

**...SPOKIN' WORDS...**  
COUNTRY ROADS CYCLISTS NEWSLETTER  
Serving North Central West Virginia Cyclists  
September-October 2021 Issue 4

It is the end of the biking season, so it is time for:

- first, The Ghost Town Trail Bike Tour;
- then, The Annual Metric Century;
- and this year, for the first time: the Decker's Delight Bike Ride.
- Plus, the annual CRC meeting.

[Ghost Town Trail Bike Tour: September 11 and 12:](#)

Meet at 10:00 AM in Black Lick, PA, at the Saylor Park (about a two hour drive from Morgantown). From there it is about 32 miles one way to Ebensburg, PA. The trail climbs 1000 feet, but this is over the 32 miles. And, we will be climbing on the first day. There is also a 12 mile spur trail, for anyone needing extra mileage. On Sunday morning, we will return to the start. Hotels include the Red Carpet Inn, or the Noon-Collins B&B. And, this being September, there is a good chance of rain and cold weather, so plan for both possibilities.

[The Annual CRC Metric Century: September 19](#)

Meet at the parking lot behind Wendy's in Sabraton (RT 7, East), at 9:00 AM. We will bike on Decker's Creek Trail to the Mon River Trail, then head south to Prickett's Fort. We will then return north to Point Marion. Finally, south again, ending at the Mountain State Brew Pub. Please join us for all, or part of the 62 mile (100 km) bike ride on the Mon River Trail. Or, just show up at the Mountain State Brew Pub at the end of the ride.

[The Decker's Delight Bike Ride: September 26](#)

Meet at the parking lot behind Wendy's in Sabraton (RT 7, East), at 12:00 NOON. From here, we will bike up the trail to the very end (mile marker 19.5), then to the river front park, and then back to the start. Then, we will bike to the Mountain State Brew Pub for refreshments. (40 miles total).

**Country Roads Cyclists Annual Meeting:  
CRC Annual Meeting will be held on September  
25, 2021 at 6:00 PM, at the Panera's Bread, 357  
Patteson Drive, Morgantown, WV**

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## Ride Reports:

[2021 Emlenton to Franklin Bike Tour, July 24 and 25, 2021, by Karl Diefenbach](#)

We got started in Emlenton shortly after 11 a.m. on a mostly cloudy, cool day. There were 11 riders taking the trip: Marilyn, Jennifer, Paula, Tim, Phil, Joe C, Joe S, Bruce, Rick, Karl, and Kelly.

We took a lunch break upon reaching the Sandy Creek trailhead. Then we pushed and pulled our bikes, some with full panniers, up the steep steps to the trail. We hadn't gone far down the Sandy Creek trail when the rain started. Due to the rain and the steep steps, it made sense to head back to the ART and on to Franklin. As we rolled into Franklin, the rain stopped, of course! The Quality Inn was a welcome sight, followed by a hot shower. The group met for beers and dinner at The Ale House Restaurant.

On Sunday, at the crack of 8 a.m., 8 riders headed north 7 miles to Oil City on the Samuel Justus Trail. Bruce, Joe S., and Joe C. decided to head directly back to Emlenton.

When the remaining 8 got back to the Sandy Creek Trailhead, Karl, Tim, Paula, and Rick decided to do both directions of the SCT, about 26 miles. Kelly, Marilyn, Jennifer, and Phil returned to Emlenton. The weather on Sunday was beautiful with bright blue skies.

Here are the mileages that I recorded on Strava:

Day 1 - Emlenton to Franklin (plus short distance on SCT): 32.28 miles, 342 feet of climbing

Day 2 - Franklin to Oil City, Sandy Creek Trail, Emlenton: 67.35 miles, 453 feet of climbing

Great trip except for the flat tire I got 15 miles out of Emlenton. We patched it up and rode on!

[A Blast from the Past And, Country Roads Cyclists rode the Allegheny River Trails July 24 and 25, 2011](#)

### **SPOKIN' WORDS 2011 #2**

#### **COUNTRY ROADS CYCLISTS NEWSLETTER page 3**

JOIN US FOR A JULY BIKING WEEKEND IN NORTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Come ride the roads and rail-trails of northwestern Pennsylvania the extended weekend of July 8-10, maybe more. We had a great, but rather cold time in Franklin in October of 2009 . Here are some highlights and options:

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**The home base:** Summer place of the family at 312 Allegheny River Avenue, Emlenton, PA. Welcome to pitch tents, park campers, etc. in large yard (toilet and shower, kitchen facilities, to share, open after noon on the 8th).

