Cyclists to catch a ride on the Bike Florida ‘Orange Blossom Express’

Becky Afonso’s trusty Schwinn “mule” is on the roads and trails again, this time at the Lake Kissimmee State Park “Florida Cow Camp.” Becky, who serves as ride director for the 2013 Bike Florida ride, took the photo during a recon for the Orange Blossom Express tour slated for March 23 through 29, 2013.

Riders have an opportunity to visit the 1870s cow camp on the third stop on the 7-day tour, a layover in Lake Wales.

See page 7 for more details. Or don’t take our word for it. Go to the Web site: www.bikeflorida.org.

In an occasional feature for the FBA Messenger, “Where My Bike Takes Me” highlights FBA members and staff doing stuff you like to do on your bike. If you have a high quality, high resolution photo you’d like to see published in full, living color (well anyway, the best we can do with our newsprint budget) send it to FBA Director Tim Bustos.

Photo: Becky Afonso
Time to change the ‘frame’ of the debate...

We all are drivers

by J. Steele Olmstead, Esq.

It was at the SWFBUD (South West Florida Bicycle United Dealers) “Bicycle Bash” in Tampa in November and had a lot of people interested in how we can improve our status on the roads from a legal standpoint.

Our problem as serious cyclists who want the laws in our favor enforced is that the motorizing public cannot differentiate between us, who are using the road exactly as motorists are, and children.

We share in common with children the same machines and the same activity—riding our bicycles. Unfortunately it is not the same. There are laws which put us on equal legal footing with motor vehicles and protect our adult cycling activity.

It would appear we need to “reframe” the discussion. George Lakeoff, the brilliant behavioral linguist, shows that debates are won by the side that “frames” the language of the debate. Think “embryonic stem cells” (scientifically superfluous) and “tax relief” (“where’s the pain?”).

In my jury trials, very often the winner is the one whose words/phrases frame the facts and makes the most heads nod or gives the most memorable phrases. Re-framing applies to any public image.

Think of the groups who’ve changed their entire labels: “Negroes” to “African Americans,” “homosexuals” to “gay,” “atheists” to “Brights.”

This is similar to the marketing concept of “re-branding.” We cyclists need to do the same. It’s time to change the “frame.” It’s time for us as cyclists to claim our rights by reframing what we do.

Florida statutes do not help us. Bicycles or human-powered vehicles do many things under Florida Statutes Chapter 316, the traffic statutes.

A quick review has us: 1. “driving” 316.1995(1); 2. “Riding”: 316.151(1)(b) and (c), 316.2065(2), (3)(b), (3)(c), (3)(d), (3)(e)(4); 3. “propelling” 316.130(15), 316.2065(1), 316.2065(9); and 4. “operating”: 316.072(1), 316.091(4), 316.2065(5)(a), (5)(b), (6).

A review of the popular literature for cyclists (Bicycling, Outside, Cycling World), almost uniformly presents the cyclist as a “rider” of his vehicle. Not good.

You may think, “Steele, wait, what’s wrong with saying I’m ‘riding’? Is this bad?” My reply is, “Who else ‘rides’ their vehicle?”

Well, kids, children do. They ride their scooters, ride their Big Wheels, ride their skateboards, ride their tricycles, and ride their training wheel bikes. Riding is what kids do.

Furthermore, “you know how kids are.” A kid is “unpredictable, irresponsible, risk-taking, foolish, they are just crazy kids.”

And kids don’t have any rights, they don’t vote, they are non-citizens, their parents are responsible for them, and they are just “a bother on the roads.”

The motorizing public believes: “We are cars. The parents of those kids have taught them to ‘look out for cars’ right? Well, get out of our way.”

So what does the general motorizing public think adult cyclists do on their human powered vehicles costing several hundred dollars, even thousands? Why, they “ride” those too.

Say, they are doing the same thing as those kids on those bicycles! Ladies and gentlemen, you don’t have to make a huge cognitive leap to understand how this is perceived: all bicyclists are kids, they should look out for cars.

When your typical motorist, who hasn’t driven a bicycle since they were fourteen, sees a 45-year-old cyclist, the cyclist is viewed the same as those “unpredictable, irresponsible, risk-taking, foolish, crazy kids riding on the road.”

It’s the same with the law enforcement officers I speak with. “What the heck are they doing on a bicycle in traffic? They don’t hit us without some serious consequences. So, too, should it be for human powered vehicles.

We need to start calling what we do drive. We drive our vehicles too. We drive and we have the same rights as other drivers.

You don’t hit us without some serious consequences. We are not kids: We DRIVE. When we start referring to ourselves as drivers of our vehicles, we establish that we drivers get the same rights as other vehicles.

How? It would appear the way to do that is reframe what we do. We are not kids, so we do not “ride” vehicles on the road. We “drive” our vehicles on the road. Just one word substituted: drive.

We must recognize our rights are tied up in reframing using the word “drive.”

Cars drive, trucks drive, motor vehicles drive.

A driver of a vehicle is entitled to right of way and to be passed with a safe clearance. A driver of a vehicle must be given the same road rights as other drivers.

FBA’s annual Florida Bicycle Club Leadership Workshop returned to Clermont November 17 after having taken a year off in 2011. Over twenty club representatives, as well as all of FBA’s and Bike Florida’s staff were in attendance the day before the very popular and challenging Horrible Hundred.

Tim Bustos opened the workshop by providing some insight into what FBA is doing for our member clubs, as well as for cyclists in general. I gave an update of the CyclingSavvy bicycle education program, Becky Arfons announced Bike Florida’s 2013 “Orange Blossom Express” tour, and Ken Foster gave a rundown of “Share the Road” license plate marketing and education activities.

However, the featured presenter was Chris Burns, a long time FBA member and Jacksonville attorney whose practice focuses on representing cyclists involved in crashes.

Chris’s presentation covered liability issues clubs need to be aware of and prepared for, a topic of which he has plenty of firsthand experience. By citing many examples and actual scenarios, he provided club leaders with invaluable information that could serve to protect their organizations and individual members, including officers, directors, and even ride leaders. Based on the comments and questions during and after Chris’s presentation, there is little doubt in my mind that those in attendance were glad to have made the effort to take part.

