

OH Bike Mini-Newsletter – June 2023

CONTENTS

Message from the President

Half-a-Road Captain's Report

Oxon Hill Bike and Trail Club Board Meeting Minutes - Draft

Bike NY: Five Boro Bike Tour, NYC: From a CYCLIST Point of View

Message from the President



ohbike.org

May has been a very busy month, and it is not over yet! The “Three Musketeers” are turning 81 (Jim Hudnall last fall, me this May, and Steve Palincsar soon). Cycling is a great way to improve your health but you should adjust the sessions to fit your age.

Jackie and I did the all-class ride from Mechanicsville Elementary School along with many others. It was a great success. We did the Three Notch Trail with Ron's group; the other riders headed south into the beautiful southern Maryland farm land. After the all-class ride on May 14th (Mother's Day), several of us attended Gene And Dani Villiva's 25th Anniversary Margarita Party at their newish home near Mt. Vernon.

As you have no doubt seen already, there is a need for club members to volunteer to help with the Rural Legacy Ride next month. This ride is an important fund raiser for the club. It looks like there will be a good turnout of riders to enjoy the rural area of Prince George's County, and we need volunteers to make sure all runs smoothly. Many people in the DMV don't realize how rural and beautiful eastern PG County near the Patuxent River is.

The planned **trail ride from Cockeysville MD to York PA** on June 17-18 looks to be well on the way and about to finish up with the final details. Sherwood does a great job with leading overnight and multi-day trips, and we are looking forward to this ride. Jackie and I were hoping to visit with our grandson who attends York College, but Logan is finished for this semester and is home in Bowie.

I finished up repairing another quality but very old bike and put it into our storage locker. This bike and several others are available as loaners for our club members should visitors come from out of town to visit and want to ride.

See you next month on the trail or road,
Rabbi Randy, President

Half-a-Road Captain's Report

By Steve Palincsar



What Does This Signal Mean?



You'd think it means "Cyclist Making a Left Turn," wouldn't you? It's what we were taught. You'll even find it labeled "Left Turn" on the California DMV web site (where I copied it from). But lately I've discovered that for some drivers in Southern Maryland, this sign instead means "Pass Me on the Left Now."

The first time I discovered this was a couple of months ago when riding on Baptist Church Road, about to make the left onto the Three Notch Trail.

Silly me, I thought the crosswalk panda markings and the flashing yellow lights would have been enough to make my intentions clear, but no. I'm glad the roaring of his engine as he sped up and the screams of the cyclists behind me alerted me.

This wasn't the only time. This Tuesday as I was riding north on Oaks Rd., signaling that I was about to make a left turn into Oak Ridge Park, *three* cars passed me right in front of the park entrance. To their credit (?) they all crossed over the double yellow and then went the extra mile, passing on the left shoulder. Once again, roaring engines and shouts from a riding companion behind me saved the day.

I wonder what would have happened had they been electric vehicles with no engine noise, with me riding alone and no one behind to shout a warning.

I also wonder: were these isolated instances, or is this a Southern Maryland thing?

All Class Ride

Last month's column was written as we were about to have our **Start the Season Right** ride, postponed because of a dire weather forecast, worrying about rain in the forecast. Sunday, April 23 turned out to be a beautiful sunny day. 44 riders registered and 34 were checked in including 3 guests. Sherwood Byers led the combined A/B group, Ellen Goodwin led the CC group, and Randy Schoch and Ron Altemus led the merged C/Trail group.



The only incident of note was that Saturday night's storms brought down a tree on the trail after Livingston Road and before mile marker 4. Being a Sunday, the Parks crew weren't on call to quickly remove it, so riders had to form portage brigades to help cyclists across the blockage.

Then on May 14 we had our **Mother's Day Metric**, starting from Mechanicsville Elementary School in St Mary's County. 50 riders registered, 33 checked in. Diane Harris led the 60-mile route (which turned out to be somewhat less than 60 miles, due to an error in the

route, which has now been corrected). Walt Roscello led the B 46-mile route. Joan Oppel led the CC 46-mile route. Jessica Hirschhorn led the CC/C 35 mile route, and Ron Altemus led the 22-mile trail ride on the Three Notch Trail.

There were a couple of minor mishaps: a rider stalled and fell over on the steep entrance to Seventh District Park, but fortunately no harm came to either rider or bike. More serious was the loss of a cell phone that fell into a portalet.

