

Rollin'

Newsletter of the Silver Wheels Cycling Club - March, 2008

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Silver Wheels Mission

To create and provide an environment for members and guests to:

Ride for exercise and fun

Enjoy the social side of cycling

Improve bicycling skills

Learn more about bicycling and educate others

Promote bicycling in our area

Happy Birthday To Us

It was April 15, 1998 and a group of folks met in the meeting room at Carlisle Visitor Center. About 30 people showed up that night, lots of gray hair, plenty of wrinkles, photos of grandkids in their wallets. Most of them were strangers to each other.

The event was an invitation to consider beginning a bicycling club and everyone there showed a strong interest in getting something started. After a short sharing of ideas there was a sign up and we had our first members: Silver Wheels Cycling Club was born.

The first check received was from Jack and Kathy Secrist. Our first rides were held on Saturdays and alternating Tuesdays and Thursdays. Twenty-five miles was a long ride back then. Twelve to thirteen mph was about all the faster we went. We had started as an over-55 club and that was the group we attracted.

Word got out about Silver Wheels pretty fast and in a few short months we had people younger than 55 wanting to join and we dropped the whole age thing, opening membership to anyone. That first year we had 50 rides and had grown to 80 members by our first banquet held in November – a potluck dinner.

Things change. Now the club is about to turn ten and we've put a lot of miles under our tires. Now we have so many rides and members going every which way it's hard to keep track. We have riders who go at preferred speeds anywhere from 8 mph to over 20 and distances from 10 miles to over 100 – and that might happen all in one day!

It is feasible our club will grow to over 200 members soon. And with that growth comes the complications and challenges of making the organization work well for all members regardless of their involvement or skill. We are blessed that we have a dedicated group of volunteers who keep this machine rolling – ride leaders, committee chairs and their members, and the board that helps steer us on a course for the future.

Party Time

On Sunday, April 13, the club will have an official celebration of its 10th anniversary. We'll meet at the Oberlin Depot-Community Center at 12:30 pm and do a little riding first. This is an all-star event so everyone can partake. The rides will be brief so we return back to the Depot and the party at 2:00.

After the ride we'll part down at the center and enjoy a little levity, cake and entertainment. All members are invited of course and also invited to bring some sort of memorabilia and anything else to help us celebrate and commemorate the event.

Bring what? Some of our talented members are planning to write poems about cycling and we'll hear them read those poems too. There was a day when Marge Goelz, Sharon Bouchonville, and Sheryl Edwards did a song and dance for the club... maybe the terrible trio will do an encore. We have some musicians in the group and they might lead us in some songs we can recognize.

For a small fundraiser, Ed Stewart will have a bike painting on the block for a drawing – tickets will only be a buck. The drawing will help pay for the birthday cake Steve Woosley said he would get... or bake? What can you bring to the party? How about a story about a ride you will never forget, or remember some of the members who used to ride with us or just show up and be a part of it all. Ask any kid and he'll tell you: "You don't turn ten everyday."

Photo of the Month

Let this be the start of something big. Or interesting. Or hilarious.

This is a photo shot a couple of years ago while on a ride in the early fall on the Towpath Trail. When I saw this scene out of my side vision I braked as hard as I could. Darlene Wieland almost ran me over. It was in the later afternoon and the sun was setting behind the far trees and there was this brilliantly lit field just behind the trees lining this little pond. I knew that some day this would also become a painting, which it did a year later. Joe Etzler has been hounding me for it for a while and soon he will have his way.



Do you have a photo you want to submit as next month's photo of the month? All you have to do is send it via email to ed@stewartadv.com and the newsletter staff of editors and journalists will consider all submissions for the high honor of being depicted in next month's issue of Rollin'. If none are submitted something really awful will be used instead.

So get out there and take a picture of your bike or of your ride buddy doing something fancy or stupid or naughty or nice. Some sort of prize will be offered.. the value may be questionable but it will be a prize. The file size should be around 1-6 megabytes and in jpeg format. The crew at the newsletter office makes its decisions around the 15th of each month. Photos submitted might also be used on the club website. Or not.

Have you received any emails?

The past month or so has been pretty frustrating for a lot of members, and for good reason. Our board tried to make things better for our communications by eliminating one of two systems that were used (Yahoo and our own website) and chose to go with our website service for sending news to members. Theories always sound pretty good don't they?

