City Manager is proud of Punta Gorda’s bike/ped facilities

by Dan Moser, FBA Program Director

The March 31, 2012, Pedal and Play in Paradise, an annual ride hosted by Team Punta Gorda and managed by Peace River Riders Bicycle Club (www.peaceriverridersbicycleclub.com), included a post-event tour that those of us working to improve our cycling environment would like to see replicated elsewhere.

After cyclists completed their rides and had lunch, City Manager Howard Kunik led anyone interested—including many who didn’t take part in the prior ride—on a tour of Punta Gorda’s bike and pedestrian infrastructure, pointing out improvements, articulating plans, and

Please see City manager, page 2

Clarification to bike lane mandate signed into law

Governor Scott put his pen to a revised highway safety act (CS/CS/HB 1223 – Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles), sections of which clarify “situations in which a bicyclist is not required to ride in the marked bicycle lane (if the roadway is marked for bicycle use) or as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway.”

The Safety Act changes Florida Statute 316.2065 Bicycle regulations, clarifying that a bicyclist is exempt from this requirement when a “potential conflict” or a turn lane interrupts the roadway or bicycle lane. (316.2065(5)(a)3).

The specific language instructs cyclists to stay in the bike lane or keep “as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway except... 3. When reasonably necessary to avoid any condition or potential conflict, including, but not limited to, a fixed or moving object, parked or moving vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, animal, surface hazard, turn lane, or substandard-width lane, which makes it unsafe to continue along the right-hand curb or edge or within a bicycle lane. For the purposes of this subsection, a “substandard-width lane” is a lane that is too narrow for a bicycle and another vehicle to travel safely side by side within the lane.”*

Readers may note the use of the word “practicable” in the paragraph above. This is the same verbiage that’s always been used in 316.2065. However, it is a somewhat archaic term that’s rarely used in “walking around” language for most people, so it’s frequently misinterpreted by law enforcement personnel.

This verbiage is almost always interpreted to mean “as close to the curb as possible,” which is not correct, but it frequently leads to cyclists erroneously being ticketed when they shouldn’t be.

FBA would like to see this language cleaned up in a future session of the legislature to prevent further misinterpretations.

Other sections that affect cycling include a change in helmet compliance with federal safety standards.

*Underlines indicate new language.

Please see Legislative, page 6
City manager enjoys ‘tour guide’ role when Punta Gorda’s bike/ped infrastructure is the subject  

from page 1

City Manage Howard Kunik has led an annual tour of Punta Gorda’s bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure for the past seven years.

Asking questions, all while in the saddle.

This is the seventh consecutive year he’s done so, a tradition that’s evolved over time to now becoming the icing on the cake of Pedal and Play in Paradise.

While many of us struggle to get elected officials and staff people at all levels onto a bike so they could see for themselves how things really are—something that’s very hard for them to do from behind a car windshield—Manager Kunik turns that practice on its head by leading the way.

Accompanied by two Punta Gorda Police Officers on bikes and one on a motorized vehicle similar to a Segway, almost 200 residents joined Howard as they rode along the city’s beautiful riverfront trails and through its now-thriving downtown.

Bike Friendly Community

Punta Gorda was named FBA’s Bike Friendly Community of the Year in 2010, primarily because of the work that had been done to rebuild this historic city after Hurricane Charley devastated the place in 2004 and their commitment to making the place pedestrian and bicycle-friendly as one of their major goals.

And what a comeback! Historic elements were preserved and the bike/ped parks infrastructure all vastly improved, thanks to a successful public-private partnership led by Team Punta Gorda (www.teampuntagorda.org) and the city.

A visit to Punta Gorda is enlightening.

While in town you can stop in and chat with FBA board member Earl Lang at his Acme Bike Shop, just south of downtown, and check out JRA Bike Shop, a very urban establishment in the heart of the historic district that symbolizes the progress made since 2004.

If you don’t want to schlep your own bike, you can always use one from the free bike share program, another great example of a successful public-private partnership.

People who ran faster than 12 mph are not in our gene pool.

Attorney J. Steele Olmstead practices law statewide from offices in Tampa. One of his specialties is bicycle law and he’ll even come to you...wherever you got broken.

Progress left the brain behind

by J. Steele Olmstead, Esq.

Ask a cycling attorney...

If you don’t mind I’d like to slip into medical mode for all you cyclists out there. Here’s a discussion I have with my injured cyclists clients and the parents of young cyclists.

The human brain weighs approximately 3.0 pounds. It is sitting in a semi-opaque fluid called cerebral spinal fluid.

It is inside your skull surrounded by seven layers of protective tissue and you’re a custom-fitted housing, the cranium (bone). That skull (which may sound iber bullet proof) is only (think really carefully about this number) one-tenth of an inch thick (2.945-2.972mm, male/female).

That’s it. And your brain is attached to the human body only at its base (with the various veins that flow into it, nourishing, enriching and taking away the brain activity by-products).

That’s it! The attachment, in its basest analysis, makes the brain a neural punching bag wobbling back and forth on your brain stem.

The human body has been essentially unchanged for the last 200,000 years. That long ago there was no pavement or sidewalks—no trucks, trailers, helmets, wheels, houses, buildings, gas tanks, steel, plastic, glass, wire, or anything that humans invented in the last 10,000 years.

The human body at that time, as it is today, could walk at approximately 3.1 mph/5.0 kph. The average human could run 12-15 mph/19.3-24.1 kph.

The folks that ran faster would have exceeded their body design tolerances, and injured themselves with any type of fall.

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Look at it another way, and you can see why people who ran faster than 12 mph are not in our genetic pool. So the human body, specifically to our discussion, the skull, evolved to tolerate speeds less than the fastest the body could run.

You run faster you are going to get hurt. Your body isn’t designed to go that fast.

One alarming thing about our body’s design: if you were standing completely upright and were to lose all motor control and collapse to the ground from an average height, let’s say 5’9 inches/1.75” (average man/woman), you would injure yourself, including your brain, pretty seriously. So, humans who pass out spontaneously are also not in our genetic pool.

Hurt the brain

Let’s talk about hurting the brain. When the brain wobbles, it collides with the inside of your skull. There’s a name for the injury to the brain from this internal trauma of the punching bag: “coup-contrecoup.”

This is a bad thing.

Trauma to the front, back, or sides is going to cause your brain to experience trauma with coup-contrecoup. It will damage the neural cells’ bodies, the sheath coating the connections between the cells, or the connection, or cause blood vessels to burst—also resulting in brain damage.

And this is without fracturing your skull. So if you were not genetically designed to pass out, you’d fall, and chances are, sooner or later, injure your brain - maybe pretty bad.
The best ship is the partnership

recently spoke at the ribbon-cutting event for a new paved path in Miami. The new path is only a mile and a half long, but it fills an important gap between two existing trails: it connects to a Metrorail station at one end, and to a transit-oriented development project on the other end.

There was a nice crowd for a rainy Thursday morning that included elected officials, staff from FDOT (project management), Miami-Dade Transit (owner-operator), MPO (funding), Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (review and comment), consultants and contractors (design and construction), and the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority (the trail crosses one of their roads).

However, the event was also well attended by many of our partners that included representatives from the Green Mobility Network (pathway advocates), the Everglades Bicycle Club (trail users), supportive businesses (bike-friendly destinations), and the East Coast Greenway Alliance (designator of the project into their 16-state network of paved paths).

This was in addition to throngs of regular citizens who had attended meetings, or written messages of support during development.

I don’t think the project would have flopped without all of these partners, but I know it would have been more successful if we had worked more with representatives from healthcare, environmental organizations, advocates for kids and the elderly, other user groups (runners, skaters, dog walkers), and more businesses (why wasn’t the ice cream shop there?).

The fact is, even though we usually seek out other “bike people,” it is always useful to reach beyond and connect with people that have other perspectives, resources, connections and needs.

Don’t you think that some members from the senior center would like to ride to the park, but need a ride leader to help them get their tires pumped up and shown a low-traffic route?

Of course a partnership is a two-way street, but maybe you need to pay it forward first. You never know how it may come back to you.

In your community, who are your media partners? Do you provide them with story ideas, information and advance notice of significant events? Do they cover traffic safety issues in a way that puts the correct emphasis on the problems of impaired, distracted, and careless driving?

