

...SPOKIN' WORDS...

COUNTRY ROADS CYCLISTS NEWSLETTER

Serving North Central West Virginia Cyclists

July-August 2023 Issue 3

The CYCLING YEAR is mid-way! Spend your money at these places or pick your own (like Gibbies)!

On a sweet note: The Brownie House in the Seneca Center in Morgantown has a new trail entrance and the Junction Cafe just opened in the old boat house at Prickett's Fort State Park - and they have a cooler filled with ice-cream!



July-August CRC Ride Schedule:

The July-August schedule has several rides on the GAP. Looking back in time ...

For our first GAP overnight bike trip of the year in May, from Connellsville to Confluence and back, we had a whole lot of rain on the first day. But day 2 was very pleasant, making up for the first day. However, we did have a couple of mechanical issues. But big thanks to Dave Berry for supporting and running sag for us.

May 20: It was raining hard today for the GAP ride from Connellsville to Confluence. Today, we had Kelly, Jennifer, Paula, Cindy, Karl, Joe S, and Nyles, with David Berry running SAG for us.

We started up the trail shortly after 10 AM, experiencing rain from light to heavy as we headed to Ohiopyle. There, we stopped for lunch at the Falls Market, where we were joined by Tom Pinto, who had biked by himself to Ohiopyle, also in the rain. After Ohiopyle, it rained very hard for the next 12 miles into Confluence. We were all covered in mud when we arrived at the Parker House, and we all had to hose off our bikes and then ourselves, before entering the Parker House.

Supper was at the River's Edge restaurant, very nice, before retiring to the B and B.

May 21: Today, Sunday, was the complete opposite of yesterday's ride. We all got ready to return to Connellsville, but first we all had breakfast at Mitch's in Confluence, a great new cafe right off of the town square. They had a great breakfast, and got us all in and out quickly, and stuffed with eggs and pancakes. Also, that morning, Dave Berry oiled everyone's bike chain before we started out.

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Today was warm and clear, with blue skies. We all headed to Ohiopyle, for our first break of the day. Today, we encountered a lot of cyclists, going east and west, many of them loaded for riding the entire trail, both the GAP and the C&O canal. After Ohiopyle, we descended down the trail to our cars parked at the Connellsville trail head.

Today was a great 30 mile ride in perfect weather.

At least a great ride for most of us. Nyles had a blowout and had to walk in for several miles. Jennifer rode back up the trail, to walk with Nyles, while Joe drove to the first road crossing, to pick him up. Thanks, Jennifer, for the support on the trail. Also a big thanks to Dave Berry for supporting this ride.

So, a great weekend of riding, except for the all day rain on Saturday and the flat on Sunday. Except for those two items, we all had a great time.

MRTC NEWS Collins Ferry Connector Is now open!

The Collins Ferry Connector just opened on Monday, June 12, 2023. Thanks and congratulations to MRTC, and the construction company Mountain Valley Construction. After waiting for years the connector is finally completed.

From WVMetro, by Mike Nolte (June 18, 2023):

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — A new neighborhood trail is opening in Morgantown.

Mon River Trails Conservancy Executive Director Ella Belling said the section of trail is about 20 years in the making and connects Collins Ferry Road residents to the city via the Mon River Rail-Trail.

“It’s a neighborhood connection that will link up those folks who are living and working along Collins Ferry in the Suncrest neighborhoods to the rail-trail,” Belling said.

Belling and officials have been unsuccessfully searching for a historic photograph showing the original ferry location in its original state. But the original site was a ferry that served travelers crossing the Monongahela River before West Virginia was founded.

“It was built way back in the 1830s and 1840s by the state of Virginia,” Belling said. “So, it’s neat to bring back a historical route and make it function again for neighborhood transportation.”

The connection is about 1/4 mile long, with drainage. Over the next month, Belling said they’ll add signage and parking bumpers prior to the official ribbon cutting, which has not yet been announced.

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Belling said 80 percent of the project was financed by the West Virginia Department of Highways (DOH) Recreational Trail Grant Program, Be Active WV Grant Program, in partnership with the WV Division of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease, Central Supply of West Virginia, Mylan Pharmaceuticals, Oakland Foundation, People for Bikes, Timberline Apartments/Vanguard Residential, WV Land Trust, Your Community Foundation of North Central West Virginia, and Mon River Trails Conservancy Donors.



Figure 1 Collins Ferry Connector Trail

Adventure Awaits:

Many club members have been out and having big bicycling adventures so far this year, and we are barely into summer. For instance, **Mike Hawranick** went to North Carolina to bike up Mount Mitchell on May 22, 2023.

The 46th Assaults on Mt. Mitchell was held on May 22, 2023.

The Assault on Mt. Mitchell is a 102.7-mile self-paced ride from Spartanburg Memorial Auditorium in downtown Spartanburg, South Carolina, along the Blue Ridge Parkway, to the summit at Mt. Mitchell State Park in North Carolina—a total vertical ascent of more than 10,000 feet. (**SEE** the attached document and photos by Mike Hawranick.)

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Meanwhile, Phil Slates, on May 27, stepped out of his front door, jumped onto his bike and rode over hill and dale to Dunbar (the first two miles of the Sheepskin Trail) and then past Connellsville, PA. The route was 55 miles with 2400 feet of climb, through Fayette County, from Point Marion then onto Gans Road, Mountain Road, Bennington Road, and Coolspring Road, and finally Dunbar.



