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off road

WINTER 2004 - 2005 ISSUE

A FEW WORDS FROM THE NEW MAN IN CHARGE.

Scott Thayer, MORC President

Greetings! I feel very privileged to have been elected to serve you as President. For the past two years while I've been on the MORC Board, it's been exciting to see the progress that we've made. I'm really looking forward to this opportunity to lead the organization to the next level of success.

Just over 4 years ago, I relocated to Minnesota from Michigan when I was offered a job in Bloomington. Since then, I've been involved in MORC as a member, a trail work volunteer, and for the last 2 years, as a member of the board. I've been a mountain biker for the last 13 years and have 3 mountain bikes and 4 other bikes to my name. I got into mountain biking through my friends and quickly got into racing. For a few years, I raced heavily on the state level before "real life" caught up to me. Now, I'm back to riding with my friends and am having more fun than ever.

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DESTINATION TRAIL IN MINNESOTA?

Tim Wegner, State IMBA Representative



Could a destination trail be in the future for Minnesota? Is there enough land and varied activities to make others want to come here and ride our trails? What would it take to make this reality? If we build it will they come?

These and many other questions came to mind after a recent meeting I had with DNR officials. After about a month of thinking this through I believe we can make it happen. I am going to share with you a description of the area as well as my dreams and thoughts about how this can happen.

In September I had a meeting with Courtland Nelson, Minnesota's new director of parks. I discussed that our state parks did not have any real mountain bike trails. Mr. Nelson agreed with me and invited Dale Gundberg from MORC and me, as the Minnesota State IMBA Representative, to give a presentation at a meeting for all the state parks land managers. As a result of the presentation I received a call from the land manager at one of the state's newest parks; Cuyuna State Recreation Area. He asked me to come to the area and review the land and evaluate it for potential mountain bike trails.

I made the trip in October and spent about 5 hours evaluating this piece of land. First off, it is huge: 5,000 acres with 1,800 acres of water. It is an abandoned iron ore mine with incredible potential for mountain bike and hiking trails. I believe we could easily construct 40+ miles of trails in this area.

This land is beautiful, with wonderful vistas from the top of the hills, tremendous lookouts where you can see for miles and miles, water that is clear deep and a land manager that is excited about having a user group to work with to develop trails. Camp sites are on the property, and activities range from canoeing and kayaking to fishing and scuba diving. Some of the pit lakes are over 500 feet deep. I was told that the water clarity is 70-80 feet 10 feet below the surface.

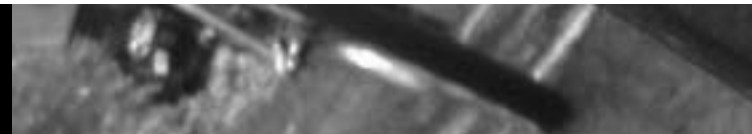
It's centrally located, too: about 1.5 hours from Minneapolis, 1 hour from Duluth, 15 minutes from Brainerd and 1.5 hours from the Iron Range. This area has the potential to become an epic ride. Much like the Maah-Daah-Hey trail in North Dakota, this could become the destination of thousands of people to come to enjoy the tremendous trails that would have design input from mountain bikers.

Do I sound excited? You bet. Mountain bikers have a tremendous opportunity to prove to land managers all around the state of Minnesota that we know how to build trails, how to maintain them and how to work with other user groups. I will be meeting with user groups over the next few months to see if I can gather further support and pass on the excitement. The last thing I want to happen is that I would have to tell Courtland Nelson that mountain bikers are not interested in building trails in land managed by the DNR.

If you have questions or comments about this story, please contact me at twegner50@yahoo.com.

MORC PARTIES AT BUCK HILL.

Eric Lealos, MORC Board Member



The annual meeting and party this year at Buck Hill was an exercise in creative trail building, an intersection between cross-country and freeriding, and most of all a great success.

With donated lumber and a lot of imagination, a dual-slalom stunt course emerged from the tubing hill and pile of woodchips. Riders were challenged by downhill hairpins, twin ramps, banked turns, a dirt double jump, rollers and a series of Seussian elevated ramps that carried them over the woodchips and into a log ride at the finish. The result was a lot of fun in a relatively low risk environment, and a great contest. Before and after the race, a crowd gathered on the hill as a succession of riders conjugated the verb "to huck."

We also had a flat tire relay race that incorporated tire-pumping skills to compensate for wide range of fitness levels, as well as tire and wheel sizes. REI provided crack tech support, so mechanicals were no excuse. Top-notch prizes donated by REI and Erik's Bike Shop sent those on the podium away with something to show for their efforts. I'd mention the winners here, but our results tracking system wasn't exactly permanent, and in the end everyone who attended was a winner in some way, weren't they?

