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NOVEMBER 2004

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THE VOICE OF CYCLISTS IN NORTHEAST OHIO

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The Voice of Cyclists in Northeast Ohio

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On The Web @ www.crankmail.com

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From the Editors

Well, with the receipt of this CrankMail you will have enjoyed an entire year's worth of Tom and my efforts at providing you with the very best cycling articles and information around. We don't know what is harder to believe that a year has passed already or that you are still reading it.

When newsworthy cycling events occurred, we were the first to report them in CrankMail. And if none occurred that month, we cleverly made them up. We quoted people who never opened their mouths, reported on obscure facts that had no basis in reality and editorialized on situations that never existed. We hope you appreciate our efforts.

Our spectacularly colored front page is the result of mixing the printer's copy in the wash with my socks on the hot/warm cycle. The old-time photos came about because we're too cheap to buy a camera and are using some left over rolls of film from Tom's great uncle, circa 1904.

But enough of the past. On to the future. Next year we're planning to issue a glossy copy of CrankMail with advertising inserts that annoyingly drop out while you're reading. We'll be selling our mailing list to the highest bidders, most likely unscrupulous mass marketers looking to recoup losses from the do-not-call list. We'll be soliciting ads from beyond the cycling arena, to those selling questionable enhancement products of dubious reputation or outright illegality, preferably the latter. Finally, we will follow in the great journalistic footsteps of *Bicycling* magazine by offering feature articles such as 10 Great Rides on the Towpath and 15 Reasons Presta is Better Than Schrader.

In short, we'll be upholding the finest traditions of CrankMail, making us proud of our work and you lucky to be associated with us. In closing we would like to wish you and yours a happy holiday season. We would really like to. But we just can't bring ourselves to do it. So, instead, fend for yourselves and let the devil take the hindmost.

Martin Cooperman and Tom Meara, Editor & Publisher
November 2004

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Gossip

Chuck Smith, Chair of the Ohio Bicycle Federation reports that the **Lake County Bike Expo** will indeed take place from 11-4 on April 17, 2005 at LakeFarm MetroPark, as originally scheduled. While the event is being renamed the "**Earth Day Summer Sports Expo**", it will still feature cycling. Chuck sends his thanks to those of you who helped save the event by encouraging more bike shops to participate.

Russ Marks from LEW sent us this item on **Proper Cycling Attire**. Driving south on State Rd. in Medina County I spotted a cyclist ahead of me. I only saw him because I was thinking how smooth the road was after the repaving. The fresh blacktop and the shadows from the trees at 4pm hid him as effectively as an army camouflage suit! He was wearing a Blue tee shirt, khaki shorts on a dark colored bike. Great camouflage, easy to get run over by an inattentive motorist. Blue may match your eyes and you may look good in it, but you can't be seen! Red is a poor choice, red turns black in low light. Pick White, Yellow or Multi Colored Jerseys. With the leaves turning in the fall Yellow might be suspect. Be Seen and Stay Alive! (Hmmm, no red, no blue, no yellow, perhaps if you didn't wear anything you really get noticed! - editor.)

The **Lake Erie Wheelers** rode through Grafton recently and report some good news. **Eastano's Bakery and Cafe**, which has been open for about one year, now has Sunday morning hours. In addition to coffee and pastries they offer smoothies and some excellent breakfast bagel sandwiches.

Egads, could this be true? A Campy equipped comfort bike? The **Campagnolo Ergopower Flat Bar** project stems from the concept of providing the same performance and lightness characteristics to cyclists wishing to ride more comfortably. A riding position determined by the use of a straight handlebar which obviously requires the use of special controls, hence Ergopower Flat Bar.

Diane Lees reports that after many months of trying to have certain agreements satisfied from the shopping center owners at their new location, they have come to an impasse. Much to their dismay, their coffee shop, **High Peaks Coffee**, closed for good on November 7th.

Hubbub Bicycle Shop will continue to fulfill its outstanding promises and is attempting to locate a temporary space for the short term.

They are personally heartbroken that we were unable to work out the problems as they put all of their dreams, efforts, resources, and hopes into the project.

