

ON ONE WHEEL



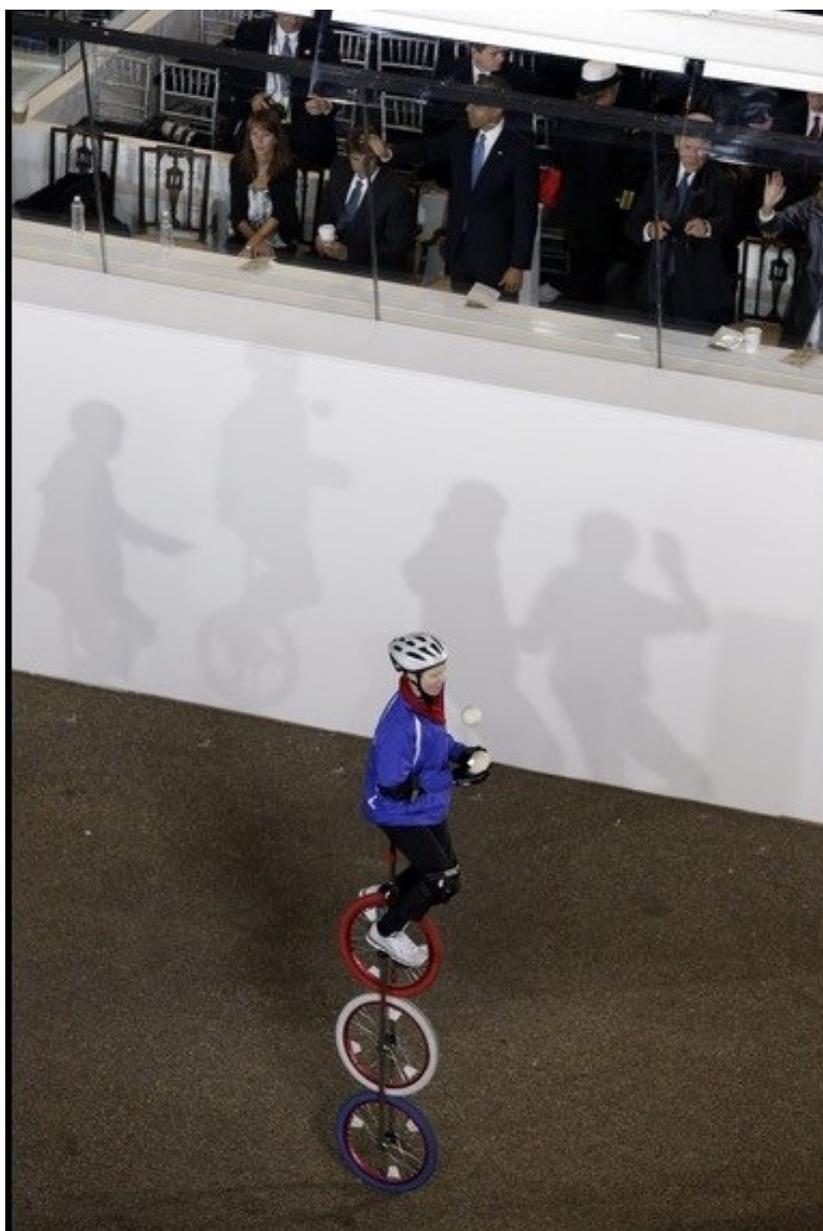
Issue 36-1

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January 2014

2013 Retrospective

Last year was a momentous year for the promotion of unicycling for fun and sport. It started out in January with the Gym Dandies riding in the Inaugural Parade in Washington D.C. NAUCC 2013 and the 4th Annual New York Unicycle Festival also amassed lots of attention and media coverage. This issue looks back and celebrates all that was accomplished in 2013.



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"I was elated when I got the call: relief, excitement, and such a sense of validation of our Gym Dandies Circus Arts Program. It doesn't get better than this: the oldest, largest, and most historic parade in the U.S."