If you want to make your community a better place for cycling, leave the bike at home, and get onboard the partnership!

Ribbon cutters include (from left) John Hopkins, Green Mobility Network; Tim Bustos, FBA; Irma San Roman, MPO; Yael Lloro (in red), Miami-Dade Transit; Herb Hiller, East Coast Greenway; David Henderson, FBA; Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez; Alina Hudak, County Manager; Harold Desdunes, FDOT (in dark suit). In back behind the Mayor is Mary Jane Mark, Mack Cycles.

Bike/Walk Central Florida Chapter...

The forecast called for thunderstorms, and for some reason that kept people from riding their bicycles to Earth Day—go figure.

Still, it’s nice to be remembered, and Ms. Nature must have approved, despite the big-old carbon footprint, because the weather, though breezy, was beautiful.

Volunteers outnumbered customers, but we were conveniently located next to the Aveda beauty school, and at least one volunteer availed herself of the opportunity to get a salon-quality cut for only $10.

Thanks to all of our great volunteers: Anna McCambridge, Andrew Harrell, John Randle, Keri Caffrey, Darlyn Kuhn, and Diana Steele.

Big ups to our new friend, diabetes warrior Cesar Cesarea, of the Tour de Cure, for loaning us bike racks that met Orlando Parks & Rec requirements prohibiting sprinkler-killing stakes.

Special mention, as well, to Andrew, who went above and beyond to pick up the bike racks and drop them off.

The weather held until about 5 p.m., when we saw the big green blob on the weather radar and packed it in. We were all home, high and dry, when the weather hit.

Trail update

The Orlando Urban Trail, which opened in May, is only 1.2 miles long, but that’s an important mile, winding its way toward becoming a bicycle gateway to downtown.

Officially, the city now has more than 280 miles of bike trails and marked bike routes—enough to garner a “Bike Friendly City” designation from the League of American Bicyclists.

And while we’re on the subject of trails . . . Looks as if AASHTO – the folks who set national design standards for roads and recreational bike trails, are finally getting around to finalizing their new recommendations that include a thumbs down on bollards—those concrete or steel posts used to keep cars out, but more often than not, serve to send cyclists to the hospital.

The new urban trail was designed without bollards, and the director of the Orange County Department of Health has sent a letter to the county personally requesting removal of these dangerous hazards. This has been a long-time goal of ours. We should have more to report in our next update.

Pedestrian Crossing

Hey—if crosswalks are good enough for John, Paul, George and Ringo, they’re good enough for you.

Now, if only we can get cars to stop.

Statistics show that in the Orlando-Kissimmee Metro area, we kill one pedestrian each week, and injure two a day.

Bike/Walk Central Florida, and our community partners, MetroPlan Orlando, Winter Park Health Foundation, Orlando Health, Lynx, Orange Cycle, David’s World Cycle, Track Shack, the mayors, police chiefs, and engineering departments of the Cities of Orlando, Winter Park, Maitland, Eatonville, other cities, plus Orange County, are going to change that.

On May 30, we plan to launch a county wide initiative in Orange County, aimed at increasing the percentage of drivers yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks and encouraging pedestrians to use those crosswalks.

This so-called “Triple-E” approach combines low-cost engineering with education and high-visibility enforcement, to fundamentally change the crosswalk culture in support of ongoing efforts by cities, counties and the Florida Department of Transportation, to make our streets safer.

At our first law enforcement training operation, Orlando Police issued warning fliers to drivers failing to yield at problem crosswalks around the city.

More than 400 drivers were stopped over the course of three hours. Research has shown that those drivers will tell at least six people each, for a total reach of 2,800 drivers.

Orange County Sheriff training will begin in June.

The Orange County School Board plans to review our pedestrian education curriculum this summer for possible use, district-wide, in the fall.

This is a significant development.

Keep your fingers crossed.

http://BikeWalkCentralFlorida.org
Executive Director’s Corner...

Some good news, some bad; much still to do

It’s been a busy time for the Florida Bicycle Association since our last issue of the FBA Messenger. Many things have happened that give us cause to celebrate, yet many things have also happened that give us cause to be concerned.

Every day, when I get up and check Facebook, various blogs, and other news outlets, I see good things happening for cycling in Florida, and other things that show me we still have much work to do.

First, the bad news.

There have been multiple bike crashes in the Tampa area over the last six months that, sadly, have included multiple fatalities.

Unfortunately, these fatal bike crashes continue a sad trend the Tampa Bay area has been experiencing for the last one to two years.

We have a number of people in the Tampa Bay area who are working very hard to reduce this trend, including Alan Snel with the South West Florida Bicycle United Dealers (SWFHUD), and J. Steele Olmstead, a local attorney that just donated $2000 to the Tampa Bay Police Department to install more ‘Share the Road - It’s the Law’ on police cars.

In Volusia County, there have been 24 children hit while walking or riding their bikes to school—just since the beginning of the current school year—and two of these have been fatalities.

Many of these crashes have occurred in Orange City, which, as many of our readers know, is very close to FBA’s new headquarters in DeLand.

As a result, FBA has been trying to provide staff time and resources to help reduce the trend in Volusia County as well.

This is truly sad, but contrary to what certain websites have maintained—there is light at the end of the tunnel. Overall, our crash statistics are going down statewide, and we’d like to think that it’s at least partially a result of aggressive counter-measures we’ve been pursuing at the state level.

FBA is ramping up our enforcement programs, and we’re expanding the Cycling Savvy program and other educational efforts.

The Florida Department of Transportation is stepping up to the plate as well. At a press conference on the steps of the state capitol a couple of months ago, FDOT Secretary Ananth Prasad stated that bicycle and pedestrian safety is now one of his “top priorities.”

As a result of these new priorities, and staff turnover, new staff is being put into place with FDOT to help ensure that bicycle and pedestrian safety does improve.

Our hats (and helmets) are off to Secretary Prasad, and we hope FDOT considers FBA as a resource while we endeavor to make Florida safer for all road users.

We also fared well in the legislature this year. Despite being told nothing “substantive” would probably happen this year, ostensibly due to the legislature’s preoccupation with the budget and redistricting, FBA and its partners pressed on nonetheless.

Consequently, we have some positive changes in the works as a result of working with FDOT and the legislature. We go into more detail about what we’ve achieved this year in the article on legislative updates in this issue.

At the federal level, we are not where we would like to be, but we have been able to stave off partisan attacks on the current federal Transportation Bill. However, it has only been through the dedicated work of FBA staff, our members, and the countless e-mails and letters we’ve wrought on congress that we have been able to make a difference.

Our current status at the federal level is also detailed further in the article on legislative updates.

As this issue of the FBA Messenger heads to press, we’re already easing through spring, and rapidly approaching summer, so we decided to do a Spring+Summer issue this year.

Fortunately, our winter was not severe, so most of us were not sidelined by weather, and consequently, we’ve been riding all year (yay!). However, most of us are riding even more now.

We’re getting up earlier, and riding even later into the evening. We’re doing group rides, century rides, and for the lucky ones—extended tours like the “Forgotten Coast Tour” recently completed by our “sister organization,” Bike Florida.

Welcome New/Rejoining Members! from page 3

Eric and Myrian
Steinbaugh
Robin Vaudreuil
Daehyun Kim
David Shirley, Jr.
Jerry Skirvin, Jr.
M. Happy Marly
Scott Holley
Patrice Leconte
Kris Maglione
Bruce Alberts
Fiti Huang
Jeff Fricker
Tim Karanovich and
Marjorie Graziano
Linda Ducharme
Chris Furlow
Ann Redgrave
Byron Barnes
Dennis Mayo
Tom Hoffman
Amy Stanley
Jody Yanow
Sharon Kriegman
Rebecca Bonetempo
Albert Porter
Nicholas Laudadio
Brian Blizard
Clive Lloyd
Todd Sahner
Howard Blank
Carl Longeri
Michael Zimmerman
Chris Spire
Oscar Breeding
Carlos Gonzalez
Dana Wittenberg
Joshua Silver
David and Jeannie Lanham
Jacqueline Ledeja
Elizabeth Vasiliou
Abelardo Coro
Ron and Deborah
Rader
Dennis Dricoll
Miguel Morales
Heidi Fuchs
Gary Ecroft
Bonnie Ecroft
Tim Snow
William Jensen
John McCauley
Juan-Carillo Tamayo
Haven Gutentag
Rafael Lara
Marc Blumencranz

Some Online Resources

Have you a subscription to the Share the Road Newsletter? It’s filled with information about bicycling events, people and places (including great trail maps for off road cycling), sign up at www.bikeflorida.org.