Wondering how to keep in shape over the coming winter? Don't like riding the nice new Trek Fuel you plan to get for Christmas on salty roads? Check out www.raysmtb.com/. It is the link for a new indoor mountain bike course being built in an old factory just off West Avenue in Cleveland. There are not a lot of details yet but it boasts 66,000 sq. ft. (1.5 acres) divided into beginner, sport, and expert sections.

Bill Andersen of Yuma, AZ recently completed a 1000 mile bike ride from the Pacific at San Diego to the Atlantic at Jacksonville Beach, Florida to become the oldest person to ride coast to coast. Bill is 78.



Cleveland Touring Club
P.O. Box 32456
Euclid, OH 44132-0456

email: clevelandtourclub@hotmail.com
www.clevelandtourclub.org

Please welcome the following new member : **Jack McKee Jr.** of Euclid.

A **HUGE THANKS** to **BILL AND JULIE MAUREY** for hosting a wonderful fall get-together at the park near their home on Sunday, October 3rd. The food was abundant and attendance was possibly around 50 – 60 people. Some of us were treated to a lovely sunset from Bill and Julie's back yard which is right on Lake Erie.

Also there will continue to be **Thursday Night Rides** at **North Chagrin** beginning at 6:30 p.m. until the weather is too hideous to ride. **Both headlights and taillights required.** Come and Join the Crazy Fun. Usual distances are 15-25 miles on familiar roads. It is actually safer to ride at night in a large group. The car drivers are totally mystified by all the blinkies and wavering headlights and give the riders lots of distance and use caution.

I hope everyone has a happy and safe holiday season. The club has no organized activities planned so we'll see you all next year!

RIDE SCHEDULE

| DATE | Time | Ride Terrain |
|-------------|-------------|--|
| Nov. – Feb. | 10:00 | NORTH CHAGRIN Pickup Ride to various locations if dry and over 40 –Group decides the destination. Varied |

RIDE START LOCATIONS

North Chagrin Reservation - Sanctuary Marsh Nature Ctr. lot, enter park from Rt. 91 south of Rt. 6



November & December 2004 Wheelmen Calendar

| | | | | |
|-----|-------|------------------|--------------------|--|
| SUN | 11/07 | Community Center | Oberlin | Red Flannel 62 & 31 miles. |
| THU | 11/11 | Amherst | 9:00 AM | Veteran's Day U-Show |
| THU | 11/11 | Nordson Dep ot | 7:30 PM | Meeting ...No prolog ride, no pizza, just business! |
| SUN | 11/14 | Amherst | 9:00 AM | Depends on the weather! |
| SUN | 11/21 | Oberlin Inn | 9:00AM | Will the weather hold? |
| THU | 11/25 | Amherst | 9:00 AM | Thanksgiving day ... Work upan appetite for turkey! |
| FRI | 11/26 | Oberlin Inn | 9:00 AM | Now work it off! Well, some of it. |
| SUN | 11/28 | Amherst | 9:00 AM | Hope for the best! |
| SUN | 12/05 | Oberlin Inn | 9:00 AM | Do ya suppose it'll be dry? |
| THU | 12/09 | Nordson Depot | 6:30 AM 7:30 PM | Prolog ...Rollers 'n Trainers Meeting (maybe pizza) |
| SUN | 12/12 | Amherst | 9:00 AM | This'll be iffy! |
| SUN | 12/19 | Oberlin Inn | 9:00AM | Could be a snow day! |
| SUN | 12/26 | Amherst | 9:00AM | Work off the BIG dinner! |

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Contact the following for information

www.medinabikeclub.org

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--|
| President: Shawn Conway | 330-764-3019 | the5conways@earthlink.net |
| Vice President: Dave Ling | 330-416-9421 | ldbl3000@aol.com |
| Treasurer: Glen Hinegardner | 330-725-8430 | biker10260@aol.com |
| Secretary: Lou Vetter | 330-725-0441 | bikevetter@aol.com |

Tuesday Evening Rides

Starting in the Spring! (Pace: Moderate 12 - 15+ mph)

Sunday Morning Rides

Starting at 8:00 am (May through September) and 9:00 am (October)

See you next season!

