

Rollin'

Newsletter of the Silver Wheels Cycling Club - December, 2009

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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



WOW – 2009 – WOW

by Joe Etzler, President

Silver Wheels has had another great year. We have experienced significant growth in several areas. Our membership is above 200 riders and volunteers. We have had over 430 scheduled events including rides, meetings, and picnics. The Club received the League of American Bicyclists (club of the year award) for our region. We are in the process of competing for the newsletter of the year award. Can't see how we could lose. The number of ride leaders is increasing allowing for a greater number and variety of rides. We have had a very successful invitational (Dog Days) ride and our adopt a highway program is working well. While we have had some turn over in leadership, we have an enthusiastic team of hardworking directors and committee members.

All this is possible because we like to ride, and party and are not afraid to help out when needed. Riding for fitness and pleasure is our main activity. This is made possible by you, the folks who lead rides, publish the calendar and newsletter and those who take care of membership information. Other folks help out with our website, publicity, education, safety, merchandise and tracking our mileage. Our riders are very willing to help each other with repairs, advise and offer first aid when needed. How can a club with members like this only grow and get better?

My thanks to all who have made 2009 a very enjoyable and successful year for us all. We can look forward to an even better year in 2010. Have a happy holiday season.

Get Ready for Winter Weather

From RoadBikeRider.com

Lubrication & Bearings

Moisture and temperature changes (which cause condensation) are bad for the hardest working parts of a bike -- chain, cassette, chainrings and the bearings in the hubs and bottom bracket. Check all these parts and address any issues before riding into Mother Nature's worst.

Start your off-season riding with a relatively new chain, cassette and chainrings. Protect these parts with a high-quality chain lube. Check your chain after wet rides and add lube if the links appear shiny, which indicates lubrication has washed off.

Check components that have bearings by turning them with your hand. You should feel smooth rotation against a slight hydraulic resistance.

Turn wheel axles like this and then push and pull to feel for play. Turn the axle nuts to make sure they aren't loose. If they are or there's roughness, play or lack of lubrication (no resistance to smooth spinning), have the hubs overhauled with fresh grease and bearings.

To check bottom bracket bearings, lift the chain off the small chainring and set it on the frame. Slowly turn the crank by hand to feel and listen for roughness or lack of lubrication. Grasp the crankarms (not pedals) and push and pull laterally to feel for play. Find a problem? It may be time for a new bottom bracket. On most modern road bikes they're designed to be replaced rather than serviced.

Tip: Lubricant makers such as Finish Line, Pedro's and others offer lubes specifically made for wet riding conditions. Check with your local bike shop and riding buddies for recommendations because what works best varies by region.

This article and many others brought to you each month are available online at the website www.RoadBikeRider.com. Expert advice and insight into everyday cycling problems plus product reviews. Worth clicking onto.



Brakes

Most road bikes use rim brakes, which lose lots of stopping power when the rims are wet. To minimize this effect, start the season with new brake pads. Replacing pads that are worn, dry and hard is usually as easy as loosening a keeper screw, sliding the old pad out of the holder, and sliding the new pad in. Also, check brake cables to make sure they aren't fraying and are sliding easily in their housings.

Tires & Tubes

Wet winter weather causes more flats because debris gets washed onto the road. Water also accelerates pothole growth, which means a greater risk of pinch flats. Plus, pavement gets slick.

For these reasons it's best to ride into winter on quality tires in excellent condition. If you use narrow performance tires during the season, switching to one size wider (say, from 23C to 25C) will provide additional puncture protection and allow lower inflation pressure for better traction. You'll also get more mileage from the thicker tread.

Even with beefier tires it's smart to carry a second spare tube. It's hard to patch a puncture in wet and cold weather.

Tip: For more flat protection, consider installing sealant in your tires. Slime is a popular brand. It can be put into your tubes or you can purchase tubes that contain it. Sealant plugs small punctures almost immediately, preventing a flat.

