

# 2009 AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION RIDE RESULTS



BY JOHN FISCHER

FOURTEEN YEARS OF FUND-RAISING

FEBRUARY 4, 2010

## AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION ONE-HUNDREDDTH ANNIVERSARY

100 years ago Christmas Seals had just gone on sale for the first time in the lobby of Philadelphia's leading newspaper, the North American, to raise funds for the fight against tuberculosis. President Theodore Roosevelt was one of the many public figures who backed that first campaign, which raised \$3,000. At that moment a tradition was born. To date, there have been 102 years of Christmas Seals, many of them designed by America's most popular artists, and many coveted by collectors. Christmas Seals national spokespersons over the years have included President John Kennedy, Bob Hope and Brooke Shields. The tradition continued and grew year after year through World War I, the Great Depression and World War II. As the American Lung Association's mission

expanded to include research into other respiratory diseases, such as lung cancer, more people began to use Christmas Seals. And as the American Lung Association stepped up to protect children and families from pollution and cigarette smoke in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, America continued its commitment each year by supporting the Christmas Seals tradition. Today, the American Lung Association fights more battles than ever before. From important research on lung cancer and asthma to the fight against dangerous poisons in air pollution and secondhand smoke, the American Lung Association's crucial mission is still largely supported by Christmas Seals. The campaign as it operates today has come a long way from ALA's early efforts. Christmas Seals are even featured online at [Christmas-](#)

[Seals.org](#) and have a presence on Facebook. Despite these new forays into social networking, the Christmas Seals Campaign still upholds the tradition and sentiment of the first campaign 100 years ago. But perhaps the message on the small envelope carrying the first 25 Seals for a penny said it best:

*Put this stamp with its message bright  
On every Christmas letter;  
Help the tuberculosis fight,  
And make the New Year better.*

Today ALA changes the word "tuberculosis" to "lung disease" and the message still resonates well today.

## MY FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY FUND-RAISING FOR AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION

In 1996 someone suggested to me that I might enjoy taking part in a bicycle ride that would not only be fun to do, but also would provide valuable resources to the non-profit American Lung Association of Maine organization based in Augusta, Maine.

Thanks to that conversation, I participated in my first Trek Across Maine. At that time, the ride still began at Sunday River Ski Area and it finished at the Samoset Resort in Rockport. The ride covered approximately 200 miles over 3 days. There are probably 1,200 riders at the time and, if memory serves, it raised somewhere in the neighborhood of \$600,000. Then, as now, the funds generated go to tobacco control and prevention programs (including especially youth smoking), asthma research and support, and research for other lung diseases.

At that time, Maine led the nation in youth smoking rates. Young people between

the ages 18-35 in Maine far surpassed, per capita, the rate in any other state.

Today the Lung Association continues these programs along with clean air initiatives for wind power and other forms of clean, healthy and renewable energy.

2010 marks my Fifteenth Anniversary raising money for this important organization.

Over these fourteen years I've put in just under 18,000 miles of rides. That does NOT include training miles. If things go as planned, by next year I should have accumulated 24,000 miles — the circumference of the earth at the equator.

To date (as of February 4, 2010), I've raised \$235,227. If my fund-raising plans come to fruition, I hope to have raised \$250,000 (\$14,773 to go) by the time my fund-raising campaign for the year is complete.

This success has been possible only because of the continuing generosity and support of my sponsors, friends and family. My gratitude is deep and wide.

To celebrate this alignment of anniversaries, I will do another transcontinental ride under the auspices of Adventure Cycling Association. 4,400 miles from Anacortes, WA to Brunswick, ME.

I look forward to contacting all my sponsors this year in celebrating this landmark.



**AMERICAN  
LUNG  
ASSOCIATION®**  
Fighting for Air

## 2009 AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### **Proposed a \$1 cigarette tax increase in each New England state.**

There is no more effective intervention to reduce smoking rates than to increase the price of cigarettes. This is especially effective in preventing youth smoking. In fact, for every 10 percent increase in price, the smoking rate drops by about seven percent for youths and four percent for adults. While calling for tax increases on tobacco products, accompanying programs to help smokers quit are also urged.