Then we fired up the grill, opened up the coolers (except for the rank coffin of fermented C2 that Lundell brought), and then got down to business. Board members Don Youngdahl and JJ Robb

retired. Doug Holz, Troy Lawrence and Charles Youel became new board members. I'd call it the changing of the guard, but we know better - it's the cycle of the peloton. Speaking of which, a couple of domestiques received special awards for their work and dedication. John Lundell was voted trail worker of the year and received a \$100 gift certificate, courtesy of Erik the Bikeman. Erik Gerrits came in second place and received a \$50 gift certificate from Penn Cycle to go with another fracture for his already impressive collection.

After the meeting the 1st annual MORC Film Festival featured entries from 4 MORC "artists." The votes were close, but somebody had to walk away without a trophy. Penn Cycle came through with some cool awards for the film festival winners, and I am sure they enjoy a place of honor in the winning homes.

Special thanks to: Pat Arneson, Bob Bryan, James Ford, Erik Gerrits, Jeff Gude, Dale Gundberg, Scott Haraldson, Doug Holtz, Shad Holland, Troy Lawrence, Ryan Lieske, Ty McElvain, Ryan Panning, Bob Shepard, Scott Shore, Troy Sierakowski, Scott Thayer, Charles Youel, Don Youngdahl and others who took time out from the festivities to keep things somewhat orderly.

Plans for next year's shindig are already in the works. Watch morcmtnb.org for details, and step up to volunteer early if you want a hand in making the 2005 party an even bigger success.

MORC IS GROWING, THANKS TO YOU.

Jeff Gude, MORC Membership Coordinator

The foundations of MORC date back to the mid-1990s, to Gary Sjoquist's North Central Mountain Bike Group. Back in those days, only a handful of local riders could call themselves members. A little less than 5 years ago, in January 2000, MORC had 68 members. By January 2002, the message was getting out and that number had increased more than 300%, to 215 members. We expect that in January 2005 MORC will have more than 500 members. From that original group of 68, nearly 50 are still active members.

As MORC grows, our ability to gain and maintain trails has grown accordingly. However, the administrative work required to maintain an organization that has grown 800% in four years is challenging to say the least. Everyone involved in the day-to-day operation of MORC is a volunteer, with all the competing obligations of job, family and daily life. We appreciate the support of our members, and we appreciate your patience as we try to keep up with MORC's increasing size.

Many of you have already received our new membership cards. These cards are among the first steps we're taking to process memberships more efficiently. As with any new process, there have been bugs to work out, but we're making progress. And speaking of cards, remember that your MORC membership card entitles you to discounts on purchases at numerous local bike shops, which are among our staunchest supporters. Check with morcmtnb.org for a complete list of partner shops to see how and where you can put your card to good use.

LOOKING FOR WINTER RIDING?

Check the forums at www.morcmtnb.org



MORC PARTY PIX



A FEW WORDS...

Continued from page 1

Over the years, MORC's leadership has done a terrific job in growing the organization and gaining and maintaining trails. Now, with the success that we've had, we can set new goals. Some of the things that we will be working on in the coming year include raising our visibility with mountain bikers and growing our active membership base. As I write, we are at nearly 500 members. Despite that being our highest membership ever, that's still just a fraction of the riders that use our trail systems.

In 2005, we also want to expand the variety of riding experiences our trails have to offer. The impression is out there that MORC is only interested in cross-country (XC) trails. This isn't the case. We are interested in building sustainable mountain biking trails according to IMBA standards. In order to get approval for the more challenging freeride and downhill trails, a certain level of trust needs to be developed with the land managers we deal with. At the same time, it also involves a level of responsibility from mountain bikers to obey the current rules of use for property, and get permission before building stunts and obstacles.

Lastly, and this is big, we are going to be pushing beyond the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metro area in our project focus. There are a couple of incredibly exciting opportunities that we are working to develop. If things come together and the projects get green lighted, we will need MORC members in those areas to step up and take leadership roles in making these projects become a reality.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you. The MORC Board is acting on your behalf, so if you ever want to ask a question, or have your thoughts heard, email me at president@morcmtnb.org. As always look for the latest developments to be posted online at www.morcmtnb.org.

OCTOBER 2004



AT BUCK HILL

FROM THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT

Steve Garnjobst, MORC Board Member

It's with confidence in MORC's future that I turn the reins over to Scott Thayer, your new MORC President. It's been very rewarding to serve as MORC President for the past 2-1/2 years. Due to the efforts of tireless MORC members and generous sponsors, we've made considerable strides during that time. Before we take the next step in MORC's evolution, I'd like to highlight a few important steps already completed:

- Dramatic increase in MORC membership rolls. Membership has grown to more than double that in 2002.
- Extensive Internet presence. The revised website and online Forums have provided a vital place for the mountain biking community to interact and become more organized.
- More and better trails. Long MORC's core competency, solid trail design, construction and maintenance has led to significantly increased riding opportunities for Twin Cities mountain bikers.
- Increased coordination between various constituencies in the mountain biking community. In the past 2-3 years, MORC has started to become the statewide voice for mountain biking that many of us have dreamed of.
- Greater visibility in Minnesota for MORC and mountain biking in general.