CLUB NOTES:

Season's End: Shawn and I ended the season with one last ride out of Buckeye Woods on the first Tuesday of October. Shawn got in a real 25 miler while I dropped off the back and settled for 18 miles. After the ride we went home to check our ride schedule to see why we were the only ones who showed up. As it turned out we had no rides scheduled for the club after September. We are now preparing for our classic ride the FFF – f f f f, hosted by the count himself, DracuLou. In the next issue of crankmail I'll let you know how it turns out. Since the ride schedule is on hold for winter I expect the club will be getting together once a month for a social evening and dinner out. We might even drink a few of our favorite beverages. We will E-mail all of our members who provided us with addresses and make arrangements. I hope to see you all there and be sure to get you mileage charts totaled up to share how many miles you rode this year. I'm at 5,033 and still trying to get in more riding. Maybe 5,432 would be a good goal.

LETTER FROM VETTER:

Return to Mountain Biking: Tom and I dusted off our old mountain bikes and have been out three times so far. I have the aches and pains to prove it too. Our plan is to do more off-road through the winter but it's a lot harder than I remember. On our last practice run Tom was debating whether to try riding down this one short hill. We both chickened out and rode around one more loop before coming back to the same hill where I went for it but shouldn't have. It was only about twenty feet of riding to a landing with an elevation loss of about twelve feet. I crashed and bounced. Tom said it looked like the bike bounced me off. I fell about four or five feet as I floated over the handlebars. I got the wind knocked out of me too. Later I consulted with my wife the nurse to see if I broke a rib or something. She said that it was most likely a pulled a muscle. It still hurts when I cough.

Ol' MacDonald Has a New Bike, E.I.E.I.O.: Laurie has gotten a mountain bike so she can ride all winter long now. Tom and I showed her and her son, Jimmy, our secret off road trails. I should have known that anyone who has "MUD LVR" for a license plate would beat the stuffing out of me mountain biking. Jimmy led the whole way and just stopped long enough for the rest of us to catch up and decide on what direction to go next. Laurie learned very quickly how to jump over logs and pedal through the muddy bogs without falling over. If she ever decides to be a downhill racer, look out Missy Giove. I keep telling her how Missy is a retired downhill racer who intimidated her competition by wearing the dried up carcass of her deceased pet piranha. Later after her pet dog died she had it cremated and would bring the ashes to competitions and rub some ash on herself for good luck. For some unknown reason I find Missy strangely attractive.

ICE CREAM: I met the new owner of Bricker's Ice Cream in Hudson, Ohio, Karin A. Eisenhardt. She has extended an open invitation to make her shop a destination for upcoming bike rides. Their ice cream is "homemade", so if you haven't been in Hudson for ice cream lately, you need to go back there. Bricker's is located on Route 91 just south of route 303 in Hudson. The local authorities widened the street just so we could ride there in comfort. Other attractions on the menu include homemade fudge (I had the pumpkin, yum, yum), specialty candies, and the best coffee and espresso anywhere. Oh, did I mention pastry; because their cinnamon rolls are fantastic. That's another yum, yum. For the non-caffeine drinkers they have an assortment of 100% fruit juices as well as decaffeinated coffee. New to the menu is authentic gelato with less fat and more flavor. It is really really good.

She makes phenomenal wedding cakes and studied cake baking under an English pastry chef noted for having made cakes for Princess Di's wedding. So, if someone you know needs a cake for a special occasion make sure they know about "Cakes by Karin" in Hudson.

The Akron Club had a ride that started at the hike and bike trail at old route 8 and route 303. The ride circled around Streetsboro then back through Hudson to the parking lot. I got one of their maps and rode the route myself making sure I stopped for coffee and a cinnamon roll at Bricker's.