### **Smoking in Cars with Kids**

Based on the Maine model that led to the successful passage of a bill to prohibit smoking in cars with kids, similar (but unsuccessful) efforts were made in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. According to the U.S. Surgeon General, children are the only population group that has not seen a significant reduction in exposure to secondhand smoke. Children are involuntary smokers when in a car with adult smokers. Secondhand smoke is a cancer-causing substance with no known safe level.

### **Healthy Air**

The new Massachusetts law, banning vehicle idling on school grounds, was a major victory for children's health and the environment. The effectiveness of this legislative action will hopefully prompt passage of similar laws in other states.

Maine was successful in banning smoking on outdoor decks and patios at dining and drinking establishments, making it the third state to establish such a ban. In addition, smoking and tobacco products were banned from its state-run parks and beaches.

The American Lung Association of New England played a key role in assuring that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (stimulus bill) contained \$1 billion for a Prevention and Wellness Fund. The national group, Partners for Prevention, called it, "the largest single infusion of resources ever made available to the U.S. public health system."

The Cape Wind project, a 130-turbine wind farm to be built off the coast of Nantucket on Horseshoe Shoal, is moving toward final approval. The wind power generated by the giant turbines will alleviate some of the environmental and economic strain

caused by fossil fuel plants throughout the region.

More importantly, the reduction in fossil fuel consumption in New England will go a long way to improve air quality in our region. New England has some of the country's worst air quality – over 90% of our summer days are usually considered unsafe due to high ozone levels.

The American Lung Association's State of Tobacco Control report tracks progress on key tobacco control policies at the state and federal levels and gives grades to tobacco control laws and regulations in effect as of January 2, 2010. The federal government, all 50 state governments and the District of Columbia are graded to determine if their tobacco control laws are adequately protecting citizens from the enormous burden caused by tobacco use.

During the nation's recent health care reform discussion, the importance of prevention and wellness played a prominent role. Tobacco control policies are at the heart of preventing and reducing the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, as more than 443,000 Americans die each year due to tobacco-related diseases. In addition to the devastating human toll caused by tobacco use, smoking costs the U.S. economy more than \$193 billion each year—including \$96 billion in health care costs and \$97 billion in lost productivity.

Mounting scientific evidence shows that effective tobacco control policies lead to fewer kids starting to smoke and more smokers quitting. However, elected officials continue to fail to enact these proven measures. In this year's report not a single state or the federal government qualified for all "A" grades for enacting strong and effective tobacco control laws. Ironically, this comes at a time when tobacco control policies, such as smoke-free laws, are extraordinarily popular with the public. However, until elected officials overcome their fears of standing up to the tobacco industry lobby, more lives will be needlessly lost and billions of dollars will continue to be wasted.

### **FDA Wins Authority to Regulate Tobacco.**

After more than a decade of debate and struggle, Congress passed long overdue legislation for FDA regulation of tobacco products. President Barack Obama signed

the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act into law on June 22, 2009. This law at long last gives the FDA authority over tobacco products, including how the tobacco companies are allowed to market, manufacture and sell their deadly goods. Parts of the law have already taken effect, and other parts of the law will take effect over the next several years. On September 22, candy- and fruit-flavored cigarettes were removed from store shelves across the nation—taking away one of the industry's favorite tools to hook kids. Although the new law is not the panacea, it is a critical piece of the puzzle for reducing death and disease caused by tobacco use in the U.S.

### **Congress Increases Federal Tobacco Tax.**

In February 2009, Congress passed a 62-cent increase in the federal cigarette tax, which will be used to fund the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). This bipartisan measure was truly a win-win for lung health. The significant increase in the cigarette tax will help curb youth smoking rates. In addition, thanks to the revenue from this increase, an estimated 4 million uninsured children now have their medical care covered by insurance. Studies show that children with asthma who were enrolled in CHIP had fewer asthma attacks and needed fewer medical visits.

