Giving Back - The Power of Volunteerism

By Rob Ern, Vice President, Ocala Mountain Bike Association

When I was asked to write something for this issue of The Messenger, I hesitantly agreed. After all, I am an engineer. We are not known for our eloquent dissertations. We are numbers people. So, what to write about?

After some deliberation, I settled upon a topic I feel deeply about, preach about often, and bore others with regularly; volunteerism and advocacy. After all, isn’t that what the Florida Bicycle Association and other organizations like the Ocala Mountain Bike Association (OMBA) are all about?

Some of the numbers I have to share with you are impressive, and make me feel good. Some, not so much. So, without further adieu, I present to you some numbers.

- Number of Hours Donated by OMBA Volunteers in 2014: 7,666
- Value of Those Volunteer Hours by OMBA Volunteers: $165,662.26
- Number of Trail Locations Maintained by OMBA Volunteers: 3
- Miles of Trail Maintained by OMBA Volunteers: Over 110
- Number of Dirt Jump Lines Maintained by OMBA Volunteers: 7
- Number of Pump Tracks Maintained by OMBA Volunteers: 2
- Largest Vertical Drop in the Vortex Freeride Pit: 20’

Why do I share these figures with you? To illustrate the power of volunteerism!

I began riding mountain bikes on the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway in 1994, one year after OMBA was founded. At that time, there were under 15 miles of mountain bike trails, no paved parking lot, no facilities and no features. Signage was limited, trails were confusing to a newbie like me, conflicts with other user groups were fairly common, and organized events were non-existent.

OMBA was a loosely knit collective of local riders who had banded together to gain legal access to the Greenway for the purpose of building trails. Those first pioneers had no idea what they were starting, or what it would grow into, but I am thankful every time I get on my bike that they did!

Through a concerted effort on the part of countless volunteers, OMBA grew. We established a great working relationship with the land manager, assisted in creating uniform signage and maps, worked to build relationships with other user groups, organized events and grew the trail system to what it is today.

(continues on page 10)
We Love Our Members!

**Lifetime Members**
Duke Breitenbach
Kimberly Cooper
William R. Hough
Walter Long
James Nash
Mr. & Mrs. H. Middleton Raynal
Earle & Laura Reynolds
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Thomas Lewis
Tim Mulligan & Nioma Brown
Court Norris
Jerry & Robin Potts
James & Mari Woodman

**Save the Date - 10/17/15 – Annual FBA Membership Meeting – Oldsmar**

**Supporter:**
Bob & Rita Bennett
Red Camp
Michael Dowling
Robert Griendling & Karla Leavelle
John D. Hardy & Dawn Wilson
Shannon & David Hidalgo
Sandra Jolly

**Club/Business High Donors**

**Premier Partners:**
Polk County Sports Marketing

**Champion:**
Boca Raton Bicycle Club

**Patron:**
Florida Freewheelers Bicycle Club

**Advocate:**
Panther Medical Inc.-Richard Rapports
Florida Greenways and Trails Foundation
Orange Cycle Works
Gainesville Cycling Club

**New Businesses/Clubs/Organizations**
Bike Works-Gainesville
Brick City Bicycles
Elite Cycling & Fitness
Impact Grafx, Inc.
Katie Caples Foundation
National MS Society
Mid Florida Chapter-Bike MS
Providence Painting
Rejee, Inc.
Tri Bike Run

**New Members**
Michael Belle
Lin Bente
Marsha & Al Brown
Mark & Mary Caporale
Claudia Carlson
Richard Hartman
Dan Henry
Shannon & David Hidalgo
William Karlawiege
Alan & Deborah Kelmereit
Scott Lagasse, Jr.
Krissy Larsson
Craig Levan
Joanna Lowenstein
Josiah Mathews
Court Norris
Pedro Parejo
Jerry & Robin Potts
Angel Rodriguez
Paula and Dan Saracki
Michael Senecal
Alex Smith
Marie Soler
Mervin Stringer & Stephane McDaniel
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Carrie Waite
Carolyn Waltz
Jerry Willert and Mary Towle
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P.O. Box 2452 • Oldsmar, FL 34677

Help Us Grow the Base! Give to FBA

OUR MISSION:
For Florida bicycling is to network and share best practices, to educate and advocate and to build awareness as a unified voice.

OUR VISION:
For Florida is to be a state where bicycling is safe, respected and encouraged as a means of transportation and recreation.

OUR PURPOSE:
• To educate bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists about safely sharing roadways and paths
• To be a powerful, influential voice that protects and advances the interests of bicyclists
• To encourage the creation of great on-road and off-road places to ride
• To provide a statewide communications network for bicyclists
• To encourage more people to bicycle more often

Help Us Grow the Base! Give to FBA

The Florida Bicycle Association was founded by people like you who want to make Florida a better place to ride a bicycle. Our projects and programs that benefit bicyclists are made possible primarily through membership and sponsorship to our organization. Simply put, without membership, sponsorship and donations, the Florida Bicycle Association would not exist. Keep bicycle enjoyment alive in Florida and help us in the fight against bicycle fatalities, Join FBA!

Did you know your membership donation to FBA is tax-deductible?

FBA is a 501(c)(3) education and charitable nonprofit corporation. You can join FBA online or download and mail an application from our website, www.floridabicycle.org. You can request an application to be mailed to you by contacting Becky Afonso at 813-748-1513.

Does your place of employment offer matching gifts to non-profits? Think FBA!

Bicycling is one of life’s simple pleasures to enjoy, not fear. Join or donate to the Florida Bicycle Association and let’s ride together for Florida bicycling excellence. Contact Becky Afonso at becky@floridabicycle.org for more information on ways to donate to FBA.

Working Together to Build a Bicycle-friendly Florida

The Florida Bicycle Association (FBA) was incorporated in 1997 for educational and charitable purposes. FBA is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt corporation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations, including membership dues, are tax deductible. A copy of the current financial statements may be obtained by contacting FBA.

To become a member support of FBA, join online at www.fbmembership.org

The Messenger is published quarterly as a service to members and advocates for a bicycle-friendly Florida by the Florida Bicycle Association, P.O. Box 2452, Oldsmar, FL 34677

www.floridabicycle.org • e-mail: Becky@floridabicycle.org • Phone: 813-748-1513
A Fond Farewell

by Jodi Hohlstein

Well, here we are – approaching the end of summer having been blessed without any major storms to mar the summer riding opportunities. Let’s hope our luck continues through the next couple months until several of the major rides are completed. And there are plenty from which to choose. Check out the FBA Bicycle Touring Calendar on page 14, as well as the FBA home page to see what is happening around the state for the rest of the year. The options and variety are great.

FBA’s last quarterly board meeting for the year is approaching in October. This will be my last President’s Message since I will be terming out as a member of the board. It has been a privilege and honor to serve as the president of the Florida Bicycle Association for the past two years and a board member for six years. I, as well as the other members of the board, are proud to have been a part of FBA’s growth.

