

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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SEARHC joins other Sitka groups for National Bike Month

SITKA, April 21, 2008 — The SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) Health Promotion Department, SEARHC Injury Prevention, SEARHC Employee Wellness Team and the SEARHC Steps to a Healthier SE Alaska program are joining with several other Sitka community groups to host a series of May events for National Bike Month.

The list of mostly free events includes bicycle safety classes for commuters and children, panel discussions about cycling in Sitka, displays, a National Bike To Work Week contest, a bike rodeo for children, a triathlon, a family fun ride and a blessing of the bikes. This year's National Bike To Work Week spokespersons for Sitka are Nancy Knapp and Chris Bryner.

“Bike riding is an economical way to get our needs for transportation, physical activity and fun all in one,” SEARHC Health Educator Doug Osborne said. “Bicycling provides a low-impact, heart-healthy workout, and most people can bike. With the high cost of fuel and the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, there never has been a better time to promote safe bicycling.”

The list of events includes:

- **Thursday, May 1, to Saturday, May 31** — **National Bike Month Sitka Style display**, a display and educational material will be at Kettleson Memorial Library all month.
- **Thursday, May 1** — **Basics of Bicycling in Sitka panel discussion**, noon to 1 p.m. at Sitka Community Hospital classroom, this lunch-and-learn features a panel discussion led by Chris Bryner, Nancy Knapp, Eric Haseltine, Natalie Sattler and others, who talk about biking in the rain, handling intersections, managing work and biking clothes for the commute and other topics, first 10 participants receive a free lunch from Sitka Community Hospital.
- **Friday, May 2** — **Safe Cycling for Youth presentation**, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Boys & Girls Club of Sitka's new clubhouse at Rasmuson Center, 110 College Dr., there will be a series of short bike safety and skills workshops for small groups of youth led by a League of American Bicyclists League Certified Instructor (LCI), participants should bring bike and helmet. Info: Lillian Feldpausch of Boys & Girls Club of Sitka, 747-4968.
- **Saturday, May 3** — **League of American Bicyclists Commuter I bike safety class**, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the SEARHC Community Health Services Building First Floor

Conference Room, topics include safety, cargo, riding in the rain, bike maintenance, etc., participants should bring bike and helmet. Info: Doug Osborne, 966-8734.

- **Wednesday, May 7 — Bike to Work Lunch-and-Learn**, noon to 1 p.m. at the SEARHC Mt. Edgumbe Hospital Lighthouse Cafeteria Conference Room C, discussion of bike safety, maintenance and other bike commuter issues, first 10 participants each receive \$15 gift certificates to Yellow Jersey Cycle Shop.
- **Sunday, May 11 — Blessing of the Bikes and Ribbon Cutting for new downtown bike rack**, 2 p.m. at the new downtown bike rack at the corner of Lincoln and Harbor streets (by Crescent Harbor), after the ribbon is cut, Father Dave Elsensohn of St. Peter's By The Sea Episcopal Church will bless the bikes.
- **Monday, May 12, to Friday, May 16 — National Bike to Work Week contest**, Sitka residents who pedal to work or school can register at Yellow Jersey Cycle Shop for a chance to win a \$100 gift certificate, the more days you ride the higher your chances of winning, participants must wear a helmet while cycling to be eligible for the prize.
- **Friday, May 16 — National Bike to Work Day half-price breakfast or lunch**, all helmeted cyclists who bike to work or school on May 16 can stop by Café Mellow Days for a 50-percent discount on breakfast or lunch.
- **Saturday, May 17 — Rotary Club of Sitka/U.S. Coast Guard Bike Rodeo**, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the U.S. Coast Guard-Air Station Sitka hangar, for ages 14 and younger, event features bike fitting, bike safety checks, helmet checks, discount helmets, an obstacle course, hot dogs and healthy snacks, participants need to bring a bike, helmet and a parent/guardian. Info: CMDR John Turner, 966-5510.
- **Saturday, May 17 — 24th Annual Julie Hughes Triathlon**, 9 a.m. at the Hames Athletic and Wellness Center, course is 5-mile run, 10-mile bike, 1,000-meter swim, with short course for those age 12 and younger, registration 5-7 p.m. on Friday, May 16, at Hames, mandatory bike safety check before race and all cyclists must wear helmets, athletes can participate as individuals or on teams, \$20 entry fee required (fundraiser for local cancer group). Info: Susan Suarez, 747-0519.
- **Wednesday, May 28 — Tlingít & Friends Bike Club meeting**, 6:30-8 p.m. at Sitka Tribe of Alaska's main building, 456 Katlian St., club is open to all Sitka cyclists and is geared toward families. Info: David Kanosh, tingit_bicylist@yahoo.com.
- **Saturday, May 31 — Tlingít & Friends Bike Club family ride**, 10:30 a.m. from the Crescent Harbor Covered Shelter, participants should bring a bike, helmet, rain gear, water bottle and snacks. Info: David Kanosh, tingit_bicylist@yahoo.com.

Besides SEARHC and the Steps to a Healthier SE Alaska program, other event sponsors include the Sitka Bicycle Friendly Community Coalition, Sitka Community Hospital, Kettleton Memorial Library, Yellow Jersey Cycle Shop, Sitka Conservation Society, North Star Television (KSCT), the Boys & Girls Club of Sitka, the Tlingít & Friends Bike Club, St. Peter's By the Sea Episcopal Church, Daily Sitka Sentinel, KCAW-Raven Radio, Café Mellow Days, Rotary Club of Sitka, U.S. Coast Guard-Air Station Sitka, and Sitka Tribe of Alaska.

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