Congress also wisely increased taxes on some other tobacco products to encourage smokers to quit using tobacco and not simply switch to less expensive products.

### **Federal smoke-free workplaces expand.**

Despite tremendous expansion of smoke-free workplaces and public places nationwide, thousands of federal workers still are potentially exposed to secondhand smoke at work. In June, the federal government's General Services Administration (GSA) implemented a policy prohibiting smoking in all GSA-controlled buildings and work sites. However, GSA controls only about 30 percent of all federal workplaces, according to the Congressional Research Service. The American Lung Association has called on President Obama to issue an executive order prohibiting smoking in all federal workplaces to ensure a safe and healthy work environment.

## 2009 AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CON'T)

### **Court affirms that tobacco companies are “racketeers.”**

In May, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia upheld a landmark ruling that the major tobacco companies perpetuated a 50-year campaign of fraud and deception against the American public. This verdict, which forever branded the tobacco companies as racketeers, was unanimously upheld by a 3 judge panel, that also found a substantial likelihood the tobacco companies would continue to violate the law in the future. The American Lung Association is a party in the case and sought additional remedies to prevent the tobacco companies from continuing their illegal actions; however, the Court of Appeals did not sanction additional remedies. It is expected that the case will ultimately be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

### **House Passes Legislation Expanding Cessation Coverage.**

Notable progress on tobacco cessation coverage was made in November, when the U.S. House of Representatives approved health care reform legislation that significantly expands tobacco cessation coverage under Medicaid, Medicare and private insurance plans. As of December 15, when this report went to press, the Senate was still considering its version of health care reform legislation.

### **Over Halfway to Victory on the Smoke-free Air Challenge**

In January 2006, the American Lung Association issued its Smoke-free Air Challenge, calling on all states and localities to pass comprehensive legislation prohibiting smoking in all public places and workplaces. As of January 2, 2010, 26 states and the District of Columbia have met the Lung Association’s challenge. As a result, millions of Americans are still exposed to secondhand smoke, despite overwhelming evidence that it causes premature death and disease.

Elected officials in North Carolina, which is headquarters to two major tobacco companies, showed tremendous political will in 2009 and demonstrated how much the state has changed. The legislature passed a bill prohibiting smoking in restaurants and bars. North Carolina’s new law is not comprehensive, as it does not protect workers in other public places and workplaces from exposure to secondhand

smoke. Yet it represents a major step forward.

Defying extensive scientific evidence, opponents continue to spread the fiction that smoke-free laws have a negative economic impact on restaurants and bars. This myth, perpetuated by the tobacco companies and their allies in state after state, has been repeatedly disproved through careful analysis of sales tax receipts, bar and restaurant licenses and other quantitative measures. It is especially critical in these troubled economic times that elected officials be aware of the evidence refuting these false economic impact claims. Elected officials must be well informed in order to ensure that comprehensive laws are not scuttled by factually inaccurate arguments.

There was mounting evidence in 2009 that smoke-free laws improve the health of workers and the general public. A new report by the Institute of Medicine, *Secondhand Smoke Exposure and Cardiovascular Effects: Making Sense of the Evidence*, was released in October. This report confirmed that secondhand smoke is a cause of heart attacks. The report also concluded that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke, and that even relatively brief exposure can cause a heart attack.

### **A Call to End the Military’s Addiction to Tobacco**

In June 2009, the prestigious Institute of Medicine (IOM) released a report recommending that the military phase out all tobacco use among its ranks. The IOM found that tobacco use interferes with military readiness and costs both the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs massive sums each year.

A recent study by the Veterans Administration, part of the Department of Veterans Affairs, found that 50 percent of U.S. troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan come home addicted to tobacco. According to the 2009 IOM report, the Department of Defense spends more than \$1.6 billion each year on tobacco-related medical care, increased hospitalizations and lost days of work. In 2009, the VA spent more than \$5 billion to treat chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) alone; over 80 percent of COPD cases, which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis, are caused by smoking.