If you are an Adventure Cyclist, check out the adventurecycling.org newsletter, Bike Bits. To subscribe, visit: http://www.adventurecycling.org/bikebits/subscribe.cfm and read their blog at http://blog.adventurecycling.org

FBA board member and former president Mighk Wilson blogs regularly at www.mighkwilson.com. His well-researched, philosophical essays will get you thinking on a higher plane.

Don’t forget to check out our Cycling Savvy guru, Keri Caffrey’s favorite site, http://cycling savvy.org. There you’ll find a pannier-load of stories about “empowerment for unlimited travel.” FBA’s own little program is so popular it’s spreading across the country. Have you taken your class yet?

For information about Florida’s bicycle laws, go to http://Flbikelaw.org. Read through the archives, or ask your own burning question. We reprint some of the questions and answers in the FBA Messenger, but there are many more on the site.

Can’t get enough of Keri? Go to her Website/blog at http://CommuteOrlando.com. Lots of great information on “Bicycling in the Real World.”

And don’t leave your computer without a visit to (I know it’s another Central Florida site...sorry) the Orlando Sentinel’s own cycling blog, The Chain Gang.

http://blogs.orlandosentinel.com/sports_thechaingang

Sign up for the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy eNewsletter at http://support.railstotrails.org/site/PageServer?pagename=rtn_registration to keep on top of advocacy, trail conversions and more.

Florida Cycling Magazine, a semi-monthly digital magazine dedicated to promoting Florida cycling and focusing on racing, can be found at www.floridaacaling magazine.com. Sign up for the e-mail.

You’ve certainly run across many more. The list is virtually endless. These few offer a variety of subject matter, just to get you started.

Tim Bustos

As a result, we have only two things to ask of you, our loyal members and other cyclists:

1. Be careful out there! If you’re a relative newcomer to cycling, consider taking a bicycle education class, such as FBA’s acclaimed “Cycling Savvy” course (cycling savv.org). If you’re an experienced rider, consider mentoring a new rider. Be sure you have lights at night, practice your riding skills, and refresh your memory about Florida traffic laws that govern cyclists—and all road users. Yes, automobile drivers do contribute to a significant number of bicycle/motor vehicle crashes—too many—but not all of them. Please take responsibility for your actions, and be aware of your surroundings at all times. Be visible—be predictable!

2. Have fun! That is, after all, the reason most of us started riding a bike—right? Whether we learned to ride at age 6 or 60, cycling should still be as much fun as it was the first time we ever set foot on a pedal. Yes, it’s good for the environment, and it helps to improve air quality. It’s also good for our health, a heck’uva lot cheaper than driving, and good for our cities. But never lose sight of the fact that cycling is supposed to be fun. Do your part to put the “weeeeee!!” factor back in cycling.
10 reasons not to bicycle against traffic

by Earl Lang, FBA Board Member

In an ongoing effort to reduce the number of bicyclist injuries and fatalities, I am addressing a pervasive and reoccurring topic: riding the wrong way on the road or sidewalk.

This is one of the leading causes of bicycle/car crashes.

Even riding on the sidewalk in the same direction as traffic is the least dangerous way to ride on the sidewalk. (Note: Riding on the sidewalk has its own hazards, and is not recommended.)

If you never ride against traffic, I will warrant that you have conversations with people who do. Here are 10 good reasons to help them rethink riding against traffic.

1. It’s illegal
A bicycle operated on the roadway is a legal vehicle and must follow the laws enacted for vehicles using the roadways. It is against the law to ride a bicycle on any roadway, against traffic, in every state of the Union. You can be given a ticket for a serious traffic violation.

2. Less time to react
When you are riding on the side of the road against traffic you reduce the amount of time that drivers have to react to your presence.

Drivers have to swerve more quickly, and if there is oncoming traffic, they risk hitting another vehicle. If they have to choose between hitting another car and hitting a bicycle the bicycle will lose.

3. Traffic signals
You are not able to see and read traffic signals and signs. You can not use the benefit of traffic lanes designated for turns.

Just how would you make a safe right turn from the far left side of the road?

4. Closing speed
The closing speed is the effective speed when you add your forward motion of 8 to 12 mph, to the speed of the car at 25 to 70 mph. Bicycle riders have a fair rate of survival when struck at 45 mph or less.

Closing speed of a car travelling at 40 mph added to a bicycle travelling at 10 mph equals 50 mph. The bicycle rider has very little chance of surviving.

Compare that to a car travelling at 40 mph and a bicycle travelling with traffic at 10 mph; the closing speed is now only 30 mph. The bicyclist has a much better chance of surviving.

5. Statistics are against you
Most bicycle/car crashes happen from the bicycles front. If you are riding against traffic, you are increasing the odds of being hit from the front immensely. If you are a gambler, you are making a “chump” bet.

6. Less safe
Contrary to the opinion of those bicycle riders who practice “riding against traffic” because they believe that it is safer, it is far more dangerous. Every one of these 10 Reasons not to ride against traffic should make that abundantly clear.

7. Slower
Riding against the flow will slow you down. As you ride with traffic, vehicles passing by will encourage you to ride faster.

You won’t have to slow down when you “get off the road” to let oncoming cars pass you.

A big benefit is the boost you get from the pocket of fast moving air generated by the motor traffic. You will be amazed at the help the “tail wind” caused by passing cars will have on your speed.

8. Human nature
All drivers operate under a universally accepted set of rules and conventions, known as the “Rules of the Road.”

When they encounter a situation that doesn’t fit with those rules and convention, they must think and make a decision. This takes time and causes some confusion.

Imagine that you are driving down a street and suddenly you see a car coming toward you in your lane. What to do? Swerve right and go into the ditch? Swerve left into the oncoming lane?

But wait, what if the oncoming driver attempts to correct and swerves back into the proper lane?

9. Visibility
Reflectors and tail lights on cars are always white to the front, and red to the rear. Drivers expect and are trained to follow red lights and pass safely on their left.

White headlights identify an approaching vehicle, which is always passed on their right. Now comes a bicycle riding against traffic, so how is it to be passed? Riding against traffic especially at night, defies all the conventions of roadway use.

10. Tunnel Vision
People see what they are looking for—where they expect to see it. Riding with traffic, where the traffic is supposed to be, is the most visible place on the roadway.

If a bicycle rider is in the wrong place, the chance of being seen is greatly reduced. The whole object of bicycle riding safely, is to be seen.

If you are seen, there is an excellent chance that the motorist will miss hitting you.

I hope that these 10 reasons show the folly of riding a bicycle the wrong way on the road.

Use this extra ammunition the next time you have an opportunity to talk with a riding contrarian.

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Legislative updates

continued from page 1

New helmets must comply with 16 C.F.R., part 1203, which calls for strict helmet design, construction, testing and labeling.

Helmet purchased before October 1, 2012, are exempt from the new standards (provided they still meet the older standards) and may be legally worn until January 1, 2016.

The new law also allows law enforcement to issue verbal warnings or citations and fines to cyclists riding at night without proper lighting.

Riders would have to show proof of purchase and installation of proper lights to avoid the charges.

Other legislation of interest has to do with a bill that FBA has been working on for two years: allowing bicyclists to use selected limited access bridges.

Among other things, HB 599 “requires the Florida Department of Transportation to establish a pilot program to open certain limited access highways and bridges to bicycles and other human-powered vehicles.” This is a huge win for Florida cyclists, because - as many of us know - we have many long bridges spanning large expanses of water, and there may not be a suitable alternative for many miles.

It should be pointed out though, as detailed in the language of the bill, this is a pilot project with a limited number of candidates, but we’re hoping this study will ultimately open the door for many more candidate sites throughout the state.

