

THE CueSheet February 2006

The newsletter for affiliated organizations of the League of American Bicyclists



League of
American
Bicyclists

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Get Involved: 2006 Share the Road Campaign

Cyclists who are active in local clubs ride thousands, if not tens of thousands, of miles each year. They're also more likely to leave the car keys at home and ride to work or the grocery store.

So you're a special breed—and that means you are vital to the future of cycling in America. Club cyclists are where the rubber of the League's 2006 Share the Road Campaign hits the road. And it is a road that all cyclists have a right to ride on! As League president, Mike Greehan, said in his recent letter to members, "We won't rest until we've put an end to cyclists being intimidated, abused, buzzed, run off the road, or killed by motorists who don't obey the laws." That is a promise the League intends to keep, regardless of how long it takes.

Club leaders have the ability to change attitudes about bicycling in their community, which will eventually improve behaviors, creating the bicycling-friendly environments club members seek. You can instill in your members that they are NOT just passive users. Instead, they are active participants, asserting their right the road, sharing their joy and giving frustrated motorists a glimpse of what our communities could be if cycling was the option of choice.

Following are a few examples of some club leaders that are using the Share the Road message to make their communities more bicycle friendly. The League's goal with the 2006 Share the Road Campaign is to provide cyclists with the tools they need to empower themselves.

Stopping Harassment

The first way to prevent a motorist from arrogantly asserting their (perceived) exclusive right to the whole road is to teach them that cyclists have rights to the road. The bicycle clubs in Illinois recognized this and have contributed more than \$6,000 to help the League of Illinois Bicyclists produce a Share the Road video for high school driver education classes. Back in Washington, D.C., the League will add 300 certified instructors, a new teaching DVD and Share the Road tips for every member of AAA to our 2006 BikeEd program.

Preventing Injuries & Tragic Deaths

We know from experience that irresponsible, inattentive driving caused many of the more than 41,000 cyclist injuries in 2004. And there have already been at least six cycling deaths in 2006. Accidents do happen, but the vast majority could be prevented if we raised awareness of Share the Road principles. How about making sure every club rider has a weather-resistant cue sheet with the police number to report harassment? Why not include the rules of the road from your vehicle code? Better yet, why not equip ride leaders with a few extra to give to motorists?

Using the Legal System to Make Things Right

It is time we demanded justice when our fellow cyclists are seriously injured and killed. Recently, we've seen examples of club involvement at all levels of the legal process.

- *Todd Weaver* – the case of the Charlotte, NC cyclist who was killed by a bus driver who only 30 minutes earlier caused an accident that sent six people to the hospital, is moving along. *The continued on page 2*

BikeFest 2006: Cycle Across Maryland

The League of American Bicyclists is delighted to partner with One Less Car to produce BikeFest 2006 – Cycle Across Maryland.

The event will be held in Princess Anne, Md. from July 13-16, 2006. The charming Eastern Shore of Maryland will provide endless miles of great riding during the day and countless hours of laughter and fun at night.

Make sure you plan early to get as many club members there as possible.

Logging More Miles on Your Bike Than in Your Car?

The League's official 2006 mileage log is now available at www.bikeleague.org/members.htm. We've created an electronic version that records all the statistics to make this your best year of riding yet.

Launching a New Web site

You wouldn't ride the same bike for six years without a tune up, would you?

Nor should the League of American Bicyclists have the same Web site. Within weeks our new site will be launched.

Need to Thank a Club Member?

Let us know and we'll create an official, signed League award. Email mike@bikeleague.org to get one started.

Share the Road 2006

Continued from page 1

League has sent a letter to the District Attorney pressuring him to (a) charge him appropriately and (b) make sure the bus driver loses his rights to drive a bus, as it has come to light that the driver has had seven accidents in the past four and a half years.

