

Spokin' Words

Serving North Central West Virginia Cyclists

March-April 2018 Issue 1

MARCH - APRIL 2018 CRC Newsletter: The Spokin' Word

Welcome Back! And, it is time to renew your membership! Launch your 2018 cycling season by renewing your membership with Country Roads Cyclists! All memberships run from January 1–December 31. Choose from four membership options: Family \$15; Individual \$10; (new) \$100 Lifetime Individual Membership for members 70+ years old; and (new) \$125 Lifetime Couple Membership for couples who are both over 70 years old and have the same address.

Club members enjoy picnics and parties, as well as bicycling throughout the beautiful north central West Virginia and Pennsylvania regions. We offer rides every Saturday and Sunday from March 1st through October 31st, and in September we sponsor a Metric Century Ride.

CRC is a member of the League of American Bicyclists, Mon River Trails Conservancy, Harrison County Rail Trails Foundation, and multiple community and rail-trail advocacy groups.

Club members receive our newsletter four times a year, which features our Ride Schedule, and Club and area bicycling news. Your 2018 Membership form is available on www.crcyclists.org.

Already renewed? Thank you!! Please share the CRC - love and give the form to a friend!

Road or rail-trail, we look forward to seeing you at the many Country Roads Cyclists events in the coming year!

PIZZA PARTY - Saturday, March 10, 2018 at 6:00 PM, at Colasessano's Pizza, 141 Middletown Rd, White Hall, Fairmont, WV.

CRC members are invited to meet and eat at Colasessano's Pizza in Fairmont, on Saturday, March 10th, to start the 2018 season with good food, conversation, and plans for the new season.

Ride Schedule for March and April!

We have an (almost) full ride schedule for March and April! Saturdays and Sundays, we have either a road ride or a trail ride. So come out and join us for some bike riding in West Virginia! The Wendy's in Sabraton is the most popular place to start because of available parking and its central location.

2018 Spring Spectacular Weekend May 5 and 6, 2018

SATURDAY, MAY 5, 9:00 AM (Registration starts at 8:00 AM)

Contact: Kelly Williams 304-292-9821

Starting Point: 103 School Rd, Mt. Morris, PA.

(Mt. Morris Gospel Tabernacle). Choose a 25, 45, or 60 mile Road Ride on scenic, low traffic roads. All routes are reasonably hilly and challenging for fit road cyclists.

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\$15 Registration fee includes: Coffee and Snacks before the ride; Map and Cue Sheets; Snack Stop and SAG wagon support during the ride. Signed Registration/Waiver Form and helmets required.

SUNDAY, MAY 6, 9:00 AM (Registration starts at 8:00 AM)

Contact: Kelly Williams 304-292-9821

Starting Point: Wharf Parking Garage,
61 Wharf Street, Morgantown, WV 26501.

Choose a leisurely 21 mile Rail-Trail Ride,
OR

a 60 mile Road Ride at a moderate tempo with 5000 feet of climbing. These are free, non-supported rides, but a Signed Registration/Waiver Form and helmets are required.

Other Rides:

- **BIKE VIRGINIA 2018 JUNE 22 to 27**
- **Marietta River Rendezvous 2018 JUNE 2 to 3**
- **Horsey Hundred 2018 MAY 26 to 27**

Local News:

- **Deckers Creek Trail Bridge (connecting to Kingwood avenue in Greenmont) 2018**

Preliminary work has begun on a pedestrian bridge that will connect lower Greenmont with the rail-trail. The new pedestrian bridge will be located on the site of the old Decker's Creek Avenue vehicle bridge, which once connected Greenmont and South Park to downtown. This site was identified in the Morgantown Pedestrian Safety Plan as the number one project to improve walking and biking in the Morgantown downtown area.

- **New Sturgis Avenue Trailhead (New Rail-Trail Parking in Morgantown!)**

The city of Morgantown just opened a new trailhead with access to the Deckers Creek Rail-Trail at Sturgis Avenue. There are nine new parking spots with two-hour free parking to access the Deckers Creek Trail near its start at Hazel Ruby McQuain Riverfront Park. Within this mile of the Deckers Creek Rail-Trail is Stanley's Spot Dog Park and access to Whitmoore Park and Marilla Park. Alternatively, trail users can turn right and head toward Hazel Ruby McQuain Park and access the Caperton / Mon River Trail and nearby restaurants and parks along the Monongahela River. To get to this trailhead, turn from Foundry Street across the Sheetz gas station onto Sturgis Avenue and trail parking is located at the end of this street.

Thank you City of Morgantown and especially the city engineers, city planner, and city attorney that recognized the opportunity, planned, and oversaw the construction of this newest trailhead.

Mon River Trail Park improvements and expansion 2018

- Sheepskin Trail extension to Point Marion 2018 Contract awarded to Raffle Construction for the trail construction on stretch from state line to Cheat River (Point Marion). Project manager says "It will take a month probably to get things moving on the contract side and we will break ground as fast as we can"
- Fayette County Commission / National Road received \$100,000 of LSA funding for a future section.