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Winter Tune-Up Classes at Marty's

Marty Hausenstaub of Marty's Cycle Center in Avon Lake has come through again for the club. He is repeating an offer he made to us a few years ago that was pretty popular and he willingly agreed to do it again.

Here's the deal:

Class 1 – January 11,12,18	6-9 p.m.
Class 2 – February 8, 9,15	6-9 p.m.
Cost is only \$25.00 – must be a club member	

This is a real hands-on class during which the "student" totally disassembles his/her bike: wheels, cables, brakes, derailleurs, front and rear hubs, bottom bracket and head set. All parts are then cleaned then the bike is re-assembled under Marty's guidance (he will also double-check bikes to assure work is good). Replacement parts will be discounted too... and you should anticipate some parts will be needed.

How to register: By email to emsbiker514@gmail.com. Strictly on a first-come, first-enrolled basis. Classes are limited to six people due to space limits. Class payment may be made on the first night. Enrollment ends when both classes are filled. A waiting list will be maintained in case of drops.

This is a tremendous offer made by Marty. A total overhaul will normally cost \$100 or so, plus parts. Here, you not only get it for 75% less but you also get to know your bike intimately. This is an excellent opportunity you should not pass up. You'll also get to know about other people's bikes because you will work together in some instances.

For the class you should wear clothes that can get dirty, a shop apron of some sort is good, rubber gloves – not surgical gloves – should be brought, and a metal or heavy plastic pan for cleaning your chain and bearings and to store the parts in overnight. No tools are required. If you have tools and cleaning brushes you can bring them in your car and then ask Marty if they'll be needed. (We don't want to risk mix-ups.) Also bring your bike... only one bike though. Leave your bags and other accessories at home.

Get Ready For Winter

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Fenders

The best way to protect yourself and your bike from sloppy weather is to install fenders. They reduce the amount of water and crud thrown onto your frame and components. Equally important, there won't be a rooster tail to soak your shorts and cause saddles sores, or front-wheel spray that drenches your shoes and freezes your feet.

You can get quick-connect fenders that go on/off in minutes. But more effective are full-coverage fenders that bolt on and stay put throughout the season. Light, durable and (usually) rattle-free plastic fenders are available from several companies, including Planet Bike and Axiom.

Tip: If your frame has enough clearance for fenders under the fork crown and behind the bottom bracket, but doesn't have threaded eyelets on the dropouts for attaching struts, look for fender sets that provide clamps for the fork legs and stays.

Lights

Winter means less daylight, and this means a greater chance of riding after dark, intentionally or not. To see and be seen, you need lights.

There are expensive, high-tech, super-bright rechargeable headlights that illuminate the darkest roads for hours. And there are simpler lights that are much cheaper and run on regular batteries. These can be bright enough to show you the road and keep you visible. They may be all you need in areas where there is ambient light.

Check out our summary of the Light Show at the end of this month's newsletter where we discuss a variety of lighting solutions. One type that was not studied is the generator powered lights that run off a device driven from your tire or hub. These can be very useful and they do not require battery re-charging, which can be a pain sometimes. Often you would still want a supplemental battery-powered light to go along with a generated light.

Tip: If you plan to do some serious winter cycling, as in snow and hypothermia, visit these websites for advice, equipment and inspiration: <http://www.icebike.com> and <http://www.allweathersports.com>

Board Approves Bike Safety Comic Book Project

At its November meeting the Silver Wheels Board of Directors approved a project proposed by Ed Stewart. This is a unique project for the club because it is using for the first time some of its set aside funds for advocacy and education to directly fund a local project. Most often our Advocacy funds go to organizations like League of American Bicyclists or Ohio Bicycle Federation. This project is a local one and our club will be the primary funders for it.