There's still plenty of work to do. MORC still isn't a household acronym for many mountain bikers and land managers. Our efforts are still largely focused on the Twin Cities. And new trail building efforts are still constrained by limited volunteer and monetary resources. With Scott's able leadership and the support of dedicated MORC members, I'm confident we'll meet these challenges and achieve even greater success in the coming year.

I plan to remain active in MORC, serving as Battle Creek Trail Steward and providing other support where needed. Most importantly, I plan to spend more time on the trails.



UPDATE: MORCMTB.ORG

John Lundell, MORC Vice President

The MORC web site, specifically the forums, continues to grow. I thought it might be interesting to share some of the web site traffic data that has been collected.

Our busiest month in 2004 was August. During that month we had an average of 897 visits and 4,552 pages viewed per day with a total of over 141,000 pages viewed and almost 28,000 visits for the entire month. The next busiest months were June, May, September, July and October respectively.

When I set out to include forums on the web site I had no idea how important they would become. The forums are now THE place to find out what is happening with MORC, including but not limited to trail work, upcoming trail projects, events and group rides. The forums are also a great place to stay in touch over the winter months, with events like bike maintenance classes happening during the off-season.

This winter we hope to take the web site through another revision, updating the look and feel with our new logo and graphics. We also have plans to add to our online merchandise section, with the new socks becoming the next item available for purchase online.

If you have not yet registered on the MORC web site, now is a great time to see what you've been missing. You can use the site to check trail conditions, plan a group ride, and connect with other riders about gear, riding techniques and just about anything else.

Most importantly, the site will always have times and locations for upcoming trail work sessions. One of our primary goals for next year is to increase participation in trail work. Find out where we're going to be, stop by to help out, and be sure to bring your bike to ride the trail you helped build.



UPDATE: THEODORE WIRTH PARK

Erik Gerrits, Southern MN IMBA Representative

The trails at Theodore Wirth Park had a flow that felt a lot like ADD. Very interesting, but with very short attention spans. Everyone had their own favorite loop and a certain direction they liked to ride. And what's not as widely known is that not a single inch of those trails was technically legal to ride.

If you have been out to Theo this year, you know that a lot of things have changed.

The changes at Wirth began with a group of individuals approached the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to talk to them about building sustainable, legitimate trails in Theodore Wirth Park. This process took years, but the end result was that the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board granted the group authority to design, build and maintain a mountain bike trail network through the park. One of MPRB's requirements was that a Minneapolis-based group needed to take on this project. The group is Minneapolis Off-road Cycling Advocates (MOCA), which is now an affiliate member of MORC.

As anyone who's spent any saddle time at Wirth knows, bikers are not the only ones out there. And one of the unintended consequences of the old trails was that they created multiple intersections with traditional walking paths, and in some cases encouraged hikers and walkers to create additional shortcuts through the woods to get down to the beach or up to the prairie.

The resulting loop trail is designed to increase sustainability and reduce user conflicts, which are the primary standards by which the MPRB will judge the success of the project. The trail has been laid out as an intermediate loop, with an expert loop to come next summer. Tim Wegner and Shawn Sheely did most of the trail layout at Theo. And up until just recently, all of the trails were built by hand. This is a lot of hard work, and a lot of calluses.

The trail crew has been building every Wednesday and Sunday throughout the summer and into the fall. We've had as many as 30 people and sometimes as few as five. Right now, the plan is to hold a grand opening in June, at which point the evaluation process will start. After a year the MPRB will evaluate the trail to see how well the trail has sustained. If the evaluation is positive, we'll work to extend the trails south to Cedar Lake.

If you like what you see at Theo, thank a trail worker—we'll be out again in force come spring. Better yet, join us. If you don't like it, talk to me about. Post about it on the MORC site. Better yet, join us and get your ideas into the mix.

UPDATE: RACING

Scott Thayer, MORC President

Over the past few years, two of the most important annual events on the MORC calendar have been the Erik's Spring Cup race at Buck Hill, and the 24 Hours of Afton at Afton Alps. The commitment and contributions of local bike shops make these race events possible, and the proceeds make up a good chunk of our operating budget. Here's a brief review of this year's events:

For the Spring Cup, the weather cooperated wonderfully, and with the state racing series (MNSCS) back in place, turnout was up over last year. The partnership that Erik's and MORC have has each of us working together to pull off the race. Erik's gets the exposure and publicity from the event, and generously donates the proceeds after expenses to MORC. This year and last year, MORC helped with setting up new trails at Buck Hill to spice up the course. See the MORC web site photo gallery for images from the 2004 race.



The 2004, 24 Hours of Afton was a huge success. Penn Cycle stepped up and helped sponsor the event, the weather was great, the number of participants was the highest ever, and a new scoring system (developed by a MORC member) was a smashing success. Gone are the days of the dot board to keep track of race results, the new computerized system gives near real time results. For next year, we're looking at additional ways to make the event even better.