Barnard House B&B 108 River Road 724-867-2261,

Sandy Creek rail trail bridge over Allegheny River rail trail fall 2009 foster foto (below)

**What to do: cycling** - the rail-trails and great road rides, paved or dirt. **River play** - offer their kayaks and canoes, bring your own swimming suit or fishing gear. (Pa. license required) The weekend also includes usual parade, crafts sales and food. **Eat** - We may plan a cookout there, maybe Saturday night? Nice restaurants in Foxburg and Franklin, too. See [www.emlentonpa.com](http://www.emlentonpa.com)



and also in 2009 (Columbus Day Weekend, October, 2009). **(A Second Blast from the Past)**

#### **FRANKLIN, PA RAIL-TRAIL WEEKEND**



Frank considers the paved Sandy Creek rail-rail foster photo



earlier the same day when the sun was out

dieffenbach photo

Some photos from the CRC Columbus Day Weekend Fall Color tour around Franklin, PA.

More next year.

(Actually the tunnel is about a mile down the trail after another Sandy Creek crossing, but I couldn't resist this. ed.)

**(NOTE: on our website, [www.crcyclists.org](http://www.crcyclists.org), there is an archive of all of the older Spokin' Words and Ride Schedules. Check it out!)**

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Phil Slates' Elkin's Gravel Tour: July 4<sup>th</sup> Weekend

Mike H and his daughter Olga and son Luke rode with me from Elkins to Thomas. Mike's wife picked them up outside of Thomas because of limited parking for the holiday weekend crowd. For that main part of the weekend route I had 35.5 miles in 3 Hr 53 minutes and 2477 ft elevation gain. Along the way I showed them the old pedestrian bridge in Harman that originally went to a town across the river where alcohol could be legally purchased and Douglas Falls outside Thomas. Sunday as I was taking a break while standing on my bike a couple drove up and said they were just thinking about how they should have brought their bikes to ride the area. I mentioned routes I learned of online and they were familiar with the articles. I said I just did another route in the region last month and can't wait to do more. I camped by myself a short distance away from the Dry Fork just off a very nice rather newly paved dead end road a very short distance from Otter Creek Wilderness. The entire time in my camp I rarely heard any vehicles across the river on route 72 and have wanted to cycle part of that so it sounded like that would be nice.

I have yet to see the area but I read of a few miles upstream from where I camped is a road whose path goes through the river and apparently most of the year can easily be waded through. I have seen photos of cyclist wading while carrying their bikes. Not sure if vehicles can easily drive through it and I guess was first built for use by horses and wagons. I can tell the pedestrian bridge in Hendricks is not the original because of neighboring supports from the river and I guess numerous floods that had washed away the original bridge. Here is what is to me a fascinating article of the Mon Forest and its original land in the Parsons area after a major flood of Pittsburgh and I am sure numerous other towns along the way reminding me of the very tall flood walls in Parkersburg and Huntington. <https://highland-outdoors.com/100-years-monongahela-national-forest/>

I did not visit the area but on the south side of the bridge in Hendricks is the Brooklyn Heights Preserve of the Nature Conservancy. All reasons I can't wait to go back.

Cindy Berry's GAP Ride, August 2021:

The idea to ride the GAP trail began back in January when I was looking into possible adventures that would take me a bit out of my comfort zone and challenge me. I've always loved riding on the Rail Trails, so I decided on a 4-day ride/3-day camp adventure.



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August 9th through August 12th were the agreed upon dates, all arrangements for campsites were made, my husband David ...along with his 3 month old Jack Russell puppy...agreed to crew the trip and Monday morning the adventure began!

I chose to bicycle the 150 miles in the direction of Pittsburgh to Cumberland, so we made arrangements to travel north from Clarksburg the morning of the 9th. I got a late start that first day for a number of reasons so that by the time I actually left Pittsburgh to begin my ride around noon, it was already 94 degrees!



*Figure 1 David*

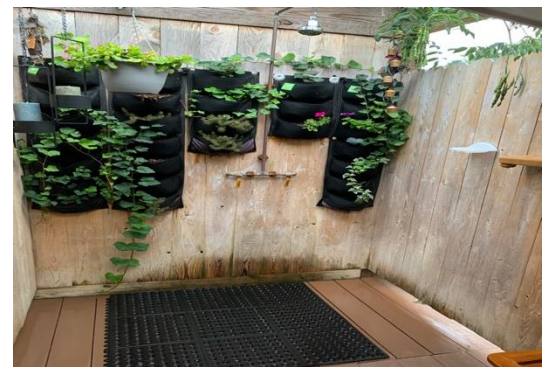


I was told later during my trip that I had picked both the hottest day (day 1) and the wettest day (day 2) to be riding the GAP, but the trip was amazing, and the trail was absolutely beautiful. For the most part, the trail is hard ground & fine gravel, although much of it is paved. And the trail is very well marked and easy to follow, with the section going through McKeesport being the only exception. Under the best of circumstances, it is difficult to follow, and the day I entered McKeesport, there was quite a bit of construction which served to further complicate navigation. I met a wonderful woman named Martha though, who was riding that

section with her niece and they had also become lost in McKeesport! She offered to ride with me on day 3 as she lives in Rockwood and I gladly welcomed the company!

