

...SPOKIN' WORDS...

COUNTRY ROADS CYCLISTS NEWSLETTER

SERVING NORTH CENTRAL WEST VIRGINIA CYCLISTS

affiliated

www.crcyclists.org
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MARCH - APRIL 2007 #2
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**League of
American
Bicyclists**
since 1979

SPRING IS COMING - GET YOUR WHEELS READY

Country Roads Cyclists like to bike. We promote the fun of bicycling through group rides, cycling advocacy; social events, encouragement of new cyclists, social events and the dissemination of safety, skills and riding opportunities information. We welcome adult cyclists and their families, road riders and mountain bikers, beginners, old pros, casual or ambitious, for congenial bicycling activities including picnics, parties and rides ranging from ten miles to multi-day tours on roads and rail-trails throughout the region. We appreciate your support. Please join us now!

SPRING PIZZA PARTY TIME

Mark your calendar for our President's Pizza Party on Saturday, March 24 at 6:00 p.m. at Kelly and Gerry's Morgantown home, 216 Lebanon Street. Directions for out-of-towners: I-79 exit 152 to Westover Bridge, right lane uphill, crossing High Street and Deckers Creek bridge to Domino's Pizza, jog right then left onto Grand Street, go three blocks & turn right onto Maple Street, go six blocks and turn left up onto Lebanon Street. Look for the porch light on the right. The Club provides salad, pizza and dessert as well as mucho bike chat.

NEW AND CASUAL CYCLISTS

Bill Foster will be leading a series of easy rides from the I-79 Jane Lew exit 105 on Sunday afternoons in March.

This is an area with several great choices, some without any big hills and usually little traffic. He is happy to go with the slowest cyclist, as it is often a chance to meet someone new (and he doesn't need an excuse for not being first to the top of any hill we might decide to visit.) Check it out on our schedule. Call if you have questions.

We have only two rail-trail rides in this schedule, both 30 miles, which may be more than you want this early. We tend to stay off the early spring weather softened rail-trails, but portions of these will be paved, so consider:

West Fork River rail-trail from Mary Lou Retton Park in Fairmont on March 17, and/or Mon River Trail south from the Wharf District in Morgantown on April 19, both led by Kelly Williams. The March 17 ride will be followed by a late lunch at the Black Bear in Morgantown.

We will be inviting the local public to join our the April 7 ride from Clarksburg south to Jane Lew. We will also offer a shorter option for beginners and casual cyclists.

CONGRATULATIONS and best wishes to members Paul and Marilyn Moses, who were married January 19 in a private ceremony in Clarksburg. Paul is the owner of Holy Moses Bicycles and Marilyn is manager of Body Works Tanning Salon, both in Clarksburg.

THE GREAT C&O-GAP TOUR

Can't wait for summer? Want to get through the mountains without having to climb them? Kelly Williams is working out the details for a towpath-rail-trail ride from Washington, D.C. to McKeesport, Pennsylvania. The only mountain to cross is done on a railroad grade with a tunnel under the ridge top. Here is the itinerary:

Friday, May 18 DC 60 miles to Harpers Ferry
Saturday, May 19 60 miles to Hancock, Maryland
Sunday, May 20 64 miles to Cumberland, all C&O
Monday, May 21 60 miles to Confluence, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, May 22 70 miles to McKeesport, Pennsylvania
Kelly needs to know if you are interested in order to plan for lodgings and shuttle. (304) 292-9821

Full details will be in the next newsletter, but it may be too late to get reservations, so don't put it off.

OFFICERS' MEETINGS

Our three Club officers conduct most Club business except for actions taken at our annual business meeting in the fall. Members are invited to submit ideas and proposals to any officer for consideration at our next meeting. Officers meet about monthly, typically reviewing correspondence sent and received, membership and financial data, activities past and planned, and other items of interest or obligation.

At our February 5 meeting several ongoing spring activities were discussed and sympathy cards were prepared respecting the passing of the fathers of Ken Parkington and Mike Breiding. Complete minutes are filed on our archive site: groups.yahoo.com/sports/group/CRCyclists. You may get there using your own I.D. and password or "crcycler" and "archives".

DUES ARE DUE, DUDES Members paid for 2007 have Bruce's color photos with this newsletter, thank you. If you got a waiver (it's a postage thing) instead, please return it with your 2007 dues. We want you back **WELCOME BACK** former members Lee and Martha Gustafson (Clarksburg) and Jenny Huey (Fairmont).