Combined, these two events raised almost 25% of the MORC budget for 2004. Without the help of MORC members volunteering, pulling these events off wouldn't be a possibility. These events are both a way for us to give back to the mountain biking community, and a means for us to generate revenue to finance trail projects that will benefit all mountain bikers, not just racers. Thank you volunteers, for helping make these events happen.

THE 2005 MNSCS RACING SEASON:

> FIRST RACE: Spring Cup at Buck Hill
Burnsville, MN - May 7

> LAST RACE: Laddie's Loppet at Maplelag
Callaway, MN - September 3-4
Complete schedule at www.mnscs.com

UPDATE: TERRACE OAKS PARK

Douglas Holz, Trail Steward



Having played bridesmaid to Lebanon Hills' bride for the past five years, Terrace Oaks is finally getting a little love of its own. In 2004, we closed some of the most badly eroded and least sustainable trail sections, and cut new trail that added mileage to the overall loop while keeping the twisty flow that Terrace is famous for.

The season began with the REI Trail Day, which brought many people new to trail work out to reclaim an area near the beginning of the trailhead, which was re-routed to fix a badly eroded uphill segment of trail. We began more trail work in September, which was a little late in the year to start. But in that short time we were able to accomplish three re-routes totaling nearly half a mile of trail (roughly .30 miles have been added with the re-routes) with small but very dedicated trail crews.

The re-routes were necessary to keep noticeable erosion from continuing on some badly rutted sections. Terrace Oaks has always been known for its flowing singletrack, and the trail system will continue to be true to that form.

Cannondale held a test ride at Terrace Oaks this fall, giving riders a chance to take some of their 2005 models for a spin on the new trails. Hopefully there will be more events like this next year to get more people out to this trail.

Terrace Oaks isn't likely to see the kind of technical features we've built into Lebanon Hills, but there's a lot of great singletrack in those woods that deserves to be ridden, enjoyed and respected. There are even more re-routes planned for 2005, as well as some much-needed reclamation, so look forward to a full season of trail work.

Unfortunately, the other news about Terrace Oaks is the problem of trail poaching due to the early closure of the trails. We are working to change this, but until we can, please stay off the trails if they sign says they're closed. Riding them only hurts our chances of extending the season, and gives ammunition to those who'd like to see the trails closed altogether.

If you live in the Terrace Oaks neighborhood I strongly urge you to let others know that the trails are closed and that work is being done to make the trails both more sustainable and fun to ride. And if you haven't joined us for trail work yet, please do so next year.

UPDATE: SALEM HILLS/HARMON PARK

James Ford, Trail Steward

Weather conditions in 2004 brought out the foliage at Salem like we've never seen before. Colorful, but it gave us plenty to do to keep the vegetation from taking the trail over. Overall, we had a very productive year of trail work. While this trail isn't as widely known as some other metro area spots, it's an enjoyable ride that's worth the trip to check out.

We started the year out fixing a little of the damage done to the trail over the winter and completing the finishing work on the Southern Loop. As of July, we had a complete 3.2-mile loop in the southern section of the park.

A series of crossover trails give riders the option of taking smaller loops instead of the full circuit. Two of the resulting loops are around 1/4 mile in length, while the center loop in the prairie areas is about 2 miles long. August brought out the wildflowers and blooming prairie grasses to the fields of Salem — a riot of color and a blast to ride. However, all of this foliage overtook the trail in places and had to be cut back a couple of times.

Plans are going ahead with the city to design and put up a nice trailhead kiosk as well signage on the trail itself. Trail work for next year includes building a boardwalk on the east side of the pond to allow for riding during wet times. We are also going to lay out, flag, cut and complete the northern loop and decide on a direction for the trail.

When it is all said and done we should have 5-6 miles of fast, rolling trail that combine wide open prairie and thick woods, open to hikers and mountain bikers. I am in discussing the possibility of having the mountain bike trail open for winter riding with the powers that be. Keep an eye on the www.morcmtb.org forms for more news on this, and get out there and start riding this nice little gem in the southeast metro.



WHAT MAKES GREAT SINGLETRACK? YOU AND A SHOVEL.

The majority of mountain bike trails in the Twin Cities are built and maintained by MORC volunteers. The more help we get, the more new trail we can build. See www.morcmtb.org for details.



UPDATE: LEBANON HILLS PARK

Dale Gundberg, Dakota County Trail Steward

Well, boys and girls, the renovation of the trail system at Lebanon Hills is about done. To recap the events of the past that got us to this point: In 1999, Gary Sjoquist helped to get me onto a task force with Dakota County, to represent the interests of mountain bikers in the next 10-year plan for Lebanon Hills Regional Park. On the task force, I met a guy named Tim Wegner who represented XC skiers. I brought Tim over to the dark side and together we pushed for a complete remake of the mountain bike trails.

At the time, the bike trail consisted of summer use of a 2.5-mile, 12-foot wide skate skiing loop. It was fast and steep, but for those same reasons it was severely eroded. The county considered closing the trail to bikes temporarily if the erosion could not be controlled. The trails weren't designed with bikes in mind and it showed.