- *Bill Bliss* – police officer Doug Havens was convicted of careless driving while off-duty in a June 2005 incident that killed the 69-year-old Californian who had been cycling safely for 36 years. The Bliss family disputed claims that he was unsafe, which put the full burden on the motorist.
- *Robert "Mike" LaDent* – the driver who killed this Omaha cyclist had his charges downgraded to reckless driving—a misdemeanor. The Bellevue Bicycle Club and the League believe this is being taken too lightly and will continue to pressure those involved to charge the motorist appropriately.
- *South Dakota Anti-Cycling Bill* – a bill passed the House of Representatives that would specifically exclude bicycles from the definition of vehicles. Sioux Falls cyclist and Life Member of the League Greg Boris notified us and we sent a letter urging members to oppose this legislation. He wasted no time organizing his fellow cyclists, building a website, holding a press conference, and testifying before the legislature. Thanks to their work, the bill was defeated and bicycles still have the same protections as motor vehicles on state roads in South Dakota.
- *Nowhere to Ride in Florida* – cyclists in the Boca Rotan Bicycle Club haven't given up on their struggle to ensure road improvements along Route A1A include bike lanes. The League is joining them in a lawsuit against the Florida Department of Transportation requesting that the cycling public be able to use public land for public use. Did we mention the reason for the resistance is that a handful of ocean-front homeowners don't want to lose their ornate driveway entrances and privacy walls (that they built on public right-of-way)?!

Cyclists Legal Network

The League's Cyclists Legal Network is taking shape thanks to the generous contributions of clubs across America. We are currently conducting a nationwide search for interested attorneys with experience in cycling-related cases who can provide the resources necessary to address the dozens of cases that come up every year and which test the legal rights we should enjoy to safe cycling on our roads. Contact Mike Macking at mike@bikeleague.org if you have a cyclist-attorney in your club who would be willing to participate.

Enjoy the Ride! New BikeEd DVD Available

The long-awaited BikeEd DVD, *Share the Road*, will be on sale starting March 1 at the National Bike Summit and on the League of American Bicyclists' Web site at www.bikeleague.org.

Starring Selene Yeager, a contributing editor of *Prevention*, *Bicycling* and *Mountain Bike* magazines, the video offers tips on how to drive your bike on the road, with advice on everything from helmet and bike fit to signalling turns.

Made with the help of the National Highway Traf-

fic Safety Administration, the DVD includes a 20-minute instructional video, a five minute refresher course, and bonus materials including *Kids Eye View* in English and Spanish and *Cyclists Eye View*.

The video is an updated and condensed version of the video used in most Road I courses. The new *Enjoy the Ride* video is aimed at people who have just started cycling as well as those returning to the sport.

The League's education committee, in conjunction with members and clubs from all over the U.S., has worked hard to ensure that this DVD offers the most up-to-date information on vehicular cycling.

The video will be \$25, and there are discounts for bulk purchases.

For more information on the League's BikeEd program, and how you can become a League Cycling Instructor, contact Bill Nesper at bill@bikeleague.org or 202-822-1333.

Club Spotlight: The Woodlands Cycling Club

Vital Statistics:

Location:

The Woodlands, Texas
(near Houston)

Web site:

www.woodlandscycling.com

Membership:

250 and growing!

Around Since:

1993

League Affiliated Since:

1999

Year-round Riding:

Of course

Ride Schedule:

Weekly rides are available

The Basics

The Woodlands Cycling Club has riders of all ability and interest. The club organizes weekly rides for a wide range of groups, including beginner riders, tour riders, racers, century seekers, roadies and mountain bikers.

During all of their rides, WCC emphasizes the importance of communication, predictability and safety.

Why They Aren't Your Average Club

WCC annually sponsors and co-sponsors many cycling events within the community. One of their largest events is the Texas Cycling Classic, benefiting *Elves and More*, a non-profit organization servicing impoverished children in Houston and across the country.

WCC gives back to the community by awarding direct scholarships to graduating seniors from the areas frequently used as cycling routes. Currently the club gives \$2,000 annually in this way.