EYES ON WV article

Four Reasons to Ride A Bike in Morgantown December 9, 2017 by Karlee Gibson

Despite a hill-heavy landscape, Morgantown is home to many bicycle riders. Some ride for enjoyment, some for the community, some for their own health, and some for the health of the environment. In 2016, a statistical report by The Statistic Portal, said that only 12.4 percent of Americans cycled on a regular basis. Additionally, within the U.S. 50 percent of those trips are two miles or less. Everyone has their own reason for why they should bike, but here are some good ones if you need the motivation to get started.

Meet people and find a community

Kelly Williams is 64 years old and the president of the Country Road Cyclists in Morgantown. He has been riding with the group for several years and dedicates much of his free time to the club and to cycling. The Country Road Cyclists group is mostly made up of older adults or seniors, but the club welcomes anyone of any age to join.

As president, Williams plans out various biking trips for the whole group to enjoy together. "It's always enjoyable to do these little biking adventures," says Williams. Williams officially joined the club after he went on his first bike tour with the group, to the upper peninsula of Michigan. "Our [the club's] mission is to get people out on their bikes, mainly adults, but it's always nice to see someone come along, join the club and progress as a person and as a cyclist," Williams says.

Williams and his wife, Gerry Katz have spent a lot of time biking, and it has become one of their shared passions. Katz, who is 76, says her husband has helped her stay motivated, and riding together has helped them become closer. The couple also take their rides together as a time to learn. Katz explained when they started biking, she learned to identify wild flowers, while Kelly learned to identify birds, so they could educate each other when riding in nature.

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Other groups around Morgantown and West Virginia have been established to help bring communities together. In Morgantown, another group called the Mon Bike Club meets every Sunday at the Courthouse to do a weekend ride. The Mountain State Wheelers, based in Charleston, organizes rides for cyclists of different abilities, in hopes to get people out on their bikes and riding more safely. Chris Nagorka the president of the club said the club has activities to foster relationships outside of riding as well. "We also have a post holidays dinner where everyone can get together when they aren't on the bike." Nagorka says most of the time riding is more fun when you do it with a group rather than by yourself.

Boost your Mental Health

Bicycling and exercise can be used as anti-depressants.

Christiaan Abildso, an assistant professor at the School of Public Health at West Virginia University and an avid biker, can feel a difference in his mental state when he doesn't take the time to ride each day. "Other people around me can tell for sure. I can tell in the way I work or the way I talk to my children," Abildso says. He says he is short-tempered or irritable when he doesn't ride.

Abildso had a family member diagnosed with clinical depression for whom exercise was a part of the journey to recovery. "They started to come out with it and started to come out with some counseling and medication, and then now they're just a really super exerciser," Abildso says.

When he has been on the road for long weeks of traveling or conferences, Abildso says sometimes he feels the strain of the lack of activity, so his wife pushes him out the door to ride for a few hours. He says it creates a dramatic difference in his attitude and outlook on life as soon as he exercises.

A recent article in Momentum Magazine a publication dedicated to showcasing the bicycling lifestyle, noted cycling as a physical activity improves one's self-esteem, prevents depression, and reduces anxiety and stress. According to a study on outdoor exercise, by The Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry, "... partaking in physical activity outside was associated with greater feelings of revitalization, increased energy and positive engagement," which is just another reason biking is great for your mental attitude.

Get in Shape and Feeling Healthy

Eric Cappellini, a West Virginia University student and member of the WVU cycling club

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talks about his brief break from cycling during his freshman year at WVU and how getting back on track with the team has helped him shave off the resulting freshman 15. However, the physical benefits go beyond losing weight. According to Harvard Medical School website, cycling for physical health is both easy on the joints and great for building muscle. "Pushing the pedals provides an aerobic workout. That's great for your heart, brain, and blood vessels. Aerobic exercise also triggers the release of endorphins, the body's feel-good chemicals – which may make you feel young at heart."

In an interview with Men's Fitness, Andy Clarke, the president of the League of American Bicyclists said, cycling is "much easier on your legs, ankles, knees, and feet than running. Running has the potential to take its toll on the body."

Helping the Environment with Cycling

On its website, the Morgantown Municipal Bicycle Board announces the purpose of a Morgantown bicycle friendly community, as described by the League of American Bicyclists: "...to reduce traffic demands, afford better air quality, and improve public health."

According to information presented by the San Francisco Bay Area's Bike to Work Day organization, bicycling is helpful to the environment because it doesn't use fuel, uses less energy than a car, and does not require batteries or motor oil.

Cappellini, an engineering student, says, "I'm a firm believer in foot travel and other forms of transportation; cutting down on emission is huge." He routinely cycles to and from locations around Morgantown and notes that some of the advantages are the savings from not having to buy gas, and the freedom to bypass the stress and hassle of Morgantown's rush hour traffic jams.

A midsize car traveling a 10-mile round trip commute five days a week for an entire year uses about 124 gallons of gasoline and emits 1.3 tons of CO₂, according to youcanbikethere.com. Think how much CO₂ could be eliminated from the environment if more people chose cycling as their primary transportation.