You can find information in more detail with photographs on the Ride Reports.

Mother's Day Metric:

- 22-mile: <https://ohbike1.wildapricot.org/reports/13201418>
- 35-mile: <https://ohbike1.wildapricot.org/reports/13201376>
- CC 46-mile: <https://ohbike1.wildapricot.org/reports/13201477>
- B 46-mile: <https://ohbike1.wildapricot.org/reports/13201413>

Start the Season Right

- Overview: <https://ohbike1.wildapricot.org/reports/13181477>
- C/Trail ride: <https://ohbike1.wildapricot.org/reports/13180455>
- CC/B 41-mile: <https://ohbike1.wildapricot.org/reports/13195768>
- A/B 54-mile: <https://ohbike1.wildapricot.org/reports/13181302>

Rural Legacy

The Rural Legacy ride is June 10, 7am – 3 pm on the Picnic Grounds of Jug Bay. There are **routes of 22, 35, 46, 55 and 65 miles** on paved, country roads, with supported rest stops at Magruder's Ferry, Eagle Harbor, and the Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary. Registration includes Ride with GPS routes, SAG support, food and drinks at rest stops, and an after-ride picnic. As of May 19, 330 riders have registered for the ride.

Registration closes June 8. You can register for the ride here:

<https://ohbike1.wildapricot.org/event-5125992>

Volunteers are needed for the Rural Legacy for parking, rider check-in, rest stops (Magruder's Ferry, Eagle Harbor, and Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary), the Picnic, and SAG. You can register as a volunteer here:

<https://ohbike1.wildapricot.org/event-5188121>

Oxon Hill Bike and Trail Club Board Meeting Minutes - Draft

Date/Time	May 8, 2023 7:00 PM
Attendance	Joan Oppel, Jim and Jane Hudnall, Randy and Jackie Schoch, Diane Harris, Walt Roscello, Jessica Hirschhorn, Ellen Goodwin, Steve Palincsar, Michael Saizan, Dan Donahue, Sam Perry, Walt Chalmers
Absent	Board members: None

President Schoch called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes from the April board meeting was made and seconded. Minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report – Walt Roscello

Walt presented the Treasurer's report, showing that the club's finances are healthy. Year to date income has exceeded expenses, with a net cash flow of approximately \$5240 thus far in April. That cash flow represents Rural Legacy registrations but also very few Rural Legacy expenses. That ratio will change as the event expenses are booked during June. The current report reflects quarterly payment for the storage locker and the Grace Lutheran \$200 donation for the use of the church for the club's annual meeting.

Membership Report – Jim Hudnall

Jim reported that one new member joined in April, with total membership of around 400 members.

All-Class Rides Update

The Start the Season Right Ride on April 15th had approximately 34 riders turn out for the ride. All went well.

For the May Metric, to be held on May 14th, we have 28 people registered. We need a B ride leader, and Walt agreed to do it.

Rural Legacy Update

Joan gave an update on the Rural Legacy Ride scheduled to occur on June 10th. Planning is ongoing. The porta potties have been reserved. There are many details still to be finalized. Social media is being used generously, including placing ads on Facebook for a small fee.

Advocacy Report – Diane Harris and Walt Roscello

Diane reported that she attended a meeting at Proteus Bike Shop in College Park MD, which was a meet-and-greet with WABA and members of the MD state Department of Transportation. The meeting was to discuss Prince George's county bike trails and changes to the trails. Diane sent a letter to Council Members of Prince George's county to let them know that they have constituents that care about bike safety. Diane suggested that more meetings like this are needed in the southern areas of the county including Fort Washington, Clinton, and Oxon Hill. She said that WABA is interested in having future meetings like this, and she would look into using the Oxon Hill Library as a potential meeting location.

Walt reported that there was a public outreach meeting on the Nice Bridge and the plans for bike utilization on the bridge. Walt indicated that there are a lot of advocates in Virginia noting how unsafe the current plan is. It was mentioned that [WTOP did a nice story](#) on how unsafe the bike transportation plans are in connection with the bridge. Walt said that the period for public comments regarding the bike plans ends on May 10th, and he will resend information about the bridge and the opportunity for public comment to all club members.

Social Media Update – Jessica Hirschhorn

Jessica mentioned that she has been pounding the pavement on social media, mostly Facebook, regarding the Rural Legacy ride. She has also been sending emails to other bike groups.

