

# ...SPOKIN' WORDS...

## COUNTRY ROADS CYCLISTS NEWSLETTER

SERVING NORTH CENTRAL WEST VIRGINIA CYCLISTS

affiliated

www.crcyclists.org  
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February 2010 #1

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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. If not a member yet, please join us now !

#### SPRING FREE PIZZA PARTY

This time the Clubs buys, so plan to come to the President's Pizza Party Saturday, March 27 at 5:00 p.m. at Kelly and Gerry's Morgantown home at 216 Lebanon Street. (I-79 exit 152 to Westover Bridge, straight uphill, crossing High Street, right lane to cross Deckers Creek to Domino's Pizza, jog right and left onto Grand Street, go three blocks and turn right onto Maple Street, go six blocks and turn left up onto Lebanon. Look for the porch light on the right.)

#### CAPERTON TRAIL CLOSED

An approximately 2.5 mile section of the Caperton Trail in Morgantown will be closed while the Morgantown Utility Board works on a water and sewer infrastructure project. The trail will be closed from Hazel Ruby McQuain Riverfront Park north to 84 Lumber in Star City. Work is scheduled from February 22 to July 31, 2010. There will be no interruptions of public bus transit due to this project and there will continue to be access to the restrooms and amphitheater at Hazel Ruby McQuain Park.

#### NOTICES

Tuesday, March 11 - Trails Day at the Legislature, Charleston 9:00 - 2:00 under the Capitol dome

Wednesday, March 17 - WVDOH Long Range Planning Workshop, (west of) Clarksburg 4:00 - 7:00 at Liberty High School auditorium. The only one in our area of several statewide, it could use some cyclists input.

The Harrison County Bike and Hike Trail is closed indefinitely due to a determination of hazardous materials in the surfacing. This rail-trail goes from North View in Clarksburg seven miles to Spelter.

#### FOND CYCLING MEMORIES

Frank Woodruff Buckles, last surviving WW1 veteran, celebrated his 109<sup>th</sup> birthday February 1<sup>st</sup>. In a documentary interview recorded at his Gap View Farm, near Charlestown, W.Va., Martha Jett asked about any happy times in his wartime experiences as an ambulance driver in France.

He said, "I think of the happiest scenes then, this time, I was in Bordeaux and I persuaded a Quartermaster sergeant to let me have a bicycle. This was on a holiday or Sunday. Of course, I didn't have any money to buy anything with anyhow. And so, I started to get very thirsty and stopped at a chateau, and tried to get a drink of water. They said, 'We don't drink water here, only wine.' They gave me a glass of wine....the water they said wasn't safe to drink."

He continued, "My happiest memory was - I was on a bicycle and I stopped someplace and there was a bridge in the distance and the beautiful scene you could see. A chateau, by the way, doesn't necessarily mean anything elaborate. It could be quite a small thing. I could visualize that scene with the background and then, not soon, but I've been to the Louvre probably 20 or 30 times...I saw that same scene by an artist. It was a beautiful memory."

#### CONFIDENT CITY CYCLING

will again be offered in Morgantown in April, with sessions on three consecutive Saturdays, 8:30 - noon, as follows: April 3 WVU Coliseum, April 10 & 17 Morgantown Public Safety Center. See also Spokin' Words, November 2009. Cost \$20 for residents of Monongalia County, WVU students, faculty and staff, \$40 for non-residents. Online form: [morgantown.com/Confident-cycling.htm](http://morgantown.com/Confident-cycling.htm)

**OFFICERS MET** November 5 and February 22 in Clarksburg for reporting and planning sessions. Any member is welcome to attend any officers meeting. Contact any officer for the time and place of the next meeting. At the February meeting a proposal that the Club help as course marshals with five local ARBA races was considered and declined because officers felt unable to commit the members. The treasurer reported a year end balance of \$1285.03 less secretary's 2009 expenses of \$12.87 paid in February. Membership was reported as 75 paid for 2010, including 22 in Harrison Co., 21 in Monongalia Co., 21 other West Virginians and 11 out-of-state. (We had 136 in 2009)