Fast forward: There are now 8.5 miles of bike-specific singletrack. Use of the ski trails for bike use has been eliminated. It's taken 5 years, countless meetings with land managers, thousands of MORC dollars for machine work, and thousands of volunteer hours to get here.

One fact not generally known is that before we were allowed to build all the new singletrack, MORC volunteers had to first fill in, seed, and reclaim 1.2 miles of eroded bike, ski and hiking trails; spend three months building a new section of 12-foot wide XC ski trail by hand; and build a new half-mile section of hiking trail so that the other users would still have usable trail systems when the new bike trails were added. The goodwill that we built with this unseen work is why we were trusted and allowed to build the singletrack and all the fun stuff we have on the trails today.

Some special memories of the construction process:

- Both Tim and I breaking ribs on pre-rides during construction.
- Hearing hoots and hollers from riders trying a new trail section for the first time.

- Running a chain saw with a cast on one wrist and the other wrist in a bandage from a fall on a spring ride in Moab, Utah.
- Poison ivy covering half my face after constructing a 12-foot wide ski trail bypass with hand tools and 5 volunteers.
- Flagging trail with Tim for 4 hours in a thunderstorm.
- Working with my daughters to build all the bridges for the beginner trail.
- Flagging the new singletrack at the end of the trail with Tim Wegner and John Lundell on New Year's Day 2003.
- Learning about my new bee sting allergy during a trail approval walk-through with land managers.
- Learning that it takes 11 people to set a Bobcat upright after Tim rolled it down the hill.
- Building jumps with the Dingo and flying through the air as the first test pilot.

Special thanks to Tim Wegner, Jan Lee, John Lundell, and all the volunteers that worked on this trail. We are also in debt to the Dakota County Parks management who took a chance on MORC, trusted us with their park, and let us create a unique and unquestionably popular trail. Take time to thank Steve Sullivan, Bruce Blair, and Terry Vikla when you have the chance.

Now, efforts at Lebanon will shift to maintenance and focused redesigns of certain sections. An infrared trail counter installed in 2002 put the rider count at close to 35,000 laps for the year. If you've been out there recently, you know that usage is up dramatically from 2002. Riders' skills have improved and impact on the trail in some areas is exceeding design limitations. It's all part of the trails' evolution, and the changes we will make in coming years will only improve the flow and make it an even better ride.

IMBA 2004 YEAR-END REPORT

Tim Wegner, State IMBA Representative



Momentum for land access continued to build in 2004 as a result of our efforts in 2003, when we had the IMBA Trail Care Crew here for an extremely successful 10-day HotSpot program. Trail access opportunities continue to present themselves to us, and they will be acted upon. Here are a few of those opportunities:

Three Rivers Parks District

We had another successful IMBA Trail Care School at Murphy-Hanrehan Park in October. I counted about 35 people in attendance. Organizations that sent participants included Dakota County, Washington County, Three Rivers Parks District, Minnesota DNR, and Minnesota State Parks. At this school we designed trails. The group worked together to come up with a plan and then laid out nearly 4 miles of trails at Murphy-Hanrehan Park. Hopefully these 4 miles of trails will become part of a bigger trail system in this park. MORC and IMBA would like to thank Three Rivers Parks for allowing us to utilize this wonderful park for our exercise. IMBA would also like to thank Quality Bike Products, REI and Minnesota DNR for sponsoring the visit from the IMBA Trail Care Crew.

Belle Plaine

I reviewed some land here in October. While it's only about 80 acres, it does have great potential for trail. Boundaries and land ownership need to be defined before we can move forward.

Roseville

Met with the parks department in Roseville in late October. There is a 250-acre piece of park land that has tremendous potential for trails. We hope to prepare a presentation for the parks commission and ultimately for the city commission this winter and preliminary work begin sometime in 2005. City and Parks must approve this before we will be able to move forward. The trail will be a multi-use trail shared with hikers and bikers.

Steeplechase

This is a ski area near Cannon Falls and Rochester that holds tremendous potential. There is a group of riders from Rochester that would become the trail stewards for the trails here. The landowner is interested in putting cross-country trails, dual slalom, freeride and maybe some downhill trails on his land. Trail design will begin at the end of November.

Afton Alps

John Reents and his family have been tremendous hosts for MORC and IMBA. We had a two-day IMBA school at this facility in October. John and the entire family at Afton could not have been more cooperative with us. We built some challenging stuff at the Alps and had a great time as well. Might mention that Afton Alps hosts the 24 hours of Afton each year, which benefits MORC's treasury. I believe that MORC will be doing even more in the future to help improve the trails at this great facility.

Plum Creek Trail St. Cloud

This trail in St. Cloud has outstanding potential. The local user group has been extremely effective in working with other user groups as well as the consultant hired by the city to make recommendations for this trail system. As it stands, mountain bikers would share the

trails with other users but parallel trails would be built that would add some challenge for mountain bikers.

