

...SPOKIN' WORDS...

COUNTRY ROADS CYCLISTS NEWSLETTER

SERVING NORTH CENTRAL WEST VIRGINIA CYCLISTS

affiliated

www.crcyclists.org
P.O. Box 4322
Clarksburg, WV
26302-4322

July - August 2012

3

President Kelly Williams 292-9821 kellyrwilliams@msn.com
V.P./Road Captain Jennifer Previll 282-0218 jnprevill@gmail.com
Secretary/Treasurer Bill Foster 623-2736 billbikes@hotmail.com

**League of
American
Bicyclists**
since 1979

Morgantown Wins Bronze: Puts West Virginia on the BFC Map

From the League of American Bicyclists with permission bikeleague.org By Lindsay Plante, BFA Communications Intern

On Monday, Morgantown added another state to the Bicycle Friendly America map, becoming the first Bicycle Friendly Community in West Virginia. Having applied several years earlier, Morgantown used the

League's advice to guide its efforts and win the Bronze designation.

But this is just the first milestone for Morgantown. The community plans to become a city that is bike-friendly for riders of every background and purpose.

"Our goal is that bicycles will be 5 percent of all vehicles on Morgantown streets by 2020," says Frank Gmeindl, Chairman of the Morgantown Municipal Bicycle Board. "Our mission is to get the everyday commuter, student or employee, to look beyond Morgantown's hilly terrain and see the potential cycling holds individually and for our community."



"Our city has seen unprecedented growth in the past few decades and, as a result, traffic congestion in popular university and commercial areas has increased," he adds. "Cycling offers congestion relief, as well as personal benefits to body, mind, and pocketbook!"

Already Morgantown has seen an increase in bicycle commuting, recreational riding, and growth in general cycling culture. These changes haven't always come easily. Like many communities across the country, Morgantown faces tough terrain and older street systems, as well as a lack of financial resources to change existing infrastructure. Rather than attempt a construction overhaul with a lack of political and community support, Morgantown has focused on mounting small, attainable achievements, like funding for cycling classes and improving bike rack facilities.

There's no switch you flip to become bike-friendly," Gmeindl says. "We want our citizens to see the sum of all of these activities, and eventually draw their own conclusion that seeing bicyclists on the road is the norm. Overcoming challenges requires continuous cooperative effort among all stakeholders in becoming a bicycle-friendly community."

After seeing such growth in cycling and the positive impacts to health and community, Morgantown will continue its effort with a new comprehensive bicycle plan. It's not just city officials and cycling enthusiasts who are excited about riding in Morgantown.

"One local cyclist started commuting and used a tag-a-long to take his daughters to day care," Gmeindl says. "One afternoon he overheard the other kids talking about how cool it was that her Dad brought [her] to school on a bike!"

We couldn't agree more!



Ride in Morgantown (Credit: EpicRoadTrips.us)

[This issue comes way late due to a computer meltdown, and has been modified to focus on Morgantown activities. Ed.]

The 2012 APPALACHIAN SPRING SPECTACULAR

Following three years of rainy first Sundays in May, the 2012 Appalachian Spring Spectacular returned with an early morning fog slowly lifting for the 92 cyclists ready to start from the Wharf Parking Garage in Morgantown May 6th.



Nick - Positive Spin - helped cyclists get ready inside



outside on the Mon River Trail the group is ready to go.

Following a police escort out of Morgantown, the cyclists went along the Monongahela River, out route 100 and into Pennsylvania on US 19 to Mt. Morris, where 25 mile cyclists found a refreshment stop and returned to Morgantown. The 45 and 60 mile riders went around and about through Kirby (and Waynesburg for the longer route) to their refreshment stop at the Robinson Run covered bridge.

All photos by www.EpicRoadTrips.us



John and Patti

Country Roads Cyclists from Missouri



Don, Gunnar, Gary (sag), Bill (snack stop prep.), Kelly



Linda and Don
Morgantown tandem team

Water, Gatorade, orange juice, cheese and crackers, cookies, donuts, bananas, oranges and strawberries provided fuel for the hilly return to Morgantown and a pasta buffet on the Morgantown Brewing Co. deck.

Two-thirds of the 21 out of state guests came from Pennsylvania, with others from Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia. We also met cyclist Thomas Faust from Oregon, who was passing through on a tour that began in Florida.

Thanks to the volunteers who helped make this a fun event, including the planning committee, registration and refreshment workers, ride leaders, and sag driver. Also thanks to all who participated for helping make it more enjoyably memorable. After three difficult wet years, we also returned to a positive cash flow for Country Roads Cyclists.





Mylan Park ultra CX race start 6-25-2011 Fred Jordan photo

THE APPALACHIAN BICYCLE RACING ASSOCIATION conducts a broad scope of bicycle races, focused in the Morgantown region. One of the most unusual and most difficult, the third annual Hilly Billy Roubaix was held on Saturday, June 23 with a warning from local promoter J. R. Petsko, "This is going to be a mean one, Folks! This course will take you over dirt and paved "State Roads" around Monongalia County in Northern West Virginia and Western PA. Finish times could be 6 plus hours for some riders. Road conditions may include missing bridges, car-sized potholes, gravel, mud, black top, cow paths, and maybe a piece of road kill or two."

