

## Greenwords:

### GARI Gears Up for Great 2008

Welcome to 2008 on the Greenways and Blueways!

This will be our second year working in partnership with the Narragansett Bay Wheelmen to provide funds to local grass roots organizations to create more bicycle and trail resources in Rhode Island.

In 2007 we identified several organizations pursuing activities and projects that met our funding criteria. GARI/NBW funds supported the following projects:

- > Volunteers for the East Bay Community Bike Path provided bottled water on the East Bay Bike Path during the summer;
- > Jamestown Rolling Agenda, in conjunction with the Jamestown School Department's Walk/Bike/Bus to School Month, replaced a bike rack at the Melrose School;
- > Bike to Brown explored the feasibility of creating a map of the Henderson Bridge Detour;
- > Tiverton Trailblazers initiated plans to support conversion of the abandoned rail bed along the shore of Narragansett Bay in Tiverton to a greenway;
- > Recycle-A-Bike purchased bicycle repair tools for their workshop in Providence;
- > Providence Bicycle Coalition

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## Jamestown Gets Rolling

By Julie Kallfelz

What started three years ago as an effort to improve bike and walking access to Jamestown's schools has blossomed into a community-wide effort to create outdoor recreational spaces that all Jamestowners value and can use.

Spearheaded by Rolling Agenda, a local group of bicycling enthusiasts, the project began as various local organizations joined together to address deficits and make improvements on and around the Jamestown school grounds. In

addition to Rolling Agenda, these groups included the town

recreation, planning, and school departments, town soccer and baseball associations, Jamestown's Tree Warden, and the local senior citizens' association.



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## Sustainable Tourism on RI Blueways

By Rita Kerr-Vanderslice and Terry Meyer

Sustainable—or green—tourism is a market that has grown dramatically in recent years. Instead of forcing environmentally-conscious individuals to personalize their travel in order to enjoy a low-impact vacation, green tourism allows those individuals the same package deals and planned itineraries found in the usual cruise or Disney World trip. Rhode Island's newly formed Blueway, or water trail network, is bringing

together kayak outfitters, local restaurants and lodging purveyors to provide opportunities for sustainable tourism in Little Rhody.

Rhode Island's water trail is developed under the leadership of the RI Blueways Alliance. The Alliance promotes the safe enjoyment of Rhode Island's rivers, lakes and ponds, as well as Narragansett Bay, through

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## Greenwords

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created a web site for their organizations; and

> Friends of the William C. O'Neill Bike Path will use their grant, along with additional funds from private donors, to reprint maps of the path.

As a result of our cooperative funding project and our newsletters highlighting Rhode Island's rivers and trails, we have learned about more grass roots groups and projects in the state with missions like ours: to encourage communities to build and maintain greenways and other safe resources for non-motorized transportation.

Our June issue of Trail Mix will highlight the many paddling opportunities offered by the rivers, bays and ocean in our state during Rhode Island Rivers Month in cooperation with Rhode Island Blueways Alliance. The fall edition of Trail Mix will once again feature recreational opportunities for bicyclists and hikers on our trails and greenways during Rhode Island Trials and Greenways Month in September.

We invite all groups with similar missions to collaborate to create communities that are both pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly. Please contact me to discuss how we might accomplish more together.

**Sue Barker**  
GARI Chair  
[Sueb4@cox.net](mailto:Sueb4@cox.net)

## Rolling Agenda

As it looked at current conditions as well as future needs, the coalition compiled an ambitious set of goals:

- > improve the condition of the town athletic fields, used by school and town recreational soccer and baseball teams as well as school gym classes;
- > improve the ease and safety of bike and pedestrian access to the schools and athletic fields;
- > choose sites and install fitness trail equipment that has already been purchased by the school's PTO;
- > create walking paths through and around the school grounds for use by students, school staff, and all residents;
- > design and install playground equipment at the middle school;

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

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> improve the wooded area between the two school buildings, known as the "Town Forest," which had previously contained an outdoor classroom; and

> improve car and bus traffic flow and parking around the school buildings.