Chris is also interested in hearing of your experiences with law enforcement, insurance companies and agencies you may do business with or are looking into, crash outcomes, and other input.

continued on page 4

And you don’t hit a driver a vehicle of without some serious consequences. So, too, should it be for human powered vehicles.

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You don’t hit us without some serious consequences. We are not kids: We DRIVE. When we start referring to ourselves as drivers of our vehicles, we establish that we drivers get the same rights as other vehicles.

By reframing this discussion it appears we may take control of the debate and make the public aware of our real legal status, get our rights and stop getting hit. What do you think?

Anybody want to go for a bicycle drive?}

2012 Leadership Workshop

by Dan Moser, FBA Program Director

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Stay up-to-date on bicycle issues with these statewide forums.

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President's message...

I can dream, can’t I?

It is my pleasure to return to the position of board president of Florida Bicycle Association. David Henderson did a superb job, and if you see him, be sure to thank him for guiding our organization through an interesting and challenging time.

Those of who’ve read my blog posts, articles and previous president’s columns know I’m not one to follow the latest fads, but that doesn’t mean I don’t have some dreams of what could be.

But rather than dreams of elevated bikeways or the latest tech wizardry, mine tend to focus on how we might — as the oft-repeated Gandhian cliché goes — be the change we wish to see in the world.

So I’d like to start off with a list of What Ifs...

What if … bicyclists were broadly considered to be the best trained, most polite, and predictable of road users?

What if … all group rides were managed so that everyone enjoyed having them come through their communities?

What if … all children in Florida received comprehensive training on how to walk and bike safely?

What if … people walking on sidewalks didn’t have to worry about being buzzed by cyclists?

What if … all drivers kept their attention on their driving, rather than on their gadgets?

What if … a bicyclist driving confidently and legally on a busy arterial was seen to be as normal and reasonable as can be?

What if … good quality bike parking was available wherever it was needed?

What if … there were connections between cul de sacs and walled communities so cyclists and pedestrians didn’t have to travel on fast, noisy, busy arterials, and we could instead travel mostly on shady, quiet neighborhood streets?

What if … Florida Bicycle Association expanded its mission to include the interests of pedestrians and drivers of electric bicycles?

What if … people from around the world came to Florida to ride bikes, through our country-side and along our coasts rather than visit the theme parks?

What if … cargo bikes were as common as pick-up trucks?

What if … Florida Bicycle Association had 100,000 members?

What if … every Florida high school had a bike racing team and a social cycling club?

What if … every major city in Florida had a Trips for Kids mountain bike program?

What if … one could make a comfortable living solely by teaching cyclists how to be safe and confident road users?

What if … Floridians were known far and wide as the best cyclists in the U.S., or maybe even the world?

BWCF* walks the talk in Central Florida

by Brad Kuhn

That a difference six months can make. Late last May we launched Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety as a communitywide coalition to reduce pedestrian deaths and injuries.

Then, when a pedestrian stepped off the curb at an unsignalized crosswalk in Orlando, only about one in 20 cars would stop — even on streets with speeds posted 35 miles per hour or less.

Now about one in three cars will stop. It is too soon to say how that has translated vis a vis pedestrian deaths and injuries, but it is right on projection, and close to the “tipping point” for culture change, according to the Center for Education and Research in Safety, the organization that designed the program.

The “Triple E” initiative combines low-cost engineering (signs and lines) with education and high-visibility enforcement to act as a cultural catalyst, targeting behavior change by both drivers and pedestrians, to get the Orlando-Kissimmee MSA off the top of Transportation For America’s list of most dangerous communities for pedestrians.

Best Foot Forward has garnered extensive positive media coverage, and a groundswell of public support.

An online reader poll conducted by the Orlando Sentinel, found that 80 percent of respondents supported ticketing drivers for failing to yield to pedestrians.

The initiative has been embraced by both Orlando Police Department and the Orange County Sheriff’s Office, and received resolutions of support from Orange County, The City of Orlando, Winter Park, Maitland, Winter Garden, Eatonville, Windermere and Apopka.

In education, we have partnered with WalkSafe, a Sunshine State Standards compliant curriculum developed by the Miller School of Health at the University of Miami, and currently in use in Miami-Dade Schools.

Orange County Public Schools has approved the curriculum for classrooms in Orange County. To date, 59 teachers have downloaded the curriculum.

The coalition touches all aspects of our community — including the Winter Park Health Foundation and its Healthy Central Florida program, the Level One Trauma Center at Orlando Health, Orange County Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division, Lynx, Lighthouse of Central Florida, The (Orlando) Mayor’s Commission on Aging, AARP, the International Drive Improvement District and others.

This is an ongoing initiative with a goal of reducing pedestrian deaths and injuries by 50 percent over the next five years. For more information, please visit the program website at www.ivield4peds.org.

Leadership workshop

continued from page 2

related to your rights as cyclists. You can visit his Facebook page (www.facebook.com/BicycleAccidentAttorney) for contact and other useful information.

This leadership workshop has been a cooperative effort between FBA and the Florida Freewheelers since 2009 when they invited FBA to host the workshop in conjunction with their premiere bike ride of varying distances but most notably its Horrible Hundred. Plans are underway for next year, so mark your calendar for the third Saturday of November (11/16/13).

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our member clubs this resource and wel-

**Leadership workshop participants**

- Florida Freewheelers
- North Florida Bicycle Club
- Peace River Riders
- Seidler Productions
Executive Director's corner...

Distracted driving: a threat to cycling as we know it

The Florida Bicycle Association has been very busy this last quarter! There have been many positive happenings and events in our great state that bode well for cycling.

However, I recently went to a very important conference that reinforced many things I already knew, yet still provided new information I think is very important to share.

What I’m talking about is “distracted driving,” and just for this issue of the Messenger, I would like to focus on this one issue alone, so please humor me. It’s very important for cyclists of all stripes.

Distracted driving is the single greatest threat to our happiness and well being on our roadways – for all road users. It’s a hazard for those of us driving cars, trucks, and SUVs, but as vulnerable road users, cyclists, pedestrians – and motorcyclists – have the most to lose.

When I first started cycling decades ago (we won’t say how many), my biggest fear on the roadway was getting slammed by a cement truck.

Don’t ask me why, but they are very big, very heavy, and they sit so high off the road, I always wondered if the drivers could even see me!

However, over time, as I spent more and more time on the road, and got more experienced as a “roadie,” my fears subsided.

