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### 2008 LEADERSHIP RETREAT: EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE EXTENDED

The 2008 Thunderhead Alliance Leadership Retreat is just two months away, and we are extending the early registration deadline until July 15th. If you have not yet registered, now is the time to [sign up](#) and pass this message onto other leaders in your organization. Past retreats have focused on executive directors, but this year we want to include other leaders of member organizations such as key staff and board members. Given the huge challenges and opportunities ahead for bicycling and walking, the retreat is a key time to meet face to face to discuss our role and how best to take coordinated and effective action. We only have this opportunity every other year!

This month's Weather Report brings you good news that will save you money:

1. We've extended the discounted pre-registration rate for the retreat. [Sign up](#) by July 15th and save \$75.
2. We are able to offer a few scholarships to the Leadership Retreat thanks to some generous supporters. [Click here to apply.](#)
3. Courtesy of the National Center for Bicycling and Walking, we are able to offer 50 scholarships for \$155 off registration to the Pro Walk/Pro Bike Conference (September 2-5). Although the usual rate for the conference is \$550, the 50 scholarships offer the reduced rate of only \$395.

The Leadership Retreat Committee is working to finalize the retreat agenda, which will include workshops geared towards growing your organization through additional staff, membership, and fundraising. Participants can also expect specific workshops aimed at expanding your capacity through technology, the web, and strategies for empowering your organization. And, of course, do not forget the highly anticipated discussion on next year's federal transportation bill. A draft of the agenda will be available by Wednesday, July 2, at <http://www.thunderheadalliance.org/retreat>.

Since we only have 50 Pro Walk / Pro Bike Scholarships to award and space at the 2008 Thunderhead Alliance Leadership Retreat is limited, we urge you to [sign up today!](#)

### THUNDERHEADALLIANCE.ORG: NEW MEMBER CONNECTIONS AND TOOLS

As promised, Thunderhead has completed the transition of our web site to a new platform, offering our members and supporters a new, easy-to-use site that strengthens your connectivity to other Thunderhead leaders. An enhanced home page offers quick access to upcoming events and mutual aid calls, the latest member news, recently added resources, Weather Report archives, and a more up-to-date news section. Members can also find other enhancements under Media Center and Member Services including:

- Ability to submit your organization's news for others. Selected news will be featured in Thunderhead's Weather Report;
- Ability to post articles and press featuring your organization;

- An enhanced job library where you can post job opportunities with your organization;
- Quick links to change your account password and edit your organization's profile directly—your profile will be automatically updated on our Members & Supporters list;
- Direct access to listserv and other help documents—including a place for you to submit your technology problem online;
- RSS and other web 2.0 technologies—keeping you advised of updates to our site.

There's more... Thunderhead Alliance has more tools in development which we plan to release in the coming months, including more online help documents and a forum to capture all of the great discussion on our listserv, further enhancing your ability to search those list archives for previous discussions.

As always, we want your feedback. If you have recommendations on future enhancements for [thunderheadalliance.org](http://thunderheadalliance.org), [email Jeremy Grandstaff](mailto:email_Jeremy_Grandstaff), our Member Resources Manager, with your ideas.

## ORGANIZATION TIP: PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISING RIDE

*These tips are from a recent Thunderhead Mutual Aid conference call on Planning Successful Fundraising Rides. To listen to the entire call visit Thunderhead's [Bike & Ped Advocacy Resource Library](#) - and search "Fundraising ride".*

### Who to Target for Your Ride?

"In New York City we target everyone, because we want everyone to ride bikes. Even though our ride is the New York City Century, we definitely promote the 15-, 35-, 65-, and 75-mile aspect of it because we want people to be encouraged to do the ride. This ride isn't just for hard core riders, this ride is for everyone to get to know the city and see it from the vantage point of the bicycle."  
—Nora Pena, Transportation Alternatives

"You might piggyback with another event in your city, maybe some sort of art festival or flea market or garden market." —Christine Schwartzkopf, Chicagoland Bicycle Federation

"For our Boulevard Lakefront Tour we do try to go after everybody. We have an older demographic that have been doing the ride for years... but we are also trying to get a younger demographic... Last year we served beer for the first time at the post-ride festival. So the post-ride festival (message) is, 'hey come purchase a picnic lunch, grab a beer, we're going to have music, and this year we are having a scavenger hunt.'" —Ethan Spotts, Chicagoland Bicycle Federation

### Dealing with Traffic in Urban Areas

"We send them out in waves... approximately groups of 100. It's an early morning ride. Starting at 7:00 am we start the first wave. Because it's a Sunday morning, car traffic isn't as heavy." —Christine Schwartzkopf, Chicagoland Bicycle Federation

"In New York City you have to have a parade permit for riders over 1,000. Once we get that approved we talk with all the agencies. Most of our ride is on bikeways and greenways. We make sure to guide them through these designated areas... they have to abide by stoplights, stop signs, etc. Any information we put out, we inform them of all the laws they need to abide by." —Nora Pena, Transportation Alternatives

"We do as much communication with the participants (as possible). We are upfront with the information on our website, our ride guide... announcements at the start, signage along the route, marshals along the route. We put a volunteer marshal to assist with left hand turns... and at major intersections." —Ethan Spotts, Chicagoland Bicycle Federation

### Insuring Your Ride Against Weather

"We say that the event will be held rain or shine and we don't offer refunds. So even if it's a terrible rain... we do the ride and we say no refunds." —Ethan Spotts, Chicagoland Bicycle Federation

"Rain dates do cause a lot of logistical problems. When you do advertise rain or shine people get to make their own decisions... The cut off date for pre-registrations should be ten days before the event. You want people to commit well in advance... and if they decide not to do it they'll say, 'Oh well it's a donation to a good cause.'" —Jeff Miller, Thunderhead Alliance (formerly of Bicycle Coalition of Maine)

Want to hear more from this Mutual Aid call? Check out the recording in our [Bike & Ped Advocacy Resource Library](#) by searching "fundraising ride".