The scope of the project was daunting, but the coalition agreed that the only rational and cost-effective approach was a unified one that brought in professional expertise to guide planning, coordination, and execution. Step one was conducting an area study that would be used to develop a comprehensive plan. Funding for the study was provided through the generous donations of local organizations such as the Jamestown PTO, Rotary Club, Jamestown Soccer and Baseball Associations, the Rhode Island Foundation (through GARI), and BankNewport.

East Providence-based landscape architecture firm Gates Leighton Assoc. was hired through an RFP process, and for the past year, has been assessing conditions in the target area, meeting with stake-holders to define needs, holding public input sessions, and refining ideas. Gates Leighton is due to present its final version of the plan in early February 2008.

In the meantime, Rolling Agenda and the other coalition members are gearing up for a significant fundraising effort in the spring and summer of 2008. Efforts will include applying for various state, federal, and private grants; soliciting support from local individuals, organizations, and businesses; and requesting funding from the Town Council and

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## East Bay Community Bike Path Association

The East Bay Community Bike Path Association was co-founded in 2003 by former bike path coordinator Leonard Hickey, and Frank DiPrete. With the help of Nancy McDonald, Karen Stinger, Mona Noonan, Janice Everett, Bob DeSilva, Fred Brown and Frank DiPrete, our mission is handing out bottles of water that are donated by local merchants and other companies.

The East Bay Community Bike Path Association (EBCBPA) stand is located in Riverside, between Crescent View Avenue, known as "The Causeway," and Riverside Square near the bait shop and the carousel. This is where we hand out free bottled water to everyone who passes by. Most of the people on the path know the EBCBPA volunteers by name—and we know most of our "customers" by name, too! During the 2007 season, we handed out 111 cases of water—that's 2,664 bottles of water

Beginning last year, we took on a new direction by educating young children on the importance of bicycle safety with the proper safety tools. Frank DiPrete was invited by Colleen Holland to give a bicycle safety class to

the students at the Emma G. Whitenact Elementary School. A total of sixteen students brought their helmets to class. For those students who didn't have a helmet, Frank provided them with one. For those students whose helmet didn't fit properly, Frank provided them with one that did fit. Following a lesson on how to adjust helmets properly, rules of the road, and safe riding techniques, each student was given a Bicycle Safety Manual and a Bicycle Safety Math Book to help them remember that "On a bike, safety comes first."

The EBCBPA plans to continue to hand out free water along the bike path. We also plan to further reach out to the community by distributing bicycle safety information, earmarking a portion of our contributions for a scholarship program, and looking for new ways to keep our community growing. We would like to thank Captain Walter Barlow of the East Providence Police Department, whose knowledge and contributions were instrumental in getting the EBCBPA up and running.

Come spend a day with us on the bike path! To get involved, contact us at [ebcbp2003@yahoo.com](mailto:ebcbp2003@yahoo.com)



*Frank DiPrete and students of the Emma G. Whitenact Elementary School.*

## Connecting the DOTs

More mileage expected for Blackstone River Bikeway in 2008

By Charles St. Martin

This spring, the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) expects to finalize a 1-mile extension of the Blackstone River Bikeway beginning on John Street in Lincoln (the site of the former Lonsdale Drive-In) to the area of Valley Falls and Cumberland Town Hall. The unique feature of this section is a 540-foot long, 14-foot wide elevated boardwalk used to cross a portion of the Lonsdale Marsh. This section also uses a few local roads to reach Valley Falls Heritage Park, a hidden gem of a park that incorporates several switchback ramps which allow visitors to get close to the river.

RIDOT is working with the City of Woonsocket on two path projects that would add 1.3 miles to the current northern end of the path. The current northern portion end was extended in early November 2007, with the dedication of a 2-mile segment from New River Road in Lincoln to the Woonsocket Water Treatment Plant on Manville Hill Road in Woonsocket. RIDOT expects these path segments to be opened this year.

