

On One Wheel

[the usa newsletter]



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On The Cover; Marcus Hertlein on the Porcupine Rim Trail in Moab. That spot is referred to by many unicyclists as the "Krazy Karl Overlook". *Photo by: John Foss*

On One Wheel

This official publication of the Unicycling Society of America, Inc. is published at least quarterly. We invite editorial submissions of all kinds. Send news about yourself and other unicyclists. We are not responsible for articles and pictures unless accompanied by a request for their return and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We also invite e-mails to the editor. Reproduction or use of the material in this magazine without the express permission of the Unicycling Society of America, Inc. is prohibited. ISSN 0893-4606 All views expressed in this newsletter are those of the respective authors. They are not necessarily those of members or officers of the Unicycling Society of America, Inc. Address editorial material to:

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Subscriptions/Renewals & Address Changes

Individual membership in the Unicycling Society of America, Inc., which includes a subscription to On One Wheel, is \$20 for the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, \$25 for overseas. Family memberships are also available for an additional \$15. First-class delivery within the U.S. is available for an extra \$10. Send address changes immediately to Unicycling Society of America, Inc., PO Box 530518, Livonia, MI 48153-0518. The USA, Inc. is not responsible for forwarding returned magazines.

President's Corner

Hello USA members,

The USA, Inc. Board continues to meet bi-monthly to discuss USA business. We also converse via email. In the past few weeks, we have discussed and/or voted on:

- UniMag subscription (we'll be voting at the next USA general membership meeting whether to continue the subscription for all USA members!)
- Online USA membership renewal
- USA website redesign
- USA tax deductible donations
- NAUCC 2009
- USA insurance (voted to continue for another year)
- Organization of the Canadian Unicycling Association
- USA Rules Committee
- New Board vacancies for 2009-2010 (Secretary, Director, OOW Editor)
- First ever Teen USA meeting at NAUCC 2009 (come prepared to volunteer!)
- Replacement OOW Editor for the duration of the 2008-2009 term (voted to allow Amanda Grzych to edit the next 2 issues)

I hope to see you in Minnesota this summer,
Wendy Grzych



Mission Statement of the Unicycling Society of America, Inc.

To foster social and athletic interest in and promote the healthy, wholesome sport of unicycling among youth and adults of the country by establishing voluntary standards of performance and sponsoring and overseeing local and national meets. To disseminate knowledge and information on all phases of the sport to all interested parties throughout the country via a newsletter and information service.

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UNICYCLE CENTRAL

Our group's goal shifted a bit over the last year. We still want people to come and be active, learn new skills, meet others, and have fun. We also want all this to have another purpose -- community service through entertainment. We hope to do a lot more by encouraging all our members to put together very short acts that we can use in our shows and demos.

We have 28 active families now and if we can continue to grow, continue to offer lots of options for our members, and continue to pull in new members and new helpers, that will be even better.

For our future:

We plan to continue to meet on most Fridays in St. Paul through May; we plan to do some parades and outdoor rides this summer; and we hope to come back bigger and better next fall!

Unicycle
Central

Website



*Unicycle Central and Twin Cities Unicycle Club
go for a ride on January 1st.*

WOW Unicycle Club

www.
wowunicycle.com

1 (734) 424-0447

WOW

WOW Unicycle Club is also a 4-H Club. The 4-H Unicycle Project is taken by all members that are 4-H age. Some of the kids also take other 4-H projects. Pictured is Emily Aurand and Brooke Daugherty wearing items they made for the project Ready Let's Sew. The kids can take a variety of projects on many topics. Some have taken cooking, photography, athletics, and animals.

In December WOW held their end of year awards banquet. At the banquet awards are given for unicycle and 4-H.

The start of a new year brings beginner lessons! Lessons are held twice a week with many new prospects in attendance.



REGIONAL MEET

What: Regional Unicycle Meet hosted by WOW Unicycle Club

When: Saturday, May 16, 2009

Where: Maumee Bay State Park

Who: All interested unicyclists

We will be holding racing events outside in one of the parking lots at the park, as has been done in past years. Ribbons will be awarded to participants.