## NEWSLETTER CUT-AND-PASTE: THE TRUE LIFETIME COST... AND BENEFIT

By Jeffrey Miller, President/CEO Thunderhead Alliance for Bicycling and Walking

*The Newsletter Cut-and-Paste column is a service for Thunderhead member organizations. Feel free to cut and paste this article into your next newsletter.*

Never before have so many issues lined up in favor of bicycling and walking as there are today. The price of gas is another great chance for us to highlight the costs of cars versus the benefits of biking and walking in such a way as to get more folks in our camp without distancing drivers (who are excellent candidates for change). One way to do this is to highlight the lifetime costs of transportation choices.

A recent New York Times front-page story (6/4/08, "Big Vehicles Stagger Under Weight of \$4 Gas") hit on a key concept that is often overlooked: the full lifetime cost of a new car or truck. The article even caught me off guard; it stated that a new Ford pickup costs \$100,000! I knew they were fancy these days, but really? The price, of course, wasn't just the retail price of the truck, but the average five-year lifetime cost that included insurance, repairs, and gas. Chances are that more Americans would think twice before they pop down \$100,000 for a new truck or even \$40,000 for a Ford Focus if the true lifetime cost were calculated and displayed.

There are many ways we can decry our society's driving dependency and its contributions to climate change, obesity, decreased safety, and increased sprawl, to name a few. Although it is tempting to shout anti-car messages, this will only turn off a lot of the mainstream and slow our progress. But, if we sympathize with the high expenses people are facing and reveal how truly expensive these cars are, we have a platform to highlight all the great benefits of biking and walking. We should be doing all we can to get the word out to the press, the public, and decision makers, that we bring solutions to the table.

So, as bike and pedestrian advocates, let us stand tall and speak proudly about how gas prices are winning us new converts everyday. Let us keep our message positive by highlighting the many benefits of affordable, healthy, and clean transportation. In contrast to six-figure price tags, the benefits of biking and walking include a lifetime of freedom, health, and fun.

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## MEMBER NEWS

### NYC's T.A. Hosts 4th Annual Tour de Brooklyn

[Transportation Alternatives](#) (T.A.) held its fourth annual Tour de Brooklyn fundraising ride on May 25th. According to T.A.'s StreetBeat, "Close to 3,000 riders celebrated the Brooklyn Bridge's 125th birthday with a sun-soaked 18-mile bike ride that started in DUMBO, stopped for a snack in Bushwick, sailed through the Navy Yards and finished up at Walt Whitman Park. It was a perfect day made even better by thousands of smiling faces, hundreds of helpful volunteers, scores of skilled marshals and the beautiful borough of Brooklyn." [View video](#) from the ride from StreetFilms.org.

### Former Congressional Aide Named Bicycle Coalition of Maine Director

According to the [Bicycle Coalition of Maine](#), "Allison Vogt, a former aide to Congressman Tom Allen who now directs an Alabama conservation agency organization in the Southeastern U.S., has been named as the new executive director of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine. "An outstanding field of more than 30 candidates applied for the position, and we are thrilled that Allison has accepted," said John Balicki, president of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine's board of directors. "She brings management experience, fresh ideas and enthusiasm." To find out more [read the Bicycle Coalition of Maine's Press Release](#).

### San Francisco's Bike to Work Day Reaps Hundreds of Members

San Francisco's 14th Annual Bike to Work Day was a record-breaking success. The [San Francisco Bicycle Coalition](#) (SFBC) welcomed 704 new members through 25 Energizer Stations, which takes SFBC to over 9,000 members! The city also counted twice as many bicycles as cars on Market Street in downtown San Francisco. Bicyclists made up 64% of the eastbound traffic on Market St. at Van Ness Ave., while motorists comprised 32% between 8am and 9am (a 31% increase in biking over last year).

### New Law for New York City's Most Dangerous Streets

On April 1st, New York City (NYC) Mayor Michael Bloomberg signed the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Act into law. It requires the NYC Department of Transportation to analyze the city's most dangerous intersections, recommend preventative countermeasures, and take steps to implement them. This will prevent scores of injuries and save dozens of lives each year. Currently crash data shows that 50% of all pedestrian-related crashes occur at just 10% of all intersections. [Transportation Alternatives](#) says that institutionalizing the process of making improvements at the most crash-prone locations will systematically prevent traffic injuries and fatalities.

### Thunderhead Alliance Organizations Are Hiring!

Our member organizations are hiring! Check out all of the fantastic job opportunities on the [Alliance Job Board](#). If your organization is hiring, be sure to [post your job to the job board](#).

### Upcoming Events at Thunderhead Alliance

July 24: Mutual Aid Call: Bike, Walk & Plan: How to Build Relationships With Planners, 4-5 EST - [more here](#)

August 14: Mutual Aid Call: Media Relations, 4-5 EST - [more here](#)

August 31st - September 2: Thunderhead Alliance Retreat in Seattle, WA - [more here](#)

### 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! Be sure to [tell us your news](#).

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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](http://www.thunderheadalliance.org).

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