In meetings with FDOT, I’ve found the department to be very responsive to both the letter of the law – and the intent – by developing a matrix of needs and other parameters that include the proximity to large urbanized area, proximity to suitable alternatives, and the potential for use by cyclists. It’s also been noted that, for some of the bridges under consideration, many cyclists are already using them, so this would help to validate that use.

We will keep our members up to date as this study progresses. However, based on my experiences working with different states around the country that already allow cyclists on limited access roadways, they tend to have an extremely low crash rate.

Status of Federal Legislation

The good news is that we’ve been able to hold on to what we have for now, primarily due to serious efforts by groups like FBA, Bikes Belong, and the League of American Bicyclists. However, I can’t stress enough how much your e-mails and phone calls have kept it that way.

As many of you know, there has been a serious partisan effort underway for sometime to strip the current transportation bill of all the dedicated funding necessary for funding of critical bicycle projects, specifically, the Enhancements Program, Safe Routes to School, and the Recreational Trails Program. In the last round of attacks, there was even an attempt to strip away dedicated funding for transit, so we are not alone.

For now, we were able to keep these funds intact with a “clean” extension of the transportation bill, but this is only temporary. What we need is a permanent passage of the bill (i.e. it’s supposed to work in 5 year cycles), so that we can make plans on large scale transportation projects.

With the repetitive cycle we’ve been in, it’s been very difficult to make long term plans.

We are currently on a short fuse with the current extension, so we must remain vigilant. We will try to be frugal with our “action alerts,” so if you do see one – please contact your representatives to let them know how important dedicated funding is for bicycling, for walking, and for trail use in Florida.
In the late 50s and early 1960s motorcyclists were discriminated against much like bicyclists are today.

They were seen as unwanted roadway users, and often suffered serious injury with little recourse for accountability from the driver or court systems.

The Hells Angels formed directly from this issue with a “one for all—all for one” mission.

If you injured an Angel, all the Angels would come together and disturb your reality, wherever it was.

It went from disturbance to severe violence against drivers, including physical beatings, shootings and death of the drivers deemed guilty of hitting or killing Angels.

During this havoc, auto drivers began to notice motorcyclists and were scared to death of this mission—and of the Hells Angels.

Other motorcyclists took advantage of the opportunity and became some of the badasses of the lane. Until then, motorcyclists had a very small percentage of ridership, and this was mainly on the west coast.

Some brilliant minds were working in Japan, and they noticed the motorcycle ridership, and this was mainly on the back of the lane. Until then, motorcyclists abuse drivers and it puzzled and disturbed me. Later, as a motorcyclist at 15, I understood, but it still disturbed me.

I am also a bicyclist, and have been since that time, too. So I believe we need the same “oomph” for bicycling that Hells Angels gave motorcycling.

However, the abatement of this practice of discrimination—“lane-ism”—can be accomplished without the violence.

The LANE is a public utility we all depend on for travel. It is a place to move people and goods. It’s beginnings go back to game trails, worn by hunters and prey. Later routes developed for trade and travel. Game is killed in the lane still. We hunt stores and places, and of course, we move goods and some bads. Biases and -isms travel too, crossing oceans and mountains and affecting realities sometimes in intolerable ways.

Historically, various minorities, in this country and others, received scraps on a good day, whips, chains, and verbal abuse on most days.

Few people in the dominant classes ever thought it wrong. Many are still racist—living in the South, I still see it almost daily.

Sadly, bicyclists are the new minorities in the travel lane.

The lane works on a first come, first served basis, to service the need of people to get around.

Some of these people have used devices or vehicles to get around since they were born into this culture. The “main device” is currently the automobile.

We were born in cars—some of us literally. Our earliest memories are of cars and families, new cars, first cars, and cars for dating. We are biased, bigoted, arrogant, intolerant and just lost in our own delusions of right and wrong. Most of us were born into being lane-ists. The automobile and its dominant place in our lives, along with a life-long memory of being in it, combine into a rigid attitude of entitlement to it and its lane.

I, too, am one of those people, but I also found enlightenment...well, some reason, anyway, to rethink this madness.

Bicyclists are relegated to ride on the side of the road where all the debris is blown by traffic.

As a cyclist we must multi task; we must navigate the debris fields on a device that is articulated, requires balance, has little tires, little suspension and the tendency to quickly toss us to the ground hard if you make any mistake.

At the same time, we must be diligent of safety concerns, dodging multi-ton vehicles, while their drivers relax in their easy chairs with air conditioning, cell phones, radios and who knows what else to distract them, as they steer with a single finger, accelerate with a single toe. They are belted, air bagged and surrounded by a metal cage, protected from cyclists and each other.

All these people are lane-ists, just like our forefathers were racists.

It is so deeply ingrained in all of us we do not see it.

OK, take a breath and smile now, I am not a radical crazy person—just one who has worked many crashes, ridden motorcycles, driven many cars, and rides a bicycle often.

I’m a biker who grew up car crazy—but I’ve just found a way to have economic freedom and health; it includes biking, walking and talking sense.

We often are under-active, unhealthy, obese, unsustainable and mean as hell.

We are on the road to some form of hell, and driving the car that will take us there the fastest.

All 100 to 200 pounds or so of us jump into a 1.5 ton device to go a mile, pick up a couple pounds of food, and return.

We have come to believe we have subjugated our cars to do our bidding, but in reality, we have become slaves to our cars. We are afraid too, of the bicycle, of walking, of being unprotected. We have had this 3,000 pounds of protection our entire lives, and cars now do our work and protect us too. Lane-ism is much like racism, but much more powerful.

The lane carries different types of vehicles and devices. All are operated by the same species of animal that breeds, loves and thinks, but now is lost somewhat as the culture changes from oil to brain-empowered.

A lot of thinking has to go on if we are to prosper and survive this depression wherein the cost of driving and the cost of healthcare will continue to rise, and the cost of ignorance and intolerance—if left in place—will rip our communities in parts never to be reassembled in our short lifetimes.

Health displaces healthcare, activity provides health, the bicycle in its many forms can be comfortable, sustainable, and reasonable. If each of us used a bike for trips under 5 miles, 50% of car use would disappear overnight. I don’t doubt that 50% of our healthcare cost would, too. Eventually. Maybe 90% of our inability to get along would also vaporize as we rode together unprotected, side by side, in conversation each day.

A bike waits for you, and skilled lane taking cyclists have the skill sets and programs to train you. Upright bikes, tandems, recumbents, trikes that go fast, electric assists, and on and on. Sure they make you feel like a kid again, but that is the best part—besides being healthy, being happy, being sustainable, and well adjusted.

You born-and-bred lane-ists who need to maintain a modicum of identification with the automobile may be able take the lane on this Volkswagen bicycle some day in the future. Just a concept now, the sleek, but classy minimalist urban “bik.e” is fully electric, has no pedals and folds up to spare tire size. Bik.e will charge using your car’s DC current (you still need your car to get to the Park-n-Ride, right?) or with AC current at home. Its blazing 12.4 mph top end may not be optimum for a cruise in the country, but will show all those Segways who’s boss.
Where My Ride Takes Me

In an occasional feature for the FBA Messenger, we highlight FBA members and staff doing stuff you like to do on your bikes.

Battery Park was the scene of some mighty organized tenting, courtesy of Padre’s Cycle Inn, one of the tour vendors on the Bike Florida Forgotten Coast Tour.

Padre provided the pop-ups and all the cyclists had to do was remember their row and column—sort of important on the trip back from the loo in the middle of the night.

Padre's Cycle Inn, one of the tour vendors on the Bike Florida Forgotten Coast Tour.

The night before, shut us down. Fortunately, the only real optional route was at our front door, all we had to do was
- keep 625 riders from leaving the wrong way (check),
- find a new rest stop (check),
- move our crew to it (check),
- find a vendor (at 6 a.m.) for eight port-a-potties—the others were “smoked” in (check),
- keep everyone informed (check!)

The “Forgotten Coast De-Tour” was born.

Did I mention a multi-car, deer induced accident with injuries, delayed us just as we announced it was okay to ride? Everyone, including law enforcement, staff, riders and volunteers, focused on the fun and enjoyed the day.

These moments set up several opportunities. Another of the “fire” relocated rest stops found its way to the perfect park setting as we entered our lunch stop in Port St. Joe, where I heard many stories of oyster and beer stops along 30A.