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Top Ten Reasons To Cycle In The Winter

(or Things I Have Come To Realize After My First Year
Of Winter Riding/Commuting)

by **Edie** lusedtobenormalormaybenotiforget**Anti**

1. Got the midwinter blues? Does winter seem to be stretching out into May? The blues don't stand a chance when your bicycle is in your life. My motivation to ride in the summer was this: "It is always better to ride, than to not ride." I have found that this same motto applies in the winter. I am serious about this. The hardest part about winter riding is convincing yourself that it makes sense. It does.
2. Are you one of those people who dislikes (okay- hates!) the cold? Who isn't?! Well, like your mother used to say, the best way to beat it is to join it! Get on your bike and generate some heat! Then you won't be cold any longer! Sounds simple! It is!
3. If you are like me, you love the way the snow looks oh-so-gently drifting down in big generous flakes in your yard. Now imagine that on your face... while you are riding your bicycle... with your best friend... in a ghostly silent cityscape. Does it get any better than that? No, it does not. Don't take my word for it, try it for yourself. You WILL thank me for this.

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4. Can we talk about head winds here? Haven't we all whined about that head wind last summer that came zipping across the corn fields, slowing us down? It is challenging, at best, demoralizing on a bad day. Well, wah, wah, wah! After just one short winter of riding, I am happy to report to you this: a warm head wind sure beats a cold gusting head wind. You will never complain about a mere head wind again, once you have braved a winter head wind. Your friends will like you better and buy you gifts. It's all good!

5. Have you and your therapist-er, I mean- friends been trying to work out ways to shift your attitudes about hill climbs? To not hate them so much? Maybe even to LIKE them instead of DREAD them? I know just the way to do this. It's the beginning of your first ride of the day on a January Saturday. Be cold. Be very cold! Head right for that Metropark hill that you normally head away from. Ride up that hill! Instant warmth! You now love hills! See what I mean?

6. Are you weary of those achy sit bones on those first few spring rides? Keep those bones and tissues tough! Keep them in the saddle all year!

7. Impress yourself (and your non-riding friends and family) with your ability to negotiate snow covered roads. Don't tell them how easy it really is and ruin that illusion!

8. For you fashion forward folks- This is your excuse to shop till you drop! You need to buy new cycling gear! ...Extra blinkie lights, polypropylene base layer, waterproof lobster claw gloves, heavy duty waterproof insulated boots, rain/wind pants in day-glo colors, balaclavas in revolutionary new fabrics that transfer heat to cold spots and vice versa, the list goes on! Wheee, I feel a shopping spree coming on! Outta my way, kids!

9. Come on, you know you're going to be outside anyway. Many of you ski, hike and snowmobile in the snow, yes? Cycling is much more fun than any of those wimpy sports!

10. Ladies, can we talk? Guys, you listen in, too! Riding year round (aka extending your riding season) keeps that winter tonnage off! You can eat, my dears, eat! Let's see: sit on my butt in the dark dreary cold gaining weight so fast I can hear it or just hopping on my bike and riding to work? Hmmm, I wonder what's it gonna be? I'll take the pasta alfredo, please. With bread.

And a bonus reason just for reading this far, my brave ones:

11. One word for all of your fragile flowers: Rain. You won't melt, I promise! And the spring day will come, that you will be happy to ride in a downpour riding home one balmy 55 degree evening. All you have to do is remember the way that rain that felt in January. And froze. Words to use in your mind that make rain sound like a walk in heaven: Sleet, slush, hail, freezing rain. Rain is not bad. Rain makes for very tolerable riding conditions, as you will soon see once you have something worse as comparison. Winter rain gives you just that. I dislike winter rain, but I can still say it is "always better to ride..."

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LEGISLATION

Bike Access on the RTA - UPDATE!

RTA officials met with ClevelandBikes to talk over increasing opportunities for bicyclists on trains and buses. RTA reiterated their commitment to expanding cyclist access, indicating their rider data show that the bus racks and train access have added RTA riders and expanded RTA area coverage.

RTA indicates they are adding handicapped access to several east side blue and green train stations, with Shaker Square and East 55th Street supplementing Green Road, Warrensville Road, West 65th Street and the Waterfront Line. These improvements are expected to increase handicapped ridership, which could also increase ridership opportunities for cyclists. RTA indicates they would partner with ClevelandBikes on grants to add hooks to carry more bicycles outside of the current handicapped rider areas, however, they have no money to pledge to the project. As for lifting the rush hour restrictions, RTA requested assistance in developing and implementing any decision to change the rules, as modification would increase discretion for RTA drivers.