**DUES ARE DUE** with no increase in rates: \$10 for individuals, \$12.50 for families. A flier is included with this newsletter unless we already have your 2010 dues. It is also posted on our web sites: [crcyclists.org](http://crcyclists.org) and at [groups.yahoo.com/sports/group/CRCyclists](http://groups.yahoo.com/sports/group/CRCyclists). We hope to see your renewal, even as we are looking for new members, so tell your cycling friends about us.

**HELP ! WE NEED A NEW WEBMASTER** for [crcyclists.org](http://crcyclists.org). It is an easy job if you know html and css, but our officers are not that smart. In the interim we will be maintaining our Yahoo groups archive site with current ride schedules and newsletters, but it can be hard for strangers to find us there. You can get there by going to [www.groups.yahoo.com](http://www.groups.yahoo.com) and signing up with an address and password, then join the group at: [groups.yahoo.com/sports/group/CRCyclists](http://groups.yahoo.com/sports/group/CRCyclists).

### **PIZZA PIG-OUT DRAWS A CROWD**

A big snowstorm blew in and gave us all the snow they hoped to get at Whistler, so we postponed our pig-out by e-mail notice and rescheduled for the next Saturday, February 13. It was still a cold winter's eve when nineteen CRC members came to Collessano's to enjoy the food and chatter, and perhaps we gained a new member, as our waitress seemed pleased to learn of the Country Roads Cyclists and our activities.

Attending were: Mike & Betsy, Don & Jeanette, Dan, Mark, Kari & Carissa, Bill, Laurel, Craig, Ray & Susan, Dave, Donna, Mark, Jim & Sandy and Kelly.

### **COUNTRY ROADS CYCLIST TO UGANDA**

Member Michael "Ty" recently departed for Uganda to begin pre-service training as a teacher training and community development Peace Corps volunteer. Upon graduation he will train primary school teachers in technology. He graduated from WVU in 2005 with a masters degree in geography. His Potomac Highlands tour was featured in Nov. "Spokin' Words."

### **WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS**

Doris - Albright, Jeni - Lost Creek, Michael adds family - Buckhannon

### **THE NEXT GREAT ALLEGHENY PASSAGE**

That was the headline in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* last November 14, reporting on the goal of the Erie - Pittsburgh Trail Alliance, "a consortium of 12 rail-trail groups working with state and national advocacy organizations toward connecting non-motorized trails between Pittsburgh and Lake Erie." If they can get out of Pittsburgh, it looks like they will follow the Allegheny River at least as far as Franklin. The Erie end was not discussed in the article.

Meanwhile, the real GAP continues to be developed northwest from McKeesport toward downtown Pittsburgh, with Allegheny County Executive Dan Onorato announcing a goal of finishing the trail by November 2011, according to the *Post-Gazette*. (Oct.3)

### **THE CHOSEN WILL RECEIVE**

A brand new mountain bike and helmet cam, Branded riding gear and more for cycling friends, and A trip to the 2010 Sea Otter Classic in mid-April in Monterey, California.

This is the offer recently sent to IMBA clubs from a new IMBA partner making new high-performance mountain bikes. They are looking for ten "enthusiastic riders to test their new bikes, post videos of their adventures and represent them at the Sea Otter Classic." To apply, you need to fill out an entry form and upload to their website an essay and photo or video stating why you should be selected. The search began February 15 and ends March 15, so if interested, contact secretary Bill Foster immediately.

