

Rollin'

Newsletter of Silver Wheels Cycling Club, Inc.

May, 2012

Coming Event

Don't miss the next club meeting, Thursday, May 17 at Carlisle Visitor Center, 7 p.m.

Our presenter will be member Ken Sloane who has literally traveled the world by bike.

Ken will present on how to prepare for longer distance trekking and what to expect. He will share some of his tales of the road and maybe some horror stories too.

Swerve Bike Shop will be there to show some bikes and gear you may want to consider for making long bike rides also.

We have a handful of members who have done considerable trekking and they will be glad to share their education with you.

Even if you are not looking at long trips, this will be an interesting night and you get to meet all sorts of characters.

Guests are always welcome.

Subbing For Larry

Ed Stewart, guest editor

I was sitting there minding my own business

when all of a sudden I got an email from Larry Best. His message was about him leaving for a couple of months and that he needed someone to handle the newsletter in his absence. He promised he would send articles to fill the void while on his cross-country trek, so of course I agreed. I figured we would also receive many other articles from members, just like we do for each issue of Rollin'.

As each of you know, things do not always go as expected. Larry left and apparently he was so filled with the excitement of the time he forgot to write the promised articles. Who wouldn't? After all, he is chasing a dream alongside people who are 30 and 40 years his junior and riding the ride of his life. Writing articles for the newsletter would have been the furthest from his mind in the days leading up to his departure, and if you have followed his sporadic (spasmodic?) notes from the road so far, you know he has other things on his mind just staying alive while climbing and climbing and climbing.

So this issue of Rollin' is mostly devoted to the recent aging of the club as we embark our 15th year as an organization. I know, we've been hyping for months already - isn't it time to stop? Almost. This is probably the last of the hyping. But we have collected some interesting material for this issue.

Party Time!

On Saturday, April 14 we had a celebration party to commemorate the start of our 15th year. It began with an all-star ride and went on to the full fledged party held at Swerve Bike Shop. According to the membership folks we had at least 84 in attendance. There was cake, food, and lots of friendly getting togetherness. And we took "Class Photos" of the members who were still around when the cameras went flashing. See the photo pages in this issue.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Eva Weber, Membership Chair

How many of these new members who have joined since January 1st have you met on a ride, at a club meeting, or one of our club social events?

Vivian Atkinson, Elyria

Angie & Joe Auner and sons

Michael & Stephen, North Ridgeville

Joann Bacon, Akron

Nancy Bertsch, Sandusky

Bill & Jane Blackie, Bay Village

Dan Brattoli, Grafton

Kathy Carnicom, Waterville

Christine Daley, Elyria

Sharon Ferroni, Avon

Todd Freshwater, Cleveland

George Ioannides, Rocky River

Garry Jennings and son Andy, Avon

Kate Kosar, Cleveland (rejoined)

Karen Kulow, North Ridgeville

Kate Lazar, Wellington (added to family membership)

Becky Montague, Sandusky

Tony Morano, Fairview Park

Greg & Christine Orlowski, Cleveland

George Randt, Bay Village

Dianne Reichlin, Bay Village

Frank & Susan Tokarczyk, Amherst

and sons Daniel Tokarczyk & Corey Smith

Zachery Whitesel, Grafton

Paul Zacharias, North Ridgeville

WOW! That's **32 new members** since January 1st! At the beginning of March we lost some members who did not renew, but the club membership is back to **256 as of April 17th**. Over half of these new members have been on a ride and/or attended a club meeting or a club social event.

Adopt-A- Highway Program

Jim Wiley, Bud Ennis, trash kings

Our club has been participating with ODOT and the Adopt-A-Highway program for about the past six years. Tom Cline was the original Trashman, followed by Trash Chicks Eva Weber and Marilyn Torres. This will be the second year for Bud Ennis and me to try and fill the large boots that came before us.

The Adopt-A-Highway program is a great way for our club to do something good for the community and get the club name out for more people to see. We pickup litter four times a year on SR 58 between Russia Road and Butternut Ridge Road. Look for the Adopt-A-Highway signs with our name on them near these intersections. Last year we collected 30 bags of trash in a total 5 ½ hours over the four pickup dates.

A typical morning litter pickup goes something like this: Meet up with fellow club members 9 AM at the Drug-Mart at Rt 58 and Butternut and spend no more than 2 hours picking up litter. Then we move down to the CVS parking lot to grab a snack at McDonalds and go on a 15-26 mile ride at a 2 star pace.

An evening litter pickup is a little different. Meet up with fellow club members 6 PM at the Drug-Mart at Rt 58 and Butternut and spend no more than 2 hours picking up litter. Then we move down to the CVS parking lot and go on 2 star pace ride. (distance will be determined on amount of daylight available). After all of this maybe a cold beer could be enjoyed downtown Oberlin.

For the litter pickup the club has 5 buckets, 6 trash grabbers, 12 trash stabber sticks, ODOT vests and trash bags. You should wear boots, long pants, gloves and sun screen. Feel free to bring your own bucket and trash grabber if you have them.