- Jon Cahill (Director of Gym Dandies)

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On the cover: David Grover, 14, rides a three-wheel giraffe unicycle with red, white, and blue tires past the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, during the Inaugural Parade on January 21, 2013.

Photo by: Tech. Sgt. Eric Miller (www.dvidshub.net)

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 information service.

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On One Wheel

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Letter from the Editor

I want to apologize for the delay in getting this issue out. I had no idea what I was getting myself into when I volunteered to take over as Editor of *On One Wheel!* Like nearly everything else in my life, I grossly underestimated the time it would take. I didn't think about the research and endless communication that happened as part of the process.

However, I'm not complaining as it has been great fun getting to know the unicycling community at the national level. I also have not done it alone. I have received heaps of help from riders all over the North America. I am sincerely grateful to everybody for their contributions. However, I feel that certain individuals deserve a special shout-out for going above and beyond:

- Jon Cahill provided me with loads of videos, photos, and information on the Inaugural Parade. He told his associates, "This is a big deal. The Magazine goes to the unicycling community world wide." I appreciate his enthusiasm!
- Stephen Ramirez of the Unicycle Football was extremely helpful in providing background information, photos, and captions. I encourage everybody to visit and follow the groups Facebook page for updates.
- Will Streets was a charming interviewee who even helped create the best questions.
- Lauren Johnson (shown at right) wrote a lovely piece about the Madison Unicyclists Summer Camp. I totally want to go to next year's camp and play Blob Tag!
- Adrean Clark generously shared her snowman unicycling cartoon. It is adorable and funny! You can purchase it on a mug and on several other items. Check out: http://society6.com/adrean/Unicycling-in-the-Snow_Mug#27=199.



Lauren Johnson, and her sister Megan, at the Madison Unicyclists Summer Camp. (Photo by Doug Buege)

Thanks to all for your patience as I learn the ropes. If you'd like to contribute to *OOW*, have questions, comments or feedback, please write to shellyononewheel@gmail.com.

With gratitude,

Shelly



From left to right, Arthur Hughes, of RTUC takes advantage of the club's additional practice time. (Photo by Mike Parsons)



U.S.A. Rule Changes Approved

The new U.S.A. Rulebook will be ready in just a few weeks. Remember that it is your responsibility to know U.S.A. rules prior to any NAUCC-sanctioned event. 2014 changes include:

- ◆ Helmets will be required for all track races (including obstacle course).
- ◆ 100mm cranks may be used for 20" wheels in track. (Before 2014, the minimum crank size was 114mm.)
- ◆ There is no longer any boundary for freestyle competition.
- ◆ Individual and pairs freestyle categories are now *novice*, *intermediate*, and *expert*. There is no separate adult category.
- ◆ Group and club freestyle entries may have as few as three riders.
- ◆ In distance races, a separate championship will be awarded for the fastest ungeared rider, if five or more gear riders enter the race.
- ◆ Flatland will have a Jr. Expert (age 0-14) category.

[Editor's Note: Perhaps we should rethink the minimum age category for Jr. Expert. As a mom, I don't think we should allow infants and toddlers to compete in Flatland.]

NAUCC 2014 now has a Facebook page! If you're on Facebook, please "like" it for up-to-the-minute news!

<https://www.facebook.com/naucc2014>



Hello U.S.A. members,

Happy New Year! I hope everybody had a joyous holiday season.

The Rulebook Committee has been hard at work editing the new guidelines for competitions and activities (see information above on the changes). I would like to thank everybody involved in process for their feedback and hard work.

The NAUCC dates have been finalized, and the webpage is up (more details on the back page of OOW). The event has a new Facebook page, please check it out and like it for up-to-the-minute updates.

Keep on riding,

Amanda Grzych



President's Corner



Parade on Pennsylvania Avenue



Gym Dandies ride past the review booth. (Photo by Peter Vachon)

2013 started with a once-in-a-lifetime type of event for the Gym Dandies Children's Circus of Scarborough, Maine. The group participated in the Presidential Inaugural Parade in Washington D.C. on January 21st.