This is the point where we ask for your help. RTA wants more information about cyclists' goals for RTA to contribute to the planning process.

- What are your goals for an effective bike/bus/train partnership?
- Would riders take buses and trains to gain access to riding in parks?
- How do restrictions to trains during "rush" hours impact cyclists?
- Which bus and train routes would cyclists ride?

So let's tell them. This is an exciting time as it says a lot about our young organization to be asked to partner and come up with solutions on a range of activities that can move forward. Let's hear your thoughts and suggestions for RTA. Contact Kevin Cronin @ www.clevelandbikes.org !

Free Bicycle Pavement Marking Stencils

EcoCity Cleveland would like to announce the availability of bicycle pavement marking stencils for loan. They've purchased one shared lane symbol, and one bicycle lane symbol pair (international bike symbol and directional arrow).

Municipalities, park districts and private street owners are welcome to borrow these stencils or trace them to make a set for their own use. For more information on some of the symbols go to <http://snipurl.com/ac9f> .

If you are interested in borrowing the stencils please contact: Ryan McKenzie, Transportation Program Manager, EcoCity Cleveland, 3500 Lorain Avenue #301, Cleveland, Ohio 44113 - Tel: 216.961.5020 x 209 - Fax: 216.961.8851 - <http://www.ecocitycleveland.org>

BIKE EDUCATION

Kids II Classes?

Is there a recreation or community center where you live that could benefit from a Kids II Class? Kids between the ages of 4 and 12 can join in to learn to ride a bike or improve on their cycling skills in a class that's not only educational but a lot of fun! If you think there is interest in your city or town or if you would like more information on BikeEd Programs please contact Jim Sheehan at Ohio City Bike Co-op at 216 830 CO-OP (2667)
www.ohiocitycycles.org

UP-COMING EVENTS!

CAMBA announces their trailbuilding schedule for the winter of '04-'05!

Come, join us, and build sustainable singletrack trails for present and future generations. Most of the trailbuilding sessions will be at West Branch State Park unless noted. Start time is typically 9am. Lunch will be provided. Dress warmly and bring water (hydration is important even in trailbuilding), a snack in case you get hungry, work gloves, work boots, and eye protection. We will provide tools and camaraderie. Don't know how to build trails? We will be happy to teach you. With lots of IMBA trained members we can instruct while we work right beside you. Hope to see you there!

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Check the CAMBA website at www.camba.us for directions and more details. Questions?.....you can reach us at info@camba.us Thank you, Bill Braum, CAMBA president Fall/Winter - '04 Sunday, November 14th Sunday, November 21st - half day at Atchinson (Lake County) Saturday, November 27th Sunday, December 12th Winter/Spring - '05 Saturday, January 8th Sunday, January 23rd Saturday, February 5th Sunday, February 20th Saturday, March 12th

EVENTS RE-CAP!

Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day at West Branch

Thanks to all the kids, parents, aunts, and friends of kids that showed up on Saturday, October 2nd at West Branch for "National Take-a-Kid-Mountain Biking Day". Gabe, Zach, Eric, Tyler and Alexis along with their dads, aunt, and adult mountain-biking-friends, braved the murky morning weather to come out to West Branch and ride. We started with some riding instruction and safety pointers, then headed out to the double-track of snowmobile loop A, pushed our way through the uphill of loop B, and sampled some rocks on the downhill. After making our way successfully through the bumps and roots that followed, we stopped for a well-deserved snack break where we got an impromptu lesson from Advocacy Director Mike Farley about trail-building techniques, tools and safety. Well fortified by our Snickers, M&M's, and a banana or two, we felt ready to tackle the sweet lakeside single-track. And tackle we did! Everyone rode the kitchen-sink trail like a champ. We made our way back to the trailhead just in time to avoid the raindrops. Thanks to all that came out, and we hope to see you on the trails again soon! Written by Mindy Kuth, Northern Ohio IMBA representative & ClevelandBikes Member

MEMBERSHIP

ClevelandBikes Membership levels available! Help support safe cycling in your community!!