Combining the existing path mileage and what may be opened in 2008, the Blackstone River Bikeway will stretch to almost 12 miles from Cumberland to Woonsocket. RIDOT is examining other path extensions that would someday complete the 19-mile portion of the bikeway in Rhode Island.

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# India Point Park, Jewel of Providence

Mayor David Ciciline has called it “the entering crown jewel of the City.” It has 3,600 feet of Narragansett Bay shoreline, with sweeping views of the Providence waterfront, East Providence and miles of open water to the south. Where once rail yards and piers made up a blackened industrial landscape, Providence residents (and anyone else) can now enjoy a green, quiet oasis of lawns, playing fields and a playground. It is India Point Park, and although it was dedicated in 1974, it’s still a work in progress.

Leading the effort to ensure that progress continues is Friends of India Point Park (FIPP), an all-volunteer group of Providence residents dedicated to upholding the integrity of the Park. FIPP grew out of community concerns over the impact of the I-195 relocation on the Park. Organized in 2000, the group has addressed issues ranging from preserving a stately oak tree at the new pedestrian bridge’s East Street entrance, to leading the campaign to bury National Grid’s high-voltage overhead power lines that were moved during the I-195 construction. According to FIPP co-chair David Riley, “We’re hopeful. \$14.5 million has been allocated to the project, and we only need \$4.5 million more to proceed. The State Senate

last year passed a bill authorizing a statewide utility surcharge of five cents per month to raise that money, but the bill stalled in the House. It should be re-introduced and, we hope, passed,

Jerome Williams has involved himself in the process, hosting meetings between RIDOT planners and engineers and environmental and recreational advocates, including FIPP and GARI representatives.

Coming soon are user-friendly information signs at the Park’s East Street entrance, as well as throughout the Park at significant historic or natural vantage points. The signs will describe, in text and pictures, the Park as it was and how it came to be. Designed and produced by William Warner, the architect and planner who created Waterplace Park, the signs will constitute a self-guided tour through the Park for visitors.



*The Head of the Bay Gateway area of India Point Park as conceived by architect Charley Norris.*

early in this session.” Riley added that National Grid has been “supportive” and had performed extensive engineering studies to determine the best route for the buried cables.

FIPP is also working along with GARI and other community and environmental groups to ensure that bike paths in the Park extend along the western end of India Street. In numerous exchanges and meetings with RIDOT officials, FIPP advocated a reconfiguration of the planned India Street sidewalks to better accommodate bikers, as well as to provide a better link to Downcity for bikers coming over the Washington Bridge from the East Bay Bikeway. The outcome of those discussions is still pending, but RIDOT Director

## GARI accomplishments

- Our members and supporters:
- > Cooperate with other bicycle and trails groups to support trail and greenway development and to promote bicycle safety.
  - > Communicate with state department directors to encourage improved bicycle and pedestrian resources.
  - > Coordinate and promote September as Rhode Island Trails and Greenways month.
  - > Participate in other state and national trails and environmental support programs.

[www.rigreenways.org](http://www.rigreenways.org)  
Spring 2008

# Sustainable Tourism on RI Blueways

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the web site [www.ExploreRI.org](http://www.ExploreRI.org). ExploreRI.org provides paddling routes, information and safety tips. When fully developed, the web site will also include information on where to rent boats, where to eat and where to stay while paddling in the state. The Alliance is partnering with tourism councils and outfitters to create hospitality packages for residents and visitors. For a fixed fee, these packages will provide a visitor with a full Blueway experience: transportation to the water, a guided trip along the trail complete with information on the history and natural features of the area, meals and overnight accommodations. The Blueways Alliance wants to make it easy for the average person to spend their vacation time enjoying everything Rhode Island’s waterways have to offer.