Besides, as I moved into traffic safety in my professional career, I learned that commercial drivers are the most highly trained drivers on the road.

My greatest concern now is a skinny teenager texting “…not much – U?”

Too many people have been killed or seriously injured in less time than it takes to text the above message. At the speed most people drive on urban arterials and rural highways, you can travel the length of a football field.

And those highly trained commercial drivers?

They’ve become a threat once more…

One of many horror stories related at the conference – by the victims themselves – or the surviving family members, involved commercial drivers.

There was the case of the semi tractor trailer that slammed into the back of a school bus – which then exploded – simply because manipulating his cell phone was the most important thing in the world for the 3 – 4 seconds he took his eyes off the road.

However, as humans, we have a tendency to compartmentalize things in terms of “us and them,” but in this case, that’s not necessary applicable.

What I’m referring to are all the experienced cyclists I know that would be horrified to think the driver coming up behind them on a narrow two lane road is messaging his or her lunch order to a fast food restaurant while barreling down the road at 55MPH!

However, I know many of these same cyclists that do it themselves.

Recent surveys indicate that 80 – 90 percent of all drivers know that texting or talking on the cell phone is dangerous, they’d like to see it regulated, but they don’t want it to apply to them.

Let’s face it – nearly all of us have done it at one time or another. I know I have. I’ve always known it was dangerous – I’ve seen the crash reports, and studied the research, so I kidded myself by doing it the “safe way” – I used a hands free (e.g. blue tooth) device.

However, all of the modern research indicates that hand held or hands free – it’s all the same. It still affects cognition.

Drivers on the phone – even good ones like you and me, – tend to brake too late and too hard if there is a problem. They over react and over steer if they have to avoid collisions – frequently leading to roll-overs.

And don’t get me started on texting. One trucking company installed cameras in the cab of their trucks, and found that in nearly every crash their drivers had over the period of several months – they had been texting immediately prior to a crash.

We all tell ourselves “I’m smarter.” “I’m a better driver,” “I use a hands free device,” but sadly, it doesn’t make any difference.

One woman at this conference related how her mother was run over by a driver that “never hit the brakes, and never tried to avoid hitting her mother,” because the driver was talking on the phone.

She said the driver “wasn’t texting, wasn’t reaching for her phone – she was just talking on the phone…”

Too preachy? Perhaps, but texting and talking on the phone is the single greatest threat to traffic safety in the 21st Century, and we’ve got to be part of the solution.

You say you’ve never used a cell phone or text while driving? Awesome! You’re one of the few, but there are other things you can do to make our roads safer.

The next time you call someone, and you realize they’re driving, please ask them if they can call you back when they’re not driving.

And trust me – most people won’t think it’s sanctimonious or preachy. I’ve been doing it for years, and most people thank me for thinking of their safety.

In closing, please allow me to remind our readers that, mile for mile, bicycling is still one of the safest modes of transportation out there (research has shown that basketball sends more people to emergency rooms each year).

We here at FBA strive to make it even more attractive and safer. We’ve developed many popular and successful educational programs such as “CyclingSavvy.”

We contribute to the design and review of safer and more effective infrastructure for bicyclists, and we also lobby the Florida legislature for traffic laws that benefit all road users.

However, we can and must do what we can do to stop the epidemic and catastrophic habit of distracted driving.

For more information about the Florida Distracted Summit, please go here: http://fastlane.dot.gov/2012/11/ florida-distracted-driving-summit-has-a-clear-safety-goal.html#.UKWmXYXkI64

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_subscription.cfm and read their blog at http://blog.adventurecycling.org

FBA board 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://cyclingsavvy.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://FBAkeelaw.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 Keri’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.railtrails.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.floridaracingmagazine.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.
Get max performance from your legs and gears and save $$

Cadence is the Flywheel of Your Powertrain!

When I was first riding, I found that I got to the highest gear combination by 15 mph. I went into the bike shop and said, “I need a bigger crank ring because I’m running out of gears.”

The shop representative looked at my bike and said, “I’ll sell you a bigger crank ring if you wish, but your problem is you’re not pedaling fast enough. You need to pick up your cadence.”

Cadence is the number of pedal strokes of one leg that the rider completes in a measure of time (normally measured in rpm).

Unlike automobiles, whose engines can develop a great amount of torque (power) at low rpm, humans need high centrifugal pedal torque to generate power.

The League of American Bicyclists recommends a cadence rate of 75-95 rpm, regardless of one’s bicycle speed. A cadence below 75 makes the knees use more brute muscle power and is more fatiguing on long rides.

Over time a slow cadence can be damaging to the knees. As the rider increases cadence, more blood is pumped to the legs, improving endurance. 90 rpm is ideal through both acceleration and cruise.

I once coached a woman who thought she had hit the wall at 39 miles into making it to the 43 mile end point. I did it by coaxing her up from her habitual 45 rpm cadence to about 70, coaching her down through the necessary gears to get there. Rule #1 for performance: Shift up or down, however, is necessary to maintain your cadence.

If you don’t have a cadence meter on your bike, you can get your cadence by counting the number of cycles one leg completes in 15 seconds and multiplying by four. For instance, a 90 cadence is 22.5 and an 80 cadence is 20. It might be difficult to get to 90 initially but keep working at it and your legs will adapt.

CROSS-CHAINING IS HARD ON YB! AND YOUR BIKE

Cross-chaining at its worst is where the chain goes from the large (outside) chain ring to the large (inside) cog, or vice versa, as shown in Figure 1. Either way, it puts tremendous side force on the chain. The following link clearly illustrates the problem. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24vtX2PSMM

If you are fully cross-chained when you start, you are putting maximum force on the drive train as you accelerate, increasing the wear on both your equipment and your legs.

Conversely, the cyclist who fails to shift the crank up to the large ring for high speed will cross-chain in the opposite direction.

Extended riding in this configuration is less efficient due to chain drag and accelerates wear on both the chain and gears. Like a car, regardless of your cruising speed, it’s best to down shift as you come to a stop so that you start again on the mid crank ring and cassette gear #1 or #2.

SO WHAT IS THE IDEAL SPEED TO SHIFT FROM THE MID TO THE LARGE FRONT RING?

The ideal point depends on your gearing and cadence. On the middle front crank ring, I run out of rear gears, fully cross-chained at 21 mph.