We have seen changes at many levels over the past two years. Becky Afonso was hired as our Executive Director last year and has helped facilitate many changes within the organization. She has strengthened our relationship with bicycle clubs and bike shops statewide. She offered a challenge to the bike clubs, “If your club joins FBA, I’ll join your club,” and quite a few have accepted the offer. This relationship has led to a greater participation and recognition within the cycling community.

We have also rekindled our relationship with FDOT and other state and national organizations. The FBA logo is gaining brand recognition and people, once again, look to us as their information and representation organization. Florida Bicycle Association is the cyclists’ voice in Tallahassee and our strengthened relationship with the agencies that hear our concerns and needs will help address the concerns of our membership base.

We have shaved expenses by cutting overhead costs and increased revenues through increased membership. As a membership-driven organization we all, including the board, need to actively work to recruit new members in order to help grow our voice and further encourage our FBA mission, vision and purpose – see page three for a summary.

Your board has worked to support the mission, vision and purpose of FBA. I am proud to have been a part of the transformation and growth FBA is experiencing. This has been a journey for us all, not just a few. It has been a journey I have been privileged to be a part of. Thank you all for your support of the Florida Bicycle Association, what we represent and wish to accomplish.

Our annual meeting will be held in conjunction with the October 17th quarterly board meeting in the Tampa Bay area. The exact location will be announced at a later date and as always our members are encouraged to attend.

Thank You Randy

by Laura Hallam

Randy Williams joined the FBA Board of Directors in 1999 with an initial responsibility of serving as editor of the quarterly Messenger newsletter. After stepping down from the Board in 2005, he has remained on the Advisory Board ever since.

The Messenger has continued to evolve in size, quality and circulation over the years. His ability to take a hodge-podge of material and magically turn it into a stimulating newsletter is amazing. His behind the scenes and dry wit often came out in his occasional addition of “No Exit” cartoons.

Making the Messenger fun versus a boring, geeky bicyclist newsletter was important. Every now and again when Randy needed to design an ad or create “fill,” he was his own model. And when the FBA headquarters moved from Orlando to Waldo (based on the residence of the executive director), instead of just using a “Waldo (FBA HQ)” place card on the Florida map indicating where staff and board members lived, he included a “Where’s Waldo” logo. That’s a terrific example of Randy’s humor.

In addition to his role as newsletter editor, Randy served as web master for many years. He designed and edited numerous brochures and publications including the Florida Bicycle/Pedestrian Law Enforcement Guide, Florida Bicycling Street Smarts, FBA membership brochures, ProBike/ProWalk Florida conference and Florida Bike Summit logos and programs, just to name a few.

Change is progress, but Randy’s editorial services will be greatly missed. Thank you, Randy, for your many years of service to FBA.

Bicycle Club Leadership Workshop becomes Bicycle Best Practices Workshop

The annual Florida Bicycle Club Leadership Workshop held in conjunction with the Florida Freewheelers Horrible Hundred event is moving to Miami in 2015 and getting a name change! The Florida Bicycle Best Practices Workshop, in conjunction with WHEELS, is open to anyone who wishes to learn or share ideas with other bicycle enthusiasts to be part of the solution for Florida bicycling concerns.

Florida Department of Transportation District 1 Secretary and Champion Billy Hattaway will be attending in addition to Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization Bicycle/Pedestrian Administrator and former FBA president David Henderson. Our agenda is in the works and our format will lend itself to more open discussion by all participants, but space is limited.

Date: Saturday, November 14, 2015
Time: 3:00-5:00pm
Location: South Miami Hospital, Victor E. Clarke Center, Classroom D, 6200 SW 73rd St, Miami, FL 33143

Host/Plan a Workshop

or

TEACH BIKE SAFETY • HOST A WORKSHOP
Florida Traffic and Bicycle Safety Education Program (FTBSEP)

This statewide, comprehensive, pedestrian and bicycle safety education program instructs school teachers, community professionals, and others how to teach pedestrian and bicycle safety to children.

HELP SAVE LIVES AND REDUCE INJURIES

Teach children safer traffic behaviors and skills such as:

• stopping at the edge, searching and scanning, signaling, and avoiding hazards

For more information on how to become a Regional Trainer or Host/Plan a Workshop please call 352-294-1685 or email safety@hhp.ufl.edu

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For more information on how to become a Regional Trainer or Host/Plan a Workshop please call 352-294-1685 or email safety@hhp.ufl.edu
Applauds the Florida Bicycle Association for its efforts in making our community a healthier one by providing education and inspiration of cycling.

See you on the road!

Kenneth L. Scearce, CPA
David A. Satcher, CPA
Carla M. Hansen, CPA

(407) 647-6441 Office  (407) 645-0099 Fax
1030 W. Canton Avenue, Suite 210, Winter Park, FL  32789
Citizens that Shine as Bicycle Advocates

Yes, we saved the best for last. To wrap up our 2014 FBA Annual Award recipients, we honor two gentlemen as our Citizen Bike Advocates. One is a bicycle commuter just trying to get to work, the other is a bicycle club president working to make the community a better place to ride.

Ryan Scofield, Bonita Springs commuter

Ryan Scofield is a name you might have seen pop up in social media and on YouTube. His GoPro videos of being pulled over by law enforcement for cycling in the middle of the lane for his legitimate safety or of being harassed by a truck driver have sparked a flurry of discussion. Ryan decided to use GoPro cameras on his bike after having experienced several incidents with aggressive motorists. He also began researching safe cycling on the Internet, in particular, the CyclingSavvy education program. Here, he learned how to prevent accidents from ever happening. By positioning himself in certain places, he is able to eliminate right hooks, left hooks, in-lane passing, and most other common crash causes. Cyclists need to obey the rules of the road as well. Ryan prefers to wear a reflective vest, and has two flashing lights for safety, in addition to his helmet, while riding early in the morning to his Crossfit class or work. He never ventures out during the 11PM to 2AM time frame when drunk drivers are more likely to be on the roads. Ryan says that he usually prefers not to “rock the boat” or “start any drama,” and is generally calm when confronted during his bicycle rides. Ryan is a true role model for cycling in Bonita Springs.

Court Nederveld, President, Peace River Riders Bicycle Club

As a member of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee of the Charlotte County MPO and president of the Peace River Riders Bicycle Club, Court led a project to put four signed bike routes in southern Charlotte County totaling 118 miles, and started the Peace River Riders mini grant fund to provide seed money for county projects that promote cycling for all riders. He worked with the Punta Gorda Police Department to put bumper stickers on all cruisers stating “3 Feet Please It’s the Law,” as well as expanded the project to put the same message on all City owned vehicles. Court launched the Wheels and Wings Event now in its sixth year bringing hundreds of cyclists to Punta Gorda each July, and worked with Punta Gorda Police to run a three foot sting operation in Punta Gorda. He is the co-chair of Team Punta Gorda’s Bicycle Friendly Community committee working for recognition as a League of American Bicyclists Bicycle Friendly Community award. And last, but certainly not least, he arranged for the Three Palms Race track to open the track to cyclists.