Two nights in Apalachicola, a day at the beach on St. George Island and a party at the Blue Parrot were welcome layover day activities.

Our next day’s ride was along the beach coast, in many cases mere feet from the water, to the Wildwood Resort in Wakulla County. Except for the occasional “fore,” a driving range is good camping.

A short 30-mile ride back to Tallahassee and a cool cup of “iCycle Works” organic homemade Gelato, finished the event wonderfully.

Of the many things that make these events a success, the volunteers are paramount. We had nearly 100 working as site facilitators, rest stop helpers, sign crews, sag riders, trash monitors, errand runners and medical issue assistants.

Our volunteer program offers a discounted entry fee in exchange for one and half days work on the tour. Most of the volunteers who enjoyed a day off riding, commented how the “behind the scenes” experience enhanced the ride, and offered to help next year.

So many variables go into the decision making process when designing large tours. There are as many opinions about daily miles, the routes to take and the places to stop as there are riders.

It is obvious things are going well when the seasoned rider says this was one of the best. But the person I consider most often when planning, is the one doing it for the first time.

When the ingredients are mixed just right: miles per day, rest stops, host cites, and the weather is good, we have the chance to really open the world of possibilities to them. Each of us—each experienced rider—knows that inspiration.

This year’s tour had its share of new riders who had not ridden day after day and half days work on the tour. Most of the volunteers who enjoyed a day off riding commented how the “behind the scenes” experience enhanced the ride, and offered to help next year.

They said thank you, but did not need to. You could see it in their eyes, in the way they walked and the way they talked.

The bicycle is their new muse. The perfect ingredients were available and we blended them well; seasoned riders loved it, new riders found the inspiration.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to create something special.

I appreciate your comments and expressions of gratitude. I hope to see you next year.

Bike Florida’s Forgotten Coast Tour was an adventure to remember

by Ken Foster, Ride Director

The northwest panhandle of Florida proved to be a beautiful riding venue. Hills and beaches go well together.

The transition from Tallahassee’s newly paved—and flat—St. Marks Trail, to the rolling hills of Gadsden County set up our next day’s challenge perfectly. Hills, and a minimum 70-mile—or century route—from Quincy to Wewahitchka, left most riders ready for a quiet night, and ready for bed after a home-cooked meal. One rider described a hill on the century route as “scary steep—I wasn’t sure I was in Florida.”

The next day I woke to a 5 a.m. call. No 5 a.m. call is good, but I always answer. Our sign team was forced to the side of the road in zero-visibility smoke, then back to “tent city” by zero-patience law enforcement.

The route was closed.

A wild fire, visible on the horizon the night before, shut us down. Fortunately, the only real optional route was at our front door, all we had to do was
- keep 625 riders from leaving the wrong way (check),
- find a new rest stop (check),
- move our crew to it (check),
- find a vendor (at 6 a.m.) for eight port-a-potties—the others were “smoked” in (check),
- keep everyone informed (check!)

The “Forgotten Coast De-Tour” was born.

Half had not ridden a Bike Florida Spring Tour, the other half had ridden 5, 10, 15 or more.

The endless hours of planning, mapping, communicating and analyzing every possible detail that was required to successfully navigate and lead 625 cyclists 400 miles to 5 different cities in 7 days, required levels of planning and detail that are the stuff of nightmares.

If I didn’t love it—the excitement, the experience, the opportunity to create something special—I would still do it.

The rural route, small towns, Gulf views, great weather, volunteers, and camaraderie were perfect ingredients for turning ordinary times, extraordinary.

Registration closed early at 625 riders.

Spring Tour, the other half had ridden 5, 10, 15 or more.

Did I mention a multi-car, deer induced accident with injuries, delayed us just as we announced it was okay to ride? Everyone, including law enforcement, staff, riders and volunteers, focused on the fun and enjoyed the day.

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I appreciate your comments and expressions of gratitude. I hope to see you next year.
Bicycles and law enforcement
by Dan Moser, FBA Program Director

When I’m asked what I do for a living, I’m often at a loss to put a label on it, even among those who know how involved I am in bicycle and pedestrian matters. However, one thing I don’t claim to be is a public safety first responder, a job much more important and difficult than mine.

Whatever capacity I’m working in for a given project or task, be it human service worker, traffic safety professional, injury prevention specialist, nonprofit organization program manager, public policy geek, or citizen advocate, it frequently involves interaction with firefighters, EMS, state troopers, police officers, sheriff’s deputies, code enforcement officers and fire marshals, all who have my highest respect and appreciation.

In fact, many of my closest friends work in, or are retired from one of those honorable professions.

That being stated, over the decades of doing what I do, I’m disappointed to say that those of us who are the most vulnerable on our roads are being shortchanged by law enforcement when it comes to protecting us from injury and death, as well as how matters are handled after we are involved in a crash.

From the time I worked in the injury prevention program at a public health agency, where dissecting crash data in order to determine countermeasures to prevent future injury and death was among my duties, I became acutely aware of the second-class treatment non-motorists receive in crash investigations.

Law enforcement agencies (some are worse offenders than others) seem to operate under the premise that our roadways and bridges are first and foremost for motor vehicles, thus non-motorists have some degree of fault when a crash occurs, simply by virtue of “being where we don’t belong.”

This mind set must change, or Florida’s dubious distinction of being the most dangerous state for cyclists and pedestrians in the country will continue.

Stating this, I’m risking my working relationship with some in law enforcement who will take it personally. But those of us who are striving to improve conditions for exposed road users (and there are many) aren’t looking to criticize for the sake of criticism, but rather, offering our expertise and insight to help solve a chronic problem.

I’d like to think anyone who’s truly committed to doing the same will look to us as a resource and take advantage of what we offer rather than consider us whiners and discontents who are only trying to justify the unpredictable behavior sometimes practiced by the vulnerable among us.

To that last point, one of the reasons pedestrians and cyclists frequently break traffic rules is self-preservation. Our sometimes-risky behavior results, in part, from poor design, but primarily from motorists’ lack of adherence to laws that are in place to allow vulnerable road users to safely and efficiently share the same space.

If drivers operated the way our laws require — with the utmost due care and highest level of responsibility because of the potential for injury and death the motor vehicle is capable of inflicting (see FSS section 316) — and if police, deputies and troopers enforced those basic legal requirements, pedestrians and cyclists wouldn’t need to get creative just to get across the street.

Senior officers have reported that part of the problem is that police officers are, for the most part, only trained to investigate motor vehicle crashes, and are ill equipped to investigate bicycle and pedestrian crashes.

We can and must do better by working together to solve common safety problems.

My plea is for our law enforcement agencies to take us up on our offer to assist them in doing their job. We’re not attempting to tell you how to do it, only to help you better understand our plight, and the frustration we face, so you can make our roads safer and easier for all users to navigate.

Granted, law enforcement is only part of the solution, but it’s a vital element that clearly needs improvement.

Statewide, the Florida Bicycle Association (floridabicycle.org) would be a great place to jump-start the process.

— Dan Moser is a League Cycling & CyclingSavvy instructor/trainer, and Program Director for the Florida Bicycle Association who cycles, runs and walks regularly for transportation, recreation and fitness. He can be contacted at dan@floridabicycle.org or 239-334-6417.

HAVE YOU BEEN INJURED WHILE CYCLING?
(I have. That’s why I’ll fight so hard for you.)

Chris Burns is not your typical personal injury attorney. As an avid rider, he combines his experience on the road with his expertise and insight in the courtroom. This unique perspective provides cyclists across Florida with the representation they deserve.

Your race for compensation begins here.

904-632-2424
Cycling Savvy courses now available in Orlando, DeLand, Jacksonville, Ft. Myers, West Palm Beach, Tallahassee and Tampa Bay areas. Go to the Web site to contact an area coordinator near you.

First Coast Chapter update...

**Cycling Savvy, Bike Month, Mayor Brown**

*Stephen Tocknell, First Coast Regional Advocacy Director*

Jeff and Jodi Hohlstein and Kevin Pryor have continued to conduct CyclingSavvy classes.

The St. Marks Episcopal Day School conducts an annual kids’ bicycle rodeo for its second graders. Students who successfully complete this rodeo receive a ‘bicycle license’ that allows them to ride their bikes to school.

