

OH Bike Mini-Newsletter – November 2022

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Message from the President



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Our monthly meeting on Oct. 10th was short and busy. One topic, led by Walt R, was the demolition of the Nice Bridge. Walt and our club and several others were hoping to save the bridge for pedestrian and bike use to connect to Virginia. I heard on the radio news that the effort failed, and the bridge would be destroyed. Walt might have [a more detailed report](#).

Another topic was the discussion of our '23 OHBTC events. We hope to have our usual main events next year including the Annual Meeting and election of officers, the Rural Legacy Ride, perhaps a picnic and ride, the Labor Day Century, and possibly others.

Jackie (my bride) did her 76 miles birthday ride on the IHRT. Those who came out to ride with her were Stu R, George M, the Baptist Pastor, and me. It was Rosh Hashanah, so I came after services and brought her lunch.

Perhaps you have seen on the club web site photos of me on my new trike. I have been having so much fun riding it that Jackie ordered one for herself. It came a week ago and she rode it on the IHRT.

The weather is cooling down, so riding is more comfortable. Don't put away your bikes just yet because there will be plenty of nice weather days ahead to enjoy riding.

See you on the road/trail,
Rabbi Randy, President

Oxon Hill Bike and Trail Club Board Meeting Minutes

Date/Time	October 10, 2022, 7 PM
Attendance	Joan Oppel, Jim and Jane Hudnall, Randy Schoch, Leslie Tierstein, Walt Roscello, George Martin, Jessica Hirschhorn, Ellen Goodwin
Absent	Board members: Diane Harris

President Randy Schoch called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Approval of Minutes – Randy Schoch

President Schoch asked for board approval of the minutes from the September 2022 board meeting. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer’s Report – Walt Roscello

Walt Roscello gave the Treasurer’s Report.

For the month of September, the club had income of \$415. Expenses were \$359, which includes: \$100 donation on behalf of Nanjemoy Store, \$21 in processing fees, \$238 in picnic item reimbursements. So, there was a net income of \$56.

In October we made a quarterly payment on storage unit rental of \$405. We have set aside the expected payment for insurance renewal for later this month of approximately \$1400.

Expenses for the storage locker will go up \$5 next month.

Insurance Report -- Joan Oppel

Joan gave a report on the renewal of the club’s liability insurance, which protects the club, officers and volunteers during normal club activities sponsored and supervised by the club, such as rides, meetings, and trail patrol. The premium is based on the number of active members at renewal and has increased \$0.20 cents per current active member. We have about 425 members so the premium will be \$1381.25. Walt and Joan are working together on the renewal application.

The insurance covers normal club activities sponsored and supervised by the club. It provides coverage for non-member riders at a first “trial” ride. Special events, such as the Rural Legacy and the IH 100, are not covered by the general policy. For those, the insurer provides separate coverage which must be applied for before the event; the premium is based on a per rider/volunteer count.

Advocacy Report – Walt Roscello

Walt gave an update on advocacy related to the Nice Bridge in Maryland. The lawsuit requesting an injunction against demolition of the old bridge was filed over a week ago. A hearing is scheduled on the order, and the judge gave the defendants until this weekend to file a rebuttal, which they did. The new bridge is ready for traffic on Wednesday, there was planning to demolish the old bridge this week. A hearing scheduled for tomorrow on the injunction against demolition.

2023 Events Discussion – Board Members

Joan opened a discussion of 2023 events.

Annual Meeting: The annual meeting is typically held on a Saturday night in March. Because of COVID, St. John's Church is not available. Harmony Hall and Accokeek Firehouse are options.

The Rural Legacy and the IH100 are the main financial support for the club, and they are on the agenda for every meeting because it has been three years since we've had any income from an event. The Rural Legacy is typically held on the second Saturday of June, and the IH 100 is typically held on Labor Day.

The board discussed how to get volunteers for the Rural Legacy and IH 100 rides. The board discussed the possibility of relying on club members themselves for the bulk of volunteers rather than seeking volunteers from community groups.

For the Rural Legacy ride we already have reserved the pavilion for 2023.

Randy suggested that his synagogue might be available to volunteer. The board discussed whether we need to have the IH 100 as a paid ride if we earn enough funds from the Rural Legacy ride.

Social Media Report – Jessica reported that she has increased Facebook postings on the club's page and page views increased to 1100 for the past month.