For a good time picking up litter please add at least one of the following dates on your calendar:

April 30 at 9AM

June 11 at 6PM

August 27 at 6PM

October 8 at 9 AM

Don't think of this as just picking up litter, think of it as a treasure hunt !

How It All Began

Ed Stewart

I remember the first time I mentioned the idea of starting a bike club to Mike Bokulich, our co-founder. We had formed a routine of alternating weekends by planning mid-range trips to go somewhere new on our bikes, with us taking turns in the route planning. We had done that for a few months and our trips gradually grew longer and longer, with no real limits other than our ignorance.

On the day I first mentioned the club idea we were riding to Doylestown, southwest of Akron, to visit my step-mother for her 80th birthday. I told him how I felt that there were surely others who enjoyed cycling out in the country as much as we did – our time together on two wheels had become one of the most interesting, fun and novel aspects of our lives. We agreed that when we visited bike shops we often saw others “our age” and we occasionally saw others on the road of course.

Over that winter I discussed this concept with a number of clients and they agreed to help us financially and in other ways to get started. That is why on our early tee shirts you see the names of companies like Genesis Insurance, Life Care EMS, Community Health Partners, Martys Cycle Center, Mike’s Bike Shop, Lorain County Metro Parks and of course U.S. Sports Video (Mike’s company) and Stewart Advertising. I knew that the biggest reason fledgling organizations fail is because they are undercapitalized – this group of early supporters made sure that would not happen. To get started we would need to get the word out and have some start up materials. The Metroparks helped a lot by letting us mention the first meeting via their newsletter, the Arrowhead.

Our first meeting was held on April 15, 1998. The purpose of that meeting was to see if anyone had any interest in forming a club. Thirty people showed up – more than we ever imagined would. We had already made some early determinations, like the \$15 dues, and some ideas for a ride calendar. People signed up that evening and the club was off to a great start.

Within a few weeks we had 30 members and were riding twice a week. During those early times we all rode together – no subgroups yet. And of course there was some grumbling about being too fast or too slow but still we held to the group organization.

We had announced our new club, Silver Wheels, to be a 50 and over club. And that is the group we attracted. But soon word got out that we were a club that rode more casually than other clubs and that we were, well, nice. After those first few months at the beginning we had “younger” people asking if they could please join our club too, even though they were not old enough. So we dropped the age reference after about three months, but kept the Silver Wheels name.

By September of 1998 we had 80 paid members – an astonishing rate of growth. We knew we had struck onto something of value. That first year we had a total of 50 rides. Our first banquet was held at the Carlisle Visitor Center and it was a potluck dinner – if you came you had to bring something. What a feast it was, too.

I continued as the club Director all that first year and into the second year. But I knew that if the club was going to develop any life of its own it needed a way to continually renew itself and keep on inventing itself. It needed a group of leaders other than myself in order to accomplish what it could become. So that second year we had our first officers elected for the next year, 2000.

That’s how Silver Wheels got its start. Just a couple of guys out for a ride and an idea sprouted. With the help of Mike’s big personality and the backing of our business friends we were able to make a solid start marked by early growth – growth that continues today.

Our continued growth is the result of the work of numerous people. We have been very fortunate to always attract the nicest folks who ride bikes in Northern Ohio. The club’s friendliness and caring about each other is truly what sets it apart from others. Everyone who joins and rides with us surely agrees.

Recently a request was sent out to members for stories they would like to share about the club. A few of them are reproduced here and on the next page.

A story of Inspiration, by Joel Edmonds

Have told bits and pieces of this story to several Silverwheelers but it is time that whole story be told.

The story begins in my family room. The room is on a lower level of our house. At the time it seemed cold, dark, and lifeless. I sat there watching TV and drinking beer until the wee hours of the night. I was fat , lazy, lethargic, my body riddled with various minor injuries. I was a sad, moderately depressed old man faced with the reality that my best years were long behind me. All that was left for me was to muddle through the rest of my life. Of course what do you expect, after all I was 47 years old.

My lovely wife Sandy had seen enough. She pushed me off the couch one evening and dragged me out to a bike shop where we purchased a couple of bikes. We began to go on what seemed like incredibly long rides. One time we rode 18 miles, my butt and legs were killing me. Later that summer we joined Silverwheels and began to ride a little farther and a little faster and I was enjoying it but as Summer slowly turned to fall I was ready to reclaim my spot on the couch with a cold beer. I was getting a little tired and had enough.

Before the riding season came to a close Sandy told me not to stay up too late and to set the alarm, we have another ride tomorrow. The Harold Copperman birthday ride. I had never met Harold but I knew a little about the man. He was in his eighties and legally blind but could still ride a bike. I remember thinking "he won't know who we are, should we really attend his birthday ride" We attended the ride and fit in just fine this was the first time I really felt the "all are welcome attitude of Silverwheels" .

The ride was a miserable one. cold, windy, and rainy, and as we rode it only got colder, windier, & rainier. Everyone was miserable as we headed towards Kipton along the trail. Several turned back after a few miles while I chose to ride a little faster just to get it over with. A few of us rode together all the way to Kipton where we turned around and headed back. Most mumbling about Mother Nature's wrath, most of which can't be repeated.