### **WOMEN'S MT. BIKE WEEKENDS**

Elk River Touring Center announces two women's mountain biking weekends with Sue Haywood. Dates are May 21-23 and September 24-26 to be held at their Slatyfork facilities. Rates are \$359 - 409 per person double occ., 15% discount for registering with a friend. see [ertc.com:108/events?.com](http://ertc.com:108/events?.com) (call 866 572-3771)

### **PITTSBURGH'S DIRTY DOZEN**

The 27<sup>th</sup> annual Dirty Dozen was held November 28 in Pittsburgh, challenging cyclists to survive the climbs of thirteen of the toughest hills in town. Morgantown's Betsey Shogren dominated the women's field with the best times on all but one of the climbs. CRC members Ryan and J. R. (who bragged on his blog about being the heaviest finisher ever at 240 pounds, confirmed on founder Danny Chew's blog) were among the participants.

## RETURN TO THE GREAT ALLEGHENY PASSAGE AND BEYOND

by Kelly Williams

Bruce was back in our area last fall. He came to ride the GAP and C&O Canal Towpath with Seattle friends John and Carrie. They had cycled with him on his Bangkok 2 Saigon tour in the Far East a few years ago (Spokin' Words, March - April 2007), but this was their first tour in the US East. I was invited to join them as the GAP expert, from our Club tour in August. (Spokin' Words, September - October 2009) Bruce planned to use his van as a sag and for restaurant - hotel scouting.

Day 1 - Tuesday, 10-6) We loaded the bikes in the van and drove to Connellsville, Pennsylvania with a Plan - Bruce would drive the van to the lunch spot and bike west to meet the three of us coming east on the trail, then bike with us to the van. As it turned out, even though we took our time on a fine, dry October day (in contrast to the rains of August), we didn't see Bruce until we got to Ohiopyle. It turned out that it often took him as long to drive, park, get organized and start biking as it took us to get there. We lunched at the Firefly Grill and continued on towards Confluence, with Bruce again driving the van. This time he did catch us on the trail and he also found a great place to stay in Confluence.

The River's Edge had a cabin right on the Youghiogheny River with three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a kitchen, plus breakfast in the morning. Dinner was at Sister's, and we arrived just before they closed. We spent the evening walking around the town and talking in the cabin.

Day 2 - Wednesday) The goal was Frostburg. We also had lunch in Rockwood at the Opera House, just like in August. (hot soup and homemade granola bars) It was a crisp fall day in the 50's, cloudy and blustery, with the trees losing their leaves. It was so windy at times we were concerned about whole trees being blown down on the trail. After photos at the Savage Tunnel overlook, we biked on to Frostburg where we dined at the Italian restaurant and stayed at the Gunter, and of course visited the museum and jail in the basement.

Day 3 - Thursday) After breakfast at a diner across the street from the Gunter, we descended down the street to the trail and downhill all the way to the outskirts of Cumberland. Views into the valley were tremendous and the clear blue sky of a cold fall day was invigorating. The trail, paved through the outskirts of Cumberland, took us directly to the C&O Canal Towpath trailhead visitor center at the railroad station in Cumberland.



### APPALACHIAN BICYCLE RACING ASSOCIATION - - 2010 SCHEDULE

#### abra road race series

[www.abracing.com](http://www.abracing.com).

- April 3 **Morgantown Road Race** APRRS # 1 Race Director J.R. Petsko Morgantown, W.Va.
- May 8 **New Martinsville Road Race** APRRS # 2 Race Director Aron Yuveta New Martinsville, W.Va.
- May 16 **IUP Road Race** APRRS # 3 Race Director Steve Cummings Indiana, Pa.
- May 29 **Tour of Tucker County Road Race** APRRS # 4 Race Director J.R. Petsko Thomas, W.Va.
- June 26 **Hilly Billy Roubiax Dirt Road Race** Director J.R. Petsko Morgantown, W.Va.
- July 3 **Barbour Detour Road Race** APRRS # 5 Race Director Thad Kelley Philippi, W.Va.