Jeff used a Styrofoam filled cooler into which he dropped raw eggs to demonstrate the shock absorbing qualities of bicycle helmets.

The one he dropped to the hard surface brought home the strong reason for wearing a helmet.

Jodi and Jeff then taught the rock dodge and scanning back-signaling exercises.

Steven Tocknell reports that under the leadership of Jennifer Kubicki and with help from Matt Uhrig at Bike Jax, the Jacksonville Bicycle Coalition kicked off Bike Month on May 2, with a presentation of a brand new custom made bicycle to Jacksonville Mayor Alvin Brown.

The bicycle is painted in orange and black, colors taken from the official seal of the City of Jacksonville.

Jacksonville Mayor Alvin Brown takes a ride around town on his new bicycle.

continued on next page
Do you have a question about the laws related to bicycling? 
**Ask Geo @ FlBikeLaw.org***

George Martin

Walking on a one-way street

Q Nathan asked: Is there a legal way to walk with traffic on a one-way street without sidewalks? Or do you have to go to the next block?

A The applicable statute is:

s. 316.1130 – Pedestrians; Traffic Regulations

(3) Where sidewalks are provided, no pedestrian shall, unless required by other circumstances, walk along and upon the portion of a roadway paved for vehicular traffic.

(4) Where sidewalks are not provided, any pedestrian walking along and upon a highway shall, when practicable, walk only on the shoulder on the left side of the roadway in relation to the pedestrian’s direction of travel, facing traffic which may approach from the opposite direction.

Obviously, it is not “practicable” to do as the statute indicates. To me, the use of that word is the recognition that the statute’s actual wording can not apply in all possible situations, and we must use our best judgment.

If it was necessary to reach a destination on the other side of this predicament, I would check to see if there is another walkway available. If not, I would read the rest of the message on the pavement that says something about walking and determine if it was applicable. As a last resort, if that was the only possible route, I would proceed with caution on the left side after checking to insure there is no overtaking traffic. On-coming traffic on the right would not be visible.

If this is a public way, I would contact local officials and advise them of the circumstances.

Mark asked: I live (and ride) along the East Coast of Florida and when I am headed north in the A1A bike lane there is no traffic on my right, only the Atlantic Ocean. Do I still need to stop at a red light if I am going straight and I am in the bike lane? The only possibility of an accident would be someone turning from a perpendicular road that would be heading north (as it is a one way road) and if that driver turned too wide and went into the bike lane. Obviously this is a very real possibility, however I was just wondering if I am still required by law to stop at said red light or can I proceed at my own risk?

A Short answer: Yes, you are required to stop for the red light.

Actually there is another possibility of an accident, that of your colliding with a pedestrian legally crossing the roadway.

The applicable statute is:

s. 316.075 – Traffic Control Signal Devices

(c) Steady red indication

1. Vehicular traffic facing a steady red signal shall stop before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection or, if none, then before entering the intersection and shall remain standing until a green indication is shown.

A bike lane is part of the roadway as defined in both Florida and national roadway guidelines.

1st Coast update

continued from page 10

The presentation was made as part of the city’s monthly downtown Art Walk event.

The bicycle was donated to the city by Zen Cog, a local bike shop. Accessories were also donated by other bike shops in town.

Following the presentation Mayor Brown led a short procession of 50 – 100 cyclists around Hemming Plaza in downtown Jacksonville.

The city intends to put the bicycle to use for short trips between City Hall and other downtown locations. For now, it’s on display in the lobby of the mayor’s City Hall office.

Other Bike Month activities have been planned!

Florida Bicycle/Pedestrian Law Enforcement Guides are available

Thanks to the Florida Pedestrian/Bicycling Safety Resource Center, the Florida Bicycle/Pedestrian Law Enforcement Guides reflecting 2010 statute changes are available, including the mandatory bike lane law which went into effect September 1, 2010.

This handy booklet, periodically updated to reflect statute changes, has been distributed to nearly 100,000 individuals since 2001.

You can download a copy or request copies for you and your friends by contacting FBA.

New text includes:

Roadway position

| [§316.2065(5)] |

A person operating a bicycle on a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic under the conditions existing must ride in the lane marked for bicycle use or, if no lane is marked for bicycle use, as close as practicable [safe] to the roadway’s right-hand curb or edge, except under any of the following situations:

* when passing another vehicle
* when preparing for a left turn
* when reasonably necessary to avoid conditions including (but not limited to), a fixed or moving object, parked or moving vehicle, pedestrian, animal, or surface hazard

* when a lane is too narrow for a bicycle and another vehicle to travel safely side by side.

A cyclist operating on a one-way street with two or more marked traffic lanes may ride as close to the left-hand edge of the roadway as practicable.

Visit the FBA website to review a complete description of the Bike Lane Law and to download a copy of the guide.

Show Your Support and Help Get the Word Out

Educate other users that bicycle drivers are allowed the full use of the lane on most of our roads* with an FBA static cling. Only $2.00 (mailing included). New and renewing members get this free!

Order via FBA’s online store at www.floridabicycle.org

As a part of the Bicycle Law Enforcement Program, a website exists to provide a place to ask questions about the laws. This is a continuing series that addresses some of the questions and provide updates about FBA’s Bicycle Law Enforcement Program.

*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 the 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.
## Selected State-wide Contacts

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<td>Metropolitan Orlando (MPO)/Bike-Ped Coordinator, Smart Growth Planner</td>
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<td>Hillsborough County Public Works/Engrg Tech, bicycle-pedestrian coordinator</td>
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<td>Hillsborough County Public Works/Manager, Bicycle, Ped &amp; School Safety Prgms</td>
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<td>City of Pinellas Park/Planning</td>
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<td>City of Tampa Public Works</td>
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<td>City of Tampa/Parks &amp; Rec Dept/Greensways &amp; Trails Coordinator</td>
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**Florida Bicycle Association**

Here’s whom to call about your bicycle/pedestrian/transportation concerns. Go to [www.floridabicycle.org/statecontacts.htm](http://www.floridabicycle.org/statecontacts.htm) for the complete, up-to-date list.
Selected State-wide Contacts

Go to www.floridabicycle.org/statecontacts.htm for the complete, up-to-date list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENCY/FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>TELEPHONE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other state &amp; federal agency staff</td>
<td>Florida Bicycle and Traffic Safety Education Program/Director</td>
<td>Dan Connaughton</td>
<td>352.294.1666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FTBSE assistant</td>
<td>John Egberts</td>
<td>352.294.1685</td>
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<td>FDEP Office of Greenways &amp; Trails</td>
<td>Jim Wood</td>
<td>850.245.2052</td>
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<td></td>
<td>FDOE Student Transportation/Director</td>
<td>Charlie Hood</td>
<td>850.245.9924</td>
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<td>Florida Tech Transfer (T**2) Center/Co-directors</td>
<td>Janet Degner, Nina Barker</td>
<td>352.392.2371x227</td>
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<td></td>
<td>FHWA Fla Div Safety Engineer</td>
<td>Hussein Sharifpour</td>
<td>850.942.9650x3204</td>
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<td>Florida Pedestrian/Bicycling Safety resource Center</td>
<td>Wanda Willerson</td>
<td>352.273-1680</td>
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<td>Other organizations</td>
<td>Bike Florida Board President</td>
<td>Leigh Matusick</td>
<td>386.736.1202</td>
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<td>Rails-to-Trails Florida Office</td>
<td>Ken Bryan</td>
<td>850.942.2379</td>
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<td>Epilepsy Foundation (Ped-Bike Safety Resource project)</td>
<td>Susan Eddins</td>
<td>561.478.6515</td>
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<td>FDOT Districts</td>
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<td>Cities: Bradenton, Fort Myers, Naples, Sarasota</td>
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Brain trauma almost certain at speeds over 12 mph... continued from page 3

So, you are designed to not pass out, and not run faster than your body can tolerate. All of this can lead us to the following conclusion: If you are riding a bicycle taller than your body, and you are proceeding faster than the human body is designed to withstand, you all have the necessary forces for—in engineering speak—exceeding your design tolerance specs. Which means you can end up breaking your cranium, your skull, should your cranium come in contact with objects that were not around 200,000 years ago, at a speed your one-tenth of an inch skull isn’t designed to handle.

