

October 2008

Program for Alternative Transportation and Health (PATH)

Monthly Drawing Reminder and News Update

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Hello PATH members!

This is a reminder to reply to this email if you have carpoled, bicycled, walked, or ridden transit at least 10 times or about twice a week during the month of December. We have a variety of prizes to give away in the next few months, so don't forget to participate!

A Preference to an Auto-Culture.



This is the story of a PATH member and his decision to live near his work and free himself from auto culture.

My commute to work has become a therapeutic and healthy ritual. My decision to move into an apartment near downtown Concord where I could walk to work has significantly improved my quality of life.

I grew up and went to college in Cincinnati Ohio. Even through college, I liked and depended on public transportation to get around. A semester abroad in the Netherlands sealed my preference for a car-free (or at least car minimized) lifestyle.

When I was offered work in Concord, I jumped at the chance to live in New England. I packed up my grandmother's old car (a 1988 mercury named Pearl) and headed east.

A year ago, I commuted to work from Manchester to Concord. My car was aging and I wasn't interested in a new one, gas was getting expensive, and I really didn't enjoy driving all that much. In response, I arranged to carpool with a few of my coworkers. It was a fun experience that kept some road rage at bay, and it was nice to spend some social time with colleagues outside of work. After a year of commuting by car I decided that I would enjoy living in the comparatively quiet and slow-paced capitol city of Concord close enough to walk or bicycle to work.

After a quick inspection of three potential apartments, I settled on a second floor apartment on Spring Street with a bay window, hardwood floors, an extremely talkative landlady on the first floor and her fat cat Max, which happens to resemble a cow more so than a cat.

I settled into the apartment in mid-September, which is of course a beautiful time of year in New England. I was just in time to view the foliage change colors. The surrounding hills were transformed into a patchwork of crimsons, yellows, deep greens, and rusty browns. This dynamic and seasonally dependent scene has accompanied my mile and a half commute since then.

I ride my bike when weather permits, and walk when rain or snow is in the forecast. Five days a week, I cross through the quaint neighborhoods and over the inactive rail lines. An ancient lonely sycamore and still-utilized antiquated farm equipment have become familiar friends. The geometric pattern of the corn rows alongside Horseshoe Pond is my final landmark before I arrive at work in the renovated old Page Belting factory with its handsome brickwork and arched windows.

With the arrival of winter I lace up my boots, throw my scarf around my neck, and trek up, over and through snow embankments reminiscent of the glacial movement that once covered this region. My commute to work is certainly more difficult this time of year, but the same is true for everyone. I feel fortunate to not be scraping ice from a windshield, or holding onto a frigid gas pump while buying fuel.

I look forward to my commute. It is where I have drawn inspiration for many of the artistic endeavors that consume my evening hours. I will continue to hold close the ethereal image of mist rising of the pond, and gladly accept the seeds of the tulip poplar as the scatter on the ground and me.

Request your PATH Membership Card!

We have a stack of PATH cards to give out that can be used for discounts at local businesses. PATH has arranged with several retailers in Concord to offer discounted prices to all PATH members (details to come). The cards will also contain useful information about how to take advantage of the Emergency Ride Home service in case you are stuck without a ride home in the event of an emergency.

To have your PATH card sent to you by mail, simply reply to this email requesting one. We recommend giving us your mailing address in case we don't already have it.

PATH's mission is to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and increase societal emphasis on personal fitness through the creation of services and materials which promote transportation options to the single occupancy vehicle.

Craig Tufts
CNHRPC

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