- August 14 **Appalachia Visited Road Race** \*\* APRRS # 6 Race Director J.R. Petsko Kingwood, W.Va.
- September 18 **WV State Time Trial Championship** \*\* Time Trial Race Director J.R. Petsko Kingwood, W.Va.

#### abra cyclocross race series

\*\* Denotes West Virginia State Championship Races

- October 2 **Little Washington Cyclocross** APCXS # 1 Race Director J.R. Petsko Washington, Pa.
- October 16 **Fayetteville Cyclocross** APCXS # 2 Race Director Josh Feazell Fayetteville, W.Va.
- October 23 **Steel City Cross** APCXS # 3 Race Director J.R. Petsko Pittsburgh, Pa.
- October 30 **Marilla Cyclocross** APCXS # 4 Race Director Gary & Marc Morgantown, W.Va.
- November 6 **WV Night Club Cyclocross** APCXS # 5 Race Director Mike Miller Lost Creek, W.Va.
- November 13 **Morgantown Monster Cross** \*\* APCXS # 6 Race Director J.R. Petsko Morgantown, W.Va.
- November 20 **Mason Dixon Cyclocross** APCXS # 7 Race Director J.R. Petsko Morgantown, W.Va.
- November 21 **Bruceton Mills Cyclocross** APCXS # 8 Race Director Don Parks Bruceton Mills, W.Va.
- November 27 **ABRA Cyclocross Championships** APCXS # 9 Race Director J.R. Petsko Waynesburg, Pa.

Series Championship Race

### HERE'S SOME EASY KARMA

J. R. took on the challenge of developing the two racing series above for cyclists, and now he'd really appreciate some help from cyclists who won't be racing on five Saturdays. Does that sound like us - Country Roads Cyclists? He is looking for course marshals for the following road race series events, on April 3, May 29,

June 26, August 14 and September 18 and it would help promote our Club as well as the sport. It's easy and usually enjoyable, but it does take some weekend time. (You may be able to bring you bike and ride from the registration area to the assigned intersection and back.) Please contact J. R. at [jrpetsko@hotmail.com](mailto:jrpetsko@hotmail.com) or call Club officers Bill or Kelly. Thanks.

**REGIONAL EVENTS**

**NATIONAL BIKE SUMMIT** LAB  
March 9-11 Wash, D.C. \$580/475  
member bikeleague.org

**CYCLE N. C. SPRING WEEKEND**  
April 9-11 Edenton, NC tour  
\$130/115online +\$15aft 3-9  
ncsports.org/cncevent2.php

**ROSEBUD RIDE** London, KY 24-105m  
April 17 rosebudride.com \$25/30aft.4-7

**PSP BENEFIT RIDE** Hershey, PA  
April 24 32/38/62 \$25  
pspmetriccentury.com

**GREAT GREENBRIER RIVER RACE**  
April 24 pre-reg. only, by Apr.12 \$40  
greenbrierrivertrail.com run canoe bike

**3 STATE 3 MOUNTAIN CHALLENGE**  
May 1 Chattanooga, TN \$46/50aft.4-1  
Chattbike.com 62/100miles

**BIKE NEW YORK the Great Five Boro  
Bike Tour** May 2 42 miles \$60 online  
Bikenewyork.org

**TOSRV** Columbus, OH 200miles  
May 8-9 \$47/57after 3-15 Tosrv.org

**ALA GREENBRIER TRAIL BIKE TREK**  
May 13-16 fundraiser 3d=100m, 2d=70m  
\$50 +\$450/400pledges  
mrsnv.com/evt/home.jsp?id=2338