Springing a leak From my clients over the past 26 years of doing personal injury cases, I know breaking your cranium can result in cerebral spinal fluid leaking out of your ear, or leaking out of any cracks in your skull.

But, that’s not all that would be leaking out. Once the tissue is damaged, it’s ripped, so blood would also “leak” out too.

Or the blood might even stay in your brain, which is actually a bad thing, a very bad thing. Blood, as neurosurgeons will tell you, is a substance toxic to neural tissue, especially brain cells, all brain cells.

Sufficient blood leakage on the brain, as we know from stroke victims (where blood vessels break in the brain), results in loss of function, palsy, memory, and the senses (think loss of sight, smell, hearing).

Why I am I discussing this? I’ll tell you, but first, answer this for me please: Where do you think your sense of humor is located? Where do you think memories of learning to ride a bike are? Your significant other’s phone number is stored, the combination to your bike lock, your underwear size?

How much milk you have in the refrigerator? Where do you think your preference for your color, style of clothes, favorite food, your personality, decision making skills, your language skills, your memories, your hearing abilities, your visual abilities, your ability to walk, your ability to not defecate or urinate on yourself, to move your eyes, to keep your eyes open, to hear. Where’s that located? Your brain.

As a back drop to this discussion, keep in mind (pun not intended), your brain is what your helmet was supposed to have been), and a mild TBI (traumatic brain injury). What he didn’t know (that I did, because I see the bills for these types of injuries) was what his hospital bill was going to be: most likely on the average of $25,000 to $50,000 for a brain injury. What struck me was that he’d had his helmet on; however, when I saw him, he had an inch and a half gap from the bottom of his chin to where the strap was. The strap was not tight enough to have kept his helmet in place—it didn’t keep the helmet where it should have been so it could have protected him. I pointed this out to him, and told him he’d get repeat that experience again if he didn’t tighten up.

Keep all this in mind next time you put on your helmet: “Do the tighten up” like Archie Bell and the Drells of Houston, Texas. If it’s not tightened, it’s not going to work; it will move out of the way as you fall. If it doesn’t work, your brain is at risk. If your brain is at risk, your personality, your memories and the ability to keep yourself from decealing on yourself are at risk.

Have a nice day!
Upcoming Bicycle Touring Events in Florida

This printed version is ABRIDGED from promotional material provided by tour organizers. We're not responsible for accuracy of information or quality of these rides. Use the contact information for more details about each ride. Ask your friends. Data are from an online calendar database maintained by Roger Pierce. To add an event to his (and our) calendar, e-mail to fbc@piercereports.com or go online to post your own entry. See complete calendar, including many out-of-state rides we don’t have room to print here, and much of the hype we edited out in this here version, at www.floridabicycle.org/fbco/

June

June 2 (Sat) Chiefland
Tour de SAG

Terrain is flat. Well-marked rural highways. Route maps available at the registration table. Approximate rides of 15/30/65/100! 100 mile ride is a great “starter” ride for anyone wanting to ride their first Century. Rest/snack stops provided on all routes. Ride starts and ends in downtown Greenway Trail, 102 North Main Street, Chiefland, FL. Ample parking and rest rooms provided. SAG service provided. Helmets are required. This also includes children riding in bike seats and/or buggies. http://www.tourdemelon.com Active.com

Online Registration

June 2-9 Chattanooga TN
Bicycle Ride Across Georgia (BRAG)

33rd Annual. Average daily mileage 60 miles for a total of 400 for the week. Additional mileage available each day. Rest stops every 15 miles. The tentative, unconfirmed route is to begin in Chattanooga, with overnight stops in Dalton, Cartersville, Rome, and Cartersville. Hartwell. For more info. email info@brag.org or call 770-498-5153. http://www.brag.org/

June 16 (Sat) Atlanta GA
3rd annual Jackson County Brevet

LARGEST fundraising event for Aplastic Anemia (benefitting charity) in the entire USA. Ride one of the fastest growing and most popular rides in metro Atlanta. 5 mile (family-friendly), 39/64/100 mile options. Rest stops every 18 miles. The tentative route is as follows:

1. SAG support and support the Wounded Warriors Project. For any questions please contact the Wounded Warriors Project. For any questions please contact the Wounded Warriors Project.

www.bocarabicycleclub.org http://www.boca bicyciclub.org

July

July 7 (Sat) Punta Gorda
Peace River Rider s Wheels and Wings 2012

One Event - Four Rides 13/52/50 and a 10 mile Gentleman s Race - Another Freakin T-shirt! (but cool!) - SAG Stops - A Dozen Wings - And TWO Cold Beers or Beverages - Race Winner Presentation - Air Conditioning - Stage 7 Tour de France on the Big Screens - 50/50 Drawing. Makes one want to sign up right now.

Well you can... at http://bocarabicyciclub.com Active.com

On line Registration

July 15 (Sun) Boca Raton
Frank Stark Celebration Ride

This ride features a 30 mile (starts at 8am) and 62 mile options (starts at 7:00 am). On-site registration opens at 6:30am at the Boca Raton City Hall parking lot (201 Palmetto Park Road, Boca Raton FL 33432). Ride features a scenic ride along the Atlantic coast from Boca Raton to the mansions in Palm Beach. The 62 mile ride crosses the intracoastal waterway and follows the newly renovated shoreline in West Palm Beach. Roads are paved and clearly marked along scenic A1A. Two well-stocked rest stops. Full SAG Support. Free meal after ride in the Vendor Village at City Hall. Registrations received before June 8th will receive free t-shirt. $35 online at www.bocaratonbicycleclub.org starting May 15th and ending July 14th, 11:59 pm. $35 by mail after June 8th. $40 On-Site Day Registration. http://www.bocabicyciclub.org

Emergency SAG. For registration, ride information, and ride direction permission please visit the Capital City Cycling Club’s website (www.ccyclists.org).

October 7 (Sun) Heathrow
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Cycle For Life

100/62/35 Registration 7 a.m., Start 8 a.m. - The CF Cycle For Life is a one-day event where hundreds of men and women will come together to participate in an event to find a cure for cystic fibrosis. Participants have the choice of 35, 62, or 100 mile routes riding through the back roads of northern Seminole and Volusia Counties. Free meal after ride in the Vendor Village at Heathrow. The bike tour is a fully supported journey with stocked rest stops every 15 miles. Supported Cycling gear (SAG) vehicles, on-site medical services, marked route and much more. This unique event empowers participants to take action and demonstrate their fight in finding a cure in a tangible, emotional and experientially powerful way. For any questions please contact the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation at either 1850 Lee Rd. Suite 111, Winter Park, FL 32789, or Pam Glaeser at 407-339-2978 or pglaeser@cff.org orlando@cf.org/cycleforlife

October 11-14 Chiefland
Chiefland Fall Bicycle Fest

Up to four full-finned rides during Florida’s Gulf Coast Trails. All rides start in Chiefland, FL. Choose from several options to these destinations - Florida City, and Cedar Key. Tent camping included or RV and hotel options available. Food Options. Phone: (727) 457-6994. http://www.chieflandbicycletest.com

October 15-19 Cross City
Gulf Coast Highlight Tour

Tour package consists of 5 days and four nights; cycling on Florida’s beautiful Gulf Coast, other attractions include a visit to Historic Yulee Sugar Mill, see the Mermaids perform at Weeki Wachee Springs, and see the Manatees at Crystal River. http:// www.gulfcoasteventstours.com

October 20-21 Winter GA
Spin For Kids 2012 Mountain Bike Ride

Camp Twin Lakes- Will-A-Way at Fort Yargo State Park. Start from camp and choose the 8-mile, 12-mile or 20-mile loop and ride along the adventurous and beautiful trails of Fort Yargo State Park! SAG support. After the ride, a Thank You Luncheon. Saturday riders can also choose to ride Sunday s ride: five courses for riders of various skill levels, from the occasional rider to the well-experienced cyclist. 5/22/74/62/100 mile rides. For more information, please visit www.spinforkids.org http://www.spinforkids.org Active.com