By shifting to the large ring, I could pedal to above 30 mph if I were strong enough.

When you shift to the large ring, you typically have to downshift the cassette 2-3 gears to maintain the same speed and cadence.

On the middle ring I start mild cross-chaining at about 17 mph. So if I’m going to dash up to 20 for a short burst I won’t bother shifting to the big front crank.

If I intend to dash above 20 or cruise at or above 17, I shift to the big ring. Once you start even mild cross-chaining at cruise speed, if you’re alert to it, you can feel the drag.

Naples bike and brunch promises fun, food and friends

Looking for a ride that offers breathtaking scenery for your visual palette and delicious freshly made treats from local cafes along the way, ending at the beach with a sizzling buffet amidst towering palms and a gentle breeze?

Mark your calendar for Sunday, January 27 – the ride that offers it all for any fitness level: The 7th Annual Moe’s Bike Brunch & C.A.N. Walk in beautiful Naples!

Enjoy piping hot coffee and continental breakfast at Lowdermilk Beach Park while gazing at the rolling waves and diving pelicans.

Then choose the ride that’s right for you. There are 10-mile, 20-mile, 30-mile, metric century (62-mile) and full century (100-mile) routes.

The 10 and 20-mile routes take you through the exquisite neighborhoods of Olde Naples.

Catering to families, children and newer riders, the Naples Police extends its support by riding along on these routes.

The 30-mile ride remains in Olde Naples but extends to its outer limits offering a peaceful yet challenging option to extend your mileage. The 62-mile and 100-mile options include some of the Olde Naples charm but will extend into eastern Collier County for the opportunity to extend into the heart rate zone of your choice.

Join Iron Joe Bonness if you want to really bump the ante. Enjoy sumptuous home-made treats from some of Naples’ finest local cafes at conveniently located rest stops along the way.

When you return you can stretch out under the shade of a palm tree, soak up some sun, splash in the waves, or maybe join a game of beach volleyball! (We’ll even be hosting a hula hoop contest at noon!)

Moe’s Southwest Grill will provide an array of delicious lunch options. Enjoy your fill, and hey, you’ve earned it – go back for seconds! Stay for live music, silent auction, raffles and contests.

The Pedaling for Pathways Bike Brunch is brought to you by Naples Pathways Coalition (NPC).

Proceeds will benefit NPC and the Cancer Alliance of Naples, devoted to helping local individuals and families who have been touched by cancer by providing financial aid, support, education and information resources.
Hop aboard the ‘Orange Blossom Express’

March 23-29

planes, trains and bicycles! All aboard for the 2013 Bike Florida Orange Blossom Express!
The 2013 Orange Blossom Express spring tour offers a 2-Day Weekend Getaway in Lakeland or a 7-Day Tour with additional stops in Clermont and Lake Wales.

First Stop: Lakeland
(2-Day and 7-Day Tours)
Spend two days (Saturday and Sunday) touring in and around the City of Swans – Lakeland!
Rich in history and the newest recipient of League of American Bicyclists Bronze level Bicycle Friendly Community, Lakeland is ready to welcome our riders with friendly and fascinating places and people. Our overnight facility, Sun ’n Fun aviation complex, sits between the sparkle of downtown lakes and the still of Florida orange grove farmland.
Set your own pace to explore with route options from 27 miles to 100 miles. Enjoy an afternoon social at Sun ’n Fun before shuttling to evening entertainment including Lakeside Live on Saturday.

Second Stop: Clermont (7-Day Tour)
Pack your bags for a Monday morning departure to spin into Florida’s Gem of the Hills – Clermont.
We’ll spend two nights at Clermont Middle School, located within a mile of downtown, Waterfront Park and the South Lake Trail.
Take a day off from riding on Tuesday to relax or choose to saddle up and test...
your love of climbing with the Sugarloaf Mountain Challenge.
There is also an option to stay in the “orange” theme and cycle the West Orange Trail.

Third Stop: Lake Wales (7-Day Tour)
The luggage gets loaded on Wednesday as our route goes south to Lake Wales for two nights at Lake Wales High School.
Your Thursday layover offers Florida’s Natural virtual tour, Bok Tower Gardens, Lake Kissimmee State Park, Main Street Murals and the legend of Spook Hill.

Ride, walk or take a seat along the Lake Wales shore, this day is destined to take you back in time.
The evening entertainment will feature a citrus dessert buffet as the 60 bell carillon of the Singing Tower plays and the sun sets on our last night of the tour.

Final Stop: Back to Lakeland (7-Day Tour)
We end the tour on Friday with a route through orange groves, a rest stop at Homeland Heritage Park, a pass through Bartow and a trek on the Fort Fraser Trail.
Our end of the ride treat will be citrus-based and our gift to participants will be a commemorative 20th Anniversary water bottle announcing our celebration plans for 2014.
For more information, please visit our web site, www.bikeflorida.org.

Right: Pedaling through the orange groves in central Florida; above: the stay at Sun ‘n Fun includes entrance to the Florida Air Museum and photo ops with planes; on page 7: feeding the swans and other hungry fowl along Lake Morton in Lakeland (photos by Becky Afonso)

Spinning is good for you
continued from page 6
SPINNING UP IS A GOOD THING.
Have you ever been at a point where your cadence is just a bit slower than you like and you just know that if you had the reserve to get your cadence back up, you could sustain that higher speed?
One way to do it is to “spin up.”
Downshift once and immediately spin up your cadence to 10-15 rpm more than your normal cadence. Then use that fly-wheel effect to upshift and drop to your desired cadence. It’s like using the passing gear in your car.

LAST BUT BEST, SAVE MONEY!
A worn out (stretched) chain rapidly destroys the cassette and crank ring(s) before giving the rider significant warning of what’s going on.
The links don’t actually stretch, but through wear the rivet holes become elongated and the chain no longer fits the cogs. When this happens the chain begins to rapidly eat away at the gears.

Please see Check your chain, page 12
Share the Road sponsored four cycling events this year: the Endless Summer Watermelon Ride in Ponte Vedra, organized by the North Florida Bicycle Club; the Spaghetti 100 in Tallahassee, organized by the Capital City Cyclists; The Gainesville Cycling Festival in Gainesville, organized by the Gainesville Cycling Club; and the Horrible 100 in Clermont, organized by the Florida Freewheelers.