Other Business

Art Event - The club received an email from a local artist asking if the club would like to participate in an event called the "Oasis for the Arts" festival in Nottingham at the Patuxent River Keeper's property. Joan mentioned that she had responded in July to a card left on her car at North Keys by the artist, letting her know we'd be interested in her event. Jim said that he will respond to the email and talk to the woman about how the club might participate.

Ghost Bike Placement – Club members are encouraged to participate in the ceremony placing a ghost bike at the site where local cyclist Kaleab Yehenew was killed at the intersection of Route 210 and Fort Washington Road. Riders will meet at Friendly High School on Sunday October 16 to ride to the site.

Kids' Helmet Giveaway – Prior to the pandemic, club members have supported and participated in a Kiwanis Club project to provide bike helmets for children. The 2019 event was held at Blue Crabs Stadium during "Hug a Truck" event. The board noted that the club is interested in participating in this event again.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 pm.

Next Meeting: November 14th, 2022, 7:00pm via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Goodwin and Joan Oppel

Ride for Your Life

Ride to Congress to Remember Sarah Langenkamp and Advocate for Bike & Pedestrian Safety

Register Here: <https://bit.ly/RIDELIFE>

Details - On August 25 Sarah Langenkamp was killed by a truck while bicycling home from her sons' elementary school in Bethesda. Her husband Dan has begun a campaign to advocate for bike and pedestrian safety.

On November 19, there will be a bike ride to Congress beginning with the route in Bethesda Sarah took the day she died. We are hoping to have at least 1,000 cyclists participate and expect to obtain both local and national news coverage. The entire event is scheduled to be held the day before the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, on November 20. Trek is sponsoring, and DOT Secretary Buttigieg is considering participating.

Final (?) Update on Nice Bridge Bike-Ped Use

Submitted by Walt Roscello

As you may know, the club recently signed on as parties to a lawsuit attempting to block demolition of the Old Nice Bridge until a more thorough feasibility study of use as an alternate bike-ped facility could be performed. Unfortunately, after two hearings the judge declined to issue an injunction which allows MdTA to proceed with dismantling activities. The primary arguments of the state were that preserving the bridge would be found to be infeasible due to cost and safety concerns, and that allowing a delay for the full lawsuit would cost the state too much to dismiss the contractor and bring them back later.

Given that preservation of the old bridge was the only mitigation that the parties thought worth pursuing, with this ruling we have directed the lawyers to dismiss the suit to avoid additional legal fees. Although the lawsuit is over, funding is still needed to pay the expenses. There is a Go Fund Me at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/nf3veb-save-the-nice-bridge> if you are willing to make an individual contribution. The club signed on with the understanding that the fees would not be paid by the parties themselves; they have been guaranteed by some generous individuals, but they are on the hook for thousands of dollars so anything you contribute will defray the cost from an individual who has given much more.

The new bridge (which is now in use) will technically open to cyclists in the spring when the dynamic traffic signs are fully operating. However with only a two-foot shoulder, you will have to ride in the traffic lane and depend on motorists being alert and following the traffic warnings. If anyone would like to organize a ride over the bridge, perhaps with a blocking vehicle, I will be happy to provide assistance in preparing the ride.

Richmond to Williamsburg Self-Supported Overnight Ride

Submitted by Diane Harris

For the past few years, Sherwood Byers has led a group of club members on a 3-day (2 nights) self-supported trip from Richmond to Williamsburg (VA). The first and last days of this tour take us to and from Richmond and Williamsburg, with the second day spent touring across the James River in Surry. Most of this tour uses the Virginia Capital Trail, a paved trail that goes from the present capital of Virginia (Richmond) to the past capital (Jamestown). I initially signed up for this trip in 2020 but bad weather postponed the trip by one week and I was not able to attend. Last year my sister (Theresa) and I were able to do the ride; in spite of heavy rain the first day and intermittent rain the second, we enjoyed it so much we committed to doing it again this year.

Day 1, Richmond to Williamsburg (Jamestown)

So here we are in 2022, having completed all three days, and this is my report. The first day (Saturday) had all nine riders meeting at the Richmond Main Street Railway Station. Ride leader and organizer,