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.

Next Meeting: June 12, 2023, 7:00 pm, via Zoom.

Bike NY: Five Boro Bike Tour, NYC: From a CYCLIST Point of View

By Jessica Hirschhorn

Imagine, if you will...

- 40 miles
- 5 boroughs of New York City
- Zero traffic
- No lights
- In one day
- With 32,000 of your friends.

Now repeat annually for 45 years.

A science fiction tale? A preposterous yarn?



I rode my SIXTH Five Boro ride last weekend, with a posse of friends, and am here to tell you that it is TRUE.

We traveled to New York on Saturday morning, on the Vamoose Bus from Bethesda, with our bicycles well stored with the luggage under the bus. Given that we were riding the mean (and not very hilly) streets of the Big Apple, we took our gravel/hybrid/urban bikes, which turned out to be just right.

Saturday was spent picking up our ride packets (only a few blocks from our Chelsea hotels). My daughter Sophie and I made a solemn pilgrimage by foot down to Mott Street, to shop at a well-known, teeny, tiny (but not cheap) Korean skin care store.

Our dinner was really special - authentic Ramen.

We awoke early and ready to RIDE the CITY! Rather than facing the hordes (although very well and strictly managed in starting waves) we simply blended into the stream of thousands of cyclists streaming up Sixth Avenue, about an hour after the ride had begun. Despite having repeated this exact ride six times, the MAGIC of riding up Sixth Avenue, with a crowd (but not too tight) of cyclists, with the NYC buildings lining both sides of the avenue, and Central Park just ahead, NEVER gets OLD.

It is pretty busy, but the only time we walked our bikes was the required safety requirement approaching every rest stop. Constant vigilance IS necessary, but I never felt unsafe.

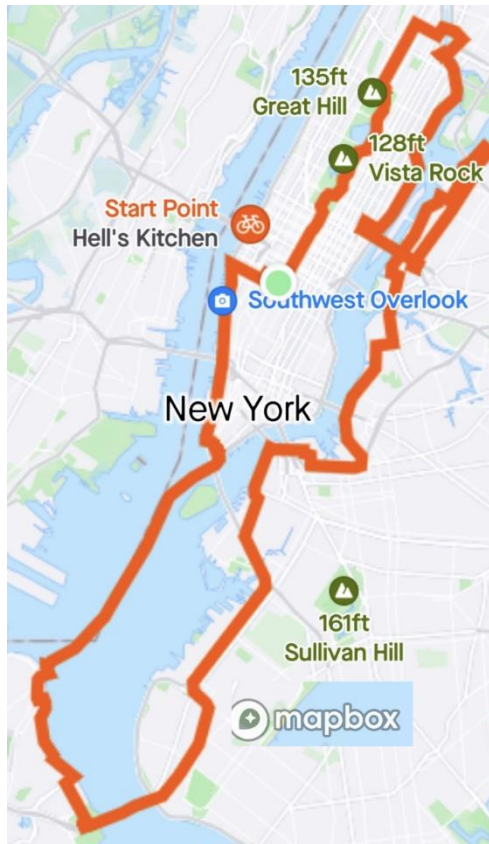
We did pass a few falls, inevitably. They were all being expertly cared for by a gaggle of Five Boro staff and volunteers.

The ride marshals were ALL OVER THE PLACE. (Thank you Leslie!)^{*1}

The rest stops were plentiful and, as expected, pretty busy.

I simply love this city. Manhattan, The Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, and Staten Island!

After a brief stop at the Finish Festival on Staten Island, we skedaddled three more miles to the ferry and were lucky to wait only a few minutes before boarding the second one waiting. Apparently there was a medical emergency not long after we took the ferry, and the riders behind us had to wait a long time. Meh, part of the NY experience and remaining resilient and lucky that we can ride our bicycles on a simply sparkling day.



***1 - Editor's (Leslie's) Note:** For more years than Jessica has been riding the Five Boro Bike Tour, I've been volunteering. Most years, I've been a "course marshal", who monitors bicyclists as well as pedestrians and motor traffic as they (try to) cross the route. After all waves of the tour have passed your post, you can ride the rest of the tour. I wouldn't miss it. If you think you'd like to volunteer, contact me for more info, or watch out for "Calls for Volunteers" when next year's ride is publicized.