The adventure began when Jonathan Cahill, the Gym Dandies' Director, was asked by a member's parent if the group would be a good fit for the parade after being alerted to the application process by an acquaintance. Cahill believed the group was deserving of the honor, and as such, countless hours of research and planning commenced.

In order to be ready in case they would eventually be selected, Cahill and his assistants, Ellen Parenteau and David Sloatman, began the planning process while preparing the application. The group had to prepare a complex application package that included photos, videos, a group narrative, the unit director's resume, and various recommendations. Cahill explained, "For the most part, my normal life ended from 11/24/2012 to 1/22/2013. But it was well worth every minute of time and energy."

Approximately 3,500 non-military units applied for a spot in the parade, which is organized by the U.S. Army. Only 47 were invited to participate.

The parade unit consisted of 42 children between the ages of 9 and 18 riding giraffe unicycles. Two rode three-wheeled cycles while juggling, and two zig-zagged through formations on 36" wheels. A group of parents walked the parade route to help with remounting and to carry the unit's sign.

On the day of the parade, the unit faced numerous challenges along the 1.5 mile, uphill route. Bright lights obscured the riders' vision, and the loud noise made it difficult to hear Cahill's commands. It was also not the speediest of parades as bands continually stopped in front of the review booth to perform. However, the group enjoyed every second of the 13-hour day.

Riders had many memorable highlights to take away from the historic event. The most notable were waving to the President and V.P. while riding past the review booth and having their unicycles examined by bomb-sniffing dogs.



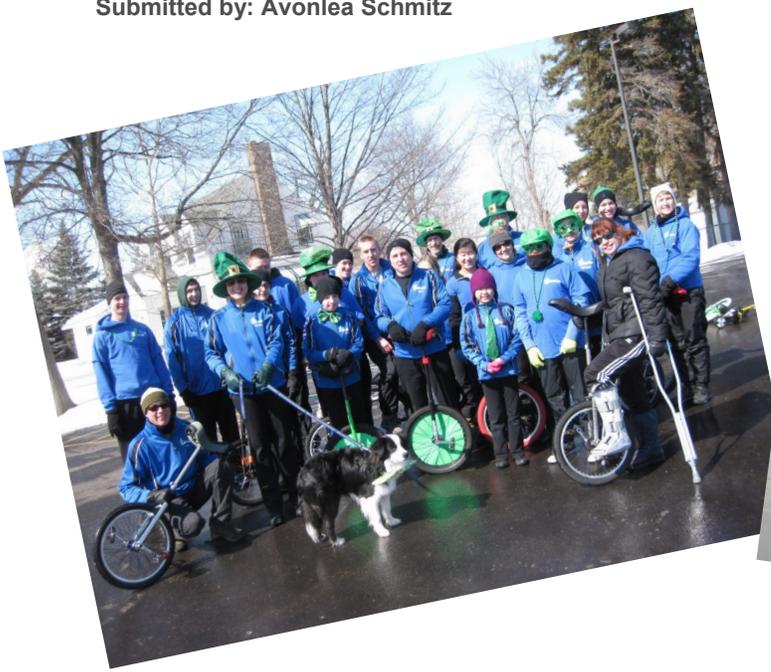
Eden Larson, 11, and Kaitlin Malayev, 13, in the staging area before the parade. (Photo by Dina Derrick)



Gym Dandies Group Picture (Photo by Claudia Murray Photo)

Twin Cities Unicycle Club

Submitted by: Avonlea Schmitz



Left: St. Patrick's Day parade (Photo by Tom Lind-MacMillan)
Right: TCUC Annual Banquet (Photo by Mike Schatz)

TCUC started the year with TundraCon which included extra gym time and a cold ride outside over New Year's. The year also included Mondo Unicycling and Juggling festival, which was a fun weekend of gym time that included a Show Group performance in the Spectacular. The summer was full with the club participating in a total of 26 parades, mostly in June, July, and August. Nationals was also a highlight for the members who were able to attend. The fall brought Minnesota Muni weekend and weekly distance and Muni rides. Most recently, the club hosted its annual banquet with a full day of gym time, workshops, a potluck, and a hockey tournament.