MRTUA (Minnesota Recreation Trail Users Association)

This committee reviews grant application for TEA-21 funds. Last spring we did presentation to the MRTUA committee asking to be added as a user group with three votes. In October, we learned that mountain bikers were recognized as a user group and would have three seats on this committee. This will help to ensure that funding requests from mountain bike groups will have equal representation on this very important committee. MORC will be the organization that will determine the committee members.

At the November MORC board meeting, the following people were appointed to serve on the committee: Dale Gundberg (three years), Erik Gerrits (two years) and me (one year). Each position will transition to a three-year term as the current person's term expires. In other words, each year we'll appoint someone new to the committee. This plan assures us that we will always have someone with experience on the committee and leadership amongst ourselves.

Much has been done and much more is left to do before we can complete all of these trails. MORC's support has been key to gaining the respect of the land managers and has made my job as IMBA Representative for Southern Minnesota much easier than if I did not have a strong club supporting me.

THE 20-20-20 CLUB

What it is and why you should join it

The first 20 is \$20 to join your local mountain bike organization (that'd be us), because all mountain bikers need to be involved in their local trail community.

The second 20 is \$20 to join IMBA and become part of mountain biking's indispensable national and international movement. (Note: IMBA has since raised its basic membership to \$25, but we're not letting that screw with the symmetry of our program.)

The final 20 is 20 volunteer hours per year: hours spent on trail maintenance, attending public hearings, helping out with the site, or perhaps contributing to the writing and/or production of a MORC newsletter. Heavens to Betsy, do we need help with that.

You don't have to stop at 20 (dollars or hours), but it's a good place to start. You get there, and then you keep going. In fact, a few MORC board members have donated more than 500 hours of service this year, almost none of it required by a court of law.

Mountain biking on public land is ridiculously fun, but it's also a privilege. One that is sustainable only if each and every one of us who enjoys the sport gives something back. Start with 20 here, 20 there and you'll be amazed by what you can accomplish.

UPDATE: BLOOMINGTON RIVER TRAIL

Steve Eberly, Trail Steward



After a lot of planning, negotiating and old-fashioned hard work, I am happy to report that we are building trail in Bloomington.

MORC has been doing basic maintenance work on the trail for several years. The River Trail has been among the most popular riding spots in the metro area. But sustainability issues have degraded several sections of the trail.

Working with local land managers, MORC proposed re-routing two fall line hill climbs on the eastern portion of the trail (south of Portland Avenue) as the highest priority. Fall line trails (trails that go straight up or down the face of a hill) cannot survive even moderate use. They channel rainfall into concentrated streams that quickly erode the trail into a gully, which is bad news for wildlife, plant life and trail users alike. These sections were eroding badly and well on their way to becoming safety issues. In order to build our relationship with land managers as responsible and knowledgeable trail stewards we were obligated to address these situations ASAP.

On September 12th, we received final permission for the work and started in with final layout, clearing, machine-aided dirt moving, and finally hand finishing and bridge/boardwalk construction. The work is just about complete, with many of volunteers lending a much-needed and appreciated hand.

Many of us got our start in off-road riding on this trail, so it has been nice to give back. Special thanks to Don Youngdahl and Josh Leonard, who organized many of the work sessions and are largely responsible for the bridge and boardwalk construction. Of course, nothing would have happened without support (and funding) from the following folks: Randy Quale, City of Bloomington Manager or Parks and Recreation and his staff; the Bloomington PARC Board (including ever-hardworking MORC member Dennis Porter); and the city council plus other area land managers.

Please volunteer your time generously as we complete the finishing touches and prepare to reclaim these two eroded areas — probably next spring. Thank Mr. Quale and other Bloomington leaders if you get the chance. Last but not least get out and ride the new section. Fall is the best time for the River Trail. And of course, we will need your help to come out and help us remove the raft in December. Makes me shiver just to think about it.

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, ON A MOUNTAIN BIKE

Rick McFerrin, Two Wheel View

From 1998 through 2000, my wife Tanya and I traveled around the world by bicycle. We pedaled more than 15,000 miles through 43 countries, exploring Europe, Africa, the Middle East, India, Southeast Asia, Australia, South and Central America and Mexico. Seeing the world from the seat of a bike was the realization of a shared dream, and it gave birth to another.

We founded Two Wheel View (a MORC affiliate program) to create a personal connection between young people and the environment, as well as to create opportunities for kids to see the world beyond their hometowns. We use mountain bikes to facilitate environmental education and improve the wellbeing of communities on a local, regional and international scale. Our programs help young people understand their interdependent relationship we have with the environment and provide a framework to create environmental and community action plans in their own communities.