I had arranged to camp at the GAP Trail

Campground in West Newton that first night, which is located just off the trail and which has the most charming bath house! I highly recommend this site for camping as everyone is very friendly and accommodating.





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Day 2 of my trip saw the longest ride, at 52 miles. (West Newton to Confluence). It was a rainy day with one storm being so severe that I, along with several other riders, were forced to huddle under a small wooden shelter as lightning cracked loudly overhead and both wind and rain seemed to whip up into a prolonged frenzy. Once the thunder got a bit quieter, I made the decision to take off again. I just wanted to get to the next campsite. At two different spots I was forced to carry my bike over fallen trees and there was all manner of forest debris scattered along the trail from the storm that had to be negotiated around. Whew...what a day! But when I reached the Outflow Campsite at Confluence, David had already set up my tent and had everything in order for me! And he took me out to eat that night as well!



*Figure 2 Cynthia and Martha*

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The next morning (day 3) greeted me with more rain, but Martha had texted me that the weather report assured it would be ending shortly. We arranged to meet at the parking area along the trail in Rockwood at 10:30, so after breakfast, I left to meet her. It's a steady climb to Rockwood from Confluence, but knowing that I would be meeting Martha to complete the day's ride with kept me going. My husband and the puppy met me also! How encouraging! Rockwood to Meyersdale is also a steady climb, but it was easier with company. I had arranged to camp for the third and final night in Meyersdale at the Maple Syrup Festival Campground. Our instructions were to call a local woman named Susie upon our arrival and she would then come to open the back gate for David's car. But we no sooner made the call when, you guessed it, lightning, thunder, wind and lots of rain! We decided not to camp that night and got a room in Grantsville at The Casselman Inn. Great food. Warm and dry. Yes!





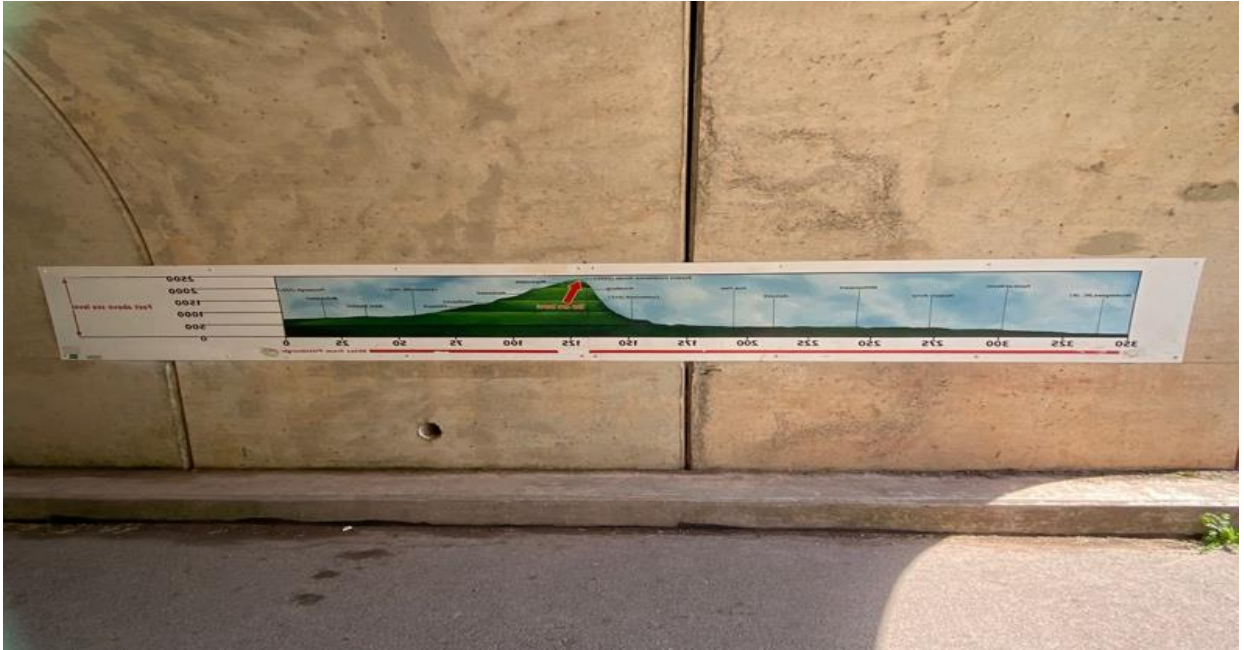
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Day 4 and my last day's ride began sunny and dry. This last section from Meyersdale to Cumberland is about 32.5 miles. The first 15 miles or so from Meyersdale to the Eastern Continental Divide continues to climb, but once you reach that summit, it's essentially downhill into Cumberland! And there are so many great things to see and experience along this section of the trail. You have the Divide, the Big Savage Tunnel (3,249 ft. long), Mason Dixon Line, an area where the train runs directly next to the trail & several places where you will have to cross over the railroad tracks.