**JACKSON COUNTY CASA CLASSIC**  
May 15 or 16? Ripley \$30 20/40/60  
casa5wv.org/events.html

**PEDAL PITTSBURGH** from Station Sq.  
May 16 \$25/30after 5-8 6/15/25/35/50/60  
pedalpittsburgh.org

**XTERRA ACE BIG CANYON Off-Rd Tri.**  
May 23 Thurmond s1.5m, r7m, mt.b10m  
aceraft.com

**NO FRILLS TANDEM WEEKEND**  
May 28-30 \$1 Seville, OH akronbike.org

**CYCLING DOUBLEHEADER**  
**Wilderness Road Ride** \$20/25after 5-15  
May 29 Radford, VA 14/29/38/58/78m  
**Mountains of Misery** \$65/95after5-16  
May 30 Newport, VA 100/125m  
cyclingdoubleheader.com

**WV RAVE** Habitat for Humanity rides  
June 5 Cowan \$50  
websterwv.com/events.html

**PEDAL FOR A CURE BICYCLE TOUR**  
June 5 Elkins, Parsons on rail-trail  
peggyb1119@yahoo.com

**MARIETTA RIVER RENDEZVOUS**  
June 5-6 Marietta, OH \$55 +  
mariettarcc.org gym floor free/dorm \$40

**24 HOURS OF BIG BEAR** Hazelton  
mt.bike race June 12-13 grannygear.  
com /races/Bigbear/index.shtml

**SNOWSHOE MT. BIKE RACE SERIES**  
June 18-20, July 23-25, Aug. 27-30, Oct. 1-3  
snowshoemtn.com (304) 572-5812

**BIG WALKER CENTURY RIDE**  
June 19 Wytheville, VA 25/40/62/100  
bigwalkercenturyride.com \$40

**NATIONAL 24 HOUR CHALLENGE**  
June 19-20 Middleville, MI road  
n24hc.org \$75/95after4-30, \$120aft.5-31

**GREAT OHIO BICYCLE ADVENTURE**  
June 19-26 Logan, OH tour loop  
goba.com \$190/200 after 4-30

**BICYCLE TOUR OF COLORADO**  
June 20-26 330+m Gunnison \$380  
bicycletourcolorado.com

**BIKE VIRGINIA Staunton Loop**  
June 25-30 \$360+ ~50 miles/day  
bikevirginia.org

**Eastern Tandem Rally** Saratoga Sp. NY  
July 2-4 \$720/tandem team + hotel  
easterntandemrally.org

**TOUR DE FRANCE** July 3-25

**SCENIC MOUNTAIN TRIATHLON ?**  
July Richwood no details

**GREENWAY SOJOURN**  
July 17-24 \$795/895aft.4-1 tour ~50mpd  
Camden, NJ railstotrails.org

**BON TON ROULET** Finger Lakes tour  
July 25-31 Auburn, NY bontonroulet.com

**MATES 09** Warrenton, VA  
Aug. 6-8 \$450/tandem team  
easterntandemrally.org

**MOUNTAIN MAMA** Monterey, VA  
Aug. 7 27/56/70/100+ \$50/60 after July 1  
bikemountainmama.homestead.com

**MedExp.SPIRITofMorgantownTriathlon**  
Aug. 8 Morgantown sprint, olympic and  
half-marathon swim/bike/run fees vary  
mountaineertriathlon.com

**WILD 100** mt. bike endurance race  
Aug. 14 Slatyfork \$110/140 aft.7-31  
ertc.com

**CHEAT MT. CHALLENGE** century ride  
Aug. ? Snowshoe wvcf.org

**W.VA. COUNTRY ROADS MS150**  
Aug. 28-29 \$30 + \$250pledges  
road or rail-trail from Lewisburg.  
nationalmssociety.org/site/pageserver?  
pagename=BIKE\_WVT\_homepage