Left: TundraCon Ride (Photo by Tom Lind-MacMillan)
Right: Mondo Show Group Performance (Photo by Patricia Wilton)

Redford Township Unicycle Club

RTUC got off to a slow start in 2013 due to a lack of gym availability. For the first time in recent history, the club was unable to host its annual riding class. The club got back on track in the spring while preparing for NAUCC 2013. In fact, an additional informal practice time was added on Tuesday night thanks to the generosity of Mike Parsons and other club member contributors. Wednesday night basketball sessions also resumed in 2013. This had a strong impact on the club's performance during the NAUCC uniball tournament, where two RTUC-based teams made it into the playoffs.

In addition to riding in several parades, the club's talents were showcased in a couple of unique events. It was invited to perform before a large and appreciative crowd at the anniversary party of TechTown Detroit, an organization that aides technology and innovation for start-up companies. Second, several riders participated in a stage production of *Barnum*, a play about the life of circus founder P.T. Barnum.

The year ended with members joining together to give back to the community in our annual bell ringing day for the Salvation Army. Teams rode unicycles and rang bells in one to two hour shifts to raise money for families in need during the holidays.



Chris Parsons cheerily rings a bell with fellow members Peter Zorbal, Brian Sciatto, and Mike Parsons. (Photo by Random Stranger Walking into K-mart)



The cast of *Barnum*, which includes RTUC members (the ones with unicycles from left to right) Mike Parsons, Mark Atkinson, Brian Sciatto, Charlotte Atkinson, and Lauren Atkinson. (Photo by Chris Parsons)

Madison Unicyclists

2013 was an exciting year for the Madison Unicyclists. Below, young members from the club share their highlights for the year.



Madison Unicyclists brave the winter weather to ride to school. Left to right, Sarah, Olivia, Sylvie, Martin and Ian. (Photo by Douglas Buege)

Unicycle Camp: New Friends, New Skills

By Lauren Johnson (10)

In July, a group of kids ages 9-13 from the club participated in a week long day camp organized by Patricia Wilton. We started by setting goals we wanted to accomplish by the end of the week. My goal was to ride with stomach on seat. We would start the day by having time to practice our goals. Then, we would spend some time playing Uni Sumo, Unicycle Hockey, Sharks and Minnows or Blob Tag. To cool down at the end of every day, we unicycled over to the beach. We went to the zoo, tie-dyed t-shirts, unicycled to a nearby park, and rode a 10K. On the last day of camp, we invited our parents to see what we had been working on throughout the week. We wore our tie-dye shirts as we demonstrated our achieved goals and group routine. Those of us who were preparing an individual or pairs routine for NAUCC performed for everyone. I really enjoyed learning new skills and getting to know everyone better. I can't wait for unicycle camp this summer!

After School Classes

By Olivia Siebert (11) and Zoey Yandell (11)

On the outside, it looks like a normal school after classes end. But venture into the Field House and you enter a different world. Unicyclists practice tricks, chat with friends, and just ride around. In the center of it all, or more accurately, lining the walls like trophies, are the newer riders. They cling to the bleachers and feel their way along, or are supported by their fellow unicyclists.

Why do they go to all this trouble to learn to uni? The answer lies in why they started. Most kids said that unicycling looked like a cool sport. Many of them also have friends who unicycle.

Two of the newest additions to the club started because they wanted to make their Battle of the Books team name at least partially true. The team name is "Purple-Spotted Gravity-Defying Unicycle-Riding Elephants." Zoey came up with it, and she also convinced them to join the club.

Some of the greatest challenges faced by our new riders are riding without assistance, free mounting, passing levels, and most of all....BALANCING!