WCC has an active race team with USA Cycling affiliation and has a Junior Development program. WCC has also established their very own Bicycle Action Committee, which is in charge of staying abreast of the Texas Department of Transportation on issues such as planning, development and maintenance to guarantee safe cycling practices in the community.

Focus: Safety & Education

WCC is currently developing and mentoring elementary school cycling clubs in the local school districts. The goal is to teach safe cycling; take short distance rides, and demonstrate proper use of the Woodlands Trail system to and from school.

\$32,307.20

This is the amount of donations the League received from League-affiliated bicycle clubs in 2005. Thank you—we couldn't build a bicycle friendly America without you!

290,000

The approximate number of bicycle thefts in 2001, according to the FBI. That is 4.1 percent of the more than 7 million larceny/thefts of all kinds.

\$4,500,000,000

The amount of money in the recently passed federation transportation legislation for bicycle-related projects. Oh, by the way, the entire bill is worth \$286,500,000,000. Yep, bicycling gets about 1.5 percent.

30

The number of different activities that will take place during the National Bike Summit. There are sessions and topics that even the smallest club would benefit from. Here are just a few...

- *Preserving Our Rights to the Road*
- *Making a Big City Better for Bicycling: Louisville, KY*
- *Building Bicycling Into the Community from Scratch: Haymount, VA*
- *Capitol Hill Rally and Meetings with Members of Congress*
- *On-Line Route Mapping for Bikes*
- *Congressional Bike Caucus Ride Around DC*

2006 Helmet Outlook from the Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute

In 2006, there are no major technological advancements in helmet design but there are some new models with the rounder, smoother profile that we think is best in case of an accident.

At the high end, you will continue to find big vents and high prices. However, retailers such as Target and Wal-Mart offer models with much lower prices that meet the same CPSC impact standard. And for a few bucks more they have better looking and better fitting models.

The "commuter" models and ring fit systems are even more common this year. The round, smooth exterior of the

commuter models make it the best in case of an accident, and are usually reasonably priced.

The pointy, elongated styles remain more costly, yet another reason not to spend \$200 for a helmet.

The ring fit system, or the "one size fits all," works well for some, but others find that they have to adjust the straps uncomfortably in order to get a better fit.

To compare on your own try the Bell Citi and Metro, essentially the same helmet except for the fit. There is still no helmet on the market recognized as the softest-landing or "anti-concussion" helmet.

Current helmets provide adequate protection against severe injury but nobody advertises that their helmet can take blows that exceed the CPSC standard.

When you are shopping for a new helmet, keep in mind the following guidelines: Make sure your helmet meets the CPSC bicycle helmet standard (look for the sticker).

Your helmet should fit comfortably and have a rounded, smooth exterior. We also recommend that you check *Consumer Reports* for further recommendations. And remember no matter where you ride, use a helmet!

Dates to Remember

March 1-3: National Bike Summit
Washington, DC

March 15: League Club Rep Conference Call
5:30 p.m. Eastern, 2:30 p.m. Pacific
712-580-0600 • Access Code 862227#
All Club Reps are encouraged to participate

LCI Certification Seminars
April 13-15 • *Bethlehem, PA*
Steve Schmidt, cat@car-free.org

April 28 – 30 • *Waltham, MA*
Dorie Clarke, bikexec@massbike.org

April 28 – 30 • *Seattle, WA*
Rebecca Szper, rebecca.szper@cascadebicycleclub.org

May 5-7 • *Tucson, AZ*
Rich Corbett, kc7ovm@dakotacom.net

May 17: National Ride of Silence
www.rideofsilence.org

May 15-21: Bike-to-Work Week
May 19: Bike-to-Work Day
www.bikeleague.org

CLUB REP update

2006 Insurance Information

American Specialty Insurance has come through again and put together a comprehensive general liability and special event insurance package for current League affiliated clubs that won't break the bank. Rates have increased ever so slightly to cover rising medical costs but the exciting news is that the aggregate amounts have been increased! Find out more at www.bikeleague.org/members.htm.

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