Sherwood Byers was joined by Tim and Charlie Copeland, Sue Ellen Gunter, Ron Altemus, Tasha Harris, Linda Bankerd, Theresa Rowell, and me. This was a self-supported ride, meaning each rider carried on their bikes with panniers or in backpacks what was needed for the three days. We were staying in hotels, so no camping gear was necessary. This year unlike the past two, the weather was absolutely gorgeous, cool at times but sunny, clear, and best of all DRY!! Traveling from Richmond to Williamsburg was mostly along the trail with occasional forays onto the roads which until reaching the outskirts of Williamsburg had light vehicle traffic. The mileage for the day was ~60 miles with 1369 feet of climbing. Most of the climbing occurred leaving Richmond with mild rollers and mostly flat terrain going towards Williamsburg. Scenery along the route included lots of farmland, mostly soybeans, some corn, woods, and homes on large lots. One aspect of this trip that I really appreciated was the designated rest stops/regrouping points that Sherwood planned throughout the ride. This gave us an opportunity to ride at our pace, stopping whenever we wanted or needed (for photo ops, removing or putting on jackets, whatever), knowing we would rejoin the group at the next regrouping point. This was done every day of the ride.



From left: Sherwood, group leader; some riders at the trail head; Diane, author

Lunch was around the midpoint of the ride. The plan was to eat at a restaurant new to us, the Indian Fields Tavern. In spite of Sherwood having informed the restaurant ahead of time our group would be there, once we arrived we were told they could not accommodate us, as they were expecting another group. We were disappointed because we were hungry and looking forward to trying out that restaurant. Fortunately, our old standby, **Cul's Courthouse Grille** was only a few miles away. What can I say about this establishment, which is located right off the trail in Charles City? IT WAS GREAT!! It always is. It's very cyclist friendly. As usual the staff was welcoming, our wait person, Eric, was very entertaining and made sure everyone had what they needed. He was attentive without being overbearing or intrusive. I can honestly say I haven't had a bad meal at this restaurant. In addition to the food and atmosphere, we got to see an alpaca (one of the cutest of all animals because they look like they're always ready for a kiss!) Articles made of alpaca hair were being sold -- including gloves, socks, scarves, and hats.



For me, the midway point of the ride means we're almost at our destination. Only ~30 more miles to go! The scenery along the trail was much the same as the first half of the ride. There were still regrouping points, the first at the [Chickahominy Riverfront Park](#) on the banks of the Chickahominy River and the second at the [Spoke + Art Provisions Co](#), a trailside café that offered food, drinks (including beer and wine), as well as art and souvenir type clothing. The closer we got to Williamsburg, the more vehicle traffic there was, but we were able to safely navigate the roads to the base hotel, the Fairfield Inn. There was only one mechanical, a bent derailleur hanger which caused difficulty shifting. (This would be discovered and corrected the next day.) Not all of us stayed at the Fairfield but those who didn't were within two miles. Dinner was on our own so after check-in, we ate and got ready for the next day. A good day on the bike!

Day 2, Jamestown to Surry (Loop)

Two members of the group (Charlie and Tim) left to return to Richmond then home, while the rest of us rode to the Jamestown-Scotland Ferry (free) for transport across the James River to Surry. From there we rode to [Chippokes State Park](#), site of the Chippokes Plantation, one of America's oldest continually operated farms. We stopped at the Visitors' Center, looked into the distance at the James River, then were lucky enough to take advantage of a tour in progress at one of the homes still standing. We also went to the main plantation house (not open for touring on this day) and walked around the grounds. Leaving the plantation we rode past a cotton field, something I've only seen from a distance a few times in my life. I had to stop to see the cotton close up. I could envision the thousands of enslaved people it took to plant, grow, and harvest cotton. My mother's family was from South Carolina, and I couldn't help but wonder if any of them worked the cotton fields. I don't have a lot of history about her family before my grandparents relocated to Ohio.