Photos missed from last issue include Trails Manager Mickey Thomason (above), and Supporting Agency Punta Gorda Police Department (below).

Volunteer Mickey Witte

2014 Volunteer of the Year award recipient Mickey Witte with newborn “Ironbaby” Carter, sporting a ‘B is for Bicycle’ onesie. Motherhood kept Mickey from a formal award presentation.

Visit floridabicycle.org/annual-awards for complete list of recipients and more information on the awards program.

Nominations for 2015 open October 1st.

Elected Official Champion

Senator Miguel Diaz de la Portilla accepting the Elected Official Champion award for his sponsorship of the Aaron Cohen Life Protection Act, a bill signed into law on July 1, 2014.
Wheels of Justice – Ask the Attorney

Who Pays if Uninsured Motorist Hits Cyclist?

by Christopher G. Burns, Esq. – an attorney who has specialized in enforcing the rights of injured cyclists for more than 30 years. He is the Chairman for the Jacksonville (Fla.) Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Consultations are free of charge. You may reach him at 904-632-2424, chris@floridacyclinglaw.com, or www.FloridaCyclingLaw.com.

Question: I am car-free! My break-up with my car happened years ago, and I don’t miss it at all. I ride a bike only. I also don’t have car insurance. What happens if I am hit by a car, and it doesn’t have auto insurance? How do the medical bills and lost wages get paid, if usually someone’s car insurance has to pay them?

Answer: You may be in a tough spot. How can cyclists, who don’t own a car or have car insurance, protect themselves in case of a crash? What can lessen the blow? There is no perfect answer, but here is some advice.

1. Secure health insurance such as Blue Cross Blue Shield, Aetna, United Healthcare, or governmental coverage such as Medicare, Medicaid, or through the Affordable Care Act. These insurers and benefit providers can provide payment of medical bills for a bicycle accident.

2. Check with your employer to see if you can be or are covered under a short-term or long-term disability insurance policy. If not, consider purchasing individual short term and long term disability insurance.

3. Consider purchasing special insurance for cyclists. Bicycle insurance policies may cover medical bills or injuries arising from a bicycle crash, and may also provide coverage for the damage to your bike. Oftentimes, the coverage by these companies for bike damage is “replacement” coverage that allow you to purchase a similar but brand new bike. Without this type of coverage, you may only be offered the value of your old bike by the at fault motorist’s insurance. Special Bicyclist Coverage is offered by a variety of companies and insurances, which include Velosurance, Spoke Insurance and Market Bicycle Insurance.

Finally, I urge you to contact your local state legislator and request support for mandatory bodily injury liability insurance coverage on all Florida auto insurance policies. Such coverage would provide money compensation to cyclists, who might otherwise be uninsured, when hit by a car.
FDOT Districts

District 1
Cities: Bradenton, Fort Myers, Naples, Sarasota
Counties: Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Lee, Manatee, Okeechobee, Polk, Sarasota
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Providence Nagy, 239-225-1983
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Bonita Bay Bicycle Club, Caloosa Riders Bicycle Club, Coastal Cruisers Bicycle Club, Highlands Pedalers Bicycle Club, Peace River Riders Bicycle Club, Polk Area Cycling Association, Sanibel Bicycle Club, Sarasota-Manatee Bicycle Club
FBA Member Bicycle Shops: Acme Bicycle Shop, Bike Route of Fort Myers, Naples Cyclery, The Bike Route (Naples), Billy’s Bike Shop, Fort Myers Schwinn Cycles, Ringling Bicycles, Bike Shop of Winter Haven

District 2
Cities: Gainesville, Jacksonville, Lake City, St. Augustine
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Derek Dixon, 904-360-5653
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Gainesville Cycling Club, North Florida Bicycle Club, Suwannee Bicycle Association
FBA Member Bicycle Shops: Champion Cycling & Fitness, Dragon Sports

District 3
Cities: Destin, Panama City, Pensacola, Tallahassee
Counties: Bay, Calhoun, Escambia, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Wakulla, Walton, Washington
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Olen Pettis, 850-330-1543
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Capital City Cyclists, Emerald Coast Cyclists
FBA Member Bicycle Shops: St. Joe Velo, The Great Bicycle Shop (2 locations), Dragon Sports

District 4
Cities: Fort Lauderdale, Fort Pierce, Palm Beach, Stuart
Counties: Broward, Indian River, Martin, Palm Beach, St. Lucie
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Jennifer Fierman, 954-777-4318
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Boca Raton Bicycle Club, Vero Cycling Club

District 5
Cities: Cocoa Beach, Daytona Beach, Kissimmee, Melbourne, Ocala, Orlando
Counties: Brevard, Flagler, Lake, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter, Volusia
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Deborah Tyrone, 407-482-7897
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Florida Freewheelers, Sunner Landing Bicycle Club, Orlando Runners & Riders
FBA Member Bicycle Shops: Infinity Bike Shop, St. Augustine Bicycle Club, Vero Cycling Club

District 6
Cities: Key West, Miami
Counties: Miami-Dade, Monroe
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Zakary Lata, 305-470-5308
FBA Member Bicycle Club: Everglades Bicycle Club, South Florida Triathletes

District 7
Cities: Brooksville, Clearwater, Port Richey, St. Petersburg, Tampa
Counties: Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Lee Royal, 813-975-6427
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Central Florida Randonneurs, Florida Panthers Tandem Club, St. Petersburg Bicycle Club
FBA Member Bicycle Shops: Suncoast Bicycles, City Bike ‘Tampa, Bike Sport, Chainless Drive (2 locations), Jim’s Bicycle Shop, Hampton’s Edge Trailside Bicycles, University Bicycle Center

Bicycle to Work – Are You Out of Your Mind?

By Earl Long

A bicycle can be far more than a toy for recreation, more than an exercise machine! In much of the world, bicycles are the most used vehicle to move people. In Copenhagen, Denmark, a city with a population of over one million, 36% of the people ride their bicycles to work and their bicycle is their first choice of transportation.

The weather is cooling and it just might be a good time for more Floridians to try it. The Snow Birds will soon be back and congesting our roads. The average speed of an automobile in urban traffic has been dropping and is approaching 27 miles per hour. Competitions have been run between bicycles, cars, and subway, and every time, the bicycle was the fastest way to commute from home to work.

To ride to Work, explore the possibilities:
• Most Americans live within 10 miles of their work.
• A 10-mile commute will take the same amount of time by bicycle as by car.
• A 5-mile commute will actually be faster by bicycle.