Projects similar to Rhode Island’s Blueways have successfully promoted sustainable tourism in other states. Kate Williams is the Executive Director

of the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, which traverses waterways from New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine and Québec. Along with standard paddling resources such as maps and descriptions of launches, the Northern Forest Canoe trail website, [www.northernforestcanoetrail.org](http://www.northernforestcanoetrail.org), provides some innovative tools. For instance, their Trip Planner gives boaters all the resources they need to create their own adventure. The Planner details local outfitters and guides, available shuttles, camping and lodging, where to get supplies, libraries/internet access, local museums, and other attractions. For the tourist looking for a ready-made trip, the site also offers sample itineraries for different sections of the canoe trail with a choice of focus on heritage or recreation.

Ms. Williams recognizes the importance of groups like hers for making the connections between

waterways and tourism. “We create access and we care for the places where people want to go and play,” explains Williams, “and that sparks the demand for services that the local businesses offer.” And many local businesses featured on the site have cashed in on the success of the Canoe Trail, reporting increased business at least partly due to referrals from the site.

Peter Casson, director of the Eastern Mountain Sports Kayak School, [www.kayak-ems.com](http://www.kayak-ems.com), anticipates similar local benefits from the waterways project in RI. Mr. Casson stresses the importance of involving outfitters and guides already intimately familiar with the boating conditions on various water trails. He points out that local knowledge is key when designing trips included on the RI Blueways website, to ensure the safety and enjoyment of those using the Blueways.

Environmental advocates, government and industry form three points of a sustainability triangle. Projects like the Northern Forest Canoe Trail and the Rhode Island Blueways project prove that the environment, society, and the economy can function in such a way that all benefit from the existence and the success of the others. Cooperation between advocates for the waterways, outfitters, and the hospitality industry will strengthen both the economy and the health of our natural environment.

## Get on the trail:

GARI is dedicated to improving conditions for cyclists, hikers, and pedestrians and increasing the number of greenways statewide. Your membership makes this newsletter possible and enables us to continue working with state and local leaders to ensure Rhode Island has an integrated, well-maintained network of alternative transportation recreation resources.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization \_\_\_\_\_

### Annual Membership enclosed

- Individual \$15
- Family \$25
- Nonprofit \$50
- Corporate \$100
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return membership form with check payable to the Greenways Alliance of Rhode Island to: GARI, 31 Stanchion Street, Jamestown, RI 02835.

Please tell me about GARI meetings by  
 E-mail  Regular Mail  Neither

## Recycle-A-Bike Update

Recycle-A-Bike is in the process of a temporary move into a 40' x 8' x 8' storage trailer on the Steel Yard property while they await the construction of their new space at the Steel Yard. Stay tuned to the website [www.recycleabike.org](http://www.recycleabike.org) for their re-opening early summer.

GARI is able to continue our advocacy for safe and accessible trails thanks, in part, to support of a joint grant program with the Narragansett Bay Wheelmen and funding of our quarterly newsletter, Trail Mix, by the RI Dept. of Environmental Management. We are grateful for their ongoing contributions to our efforts. In addition, we’d like to recognize and thank the following 2008 Organizational Friends:

- > RI Blueways Alliance
- > Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council
- > West Warwick Friends of the Greenway

# Dear Dr. Sprocket,

Dear Dr. Sprocket, For the first time in many years, I resolved to make and keep a New Year's resolution to get more physical activity in my busy life. I joined a health club, got a bunch of suggestions from friends about what I needed to do to build a good routine, and actually kept to my plan for a few weeks. Unfortunately, I injured myself by overdoing my routine, and I'm now in the sorry position of trying to find a way to keep some kind of activity going so I won't fall into the same pattern I've been in for some years. Help!

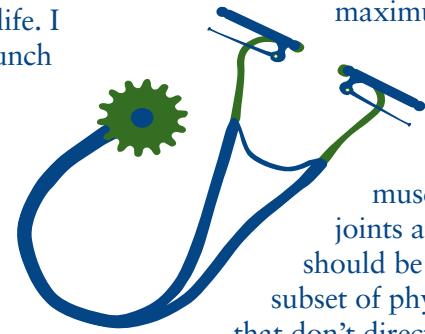
Injured in Lincoln

Dear Injured, I'm sorry that you got injured so soon after your new beginning. It's a lot easier to get hurt when starting a new program. Once injured, we tend to either try to push through the pain (causing more injuries), or stop unnecessary physical activity altogether. Both of those approaches are not good.