New riders are also setting goals for themselves, such as free mounting, passing Level 1 (or 2 or 3) and riding certain distances without help. They are also influenced by the skills practiced by more advanced riders. Some of the tricks that impressed them were wheel-walking, backwards, seat out front, back and side, and one-footing.



Unicycle Camp group shot. (Photo by Douglas Buege)

Unicycle Football Makes National Headlines in 2013

The Unicycling Society of America (U.S.A.) has been hosting unicycle basketball and hockey tournaments since the inception of the North American Unicycling Convention and Championships (NAUCC) in 2002. However, football had never been considered...until now. The U.S.A. Board of Directors is considering adding it to the 2014 NAUCC event lineup.

In 2013, the Unicycle Football League (UFL) caught the national spotlight while participating in the New York Unicycle Festival on Labor Day weekend. The event was covered by multiple local media outlets, as well as *USA Today* and the *L.A. Times*.

The league, which calls San Marcos, TX home, was created in 2008 by Marcus Garland. Garland consulted former CFL/NFL player, Carlton Pride, to create the UFL rulebook. The five-on-five matches have similar rules to standard football.

League organizers describe the style of play as “flackle”. It is flag football, but players can roust each other from their cycles with body contact as long as the force is not overwhelming.

Currently, eight teams play in the UFL, including the “Rolling Blackouts” and “Unicychos”. The players use aliases such as “Lady Bird” and “Platypus”. Most of them learned to ride specifically to play unicycle football. Riders must be 18 years of age or older, and both men and women are welcome.

For more information, awesome photos and videos, check out the UFL’s website (www.unicyclefootball.com).



Darth Vato in the red from “Hell on Wheel” tackles Larry Gunn in silver of “Rolling Black-outs.” (Photo by BirdsIView)



Titmouse in blue of the “Hot Dogs” grabs Handlebars’ flag in the black and orange “Unicychos.” (Photo by BirdsIView)



“Rolling Blackouts” in silver are about to attempt a field goal for an extra point against “Hell on Wheel” in the red. (Photo by BirdsIView)



Riding for Purpose: Unicyclists Show Support

Nothing garners attention quite like one or more unicyclist riding along a major highway! 2013 was an unprecedented year in terms of unicyclists riding great distances to raise money for charity or to bring awareness to a cause. Not only did these numerous rides showcase the unicycling community's caring and supportive nature, but they also proved to be a wonderful promotional outlet for the sport. Several rides received national and local media attention.

"There was an epidemic of unicyclists crossing the country in 2013. I doubt there has ever been more in one year."

- Dave White

One such ride was completed by U.S.A. member Dave White of Ohio. He traversed 2,975 miles from San Diego to St. Augustine to raise awareness for Lou Gehrig's disease (also known as ALS). White's father died from ALS at the age of 63. His trip took 78 days of riding to complete. The recently retired probation officer suspects

he may be the oldest to complete a cross-country journey on a 36" wheel. He claimed, "I sure wasn't the fastest, but at 58, I might be the oldest unicyclist to cross the USA."

Former U.S.A. Director, Dustin Kelm, also completed a long-distance ride in 2013. He and his wife, Katie, rode 3,511 miles across 14 states in 97 days. The couple's goal was to raise awareness for displaced Syrian refugees. They averaged about 40 to 50 miles per day with no support vehicle. Kelm was inspired to make the trip after meeting a 10 year-old boy whose parents had both been killed in Syria.



White rides amid the San Diego traffic. (Photo by Joan Drnek)



Dustin and Katie Kelm ride through the mountains. (Photo by Jarl Skibumdad Berg)

Additional Information on Distance Rides for a Cause

- Dave White's cross-country journey: http://www.jcfloridan.com/news/article_e25bc242-36ab-11e3-b151-001a4bcf6878.html
- Dustin & Katie Helm's adventure: <http://www.bladeempire.com/news/couple-ride-unicycles-cross-country-to-raise-money-for-refugees>
- Samuel Johnson Unicycles Australia: <http://www.novafm.com.au/article/samuel-johnson-unicycle-around-australia>
- Terry Peterson Day Ride for Cancer Center: <http://www.dailybreeze.com/social-affairs/20131023/lomita-unicyclists-dawn-to-dusk-ride-will-raise-money-for-cancer-center>

2013 Was the Year of the First Annual STOMP Muni Weekend

Interview with Organizer Will Streets

First of all, what does STOMP mean?