### **Tobacco Industry Takes Hits But Continues to Exert Influence and Target Kids**

As was highlighted in the 2008 State of Tobacco Control report, the nation’s leading tobacco companies—Altria and Reynolds American—now own the two largest smokeless tobacco companies, U.S. Smokeless Tobacco and Conwood. With the might of their parent companies behind them, these smokeless companies now are promoting policies—and using marketing campaigns—to encourage smokers who want to quit, or who cannot smoke due to smoke-free laws, to use smokeless tobacco products instead.

After failing to defeat the passage of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act in Congress, Reynolds American, Lorillard and a number of smaller tobacco companies filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Kentucky seeking to overturn many of the marketing restrictions in the new law giving FDA the authority to regulate tobacco products. The lawsuit shows that the tobacco companies know these marketing restrictions will make it much harder for them to continue to target the next generation of children, and the companies will fight to continue to target kids. The case was pending in early December, when this report was finalized, but a ruling on a preliminary injunction sought by the companies was rejected by the presiding judge in the case in November.

The tobacco industry also remains immensely powerful and influential in Washington and in many state capitals.

As of November 8, 2009, the tobacco companies and their employees have contributed over \$900,000 to federal candidates for office for the 2009-2010 election cycle. This same group contributed over \$4 million dollars during the 2007–2008 election cycle.

According to the National Institute on Money in State Politics, the tobacco industry contributed over \$7 million to state candidates’ campaign coffers during the 2007-2008 election cycle, and had reported contributions of over \$675,000 in 2009 (as of December 1)



## 2009 BUSINESS SPONSORS • TOTAL DONATIONS: \$3,560 • AVERAGE PLEDGE: \$74.16

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Joyful Journey Works  
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Watson & Mann, P.A.  
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### Bowdoin, Maine

Helen Watts Engineering  
<http://www.criterion-mooney.com/hcwatts.html>

### Bowdoinham, Maine

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### Brunswick, Maine

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[www.atlanticregionalfcu.org](http://www.atlanticregionalfcu.org)

Brunswick Beauty Shop  
207-729-3271

Downeast Energy  
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### Brunswick, Maine (con't)

Stoddard Smith, Esq.  
207-721-0622

Tres Amigos, Meditation  
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Music's Quill  
[http://baroquelute.com/html/music\\_s\\_quill.html](http://baroquelute.com/html/music_s_quill.html)

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[www.ornescandystore.com](http://www.ornescandystore.com)

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### Sanford, Maine

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Androscoggin Animal Hospital  
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MSA Architects  
<http://www.msaarchs.com>

### West Gardiner, Maine

Baker Chimney Cleaning  
[www.bakerchimneycleaning.com](http://www.bakerchimneycleaning.com)

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### Wiscasset, Maine

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Plymouth Travel  
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BE SURE TO PATRONIZE THESE 48  
BUSINESSES AND MENTION THAT YOU SAW  
THEM IN THIS NEWSLETTER. THANK YOU!



# 2010 RIDE PLAN - NORTHERN TIER ANACORTES, WA TO BRUNSWICK, ME WITH ADVENTURE CYCLING ASSOCIATION



2010 is the 100th anniversary of the American Lung Association and its Christmas Seal Campaign. It is my 15th year of fund-raising for the ALA. In honor of this anniversary, I plan to bicycle 4,400 miles from Anacortes, Washington, to Bar Harbor, Maine, in 93 days. The trip begins on June 6th and lasts until September 1st. My goal is to raise \$34,000 in honor of these 2 wonderful anniversaries. If I can reach this ambitious goal, I will break the \$250,000 mark for funds raised over the years of my commitment to ALA. Please give generously.

The ride will go through Washington, Idaho, Montana, Alberta, North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ontario, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. I won't be able to do the actual Trek Across Maine.