As a vendor, we also supported the Mount Dora Cycling Festival, organized by the Mount Dora Chamber of Commerce and the Withlacoochee Rails to Trails ride.

Share the Road sponsored events like these to express our appreciation for your support.

Each year, you or renew a Share the Road specialty license plate, your $15 contribution is split between Bike Florida and the Florida Bicycle Association.

Each of these long-established rides offers excellent riding:

Endless Summer Watermelon Ride
on Sept. 9 started off a bit rainy then turned into a sunny, yet windy ride. Riders enjoyed this year’s route along A1A.

A quick dip in the Atlantic was a great way to round off the day’s activities.

The Spaghetti 100
on Oct. 6 had perfect weather and a record number of riders. This year, 401 riders participated with increases in both the dirty, clay road options and the 35 mile road option.

All the proceeds from this ride support the Capital City Cyclists Kids on Bikes Program. Among other activities, they teach the Florida Traffic & Bicycle Safety Education Program in the Leon County Schools.

They will reach over 3,000 third, fourth and fifth-grade kids this school year.

The Withlacoochee Rails to Trails Ride
on Oct. 7 had wonderful weather as well.

Riders typically gravitated to the southern portion of the trail after a short ride north out of Inverness.

While riding the Southern section of the trail, one rider was quoted as saying to one of the eight people she was riding with, “It is so beautiful here, I love this trail.”

Michelob Ultra was a welcome sponsor, providing free refreshments after the ride.

The Mount Dora Cycling Festival
on Oct. 12-14, Florida’s oldest cycling event, was well attended. Multiple ride choices gave riders of all abilities wonderful route options.

Riders capped off the day by visiting Mount Dora’s exceptional restaurants, coffee houses and bars.

The Gainesville Cycling Festival
on Oct. 26-28, had perfect weather as well, although it started out a little cold on the second day.

The back country roads and beautiful vistas make riding horse farm country is a wonderful experience. Thanks for allowing us to sponsor one of the rest stops.

The Horrible Hundred
on Nov. 17-18, after a cool and windy start, was another ride with perfect weather.

Over 2300 riders participated this year. Share the Road set up near the registration area to answer questions about the plate and hand out water bottles to Share the Road plate owners.

We also raffled a new Share the Road Jersey to a Horrible Hundred rider.

We thoroughly enjoyed each of these events and the opportunity to meet so many riders and Share the Road specialty plate owners.

Cycling is fortunate to have such a diverse group of people supporting an exceptional sport.

We appreciate the support we already have and encourage everyone to buy a Share the Road specialty license plate.

Thank you for your continued support.

Excerpt from the Florida Bicycle Association website: www.floridabicycle.org
Bar on wheels could replace pub crawls with pub pedals

“Cheers” aficionados, take stock. Here’s a place you can go where everyone knows your lane.

It’s a pub that goes with you – and nine or so of your best drinking buddies – as you pedal along the byways while quaffing a pint of your favorite beverage.

The pubcycle takes driving while drinking to a different level. The new tact on urban tourism has been approved in a number of cities. The pictured vehicle is one of several similar designs, some carrying an onboard draft keg, others requiring patrons to BYOB.

A non-imbibing (we certainly hope) tour guide provides the steering and braking. An onboard motor assists where hilly terrain makes pedaling difficult.

Helmets are not required, but recommended for extra thirsty patrons.
Do you have a question about the laws related to bicycling?

Ask Geo @ FlBikeLaw.org*

George Martin

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Motor scooters

Walter asked: In the state of Florida do you need a special license for operating a gas scooter or will a valid drivers license be ok?

A

[For some reason, questions about motorized vehicles keep coming up, probably because much of the language in bicycle-related legislation is confusing at best. Here is our best shot at an answer for Walter.]

There is no specific definition of “motor scooter” in the statutes. I assume you are referring to a motor vehicle such as a Vespa Motor Scooter, which meets the definition of motorcycke, and the operator must have a license that authorizes operation of same.

s. 316.003 – Definitions

(22) Motorcycle – Any motor vehicle having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels, and not capable of propelling the vehicle at a speed greater than 30 miles per hour on level ground.

(82) Motorized Scooter – Any vehicle not having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider, designed to travel on not more than three wheels, and not capable of propelling the vehicle at a speed greater than 30 miles per hour on level ground.

s. 316.2128 – Operation of Motorized Scooters and Miniature Motorcycles; Requirements for Sales

(1) … motorized scooters or miniature motorcycles … are not legal to operate on public roads, may not be registered as motor vehicles, and may not be operated on sidewalks ….

Bicycles in crosswalks

Debbie asked: Is there a law that you are supposed to walk your bike through the crosswalk and not ride it?

A

There is no state law that requires a cyclist to dismount in a crosswalk. In fact, the applicable statute states that cyclists riding in the crosswalk have the same rights and duties they have while on a sidewalk.

s. 316.2065 – Bicycle Regulations

(10) A person propelling a vehicle by human power upon and along a sidewalk, or across a roadway and along a crosswalk, has all the rights and duties applicable to a pedestrian under the same circumstances.

I am aware of one situation in which there is a local ordinance that requires dismounting before crossing a roadway in a crosswalk. You should check with your local authorities for such regulations.

(77) Moped – Any vehicle with pedals to permit propulsion by human power, having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels; with a motor rated not in excess of 2 brake horsepower and not capable of propelling the vehicle at a speed greater than 30 miles per hour on level ground; and with a power-drive system that functions directly or automatically without clutching or shifting gears by the operator after the drive system is engaged. If an internal combustion engine is used, the displacement may not exceed 50 cubic centimeters.

The motor scooter described above is not a moped.

s. 316.003 – Definitions

(7) Moped – Any vehicle with pedals to permit propulsion by human power, having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels; with a motor rated not in excess of 2 brake horsepower and not capable of propelling the vehicle at a speed greater than 30 miles per hour on level ground; and with a power-drive system that functions directly or automatically without clutching or shifting gears by the operator after the drive system is engaged. If an internal combustion engine is used, the displacement may not exceed 50 cubic centimeters.

The motor scooter described above is not a moped.

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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.
Late last summer, the City of Jacksonville established a special city council committee on context sensitive streets.

