

CONTENTS

1.2 | Issue 06

MY BIKE SPACE

Your biking guide to the coolest trails, races, repairmen, a velodrome update and staying healthy on two wheels.



WHERE TO FIND WHAT YOU WANT TO READ

Hit the trails. **Page 06-07**
A bike museum? **Page 07**
Ultimate commuter bike. **Page 08**

Races, rides and shops. **Page 09**
Bike needs fixed? **Page 11**
Pro rider races in Europe **Page 11**

Velodrome update **Page 12**
Getting paid to ride **Page 13**
Spinning all the rage **Page 13**

GET OUT

HR'S BAD PUNK MESSAGE
Bad Brains frontman HR is in a good place now. **Page 16**

REDBONE: MUSIC IS UGLY
Leon Redbone believes that beauty is missed in music. **Page 16**

BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE
Writer and speaker John C. Maxwell will tell you how to be your best at the Lincoln Center. **Page 18**

AUTUMN BURN
Fort Collins trio ready to burn up the summer months with performances all over town. **Page 19**

NEXtNC CALENDAR PICKS
Check out our picks for the week and listings for everything else. **Pages 22-24**



leon redbone



autumn burn

SIDETRAX

ALEC'S APOLOGY
Alec Baldwin goes on "The View" to say he made a mistake in leaving that voicemail for his daughter. **Page 25**

SMELLS LIKE AN AUCTION
Courtney Love is set to auction off Kurt Cobain's stuff. **Page 25**



alec baldwin

CRAVE

FEARFUL OF FISH
Lose that fear of buying, preparing and cooking fish at home. **Page 27**

FOOD CALENDAR
Find fresh ideas and helpful hints from area cooking classes offered around town. **Page 28**




fish

ON THE COVER: A rider takes his mountain bike off road somewhere in Larimer County. **PHOTO BY:** Heidi Muller for NEXtNC

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I want to **RIDE** my **BICYCLE**, I want to ride it **WHERE** I like!

When Freddie Mercury wrote those lyrics, he wasn't thinking of northern Colorado, but he just as well have. On the road or off, we ride in 100-degree heat, or when it's 20 below. That said, here's our bike issue in all its glory.

the scoop:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------|
| Hit the trails, Jack | P6-7 |
| A bike museum? | P7 |
| Ultimate commuter bike | P8 |
| Races, rides and shops | P9 |
| Bike need fixed? | P11 |
| Pro rider races in Europe | P11 |
| A velodrome update | P12 |
| Getting paid to ride | P13 |
| Spinning all the rage | P13 |

Fort Collins resident Felix Wong, pictured here, is one of those cycling hounds you'll see out pedaling a century on the weekend.

Donovan Henderson
dhenderson@nextnr.com

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previously mentioned sites merit reminders about excellent online resources for sheet music and a custom font for your computer.

Hey, Web Search: I am a loyal reader as well as an avid piano player. One thing you come to learn from playing instruments is that sheet music is very expensive (i.e., \$50 for a 16-page piece). I was wondering if you knew of (or could find, using your superior search skills) a Web site or two that offer free sheet music to print.

— Ann Wolski, St. Paul, Minn.

RANDY SAYS:

I wrote a column a while ago about free or low-cost sheet music on the Web, but because it predates the Web Search blog (www.startribune.com/websearch), it's not available in the free online archive there. Here's a brief overview of worthwhile sheet-music sites:

WWW.MUTOPIAPROJECT.ORG

The Mutoopia Project offers free sheet music for public-domain classical compositions. Just download, print and perform. The 867 works — about 200 more than when I first wrote about the site — favor the keyboard, but voice and strings are well-represented.

WWW.8NOTES.COM

8notes offers 266 free classical and traditional pieces for piano, plus many works for all other instruments. A \$20 annual subscription gets you higher-quality printouts and additional works.

WWW.FINDFRESHSHEETMUSIC.COM

Free Sheet Music offers an instrument-by-instrument directory to out-of-the-way sites that house free sheet music. The site is filled with ads and has some dead links, but the annoyances are worth it if you find an unexpected gem.

Randy A. Salas, E-mail websearch@startribune.com or go to his blog, www.startribune.com/websearch.



WHEN IT RAINS IT POURS

"Operation Save Lawn" officially kicked off last weekend with the first mow of the season, some well-needed fertilizer and some seed to fill in the crop circles that have formed in my backyard over the years.

After investing a hefty sum into "Operation Save Lawn", I decided that my dollar would go a lot further if I could just get a little bit of help from the rain gods.

Apparently, my rain dance worked.

Exactly what dance do I perform to make it stop raining so that I can mow again?

Kristy

THE VT SHOOTER AND GUN CONTROL

Now that the abhorrent shock of the single most devastating shooting in U.S. history has begun to wane, I feel I can write somewhat objectively about the subject. In turn, I hope that you can also begin to take various arguments in stride, without retorting in contemptuous rage or indignation.

To begin, I would like to start with the shooter, Seung-Hui Cho. I personally believe Cho was a coward. If Cho wanted to rub

his thumb in the face of religion and the rich, perhaps he could have looked at the middle-class house his family lived in, or the college he was attending. Financially, Cho more than likely fell into the majority income level as the rest of his peers. On the other hand, we're talking about Virginia Tech. ... The fact that Cho sat up creating QuickTime movies with meaningless monologues that mean nothing only highlights Cho's faux sinister revelation meant to somehow enlighten or scare us.

As Cho attempted to make his voice lower and more menacing in the tape, it makes me wonder that if he knew we would simply think of him as a sad, pathetic, and cowardly individual might even have been enough to stop such indiscriminate bloodshed... On the second note, can we finally start talking seriously about gun control?

Mostly I want to see gun laws change so that we don't end up with other countries arms' laws.

Perhaps soon enough, hunters will not be able to buy 12 gauges and .306 to hunt because of indiscriminate shootings like VT. Give us rights where we deserve, but why do we have to legalize the purchase of M-16s, sniper rifles, and handguns? What good do they really do? Gun collectors? Fine. Not too many people go berserk with Colt .45s, but let's track the ones that are collectibles, and get the ones that are useless except for gang-banging, the military and school shootings.

Drew

To read the full blog, go to nextnc.com

THE BIKE FAIR

In Fort Collins — a bona fide bicycle-loving town — it seems like bike events occur as frequently as Alberto Gonzales says "I do not recall." On Sunday, there was the Community Bike Fair in Old Town. ...

First off, there was sufficient eye candy for even the most hardcore of cycling addicts, including novel two- (and three-) wheelers and gizmos you are unlikely to find at most "normal" bike shops, and certainly not Wal-Mart.

For example, there was a nifty city bike called the Trek Lime that auto-shifted itself through an interesting mix of internal gears and electronics.

A speed sensor built within the front hub communicated to the



rear hub the appropriate times to up- or downshift via wiring internal to the frame, and when I rode the bike, shifting was flawless and near-seamless. The bike was also surprisingly affordable (considering the technology) at \$550. Give Trek a thumbs up for bringing such a unique, unproven idea to a niche market — something large bicycle manufacturers have traditionally been reluctant to do.

My favorite gadget was a bicycle blender. This is because it allowed us to make delicious human-powered smoothies!

Felix

To read the full blog, go to nextnc.com

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