

...SPOKIN' WORDS...

COUNTRY ROADS CYCLISTS

NEWSLETTER

SERVING NORTH CENTRAL WEST VIRGINIA CYCLISTS

www.crcyclists.org

JULY - AUGUST

2006 #3

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ITS TIME TO GO RIDING

What's your pleasure? We have five rides partly or entirely on our rail-trails, a lot of one and two star rides mostly 20-30 miles and not too hilly, right on up to a couple of gear jammers – Dave's metric century near Snowshoe on July 22 and Jack's Prosperity Century on August 12. The President's Ride and Eat special links two Morgantown rail-trails with a nice piece of road and it is followed by another run up Deckers Creek for a complimentary picnic August 24. Looking further ahead, we have a return to Rowlesburg on "Labor Day Sunday" and our Salem September Century on the 17th.

With all that, is Kelly's Featured Ride of this schedule, featuring four tunnels each way - that's eight times in the dark and cool. Join us July 23rd as we bike the best part of the 72 mile North Bend Rail Trail. This was formerly the B & O mainline from Parkersburg to Wolf Summit. We will start in at the depot in Pennsboro AT 9:00 A.M., then travel through Ellensboro, which features the outdoor kilns of a marble factory. We will also bike through Cairo and visit the restored - but fully operational - R.C Marshall hardware store and the museum (formerly the Bank of Cairo). The tunnels along this part of the North Bend Trail range from 377 feet to 1376 feet. We shall visit the lodge at North bend State park for lunch. So plan to meet us at the Pennsboro trailhead for a scenic ride along the trail.

A GREAT APPALACHIAN SPRING SPECTACULAR!

Great routes, great weather, great food, great friends; the May 7th Appalachian Spring Spectacular had it all, with 110 riders registering for our annual Morgantown and points north cycling party. Starting at 9:15 a.m. from the Wharf parking garage, cyclists headed out together for distances of 25, 30, 45 or 60 miles, looping up into Pennsylvania for a quick snack and lotta yak at either Mt. Morris or Roberts Run Covered Bridge. Following the rides, it was reported that 36 large Papa John's pizzas disappeared from the West Virginia Brewing Company rear deck during the celebration.

While 43 participants were Country Roads Cyclists and 72 were Monongalia County residents, less than half of the 2005 participants returned. Eleven out-of-state cyclists included three Western Maryland Wheelmen, three Pennsylvanians, two from Ohio, two from Oregon and one from New Jersey. Club officers expressed appreciation for the time and work of volunteers and organizing committee.



START OF THE APPALACHIAN SPRING SPECTACULAR MAY 7 IN MORGANTOWN AT THE WHARF



Registration table: Gerry K. & Mike B., nearby: Tim Nelms, president Kelly W. (back right), front Frank G., Sue H., cartographer Than S.



Fred F., Marilyn N., Paula H., Tim W., chat with CRC road captain Laurel K. 5-7,'06 photos (and more on crcyclists.org): Bill F.

The Appalachian Spring Spectacular Committee included Frank G. facilitator, Jack B., Don D., Bill F. ex-officio, Dave P. and Kelly W. Volunteers included Mike B. registration and food stop, Bill F. registration and food stop, Sue H. sag (Positive Spin), Mia S. food stop, Gerry K. registration and food stop, and a large group of CRC and Monongalia Bicycle Club members who led and swept the rides. Thanks to everyone and the enthusiastic cyclists, we netted about \$270 for the treasury. A jar placed near registration received donations in the amount of \$75 towards purchasing a bench along the rail-trail in memory of Kim Stearns Dickerson.

Footnote: Frank counted 31 riders on the Mon Bike Club's Morgantown ride next Sunday, May 14

THE UNLUCKY BONUS (Flatlanders beware!)



John was enjoying this part of the May 6 Bonus Ride with Don. Wymp's Gap had a Pennsylvania payback for a tough climb over Chestnut Ridge. Unfortunately, there was sand in the horseshoe curve, and he skidded into the ditch, did a header and threw a shoulder block on the embankment. This was not a good thing. Here is an x-ray of John's right shoulder with a big threaded stainless steel pin in his clavicle (doc wouldn't give him TI). John and Patti are not at this very time riding through the Alps and Dolomites as planned, and though the pin comes out July 6th, neither will he be riding Mt. Shasta in August, though he hopes to be doing a bit of easy cycling by then. Professors often don't have to work much in the summer, and what little he does around the home is done left-handed with whining, but he says he'll be back for the 2007 Appalachian Spring Spectacular. After all, it was hard enough to Wymp out of the 2006 ride.

OFFICERS MEET

Club officers met on May 8 and June 12 to conduct regular business, including a review of correspondence, membership, finances and activities. The treasurer's latter report indicated a current balance of \$1,403.65 plus \$90 on hand. Complete minutes are filed on our archive website, CRCyclists@yahoo.com. Use your own Yahoo I.D. and password or (this has been restored) the group I.D.:CRCycler, password: archives.