Here is an overview of the project. A couple years ago the Elyria Comic Book Initiative was formed (a 501 C(3) non-profit organization) to assist literacy efforts for youth in Lorain County through the medium of comic books. This is done through working with youngsters – usually middle school age of 11 to 13 or so – after school and helping them to develop themes into stories and illustrations in a comic book format. The first few efforts have shown promise with getting at-risk young people more interested in school and improving grades and attendance.

Ed Stewart got together with the director of the organization and proposed a project in which the comic book could be used to introduce bike safety to youth. After a few conversations and some work, a group has been identified in South Elyria who participate with the Save Our Children program (another non-profit that is also partially supported by United Way). Once the kids were identified and a location was secured and a base of funding from the club was created, the project has taken wings... or air in its tires.

Starting in January the project will work with 15 young people at Save Our Children (located on Middle Ave. near 16th St. in Elyria) for ten weeks. Ed will present to the group and their parents (January 14) some basic concepts of bike safety appropriate to that age and maybe help out with the kids getting started. After that they are on their own with an instructor. The sessions last one hour each week and the project ends on March 25. From there the comic books "go to press" at the JVS, where high school students work with the materials and create finished comic books for each participant.

Now the fun part: the day after the kids finish their work Silver Wheels will give them a pizza party at Save Our Children to celebrate their accomplishments. The kids will be invited to tell us their stories and how they did what they did. We will be there in our bike togs and will also ride over for the event so they can check out our bikes too. This will be on Friday, March 26 at around 4:15.



The next month there will be an affair at LCCC for the Comic Book Initiative to showcase all the efforts they have made over the past school year. Our group of Bike Safety kids will be an important part of that event – and Silver Wheels will be honored in some way also as sponsors. This will be on Friday, April 30 –time to be determined. This may be another ride event so check the calendar.

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The Bike Safety Comic Book Project is a real win-win for all of us. The kids get to see that others are interested in their success –who knows how much impact this could have on a young person. Silver Wheels will benefit too from very positive media exposure. And our members who choose to participate with the project in any way will benefit from knowing we done good.

Silver Wheels is not alone in this sponsorship, although we are the major contributor. Marty's Cycle Center will be helping out significantly and other bike shops and retailers are being asked to help too.

Tips for Winter Riding



D. Phinney
RoadBikeRider

- Ride with a friend or group. Sharing conversation as well as a draft helps the miles go by. But group rides must be cohesive. Don't let them degenerate into hammerfests. You shouldn't do any hard, fast riding when the temperature is below 50F degrees. Instead, use winter to accumulate base miles.
- Don't overdress. If you're not chilly in the first few minutes, you have probably worn too much and will overheat.
- Start with hot drinks in freezing temperatures and use insulated bottles or covers to increase the time before liquids turn to slush.
- Be wary of shaded corners, which may hide ice.
- Wear light, bright colors to help motorists see you on dim days.
- Install rear reflectors or carry reflective ankle bands for times when dusk catches you a few minutes from home.
- Carry two tubes. Patching a tube with freezing fingers isn't easy, should a second flat occur.
- Don't stop for long, if at all. Resumption of the windchill will make you cold, and you may be unable to shake the shivers for the rest of the ride.
- Ride short on frigid days. As a rule, you can be fairly comfortable for 90 minutes in subfreezing temperatures. But things may deteriorate quickly after that, particularly if you have raised a sweat.
- Take time to recover after riding. Winter takes more out of you. Because of the elements and your lower fitness level, a 50-mile (90-km) winter ride feels like 80 miles (128 km).
- Be extra careful when you've been sick. Don't try to make up a week of lost training by riding before you're completely well. There is plenty of time to get back on track when spring arrives.

Membership "State of the Union"

Eva Weber, Membership Chairperson

Welcome to our newest member, **David Hershiser** of Oberlin. It's been several months since we've had a new member join.

As this year, and the riding season comes to a close for many of us, I thought I'd give a "State of the Union" report on membership in 2009.

