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## BIKE ADVOCACY

# Pedaling to support more bike paths

## Ride on Washington raises over \$100,000

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Topsfield resident and U.S. Cyclocross Champion Tim Johnson did it again this year. Starting on March 20, he pedaled 535 miles along with more than 100 other bicyclists through seven states to Washington D.C. as part of Tim Johnson's Ride on Washington.

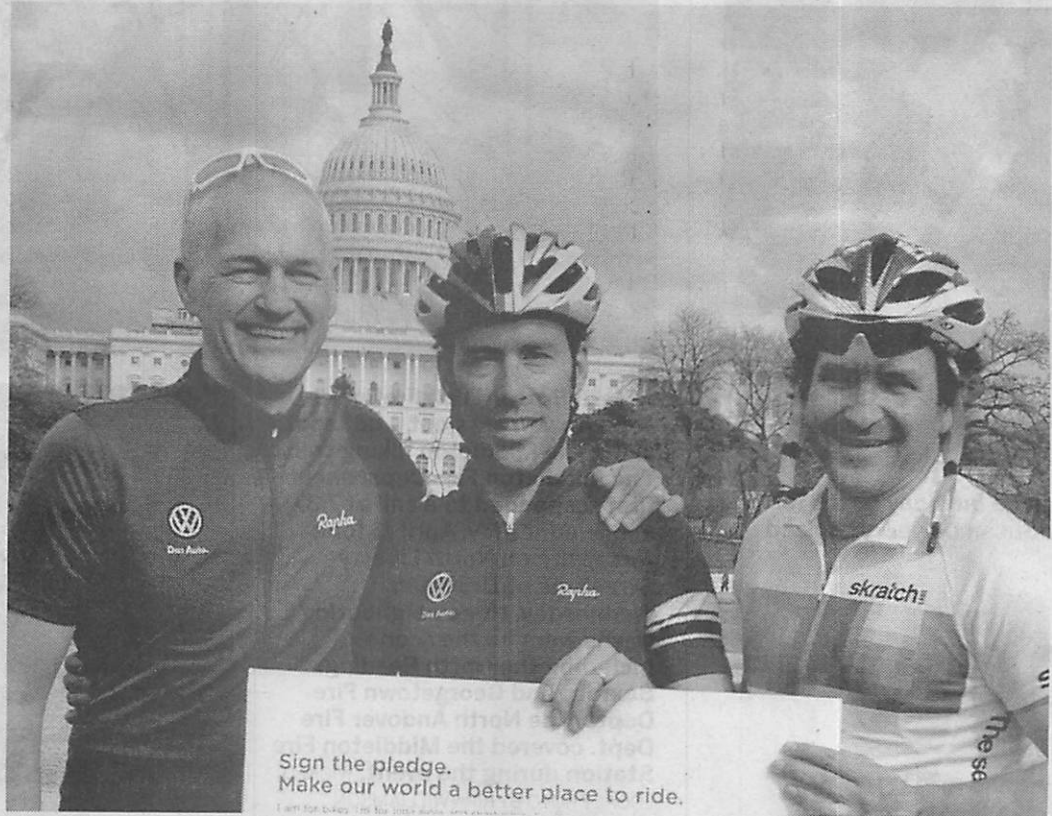
"Last year I just threw the ride together with a couple of friends," said Johnson. "This year we had a group of 20 riders leave Boston."

Ride on Washington raises funds for the Bikes Belong Foundation, a nonprofit organization, and awareness around the health and environmental benefits of bicycling.

The second annual event was a five-day ride starting in Boston at City Hall Plaza, continuing to Hartford, New York City, Philadelphia and Baltimore before ending at the National Bike Summit in Washington D.C.

"This ride was truly amazing and an eye-opening experience for me," said Johnson. "Not only did we achieve our goal for fundraising and for bike advocacy awareness, but we also rode as a large group through the most congested urban corridor in America with only positive encounters along the way."

The Ride raised over \$100,000 this year. Each day participants traveled between 50-130 miles in daylight and



**Tim Johnson, center, is shown at the Capitol in Washington, DC at the end of Tim Johnson's Ride on Washington with Volkswagen Group of America President and CEO Jonathan Browning, left, and Bikes Belong Vice President Bruno Maier. COURTESY PHOTO**

darkness and whatever elements Mother Nature presented.

"We are definitely making progress in educating Americans about the importance of bike pathways, but there is still a great deal of work to be done," Johnson added.

Johnson created his Ride on Washington after first attending the National Bike Summit in 2010. This year's final leg into Washington and to the National Bike Summit

was open to all riders, including bicyclists as young as 8 years old.

"At one point or other we had 300 riders join us," said Johnson.

In addition to Johnson, registered riders included Jonathan Browning, president and CEO of Volkswagen Group of America; Keith Hartstein, CEO of John Hancock Funds, LLC; and top-ranked U.S. Cyclocross Champion Jeremy Powers.

Johnson's proudest moment of the ride was cycling up to the Capitol.

"Last year nine people rode to the Capitol. This year there were over 100 people," said Johnson.

Johnson is proud to live in a town where cyclists have a safe place to ride, the Rail Trail.

"I live a short distance from the Rail Trail and it is nice to have a local bike path that is maintained," said Johnson.