HUTCHISON

Our unicycle club has been meeting regularly twice a week. Wednesday evenings we practice in the Cattle Barn in the McLeod County Fairgrounds, and Thursday evenings we have been practicing at Andy and Irene's farm. We were able to ride the trails at the farm until mid-November, now we practice inside the barn where a trials course has been set up. In December Jon Atwell, from TCUC came out to hold a trials workshop to teach the members of Hutchinson One Wheelers (and the TCUC members who joined us for the day) new trials and street moves. Having so many people out exchanging ideas and practicing was such a success that we are going to host a monthly trials/street/MUni day at our farm. If you are ever in MN, and want to visit our club, or come and ride in our barn, feel free to contact us!

Our club also participated in the Glencoe Holly Days Parade for the first time this year. We had 100 glow sticks to distribute amongst 20 riders, Christmas lights, and a flaming unicycle (thanks to rope ordered from Dubé, which can be soaked and started on fire). All the participants had a good time, and the Minnesota weather cooperated with us giving us a hot 32 degrees to ride in.

Hutchison One Wheelers

ireneandandy
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Jamie Engfer hopping through a doorway in the lean-to of the barn



Jon Atwell explains to Travis Trettin how to crank-flip.

Sioux Falls Unicycle Club

mclaughlin28@
sio.midco.net



Sioux Falls Unicycle Club after the Festival of Bands Parade

SIOUX FALLS

Contrary to popular belief, red hair is not a requirement for membership in the Sioux Falls Unicycle Club. In fact, nonredheads now hold the majority in this group which learned while riding in a parade that if your banner carriers are cute and incredibly enthusiastic, they can steal the show! Offers to perform this winter included the following venues: a tiny carpeted ballroom and an icy, snow packed patio. Unless Forrest Rowell can come show these riders how it's done in inclement conditions, the Sioux Falls Uni Club is waiting for better performance venues, playing unicycle hockey, and dreaming of a club trip to NAUCC.

Johnathan (Left) and Benjamin Siemens teaching an old dog (Michael McLaughlin) new tricks.



PANTHER PRIDE

Panther Pride Unicycle Team started the year with 55 beginner-level riders, seventeen level 1, twenty-three level 2, seven level 3, five level 4, two level 5, one level 6, seven level 7 and one level 9. In total, they have 118 riders. This should be an exciting year watching the beginners as they challenge themselves to get to the next level.

Microsoft invited the team to perform at their Annual Giving Campaign kickoff party where they performed several routines and had a mini skills show/workshop.

PPUT rode in a few parades and performed a few half-time shows at basketball games for the University of Washington and Mount Si High School. In February they have two shows scheduled for doubleheader basketball games at Seattle Pacific University and a second at University of Washington.

Mr. Tepper will be taking Panther Prides NAUCC riders to the "24th Annual West's Best K-12 Physical Education Workshop". Approximately, 1,000 physical educators will be in attendance. Unicycling is a part of many physical education programs in the state of Washington. There are also many demonstration teams that have unicycling as part of their performances. This workshop is a great opportunity to share what we have learned over the years from so many of the wonderful riders and leaders of USA. Hopefully, this will translate into more riders, coaches and teams joining USA and participating in Regional and National events.

Between the two shows at SPU, Niki Crook and Jessica Shilot will be organizing and leading a workshop for SPU students. PPUT advanced riders are all very excited to be a part of this workshop.



Panther Pride competing at NAUCC 2008.

Panther
Pride
Demo
Team

P.O. Box North
Bend, WA 98045

RTUC

wgrzych at
comcast dot net

35553 Springvale
Farmington Hills,
MI 48331

RTUC

RTUC's annual beginner's class began in early January with an outstanding amount of skilled, new riders. The class is now over. We've had the class graduation ceremony, show, and pot luck. We are now working on our routine for NAUCC 2009. To keep with the RTUC spirit, one Saturday after practice, a group of us went to laser tag and played a few rounds. It was a great time!

We're all excited for the arrival of our new (looking) giraffes! Marcus took our tallest giraffes to Darren Beford and as we speak they're being powder coated and having new seats, chains, and more added.

Check out RTUC's latest video!
[Click Here!!](#)



(Upper Left & Right) The adult team vs. the kids team at laser tag, all ready to go!

(Right) Grace assists Ava, one of our younger beginners.

(Below) Dan and Marcus help a new rider around the gym.



TCUC has been busy organizing NAUCC 2009. The teens have been helping by putting together short videos that show what people can expect during competition.

What's MUni?

What's Freestyle?