BRUCE SUMMERS' SOUTHEAST ASIA TOUR, NOVEMBER 11-26, 2006

Morgantown Country Roads Cyclist and owner of the Pathfinder, Bruce Summers saw an ad in "Adventure Cycling" for the Bangkok 2 Saigon Cycle Challenge offered by Symbiosis Expeditions Planning, as a tour to also benefit four groups helping needy children in southeast Asia. Here is his story.

he tour was advertised as "over 1,000 km of ruts & bumps" and that was a modest appraisal. I built up a hybrid bike for the mostly flat ride, but long before we finished, I wished I had gone with a mountain bike like the others. The distance ended up about 1,200 km (750 miles), which sounds reasonable for 15 days, but we had two 100 mile days and not many paved roads or rail-trail quality surfaces. I would have preferred a slower pace with more stops.

Our group of seven mature Americans got along well with each other and the cycling guides for each country were great. Organizer Chris Gow arranged for a sag van to follow where possible and one of the three women had to ride it all the way due to an injury just prior to the tour. Fall in the tropics (10-15 degrees north latitude) turned out to be uncomfortably hot (90's) and humid but without rain. (We heard thunder in the distance a few times.) We ate well, enjoyed local foods, drank plenty of bottled water and all stayed healthy, although I had a nasty fall the third day when one of the group made a sudden turn in front of me. I went down, snapping off a bar-end and poking myself in the ribs.



The people were totally friendly. We were treated like TV stars in Cambodia. Our lodgings were generally deluxe and two were spectacular, though there was one therefore memorable gnarly dump.

Bangkok, capital of Thailand, was exotic, as expected. I found a bike shop named "The Cyclist's Friend" and got a jersey with its name. Traffic was terrible and all driving on the left, thanks to the English. We were picked up there early on November 11 and shuttled about two hours northeast to Khao Yai National Park for local sightseeing and a night in a luxurious tourist resort hotel.

I think Yai means "mountain," because we started the day with a serious trail climb, more single-track than back road. We ended at another resort hotel. "Okay, I could get used to this." The third day, we were in rice country, though we could see the distant hills of another National Park and we got into some foothills on the fourth day as we approached the Cambodian border.

We crossed into Cambodia without incident on day five at a major commercial check point, and moved to the right side of the road for the rest of our tour. Chris routed us quickly onto unpaved by-ways through small communities where we were the excitement of the day. Much of the next day was along a very dusty road with more traffic than one might enjoy, and we washed a lot of red dust down the drain in nice bathrooms that afternoon in Siem Reap, before an evening of traditional performances by one of the groups we were supporting.



"tan" lines of dirt



. Kingdom of Cambodia gate



Now it was time to visit Angkor Wat and other ancient temple complexes in the area; two days to be amazed, awed and finally "templed out." With part of another day for a boat ride on the largest lake in southeast Asia (the Tonle Sap river widens out), we were ready to get back to cycling; meeting the country folks





in small villages on back roads, hiking up Oodong Mountain for more temples and grand vistas. On day ten, after a day of agrarian back roads, we reached the large urban area of Phnom Penh, capital of Cambodia and no place to enjoy biking. On the following rest day we went to another of the charities, a school for street kids – elementary and vocational. A vignette: Four mendicant monks in bright orange robes were soliciting offerings. We weren't carrying much cash at the time, but they accepted a few Power Bars and offered blessings for a safe journey.



motor scooter repair class

On day 12, after a century we reached the Vietnam border and found a problem for one of our group, Laurel (No, not our Laurel) The guards were adamant. Her visa wouldn't allow her in until the next day, so she had to backtrack to the last town to stay with a friend of one of our guides while we cruised into Chau Doc, Vietnam for a night at the spectacular Nui Sam Hotel, where hostesses greeted us with moist towelettes, we had black slate showers a good dinner and Swedish memory foam mattresses, etc., all of which we deserved, but it left us with a twinge of guilt for poor Laurel, so after a spectacular buffet breakfast, we waited for her to arrive and eat.