Many fear that they will arrive all sweaty and there are no showers available
• Fresh, clean sweat does not smell.
• Riding at a commuter pace doesn’t cause extreme sweating. Coast as much as possible and as you near work, slow down to cool off.
• A spray bottle with plain water and a small towel will go a long way toward freshening up.
• Hand sanitizer destroys the odor-causing bacteria and is cooling, quick and easy.

If you have to wear business attire
• Store a change of clothes at work and change in the rest room.

The roads are too dangerous
• Statistics show that riding a bicycle is as safe as driving a car.
• By choosing less traveled routes makes riding even safer.
• Operating your bicycle as if it were a car makes you predictable and safer still.

Running errands
• Most trips in cars are less than 2 miles.
• With an inexpensive luggage rack, or a spray bottle with plain water and a small towel will go a long way toward freshening up.
• Hand sanitizer destroys the odor-causing bacteria and is cooling, quick and easy.

Getting Personal
What’s in it for me? Save money, save time, get exercise, lose weight, and enjoy that smug feeling of being in better shape than most everybody.

Bicycle Friendly BusinessSM and Bicycle Friendly Business logo is a service mark of the League of American Bicyclists and is used with permission.

Congratulations to League of American Bicyclists

BICYCLE FRIENDLY BUSINESSSM
Florida award winners!

GOLD – Acme Bicycle Shop LLC, Punta Gorda

SILVER
Tampa General Hospital, Tampa
Buddy Brew Coffee, Tampa
Duckweed Urban Grocery, Tampa

BRONZE
The Bull, Gainesville
Ferg’s Live, Tampa
Anise Global Gastrobar, Tampa
Tampa Pizza Company, Tampa

Visit our website, floridabicycle.org, for additional FBA Member bicycle shop and club information.
New high-speed rail will link Miami, Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach in 2017. By 2020, a new Tri-Rail coastal route could connect Miami with Jupiter. However, a fundamental makeover of the South Florida transportation system called for in a new regional transportation policy review will likely take decades to implement, while highway congestion, already notorious, worsens.

Enter the mid-November multi-modal mega-event WHEELS that will generate immediate impact.

While the Miami-Dade County review largely focuses on transit, it will also include improved bike facilities that promote first- and last-mile access to and from express bus and train stations.

Based in South Miami, WHEELS aims to get people out of their cars now with a program that includes instructional video, free rail passes for riders with bikes, and a mentoring program to help wannabes learn from people who have made the switch.

The transportation policy review follows an August Denver fly-in by 53 public and private sector leaders that showed how city's mesh of bike-walk-bus and train has cut commute times and improved health while revitalizing Denver's downtown.

"Every Denver transportation expert emphasized how important it is to concentrate on the first and last mile, not just the trains and buses," said Jason King, fly-in participant and principal with Dover, Kohl & Partners. The town planning firm's managing partner Victor Dover is pro bono chair of WHEELS.

Cyclists who register for WHEELS, November 11-15, will have 20 guided and DIY bike rides to choose among, geared according to skill and fitness levels; some rides up to 40 miles. They can also take part in a conference headlined by national leaders in multi-modal transportation, and celebrate with a bike parade and bike-in street party.

Says Dover, "WHEELS may be the most cyclist-empowering moment since Governor Bob Graham appointed Dan Burden Florida's first bike coordinator 35 years ago."

Burden himself will be among presenters who will also include retiring LAB President Andy Clarke, Ryan Gravel of the Atlanta Beltline, and Dennis Markatos-Soriano of the East Coast Greenway Alliance.

They'll hear about innovative pro-bike initiatives from Florida leaders as well as from Kevin Hicks of Spoken Revolutions, a Durham-based tour operator that this July co-led a group of 30 that cycled the four-state Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor to St. Johns County. FDOT District 1 Secretary Billy Hattaway - who supervises all DOT bike-ped-trail programming - will speak at an FBA Florida Bicycle Best Practices Workshop.

Registrants can also take part in the 24th annual East Coast Greenway Alliance Membership Summit that's part of WHEELS. Shared overnight rooms for WHEELS start at $36 per person (plus tax). Both conference hotels are walking-close to all activity venues or accessible by bike and/or train.

WHEELS activities are all free. For a complete schedule, to pre-register for rides, for conference admission, for prizes and to book rooms: www.wheelsflorida.org.

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**FBA Positive Spin**

**Mark Terrell - Key Largo Bike Tours**

When the Monroe Association for ReMARCable Citizens (MARC) decided that their next fund-raiser would be a bicycle ride of the Florida Keys, they knew they needed to find someone with experience to set up the adventure. MARC Board member and Sheriff’s Office employee Jo Socha came upon Mark Terrell of Key Largo Bike Tours and a tour was born.

In Jo’s own words, “Mark cares for people and he really cares that the MARC House continue their work with the developmentally disabled adults in this community. Mark didn’t know me from a hole in the wall yet when I called him and told him my plight, this man was like a knight in shining armor. Mark was so excited to do this, he just ran with it and he knows how special MARC house is [to the community]. I cannot tell you how great I feel about Mark, he is so selfless and giving, you just don’t see that kind of heart in people anymore. Mark is special and he is definitely an unsung hero to some very special people that will probably never say thank you to him and he doesn’t think twice about it, I am so proud to call Mark Terrell my friend.” The Florida Bicycle Association has sent a letter to the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners in acknowledgement of Mark Terrell and the positive spin he is making for MARC.

The Monroe Association for ReMARCable Citizens (MARC) is a non-profit agency that serves adult clients within Monroe County who have developmental disabilities that include mental retardation (I.Q. 69 or below), cerebral palsy, spina bifida, Prader-Willi Syndrome, and traumatic brain injury sustained prior to age 18. For more information on MARC and the reMARCable Tour de Keys, visit their website at www.marchouse.org/

Tell us how cycling is giving back to your community! Visit www.floridabicycle.org and click our Positive Spin logo. Jo Socha did and you can be next.
Volunteerism

(continued from page 1)

Santos was one of the first trails given the designation “Epic Trail” by the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA). Within a few years, Santos was named one of the first six IMBA Ride Centers in the world! We also became a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

OMBA hosts the annual Spring Break Fat Tire Festival every March on the Greenway. Last year’s event saw over 600 participants, over 3,000 cars through the parking lot over 3 days, over 40 bike related vendors, and raised thousands of dollars in donations used by OMBA to purchase 41 bikes and helmets for needy children at Christmas! To say that I am proud of my volunteerism with OMBA would be an understatement.

So, all is grand, right?! Not so fast. How about a few more numbers to put this hard work into perspective:

• Average Number of Monthly Visitors, Santos Parking Lot, FY14: 5,753
• Average Number of Monthly Visitors, Vortex Parking Lot, FY14: 8,729
• Average Number of Volunteers per Monthly Workday: about 20

What?!! How can this be? The numbers at the top are so impressive! While many of the visitors were likely not “unique” (more than 1 visit), this represents a huge disparity between the number of users and the number of volunteers! We have made amazing progress, right? Well, sure we have. Numbers don’t lie. But can you imagine just how much more we could do if we could double our volunteer hours? Wow, talk about “next level!”