STOMP stands for Southern Trial of Oak Mountain Park. I can't remember who came up with the acronym, but it's a good one.

Are you planning on doing it again?

Absolutely! We plan on making STOMP an annual event, so if you missed it this year, don't worry; we'll be here for you next year.

What made you want to do it in the first place?

Right after attending Asheville Muni Fest last year, my friend, Elijah Rotenberry, and I wanted to hold our own muni fest. After all, we had Oak Mountain State Park and it's world class biking trails just 15 minutes up the road! So we thought it'd be great to bring the riding down here to Alabama.

How many hours did it take to organize?

Hmm... I can't say how many hours it's taken to pull it off, but I can say I've been breathing STOMP Muni Fest all year leading up to it. And it never would have happened with out the very talented group of local riders here, as well as Birmingham Urban Mountain Pedalers or BUMP for short. Everyone contributed and it was just amazing to see how well everything worked out.

How many people came to the event?

We had a good first-year turn up of 12 people, even boasting a unicyclist all the way from West Virginia!

How was the weather for unicycling?

It was perfect Muni weather! We had upper 60s during the day and upper 40s at night, the breeze was cool and the bon fire was warm. It was sunny Friday, party cloudy on Saturday, and I can't even remember what it was like Sunday, but we spent the whole weekend with zero rain!

What are the trails like at Oak Mountain State Park?

The trails at Oak Mountain State Park are very diverse. You've got the basic, mostly-flat trail that goes around the lake. This is very good for beginners and is where most of us local riders started. Then you've got numerous trails running down the mountain. Our favorite is Jekyll & Hyde. This trail is made up of two sections. The top is a really rocky and technical and the bottom is smooth up-down with a ton of flow. I personally prefer the gnarly top section, but we all love flying through the bottom section! All of these trails are in the STOMP Muni Fest video, so be sure to check that out. (See below)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0aW5oCxWUo>



Will Streets rides a giraffe at the camp site. (Photo by Karry Jones)



STOMP riders on the Jekyll & Hyde trail of Oak Mountain State Park in Alabama. (Photo by Mrs. Gulaian)



Liam Koehler performs a chin up with a unicycle during TCUC practice time. (Photo by Julie Kovacic)



Liam Koehler of TCUC Attains Level 8 Status

The highest level riders in the Unicycling Society of America hail from the Twin Cities Unicycle Club (TCUC) in Minnesota. In October of 2013, the club announced that Liam Koehler, 15, passed Level 8. Koehler joins just 15 other riders in the Unicycling Society of America at this level.

Reaching Level 8 is a daunting task. Koehler estimates that it took him a little over a year to pass. He made 8 to 10 attempts to pass the level before being successful in the fall of last year. The hardest tricks for him to master were the pirouette, hand wheel walk, and the backwards spin. The backward spin took the most time by far.