The committee was established by Council President Bill Bishop, to “review the existing Context Sensitive Streets Guidelines that have been drafted by the Planning Department but not implemented, determine the appropriateness of these guidelines, investigate any other information pertinent to this issue, and make recommendations for and/or draft legislation as appropriate to address this issue.”

This committee is chaired by Council Member Lori Boyer, whose district includes the San Marco, San Jose, and Mandarin neighborhoods in Jacksonville. Council Member Don Redman, an avid bicyclist whose district includes downtown Jacksonville and the Southside, serves on this committee as the representative of the Jacksonville Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC).

Check your chain continued from page 8

Once these gears are damaged, a new chain will not work properly on them. Several bike shop owners have told me collectively, “When I replace a chain on a road bike I usually also have to change the cassette. And usually, only one couple of the cogs are worn out. The rest of the cassette is fine.”

The equipment manufacturers have figured this out. Where they used to sell individual replacement cogs, they now only sell them in a complete cassette.

They went on to say that if people used their gears properly, kept their chains clean and lubricated and replaced them when worn out, there is no reason that a cassette shouldn’t last through several chains.

You can check your chain for wear with a simple tool that costs as little as $10 as shown in Figure 2 or you can go to any bike shop and have it checked. Believe them if they tell you it needs to be replaced, even if you have seen no signs of trouble.

Personally, I’m on my third chain with the same cassette and the cassette is doing fine. I don’t expect to replace the cassette with my fourth chain and if true, I will have spent about $340 for four chains, tax and labor.

Had I treated my equipment the way many cyclists do I would have spent about $765 for four chains and cassettes, a difference of $425. If I have to replace the cassette, I will still have saved about $320.

Usually when someone destroys a couple of cassettes they also destroy a front chain ring. I haven’t priced this out but you can add the $8.

So now that your power-train is your friend, use it all, take care of it, and go out and have fun!

The other council members on the committee are Greg Anderson, Doyle Carter, and Kimberly Daniels.

From September through November 2012, the committee has been meeting twice a month.

According to CM Boyer, “It is my hope that we can create a system in which pedestrian, bicycle and transit design is given much greater weight in more urban areas than in rural, in which one size fits all is modified to recognize the differing needs of differing parts of our consolidated City as well as different contexts within those geographic areas (industrial park vs. residential neighborhood), and that we can do this without adding time or difficulty to the permitting or design process.”

For more information about Jacksonville’s Special City Council Committee on Context Sensitive Design, use the link below:

http://www.coj.net/city-council/council-committees-boards--commissions/context-sensitive-streets-special-committee.aspx

Mobility fee to help pay for new bicycle facilities

Bicyclists in Jacksonville deserve much of the credit for the reinstitution of a fee on new development that will help to pay the costs for building new pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and roadway projects in our city. Here’s the story:

State legislation was changed a few years ago, in order to allow counties to develop multimodal “mobility plans,” in place of more highway oriented “concurrency management systems,” in support of new development.

So far, only a handful of counties in Florida have taken the mobility plan option.

Duval County, where Jacksonville is located, is one of these counties. Jacksonville also adopted a schedule of “mobility fees” for funding the projects that are in its mobility plan, including projects for new sidewalks and bicycle lanes.

These mobility fees are intended to offset the traffic impacts of new developments, and they are to be paid by the developers rather than by the general public.

In October 2011, shortly before the mobility fees were set to go into effect, a one-year moratorium was imposed on the collection of these fees.

Although the intent of the moratorium was to stimulate new development in Jacksonville, there is little or no evidence that the moratorium has had any such effect.

In October 2012, just before the moratorium was set to expire, the chair and vice chair of the Jacksonville Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee sent a letter to every member of the Jacksonville City Council, requesting them to allow the mobility fee moratorium to expire on its originally scheduled date. In addition, a large contingent of bicyclists attended the last city council meeting that was held prior to the scheduled expiration date for the mobility fee moratorium.

During the public comment period at the end of the meeting, all of the bicyclists in attendance stood up together to show their support for the end of the mobility fee moratorium.

Besides helping to get the mobility fee back in place for the funding of new bicycle and pedestrian facilities, the bicyclists at that meeting demonstrated that we are ready to have a significant long term influence upon the design and construction of new transportation facilities in Jacksonville.

The North Florida Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Study is underway

The North Florida TPO is currently developing a Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for Clay, Duval, Nassau, and St. Johns Counties.

To help in developing the plan, members of the bicycling community have been asked to provide input by participating in a survey. A link to the survey is below.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/northfloridatpo_bikepedplan_survey

In February and March, 2013, public workshops on the plan will be held in each of the four counties in the study area.

To learn more about the North Florida Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Study, contact Elizabeth DeJesus at 904-306-7505, or send a message to Elizabeth at edejesus@northfloridatpo.com.

— Stephen Tocknell is the First Coast Chapter regional Advocacy Director

Fig. 2. This Park CC-3.2 gauge tells me that my chain still has lots of miles in it before needing replacement. This is the one time that you don’t want the tool to fit because if it does, you need to replace the chain.
Coalition of church groups provides aid to cyclists in need

by Mike Olsen

Volunteers from several Tampa area churches for the last 15 years have refurbished and donated bicycles to people in need.

Russell Johnson at Tampa’s University Baptist Church created “God’s Pedal Power Ministry” on July 4, 1997, to help kids in the challenged neighborhood around the church. My wife, Karen, and I learned about the new ministry at our church, St. James United Methodist Church, and offered our help.

After a couple meetings, the two churches created a shared bicycle ministry. In the beginning, just a couple of volunteers worked outside at night at University Baptist.

We had no storage, so we walked bikes and parts about 200 yards to an upstairs, burned out apartment the apartment manager let us use for free. Soon we graduated to a small contractor’s trailer donated to us, but we still worked outside, rain or shine.

We were a close group – four guys working back to back under a 12x12 pop-up tent with one tray of tools, and two light bulbs (“...hey, anyone have the 10mm wrench?”). We were bitten so many times by the same mosquitoes that we considered ourselves blood brothers in Christ.

We saw a great need for bicycles for both adults and kids in the community, so we started a building fund to give us more room, and to help attract more volunteers. After many meetings and contacts for sponsors, we had a 23x60 foot concrete building shell constructed.

Our building has five entry doors. Volunteers from another church helped electrify the building and a Christian supplier donated the hardware for the job.