This year about 240 cyclists participated, but only 192 finished the 74+ miles race, the fastest in 4 hours, 18 minutes and 48 seconds, and the slowest needed just over 9 hours. The Morgantown husband and wife team finished high in the standings, with Gunnar Shogren the fastest single speed cyclist, finishing in 4:30:03 (fourth overall) and Betsey Shogren the third fastest woman, finishing in 4:58:57 (27th overall). Two more Morgantown Country Roads Cyclists also finished strongly, Randy Mansberger in 5:56:57 (37th male over 40) and Don Dickerson in 6:14:02 (49th male over 40, 133rd overall). One struggling local finisher (He finished in about 5:45) noted in his blog. "The sore back, triceps, every inch of my legs, stomach ache, head ache, blisters, burnt hands, sun burn, dehydration, blood shot eyes, bloody nose, scraped arms, bent rear wheel, broken chain, bent derailleur, broken saddle bag, broken bottle cage and creaking bottom bracket sum it up." He concluded his story, "Yesterday...I heard myself utter words I thought I'd never hear... 'I think I'll do that again next year.' "

"So where did all the racers come from for HBR?" asks J.R. Then he checks the list. "WV - 46, PA - 95, VA - 22, DC - 11, GA - 5, IL - 1, KY - 3, MA - 1, MD - 23, MI - 2, MO - 1, NC - 3, NY - 2, OH - 18, SC - 2, TN - 4."

THE WEST VIRGINIA DOT HELD PUBLIC MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE STATE IN MAY to gather input for a Statewide Bicycle Connectivity Plan. At a well attended meeting in Morgantown on May 15, cyclists representing many local groups, including Country Roads Cyclists (all three officers and several others), the Morgantown Bicycle Board, Morgantown Bicycle Club, Positive Spin, and Mon River Trails Conservancy, expressed their ideas for improving connections for bicyclists to ride beyond their local streets. Perry Keller, state Bike/Ped Program Coordinator presented the status of the developing Statewide Plan. Participants offered many suggestions, particularly noting that preferred road routes 100 (bad surface and shoulders, potholes, etc.) and 857 (closed at Cheat Lake by a bridge replacement project with no passable cyclist options) north into Pennsylvania were currently inadequate for cyclists. Bicycling signage and widening long uphill lanes were also advocated.

["Spokin' Words" newsletters may be viewed in color on our web site, crcyclists.org]

BICYCLING in the MORGANTOWN AREA

2012

COUNTRY ROADS CYCLISTS is the formally organized club serving the interests of bicyclists in north-central West Virginia. We promote the fun of bicycling through group rides, social events, cycling advocacy, dissemination of safety and skills information and good news about area riding opportunities. The APPALACHIAN SPRING SPECTACULAR is the largest of several public cycling events we sponsor.

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 road and rail-trails throughout the region. Scheduled rides start in early March and extend through October. We belong to the League of American Bicyclists, the International Mountain Bike Association and several rail-trail advocacy groups. Members receive our newsletter, published about five times a year, featuring our ride schedule as well as Club and area news. A Club e-mail link has breaking news and spontaneous activities. Check out our Club web site, <http://www.crcyclists.org> JOIN US TODAY!

The MONONGALIA BICYCLE CLUB is the informally organized Morgantown club which operates through word of mouth among friends and e-mail exchanges on their Google group web site. In addition to regular Sunday morning rides from the County Courthouse in downtown Morgantown, they have frequent road, rail-trail and mountain bike rides almost anytime two or more agree on-line to get together for camaraderie, riding and mellow post-ride reflections. Some ride long and hard, others take it easy, but all are pleased to slow down to ride awhile with newcomers. JOIN at: <http://groups.google.com/group/monbikeclub>

MON RIVER TRAILS CONSERVANCY was organized in 1991 to obtain and develop the 51 mile, three county rail-trail system that is now enjoyed by so many cyclists, walkers, runners, and others extending across Monongalia County, south into Marion County and east into Preston County. Their current project is extending high-quality surfacing north to the Pennsylvania line near Point Marion. For further information, maps, membership and meetings, see: <http://www.montrails.org>.

POSITIVE SPIN began in 2005 with the purpose of inspiring the Morgantown community to develop transportation that respects its natural environment without sacrificing mobility. Almost immediately, Hurricane Katrina gave them a wider vision and they collected, repaired and delivered more than 200 bikes to the Gulf area, even as they fixed and distributed another 50 Christmas bikes to Morgantown area charities. Positive Spin continues to promote cycling facilities and opportunities for youth and adults. See: <http://www.positivespin.org>.

WVU CYCLING CLUB sponsors a student team that competes in the Atlantic Coast Collegiate Cycling Conference, winning the mountain biking championship ten consecutive years while vigorously contending for road titles. The Club is organized and run by students and includes racers, friends and fans. see: <http://www.wvucycling.com>, or attend a regular meeting every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. in the Mountainlair.

The Racing Scene includes a program of road and cyclocross racing presented by the Appalachian Bicycle Racing Association, whose schedule is at: <http://www.ABRARacing.com>. Morgantown Multisport is a club for triathletes. See: <http://www.morgantownmultisport.com> Also, the Mountaineer Triathlon is in June and the Henry Clay 30k mt. bike race at Coopers Rock is in August this year. see: <http://www.iplayoutside.com>

FAMOUS BICYCLE SHOPS in downtown Morgantown

Pathfinder 235 High Street, next to the Courthouse 304 296-0099

Wamsley Cycles 709 Beechurst Avenue, in Seneca Center 304 296-2447

Morgantown Municipal Bike Board was established by the City Council in 2006 as an advisory committee reporting to the Traffic Commission. It meets the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Public Safety Building Conference Room at 300 Spruce Street and it is the City's bicycle advocacy group.. See their web site for members, bicycling laws, minutes and other results of Board activities:

<http://www.morgantown.com/bike-board.htm>. Also check out <http://www.BikeMorgantown.com> for maps, rides, events, and the schedule of **Morgantown's Confident City Cycling program**. In 2012,

Morgantown became a League of American Bicyclists BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY.