

# 211-mile bike trek to follow patriot's life

BY RUTH EPSTEIN  
REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN



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**Sal Lilienthal of Kent will bike 211 miles on Sunday from Ethan Allen's birthplace in Litchfield to his resting place in Burlington, Vt.**

from the British in a joint effort with Col. Benedict Arnold.

Lilienthal will be accompanied by some friends in a van and others in private cars. He expects some riders will join him for portions of the trip. One of those support staffers is Sharon First Selectman Brent M. Colley, another cyclist and history enthusiast.

"It's a great way to promote history," Colley said.

Lilienthal, who was raised in Greenwich and graduated from Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva

N.Y., has owned the Bicycle Tour Co. at 9 Bridge St. in Kent for 20 years. It runs trips in four countries and 10 states, rents bikes and supports charity rides.

"I'm turning 50 next year, so I have to do something to commemorate that milestone," Lilienthal said.

He's been training for more than a year. Leaving before daybreak for his destination, Lilienthal expects the ride will take about 16 hours.

"People don't realize they're living in the middle of

so many aspects of the American Revolution here," he said. "They're right on our doorstep. You need a little imagination to understand the freedoms we have today were fought for by so many from here."

Lilienthal, in conjunction with Mary Collins, has written a website and book called "Revolutionary Connecticut," which outlines tours to Revolutionary War sites in the state.

"It has photos and routes that can be driven, but it's designed for bike routes," he said.

Last August, Lilienthal and others biked a 128.3-mile stretch across Connecticut from the Rhode Island border to the New York line following the Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail. Colley, who also cycled a section of that route, said he marvels at Lilienthal's stamina.

Thinking ahead to the 250th anniversary of America's independence in 2026, Lilienthal would like to see an Ethan Allen/Green Mountain Boys National Heritage corridor created from Connecticut to Quebec. Funding would come from the National Park Service, he said, and he's working with U.S. Sen. Christopher S. Murphy's staff to push for a feasibility study that must go before the Senate before any money is approved.

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KENT — Sal Lilienthal is passionate about history, and he'll go many extra miles to bring attention to its importance.

The Kent resident also is an avid cyclist, and on Sunday, he'll once again combine those two loves when he pedals 211 miles from Litchfield to Burlington, Vt. The ride is devoted to Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys.

An American Revolution buff, Lilienthal noted the many connections he has to Allen.

"When I moved to Kent, I couldn't believe he was born in nearby Litchfield and grew up just up the road in Cornwall," Lilienthal said. "I learned his cousin, Remember Baker, came from Roxbury. After I finished college, I went to live in Burlington, and found out the house my friends and I rented was just across the street from the cemetery in which he's buried. All these things call to you."

So to raise awareness about Allen, Lilienthal will bike from his birthplace to his resting place in one day.

Allen, who lived from 1738-1789, was a Revolutionary War hero and colonel-commandant of the Green Mountain Boys. The militia formed in what is now Bennington to defend the New Hampshire Grants. Later, during the war, his men captured Fort Ticonderoga in New York