What's Standard Skills?

If there were a Unicycling Hall of Fame, those that have passed all USA Levels would be charter members. They have all suffered enough banged knees and bloodied shins to last a lifetime. They have all failed more than they have succeeded, and doggedly tried again. They are our Babe Ruths, our Mickey Mantles, our Rock Stars, our Pavarottis.

On January 19th, Matt Sindelar joined the Super Elite Level 10 club. Congratulations, Matt!



Matt Sindelar- Level 10 rider.

P.O. Box 21487
Minneapolis, MN
55421

tmbblee at
comcast dot net

DIY TRIALS PLATFORMS

by Steve and Truitt Parrish

In Sterling, Colorado, unicyclists are scarce and trials unicycling is unheard of. We were stoked to see the awesome trials riders at NAUCC 2008. The Rapid City YMCA had step aerobics platforms on which aspiring trials unicyclists could set up a variety of courses. Truitt got so much use from those small platforms that we decided to build platforms of our own. The result was a versatile platform system for multiple trials challenges made from readily available lumber.

Materials;

- 2" x 8" x 8' boards, amount depends on number and size of platforms and ramps.
- 4'x8' x 5/8" wafer board (the lumber store may cut it for you)
- Screws - 3" and 1 1/2"
- Exterior wood glue

Useful tools;

- Circular saw
- Drill/driver
- Square
- Chalk line
- Tape measure

You can get several platforms of various sizes out of one sheet of wafer board. You can cut tops for four rectangles at 16"x32", one at 32x48, and one square at 32x32 from one sheet of wafer board, that's six platforms! We figured anything narrower would tip too easily. You'll need at least six 8' lengths of lumber. The 2x8 pieces are butt jointed (make sure the corners are square), glued and screwed (3 - 3" screws to a corner) to form the rectangle support of the corresponding platform top. The top is then glued and screwed with 1 1/2" screws onto the 2x8 frame. It is advisable to work on a flat surface and use bar clamps or a friend to hold the corners square. After assembly paint them in order to weatherproof them for outside storage. Et voila! You are ready to set up trials courses. Elements you can try are; hopping up steps, jumping off different heights, jumping gaps, riding on ramps and bridges, pedal catches, and jumping over platforms. Have fun and... happy trials.



(Above) The platforms in storage.

(Right) Platforms are stacked for pedal grabs.

(Left) Truitt uses the new trials course.

MERCHANDISE

Rider level patches and the U.S.A patch.



(Left to right) A unicycle charm, penny (just to show size), and a unicycle tie tack.

CANUC 2009: CANADIAN UNICYCLE CONVENTION

Start Time: Friday, July 10, 2009 at 8:00am
End Time: Monday, July 13, 2009 at 10:00pm
Location: Guelph, Ontario, Canada

4 days of fun on one wheel. The first ever Canadian Unicycle Convention is open to ALL unicyclists!



Come join us!



Forrest Rowell



Nicole Crook

2008 Scholarship Winners



Spencer Hochberg



Ann McLaughlin

2008 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS DOING WELL IN STUDIES

Reports from all four of our 2008 scholarship recipients indicate that they are enjoying their first year of college and are doing well. At last year's national event, scholarships were awarded to Ann McLaughlin, Niki Crook, Spencer Hochberg, and Forrest Rowell.

Ann McLaughlin is having a great time at the University of North Texas School of Music. She is the "uni girl" on campus and that makes her well recognized. Unicyclists using their alternate means of transportation get noticed where ever they go. (The flaming red hair might have something to do with that also :>)

Niki Crook, a member the Panther Pride Unicycle Club in North Bend, Washington, is attending Seattle Pacific University where she is focusing on elementary education and psychology.

Recommendation letters played a huge part in making the difficult choices among the seven applicants for the scholarships. Who would have thought that a recommendation letter from an 11-year old would so impress the selection committee? Morgan Alverson described Niki's willingness to spend time with others and share her knowledge of our sport. With Niki's help, Morgan achieved level 6 in just 18 months.

Spencer Hochberg is attending the University of California, Los Angeles studying mechanical engineering. Have you ever noticed how many engineers we have in the unicycling community? Spencer is really enjoying his classes especially physics. He was a guest performer at the Mondo Juggling and Unicycle Festival held in Minneapolis in February.