**HANCOCK HORIZONTAL HUNDRED**  
Sept. 13 Findlay, OH \$23/28, \$5online  
36/67/100m hancockhandlebars.org

**SEAGULL CENTURY** Salisbury, MD  
Oct. 9

**WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN BIKE ASSOCIATION -- 2010 SCHEDULE**

	mtb xc racing		see wvmba.com
Apr 18	<b>BIG BEAR LAKE BIKE CLASSIC</b> #1	(304) 379-4382	
May 2	<b>CHALLENGE AT MOUNTWOOD</b> #2	XC downhill	
May 16	<b>THE CRYING WOLF CHALLENGE</b>	Bluefield (304) 543-1120	
May 23	<b>TOUR de LAKE</b> at Charles Fork Lake, Spencer	#3 (304) 927-5821	
June 6	<b>CHIEF LOGAN WILDERNESS CHALLENGE</b>	Logan (304) 855-1025	
July 4	<b>RACE TO LIL MOE'S PLACE</b>	Philippi #6 (304) 457-6090	
July 11	<b>VALLEY FALLS CHALLENGE</b> #8	(304) 592-5977	
July 18	<b>BLACKWATER BIKES W.VA. CHAMPIONSHIP</b> #7	(304) 259-5286	
July 25	<b>LITTLE BEAVER CHAINRING CHALLENGE</b>	Beckley #9 (304) 253-5202	
Aug. 1	<b>BLACK BEAR RACE</b>	Kanawha S. F., Charleston #13	
Aug. 15	<b>THE DIRT DERBY</b>	Barboursville, #11 (304) 743-9510	
Aug. 22	<b>ACE NEW RIVER BIKE FEST</b>	Oak Hill #12 (800) 787-3982	
Aug. 29	<b>HENRY CLAY 30K</b>	at Coopers Rock #15	
Sept. 12	<b>BOB EVANS FARMHAND XC</b>	Rio Grande, OH #14 (740) 645-6379	
Sept. 26	<b>CREEK TO PEAK</b>	Eleanor (304) 389-3934 <b>Championship</b>	
Oct. 3	<b>24 HOURS CREEK TO PEAK</b>	Eleanor (304) 389-3934	

**WEST VIRGINIA - VA ULTRA SERIES**  
June 20 **MASSANUTTEN HOO HA!**  
McGeheynsville, VA (800) 207-6277  
June 27 **THE WAYNE ULTRA** Marietta, OH  
Aug. 7 **BIG BEAR LAKE MTB ULTRA**  
Bruceton Mills (304) 279-4382  
Sept. 5 **ACE ADVENTURE** (800) 787-3982  
Sept. 19 **REVENGE of the RATTLESNAKE**  
ultra championship, Davis (304) 259-5286

**NON RACING EVENTS**  
May 15 **SHINGLE TREE SHUFFLE** fun ride  
Elkins (304) 636-0219  
June 25-27 **CANAAN MT. BIKE FESTIVAL**  
Davis, women's clinic, rides  
suzehaywood@yahoo.com  
Aug. 21 **TheWHITMEADOW RENDEZVOUS**  
fun ride Davis (304) 636-0219

Return to the GAP contd. from p.3

Meeting Bruce there, we decided on a different plan for the Towpath, as he had not gotten much saddle time trying to get ahead of us with the van. Now Bruce and I would take the van to Little Orleans and bike towards Cumberland, with lunch in Paw Paw, then give the car keys to John and Carrie when we passed them on the trail so they could drive back and pick us up. What could go wrong with this plan? We watched John and Carrie head east, then jumped in the van and drove to the Little Orleans trailhead. We biked west, exiting the towpath at the Paw Paw road overpass and crossed the Potomac to Paw Paw for lunch, then back on the towpath towards Cumberland. After a long while we determined, "yes, we had missed them somehow," so we turned around to head back to the van. Finally, we found them under the overpass at the Paw Paw exit. They had passed the unsigned exit to Paw Paw while we were at lunch. When they came to the famous Paw Paw tunnel, they knew they had gone too far, so they went back and waited under the overpass until we showed up. HaHa! Together we went to the van, drove up to Bill's in Little Orleans for dinner, then on to the Little Orleans Lodge. Steve and his wife, who run the Lodge, served us shortcake and ice cream and he entertained us with stories of rescuing cyclists stranded on the towpath.