If you didn't get a checkup and an OK from your primary health care provider before beginning a new program, it's a good idea to make an appointment to get checked out now. If you don't already have a favorite, competent physical therapist experienced with your age group, it's wise to find one now, so you can be ready if/when you get a script. Word-of-mouth recommendations from friends or personal trainers are a good place to start.

While you are waiting for your appointment, there are a number of steps you can take to promote maximum healing in your body. Try

to pay attention to the pain signals your body is giving you, and not injure it more. The conventional wisdom of rest, ice, and heat encourages our body towards maximum healing.



It is unlikely that you injured all the major muscle groups and joints at once, so you should be able to find a subset of physical activities that don't directly impact your injury. For example, if you injured a leg muscle or tendon and can't run or walk, you might still be able to exercise upper body limbs. Recent research has revealed that exercise on one body part (e.g. the left arm) benefits the adjacent part (the right arm). Depending on the severity of the injury, you may be able to ride a recumbent stationary bike or even participate in a water aerobics program. There are many programs and suggestions in the new fitness program presented at [www.healthyweightin2008.ri.gov](http://www.healthyweightin2008.ri.gov).

If you feel that most of the above approaches impose yet more time impacts on your already-busy schedule, you're correct. Injuries sideline even world-class athletes, and often end promising careers. The most important thing to keep in mind is that your new program, although temporarily interrupted, can be a permanent, positive addition to your life. The benefits of increased physical activity have been clearly demonstrated by numerous studies, and you have much to gain both physically and emotionally by persevering through your healing process. In a short time, you'll be able to enjoy a broader range of activities, and appreciate them much more.

Send your Dr. Sprocket questions to [rigreenways@rigreenways.org](mailto:rigreenways@rigreenways.org).

# William C. O'Neill Bike Path Update

By Bob Votava

When asked about efforts to complete Phase III of the William C. O'Neill Bike Path, DOT representatives have had a standard response for the past three years, "Yes, we are making progress."

Because of a needed realignment of the last several hundred feet of the path in Narragansett, Phase III has been in a state of suspended-animation. The realignment required a property trade in Narragansett which allows the Path to go through a Fish and Wildlife land preserve. The trade has been agreed upon.

RIDOT Director Jerome F. Williams says that Phase III will be advertised for construction late this summer. Friends of the William C. O'Neill Bike Path are diligently monitoring progress to make this date a reality. We are closer than ever, with the Town of South Kingstown currently reviewing the largest section of Phase III as depicted in the 90% DOT construction drawings. Funding for Phase III is available through the service of former Senator Chafee.

Last fall we participated in GARI's bike path event month. Our goal was to bring more seniors and physically impaired members to the bike path. This is the second year we have focused on this constituency and this year brought out a few more people. Thanks go to RIPTA for providing transportation to and from the path entrance and to all of you who support and advocate for the Bike Path.



# Webmaster's Corner

## How to Get There with On-Line Mapping Tools

Back in 2003, there was a wide range of choice for mapping programs and all did a good job of giving you directions from one place to another. Today the programs are much more robust and include features formerly found only as part of large geographic information system (GIS) databases run by local, state and federal governments.

Mapping sites can be very useful for bike route planning. Additionally, since it's easy to make out the faint lines of former rail corridors that could serve as bike paths, mapping programs are helpful for pinpointing new bike path extensions and understanding how the path would fit into the existing landscape.

Please be aware, as you use any map site, that photos become outdated rapidly, especially in areas under development. Be aware of photo dates as you surf.