Days 13, 14 and 15 were in the flat, lush Mekong delta, often of pathways where the van couldn't follow, with narrow bridges and small boat crossings, on the way to our finish in the suburbs of Saigon. At one of the narrow bridges without no side guardrails, Laurel stopped on the "up ramp" but John decided he didn't need to wait, veered around and charged on up, coming face-to-face with a small motor scooter at mid-span. We still don't know how they passed without one or both being knocked into the water, but only because John's handlebars were high enough to pass directly over the scooter's. I'd like to see a rerun. Again, because of the traffic, we were shuttled the last few miles into



downtown Saigon. (Most everyone seems to still call it Saigon, although the Northerners renamed it Ho Chi Minh City. The last day, November 26 was a time to explore Saigon any way but cycling. I got a t-shirt that brags, "I got to Vietnam before McDonalds" because they are coming next year. KFC also beat them. I also got a photo of one of the more modern buildings with a colorful Santa? house in front with a big sign "Candy Land at Saigon Centre." (see color photo)



Many great potential shots and memorable incidents occurred when there was no chance to pull out the camera, which was acting up for a while, and a couple of times I just wasn't thinking, "quick, take a picture." but I got over 600 photos and Bill can't print a tenth of the good ones. Okay, I'm still learning but I'm about ready for another great adventure.

Photos by Bruce Summers (digital format) except color: #2 'toon map, #6 Bruce on grass, #8 "The Cyclist's Friend, #11 dusty road, page 2 #9 Mekong delta ferry, left thumbnail Bruce at the river, black & white: #2 three kids, #8 Tonle Sap boat ride,

#13 Bruce the photographer, used with permission from Symbiosis Expeditions Planning.

For further information about Symbiosis Expeditions Planning, see their web site: www.symbiosis-travel.com/
For more photos, go to: www.symbiosis-travel.com/cycleweb/photoviewer.php?destinationid=11&season=B2S06
Symbiosis is planning to repeat this adventure in November (3-18) 2007. They now say it will be 1,100km. They also offer a large variety of other tours and adventure vacations (not all cycling).

REGIONAL EVENTS

PITTSBURGH BIKE EXPO MS Warmup
March 11 \$5 Southside UPMC Sports
Performance Complex 10am-5pm

NATIONAL BIKE SUMMIT LAB
March 14-16 Wash, D.C. \$450
bikeleague.org

TOUR de GEORGIA UCI state race
April 16-22 Peachtree City – Atlanta
tourdegeorgia.com 7 stages

CYCLE N C SPRING WEEKEND
April 13-15 Edenton, NC \$5mail-in fee
+\$70/85after3-27 mapped touring routes
cyclenorthcarolina.org

PA STATE POLICE METRIC CENTURY
April 28 Hershey, PA \$20/25 after 4-1
pspmetriccentury.com

VIRGINIA CROSS-STATE BIKE RIDE
May 4-12 570 miles Trans-America Trail
540-343-1616

3 STATE 3 MOUNTAIN CHALLENGE
May 5 Chattanooga, TN \$40/45aft. 4-23
Chattbike.com 25/62/100miles

**BIKE NEW YORK the Great Five Boro
Bike Tour** May 6 42 miles
Bikenewyork.org

TOSRV Columbus, OH
May 12-13 \$47/57after 3-15 200miles
Tosrv.org

ALA GREENBRIER TRAIL BIKE TREK
May 17-20 fundraiser 3d=100m, 2d=70m
mrsnv.com/evt/home.jsp?id=905

BRIDGE TO RIDGE CENTURY
May 19 Winfield no details

CYCLING DOUBLEHEADER both \$65/90
Wilderness Road Ride \$20/30after5-15
May 26 Blacksburg, VA 14/29/57/78m
Mountains of Misery \$55/80after5-15
May 27 Newport, VA 100/125m
cyclingdoubleheader.com both \$65/80

WHEELING TRAIL TOUR
May 27 no details

MEMORIAL DAY FREERIDE FESTIVAL
? Snowshoe, WV no details?

ST. ALBANS GRAND PRIX road crit.
June 2 no details

MARIETTA RIVER RENDEZVOUS
June 2-3 Marietta, OH \$55 +dorm \$20
mariettarcc.org

ACE BIG CANYON OFF-ROAD TRI.
June 4 Thurmond X-TERRA series
acecraft.com s1.5m, r7-8m, mt.b11m

24 HOURS OF BIG BEAR mt.bike race
June 9-10 grannygear.com/races/
Bigbear/index.shtml

MATES07 Henderson, NC
June 15-17 \$220/tandem +hotel to 6-3
easterntandemrally.org

NATIONAL 24 HOUR CHALLENGE
June 16-17 Middleville, MI road
n24hc.org \$65/80after4-30, 100after5-31

GREAT OHIO BICYCLE ADVENTURE
June 16-23 Celina, OH tour loop
goba.com \$170 to 5-16