So, where am I going with this? You guessed it, right up on my soapbox! You are reading this article in The Messenger, so you are on the right track! The Florida Bicycle Association is just one of many great organizations working hard to advocate for you and your passion, bikes. Kudos to you for being a member! But does your assistance stop there? Could you do more?

I think most of you know the answer to that question. In this day of limited budgets and cost cutting measures, most local and state agencies are in dire need of volunteers. Without our volunteers, OMBA members would likely still be riding on those same 15 miles of trails that captured my passion back in 1994.

Whether you ride on the road, on paved trails, or in the dirt, we all have one thing in common, our love for pushing the pedals, chasing our buddies and feeling the burn. But, just imagine how much better it could be, how many more miles of trails we could build, how many more kids we could expose to the joys of two wheels, if each and every one of you reading this committed to volunteering some of your time to give back to cycling. I urge you to find your local club, IMBA chapter, CSO, whatever, and contact them to see how you can help. For me, it’s been 21 years and thousands of hours donated, and I couldn’t be more proud of what OMBA has accomplished!

I hope you will join me in making a difference.

For the trails, Rob

Rob Ern doesn’t just talk the talk, he walks the walk. Or in this case, he rides the ride. Rob has worked closely with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Office of Greenways and Trails and is responsible for the design and construction of several miles of singletrack trails. He is also on the Board of Directors for the Florida Greenways & Trails Foundation. His love of cycling led him and a group of friends in 2011 to purchase Brick City Bicycles, located in downtown Ocala. Brick City Bicycles is a bicycle shop member of Florida Bicycle Association; we appreciate the support, the article and everything you do for Florida bicycling!
Questions about the laws related to bicycling?
Ask Geo @ FBikeLaw.org*

by George Martin

Speed of a Cyclist on Sidewalk

Q Bruce asked: The law says a bike can be on the sidewalk as long as it is following pedestrian rules. Does a bike going 5 to 20 mph on a sidewalk qualify as following pedestrian rules or behaving like a pedestrian?

A The operator of a bicycle on the sidewalk has the same rights and duties as a pedestrian under the same circumstances. The cyclist is still operating a vehicle, so must comply with applicable vehicle laws such as lights, helmets, headlights and DUL. There is no speed stated in the statute, but the following statutes apply to the speed of a bicyclist on the sidewalk:

s. 316.183 – Unlawful Speed
(1) No person shall drive a vehicle on a highway at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under the conditions and having regard to the actual and potential hazards then existing. In every event, speed shall be controlled as may be necessary to avoid colliding with any person, vehicle, or other conveyance or object on or entering the highway in compliance with legal requirements and the duty of all persons to use due care.

Note that the term highway includes the sidewalk or sidewalk area.

s. 316.003 – Definitions
(53) Street or Highway
(a) The entire width between the boundary lines of every way or place of whatever nature when any part thereof is open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular traffic. …

The cyclist must also always yield to pedestrians.

s. 316.2065 – Bicycle Regulations
(10) A person propelling a bicycle upon and along a sidewalk, or across a roadway upon and along a crosswalk, shall yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian and shall give an audible signal before overtaking and passing such pedestrian.

That does not mean yelling “Coming through” and speeding past a pedestrian. It means slowing and stopping if necessary to yield to the pedestrian.

Sidewalks are designed for pedestrians and the normal speed of a pedestrian and the speed of the cyclist would likely be considerations in an investigation of an incident such as a collision when entering an intersection or crossing a driveway.

Carrying an Infant on a Bike

Q Lenore asked: Can one wear a baby in a sling or backpack and I wanted to know if there was a case that brought about such wording.

A I am not aware of the origin or case history of this statute, but your wording is correct.

Carrying a Child

s. 316.2065 – Bicycle Regulations
(3)(a) A bicycle may not be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed or equipped, except that an adult rider may carry a child securely attached to his or her person in a backpack or sling.

Crossing Double Yellow Lines

Q Mark asked: Recently I was pulled over and given a warning for crossing a double yellow line at my school. The problem occurs when some people drop their kids off at the “car drop off point” while others go park and walk their kids in to the school. The car drop off vehicles (nothing against them) creates a long line of stop and go traffic. These cars are on a roadway with a double yellow line. Most of the time people safely swing around these cars cross the double yellow line go a short distance, then return to the proper lane to access the parking lot. All of this is done at 10 mph or less. Now everyone will be forced to sit in a line. Passing on this double yellow line has been done for years with no problems (Police present) until now.

Would the car drop off vehicle fall under the obstructions statute? Does the school zone change the rules?

A We discussed crossing the double yellow line to pass a bicycle here: http://fbikelaw.org/2009/07/passing-a-bicyclist-in-a-no-passing-zone/

Your question is similar. What is an obstruction and when can one cross the line to avoid it? A difference may be that there are many obstructions and passing them would require crossing the line for a prolonged period.

The statute is this:

s. 316.0875 – No Passing Zones
(2)…no driver shall at any time drive on the left side of the roadway with such no-passing zone...

(3) This section does not apply when an obstruction exists making it necessary to drive to the left of the center of the roadway.

What you describe seems to be considered an obstruction, which is not defined in the statute.

Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary
1. Something that obstructs, blocks or closes up with an obstacle or obstacles; obstacle or hindrance: obstructions to navigation. Syn. 1. Barrier, bar, impediment.

I can find no exception to that statute in the other concerning “School Zones”.

s. 316.1895 – Establishment of School Speed Zones, Enforcement; Designation

Assuming there is no oncoming traffic or other reasons indicated in the “passing a bicyclist” link above, it seems the statute is clear and passing should be permitted.

It is recommended that you ask the school to work with the local police to clarify the situation. They would probably appreciate your volunteering to act as the spokesman in resolving this matter.

You could also go directly to the police with the statute in hand and ask them to address it.

Either way, all concerned should be notified of the policy, which would be facilitated by your letter to them asking for a written reply, rather than just a verbal statement.

Longer range, you may want to investigate whether a pull-off lane can be installed for the drop-off vehicles.

Passing on the Right

Q Doc asked: If car traffic is traveling slower than I am on my bicycle, may I pass those vehicles on their right? The road is quite wide, with a three to four foot double yellow line at my school. Passing on this double yellow line to pass a bicycle here:

That same bicyclist would be lawful if on the bike lane or paved shoulder. The statute

There is no statute that prohibits driving a bicycle on a paved shoulder. The statute that applies to passing on the right is this: s. 316.084 – When Overtaking on the Right is Permitted

(1) The driver of a vehicle may overtake and pass on the right of another vehicle only under the following conditions:

(a) When the vehicle overtaken is making or about to make a left turn;

(b) Upon a street or highway with unobstructed pavement not occupied by parked vehicles of sufficient width for two or more lines of moving traffic in each direction;

(c) Upon a one-way street, or upon any roadway on which traffic is restricted to one direction of movement, where the roadway is free from obstructions and of sufficient width for two or more lines of moving vehicles.