Forrest Rowell is attending the University of Montana studying Media Arts and Integrated Digital Media. Forrest reports that he has already taught 6 of his housemates how to ride.

For 2009, we are renaming the scholarship to the Unicycling Society of America Leadership Scholarship to better recognize the important role of leadership within the unicycling community.

Information on applying for or contributing to the fund for 2009 can be obtained from Bill Gilbertson at Bill at Gilby dot com.

REGIONAL MEET IN MINNESOTA

The Twin Cities Unicycle Club will be hosting a Regional competition on the weekend of May 29-31. The tentative schedule is: hockey/basketball on Friday evening, May 29, Standards and Freestyle competitions and workshops on Saturday, May 30 (if we can find a gym!) and Track and Field on Sunday, May 31. Also, Trials and Muni Regionals will be held in conjunction with Down-On-The-Farm-Muni-Weekend in Hutchinson, MN on May 16.

AN OLD MAN ON A WHEEL

by: Pete Kasztk

Why the Unicycle?

I'm a sixty-six year old man who needs exercise to combat the toll of aging on his abilities. As a younger person, I ran and lifted weights. Then I was more concerned with looking good than staying healthy. When my joints no longer enjoyed running's constant pounding and my muscles no longer strengthened by lifting heavier weights, I realized I had to find another sport to keep my blood pressure, cholesterol, and bodyweight at reasonable levels. I found walking a boring activity because it took so long to do so little. With bicycle riding I found myself coasting more than pedaling and although I was going faster I had no place to go. I thought about swimming, but feared the sun because I'd already had several precancerous skin lesions removed. I considered shooting hoops, but that required finding and driving to a basketball court. Nothing appealed to me until I saw a unicyclist in a TV commercial.

I appreciated immediately that unicycling was an activity that didn't require traveling to do it. I could practice at home on my driveway and the street. Younger athletes might not consider transportation time important because time hasn't become valuable to them yet. At my age however, I find myself edging toward life's end. Because of that, I am not a person who wastes time, so activities I can do at home have the most appeal. Time is a nonrenewable commodity that only those who have used much of theirs can appreciate. I don't waste it.

I'm an adrenaline junkie. I had sky dived, bungeed, flown powered paragliders, and had enjoyed other risky ventures. Now, probably because of my age, riding a unicycle seemed perilous enough to provide a similar adventure. A younger person could easily see the unique balancing act as a fun thing and dive into its practice without a second thought. Someone my age looks at it as something that will have him falling and the thought of broken bones is daunting. Most of us haven't fallen in years and because we may be overweight and out of shape, we fear the

worst. Those were my first thoughts, too, but instead of scaring me away, they drew me to the unicycle like iron to a magnet. I became excited at the thought of having a new and unique adventure at home.

Immediately I ordered a unicycle, knee and elbow pads, a helmet, and wrist protection. For an investment of about one hundred dollars, I would soon be in business.

Learning to Fall

While waiting for the equipment to arrive I checked out unicycling videos on YouTube and read the only four books I could find on the subject. The information I devoured about my new hobby made the wait painfully long.

I knew that unicycling would motivate me to exercise with its challenge to learn new skills and improve old ones. In earlier days, I exercised for the sake of exercising and looking good both during and after. That no longer worked for me. I looked about as good as I ever would and doing the same moves repeatedly held no interest. I needed this unique aerobic activity to keep my enthusiasm for exercising high.

I discovered that there are ten measurable levels of proficiency on the unicycle and I realized that I would probably never qualify for the highest, which means there will always be challenges ahead. Tasks I found easy to do on a bicycle, like mounting and turning, were skills that would take time to learn on a unicycle. There was nothing simple about doing things while balancing on a two-inch patch of rubber.

My research turned up more interesting information that made me eager to get on with it.

As an aerobic exercise, unicycling would take more energy than bicycle riding because unicycles didn't allow beginners to coast. That was a skill that would take me a long time to master, so there would be no resting while riding.

There is a mental component to acquiring riding skills. Learning to balance

brain thereby creating more neural passageways to exchange information. This is ideal for me because family history demands I keep learning and developing new abilities to hold off dementia as long as possible.