- We started the year with 186 members and **increased to 211** members.
- We have **50 new members** since January 1st
- Only **40% of our new members** have been on a club ride with us this year. Sounds like a challenge for the membership committee to work on in 2010.
- The club gained **one new life member** this year for a total of ten life members!
- Our membership includes **eight honorary/sponsor members**, as designated by the board.

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Membership Renewals in 2010

Eva Weber, Membership Chairperson

Here's what to expect for renewing your membership this coming year. Nearly all members have been transitioned so that your current membership expires February 28, 2010.

The club membership year will now be March 1 through February 28.

- In mid-January you will receive a renewal reminder.
- If you have a valid e-mail address on record with the club, you will receive your renewal reminder by e-mail and will be instructed to go to the club web site to print out the membership application & renewal form.
- If you have no e-mail address on record with the club, you will receive by US Mail a renewal reminder letter and a membership application & renewal form.
- After completing the membership form and signing the liability waiver, you will mail your dues check with the form to the club PO box.
- We want to include all members in the 2010 directory, so it is important that you send your dues and membership form by the deadline (yet to be set by board, but approximately March 1) in order to be included in the printed directory.
- Your new membership card for March 1, 2010 – February 28, 2011 will be mailed to you after your dues are received, either enclosed with the new Handbook and Directory or mailed separately.
- Even life members will receive a reminder to complete the membership renewal form and sign the liability waiver, even though they have no dues to pay.

• IMPORTANT CHANGE ... ALL members must sign the liability waiver annually.

- If you are a new member whose membership year ends later in the year, you will receive a renewal reminder at the beginning of the month that your membership expires. In that case, your membership from that point through February 28, 2011 will be prorated so that **EVERYONE** will be on the same membership year by March 1, 2011 at the latest.



The Light Show Was Illuminating

At our November Club Meeting on Thursday, November 19, we had a Light Show that included members showing the various types and configurations of lights they use on their bikes. For the crowd the show was illuminating and educational as many have been searching for a usable light system and wondered about the value of some. The show answered some of those questions.

Here are some of the take-aways from the show:

1. Many of the 1 Watt halogen lights (either bicycle-specific or flashlights rigged to fit handlebars) appeared very sufficient in the amount of light they produced. These would be adequate for in-town riding and perhaps on a paved bike trail in total darkness. Probably not enough power and dispersion of light for on-road country riding. Multiples of these might prove to be sufficient however (but no one had a multiple 1 Watt set up for us to evaluate).

2. Most red flashing tail lights were very visible at 250 feet. The crowd was most impressed with the light that has a red flasher with a brighter strobe in the center. There at least two makers of this sort: Planet Bike Super Flash (\$25) and NiteRider Cherry Bomb (\$29).

3. There was some consensus about having two rear lights being better than only one. We felt that when the rider had a light on the rear rack or trunk bag plus another on their jacket (higher up) offered a reference point that was helpful.

4. Karen Farago fooled us with her handlebar end lights. These are very small and replace your plugs at the end of your handlebar. Very visible at 250 feet and gave a perspective afforded by multiple lights. Hers were installed on her drop bars but on straight bars they would be helpful for side viewing.

5. A few showed off their more expensive headlights with higher wattage – 10 to 25 W. Each system was valued at around \$100 more or less and demonstrated that you get the light you pay for. These systems are for riding out in the country where little or no ambient light is available, or for night riding on a paved or unpaved trail.

6. The take away for the reflecting materials is that they all work. Reflective piping on jackets and gear work very well although they are not plentiful enough to be very effective. The Illuminite jackets worn by Larry Best and Ed Stewart worked best when the high beam bright headlights shone on them.

The best take away is that you should be prepared for night riding if you think there is a chance you might get caught. Good reflective materials and at least some sort of light should be in your bag. If you know ahead of time you will be out after dark – be well prepared. Extra lights and spare batteries can be important. And the more light you can put in front of you the more you can see (duh!) things like potholes and other surface defects. Aim your headlight to focus on a distance about 30 feet in front of you so you'll have enough time to dodge a hazard.