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BASIC - members @ this level are entitled to participate in all ClevelandBikes Programs without voting privileges

ADVOCATE - members are entitled to participate in all ClevelandBikes Programs and have voting privileges

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IOWA - A Bike Ride

And an Example for the Season

Carl Antczak

This past July I eagerly secured my bicycle to the back of a friend's van and, along with two other Ohioans by the name of Bob and Greg, some sleeping bags, tents and assorted baggage, headed west for the great state of Iowa. We were to participate, with Jeff and his son Adam, two transplanted Buckeyes currently living in Iowa, in the moving bike feast commonly known as RAGBRAI (Register's Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa). For those not familiar with this singular event, it can best be described as a week-long meandering of approximately 8,000 cyclists where, through the cornfields and small farming communities of the 29th state, normally mature adults cavort in the manner of unfettered adolescents; laughing, grunting and sweating under the hot summer sun, consuming copious amounts of cinnamon rolls, grilled pork chops, corn on the cob, stacks of pancakes and any and all edible commodities within sight, sort of like one of the nasty plagues visited upon ancient Egypt.

One noon along about midweek our Group, cycling under the name of Team Grazing and sporting cow horns on our bicycle helmets, coasted into the small town of Blakesburg. We leaned our bikes against a garage and started walking the few hundred feet to the town square, already packed with a thousand or so of our fellow riders. Satisfying our appetites was uppermost on our minds. Delicious smells wafted our way and the twang of a local country /western band accosted our ears. I was lagging a bit behind our group, absorbing the sights and sounds around me when, from behind a small abandoned store appeared an older man. His lean face sported a gray, grizzled beard and a missing tooth or two. His jeans and boots had seen way better days. I smiled at him as he came alongside me. He asked if I was hungry and would I like a hot dog and something to drink. I assumed he was one of the townsfolk drumming up business for one of the few dozen food booths around the square. Always one to take advantage of a shortcut to food, and having a weakness for that tantalizing sausage, I replied that his suggestion was right up my alley. He gestured for me to follow him. Instead of heading for the center of town, he rounded an abandoned store and stopped in front of a rickety mobile home that was severely sagging on cement blocks. It had a couple of boarded up windows and was sided in warped plywood that hadn't seen a paint brush since it rolled off the assembly line. He pulled open the torn screen and gestured for me to enter. Now I'm no spring chicken and can take care of myself, but in these scary days of serial murderers, people strung out on crack, and marijuana classi-s, a medicinal agent, I felt a bit apprehensive entering the interior without anyone in my group knowing where I was. But, I reasoned, if this guy was willing to have a senior citizen wearing cow horns, Spandex shorts and a T-shirt sporting a logo of a salivating cow enter his home, who was the one taking a chance here? Besides, the trailer's old air conditioner was noisily cranking out at full blast and the cold air was not to be resisted.

Once inside the trailer, one look around at the worn and patched carpet, sagging couch and stained walls, I knew this guy was really down on his luck. He motioned me into the cramped kitchen and gestured to a chipped enameled table. It held a roaster full of hot dogs, a plate of buns, a pot of baked beans, some chips and a pitcher of Kool Aid. He gave me a crooked smile, shook my hand and told me to dig in. I wasn't quite sure what to do at this point, but appetite is strong motivation for me and I soon had a paper plate buckling under the weight of some dogs, beans and chips. I clumsily reached for my wallet and asked him what I owed. He told me to put my money away, that this offer of food was his way of sharing what little he had with his fellow man. He told me he was a Vietnam veteran, that the experience of that questionable war had changed his life in ways he had never imagined. Yes, he admitted, his life had taken a turn for the worse over the years but it also forced him to shear away the nonessentials and come to peace with himself and with what God had given him. He wanted me to know that not everyone was out to make a buck or two on us cyclists, that Iowa was a good state and Blakesburg a friendly town. He told me to just think of him now and again and remember this afternoon in Iowa.