Figure 2 Phil's Voyager Ho!

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GAP, June 10th, Mike Hawranick along with Karl, Phil, and Rick:

Table 1 GAP Adventures



Then, on June 10th, Mike Hawranick along with Karl, Phil, and Rick biked into downtown Pittsburgh to the Point State Park, starting from Boston, PA. A total of 45 miles for this adventure. **From Mike:** I got home about 6:30 pm...after a long day, but many good stories...Rick, Karl, Phil, and Mike H left Boston GAP trailhead at 12:08 pm toward Pittsburgh with David from East Pittsburgh for a little while. We stopped several times on the ride, the downtown detour was great. At 1/2 mile from Point State Park we past 2 slow city buses and joined 2 dozen cyclists for about 15 min. After the triangle we went across the Allegheny River to visit Mr. Rodgers by the stadium, we started to head to the other way but decided against it, too many NY Met jerseys. We returned back through town via the cobbled streets of Market Square and PPG Plaza. After crossing the Mon River via Smithfield Street bridge to the South Side trail, through the Color Park, then back on the GAP to where we started, I would say 45 miles total.

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Cindy Berry in June rode the entire Katy Trail, all 240 miles. She was an adventurer!

She was supported by Wilderness Voyageurs, an outfitter from Ohio, and she rode with 12 other cyclists. Here is her ride report:

Riding The Missouri Katy Trail

The Katy Trail is a roughly 240 mile rail trail traversing the state of Missouri. I had always wanted to ride this trail and decided to do so by going along with a group guided by Wilderness Voyageurs out of Ohio, PA. They provided a van driver who transported our bikes when necessary, prepared scrumptious and nourishing food for us along the trail and who was available if anyone ever wished to take a break and ride in the van for a while. They also provided a sweep guide who rode along with anyone wishing to ride a bit slowly. They were fun and accommodating, making the experience all the more enjoyable.

The trail, originally a railroad line named the Missouri Kansas-Texas Railroad, became the K-T Line and then eventually the Katy Trail, once converted to the Missouri State Park rail-to-trail system that it is today. Its surface is crushed limestone and is easy to bike on, although we were told that if it rained, it would become a little slushy to ride through. The limestone is quite dusty and covers your bike and gets into your drivetrain, but our guides were quick to wash, wipe down and lube our bikes each night in order to prevent problems. The weather was wonderful for the most part, staying between 70-80 degrees. Our first day, however, was grueling at 93 degrees and we didn't get started until around 11:30, as we were shuttled from St. Charles to our starting point in Clinton. Day 2 saw a light shower, but nothing to cause the trail surface to change much.

Each day brought something different from the trail. One day we would ride miles of flat open farmland, the next might be rolling hills, and the next might be a lot like WV with various trees canopying the trail. I saw many armadillos (unfortunately the coyotes had gotten to them first), fox, black snakes, cows, sheep, dogs & even several Indigo Buntings! We rode passed the Manitou Bluffs between Rocheport and Jefferson City, we also passed many wineries on the route to Hermann, also the Daniel Boone Monument as we headed to Augusta, and then the Augusta Brewing Co once there. There was a lot of history to be explored, but frankly...aside from leaving the rail to ride over to Daniel Boone's Monument...I concentrated on completing the day's ride. By day 2, we had pretty much figured out where we each fit in terms of riding ability within the group, and I rode from that time with a retired nurse named Linda, who generally rode between 13 & 14 mph. As many of you know, I'm much more comfortable riding for extended miles at around 10-12 mph.....so each day was a challenge for me but so much fun! (Someday I'll ride faster!)

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Our complete group consisted of 12 individuals. Linda from New Smyrna Beach FL, Deb & Jim from Raeford NC, Millie & Dee from Denver CO, Ann & Kat from Lafayette CO, Sharon from Wisconsin, Robert from Michigan and Me! We were a disparate group in many ways, but we all loved riding on the trails and everyone got along splendidly.

I would encourage anyone who has considered riding the Katy to just make arrangements and do it. It's really beautiful and provides a challenging ride.

Table 2 Katy Trail Adventure, 240 miles



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The Annual CRC Picnic:

The annual CRC picnic was held on Sunday, June 25 at the Twin Spruce Marina. Buddy, as usual, was the star, Steve was trying to predict a good future for CRC, and we managed to feed some WVU graduate students.



From the CRC FB page (<https://www.facebook.com/CRCyclists>), “The CRC picnic was going well and then the rain hit. But we were under a roof. 5 WVU students then joined us to make 16 people. We saw the falcons up on the I-79 bridge and then an osprey, which then dove to catch a fish.”



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Regional Rides through August 2023

Date	Name of Event	Location	Mileage	Climbing
7/15/2023	RAIN	Indiana	160	4400
7/19-23/2023	Shenandoah Experience	710 S. Main St., Harrisonburg, VA	15-100, various	Various
8/20/2023	Covered Bridges Classic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">https://coveredbridgeclassic.com/		

Key Ride Update

- River, Trails, and Ales Fest, Marietta OH, 8/10-13/2023 <http://rtafest.com>