn more about these calls and to register to attend visit www.thunderheadalliance.org/events.

MEMBER NEWS

Bike Pittsburgh Gets New, Simplified Bike Rack Ordinance

With City Council's resounding "yeah" vote, the City of Pittsburgh now has bike rack installation rules similar to other cities with bike friendly status. Reflective of a new found commitment to transform Pittsburgh into a "world class city" of bikeable and walkable communities, the ordinance will allow for bicycle racks to be installed in the public right-of-way by property and business owners through a simple and expedited process. Read more about this first major accomplishment of the recently hired Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, a city position created by [BikePGH](#), by clicking [here](#).

CO Senate Passes Colorado Bicycle Bill

According to [Bicycle Colorado](#), "The Colorado Senate approved the 2009 Bicycle Safety Bill (Senate Bill 148) on Tuesday morning 26-7! The Senate process resulted in no major changes, keeping a three feet safe passing distance in the bill. Now the bill moves to the House and faces the next set of votes. Passing the Senate is a big step but there is still lots of work to do in the House." Besides a 3-foot passing provision, the law promotes anti-harassment towards cyclists and allows for side-by-side cycling among other conditions. To read more about this bill visit [Bicycle Colorado](#).

San Francisco Bicycle Coalition Saves Local Bike Lane

According to the [San Francisco Bicycle Coalition](#), "We cheered at Thursday's decision by Superior Court Judge Peter J. Busch to reject the SF Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA) proposal to remove a bike lane and protective barrier at the notoriously dangerous Market and Octavia intersection. Thanks to the more than 200 bicyclists, as well as state and local officials, who came out to rally with the SFBC to save the Market and Octavia Bike Lane -- the bike voice was heard!"

WABA Wins New Bike Safety Bill for DC

The City Council of Washington, DC recently passed the Bicycle Safety Enhancement Act of 2009 at the urging of the [Washington Area Bicyclist Association](#) (WABA). Following the death of cyclist Alice Swanson in Washington, DC last summer WABA worked hard with their local political leaders to pass a bill that would better protect cyclists on the city's streets. The bill requires advanced bike and pedestrian safety training for the drivers of city-owned heavy vehicles, mandates blind spot mirrors, blind spot warning stickers, and rear wheel under-run guards on the city's heavy vehicle fleet, adds a new fine for driving in bike lanes, and establishes a three foot passing law.

New Texas Safe Passing Bill Filed in TX House and Senate

According to the [Texas Bicycle Coalition](#), "The 2009 Safe Passing bill was filed in the Senate by Rodney Ellis (D-Houston) and John Carona (R-Dallas) as SB 488 on January 15th, and the companion bill was filed in the House by Linda Harper-Brown (R-Irving) as HB 827 on January 27th. The new Safe Passing Bill protects "vulnerable road users" including a pedestrian, runner, physically disabled person, child, skater, construction and maintenance worker, stranded motorist, equestrian, and person operating a bicycle, motorcycle, or unprotected farm equipment." To learn more about this proposed legislation for cycling, visit [Bike Texas](#).

SLO County Bicycle Coalition Parks 10,000th Bike

The [San Luis Obispo County Bicycle Coalition's](#) Bike Valet program reached a landmark on January 15th when it parked it's 10,000th bike. The Coalition rewarded the lucky cyclist with a few exciting prizes including socks, a t-shirt, a gift certificate, and an iPod Shuffle. While the Coalition congratulated their parking patron, we'd like to congratulate the Coalition on their vibrant bike parking program and wish them well on their way to their next landmark of 15,000 parked bikes!

Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin Hires New Executive Director

Kevin Hardman became head of the [Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin](#) just a month ago. It's a big change from his executive experience in business and real-estate development, but Hardman's business and marketing skills will be very handy in growing the organization. Hardman has special expertise in shepherding large teams of public and private partners towards common goals. "I was attracted to the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin because of their commitment to all types of cyclists, their broad membership base, and their momentum in advocating for the integral role that bicycling plays in the creation of rich, interesting communities." Welcome Kevin!

Local Motion Celebrates Human Powered Motion on Ice

Burlington, Vermont's [Local Motion](#) is celebrating and encouraging human powered motion even in the coldest of times. Local Motion helped sponsor Great Ice in Grand Isle this month, an event they say transforms Lake Champlain into a "icy playground." The event features numerous outdoor activities including the F-f-frozen Chosen Regatta, a friendly competition inviting all ages to build and race their own funky, human powered machine on the ice! Contestants race solo or in teams and prizes are awarded in several categories.

Alliance Event Calendar

Indianapolis Winning Campaigns Training: February 28th-March 1, 2009, [details here](#).

Bring the Ciclovía to Your Streets (Mutual Aid Call): March 19, 2009 (Thursday), [details here](#).

Toronto Winning Campaigns Training: March 27-29, 2009, [details here](#).

Alliance Organizations Are Hiring!

Check out the [Alliance Job Board](#) for opportunities with biking and walking advocacy organizations across North America.

We Want Your News!

Thunderhead Alliance wants to publish your good news! Our coalition is our members and your peers want to hear about your success and innovations. Have you had a recent success? A winning campaign? A creative event? Has your organization used innovative methods for attracting members or earning media attention? We want to know about it! [Tell us your news here](#).

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 together to promote bicycling and walking in North American communities. Find more info at: www.thunderheadalliance.org.

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