



January 2010 Newsletter

Welcome to the third newsletter and thank you for your support of the MMBA. The MMBA is working hard to keep the membership informed of upcoming events and current issues.

Annual Meeting and Expo

The annual meeting and expo is this coming weekend on Jan 31, 2010 at the MSU Pavilion in East Lansing. Dave Wiens of the *Race across the Sky* documentary and six-time Leadville 100 winner will be the guest speaker. Meeting and expo visitors are welcome to bring their bikes to ride on our indoor mountain biking track. Yes there will be dirt, and yes you will be able to ride indoors.

Ed Berta First across the Finish Line Award

The MMBA will host a thank you breakfast for First across the Finish Line award recipients. We have some exciting changes for the First across the Finish Line award. Armadillo Clothing, a longtime MMBA supporter, is sponsoring the FAFL award. They are donating work shirts for distribution at the FAFL breakfast. They will be handed out on a first-come, first-served basis. To learn more about the breakfast, visit the MMBA Forums at <http://mmba.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=17&t=95260>.

Learn More About the MMBA

Do you have questions about the MMBA? Do you want to know what is going on behind the scenes? Do you want to be more involved? We have answers.

The MMBA leadership will be giving state and chapter reports at the MMBA Annual Meeting and Expo. Visitors will be able to participate in a question-and-answer session with the state board. This is a great opportunity for the membership to get involved.

Silent Auction Going Strong

The silent auction is returning for a third year and we are revving up to make this year just as special as



the last. Some of the items we will have for auction include a complete SRAM X-O drivetrain set, guaranteed Iceman entries, and airfare and accommodations for the biking trip of your choice near Red Rock Canyon. We are still accepting suggestions and donations. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Marne at execdir@mmba.org. The silent auction items will be updated on the website at <http://mmba.org/annual-meeting/silent-auction>. For current information on the annual meeting and expo, visit www.mmba.org/annual-meeting.

Advocacy Updates

The MMBA has been following the progress of state bills regarding the sustainable funding of state parks and the right for equestrians to ride on trails historically used for horses, especially those trails which have been closed to horses in recent years. There have been some drastic changes in both of these bills since their original introductions.

State Park, Boating Access Site and Forest Recreation Passport Fee

The Passport bills have passed the House and Senate floors, but Speaker of the House Andy Dillon has made some changes that have delayed the progress of this bill due to pressure from the road-funding constituents. This is bad news for the recreation bills.

Last week, Dillon voiced concerns about putting a priority on funding for the parks when other priorities rank higher. Still, he said if the Legislature fails to quickly complete a budget this year, he would not hold up the bill again. The deadline is March 31.

Senate Bills 388 and 389 would allow motorists unlimited entry into state parks, boating access sites, and state forests for one year. This fee would replace the annual state park sticker and would be \$10 for automobiles and \$5 for motorcycles. Motorists would pay the fee at the time of their annual vehicle registration. According to the House Fiscal Agency, if every motorist purchased the pass, \$61 million would be generated for upgrades at state parks and recreation facilities.

MRPA Conference Presentations

The Michigan Parks and Recreation Association will hold their annual conference and expo on February 2–5 in Grand Rapids at the Amway Plaza Hotel. Executive Director Marne Smiley will be part of a panel discussion on "Funding for Trails—How Does It Work?" This panel discussion will take place on Wednesday, February 3 at 3:30 p.m. Current MMBA President, Nate Phelps, will present "Gateway Trails" on Thursday, February 4 at 1:30 p.m.

Amendment to the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act

Senate Bill 578, also known as the "horse bill," has drastically changed, but for the better. When it was first introduced, it was proposed to allow horses access to all trails that were historically open to horses. This bill was voted out of House Committee on Jan 26 and is expected to be submitted to the House floor by early next week. The House already passed an earlier version of the bill that was not as friendly to mountain bikers, and it is expected to pass without complication. The Senate is expected to pass the Pack & Saddle Animal Trailways House Bill 4610. The tie-bared bills will likely make it to the Governor's desk in February.

Biking Advocacy Day in Lansing—May 26

The MMBA has joined forces for a legislative day in Lansing with the Michigan Trails and Greenway Alliance and the League of Michigan Bicyclists. Mark your calendars for May 26 for a chance to speak with your legislators about bike advocacy and help protecting our trails.