(2) The driver of a vehicle may overtake and pass another vehicle on the right only under conditions permitting such movement in safety. In no event shall such movement be made by driving off the pavement or main-traveled portion of the roadway.

Strictly speaking, a bicyclist leaving the roadway to pass other vehicles on the right on a paved shoulder, then moving back into the “main-traveled portion of the roadway”, could be construed as violating subsection (2) above. In such a case, it might be argued that the cyclist never left the “pavement”. You will need to seek legal advice, which we don’t do here, to resolve that.

That same bicyclist would be lawful if always remaining on the paved shoulder. Approaching an intersection might make that difficult though, since many undesignated paved shoulders disappear at intersections.

*DISCLAIMER: The purpose of this column is to inform about bicycling laws. The material provided here and through other means is for general informational purposes only and shall in no way constitute or be construed as legal advice by the officers, directors, agents or employees of the Florida Bicycle Association. If your experience in a court of law or on the streets differs from that presented, we want to know about it, but George Martin and FBA are not accountable for a ruling contrary to our interpretation of Florida Law or other consequences of cycling. You should seek legal advice on a particular situation.
Punta Gorda Police Department takes Florida’s 3-Foot Rule serious
by Captain Thomas Lewis, Punta Gorda Police Department • tlewis@pgorda.us

In 2006, the State of Florida made history as the sixth state to adopt a 3 Foot Rule, a law that mandates motorists provide at least 3 feet of clearance when passing bicyclists on the roadway. Florida law enforcement would soon realize the difficulties in enforcing such a law. If a bicyclist is involved in a crash, law enforcement can definitively say it was less than 3 feet. But how do you handle those near-misses - the drive-bys by motorists intentionally trying to discourage bicyclists from using the roadways? Was it 3 feet or 2 feet 4 inches? Hard to tell – especially when it comes to testifying in court.

Now-a-days, every jury is expecting a calibrated-360 degree video of the incident that is validated by DNA evidence. The good news is technology is evolving and enforcement-assisting equipment is being developed. But in the meantime, we all have a role to play in preventing crashes and protecting our riders. Police across the state are launching educational campaigns in many different forms – website and social media information, passing out brochures on traffic stops, 3 foot rule stickers are being placed on patrol cars, presentations to local bike clubs and civic groups, etc.

Mixing Education & Enforcement

With Corporal Katie Heck of the Punta Gorda Police Department riding her bicycle, officers from the department’s Bike Patrol Unit conducted directed enforcement of the 3 Foot Rule. When Corporal Heck experienced a violation, officers conducted a traffic stop and issued a written warning in an effort to promote education of the law. With more than 200 vehicles passing Corporal Heck during the operation, a total of four violations were observed. Court Nederveld of the Peace River Riders Bicycle Club joined in as a citizen’s observer and learned much from law enforcement perspective.

Law enforcement is collaborating and sharing these and other ideas so all Florida communities can benefit. Please get involved, contact your local law enforcement agency and offer to help. The more law enforcement and the community work together, the safer we’ll be.
SunTrail to Receive $25 Million Annually

by Ron Cunningham, Executive Director of Bike Florida

The Florida Shared-Use Nonmotorized Trail Network is quite a mouthful. Fortunately, it’s got a very cool alias: SunTrail.

More fortunately still, the Florida Legislature recently passed a bill authorizing $25 million a year to expand, connect and improve Florida’s already impressive - but, alas, still rather splintered - system of trails and greenways.

Will the Sunshine State become known as the Greenways State? Why not? Trails are good for everybody. They provide access to healthy exercise for walkers, runners and cyclists. They are an economic shot in the arm for communities (see Winter Garden, Dunedin and Venice just to name a few prosperous “trail towns”) And they are a potential draw for a new breed of “eco-tourists,” folks who want to see more of Florida but not necessarily from behind the wheel of an automobile or through the window of a tour bus.

Simply put: When visitors and residents alike have the ability to travel from city to city via a connected off-road greenway system, bicycle tourism will take off in Florida.

That SunTrail is becoming a reality in a year when practically nothing else of substance was accomplished in Tallahassee is very much to the credit of Florida Senate President Andy Gardiner. The Republican from Orlando made SunTrail a personal legislative priority this year. SunNet serves to continue and expand upon the important work began last year, when the Legislature authorized $15 million to “fill in the caps” between several Central Florida trail fragments with the idea of creating a “Cross-Coast Connector” between Tampa and Titusville.

We are pleased to announce that Sen. Gardiner has agreed to discuss his SunTrail legislation on Nov. 13 in the City of Clermont as a presenter at Bike Florida’s third annual Share The Road Celebration of Cycling event. One of the themes of Celebration of Cycling’s daylong series of presentations and panel discussions will be “So You Want To Be A Trail Town?” And Sen. Gardiner will be joined by a representative from the state Office of Greenways and Trails and others to talk about opportunities for communities to get involved in trail development. In addition, Ian Lockwood, Orlando director of the Toole Design Group, will talk about how the South Orange Trail helped transform and revitalize downtown Winter Garden. We are working on lining up other speakers to discuss the benefits of connected trails as well.

Many thanks to Sen. Gardiner for his efforts on behalf of SunTrail. We’re looking forward to hearing from him and other trail advocates when Share The Road Celebration of Cycling convenes in Clermont on November 13. For more details go to ShareTheRoad.org.

SunTrail to Receive $25 Million Annually

Florida Greenways and Trails System
2015 Opportunity Corridor Update

Public Workshops

Hosted by

Thursday, September 17, 2015 – Winter Garden
Winter Garden City Hall
300 W Plant St, Winter Garden, FL 34787
4:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Monday, September 21, 2015 – Sarasota
Sarasota/Manatee MPO Conference Room
7632 15th Street East, Sarasota, FL 34243
4:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Wednesday, September 23, 2015 – Tallahassee
DEP Carr Building
3800 Commonwealth Blvd, Tallahassee, FL 32399
4:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Thursday, September 24, 2015 – Jacksonville
The Ribault Club
11241 Fort George Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32226
4:00 PM – 6:30 PM

For more information:
www.FloridaGreenwaysandTrails.com

5TH ANNUAL BRYAN B. WRIGLEY RIDE

MEMORIAL & CHARITY RIDE | SYKES & COOPER FARM
FEBRUARY 20, 2016 | ST.AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA | 25K,50K,100K
SWEET WATER BREWERY | THE RED RIVER BAND
“REST**TAURANT STOPS” | T-SHIRT | “BIG MOUTH” BOTTLE
EARN A JERSEY | JOIN THE MOVEMENT
WWW.WRIGLEYRIDE.ORG
Registration Open

