

## Tip To Tip for Africa Will Make You Feel Good All Over

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Reporter



Are you into bike riding, good eating, and changing lives in underprivileged countries? Well, an upcoming fund-raiser called Tip To Tip for Africa will help sate all of those needs ... and perhaps a few more. The fund-raiser for micro-lending (which allows people start their own small business) in Africa will allow Islanders do something for themselves and others in developing worlds, says event co-founder Martha Deacon. The event encourages physical fitness, cultural discovery, and helping out those less fortunate. How much other good stuff can you pack in a long weekend?

Deacon, along with Rev. Lulama Ntshingwa of Gonubie (outside East London in South Africa) is the co-founder of The Townships Project which came to Canada in May, 1999. Funds were provided by SEED capital from Canadian Memorial United Church in Vancouver.

Since that time, Deacon explained, more than 1000 individuals in Canada have contributed to the project and have made more than 1100 small loans in the townships outside East London; changing the lives of about 3500 people at a cost of about \$50 per person.

"These small loans are used to start or expand tiny businesses, usually related to food; such as baked goods, sweets, chicken, etc. Tip to Tip for Africa is intended to be an annual fund-raiser for The Townships Project. It will be held on the May long weekend and will cover the Island from lighthouse to lighthouse, tip to tip, from North Cape to East Point.

Convinced yet? Here's the plan for the weekend. And just try not to get involved. You won't be able to.

### DAY 1

"Participants will board buses at Smitty's parking lot on University Avenue in Charlottetown before 9 a.m. on Friday, May 20th for the drive to North Cape. We will be stopping to pick up more riders in Summerside at the Superstore parking lot, and to pick up our lunches from Olive's Grocery in Tignish. They are being prepared by the Tignish Boys & Girls' Club in return for a donation to that club.

"After ceremonially dipping our fingers in the waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence at North Cape lighthouse, we depart on our Tip to Tip bike ride by 12:30 p.m. We will be riding to Rodd Mill River Resort, about 50 kms, for dinner, and overnight.

### DAY 2

"(The) next morning, we pick up a muffin or piece of fruit before riding to O'Leary for a gorgeous pancake breakfast and then on to Wellington for an Acadian feast and wonderful music by Jeannita Bernard and the Mazarabakiza family. We ride through Summerside to Emerald Junction, where we lock up our bikes for the night, and take buses back into Quality Inn, Garden of the Gulf. We are piped across the road to enjoy an African dinner at the College of Piping, and be entertained by highland dancers.

### DAY 3

"On Sunday morning, after breakfast at the Quality Inn, those who wish can board buses for Charlottetown to attend the special "Blessing of the Bikes" at Trinity United Church (filmed for Cable TV). Those who stay behind will be taken back to Emerald Junction to continue their Tip to Tip ride. Packed

lunches will be provided for all.

"Sunday afternoon, we cycle through one of the most beautiful parts of the Confederation Trail, along the shores of St. Peters Bay from Morell to St. Peters. We spend the night in St. Peters after enjoying a farewell lobster banquet at the Greenwich Interpretive Centre in Greenwich National Park.

"After breakfast at Bayside Inn, we embark on our final day of cycling, enjoying our packed lunches along the way, and arriving at East Point lighthouse by about 3:30 p.m. After a short photo op and dipping our hands in the waters of the Straits of Northumberland, we board buses for the return trip to Charlottetown and Summerside. Sounds good, huh?

Deacon said the Tip To Tip ride has far more advantages than one might expect.

"This event will be an enormous amount of fun. It will also contribute to every Islander's appreciation of the beauty of their province and its wonderful Confederation Trail. The food will be spectacular and all that exercise will reduce any feeling of guilt in enjoying it. And, finally, every cyclist participating in this event will know that the lives of several African families will be changed for the better because they made the effort to join in the Tip to Tip for Africa."

Deacon said she is grateful to everyone who will be contributing to the event; including volunteers, cyclists, donors, entertainers, and local businesses.

"There will be hundreds of people involved in this ride: the cyclists, those preparing the food, those who sponsor a rider or contribute money for the meals, those who provide music or

other entertainment, and those who provide transportation or contribute to it. The list is just about endless," she said... much like the possibilities.

Deacon would like to have 100 cyclists on the trail, each having raised donations of \$350 or more; translating into at least \$35,000 for The Townships Project.

"We hope it will be so much fun that everyone will want to return next year and bring a friend. And that many who ride on the Tip to Tip will begin to understand how effective micro-lending is in alleviating extreme poverty and will become involved in The Townships Project."

"Perhaps some of them will accompany us on our tour to visit clients in November, 2005."

For more information on the South African tour, see [www.craigtravel.ca/tr\\_newsouthafrica.php](http://www.craigtravel.ca/tr_newsouthafrica.php). Anyone and everyone over 18 is welcome to take part in Tip to Tip for Africa. For information or to register see [www.thetownshipsproject.org](http://www.thetownshipsproject.org) or call Florence at 902-894-9359 or Lana at 902-892-4170

Happy Trails!