## ABOUT JOHN FISCHER, THE AUTHOR

With fund-raising, singing, web development, classwork, an IT internship, keeping up on speaking two languages, training or bicycling, 2010 is filled with purposeful activity. My business, Carpe Diem Design and Consulting, offers web hosting, web site design and development and electronic-publishing. PC/Mac consulting and support services offered include: system and software recommendations, system setup, tutoring, system tune-ups, phone and on-site support, and small network setup

EMAIL: [HELP@FISHYHELP.NET](mailto:HELP@FISHYHELP.NET)  
PHONE: 207-522-1238  
WEB SITE: [WWW.FISHYHELP.NET](http://WWW.FISHYHELP.NET)

If I could catch a jet from central Montana to Brunswick Naval Air Station, maybe it would be possible. The trek across Maine that I will be able to negotiate will be at the end of August on the way to Brunswick from Fryeburg.

Thanks to cooperation between the American Lung Association and Adventure Cycling Association (Missoula, Montana), I can do this ride with a group of people and have it be a fund-raiser for ALA. The rides I did in 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006 and 2007 were all under the auspices of ACA. Both organizations are non-profits, of course. With this cooperative effort, I'm able to participate in their rides and use them as fund-raising vehicles.

In this manner, I can ride with a self-supported group (no sag vehicle) who will camp along the way and communally prepare breakfast and dinner. There will be a leader to assist in logistics, safety, bike repair and the like. As usual I will be using a trailer to haul all necessary gear for camping for 3 months on the road.

The blog for the ride can be found on the Internet at: <http://nt2010.blogspot.com>. I'm hoping to be able to publish the ride journal through the Times Record newspaper of Brunswick. Along the way I will continue fund-raising by talking with people about ALA and handing out cards to encourage them to go to the Web to pledge. I hope, too, to be able to meet representatives from the Lung Associations in the states and provinces I pass through.

TOTAL FUNDS RAISED IN 14 YEARS:  
**\$216,436**  
AVERAGE PER YEAR:  
**\$14,738**  
NUMBER OF SPONSORS IN 2009:  
**331**  
15-YEAR GOAL:  
**\$250,000**  
AMOUNT STILL TO RAISE:  
**\$33,564**  
2010 \$ GOAL:  
**\$34,000**

## FUND-RAISING HISTORY

|      |          |
|------|----------|
| 1996 | \$1,100  |
| 1997 | \$3,300  |
| 1998 | \$5,400  |
| 1999 | \$10,050 |
| 2000 | \$10,431 |
| 2001 | \$10,230 |
| 2002 | \$12,032 |
| 2003 | \$13,026 |
| 2004 | \$22,800 |
| 2005 | \$19,000 |
| 2006 | \$27,500 |
| 2007 | \$30,000 |
| 2008 | \$26,031 |
| 2009 | \$25,536 |

| YOUR 2009 PLEDGES |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| \$ AMOUNT         | NUMBER OF PLEDGES |
| 20 or less        | 56                |
| 21 - 40           | 115               |
| 41 - 60           | 82                |
| 61 - 80           | 10                |
| 81 - 100          | 46                |
| 101 - 200         | 14                |
| 201 - 300         | 5                 |
| 301 - 500         | 2                 |
| More than 500     | 1                 |
| <b>\$25,536</b>   | <b>331</b>        |

# American Lung Association Report Card for Maine

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Tobacco Prevention and Control Spending                                      | C |
| FY2010 Tobacco Control Program Funding: \$11,765,074*                        |   |
| CDC Best Practices State Spending Recommendation: \$18,500,000               |   |
| Percentage of CDC Recommendation: 63.6%                                      |   |
| *Includes FY2010 funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention |   |
| Smoke-free Air   | A |

Thumbs up for Maine for closing a loophole in its state smoke-free law for government and private workplaces.