Follow Us On Twitter | Instagram | Facebook
@VeloFestFlorida
#velofest #humanmetric #bikelove

A Velo Fest Community Initiative Event, St. Johns, Florida
October 4 (Sun) Lake Mary FL
CF Cycle For Life
100/65/32-5th annual bike tour along the north shore of Lake Monroe, through beautiful Lake Helen and along the wide open roads of Volusia County. CF Cycle for Life is a fully-supported ride with route options of 32, 65 & 100 Miles miles. This unique event empowers participants to take action and demonstrate their fight in finding a cure for cystic fibrosis in a tangible, emotional and powerful way. www.fightcf.org

October 4 (Sun) Inverness FL
Rials To Trails of the Withlacoochee 21st Annual Bike Ride
14-100 miles. Early Registration online or Ride day 7-9am at the Inverness Trailhead, 315 Apopka Ave. T-shirt before Sep.15th guaranteed. 5 SAG stops along paved 46 miles of Withlacoochee State Trail. Lunch in Inverness. Century ride certificates. Bikes plus door prizes. $30. See rialsstrainsonline.com for ride application.

October 18 (Sun) Venice FL
Family Bike Adventures at the Beautiful Carlton Reserve
Off-road wilderness bike ride through the beautiful T. Mabry Carlton, Jr. Memorial Reserve (Carlton Reserve) at 10 a.m. for approx. 1-2 hours. Pre-registration required. Join David Reynolds at 941-412-5575 or Gary Vashinder at 941-893-7729 for meeting location. Space limited to 12 participants. Must be able to ride an off-road bicycle. spwebs.scgov.net/scgdesign/spcalendar.html

October 23-25 White Springs FL
Santa Fe River Valley Cycling Festival
Two centuries in two days! (Or enjoy the shorter options for a weekend of bicycle touring.) See details in the listings for the Santa Fe Century and Horse Farm Hundred. Full info is available at gccfla.org/gcf/

October 24 (Sat) Gainesville FL
35th Annual Horse Farm Hundred
Gainesville FL
The Gainesville Cycling Club’s tour through the picturesque horse farms of northern Marion County. We have the best stocked rest stops in Florida! The 102 mile ride (and a 57 mile option that doesn’t get into horse farm territory) starts at 8:30 am atLoftin High School at 3000 East University Avenue. Bagels and muffins will be available before the start. http://gccfla.org/gcf/

October 25 (Sun) St. Augustine FL
Tour de North Port FL / “It’s the Green Pumpkin”!
Three great rides through the beautiful tree canopies of North Port, 15, 35, or 65 miles. $40 registration fee includes catered breakfast and freshly prepared lunch. Free t-shirt guaranteed to the first 250 to register. More information and online registration through Oct.23 at peoplefortrees.com. Proceeds benefit People for Trees, Inc. a 501 (c) 3 non-profit Florida native tree advocacy group.

November 1 (Sun) Lakewood Ranch FL
41st Annual Sarasota Manatee Bicycle Club Golf Coast Cyclefest
One full day of superb cycling in beautiful southwest Florida. Riders may choose supported routes of 100, 62, 35, or 20 mile distances. This is not a race and is designed to be a family event for cyclists of all abilities. Breakfast provided along with a lunch served by Polo Grill. Race Registration opens at 6:45AM. Routes close at 3:00PM. www.smbc.us/cyclefest.html

November 1 (Sun) Clermont FL
Cocoa FL
27th Annual Intracoastal Waterway Century - The most scenic ride in Florida!
Riders will pass by the Kennedy Space Center, rest at our SAG stop at the American Police Hall of Fame, and ride quiet tree lined roads along the Indian River lined with turn-of-the-century estates along the beautiful Intracoastal Waterway. Options of 100 and 63 miles, and scenic escorted rides of 28 and 14 miles. Proceed go to local charities. spacocoastfreewheelers.com/events/icwc/

November 8 (Sun) Melbourne FL
Cycle4Alz (Cycle 4 Alzheimer’s)
The event is part of the CAAM Event Series Challenge and is NOT A RACE! The event will feature 3 routes - 10 Mile Fun Ride, 65 Mile (Metric Century) and a 100 Mile (Century) Your registration and fundraising minimum includes: Event t-shirt, rest stops with plenty to eat and drink on all 3 routes. Well marked route with distinct colors for each distance Cue sheets, maps and GPS routing (available on website), www.raceroster.com/events/2015/3963/cycle4alz

November 8-14 St. Augustine FL
St Johns River to Sea Loop Tour
An all inclusive inn-to-inn tour with average mileage of 30-40 miles/day. The St Johns River-to-Sea Loop explores rural communities along the St Johns River and Florida’s Atlantic Coast, starting and finishing in St. Augustine. Coastal breezes, stunning sunrises, hidden springs, and manatees are just a few of the things that await you on this tour. Full SAG support, rest stops, and a fun “happy hour” with snacks, wine, beer, and other refreshments restore you for the next day. This ride is limited to just 20 people, so sign up early to reserve your spot! Call Joy at 352-224-8601 or visit bikeflorida.org/tours/the-st-johns-river-to-sea-loop/

November 11-15 South Miami FL
WHEELS
The five-day hub of WHEELS will be South Miami, the only city in South Florida where transit and multi-use trail directly pass through downtown. Use transit throughout the tri-county area to reach daily trail rides. Enjoy the thrill of thousands on bikes riding a closed-to-cars on-street ciclavia. Take part in a Friday afternoon/Saturday morning conference that will fit you into green mobility throughout Florida. Love three nights of block parties. It’s all free! Visit www.wheelsflorida.org for more information.

November 14-15 Clermont FL
Horrible Hundred and Cycling Expo
Enjoy the best weekend of Florida riding at Waterfront Park, Clermont. There is no charge for the Saturday rides or the Expo. The Expo will also be open on Sunday with rides of 35, 70 and 100 miles. Plenty of hills on all distances. Registration includes custom t-shirt or water bottle, access to sag stops and lunch after the ride. Check the web site or follow us on twitter @horriblehundred. horrible-hundred.com/ for details and updates.

November 21-22 Sunrise FL
Ride for Adopt-a-Bike
Two days of riding fun in Ft. Lauderdale’s Markham Park. Six Ride Levels starting at 10-12mph to 25+. Helmets required. Complete details at adoptabike.org. All proceeds benefit the Adopt-a-Bike Foundation, a non-profit organization that provides bikes, helmets and cycling safety information to disadvantaged and physically challenged children. Donations to Adopt-a-Bike Foundation are tax deductible. http://www.adoptabike.org

November 21 (Sat) Port Charlotte FL
Coastal Cruisers Bicycle Club Pasta Bash
100/50/25 kilometers on flat, lightly traveled roads. Event starts at Village of Holiday Lake Recreation Center. Well-stocked rest stop and roving SAG vehicles. This is NOT a mass start event. Registration opens on/about October 1. www.coastalcruisers.net

Visit www.floridabicycle.org/touring for more details on all these fabulous events, or to add your event.
Oh, Canada!

by Dan Moser - bikedemoser@gmail.com, 239-334-6417

Dan is a long-time bicycle/pedestrian advocate and traffic safety professional who cycles, runs, and walks regularly for transportation, recreation, and fitness.