When my equipment arrived, the first thing it was suggested I learn, even before pedaling forward, was how to safely dismount the unicycle. Learning to get off before learning to get on and ride seemed as if I was going backward in the process, but after several unsuccessful attempts at mounting and riding, I realized the logic behind it. As soon as I sat on the unicycle and lifted my feet, everything solid slipped out from under me and I fell, hard, several times.

Free mounting a unicycle is a skill that comes after learning to ride successfully over block long distances. I used a fireplace brick behind my wheel for my first mounting attempts, which were not always successful and seldom did my ride get beyond moving one pedal down.

What did happen each time was that I experienced inadvertent dismounts. They weren't deliberate, but rather they occurred because I lacked the skill to stay on. So, I postponed my riding attempts and practiced mounting to a dismount. I sat on the seat and immediately went into a forward dismount and repeated the routine until it became a comfortable and automatic action. As an older person, these also became experiences in recovering from a stumble before having a face-to-face confrontation with the ground. Those exercises kept my reaction speed up, improved my coordination, and increased my agility. Falling because of balance issues can be dangerous. Learning to avoid the fall is a time, energy, and pain saver.

####

I learned that becoming a skillful unicyclist takes patience and determination. Patience is necessary because progress can be slow. Determination is needed to get you beyond those times when you feel like quitting. I practice one hour a day, six days a week. During the few times I'm not psyched for a workout I remind myself of the effort it took

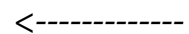
to get where I am in my riding skill and that each practice session teaches me a little more. In this respect, it is as much a mental as well as a physical exercise. As it is with the physical it is also with mental abilities – use them or lose them. Fortunately, unicycle riding works both the mind and the body.

As an ego boost, riding a unicycle puts the rider in a class beyond the ordinary cycle jockey. In my over fifty-five mobile home community, most riders are on tricycles, a few on bicycles. I'm the only unicycle rider.

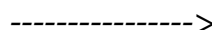
Besides being a curiosity, I hope to inspire others in my age group to challenge themselves both physically and mentally for the rewards of a better quality life than they currently enjoy. At the very least, they will see that age is not a barrier to interesting and exciting activities.



Pete riding



Pete mouting



WHAT BRINGS KIDS TO UNICYCLING?

Some of the beginner riders on Panther Pride answered two questions for me.

1. How long have you been riding a unicycle?
2. What made you want to learn to ride?

Here are their honest answers:

"It sounded exciting and a fun sport."
Briana, age 9. Riding for 14 months.

"It looked really cool if I could ride one."
Shane, age 6. Riding for 11 months.

"I enjoyed the shows they did at school and wanted to try it out."
Elizabeth age 10. Riding for 13 months.

"All the fun I was seeing the Panther Pride Unicycle Team members were having. Now my goal is to ride a giraffe."
Sarah age 10. Riding for 8 months.

"I was really curious about unicycles and it was fun and Mr. Tepper, my gym teacher, is fun and really smart."
Nik Fisher, age 8. Riding for 1 ½ years.

"Because I wanted to try it and see if I could do it."
Matthew, age 9. Riding for 1 ½ years.

"It looked like a unique type of sport"
Tyler age 10. Riding for 4 years.

"It looked really cool and I wanted to try to ride one."
Samantha age 8. Riding for 6 months.

"It seemed like a good thing to learn and it looked fun to do."
Sinclair age 9. Riding for 2 years.

"It looked so interesting, I wanted to learn."
Christina age 8. Riding for 2 ½ years.

IRUS - TALLS INTERMEDIATE SKILLS

Class 7-1

Required equipment: hockey puck

1. Ride in a figure 8, using no more than 6 revolutions for each circle (12 revolutions total).
2. Idle with right foot, 15 times, and idle with left foot, 15 times.
3. Ride over the obstacle.
4. Dismount safely with unicycle in front.
5. Dismount safely with unicycle in back.

Class 7-2

Prerequisite: On a standard unicycle, ride backward, 3 revolutions.

Required equipment: 8 cones or tape

1. Ride in a figure 8, using no more than 4 revolutions for each circle (8 revolutions total).
2. Make a 90-degree turn to the right and a 90-degree turn to the left within set boundaries.
3. Ride backward, 3 revolutions.
4. Idle with right foot, 25 times, and idle with left foot, 25 times.

Class 7-3

Prerequisites: On a standard unicycle, complete all skills in Class 7-3.

