

OH Bike Mini-Newsletter – July 2023

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Message from the President



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Our club is now into the summer cycling season with many rides having been already completed and many more being planned. Jackie and I did Ron A.'s Mason Neck ride last Thursday. A very good ride which Ron usually leads on Wednesday mornings -- but I teach at the Alexandria Y on Wednesday so Ron led the ride on Thursday for us. Thank you Ron.

The [Annual Rural Legacy Ride](#) on Saturday June 10th was a great success. I was on "guard duty" with my dog spray on Mt. Calvert Road where the mean dog that hates bicycles lives until all the riders had passed.

Then I transitioned into Sag support. I managed to help five riders with varying problems until all was over and we were having the picnic at the Jug Bay Pavilion. At our virtual club meeting this month, the ride report was very positive over all things considered. We are still recovering from the "pandemic" era, and the success of this ride is a very good sign that bike riding is "roaring back".

Jackie and I joined with 14 other club members for the Annual "overnight" Ride from Cockeysville (north of Baltimore) to York PA on the old North Central RR Line which was converted to a "hiker/biker" trail years ago. This ride was and is led by the very capable Sherwood B. My legs are still a little sore from doing almost 50 miles each day over that mountain.

Hope to see you next month for the Annual "Bob's Birthday Memorial Water Melon Ride",

Rabbi Randy, President

Half-a-Road Captain's Report

By Dan Donohoe

I have past experience with two cycling clubs that expired several years ago. Southern Maryland's Patuxent Area Cycling Enthusiasts (PACE) went belly-up in 2008. Tidewater Virginia's Tidewater Bicycle Association (TBA) disbanded in 2016. How might this fact relate to road captain duties?

Getting more people out on rides could improve member engagement with OHBTC. Increased involvement has the potential of upping the number of ride leaders, quantity of rides, and volunteers willing to help with club activities. Eventually, we might even have new blood flowing into club leadership roles. It's not that the current leaders aren't doing a commendable job. I just imagine that very few of our club leaders see themselves serving unlimited terms in office.

I plan to begin surveying members (especially new, inactive, and/or non-involved people on the membership list) to learn about their cycling motivation, barriers to participation, and areas of interest. So, envision the goal of increased member engagement. We set baselines, put measurements in place, and establish objectives to reach the goal. I'm interested in getting feedback on my thoughts as well as ideas from the membership regarding this goal of increasing member engagement.

Would any former ride leaders who have been less active recently like to get back into the swing of things by leading a few rides in this cycling season? My intention is to lead some St. Mary's Co. rides after being inactive for a few years. Does anyone have novel ideas about gaining new ride leaders? I would love to hear them.

Oxon Hill Bike and Trail Club Board Meeting Minutes

The June OHBTC Board Meeting was held too late in the month for minutes to be included in this newsletter. They will be included in the August newsletter.

Eastern Shore Ride - Chesapeake Cycling Club's C3 Tri-County Classic

By Steve Palincsar

On Saturday, April 29, Catherine Ade and I rode [Chesapeake Cycling Club's C3 Tri-County Classic](#), which started at the Talbot Community Center at Easton on Maryland's Eastern Shore. A new ride, in its second running this year, the Tri-County Classic featured 23, 38, 64 and 102 mile courses. All routes except the 23 miler crossed the Tred Avon River on the Oxford-Bellevue Ferry.

Inspired in part by the growth of the Six Pillars Century the following weekend (see Harry Kidd's report on the ride) the Chesapeake Cycling Club aimed to provide a great cycling experience as well as a lot of value for money.

Included in the registration were a Camelbak Podium water bottle, tickets for a one-way passage on the Oxford-Bellevue Ferry, free ice cream at the [Scottish Highland Creamery](#) in Oxford during the ride, finish line food and beer by the [Papuseria Kent Island](#) food truck (sadly, when we finished they were all out), and live music by [New Legacy Blues](#).

Food at rest stops included fresh baked goods from three different bakeries, including delicious brownies that helped fuel my ride and Clif Bars (my first experience with them, which impressed me enough to buy a box of 18 for the Great Allegheny Passage).



Top row: Entering Oxford; Ice cream stop at the Scottish Highland Creamery. Bottom row: Waiting for the Ferry; Riders on board the Ferry

Weather

It rained in Easton for most of the week before the ride, and the [RouteArrows](#) (temporary paper stickers on the road surface) placed to mark the route had washed away in places. The organizers responded by placing road signs along the route as a last-minute improvisation. The signs were clear and colorful although we hardly noticed them, relying instead on both cue sheet and Garmin GPS for navigation.

The rain affected the drive out to Easton, too. The DC area experienced near-record rainfall on Friday, and traffic on the Beltway and Route 50 was at a crawl due to poor visibility. Wind and weather forced the closure of one lane on the Bay Bridge, and traffic had come to a stand-still for almost an hour nearing the bridge, turning what would normally have been a 90-minute drive into a more than three-hour ordeal for me and almost seven hours for Catherine, who made the mistake of leaving Rt 50 in search of a rest area in Annapolis.