Online Registration

October 27 (Sat) Gainesville
25th Annual Santa Fe Century

A tour through the lush forest and pasture land north of Gainesville up the Santa Fe River valley. Start at 8:30 am from the North West Boys and Girls Club at 2700 NW 51st Street in Gainesville. Enjoy a 100 or a 55 mile road ride, or the 18 or 28 mile Millhopper Ramble family fun ride, with well stocked rest stops. http://gcfll.org/gcf/

October 27-28 Gainesville
Gainesville Cycling Festival

Two centuries is possible! (Or enjoy the shorter options for a weekend of bicycle touring.) See details in the listings for the Santa Fe Century and Horse Farm Century. More info is available on the web site. http://gcfll.org/gcf/

October 28 (Sun) Flemington
Horse Farm Tours

The Horse Farm Tours start in Flemington on CR 329 (Interstate 75 CR 318 exit). Registration will be open till 9 am. If you want to start with a group, we’ll send you off at 8:30 pm. Otherwise, you can start whenever you wish. With 25, 30, and 45 mile routes to choose from, there should be a distance to satisfy everyone in the family. The terrain that you will encounter as you wind through the horse farms is rolling. If you are from the coast, it will be a different challenge than just riding over the oval canal bridge. But many of you will want to make frequent stops to take in the scenery, and perhaps have a conversation with a horse. http://gecfa.org/gef/

October 28 (Sun) Marionelnd
Spoolhorns & Sprockets - Friends of A1A Scenic Byway Bike Ride

Metric 100/35/20, Mass start 8am. Come ride along the beautiful and scenic A1A Byway through Flagler and St. John’s Counties. Fully supported including SAG, this first year event will showcase stops at Gamble Rogers, Marineland, and the St. Augustine Pier. Then join us for fun and barbeque at Marineland to finish off your ride and celebrate our byway. Registration opens June 1, day of registration available, $35 for preregistration until October 20th. $45 day of. Includes T-Shirt. http://www.spenicala.org

The mission of the Florida Bicycle Association (FBA) is to inspire and support people and communities to enjoy greater freedom and well-being through bicycling.

The Florida Bicycle Association was incorporated in 1997 for educational and charitable purposes. FBA is a nonprofit, 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, P.O. Box 9015, Longwood, FL 32791. To join FBA complete the form in this newsletter and send with your dues, or join online at www.floridabicycle.org.

The Florida Bicycle Association Messenger is published quarterly as a service to members and advocates for a bike-friendly Florida by the

Florida Bicycle Association, P.O. Box 916716, Longwood, FL 32791. www.floridabicycle.org; e-mail: tm@floridabicycle.org; Phone: 850-238-5238

Membership in FBA includes a subscription to the FBA Messenger.

The Messenger accepts and welcomes your advertising! Please see the Website for rates and specifications or contact the FBA office. (Note: FBA does not accept advertising that, in the opinion of the Association, is neither in the best interest of FBA's members nor its goals and objectives. Although we carefully review articles and information submitted, FBA is not responsible for the information or opinions contained herein except explicitly stated as official policy of FBA.)

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Cycling isn’t all fun and games

by Robert Johnson

Every time you drive, another driver likely causes you to slow down or stop when you otherwise wouldn’t have. Whether it’s heavy traffic, someone preparing for a turn, or just people who drive slower than you, another driver is causing you delays. It’s part of the ebb and flow of traffic.

So why do some drivers accept other drivers slowing them down as a natural fact of traffic but become incensed if the person causing a delay is a bicyclist, even if that bicyclist is riding safely, legally and considerately?

Although I’ve heard dozens of different reasons from drivers, the one I’ve heard most frequently is that delays caused by bicyclists are particularly annoying because cyclists are just riding for fun. In other words, it’s a given that motorists are doing something constructive by driving, while bicyclists are just out for a good time.

Let’s explore that belief a little more deeply.

The term “utility bicycling” is used to describe a bicycling trip where the ride has a purpose other than the ride itself.

In other words, someone using a bicycle to go grocery shopping or to get to work would be engaging in utility bicycling.

Because many Americans relate bicycle use to a childhood activity, they automatically think about recreation when they think about bicycles. However, according to the 2009 National Household Travel Survey, 51 percent of all bicycle trips in the United States were for utilitarian reasons.

So when you see bicyclists, chances are they are not simply riding for fun. It also is impossible to judge the reasons for someone’s bicycle ride, based upon where someone is riding or how they are dressed.

I’ve ridden the rural highways of Boone County to attend classes and meetings. A co-worker of mine rides every day in a full spandex bicycle-racing kit, yet he is actually on his way to work, not training for a race.

Although there are many people riding to get somewhere, there are certainly many bicyclists riding simply because they want to ride their bicycles. Some of those bicyclists are even causing slight delays for motorists! Isn’t that rude?

People who believe that are under the belief that most driving trips are for a utilitarian purpose, which isn’t true. The New York Times Magazine recently published a story titled “Rising gas prices don’t actually affect Americans’ behavior.” In this story, the author says the average American spends about $40 per week on gasoline, but only about $8 of that is spent going to and from work.

In other words, many driving trips are for social and recreational purposes, the very same reason that many people love riding bicycles on many of our streets and highways. Have you ever tried driving across [a college campus on] a football Saturday? Did any of those tens of thousands of drivers, who make it incredibly difficult to move around town, have to drive that day?

No, they decided to go to a football game because it was fun. What about people who drive to visit a friend or simply drive to have some time alone?

Did any of us “cruise” as teenagers? It’s no surprise, really, that most driving is not really necessary, and yet here the motorists are causing traffic and slowing down other road users.

Although it’s true I sometimes cause motorists delays because I’m a little slower on the road, it’s also true that on every bicycling trip, drivers slow me down.

For every time that someone has to wait because I’m pedaling up a hill, I have to wait because someone is trying to make a left turn into his or her driveway in heavy traffic. Slowing each other down is a part of sharing the road, no matter what type of vehicle you use.

The important thing is to use patience and common sense so all road users can enjoy their trips — for fun or utility — safely.
CyclingSavvy courses continue to serve riders

by Mighk Wilson

CyclingSavvy, FBA’s traffic cycling education and training program, continues to grow, to gain national attention, and most importantly, to change lives. Nearly 250 cyclists have taken all or part of the course so far in 2012; 117 in Florida and 127 in other states.

In Florida we now have instructors in Ft. Myers (2), Jacksonville (3), Orlando (9), Tallahassee (2), Tampa Bay (1), DeLand (1) and West Palm (1). In addition to those who were simply interested in being safe and confident urban cyclists, CyclingSavvy has drawn in elected officials, law enforcement officers, journalists, bicycle advisory committee members, urban planners and traffic engineers. All have come away with a much better understanding of the needs of cyclists, of how bicyclists should behave, and what is actually possible.

Beginning this fall we hope to expand the program even further throughout Florida. We’ll be travelling around the state providing basic courses and instructor seminars with the support of a state safety grant.

In addition to Florida, CyclingSavvy now has instructors in Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, Texas and Vermont, and instructors have also traveled to California, Montana and Ohio to teach the course.

At CyclingSavvy we believe anyone can learn to bike in traffic with confidence and safety. Our students have a great time learning through state-of-the-art training methods, and afterwards they tell us how it has changed their lives for the better.

“...affirmed things I already knew, clarified things I was unsure about, and clearly explained my rights and responsibilities as a cyclist. I’ve been putting into practice all that I learned. As a person who has mobility challenges [deafness, balance issues], buying the trike and getting out every nice day to ride is simply one of the best things I’ve ever done for myself. It’s healthy, empowering and – most of all – fun. It is no exaggeration to say that riding a recumbent trike has restored vitality to my life.” — Mitchie, Portland ME

Look for a CyclingSavvy course near you this coming fall and winter! CyclingSavvy.org

Good News, Mr. Smith! The IRS now allows your employer to give you a tax-free reimbursement of up to $20 per month for reasonable bicycle related expenses as a qualified bicycle commuter.*

We can keep you up to date with the latest rulings affecting cyclists everywhere, offering quality tax and financial accounting services with the confidence and solid reputation that comes from over 30 years of quality service to the Central Florida business community.

We’re proud to support FBA and its mission to promote good health and well-being in our communities through bicycling.

Scearce, Satcher & Jung, P.A.
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