No, I have not forgotten that half hour on that hot July afternoon in the middle of America. I revisit it often in my mind now that this holiday season is upon us and we find ourselves accosted by six a.m. store openings, long and irritating lines at checkout counters, non-ending stimulus to buy, buy, buy and the frenzy of running from here to there for no real purpose. Those few moments with that wise gentleman in Iowa bring to mind what this season should truly be about. He showed me it should be about not being afraid to open up to one another; to be willing to share what we have, no matter how sparse, and to offer a smile and a handshake to a stranger. He showed me that contentment lies not in complaining about what we don't have but what we do with what is dealt us. He showed and illustrated his love for his fellow man. After all, wasn't the essence of his example manifested a couple of thousand years ago, by simple people, in another small town in another part of the world? Best wishes for a Holiday Season touched by small and heartfelt gestures of love and hope. May we learn to judge not by externals, but what issues from the human spirit.

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Hey Cranky.....

Do you have any ideas on Christmas gifts for my middle-aged, overweight, innattentive, husband with a garage full of toys? - Suzie the Cycling Widow

Well Suzie, this sounds like it could be a little tricky. I was going to suggest a tandem but that might not be a good idea. Perhaps a scale? Something he could use (more and more) as the inactive season progresses and the pounds accumulate. If you get one that measures in metric, even better. Somehow moving from 75 to 76 kilos sounds better than gaining two and a half pounds.

Last year when my wife asked me this question I replied, 'a new Merlin with 10-speed Campy Record components'. She claims she got me one but had difficulty wrapping it, the levers kept poking holes in the paper, so she took it back and got me a tie with little bicycles on it instead.

The question of what to get is often faced by someone who would like to purchase a gift associated with an activity they have little experience with. Cycling is a technical sport and many of us have very strong attitudes toward the equipment we use or clothing we wear. Purchasing a gift that is useful, appropriate, and at the same time not a duplicate of something already owned can be intimidating.

The best thing to do is ask the experts at your LBS. They can ask the questions necessary to zero in on just the right item, and as Sherman at Bike Authority points out, most good shops have a 100% return guarantee, so there is little risk. I went to the shop owners who regularly advertise in CrankMail and asked them for suggestions. To make it a little easier, I asked for gifts in three categories: stocking stuffers, something nice, and a 'you've really been good' gift.

Stocking Stuffers

I've learned over the years that there is no correlation between the size of a gift and its price tag. However, gifts in this category are to be true stocking stuffers, small in both size and price. Arline at B&K thinks there is no better way to stuff a stocking than with socks, specifically, DeFeet's Levi-T-Ator which boasts 5 levels of comfort. Lois at Century suggested moving the comfort factor up a little higher with a jar of Chamois Butt'r. "Once people try it, they're hooked."

We at CrankMail are not above shameless self-promotion. If you picked up this copy at a library or bike shop, we think a subscription would be an excellent suggestion. We will even send you a nice fresh copy with a gift subscription card. If not us, then why not Adventure Cycling? A membership is tax deductible and comes with a subscription to Adventure Cycling Magazine, the annual Cyclists Yellow Pages, and their Cyclosource catalog. Information can be found at www.adventure-cycling.org. Another more quirky publication can be found at www.rivbike.com. Membership at Rivendell gets you discounts at their online catalog and regular mailings of the Rivendell Reader. The only place you'll find well-written articles with titles like; Brazing Bottle Stars, The Zipper Story (yes, everything you wanted to know about zippers), Ed and Fred Talk About Knees, and The Panasonic Frenchy. If you are looking for good and different, here it is.

Something Nice

Okay, you don't want to go overboard but you'd like to get something nice to put under the tree. You've got two choices, extravagant, which can be risky, or pragmatic. Greg at Spin in Lakewood suggests a water bottle cage. A nice pragmatic choice you're thinking, but you're thinking wrong. The 16 gram IRD Carbon 16gr bottle cage is pretty far from practical but way cool.

On the other hand, a good pair of shorts is always appreciated. Lois at Century (am I sensing a pattern here?) says the Pearl Izumi Ultrasensor Short is their very best seller. "When we brought them in, I thought the price would be a barrier but they fit and feel so much better than inexpensive shorts. Sometimes the people who ride alot are the most in need of new shorts, so they would really appreciate good ones."