It is always questionable as to whether anyone really cares to hear or read about someone else's travels but I'll take a chance and relate my experiences from a recent visit to Canada. Taking a real vacation for the first time in a number of years to celebrate our 25th anniversary with my wife, Maria, was as much fun as we could have hoped for. Visiting other parts of the country and world does wonders for recharging one's batteries and reminding us that our own little world is just that. For us, traveling to Toronto and Nova Scotia provided both of those benefits.

Although I characterized our trip as a "real vacation" I couldn't help but look critically at the communities we visited, always considering their transportation options and infrastructure, green spaces, and other quality of life indicators. As is usually the case when being exposed to places people enjoy visiting, there's much to be learned from going home.

This was our third time in Toronto and second in Nova Scotia, allowing me an interesting perspective because my last visit included meetings with transportation, community planning, transit, and parks & recreation officials. At that time the City of Toronto was in the first stages of moving to drastically improve conditions for people using bicycles and transit. What I saw during this visit was the results of their commitment, which is significant in terms of enhanced infrastructure and increased bike ridership.

In the cities we visited – Toronto, Ontario, and Nova Scotia's Dartmouth and Halifax – transit options abounded. Of course, Toronto, with a population of over 2.5 million, had the most robust, with everything from an excellent subway, streetcar, and bus system to ferries and water taxis. But even Dartmouth, which is much smaller (pop. 70,000) than its neighbor across the harbor, Halifax (pop. 300,000), provided very good bus service as well as ferries and water taxis between the two cities. One thing I found very telling was that those on foot and bicycle are provided a 24/7 shuttle service free of charge while major renovations are taking place on one of two bridges connecting the cities, work that will take years to complete. Additional ferry capacity is also part of their plan to ensure access during this massive project.

The pedestrian environment in each of the cities was very good in terms of compliance to crosswalk laws by motorists and non-motorists alike. But one glaring difference between the US and Canada is the apparent lack of implementation of something similar to our Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that requires public places to adequately accommodate those with mobility problems and other physical limitations. While there are curb ramps in most places where needed, tactile features for people with visual impairments are seemingly rare. But the most surprising oversight is in access to many of the businesses we visited, especially restaurants.

In researching Canadians laws related to access, there is indeed a version of our ADA that's been in place since the late 1970s but specific requirements and implementation appears to be well behind ours, at least from what Maria and I encountered.

Roundabouts

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has embraced the modern roundabouts. These proven intersections reduce crashes by 76% and fatalities by up to 90%, compared with conventional signalized intersections, and they reduce waiting time during off-peak conditions. Currently, there are 13 roundabouts on the State Highway System, and around 200 on local roads and streets in Florida. The modern roundabout is often the FDOT's preferred intersection treatment wherever they can be effectively installed on our system. Expect to see more roundabouts in coming years...

...which may be a concern to some cyclists. Many Floridians are unfamiliar with roundabouts and treat them with suspicion. FDOT has learned that when public acceptance of proposed roundabouts is low initially (about 70% against the introduction of roundabouts,) acceptance grows to about 70% in favor once the roundabout has been installed and people adjust to the new traffic pattern. Given the documented safety and operational advantages, roundabouts placed in the correct environment are winners for all Florida's road users, including cyclists.

Cyclists that have taken a CyclingSavvy class have likely ridden through a roundabout during the on-road session and experienced how easy it is. For cyclists that have not ridden through one yet, here are tips for navigating roundabouts with confidence.

Roundabouts may be single lane (one center circulating lane,) or multiline (normally two circulating lanes.) For cyclists, the low speed of the center circulating lane is one of the greatest benefits of roundabouts. Circulating speeds of only 18-20 mph allow cyclists to easily mix with automobile traffic. Multiline roundabouts may have slightly higher circulating speeds, but still no more than 25 mph, which is still a very good speed for mixing with traffic.

To ride a single lane roundabout, take control of the lane on the approach, and ride through. That's all there is to it. Do not share the circulating lane, even though it may appear wide enough – doing so could result in a right hook crash.

Cyclists should ride in the center of the lane. Multiline roundabouts are bigger and, as previously mentioned, may be a little faster than single lane roundabouts. However, the principles are the same. Control the lane and do not attempt to share. The desired method is for cyclists to navigate the roundabout same as an automobile. To go right or straight, control the outside lane and ride around to your exit (shown in blue). To go left, enter the roundabout in the appropriate lane for the movement, control the lane through the roundabout and do not change lanes until after exiting (shown in red). If you enter the roundabout from the right lane you can make a right turn or a through movement. If you enter the roundabout from the left lane you can make a through movement, left turn or U-turn. See Figure 1.

Some roundabouts will have a cyclist bailout ramp on the approach (see Figure 1.) This low-speed exit ramp lets you exit the roadway and navigate the roundabout like a pedestrian, using the sidewalk and crosswalks. There will be a similar ramp on the exit to let you re-enter the roadway. For cyclists unfamiliar or uncomfortable with traversing roundabouts, the bailout ramp may be preferable. Often after experiencing the "bailout" route a few times, the cyclist decides the vehicular route is more convenient and comfortable. There is no requirement to use a bailout ramp when present at a roundabout.

Cyclists that have faced the frustration of triggering a traffic signal on a bicycle, have another reason to appreciate roundabouts – no vehicular detection needed! Yield to traffic already in the roundabout, then go when there is an acceptable gap. No signal detection, low speeds, and easy right-hand turns – FDOT believes roundabouts are the perfect intersection for bicycle traffic, and that cyclists will agree after trying them a few times. Please feel free to comment and share your own roundabout experiences.

You can download a free copy of FDOT's Guide to Modern Roundabouts at www.AlertTodayFlorida.com. Contact FDOT's State Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator at dewayne.carver@dot.state.fl.us. Thank you FDOT Roadway Design Office Section for contributing to this article.

Figure 1. Graphic courtesy of Alert Today/Alive Tomorrow
Central Florida’s Polk County is the “Cycling Capital of Florida.” Explore more than 60 miles of paved multi-use trails and 1,700 miles of pre-mapped road routes. Unlike most of Florida’s flat terrain, Central Florida’s unique topography provides elevation changes of more than 300 feet, so your cycling adventure won’t fall flat! Ready to ignite the fire inside yourself? Scan the QR code now to learn more.