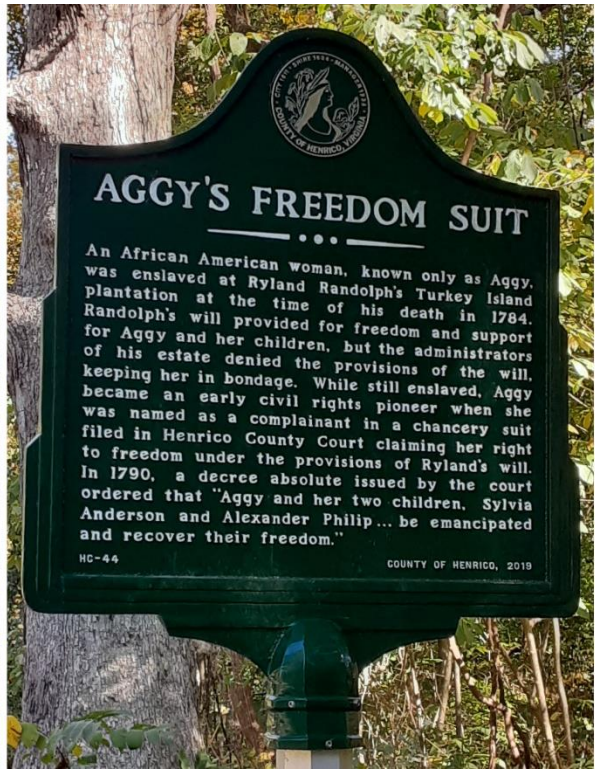
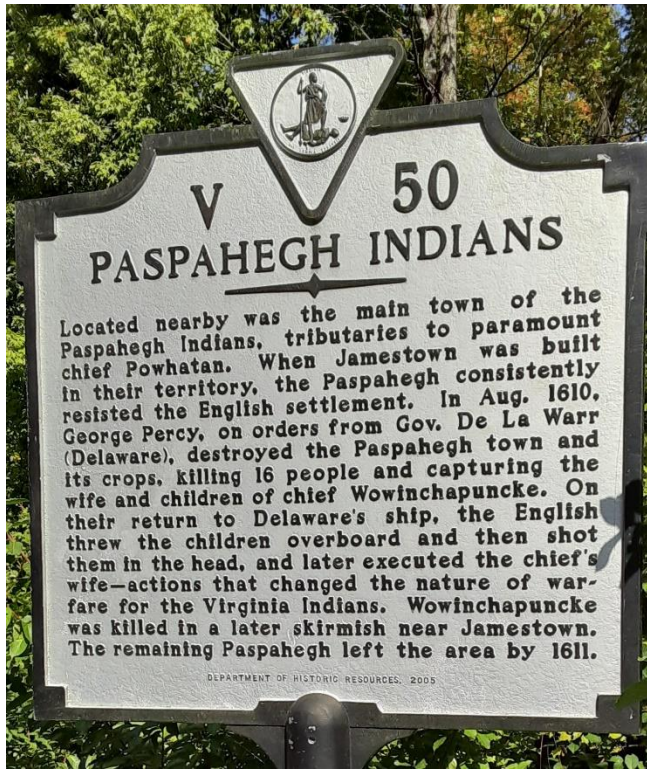


This ride was all on-road and again passed a lot of farmland with peanuts added to the crops seen yesterday. Weather was again perfect, sunny, breezy at times, temps starting out cool, gradually rising to the mid-60s. Lunch on the porch of **Meats of Virginia**, a small eatery that sells sandwiches, desserts, jellies, jams, and a variety of what I consider exotic meats (alligator and bison). An excellent choice for lunch. Today I had a good ride on a very nice route accompanied by a great group of people in gorgeous weather! We had dinner as a group at our usual Mexican restaurant (**Plaza Azteca**) within walking and riding distance from our lodging. This evening we had the pleasure of being joined by Ron's wife, Susan, who had come down for the night. Another very satisfying meal and the delicious frozen margarita kept me happy for the rest of the evening. Time to get ready for tomorrow's ride, the final day of the tour.

Day 3, Return to Richmond

Departure time was set for 9:30. At 9:34 all seven of us were on the pedals leaving the parking lot. The four minutes beyond departure time were due to taking pictures of the group on our last day 😊. We had to ride on somewhat busy Williamsburg streets before getting to the trail at Spoke + Art Provisions. The scenery along the trail going towards Richmond was the same as it was going to Williamsburg: farmland, woods, community parks, with less bicycle traffic. We stopped at Cul's Courthouse Grille in Charles City again for lunch. We had the same waiter as before (Eric), and he remembered what drinks each of us had on our previous visit! I treated myself to fried oysters, onion rings and coffee (fried, fried, and caffeine) but hey, this is vacation 😊!

After lunch, we got back on the trail, again with each of us going at our own pace with no one being left behind. I really appreciated how we rode, being mindful of each other, stopping at the regrouping points, and making sure everyone was accounted for before going forward. I took the time to stop and read some of the historical markers to get an idea of the area's past, some of which is not in our history books. You can't do this when driving the roads that parallel the trail, which is something that makes traveling by bike so much more rewarding. We all got back to Richmond safely with no incidents, no additional mechanicals, and navigating the cobblestones to get back to the train station with everything intact. (Those cobbles were bone shaking!!)



I thoroughly enjoyed this weekend. Thanks Sherwood, Ron, Sue, Linda, Theresa, Tasha, Tim, and Charlie!! ❤️