After construction was complete, founder Russell Johnson realized that his family needed more of his time at home, so Karen and I took over to continue to grow the ministry.

As business owners, we were able to apply our skills, knowledge and contacts to help GPPM expand. We could write a book on how to set up and successfully run an all-volunteer bicycle ministry.

GPPM really is an all-volunteer ministry. In our 15 years, no one has received a penny of compensation. We have applied for some grants, and we get donations from wonderful people, but our strength is in the volunteers who work two nights a week.

Our policy of recycling parts from unrepairable bikes would shock avid cyclists, but the bikes we adopt out provide safe transportation to help adults find and retain employment, and kids to get to school and the library.

Currently, the ministry provides more than 1,500 refurbished bikes a year. With the hard economic times, we now give out almost 95% adult bikes. Adults get lights, a lock and chain, a Bible and a new safety helmet if they want it. Kids get a bike, a lock and chain, a safety helmet, and a Bible if they choose.

We register every bike, and the new owner can bring the bike back for repairs.

We have helped migrant communities in Florida, and Native American children in North Carolina.

We repair small bikes at a local orphanage, and tricycles at a challenged adult daycare center near Tampa.

We have been able to help a Port Charlotte bike ministry needing parts for bikes they need to refurbish (retirement communities keep their bikes a lot longer), and we have driven almost to Alabama to pick up bikes from a rotating bike rental business.

The current economy has doubled the number of bicycle requests we get and, though my energy level at 63+ makes it a little more difficult to jump up in the morning, we are on a record pace this year.

Karen and I have no plans to retire or slow down, but we encourage others to work within your own neighborhood to help people in need. The pay for your efforts is lousy, but the retirement benefits are out of this world.

If you have a bike ministry or questions, we would like to share information with you. Our e-mail is Olsen@tampabay.rr.com. Our (in need of an update) website is at www.godspedalpower.org
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 fbtc@piercepages.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/fbtc/.

January

January 6 (Sun) North Port
Piggy’s Revenge
A free race ride consisting of 60+ miles of off-road goodness in Sarasota Florida. Get ready for a self supported gravel, dirt, sand, water and road ride. The big loop will connect tiny wilderness areas in the south end of the county. Shorter options will be available. e-mail pgrevenge2012.blueisp.net/ July 11-17 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 event website for more details. Contact information for more details about each ride. Ask your friends.

January 12 (Sat) Alachua
Tour de Felasco
January 7-11
Cross City
January 13 (Sun) Boca Raton
Tour de Boca
Sponsored by the Boca Raton Bike Club and the City of Boca Raton and recreational services. Tour beautiful Boca Raton with a 15 mile, easy-paced, police escorted bicycle ride beginning at Patch Reef Park, 2000 NW 51st St/ Yamato Rd. (just west of Military Trail). Registration: 12:30PM; Ride starts: 1:30PM; Registration fee $2.00. There is a rest stop for coffee, drinks, and refreshments midway through the ride. Promote safe cycling while spending a pleasant afternoon with family and friends. Children must be at least 10 years old and must be accompanied by an adult if under 14. No baby seats. All riders are required to wear helmets. A limited number will be provided. For information call 561-391-6109 or visit bobabikeclub.org. january12@northfloridaevents.com

January 20 (Sun) Cape Coral
The 2nd Annual Tour de Cape Coral
Presented by the City of Cape Coral Parks & Recreation Department offers a 5K run on Sat. Jan 19, and on Sun. Jan 20, there are four cycling courses that travel through the City of Cape Coral, one of the largest cities in the state. The Tour de Cape Coral offers 15, 30mi, 60mi and 100mi. course. All courses are manned with support teams and rest stations throughout. This is a great family event.

January 27 (Sun) Naples
7th Annual Moe’s Bike Brunch / CAN Ride & Walk
The rides start and end at Lowdermilk Beach Park, 10, 20, 30, 62, and 100 mile routes throughout Naples and the surrounding area. This is an event for everyone! It will be a fully supported road ride (or walk if you prefer) with refreshments on the beach from Moe’s Southwest Grill to follow. Proceeds go to support the Cancer Alliance of Naples and Naples Pathways Coalition. Continental Breakfast and registration open at 6:30 AM. Ride starts at 7:00 am. There’s also a 15 mile, 30 mile, and 62 mile road ride. Stay for a self supported gravel, dirt, sand, water and road ride. The big loop will connect tiny wilderness areas in the south end of the county. Shorter options will be available. e-mail pgrevenge2012.blueisp.net/ July 11-17 Cross City
Gulf Coast Highlight Tour
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February

February 3 (Sun) Fort Lauderdale
RIDE with HEART – 2nd Annual
February is Heart Awareness Month. FORT’s Promotions and Events, LLC will host the 2nd ANNUAL Metric Century (62 Miles) and Half Metric (31 Miles) cycling event. Rides start at 8:30 AM. The Tour de Florida in the heart of Everglades City and takes you through beautiful scenery. On- and off-road routes to choose from. Ride registration includes continental breakfast, aid stations along the route, SAG vehicle support, maps, and a delicious lunch catered by a local favorite! RIDE OPTIONS: 62 mile, 8:00 a.m. (on-road) 27 mile, 9:00 a.m. (on- & off-road) 16 mile, 9:00 a.m. (on-road) Registration and breakfast open at 7:30 a.m. www.naplespathways.org

March

March 7-10 Chiefland
Chiefland Spring Bicycle Bike/ 
Tour
February 24 (Sun) Venus
Grando Fondo Brevaard
Sponsoring the KLD Join I.R.O., Inc., a non-profit organization as we raise money and awareness for the KLD Youth Foundation - a local non-profit organization focused on supporting and educating our local youth. Experience Brevaard’s first Gran Fondo complete with a challenging course and SAG stops to help you along the way. Register early for a unique 2013 Gran Fondo Brevaard Cycling “Kit” Please check our website for further details. – The Gran Fondo Brevaard Team granfondobrevaard.org