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Cigarette Tax                   | C |
| Tax Rate per pack of 20: \$2.00 |   |
| Cessation Coverage              | C |

## OVERVIEW OF STATE SMOKING RESTRICTIONS:

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Government Worksites:  | Prohibited |
| Private Worksites:   | Prohibited |
| Schools:   | Prohibited |
| Child Care Facilities:   | Prohibited |
| Restaurants:   | Prohibited |
| Bars:  | Prohibited |
| Casinos/Gaming Establishments:<br>(tribal establishments exempt) | Restricted |
| Retail Stores:   | Prohibited |
| Recreational/Cultural Facilities:                                | Prohibited |
| Penalties:   | Yes        |
| Enforcement:   | Yes        |
| Preemption:  | No         |

## OVERVIEW OF STATE CESSATION COVERAGE:

### STATE MEDICAID PROGRAM:

Medications: Covers all 7 recommended cessation medications\*  
 Counseling: Covers individual counseling  
 Barriers to Coverage: Limits on duration, annual and lifetime limit on quit attempts, prior authorization required for some medications, minimal co-payments required and stepped care therapy required.

### STATE EMPLOYEE HEALTH PLAN (S):

Medications: Covers all 7 recommended cessation medications\*  
 Counseling: Covers individual, group and online counseling  
 Barriers to Coverage: Lifetime limit on quit attempts and co-payments required.

To see a complete report including state-by-state analysis on the Web, go to:

<http://www.stateoftobaccocontrol.org/>

## 2009 Ride Report — Brunswick, ME to Canada

A summary log of the shortened ride to Canada and NOT around the Gaspé Peninsula.

### 15 May Friday Brunswick, ME – West Bethel, ME

**[Mileage: 73, Time: 7:59, Mph: 9.2, Lodging: Pleasant River Campground]**

The first day of an expedition is always full of apprehension and excitement. Is all equipment in working order, including the body? Have I forgotten to pack anything? I didn't begin this ride with unbridled confidence; because I wasn't able to put in the kind of training I was hoping. The primary problem every day was: will I make it to the destination before dark?

Day 1 answer: yes.

My first campground was the one at which I stayed in 2005 when I was doing my circumnavigation of Maine. The following morning, I asked the owner, if he had any food in the store I could purchase for breakfast. He said that he was pretty much out of everything. I noticed that there was a camper next to the tenting area that showed signs of life. I asked Mike how friendly the people in that

camper were. He said, "Oh, they're pretty friendly. That's my mother." He yelled down to her, "Carol, can you give this gentleman breakfast?" She could and she did so. I was able to start the day with enough carbs to make it to Gorham and have a fine breakfast conversation with Mike's mom over eggs, donuts, juice and coffee. The food was necessary for the body; the conversation was good for the soul.

### 16 May Saturday West Bethel, ME – Lyndonville, VT

**[Mileage: 74, Time: 8:25, Mph: 8.8, Lodging: Moonlight in Vermont Bed and Breakfast, Cumulative Mileage: 147.5]**

Riding over Gorham Heights (between Gorham and Lancaster), was slow going. So slow, in fact, that it proved faster to walk. Crossing into Vermont was very deceptive. The road went right along the river and was flat. It was certainly encouraging until about a mile into the state. It was then that she revealed her true contours. Hills aplenty. Then it was time to enjoy the roller coaster Vermont hills in the rain. At the least my destination was a fine old Vermont B&B run by Dick and Shirley.

### Date: 17 May Saturday Lyndonville, VT – Richford, VT

**[Mileage: 63, Time: 8:10, Mph: 7.7, Lodging: The Crossing Motel, Cumulative Mileage: 210]**

The Northeast Kingdom of Vermont has a great deal of wide-open space, not many people and some claim, at least via Google, that the area is 20-30 years behind the rest of the state in terms of multiculturalism, technology and economics. The place where I stayed couldn't even guarantee that a room was actually non-smoking. The first room offered had a subtle aroma of burned tobacco covered over by deodorizers that weren't working. Part of the route involved taking a long-cut around Jay Peak. This meant going briefly into Canada on a lonely stretch of road that extends from North Troy to near Richford. At the Canadian border the guard wanted to know if I had any weapons or "Rambo"-sized knives. I mentioned that my trailer was already too full and wouldn't accommodate such a thing.