Rain tapered off during the night, by morning settling into a foggy mist. Roads were still wet, but with little or no actual ponding. I wore a rain jacket until the first rest stop, when the mist lifted leaving overcast skies that gradually cleared during the day, finally turning to glorious sunshine on the drive home. Surprisingly, wind wasn't bad at all, a rarity for the Eastern Shore.

The Ride

The metric route was just under 65 miles, mostly through open farmland with just 956' elevation gain: almost flat with the notable exception of a 9 mile section with 263' of elevation gain and at least one startling nearly 5% grade (when you're expecting dead flat, no-shifting one-gear-all-day riding, 50-foot descents and rises in a quarter mile can come as an eye-opening surprise) between the first rest stop and the outskirts of Cordova.

There were rest stops at mile 21 in the Adkins Arboretum in Tuckahoe State Park, at mile 41 in Easton, at the ice cream stop at the Highland Creamery in Oxford and at the ferry dock at mile 51. Crossing the Tred Avon River was a highlight: usually cars outnumber cyclists on the ferry, but this time we greatly outnumbered the cars.

We saw no accidents along the route, although a group of riders we briefly drafted had to stop when one rider had a flat tire. Riders were polite and well-behaved, in no way resembling the Seagull's pace mobs. One rider at the first rest stop was dismayed when he realized he'd missed a turn and was on the 65-mile course instead of the 38; I learned later that SAG support transported him and his companions

to the Oxford ferry so they could finish with fewer than 40 miles. There aren't many rides where SAG support would do that.

Conclusion

The Tri-County Classic was an excellent ride. It was very well supported and well run, with great rest stops and a fun-to-ride, scenic route that introduced me to a part of Talbot County I've never been to before even though I've been doing Easton rides for many years. In my opinion, the organizers met their goals of providing a great ride and terrific value-for-money. I enjoyed the route very much and would definitely do this one again. I also have to say, riding a ride like this with a partner is much more fun than doing it alone.

Eastern Shore Ride - Six Pillars Century, Cambridge, MD

By Harry Kidd

On May 6 the 2023 Six Pillars returned for its 16th year at its traditional start location at Gerry Boyle Park at Great Marsh. They offered a choice of three traditional routes: 37 miles, the famous 56-mile Ironman Eagleman course, and the beautiful 100-mile century course that takes you through quaint townships along the Chesapeake Bay and back through serene woodlands.

I planned on doing the 56-mile course, but the weather convinced me to ride the 37-mile route. They suggested start times for each route, based on the average ride time and the planned closing time of rest stops: One hundred miles, 7 AM; 56 miles, between 8 and 9 AM; and 9 AM for the 37-mile route.

At the ride start, there was a heavy and moist ground fog. The roads were not wet, but being aware of traffic was necessary. The route was one I had ridden previously, and each course was marked at all turns. The rest stops were well organized. The first stop was very crowded.

I plan on doing this ride again in 2024. But: unless you are willing to drive to Cambridge for a ride starting at 8 am, it is necessary to get hotel reservations **early**. I tried to make a reservation 30 days in advance. The only hotel with rooms in Easton or Cambridge was the old Days Inn in Easton. ***I WON'T BE STAYING THERE AGAIN.*** January 2024 is what I've put on my calendar for making a hotel reservation for this ride.

NCR Trail Ride

By Sherwood Byers (Tour Leader)

On a bright and sunny Saturday morning 16 riders (from left To right: Janell Saunders, Alan Kurzweil, Ron Altemus, Sarah Clement, Diane Harris Mark Garrison, Theresa Rowell, Gene Villiva, Linda Bankerd, Deborah Bowman, Leon Wells, Sherwood Byers, Robin Butler -La-



Francois, Randy Schoche, Suzanne Brown and Jackie Schoche taking photo, all OHBTC members), OHBTC President, and Gene Villiva) met at the Grand Lodge of Ancient and Free Masons to ride with me, Sherwood Byers, Sr. for a tour from Cockeyville MD to York PA.

After a pre-ride briefing and a group photo all were on the pedals to the first planned regrouping point at Monkton Station. Other planned regrouping stops were the Mason/Dixon Line, New Freedom -- the halfway point where we ate lunch at different venues, Hanover Junction, the York University of Civil Engineering, and then to the hotels where we lodged.



In New Freedom there was a historical event depicting the history of New Freedom. After some time seeing reenactments of the past, our tour continued toward the next regrouping point, Hanover Junction about 8 miles from New Freedom. Once we had all arrived, I reminded all that I wanted all to meet at the York College of Civil Engineering so that the group could ride together once we arrived in York. We would then be riding on a somewhat busy road and the need for safety was of the utmost importance.



Heading to our destination for the day, there was about a 3-mile trek to the hotel. The group stayed together and waiting as all passed through the intersections all the way to the hotel. A post-ride briefing was given mostly to determine when, where, and what time to meet and eat. Some decided to have Bar-B-Que while others ate at the diner. All met in the lobby before going to eat after freshening up after the day 1 of the tour.

