

## September 2009 NEWSLETTER



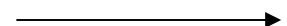
Summer is coming to a quick close and the fall weather riding is upon us so get out and enjoy it! This may be my last newsletter and this will be full of politics because these are the hot issues right now, so buckle your helmet and hold on because this will be a long one.

But first, **PMBA** is having an active summer for sure, and here are some highlights... We held another riding clinic a couple weeks ago and have had another excellent turnout. These are amazing community events, and we have another one on **Saturday Sept 19th**, but the coolest one of the year is on **Sat Oct 3rd**. In conjunction with **IMBA's sixth annual International Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day**, we will hold our 3rd annual event at the good old **Pachella Field and Pavilion**. This is a great opportunity for you to pass your passion for pedaling on to kids! We plan to have lots of fun obstacles for kids to enjoy as well as some nice prizes and food. As always, check our website for all the details.

On **Saturday 8/15**, eight of us ventured up to New York City to meet a crew of **NYCMTB** people ([www.nycmtb.com](http://www.nycmtb.com)) and to ride their trail systems which they developed in partnership with **CLIMB** ([www.climbonline.org](http://www.climbonline.org)). These people have done an amazing job of working with the city government, as well as the communities, to get approvals to build and maintain mountain bike trails. It is quite amazing that they achieved this in such a big city, and that gives us great hope here in Philadelphia to keep our access to trails, as well as develop more riding opportunities for the betterment of humanity. They have mixed together multiple disciplines of riding bikes on dirt, and that is what it's all about. People, especially kids and families, can show up and ride bikes on terrain of their choice: from a pump track, to freeride hits, to awesome singletrack of various skill levels. Seeing and riding their systems, talking to them and gathering killer advice made this trip well worth the gas & tolls & traffic! NYC is an intense place for sure...

OK, let's talk politics: Online **elections** for the **Board of Directors** have started and nine people are running for the four spots up for grabs. This is an awesome sign that this club is a huge success and that our pastime should continue to gain positive awareness in Philadelphia and beyond. All supporting members get to vote, but remember you can wait until the **meeting** held at **Manayunk Diner on Sept 23rd** to hear these people speak and cast your vote that night. I take to heart what the top official at the **FPC** told me when I was in his office doing a bike park presentation: "**non-profit groups are only as strong as their leaders.**" He is right so please keep that in mind when you cast your vote for the new Board members. There are a lot of changes on the horizon for this club, and having good, smart and dedicated leadership is really important, especially because we are all volunteers and do this on our free time.

**IMBA** is looking to expand their **charter chapter club program** to eight other clubs around the country because the model they helped **start here in Philadelphia**, the only one in existence in this form, is a success. Yes, once again we are blazing the way for the rest of the country, just like back in the good old 1700's. You gotta love this city... The main goal both organizations are all trying to achieve is to **have a concentrated and strong voice in government circles** which will allow us to keep riding the trails we love and **develop more riding opportunities**. Don't forget that all public parks are "owned" by us citizens, and the people who are in office controlling these parks need help with their management, no doubt. We see a lot of activity happening in the Wissahickon for example. There are some really good and some really bad events occurring. It is up to us, the citizens who love and use the park frequently, to take "ownership" and help in every way possible. The park management should see our volunteer work as essential, especially since they have less and less funds to perform the required maintenance to our trails. On top of a strong voice and presence in government, a stronger mountain biking community will help us **secure grants from large local companies**, like health care related firms. This is a big city with many large companies who like to give out grants to non-profit organizations that benefit the community at large in their back yards. Especially organizations that promote a healthy lifestyle like ours. IMBA can help us with guidance to obtain these grants, and we help them on the ground with our membership numbers and volunteer work. We need to have this combined relationship to really make our mark on our parks' needs. Like I said before, the city government is having a major funding problem right now and if we can generate substantial funds via



grants, we can use that money directly for our work on the trails, and let them concentrate on the much larger issues such as the devastating amount of water runoff that is literally eroding our park system away with each storm. You can see this destruction in a lot of areas right now. With that said, our trail committee people are working hard with the **Friends of the Wissahickon** in the planning for major trail projects for 2010...

OK, as far as the **executives** of this club, one thing is for certain: I will not be the President of this club after Sept 30th. When we formed the management structure of this club, we all agreed that changing the leadership is very important. There are clubs out there that have had the same leaders for far too long and have become stagnant. We want to avoid that situation and make sure fresh ideas keep flowing and the new leaders need to work selflessly (especially because we don't pay) and keep this club moving forward. With that said, the original executive committee decided we should form a Board of Directors to increase our legitimacy and spread the workload, because I can't say it enough, we are VOLUNTEERS. The roles of each executive have been blurred into the larger group of managers, but we are always the first point of contact from the public and good interaction with these people and groups is really important. Also, there are many tasks that we handle which will be expected to be handled by the new administration. I wish the best of luck to the new executives and I hope you have as much fun as I did, and I look forward to helping the best I can with this transition. I hope to remain on the Board, hence my run for re-election. Regardless, I will always be involved with and support this club as long as the goals remain the same.

OK, that is enough politics for a year, and if you are still reading, I appreciate it... Here are some events that we have happening in the near future.

Please visit our website for all the details:

Saturday 9/19: **PMBA riding clinic, Pachella Field and Pavilion**

Wednesday 9/23: **PMBA general meeting and BoD election at Manayunk Diner**

Saturday 9/26: **PMBA volunteer trail work day held at the Jannette St. trailhead**

Thanks for reading and we hope to see you on the trails having fun and/or volunteering...

**And thanks a lot for your support!!!!**

Lou Harris - PMBA (soon to be Ex-) President