My goal this day was Frelighsburg, Québec. Unfortunately by the time I made it back over the US border, night was imminent. I'm a firm believer in not bicycling at night. Had I gone from the Canadian border directly to that town, I would have hit huge steep mountains. So Richford was the choice for the night.

**Date: 18 May Sunday Richford, VT – Waterloo, Québec, Canada**

**[Mileage: 35, Time: 4:23, Mph: 8.0, Lodging: Camping Ile Ste. Marie, Cumulative Mileage: 245]**

For the Canadian portion of this ride, I took advantage of La Route Verte – a network of mapped roads through many of the districts of the province of Québec.

This day was utterly draining between more hills and lack of food sources along the way. The high point was definitely Sutton, Québec. It was a cozy welcoming town with one of the best cappuccinos I've ever tasted. The café there was stunning when I first walked in, because I had been on the road for hours and hours with no contact with people at all. Opening the door to the café was like releasing a genie. There was liveliness, conversations, coffee brewing smells and noises, cups clinking and typing noises (by the on-line denizens using the free wi-fi). It swam over and around me - truly an uplifting moment.

It was so comfy there that I stayed too long. By the time I reached Waterloo, I had not much daylight left. According to Google there were still another 35 miles to ride to get to Sherbrooke. Judging by the map and my current average speed, I would arrive in Sherbrooke sometime around midnight. So I thought perhaps it was time to find a taxi to drive me the rest of the way. I located a guy named, Jean Guy, who sometimes chauffeurs people around. So I was able to purchase a ride from his acquaintance whose name I couldn't tell you. He said his name for me a couple of times. Over our time together, he said a lot of things a couple of times and it was only the occasional word that I could understand and possibly guess his meaning. I speak excellent, not fluent, French, and this person's accent had me stymied. By this time, there seemed to be a number of factors that led me to begin considering abandoning this expedition.



Rue Principale, Sutton, Québec

**Date: 19 May Monday Sherbrooke, QC – Victoriaville, QC**

**[Mileage: 65, Time: 7:58, Mph: 8.1, Lodging: Motel Le Victo, Cumulative Mileage: 310]**

This was the first day that the Green Way (La Route Verte) was partitioned from the road itself for nearly the entire day's ride. The riding surface was like that of the Erie Canal Bicycle Path - compacted crushed rock. Every now and then there would be a paved section that would make for a much quieter ride. The trail followed an old railroad bed and so most of the hills disappeared. This was great relief after the huge slopes that were everywhere from The VT-NH border until Sherbrooke. The path was deserted and the only time there was a biker coming from the other direction, it was, for the most part, a racer who had neither the time nor inclination to say hello much less have

a conversation. I did run into two ground hogs and one very healthy-looking raccoon.

At this point I decided to suspend the remainder of the expedition (from Victoriaville on). The reasons were many and it was a decision not reached lightly:

- a) Poor planning of daily mileages. They should have been much less considering the terrain. Some of the calculated mileages were off by a lot.
- b) Long stretches with no means of mechanical/medical

support should something have happened.

c) The difficulty of the route (hills, wind, cold, rain) gave me time to only bike. So it wasn't possible to take time in a place, take pictures to document the ride, visit the towns I rode through or interact with people (when there were any to interact with.)

d) Temperature and Precipitation... For 2 nights running, temperature hovered near the freezing point and I hadn't even reached the most northerly portion of the ride on the Gaspé Peninsula. Riding with the threat of frozen areas in the woods or on the roads is unsafe. Once in Canada, it was raining every day.

I feel the drive to fulfill an obligation to all the people (sponsors and friends) who put their trust in me to do this ride. I do, also, feel an obligation to foster my own health and safety. How many times did Admiral Peary attempt reaching the North Pole? Was he sensible enough to abandon when circumstances dictated he do so? I'm following his lead. My sponsors may feel disappointed; for me it was crushing. I do hope that all my faithful sponsors understand and know that my commitment to the American Lung Association hasn't weakened.