Day 2 was the return to Cockeysville. Ready to ride, all gathered for a group photo and off we went. Navigating around the lot to the main road again we rode our bikes tightly grouped for reasons of safety.

The ride to New Freedom was casual so as not to arrive for lunch too early before the venues opened. We had quick stops at the York College of Civil Engineering, Hanover Junction, lunch in New Freedom, and Monkton Station before returning to the ride start. There were a few incidents reported (brake problem, cycling incident, and flat tire).

All in all, it was a thoroughly enjoyable weekend to tour with friends, thanks in part to perfect summer-like weather.

2023 Patuxent River Rural Legacy Ride

By Joan Oppel (Event Co-Chair)

OHBTC's 21st Annual Patuxent River Rural Legacy Bicycle Ride on June 10 was a memorable occasion. Notably, it was the first event the club has held since the start of the pandemic. (There were no events in 2020, 2021, and 2022). A team of fantastic, energetic, dedicated volunteers stepped up and provided the cornerstone for success. And, after a couple of days of terrible air quality (that set records), the skies cleared, the air cleared, and the weather was beautiful.



Forty-two OHBTC members made the event possible by buying supplies and serving at rest stops, managing parking at the start, checking riders in, organizing and running the end-of-ride picnic, handling SAG, putting up signs, delivering produce, and doing the many small chores that contribute to the event's success.

This year, after the long hiatus, 444 people registered for the event and 336 cyclists checked-in to ride. That's a typical percentage of no-shows (in our long history of events) even when the weather is good.

Parking - **Phil Mitchell** coordinated parking with **Brian Russell** and **Steve Perakis**.

Check-in - went very smoothly thanks to **Deb Reynolds**, **Carol Linden**, **Erica Sanders**, **Leslie Tierstein**, and **Walt Chalmers**.



Magruders (Clyde Watson Boating Area) Rest Stop – **Jema Palmer**, **Rodney Palmer**, **Jackie Schoch**, **Belinda Acre**, **Lois Lightfoot** and **Lou Dall'Orso** made this a great rest stop. **Celeste Conyers** managed the food purchasing (but could not attend in person).



Eagle Harbor Rest Stop was in great form due to the leadership of **Pat Colvin** and the special help of **Diana Donohue, Ellen Goodwin and Walt Roscello**.

Merkle Rest Stop had a terrific team of volunteers with **Mike Saizan, Regina Saizan, Sam Perry, Gail Perry, Theresa Rowell, Carl Hattery, and Polly Choate**.

The after-ride picnic was a big success due to the efforts of **Ron Altemus, Susan Altemus, Diane Harris, George Martin, Fran Jezisek, Wally Huie, Jane Huie, Gail Black and Bruce Black**. **Sonja Newman, Desiree Holton and Hans Holton** helped with clean up.



Produce – There would have been no fresh produce without the Friday pick up and delivery services of **John Early and Lou Dall’Orso**.

SAG services were coordinated by **Holly Carr**, and drivers were **Randy Schoch, Harry Kidd and Ken Meredith**. **Walter Carr** was unexpectedly recruited when everyone else was busy.

Sign placement on the routes – **Patricia Sanders** met Joan Oppel at 5 am to distribute about 40 information signs at significant locations along the route.

Cue Sheets – **Steve Palincsar** formatted the cue sheets.

A special thank you to Randy Schoch – who spent a few morning hours at the entrance to a driveway where there was a known bad dog to ensure the dog did not make an appearance (the dog knows Randy has a secret weapon).

Oxon Hill jerseys - **Janell Saunders** sold Oxon Hill jerseys and other OH gear and helped where needed throughout the day.

Co-chairs for the event were **Joan Oppel** and **Jessica Hirschhorn** – who devoted many hours to the details of making this event happen. Very special thanks to Jim and Jane Hudnall, who graciously coached Joan and Jessica over numerous phone and video calls.

Special thanks to **Trek Bicycle Waldorf** and Keith Jackson and Nick Walthen for mechanic services at the start.



Keany Produce in Landover has donated produce to our ride for 20 years! Special thanks to John Pearson at Keany for handling the arrangements.



The **Town of Eagle Harbor** made its community center available for a rest stop and provides tables and chairs. We are grateful to Mayor Noah Waters for coordinating with us this year.

Additional special thanks to **Joyce Lloyd** at **Patuxent River Park** for assisting with our use of Jug Bay Pavilion and Magraders/Clyde Watson Boating Center, and to **Ranger Danny Jones** at **Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary and Visitor Center** for making sure the center was available to us.

Two people volunteered but unfortunately were sick on the day of the event: **Dan Donohue and Bernie Cohen**.

Proceeds from the Patuxent River Rural Legacy Ride will benefit projects in Patuxent River Parks, Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary, and the Town of Eagle Harbor.