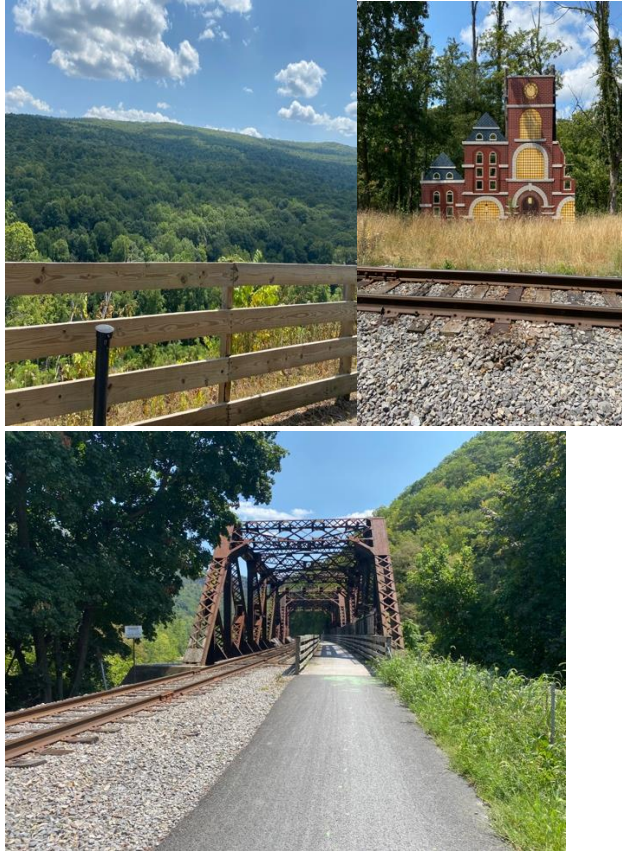
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I thoroughly enjoyed this adventure, made possible by the help of my husband, David and my new friend, Martha. It was 97 degrees when I reached Cumberland, but I was so thrilled to know that I had just reached Mile Zero, that I barely noticed. I would encourage anyone considering this trip to go ahead and do it. It was great fun and challenging enough to move me out of my comfort zone. What's next? Maybe all the way to DC!



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*Figure 3 Cynthia Berry in Cumberland*

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## **The World Cup Mountain Bike Championship, Snowshoe, WV, Sept. 14-19, 2021**

It's all going down September 14 – 19, 2021!

We're stoked to have you join us here at 4,848' elevation in the beautiful Appalachian Mountains of West Virginia. We've got an amazing 11,000-acre mountain playground full of adventure, waiting for you to explore.

Trust us when we say, this is the land of never hold back. Where beauty is in the eye of the downhill mountain bike maverick and sheer happiness is found at the end of every scenic hike, backcountry RZR tour, or decadent 4-course dinner. Throw the Mercedes-Benz UCI Mountain Bike downhill double-header and World Cup Finals onto this already delicious menu and you've got a full buffet of awesome! (excerpted from their website, [www.snowshoemtn.com](http://www.snowshoemtn.com)).

## **Next Year, 2022 -- The Dirty Double Ride**

### **The Race: June 5-6, 2021**

This is a two day bike race totaling 72 miles, rain or shine! Along the route you will encounter gravel roads, dirt roads, paved roads, tar and chip roads, and steep downhills.

**Day #1 (36miles)** - <https://www.mapmyride.com/routes/view/3667279411>

**Day #2 (36 miles)** - <https://www.mapmyride.com/routes/view/3667283782>

<https://www.pcparc.org/dirtydouble.html>