

Bike tour to make pit stop in Kent

Cyclists promote greenway on the way to Montreal

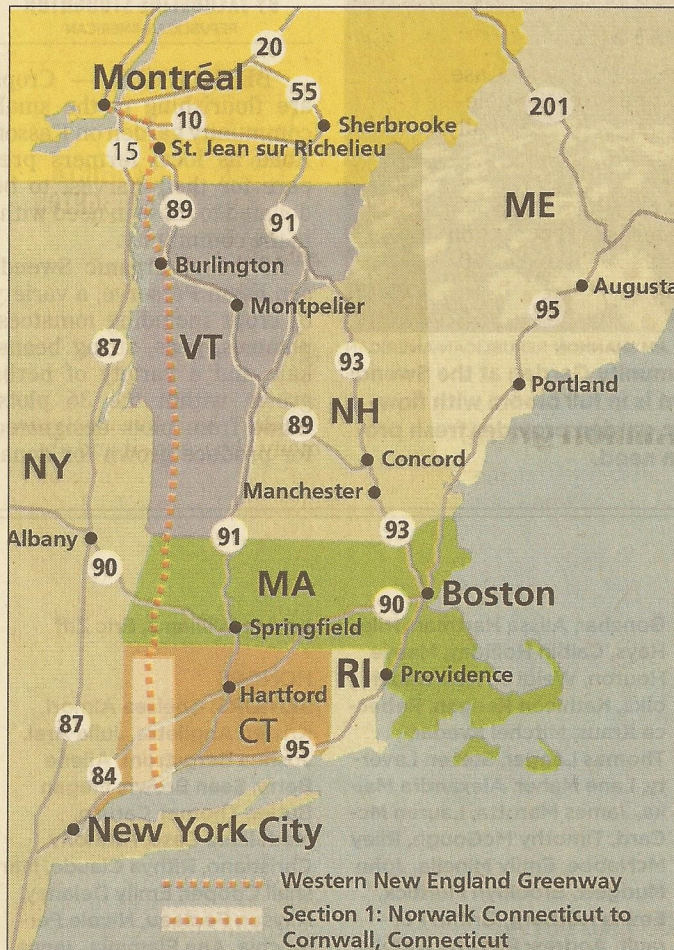
BY LYNN MELLIS WORTHINGTON
REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

KENT — An eight-day bike tour of three states will be making a stop in town at Denis and Barbara Curtis' "Sculpturedale," and the public is invited to greet the cyclists and view the steel sculptures July 23.

The Heritage Ride 2016 Bikeway Tour begins that day at the Weir Farm in Wilton and ultimately will finish July 31 in Montreal. Cyclists will be going through towns and rural back roads that make up the Western New England Greenway, a nationally recognized U.S. Bicycle Route by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

Kent resident Sal Lilienthal, who owns the Bicycle Tour Co., said he's been working on the establishment of the Western New England Greenway. With his business, he leads bicycle tours, and many of his popular rides include historic sites. Lilienthal is a history enthusiast and he specializes in the Revolutionary War. He plans to be at the Kent stop to welcome the cyclists.

The Western New England Greenway was created by a group of volunteer cyclists who wanted to highlight the many beautiful bike routes available in western Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont. The multisegment, multistate Greenway bike route links New York City and Montreal. It has been developed with the help of the not-for-profit Upper



CONTRIBUTED

This map shows the route of the Western New England Greenway bicycle trail that will be ridden by a group of cyclists this month. The trip is to highlight the route, which connects back roads and leads to Montreal.

» For information, visit
WNEGreenway.org.

Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area, Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership in Burlington, Vt., and the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Program.

The cyclists are planning to stop July 23 at 4:30 p.m. at Curtis' "Sculpturedale" in

Kent for a celebration. His large steel sculptures are positioned throughout his property, which is on Route 7 just south of the Kent Falls State Park.

Denis Curtis said Thursday he and his wife enjoy cycling but they stick to area rail trails.

"We've done over 1,200 miles this year," he said. "We only do 20 miles at a time."

He said he particularly enjoys cycling for the exercise

and experiencing nature. Cycling also helped him recover from leg surgery several years ago.

Before reaching Kent, the cyclists will have traveled along the New Milford River Trail after meeting Mayo. David Gronbach and other of officials on the Green at 12:30 p.m.

The route goes through Gaylordsville, brings cyclists through the historic covered Bulls Bridge, then along Schaghticoke Road before turning north on Route 7.

The next morning, July 24 they will ride from Cornwall Bridge along the Housatonic River to the West Cornwall covered bridge along River Road, and take Weatogue Road into Massachusetts. They will ride through Great Barrington, and take Route 183 past the Norman Rockwell Museum and Tanglewood in Lenox, where they will stay overnight.

The volunteer cyclists are riding the Greenway to Canada to highlight some of the best cycling roadways. The Western New England Greenway and Heritage Bikeway corridor follows mostly low-volume roadways through the far western portions of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont.

The southern entry point connects the East Coast Greenway at the Merritt Parkway near Norwalk with Quebec's Route Verte at the Canadian border. The bike way features more than 300 miles of mapped routes that include nearby lodging, dining, cycling shops and heritage sites.

Contact

Lynn Mellis Worthington at lynnmellw@gmail.com or on Twitter @lynnmellw.