Walking the Halls with MMBA's Newly-Hired Lobbyist

In an effort to stay on top of mountain biking advocacy issues in Michigan, the board voted to hire lobbyist Todd Tennis, late last year. Todd will be reporting to the Director of Advocacy, John Gonway. John answered a few questions to give us a better understanding of Todd's relationship with the MMBA.

Q. What is the name of the firm we will be working with?

A. Capitol Services, Inc.

Q. Why did we go with this firm?

A. They have a wealth of experience with non-profit entities and the best value.

Q. What experience does he bring to the table?

A. Todd brings an understanding of mountain bikers' interests and many years of experience working with non-profits.

Q. How long do we expect to employ him?

A. A minimum of one year.

Q. What issues will he work on?

A. He has his eyes on the equestrian legislation, DNR issues, government appointments and general advocacy on behalf of mountain bikers.

Q. What are the basic functions of a lobbyist and why does the MMBA need one?

A. A lobbyist monitors and reports on legislation that may impact mountain bikers. He also helps guide our advocacy through the political process and personality issues of persuading legislators.

MMBA Publications and Updates

Bent Rim Bugle

In December, all MMBA members received their last printed regular issue of the *Bent Rim Bugle*. We are moving to a quarterly electronic BRB that will come out in the summer, fall, and winter. The spring BRB will be printed and mailed as well as published online. Our yearly printing will take place in March to highlight the previous year and give a recap of the annual meeting and expo.

The MMBA is on Twitter and Facebook!



Look for regular Twitter updates from our Executive Director at:

<http://www.twitter.com/mmbaed>.

You can also find regular updates and ask questions at our Facebook page:



<http://www.facebook.com>

[/group.php?gid=62735932792&ref=ts](http://www.facebook.com/#/group.php?gid=62735932792&ref=ts).

MMBA Partners with Moosejaw; MMBA Members Receive 10% Discount

We are pleased to announce that MMBA members will now receive a



10-percent discount with Moosejaw. The discount is available at Moosejaw stores and online at Moosejaw.com.

The discount does not apply to Arc'Teryx, Bugaboo, Suunto, The North Face and Western Mountaineering gear. The discount is good for 10 percent off regular retail prices and 5 percent off sale prices. Please use our new discount code—**MMBA**—at all Moosejaw locations and on Moosejaw.com. Love the Madness!

Schedule of Events

January

31 MMBA Annual Meeting & Expo

February

2-5 MRPA Annual Conference

13 Grand Rapids Bicycle Film Festival

20 Mid-State Chapter Meeting

March

6 Hoosier Mountain Biking Association Annual Meeting

9-11 National Bike Summit in Washington DC

27 League of Michigan Bicyclists Bike Summit

May

5-8 IMBA World Summit

26 Cycling Advocacy Day in Lansing

Volunteers

A big thank you to all of our new volunteers! Welcome aboard and we look forward to a great year. In addition to picking up our efforts on the day-to-day operations of the MMBA, we have also significantly increased our leadership in advocacy. Under the leadership of our Director of Advocacy, John Gonway, the volunteer advocacy committee will watch bills, write position statements, coordinate trail responsibilities and work with the board and Executive Director to ensure that mountain bikers' needs are represented.

The following are volunteers who have stepped up to fill new and existing volunteer positions:

Advocate	Kelly Hoffman
Communications Coordinator	Diane Ursu
Legislative Liaison	Jason Van Elderen
Marketing Coordinator	Adam Wint
Merchandise Coordinator	Andrew Heer
Southeast Regional Trail Coordinator	Ted Welsh
Southwest Regional Trail Coordinator	Travis Bell

As it stands now, we are still looking for additional volunteers to fill the remaining Regional Trail Coordinator positions and the State Trail Coordinator position. If you are interested please contact our Director of Advocacy, John Gonway at advocacydirector@mmba.org.

We are also looking for volunteers for the day of the annual meeting. For more information, go to <http://mmba.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=17&t=95160>. Contact Marne at execdir@mmba.org. Thank you for reading and I hope to see you January 31 at the Annual Meeting and Expo. As always if you have any questions, suggestions or comments on this newsletter or any other MMBA business, please contact us at info@mmba.org.

Keep the rubber side down,

Marne Smiley