We converted all members to our email service, called News@SilverWheelsCycling.org. Well, we tried to convert anyway. There were some setbacks and delays but hopefully those have been settled now. If you still have any problems receiving the News@SW emails, here is what to do:

1. Look in your Junk Mail folder for an email - "Mailing list manager majordomo@kundenserver.com" . by all rights this looks like it should be spam and that's why it's in the Junk Mail. If you find it, open it up and click on the link offered and you're good. That's all you need to do.

2. If you cannot find it, go to your incoming email security area (it's different for every system) and type into your "safe senders" or "trusted senders" or something similar. Then go to the Silver wheels website and resubscribe to the newsgroup. You should get a confirmation email from kundenserver.com like mentioned above. For some it might come in right away, for others it may take a while, so be patient and check often.

The newsgroup will be used for communicating with the whole group at one time. It is an excellent way to notify members about rides and other events. During our peak season it can be a busy area sometimes. Sometimes when an email is sent to members they have a tendency to reply to the sender. Sometimes this reply is appropriate for all members but usually it is not. In order to keep from clogging the service with personal messages of no interest to all members, we ask that responses go to the sender's personal email rather than using the REPLY option.

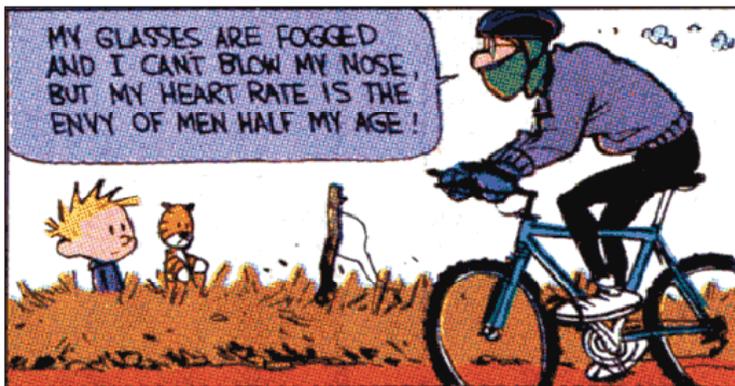
Gear of the Month

Here is a new feature we'll have in each issue – a brief look at some new bike gear that looks interesting and possibly worth examining for purchase. If you spot something worth mentioning here in Rollin' let us know, send a photo – we'll consider anything.

This month's spotlight is on a new grip for straight bars – like you use on hybrids and mountain bikes. These were spotted at a local bike shop last fall and then featured in a recent issue of *Bicycling* magazine. The Ergon GP1 is designed to relieve pressure on the nerves running up the middle of the palm and wrist – especially on longer rides. So, if you have problems with pain like that you might want to get on over to your favorite local bike shop and check these out. They cost somewhere around \$35-\$40. If you do get them bring them to a club meeting sometime and let us know how well they work.



Ergon GP1



Writers Wanted

Producing a monthly newsletter for the club is not a difficult task but it can have its challenges. One way members can help is to submit articles – of any size – prepared by members.

What sort of articles? Stories about your rides, reviews of new gear, observations of cycling behavior, a look at interesting websites, and who knows what else you crazy folks are interested in? Some of you write poetry and that would make for an interesting change of pace. Did you get a new bike – write about it. Have a close call in traffic – send us a note and we'll toss it out there. Do you have a humorous story to share? Let us laugh with you.

How do you do it? Just compose it and send it in to the newsletter staff at ed@stewartadv.com. Just about any format can be used – we'll figure out a way to use it... or just copy and paste it into an email and that's fine.

Silver Wheels Board Sets Goals For 2008 Season

At its annual retreat in early February, the board met to deliberate many topics for the upcoming year. This is the time when they look back at last year's successes and problems, then work on programs and schedules for the next year. One of the topics on the annual agenda is to set goals for the year. Here are the goals set for 2008:

1. Retain 80% of current membership
2. End the year with a balanced budget
3. Reach at least 15 individuals through LAB education programs
4. Offer at least 3 bicycle maintenance sessions
5. Be involved in at least one community service project
6. Donate at least 10% of club income to bicycle advocacy organizations
7. Offer monthly All-Star rides
8. Add one additional social event to the calendar

These goals all relate to the mission of the club. They should be reachable with concentrated effort. Social activities, education and advocacy are important to the club's success in fulfilling its stated mission.