Right now, Two Wheel View is recruiting young people 14 years and older for 2005 international mountain bike adventure programs in Argentina, Norway and Catalonia. These programs include:

- Complete roundtrip airfare
- Pre-trip orientation in Minneapolis prior to departure
- Use of equipment, including bikes, panniers, tents, camping gear and outerwear
- Medical insurance while abroad
- In-country orientation and exploration with local contacts
- Program set-up and administration costs
- Post-trip session in Minneapolis to develop environmental and community action plans to take back to your own community

Applications are available online at www.twowheelview.org or by contacting Two Wheel View at 612-874-1895. Participating in the program requires a commitment to community involvement and to raising \$3000 to support the costs of the trip — a goal that can be met by a fundraising and direct payment.

Please visit www.twowheelview.org to see photos of previous trips, learn more about our programs and find out how you can support Two Wheel View.

TWO WHEEL VIEW 2005 INTERNSHIP

Trips for Kids Coordinator

The Trips for Kids coordinator will coordinate, lead, and provide follow up for local environmental education and mountain bike outings in and around the Twin Cities.

For more information, please contact Rick McFerrin by email at rick.mcferrin@twowheelview.org or by phone at 612-874-1895.

UPDATE: MOUNTAIN BIKE PATROL

Alden Patton, Patrol Director

The Mountain Bike Patrol is one the less obvious things MORC does to support mountain biking in Minnesota. The work we do doesn't garner the same attention as a new trail. But for participants in regional races and riders who sustain injuries or breakdowns on the trail, The Mountain Bike Patrol takes on greater importance.

As the new director of the MORC Mountain Bike Patrol, my goals for the coming year are to build membership in the patrol and to raise awareness for what we do throughout the mountain biking community. These goals are pretty closely linked — the best way to raise awareness for the patrol is to have more patrollers riding trails in the metro area and providing assistance at races.

To accomplish these goals, we need to fill two key positions:

Medical Director

The medical director is a volunteer position and comes with all the perks of being a full member of the patrol. The medical director does not need to be present at events, nor do they need to patrol trails, but should be available by phone should a patroller need questions answered during an incident. In addition the medical director will need to approve the patrol's medical protocols and make changes as they see fit. The medical director will also review and approve orders for medical equipment and supplies, and sign for bigger items such as AEDs and other donated equipment.

The ideal candidate for this position would be an emergency room doctor. If there are multiple candidates for the position, the final decision will be made by the MORC board of directors.

Mountain Bike Patrollers

The patrol is a great way to be involved in the local mountain bike scene. Patrollers have three basic areas of responsibility: First, Provide all trail users with first aid, help with mechanical problems, directions, and other needs. Second, educate all trail users on safe and courteous trail use. And third, inform trail users of trail closings, reroutes and other information. As I've mentioned, in addition to riding metro area trails, we also provide support and assistance for race events like the Spring Cup at Buck Hill and the 24 Hours of Afton.

If you are interested in these positions, or know someone who might be, please contact me at aldenbiker@comcast.net.



UPDATE: BATTLE CREEK

Steve Garnjobst, Trail Steward

Battle Creek Regional Park continues to be one of the most popular riding destinations for Twin Cities mountain bikers. With the steadfast ongoing support of Ramsey County Parks and Recreation, MORC has been responsible for trail maintenance at Battle Creek for nearly 5 years.

While managing a somewhat haphazard collection of social trails, old dirt bike trails and newly constructed mountain bike trails is often challenging, we seem to have reached a sort of equilibrium. Today, the trails are reasonably sustainable and continue to provide an interesting and challenging riding experience.

For 2004, most of our trail projects were focused on rocks — LOTS of them. We used rocks and broken pieces of concrete to armor several trail sections. This allowed us to save sections of trail that were too steep for local soil conditions, while at the same time offering increased technical challenges for more advanced riders. The end results blend very well with the natural environment and should reduce long-term trail maintenance requirements.

For 2005, you can expect more rock projects (my back is aching already), including several to enhance and stabilize the Park's most advanced trail sections. In addition, we hope to gain approval for several build/re-route projects, aimed at improving trail flow between various trail segments in the park.

Thanks to all the dedicated volunteers and sponsors who supported the trails at Battle Creek this year.



HELLO, MY NAME IS MORC

Charles Youel, MORC Board Member

Quick question: How many people know who you are? Just a rough estimate. If you've ever been married, you probably have a list somewhere.

I'm guessing your answer is somewhere in the low hundreds. Which is more than enough. But in my mind, it makes what MORC has accomplished over the past few years all the more impressive. See, right now there are 500 people who not only know MORC, they're card-carrying, dues-paying, bike-riding members. And all of that has been accomplished largely via word of mouth, which is roughly the same way people got to know you.

Lest I sprain an elbow patting us on the back, I have to remind myself that 500 is but a fraction of the bike-riding population in and around the metro area. One gear out of a possible 27, if you will. And some would say that's plenty. But I digress. Point being that the vast majority of people who ride the trails that MORC builds and maintains are not MORC members. Some of them have never even so much as heard of MORC. Or simply assume we are affiliated with a certain rainbow-suspended extraterrestrial. Again, I digress.

Before my brain gets hijacked by another shiny object tangent, I'll make my point: 2005 will be the year that MORC introduces itself to more bikers, tells them we build and maintain the trails they love to ride, and gets them to join us.