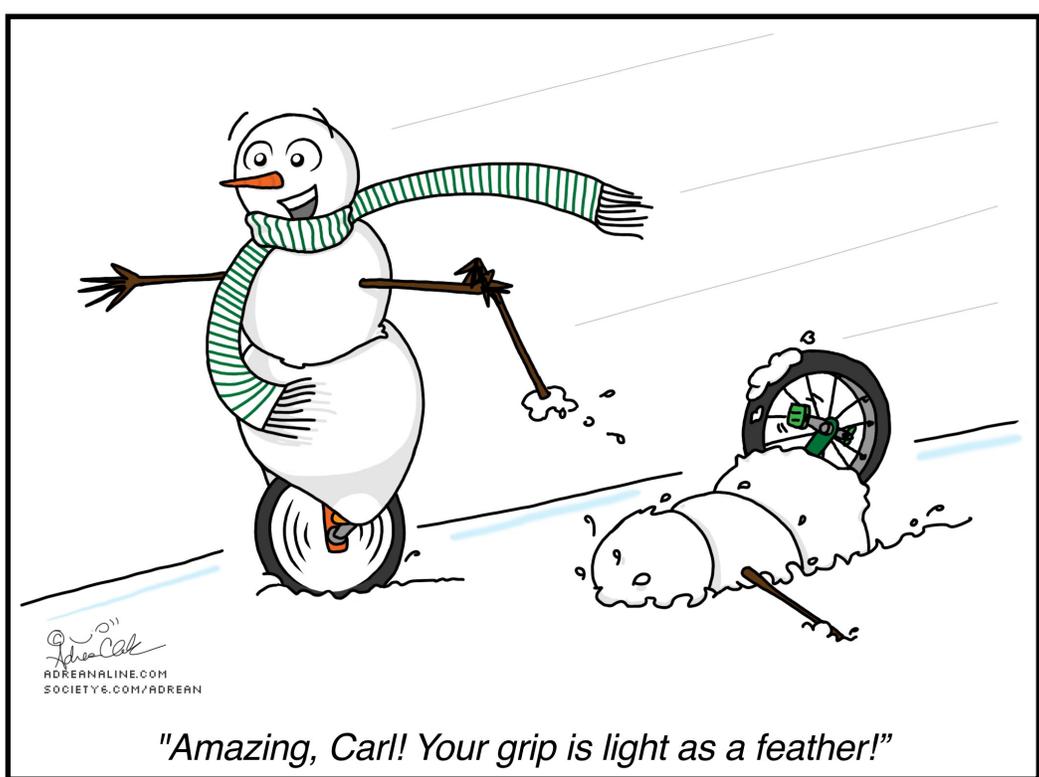
Liam comes from a family of talented unicyclists. His father, Steve, recently passed Level 5. He was thrilled when Liam passed Level 8. He explained, "It's big because the kids (of TCUC) have been stalled at Level 7 for many years. Matt Sindelar was the last Level 8. Now, a number of others are actively working on and testing for 8." Liam's mother, Mary, and siblings Ben, Grant, and Greta also ride.

As of January, Liam can do all Level 9 skills, except for the dreaded backwards pirouette. His goal is to reach Level 9 by UNICON 2014.



Liam Koehler and Rachel Sindelar perform in the pairs competition at NAUCC 2013. (Photo by Steven Koehler)

UNICYCLING FUN



A very special thanks goes to Adrean Clark of the Twin Cities Unicycle Club for sharing her winter unicycling cartoon with OOW!



Unicycle News & Stuff

Unicycle News & Stuff debuted in 2013. These brief episodes capture the best bits of unicycling features and videos that hit the Internet. They are produced and narrated by Emile Mathieu. Mathieu typically spends about four hours filming and editing. These videos, which are hilarious and entertaining, can be found on YouTube. However, as a word of caution, the content is geared towards older teens and adults. Mathieu plans to produce some PG-13 episodes of highlights from the Extreme Unicycle Championship in Germany this month.



Upcoming Events

- Extreme Unicycle Championship
January 17-19, 2014
Cologne, Germany
- Moab Munifest
March 21-23, 2014
Moab, Utah
<http://munifest.us/>
- Mondo Juggling Festival
February 28 –March 1, 2014
St. Paul, MN
- Muni Weekend
June 13-15, 2014
Bellingham, WA
<http://teamunicycle.com/muniweekend.html>
- NAUCC 2014
June 29 - July 4, 2014
Bloomington, MN
<http://naucc2014.com>
- UNICON 17
July 30 - August 10, 2014
Montreal, Quebec
www.unicon17.ca