La Route Verte (The Green Way) in Québec

## 2009 Ride Report — Trek Across Maine

After the curtailed crossing of Quebec, I had plenty of time to prepare for the actual Trek Across Maine on Father's Day Weekend, June 19–21, 2009. Over the years, the weather at the Trek has always been varied, unpredictable and challenging. This year was no break with that tradition. I did arrive a day early to get ready for the start at Sunday River Ski Area. That evening it rained a lot. The next morning it was still raining. As a matter of fact, it continued until about 15 miles outside of Farmington, our first destination. Though I had no pluviometer, it was my impression that inches of rain fell. According to some historical records found on the Internet, .5 inches fell in each town we passed. Does that mean that, since we went through about 10 towns, we bicycled

through 5 inches of rain? Nevertheless out on the road, the rain was torrential. This didn't dampen our spirits though. Group support and enthusiasm were the key factors in driving us toward our destination, as was a desire to find some dry clothes. Despite the weather, over 2,000 trekkers and 600 volunteers worked for three days to make the 25th Anniversary Trek Across Maine the most successful yet. In terms of funds raised, volunteers recruited, number of riders and one of the best safety records in the history of the event. With over \$1.8 million raised, it was once again the American Lung Association's biggest fundraising event nationwide. The phenomenal volunteers were an integral part of the success of the ride. They stood in the rain directing us, stood in mud in big tents at

the rest stops and were tireless and infinitely patient and supportive of all of us riders. I don't believe the ride would be as successful if it weren't for them.

At the finish line in Farmington, delicious, hot baked potatoes and cheese sauce were waiting for us. In Waterville, pizza and ice cream beckoned us onward. Belfast's lunch feast has always been outstanding.

This past cycling-events season, the American Lung Association of New England wrapped up their biggest biking year yet. With two hugely successful 25th Anniversary Treks, the unending support of individuals, teams, and local businesses, and a new exciting event in the works for 2010, the first 25 years of American Lung Association biking events was just the beginning.

### The Wheezers and Geezers Friends Team - 2010

With my Team Carp A Diem still long extinct, I was part of this vibrant and effective Friends team for the Trek Across Maine. Many stalwart members seen in the photo took part in 2009.

Our intrepid team was recognized yet again as the # 1 team in terms of average pledge per rider. I was honored to be part of our lively team. Everyone on the team did a wonderful job in raising their own pledges. Along with our effective fund-raising, we had excellent team spirit, as you can see by our friendly mascot.

I will be part of this team in spirit at least. If the trans-continental expedition goes as planned, I will be somewhere in Montana when the actual 3-day Trek Across Maine happens. The team will continue to work to raise as much as possible for the American Lung Association in 2010. Our goal for 2010 is \$50,000. David Lamb, from Rochester, New York, will remain our phenomenal, intrepid, resourceful and fearless leader.



#### 2009 Ride Dedications

|                            |                                    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Taghi Ansari               | Ronald Lalime 1927-1999 Trekker #1 |
| Sande Bowman               | Jean Mierop 1932-1990              |
| Cookie and Rose Delcore    | Virginia "Ginny" Siddall 1929-2008 |
| George and Blanche Fischer | Kathryn Woods 1920-2008            |

### HOW YOU CAN HELP THIS YEAR

SPONSOR ME DIRECTLY

MAKE A CHECK OUT TO ALA AND MAIL IT TO ME AT:  
104 MERRYMEETING RD BRUNSWICK, ME 04011-1623

OR

PLEDGE ON-LINE AT [HTTP://PLEDGEJOHN.LUNGNE.ORG](http://pledgejohn.lungne.org)

REFER ME TO PEOPLE WHO MIGHT BE WILLING TO SPONSOR MY RIDE  
COLLECT SPONSORSHIPS FROM COWORKERS FOR ME AT YOUR WORKPLACE  
— LET ME KNOW IF YOU CAN'T/DON'T WISH TO CONTRIBUTE THIS YEAR

EMAIL: [jfischer@gwi.net](mailto:jfischer@gwi.net)