April

April 7 (Sun) Lakeland Ranch
Tour de Cure Southwest Florida
100 Mile Century Check-In 6:30 am Ride Start 7:30 am Rest Stop Closes 3:00 pm 12.5 mph min pace – 62 Mile Metric Century Check-
In 7:30 am Ride Start 8:30 am Rest Stop Closes 3:00 pm 9 mph min pace – 35 Mile Ride Check-In 8:30 am Ride Start 9:30 am Rest Stop Closes 3:00 pm 6 mph min pace – 10 Mile Fun Ride Check-In 9:30 am Ride Start 10:30 am 4 mph min pace Times are subject to change. diabetes.org/wareflordtour

April 7 (Sun) Everglades City
Stay a Play Everglades City
Ride starts at 7:00 am. In the heart of Everglades City and takes you through beautiful scenery. On- and off-road routes to choose from. Ride registration includes continental breakfast, aid stations along the route, SAG vehicle support, maps, and a delicious lunch catered by a local favorite! RIDE OPTIONS: 62 mile, 8:00 a.m. (on-road) 27 mile, 9:00 a.m. (on- & off-road) 16 mile, 9:00 a.m. (on-road) Registration and breakfast open at 7:30 a.m. www.naplespathways.org

Active.com Online Registration

April 13 (Sat) Summerfield
Take Stock in Children Cycling for Success
35/63 plus mile ride. Registration opens at 6:30 am. Mass start at 7:30 am. Scenic ride through the heart of Marion and Lake counties. With ride options for most skill levels, there is something for everyone! Some of the most scenic roads in Central Florida. Some challenging climbs and some thrilling speeds on the descents, along with abundant wildlife. Full SAG support, rest stops, bicycle repair, and awesome food (breakfast and lunch) are all included in the low entry fee of $40 and $45 day-of registratio. www.pfmc.org/events/
Phil the knife sharpener

by Earl Lang

I had just started a solo self-supported cross-country trip, and was headed for my brother’s place in Oklahoma.

Somewhere between Pensacola and Mobile I spotted up the road what looked like a big box on wheels being pulled by a man. Closer, I saw that it was a man, pulling a bicycle pulling a big two wheel trailer. He was off the road and moving in the grass and as I went by I spied the painted sign on the side of the trailer, “Phil’s Knife Sharpening.”

I did a quick check for traffic, made a “U-turn” and went back to meet him. Phil looked to be about 60 and, while a little overweight, seemed in good shape.

The bicycle was an old “Post Office” model with a small front wheel that allowed for a big basket, one that would carry a lot of mail. Phil claimed that it was the only bicycle built strong enough to hold up to the strain he put on it.

The basket had a plywood cover and was full of mostly snacks, water and tobacco to roll his cigarettes.

He insisted that he give me something and offered me a package of frosted cupcakes. I declined, but when he insisted I accepted something. I soon learned that those handi-wipes are really a great thing to have on a trip.

“I did and I’m back.”

I guess that was the start of his traveling career. I asked him where he was headed. He either didn’t hear me or didn’t want to say. He did say that he had spent the winter in Key West. He opened the trailer to show me all the stuff he carried and it was full.

He had a full-size deep cycle battery to operate his radio and tail lights which were all 12 volt automobile lights. He kept the battery charged with the little solar cell attached to the top of the box.

He had a good supply of food and clothing and prize possession, a hand-cranked knife-sharpening grinder. He showed me how he clamped it to the side of the trailer to sharpen knives. On the front of the trailer he had tied a steel-folding chair. Weight was no consideration.

“Do you ever get tired of the continual traveling?” I asked.

He thought for a moment. “Yep, every day.” I thanked him for the handi-wipes and wished him safe travels and took my leave.

According to Phil, he made it to Myrtle Beach, which was about 250 miles. On a Saturday morning, I just tied a sleeping bag to my bicycle, and told Mom that I was going to Myrtle Beach and would be back.”

According to Phil, he made it to Myrtle Beach, went surfing and got back home on Monday.

“I thought you were going to Myrtle Beach?” his mother asked.

He answered, “I did and I’m back.”

“I can’t say that I have ever met a more free or happier man.”

It didn’t seem to matter to Phil how much his rig weighed. It was more important that it be durable. He and his brother built the trailer and used steel angle iron and half-inch plywood on an axle with lawn tractor wheels. It certainly was roomy, durable and heavy.

“Phil, how long you been traveling like this?” I asked.

“Thirty years about,” he said. “Back in the grass and as I went by I spied the trailer. He was off the road and moving in the grass and as I went by I spied the painted sign on the side of the trailer, “Phil’s Knife Sharpening.”

I did a quick check for traffic, made a “U-turn” and went back to meet him. Phil looked to be about 60 and, while a little overweight, seemed in good shape.

The bicycle was an old “Post Office” model with a small front wheel that allowed for a big basket, one that would carry a lot of mail. Phil claimed that it was the only bicycle built strong enough to hold up to the strain he put on it.

The basket had a plywood cover and was full of mostly snacks, water and tobacco to roll his cigarettes.

He insisted that he give me something and offered me a package of frosted cupcakes. I declined, but when he insisted I accepted something. I soon learned that those handi-wipes are really a great thing to have on a trip.

“I did and I’m back.”

I guess that was the start of his traveling career. I asked him where he was headed. He either didn’t hear me or didn’t want to say. He did say that he had spent the winter in Key West. He opened the trailer to show me all the stuff he carried and it was full.

He had a full-size deep cycle battery to operate his radio and tail lights which were all 12 volt automobile lights. He kept the battery charged with the little solar cell attached to the top of the box.

He had a good supply of food and clothing and prize possession, a hand-cranked knife-sharpening grinder. He showed me how he clamped it to the side of the trailer to sharpen knives. On the front of the trailer he had tied a steel-folding chair. Weight was no consideration.

“Do you ever get tired of the continual traveling?” I asked.

He thought for a moment. “Yep, every day.” I thanked him for the handi-wipes and wished him safe travels and took my leave. Now when I get tired of riding, I just think about Phil, with his old bike and big trailer and my tiredness seems to lose significance.

I cannot say that I have ever met a more free or happier man.

FBA transitioning to online membership database

FBA is transitioning to a simpler and more efficient management system to manage and grow our association. One of the most important features will allow FBA members to update their contact information directly.

Please assist us with this transition by providing your current e-mail address by using the “Contact FBA” feature on our website at www.floridabicycle.org/about/contact.html.

An online system will also lower our postage costs so more funds can be used toward education and advocacy programs. Thank you for your continued support.

Your membership makes us stronger.
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.

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