### Google Maps

Located at <http://maps.google.com>, the Google interface is straightforward with buttons to change the view options

from a conventional street map to an aerial map (with or without streets) and a terrain map (which doesn't do much for Rhode Island, but it's really cool for more rugged terrain such as the White Mountains in New Hampshire). In some areas, a "street view" button is available. In Rhode Island, Google has started taking streetscape photos in the Providence metropolitan area. Now in addition to finding a bike path trailhead in an aerial map, you can sometimes view the area from ground level, as you would when driving a car or riding a bike. You can even click and hold on the pop-up photo and pan up and down, left and right. The photos appear to have been shot last summer and fall.

Another neat feature is accessed by clicking on the My Maps tab on the left side of the page. The My Maps feature allows you to customize maps by drawing lines, adding place markers or showing routes on existing maps. Your My Maps can then be shared with others via e-mail or web links. These custom maps are especially

helpful for marking out bike paths, since the length of the path doesn't show up in conventional direction searches (which are geared toward vehicular roads). GARI is working to develop these maps on our website at [www.rigreenways.org](http://www.rigreenways.org).



Friends of the South County Bike Path gather to enjoy the Path as part of Greenways Month in RI. (Story to left, on page 6.)



### Live Search Maps

Formerly called Local Live, this mapping site, <http://maps.live.com>, is a Microsoft product and doesn't work well in all browsers. Live Search, which incorporates most standard map features, has one great one that the others lack. It's



called "bird's eye," and it offers oblique aerials taken from lower altitudes than most aerial images. This means you can see much more detail than previously possible. As in Google's street views, Live Search does not yet provide bird's eye view for all areas, but bird's eye does currently exist for metropolitan Providence and Newport. Live Search also trumps some of the other mapping applications by having more current images—some as recent as 2007.

### RI Dept. of Environmental Management's Topo Map & Aerial Photo Viewer

The RIDEM has the best GIS-based program on the web for Rhode Island. The simple program, found at [www.dem.ri.gov/maps/index.htm](http://www.dem.ri.gov/maps/index.htm), opens in a separate window. Because the DEM site includes both older and newer aerials, you can use it like a time machine to see what features were on the ground back in 1997 and compare them with the most current images from 2004. The RIDEM site also provides a menu of features you can select to customize the details of your map view. Be aware, though, that some features, such as aerials and topographic maps, only function when zoomed in closely.



# Connecting the DOTs

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RIDOT hopes to get a few other bike path projects going in 2008. These include paving a gravel section of the Coventry Greenway from near the West Warwick town line to the start of the paved bike path on Station Street, off Route 117. The 1.6-mile section would link the Coventry Greenway to the paths that constitute the Washington Secondary Bike Path (the Cranston Bike Path, the Warwick Bike Path and the West Warwick Greenway). When complete, the entire bikeway will offer 14.2 miles of uninterrupted riding.

Also in the immediate future, RIDOT hopes to begin work on a 1-mile extension to the South County Bike Path from the current end of the path on Route 108 in Wakefield to Mumford Street in Narragansett. This

would extend the entire bike path to 6.6 miles from Narragansett to the Amtrak station at Kingston village in South Kingstown.

Another project includes 1 mile of trail for the Ten Mile River Greenway, beginning at the northern end of the bikeway at Armistice Boulevard in Pawtucket. The new segment would end at an athletic field complex at Daggett Park. Altogether the path would be 3 miles long, extending to Ferris Avenue in East Providence

*The writer is an Information and Public Relations Specialist for the Rhode Island Department of Transportation.*



# Rolling Agenda

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School Committee. We already have funding toward construction costs thanks to the efforts of Jamestown's Town Planner who secured a grant from the federal Safe Routes to School Program.

The coalition's proposed improvements will dramatically enhance the number and quality of recreational opportunities for all Jamestowners: provide safe routes for bikers, pedestrians, and drivers on and near the school grounds, and make overall better use of the grounds surrounding the town's schools. Just as significant, this project is a testament to what a community can accomplish when it bands together to pursue a common vision.

Please direct questions to Carol Nelson-Lee, Chair of Rolling Agenda, at 423-2967, or [nl@nelsonlee.com](mailto:nl@nelsonlee.com).