Go to files, scroll down to CRC Officers Meetings. The next meeting will be in late July. Contact any officer if you have a proposal for consideration.

RAIL-TRAILS

The review of rail-trail conditions is unavailable at this time, hopefully it will be in our next newsletter. Sorry 'bout that...ed.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We currently have 131 paid members: 51 individuals and 40 families (x2), with 42 Harrison, 44 Monongalia, 33 other W. Va. and 12 out-of-state. New members include:

Nick & Sue H. family	Morgantown
John H.	Fairmont
Douglas T.	Morgantown

SOME SEPTEMBER REGIONAL RIDES

- 9&10 MS150 bike Tour North Bend State Park to Parkersburg and return, 150 miles road ride or 70 mile rail-trail ride. \$30 +\$200 donations www.nationalmssociety.org/wvt
- 10 Hancock Horizontal Hundred/64/32 \$20/'25 (7-22) www.hancockhandlebars.org
- 24 Cheat Mountain Challenge century/metric century \$35/45 (8-20) www.wvcf.org/cmc.htm

4-H TEAM TOURS WEST VIRGINIA to JACKSONS MILL



A group of older 4-H members and alumni recently did a four day supported bike tour from Kearneyville in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia to Jacksons Mill, arriving for the start of the weeklong Older 4-H Members' Conference. They rode about 51 miles the first day, June 15 to Berkeley Springs, followed by 77 miles through Romney to Moorefield, 73 miles through Petersburg, Seneca Rocks and Harman to Elkins, and 43 miles mostly on US 33, through Weston to Jacksons Mill on June 18. This was the third annual tour, raising donations from sponsors for 4-H programs. Included in the riding group of nine was Jason Burnside, 21, from Harrison County. His story appeared in the Clarksburg Exponent-Telegram. The program is also on the WVU Extension website: ext.wvu.edu/4-H/outspoken/.

THE MOUNTAIN BIKER'S GUIDE

excerpts from April 27 press release

Robin Boyd, Author of *The Mountain Biker's Guide to West Virginia* says, "I've mountain biked in Europe, Africa and Australia, and all across the United States, and I stand by the fact that the best mountain biking in the world is in West Virginia...In the book I cover all of my favorite places to ride throughout the state."

Each ride is rated for its degree of difficulty, amount of climbing, and the quality of the scenery. Robin also gives mileage, directions and an accurate map for each ride. She describes what plants and wildlife to look for, shares anecdotes about what parts of the rides her kids like, and points out where you'll get muddy. The guide also contains lodging and restaurant recommendations...and has numerous stunning pictures by photographer Danny Boyd (great cover pose! Ed.) and retails for \$8.95.

TAKE THE BUS TO BIKE

Morgantown's Mountain Line bus service has a new bus for their Grey Line from Bridgeport/Fairmont/ Morgantown/Pittsburgh-downtown & airport. They intend to have the bike rack installed this month, so you can go to any of the above locations and bike home. Here is the **schedule**: (seven days a week)

<i>Morgantown Depot</i>	8.00 am
<i>E. Fairmont McDonalds</i>	8.30
<i>Bpt. Meadowbrook Mall food court</i>	9.00
<i>E. Fairmont McDonalds</i>	9.30
<i>Morgantown Depot</i>	10.00 am
<i>Pittsburgh Greyhound</i>	12.00pm
<i>Pittsburgh Int'l Airport drop off @ door 8</i>	12.30
<i>Pittsburgh Greyhound</i>	1.30
<i>Pittsburgh Int'l Airport pick up @ door 8</i>	2.00
<i>Morgantown Depot</i>	4.00
<i>E. Fairmont McDonalds</i>	4.30
<i>Bpt. Meadowbrook Mall food court</i>	5.00
<i>E. Fairmont McDonalds</i>	5.30
<i>Morgantown Depot</i>	6.00 pm

Fares are economical: (one way)

Morgantown – Fairmont	\$3.00
- Clarksburg	5.00
- Pittsburgh downtown/airport	20.00/25.00
Fairmont – Pittsburgh d/a	23.00/28.00
Clarksburg - Fairmont	3.00
- Pittsburgh downtown/airport	25.00/30.00

Questions, reservations, tickets (304) 296-3869
Take the bus to Fairmont McDonalds (exit 135) and bike MCTrail and MonTrails home to Morgantown (or back to Fairmont/ bus back to Bridgeport).

FROSTBURG – MEYERSDALE AHT-GAP

Great Ride! We had 10 cyclists show up for this [June 10) ride - Mike , Dave, Carl and Connie, John, Laurel, Jace, Del, Bill W, and Kelly. Though the air was chilly, the climb to the top warmed every one up. We had a gourmet meal at Subway, then biked the viaduct and visited the depot! Beautiful scenery - I definitely will do this [rail-trail] again! Kelly.