THE GREENWAY SOJOURN D.C. to
Pittsburgh. (bus shuttle from Pitts. incl.)
June 23-30 \$700 camping, C&O towpath
and Great Allegheny Pass. Rails-to-Trails
Conservancy railtrails.org/wherewework/
northeast/events/Sojourn/index.html

SNOWSHOE MT. BIKE RACE SERIES
June 30-July 1, Aug. 4-5, Sept. 7-9 finale
Mayhem on the Mts. snowshoemtn.com

BIKE VIRGINIA Hopewell-Williamsburg
June 22-27 \$30+
bikevirginia.org/2007

BICYCLE TOUR OF COLORADO
June 24-30 \$330+ Steamboat Springs
bicycletourcolorado.com 400+miles

MedExp. MOUNTAINEER TRIATHLON
July 1 Morgantown half-marathon and
International swim/bike/run fees vary
mountaineertri.com

HIGHLAND SCENIC BIKE TOUR
July 1 Richwood area 34/46/62/80 mile
410-772-1694 \$35/45 after June 10

TOUR DE FRANCE July 7-29

SCENIC MOUNTAIN TRIATHLON
July 8 Richwood no info. yet

CAM Weekend Princess Anne, MD
July 12-15 rally onelesscar.org

BON TON ROULET Finger Lakes tour
July 22-28 Cortland, NY \$475/500aft. 6-15
bontonroulet.com

EASTERN TAMDEM RALLY Dellroy, OH
Aug. 10-12 \$300/555 w/lodging for team
easterntandemrally.org

**CHEAT MT. CHALLENGE/ SNOWSHOE
CENTURY RIDE** Aug. 19
snowshoemtn.com

W.VA. COUNTRY ROADS MS150
Sept. 8-9 \$30 +\$200pledges road or rail-
trail from Lewisburg. nationalmssociety.
org/wvt/event/default.asp?g=6

CRC SEPTEMBER CENTURY Sept.? ?

WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN BIKE ASSOCIATION -- 2007 SCHEDULE

xc racing except as noted, varying distances, classes, times, etc.

Note: phone numbers from 2006, not yet listed for 2007 see wvmba.com

Details to be finalized at a March 4 meeting in Flatwoods

Apr. 15 **CHALLENGE AT MOUNTWOOD** #1 (740) 350-2206
Apr. 22 **BIG BEAR LAKE BIKE CLASSIC** #2 (304) 594-3484
May 6 **HENRY CLAY 30K** at Coopers Rock, #3 (304) 599-9513
May 20 **TOUR de LAKE** at Charles Fork Lake, Spencer #4 (304) 532-0591
May 27 **RACE THE TRACE** at Little Creek Park, S.Chas. #5 (304) 989-7339
Jun 17 **APPALACHIAN CLASSIC** at Calhoun Co. Park #6 (304) 354-6588
TBD **BLACKWATER BIKES W.VA. STATE CHAMPIONSHIP** #7 (304) 259-5286
July 22 **WHITE OAK CHALLENGE** at Watters Smith S.P. #8 (304) 842-2576
July 29 **LITTLE BEAVER CHAINRING CHALLENGE** Beckley #9 (304) 253-5202
Aug. 5 **RACE TO THE HILLS** McArthur, Ohio #10 (740) 594-9944
Aug. 12 **BLACK BEAR RACE** Kanawha S. F., Charleston #11 (304) 545-3983
Aug. 26 **ACE NEW RIVER BIKE FEST** Oak Hill #12 (304) 469-2651ext.152
Sept. 9 **THE DIRT DERBY** Barboursville, #13 Championship (304) 743-9510
Oct. 6 **TOUR de LILLY Canaan Valley ride, not race** (304) 259-5286

Country Roads Cyclists competing in the 2006 WVMBA series included: Scott Frame (12th sport vet.), John Willis (12th sport Masters), Robert Loehr (12th single speed, from 2nd in state championships) and Bruce Wohleber (29th sport masters).

WEST VIRGINIA – VA ULTRA SERIES
June 3 **MASSANUTTEN HOOHA xxc**
Aug. 18 **WILD 100 BACKCOUNTRY
RACE** Slatyfork (304) 572-3771
Sept. 2 **SHENANDOAH MOUNTAIN 100
xxc** Harrisonburg, VA (540) 434-2087
Sept. 15 **CHEAT MOUNTAIN 100K**
backcountry race, Daily (304) 288-0512
Sept. 22 **BIG BEAR LAKE MTB ULTRA**
Sept. 29 **REVENGE OF THE RATTLE-
SNAKE** ultra series championship
at Davis (304) 259-5286