We've already taken the first steps in that direction. We have a new logo that reflects the reason we build and maintain trails in the first place: WE LOVE TO RIDE.

That new logo will be on posters you'll see in your local bike shop this winter and throughout next year. It'll be on a redesigned web site that puts a new face on the dynamic online riding community that's sprung up around www.morcmtb.org.



With a little luck and elbow grease, it'll also be on kiosks at the trailheads around the metro area, where MORC members will be talking to everyone who comes to ride about what we do and why they should join us. There's more, but I can't let all of the cats out of the bag just yet.

The most important place you'll see that new logo is on your membership card. That card means you've drunk the kool-aid. You're a believer. A believer who has friends with whom you ride, sweat, crash, laugh and swap stories. Friends who should be MORC members, too. Because, for all of the stuff we do to promote this organization, the best advertising we'll ever have is you.

Help us spread the MORC gospel, and you'll be rewarded. Not in the next life, but in this one. Rewarded with new and better trails. New and better friends. And possibly new and better swag. That's something else we're working on.

OK, no more coffee for me. Ride the trails. Spread the word. And keep in touch. Got ideas? Bend my ear at cyouel@mn.rr.com.



< THE NEW LOGO. SOON TO BE SEEN ON THE WEB SITE, IN BIKE SHOPS, ON T-SHIRTS AND WHO KNOWS WHERE ELSE.

MORC MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNTS

Save a little coin on those winter upgrades

The following MORC sponsors have generously offered to provide in-store discounts to MORC members in good standing. To receive the MORC member discount, present your MORC membership card at time of purchase.

Erik's Bike Shop

Erik's Bike Shop will provide a 10% discount to current MORC members. This 10% discount is good toward the purchase of any non-sale, in-stock accessories, parts, and clothing for bicycling and snowboarding. Primary items such as snowboards, snowshoes, bikes, child trailers, skateboards, and repair service are not included. Please present your current membership card to receive discount.

Penn Cycle

MORC Members with a current Membership Card will receive a 10% discount on regular priced Cycling Accessories and Clothing purchased from any Penn Cycle location. This offer is not valid on other items such as bikes, strollers or child trailers. Not valid with other offers or on previous purchases.

Bokoo Bikes

Bokoo Bikes will provide a 10% discount on regularly priced cycling parts, accessories and clothing to current MORC members presenting a valid MORC Membership Card. This offer is not valid on other items such as bikes, strollers or repair service. Not valid with any other offers or on previous purchases.



IMBA RULES OF THE TRAIL

Read 'em and ride 'em



The way we ride today shapes mountain bike trail access tomorrow. Do your part to preserve and enhance our sport's access and image by observing the following rules of the trail, formulated by IMBA, the International Mountain Bicycling Association. These rules are recognized around the world as the standard code of conduct for mountain bikers. IMBA's mission is to promote mountain bicycling that is environmentally sound and socially responsible.

1. Ride On Open Trails Only.

Respect trail and road closures (ask if uncertain); avoid trespassing on private land; obtain permits or other authorization as may be required. Federal and state Wilderness areas are closed to cycling. The way you ride will influence trail management decisions and policies.

2. Leave No Trace.

Be sensitive to the dirt beneath you. Recognize different types of soils and trail construction; practice low-impact cycling. Wet and muddy trails are more vulnerable to damage. When the trailbed is soft, consider other riding options. This also means staying on existing trails and not creating new ones. Don't cut switchbacks. Be sure to pack out at least as much as you pack in.

3. Control Your Bicycle.

Inattention for even a second can cause problems. Obey all bicycle speed regulations and recommendations.

4. Always Yield Trail.

Let your fellow trail users know you're coming. A friendly greeting or bell is considerate and works well; don't startle others. Show your respect when passing by slowing to a walking pace or even stopping. Anticipate other trail users around corners or in blind spots. Yielding means slow down, establish communication, be prepared to stop if necessary and pass safely.

5. Never Scare Animals.

All animals are startled by an unannounced approach, a sudden movement, or a loud noise. This can be dangerous for you, others, and the animals. Give animals extra room and time to adjust to you. When passing horses use special care and follow directions from the horseback riders (ask if uncertain). Running cattle and disturbing wildlife is a serious offense. Leave gates as you found them, or as marked.

6. Plan Ahead.

Know your equipment, your ability, and the area in which you are riding -- and prepare accordingly. Be self-sufficient at all times, keep your equipment in good repair, and carry necessary supplies for changes in weather or other conditions. A well-executed trip is a satisfaction to you and not a burden to others. Always wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.

Keep trails open by setting a good example of environmentally sound and socially responsible off-road cycling.

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

Local bike shops and other companies we love



MORC appreciates the generous donations of these sponsors, who help support our ongoing efforts to protect and expand trail access for off-road cyclists in Minnesota.

Go to <http://www.morcmtb.org/morcpages/sponsors.htm> for more information on sponsorship opportunities.