Required equipment: 7 cones or tape

1. Ride backward, 7 revolutions.
2. Make a 180-degree turn to the right and a 180-degree turn to the left within set boundaries.
3. Ride one-footed, 7 revolutions.
4. Idle one-footed, 15 times.

Class 7-4

Prerequisites: On a standard unicycle, complete all skills in Class 7-4.

1. Ride backward in a circle.
2. Ride one-footed in a circle.
3. Ride seat-in-front (T), 7 revolutions.
4. Ride seat-in-back (T), 7 revolutions.
5. Idle one-footed, with foot extended, 15 times.

Class 7-5

Prerequisites: On a standard unicycle, complete all skills 2 through 6 in Class 7-5.

1. Freemount using an Intermediate Tall mount.
2. Ride one-footed in a figure 8.
3. Ride seat-in-front (T) in a circle
4. Ride seat-in-back (T) in a circle
5. Ride seat-on-side (T) in a circle.
6. Idle one-footed with other leg crossed in front, 15 times.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR UNICYCLE HAPPY

By: the hosts of NAUCC 2009

Take your uni with you this summer to ride with fellow unicyclists at the 2009 North American Unicycling Convention and Championships, July 26th through August 1st in Bloomington, Minnesota. The 2009 NAUCC hosting committee has been busy securing venues and planning events for the enjoyment of all unicyclists. Here's what they have to say:

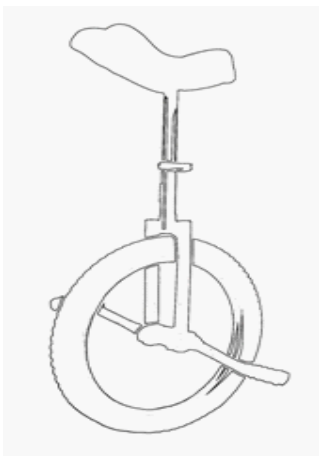
"We are really excited to offer such quality space in a great location. Freestyle riders will love the 1st class gymnasium. The attached activity center is a great space and will be open all 7 days for unlimited games of unicycle hockey, basketball, skill development and workshops. Trials obstacles, street & track competitions as well as convention vendors will all be on-site; within minutes of MSP airport, lodging, and The Mall of America. In addition, the entire metro area offers beautiful natural riding opportunities for those who wish to distance themselves from the city, while still in it. Participants will be provided with event GPS coordinates and maps of excellent river and lake trails in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area.

We hope you and your unicycle can spend some quality time with us this summer.

Please note: By registering early, you help us gauge participation and allow us to fine-tune event timing and facility space requirements. Early birds can save over 30% and pay only \$75 if they register by June 10th. Register on-line at HOW TO KEEP MY UNICYCLE HAPPY or print the registration form and mail it with your payment.

NAUCC09 New and Featured Events:

- Speed Trials for Advanced and Expert categories
- Wicked street competition
- Coker MUni Ride – 30" or larger wheel size challenge on a MUni course
- Criterium - a big wheel race on a closed course with a set number of laps
- Daily non-competitive rides of all varieties
- Return of "The Bedford Experience"
- 42K Unlimited Marathon
- Not-to-be-missed Bedford after dark games of Hockey.



Check the Official www.naucc09.com website often for additional information and updates.

CALLING ALL MEMBERS

Save the dates Sunday, July 26 through Saturday, August 1st

This year's national convention committee is actively planning all aspects of the convention activities. However to make this a truly awesome Convention we need your support.

Support opportunities include:

- Welcome & greet participants at onsite registration
- Help distribute water during the 42K marathon & other events
- Direct competitors on the MUni and distance trails
- Help judge Trials or other track & field events
- Lend your expertise by conducting a workshop
- Lead unicycle games
- Referee hockey or basketball games
- Prepare awards for presentation
- Help set-up and take-down trials course
- Help cap off the week at the awards banquet
- Have fun and cheer for participants from all over the US and Canada

Volunteering is an excellent way to meet other passionate unicyclists and their supporters from all over the U.S. Any amount of time you can volunteer will be greatly appreciated.

Please let Jessica Daily, Volunteer Coordinator, know if you are interested in volunteering at naucc09 at gmail dot com.

We hope to see you there as a participant, competitor, volunteer, and as a fan cheering on all the talented unicyclists!



NAUCC09 Registration is open now!
Watch for emails announcing open registration at www.naucc09.com