Mike and I had a fine time on May 26, too. The only problem was the promised ceremonies in Meyersdale were changed to the next day, but we got some good pictures and found a ribbon cutting at the Big Savage Tunnel. Mike posted the best with comments on his web site at: http://EpicRoadTrips.us/2006/spring/Big_Savage_Tunnel_Dedication/



Here's Looking at You, Kid foster foto

The "ESCAPE From ALCATRAZ" by Gary A.

(Gary is a mild-mannered Accounting supervisor by day, Assistant Swim Coach at Bridgeport High School, and Country Roads Cyclist. He also coaches Special Olympics X-C Skiing.)

When the Trout moved to San Francisco last August, I knew it was just a matter of time when we would try to do the "Escape from Alcatraz" triathlon. We've known each other since high school and have met almost every year since 1988 to do the Rocky Gap Triathlon in Cumberland, Maryland, so his move to California would give us the perfect excuse to go for one of the most famous triathlons in the world. It is a difficult race, way tougher than our old Lake Floyd Mini-Triathlon, though certainly not as hard as a half or full ironman that some of our members do.

Last December I got the call: I had two days to go online and enter my name in a lottery. The demand to get into Alcatraz is so great that while some competitors get in based on qualifying races, the majority of the 1,600-1,800 racers are chosen by lottery. While most of the athletes are Californians, race organizers attempt to get a demographic mix. Two of us West Virginians were picked, my buddy the Trout was not. Every week I play Powerball, but I hit the lottery and it costs me money!

I am a decent freestyle swimmer but average [at best] biker and runner, so I knew I'd have to work at it a bit to finish the 1-1/2 mile swim from the "Rock", 18 mile bike, and 8 mile run. Placing was never a consideration. Around Easter, with little provocation, club members Lee G. , Dave C. , and Cecil J. , along with some of my Maple Lake neighbors, started biking a hilly 15 mile course out Middleville Road, to Hepzibeh, Smith Road, and back to the lake. Afterwards, the group thinned to just me, Lee, and Cecil for 2 laps [about 1 1/3 miles] in the lake. Water temperatures ranged from 59-67 degrees, so we usually wore wetsuits. This proved to be fairly decent training for the swim though I needed to bike more than once a week, as was painfully evident from my bike time in the race.

At a mandatory meeting the day before the race, review of the water segment emphasized which landmarks to aim for depending on your swimming ability, and which way the current would be going. We were told that the sharks were bottom feeders and didn't bother humans but that there was no such deal with the 2-ton sea lions that play in the bay. We were told that if we drifted toward the Golden Gate Bridge we would be in real danger of becoming acquainted with the Pacific Ocean.

On race day, June 4th, after setting up the transition area, we took a bus to the 'Hornblower', which made its way with all of us to a position by the island. At 7 AM the water was almost like glass and I thought how easy the swim was going to be... Not. By the start of the race at 8 AM, winds had produced 1'-2' waves moving against the current. Now 1,800 lemmings were jumping and diving off the boat into 55 degrees water which surprisingly did not seem that cold. I was moving fairly well until Mother Nature's next surprise: a nice thick fog which made it tough to see the gold dome for which I was aiming. Halfway through, I had to ditch my goggles [Rookie Mistake - not buying new goggles for the race], and soon I had stripped my wetsuit down to my waist, as I was actually getting too warm. I underestimated the current [translation: I overestimated my swimming ability] and climbed out of the water around the 46 minute mark. Not quite the 7 minutes that I used to knock off in the 1/4 mile swim at Lake Floyd. (but not bad for the distance and conditions, ed.)

After a warm-up 2/3 mile run to the bike transition area, I was off riding. Cecil had offered his bike carrier to take my bike, but I planned to use my buddy's bike and as it turned out, I liked his daughter's bike better. It rode well, and my thoughts were to make sure I didn't drop a chain on a climbs and to take downhill with as little braking as possible.

The course was out and back with the first and last two miles flat. The 14 miles in between consisted of 7 steep hills: tough up and fun down. The hills were about 250'-350' in elevation, the most difficult similar to the hill on Hall's Run.

Views were spectacular, especially on Seal Rock Hill. My minimal training brought me in at +1:22 for the bike, a 13 MPH average, and I still had my weakest event to come.

The 8 mile run was diabolical: another out and back course with the first two miles flat, then up a narrow dirt trail, then a gravel trail, then some soft sand, then hard sand to the halfway point. Then it got tough. A 400' sand ladder loomed at the 4 1/2 mile mark, and that was the only time I felt like stopping and taking a rest, but I kept my legs moving, walked the steps and hit another 1/2 mile of uphill, before it became all downhill and flat to finish. I feasted during the run, drinking a pint of water and a quart of Gatorade, eating a banana, an orange, and some jelly shot stuff that I wasn't sure about, from one of the sponsors, so it had to be good? and I felt somewhat obligated to eat it. I finally crossed the finish line at 3:59, the first and probably most tired Mountaineer to get a finisher's medal. I hope Cecil and the Trout win the lottery next year.