We were almost halfway back when we saw four or five riders approaching. They too were miserable and mumbling about the cold, wind & rain. That is except for one lone smiling rider. It was Harold Copperman grinning from ear to ear as the others frowned and shivered their way past us. I am not sure why I chose to do what I was about to do, surely it would only prolong the agony. Something about Harold's smile made me turn around and join them. I soon was feeling a sense of euphoria and the elements no longer bothered me. In fact the wind, rain, and near freezing temperatures were almost enjoyable.

I felt inspired by Harold that moment. The fact that he can ride while being a man of over eighty years of age would be inspiring to some. The fact that he was declared legally blind and yet still can ride a bike may inspire many. What inspired me greatly that day was the fact that Harold was smiling and enjoying himself while others were miserable. It was Harold's attitude. His smile seemed to be saying "any day I can ride bike is a good day" I felt the same way that day and most days since then. I hope to carry that attitude with me on every ride and hope that it becomes contagious among my fellow silverwheelers.

I will never forget that day nor will I ever forget how fortunate I am to have found Silverwheels .

Hello, Ed

Has it been 15 years since the Silver Wheels started? It must have been sometime near that beginning that I first did a ride with the club. I recall it well, for it introduced me to cyclist who really look after every one who join them. I do not recall who, by name, if I go to a roster I may find some familiar ones, but I recall what happened.

I rode, still do, a Trek 520, noted for having a rear wheel rim that was a bear to replace a tube or tire. Once at a shop, a relatively new mechanic looked up rather sheepishly at me while I waited for him to put on a new tube, and said "Some of our more experienced fellows could do this faster".

Anyway, back to that ride. Along the route, I had a rare, for me, flat, and before I could even get out my tools, several Wheelers were right there, some taking the rear wheel off, other getting out the spare from my rear pack. In moments, it was changed and pumped up- only to find the nemesis of Trek 520 rims, a rim leak. Off came the tube, another one from some one else's pannier, and back to the pumping. Yes, Another rim leak! This time, cooler heads prevailed, and I was told to just stay put, someone would come back and rescue me. They did, and the bike and the wheel went back to Oberlin. I got it back to the shop I used regularly, and further good luck followed. On that Saturday afternoon, I found a parking meter with 30 minutes remaining, took the wheel in, and was told to bring in the rest of the bike. Andy had worked on this bike in the past, and before the meter ran out of time, I was on my way home with a new tube on the rear wheel, two replacement tubes for the Wheeler rescuers, a happy cyclist.

Many more rides with the Wheelers, even though it meant a long drive to get there. It also gave me an opportunity to visit with an good friend in Oberlin, so a morning ride, a call to Carol and lunch and good conversation at her kitchen table made for a fine day.

Thanks for your part in getting all of that started.

Mary Hoffman, Shelburne, Vermont



Story of the pants

Story: happened last year, unfortunately all true.

Diane did a quick stop, promptly fell over on Frank and tore his pants. A few days later we went to his house to deliver a new pair of pants. Frank's wife and a neighbor lady were chatting by their front door. We had not met his wife prior to that day.

Diane says "Hi, I'm the woman that fell on Frank and tore his pants". After a startled look and a pause..

Everyone broke out laughing.

It was really funny at the time...Maybe you had to be there, lol.

Lynne Cunningham

And the retort....."I assume that it was Diane Williams who fell against me last year and tore my tights. There were a few jokes about a woman trying to tear my pants off but I don't think we want to go too far with it.

"A better story about me might be my most embarrassing happening as a ride leader in the 3rd year of the club. While leading a ride in a fairly heavy rain I stopped the group just before a railroad track and gave a short safety talk about how to ride across tracks. About half way across the tracks I looked back to see how everyone was doing and fell tearing the pants of my rain suit."

Frank O'Dell

15TH CELEBRATION MEMORIES



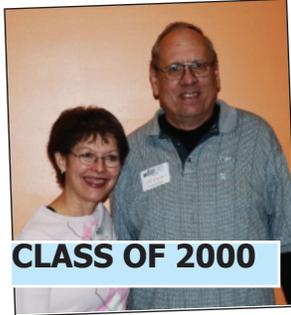
CLASS PICTURES



CLASS OF 1998



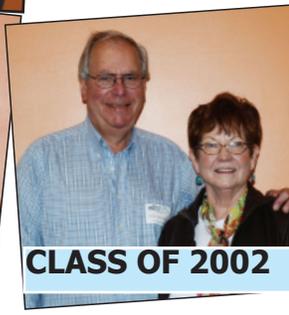
CLASS OF 1999



CLASS OF 2000



CLASS OF 2001



CLASS OF 2002



CLASS OF 2009



CLASS OF 2006



CLASS OF 2003



CLASS OF 2004



CLASS OF 2007



CLASS OF 2005



CLASS OF 2008



CLASS OF 2012



CLASS OF 2011