

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 2014

CBC begins plans for lung cancer trek

By **DINA MENDROS**

Staff Writer

BIDDEFORD — Now that the holidays have passed and the piles of snow and chilly weather are here, it seems like winter will never end and there is not much to which to look forward. But the Community Bicycle Center wants people to remember: Summer will come around again, and it's not too early to

start making some plans. On Wednesday, Jan. 29 at 7 p.m., at the CBC's 284 Hill St. location, the organization will hold an informational meeting for those interested in participating in the Trek Across Maine cycling event, scheduled for June 13-15.

Andy Greif, executive director of the after-school

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Participants in the Trek Across Maine share a laugh during a break from riding in last year's event.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

CBC Trek

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bicycle group and captain of the CBC's trek team for the past 14 years, will talk about the fundraising involved in participating in the trek, which raises money for American Lung Association of the Northeast, or ALANE.

The trek, which will be celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, is the largest fundraiser for the American Lung Association, having raised \$18 million, said ALANE spokeswoman Gale Auclair. The money raised, she said, is used

for research and advocacy in Maine.

To participate, those 18 years of age and older must raise a minimum of \$500, and those ages 7-17 are required to raise at least \$400.

Greif will also discuss the physical and emotional training necessary to complete the three-day, 180-mile bike ride that runs from Sunday River to Belfast.

The CBC is a program that helps foster self-confidence and other positive attributes in youth and teaches them skills through bicycling. The primary purpose for youth in the

program go on the trek, said Greif, is to have an experience that reinforces what they get from the CBC.

"They learn about fundraising, which involves public speaking and writing," he said. "They learn about commitment and perseverance toward a goal. ... They learn they need the support of others."

"It's a rite of passage," said Greif.

One of the things she likes best about the trek, said CBC Development and Community Relations Director Bronwyn Potthoff, is that "the kids are recognized for doing good

things. It's a positive experience, from waking up in the morning until going to bed at night. For some of the kids, that's not necessarily their experience at home."

In addition to the life lessons that the young people get from the trek, it's also a lot of fun, said Greif.

There's dancing, good food and camaraderie. "It's like a big family getting together," he said.

Those interested in participating in the trek can go on their own or with a group such as the CBC. Adults as well as youth can join the CBC team.

Greif said those on the CBC team can participate at any level, from just registering with the team or going on the ride and staying with them from when they go up the day before the event.

In the years since participating in the trek, the CBC team has raised an estimated \$231,000.

"We'd like to reach the quarter-million dollar mark this year," said Greif.

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Community Bicycle Center, which is based in Biddeford, pause for a picture during a Trek Across Maine lunch break in last year's ride. The bicycle planning for the June ride, which raises money for the American Lung Association of the Northeast.