Time to set some goals of your own

With the season just awakening it's time for you to think of what you want to accomplish in cycling this year. Many of our most active members set goals for themselves each year – some very lofty ones too. In years past we've seen one member go for a ride a day for the whole year; another went for over 10,000 miles; another has sought to get better on hills; and quite a few have sought to use cycling as a way to lose weight.

For setting goals, start by taking a look at the calendar. Are there days you can mark that are definite ride days? If you go through the season's months and mark them for riding now, it is easier to remember why you marked them. Then look for a few more to add. That's one way to get more riding in.

Another way is to set a smaller goal for each week. If you rode 300 miles last year, look at that calendar again and write in a mileage goal that will allow you to ride more this year. It's good to go for at least 10% more but if you set a higher goal that's good too.

Another type of goal is to get better at a certain kind of riding, such as hill climbing. For this one, find a hill that has always been a challenge to you. Start the season by riding that hill and timing yourself from one point to another. Then routinely find other hills and work on them, getting to know how to approach hills better. Every so often, like every two weeks, come back to that test hill and time yourself again. If there is no improvement you know your approach isn't working. You might want to add interval training to some of your regular solo rides. Intervals basically amount to riding at your hardest for a brief time, such as 10 to 20 seconds (for starters) then ride at a modest pace for double that time, then go back to the high speed again. Figure out a pattern that seems to work for you without overworking.

There are many different kinds of goals. Mostly they involve doing more of whatever you want to get better at. Getting better at hills means climbing more hills, getting faster means working at riding faster more often, learning to ride farther carrying a pack means practicing with a pack and slowly riding farther and farther.

Lots of luck with that.

Highlights from the board annual retreat

1

1. The position of Website Administrator was made a voting board position, joining the Ride Committee Chair and Membership Committee Chair as appointed board positions.

2

2. Effective immediately, mileage accounted for the year will begin on December 1 and continue through the end of November the following year. The purpose for this change is to allow mileage to be accumulated for an entire year and recognized at the annual banquet in early December. Only rides that are on the club calendar will account for club mileage.

3

3. An assortment of special rides were presented for the year. At least one per month will occur this year. Also check the new Directory and Handbook for 2008 for a summary of special rides. Plus check the website under Special Rides.

4

4. The Dog Days Wine Tour is scheduled for Saturday, August 16, to be held at the LaGrange Lions Park. This is a change of location and will feature a change of routes plus an inside room that is air conditioned. A few smaller changes will occur too.

5

5. The board applauded the changes made to the website over the last year. They would like the actions of the board made available to the membership as a permanent record somewhere in the website also.

6

6. It was agreed to drop the yahoogroups discussion group service from Yahoo.com and to use only the website's option for this service: News@SilverWheelsCycling.org. Also all members would be added to the service and new members automatically subscribed by the Membership Committee upon joining. Any member has the right to unsubscribe at any time.

7

7. The Membership meetings for 2008 will be held in March, May, July, September and November. Program topics will include bike shops from the area, interesting rides experienced by members and mechanics classes.

8

8. The Annual Banquet is scheduled for the first Thursday in December and will be held at Tom's Country Place in Avon.

9

9. The Board of Directors meetings will continue to be held on the first Thursdays of each month at Gander Mountain at 6:30 pm. All members are always welcome to attend board meetings.

10

10. The 2008 Handbook and Directory will have expanded coverage of the calendar and club information. It will grow from a 12-page to a 16-page document. It will be mailed sometime in early March.

11

11. There was a change made in the average speed ranges to most of the star levels, effective immediately. For the levels 2, 3, and 4 the upper range was increased by one mile per hour. An Open level was created for those who wish to ride above the 4-star level. These changes were made to address the ever-changing style of riding the membership demonstrates.

12

12. Ian Cheah has come forward to serve as the new Mileage Minder. An interesting statistic cited by him was that in 2006 the membership average mileage was 579 miles; for 2007 that number grew to 774, a 33% increase in one year.

13

13. The board voted to pay for one half of the cost for members to attend the club's Road 1 Bike Ed Class. This is consistent with our mission. Members will pay only \$25 for the \$50, 12-hour 4-session course. Check the website for the schedule of the spring classes to be held in April.