DAY 4 - Friday) After a hearty breakfast of French toast and sausage, we said good bye to Steve and his wife and decided to jump to Hancock, where all four of us biked the paved surface of the parallel B&O connector (11 miles one way) out and back. It was rainy in the morning but cleared up for the afternoon. After sandwiches for lunch in Hancock, it was on to explore colonial Fort Frederick. This time John and Carrie drove, while Bruce and I biked to Williamsport, where we stayed at the Red Roof Inn and had dinner at the American Legion.

DAY 5 - Saturday) After breakfast at the Waffle House, we picked up lunch fixin's at ERNST's Country Store (nice place), drove to Dam # 5 and dropped off John and Carrie on the trail. Bruce and I drove to the detour and biked westward to meet them, then we drove together to Dam # 4 for lunch. John and Carrie then continued on the trail to Harpers Ferry where Bruce and I would again meet them. Since this was the Columbus Day weekend, with perfect weather, Harpers Ferry was packed with people - and cars. We did manage to bike 5 miles on the trail from there, then back with John and Carrie to view Harpers Ferry and the river from the railroad bridge walkway. Back in the van, it was a short drive to Shermansville, where the Comfort Inn had no rooms available (being Columbus Day weekend), but they were able to book us into the Charlestown Comfort Inn.

DAY 6 - Sunday) We decided to leave the bikes in the

van and do the typical tourist thing at Harpers Ferry National Park, where we took a shuttle bus into the Historic Area and spent the morning walking through town, hiking the hill, visiting stores, and having lunch. Hoping (what were we thinking?) to get away from the Columbus Day crowds, we then drove to Great Falls National Park, found a place to park and biked to the visitor's center, where we walked out to see the falls with about 10,000 of our closest friends. We also watched a canal boat towed by donkeys go through one of the locks. Planning to stay in Leesburg, Virginia, we headed for Whites Ferry to cross the Potomac. Bruce's gas gauge was warning us, but I asserted, "there will be hundreds of gas stations on this road." So we didn't stop at the first gas station we saw when we left the park, but as soon as we made the first turn from the Great Falls road, within a quarter mile we left the thousands of tourists and all civilization. We were way out in the country, with no more gas stations and it was getting dark, and the time was approaching 8 PM, when the ferry stops for the evening. Suddenly the drive to the ferry was much longer than I remembered, and the gas gauge moved down to really empty, but luckily we made it and the ferry was still running. We crossed the Potomac, found a gas station, our hotel and a place to eat. We did not find old town Leesburg. It seems as if it has been bulldozed down, and now there are only miles of expressways and shopping malls.

DAY 7 - Monday) Our last day to bike, we abandoned the C & O and drove to Mt. Vernon, parked and biked out and back on the Mt. Vernon trail, a pleasant paved trail through wooded parks, with many views of the Potomac and surrounding neighborhoods and something new - a gigantic bridge connecting Virginia to Maryland. We biked up its ramp (and under it on the way back). It has a path underneath the bridge that connects the 2 states - you can bike or hike across the river. I think it would have had a great view - we just didn't have time to do it. We found a place for lunch in Old Town Alexandria, and also a Starbucks. Back at the van we drove to our final destination, the Tabard Inn, a hotel tucked in the Dupont Circle area. It turned out to be a very artsy upscale hotel and the staff, I believe, didn't appreciate four cyclists taking bikes to our rooms, but this was downtown DC. (In fact - though John and Carrie wanted to stay longer, amazingly the hotel didn't have any rooms the next night.) Anyway we had a great gourmet meal there, and John and Carrie picked up our tab. (Thanks!)

DAY 8 - Tuesday 10-13) John and Carrie were going to spend the rest of their vacation in Washington, so we said goodbye and drove back to Morgantown with their bikes. (Bruce had them disassembled at the Pathfinder and shipped back to Seattle).

Kelly