Another practical option offered up by Arline at B&K is a fluid trainer. Fluid trainers feel just like you are cruising on the road, why even my dog would bark and chase me when I got on mine! They have both magnetic and fluid models from Trek, Giant, and Cycle Ops, all leaders in training technology.

Dan at Solon Bike and Fitness leans toward the practical side with two ideas; paid tuition to a Solon Bike maintenance class or a Trek Interval Helmet. A helmet is a really good idea since they do need to be replaced every few years even if nothing appears damaged. Despite being effective helmets are fragile and their ability to protect is degraded over time by sunlight. It could become a regular gift to show you care, of course, if he has a good life insurance policy..

You've Really Been Good

Suzie, if you are still reading this I think you need to get your hubby something in this category. In fact, if you're not a cyclist and are reading through CrankMail at all, he needs to get you something really special this year.

Just when I thought Dan at Solon Bike was a pragmatist his idea for a really good gift is the Light and Motion Arc headlight. Sounds practical until you realize his second choice is a whole bike, the Trek 7300FX Hybrid/Commuter, which is \$10 less. All kidding aside, Light and Motion do make wonderfull lighting products and a good light allows you to extend your season. It is essential to have a lighting system that is realiable and provides adequate visiblity so you can both see and be seen.

Lois at Century is thinking big too by suggesting a cycling vacation. "I have had great luck with a company called Experience Plus. I've toured with them twice and a number of our customers have gone with them. I can't say enough good things about their tours, organization and staff."

Neil from B&K offers the new Trek Pilot. The Pilot incorporates a new performance geometry that puts the rider in a more upright position which minimizes fatigue while maintaining the responsiveness of a racing bike.

Well Suzie,there you have it,from big to small and in-between. I hope this has given you some ideas. If none of these are attractive, I have a necktie, unused, with a little bicycle pattern on it which I'll let go real cheap.



"Dr. Paul Martin" 24"X36" ©2004 Cynthia Morris Studio

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Yo, Wheelers!

It seems that only last month I was writing about the beginning of our riding season; now the season is almost over and this is my last column of the year. We had a good time this summer with no untoward accidents in the club. As I write this, I am looking forward to our annual dinner at the Hillbrook Club.



Even though winter means no riding, it is a good time to catch up on important matters. First if you have not put new tires on in the last two years, I suggest that you take the opportunity to do it this winter. If your tubes are old, replace them as well, don't try and "cheap" out. Water bottles should also be put through the dishwasher if you haven't already been doing so, to get rid of nasty bacteria.

Finally take your bike to the shop of your choice to have brakes and cables checked and for essential lubrication.

Of special significance this past summer was the way the A and A minus groups reformulated. We seem to have a lot of enthusiastic riders in these groups. They have also started doing rides from starting points other than the "J". As a long time member (dating from the club's inception) I am glad to see this resume, and the increase in new riders and members. For those on Social Security, we have the old tried and true "Over the Hill" division, formerly known as the "C" group.

Cal Kirchick is now a television star. He appeared on Channel 3 to discuss the health benefits of bicycling. Cal you will recall rides downtown to his office on an almost daily basis. Only the worst weather keeps him from riding. Cal rides 6,000 plus miles every year.

May the Wind Always Be At Your Back

Ed Reichek

2004 Western Reserve Wheelers Ride Schedule

| Date | Time | Start | Destination | Approx. Miles | | |
|----------|--------|-------|---------------------------|---------------|---|---|
| | | | | A | R | C |
| 11/21 | 9:00AM | JCC | Pick Up Ride | TBD | | |
| 11/25 | 9:00AM | JCC | Thanksgiving Pick Up Ride | TBD | | |
| 11/28 | 9:30AM | JCC | Pick Up Ride | TBD | | |
| 12/5 | 9:30AM | JCC | Pick Up Ride | TBD | | |
| 12/12 | 9:30AM | JCC | Pick Up Ride | TBD | | |
| 12/19 | 9:30AM | JCC | Pick Up Ride | TBD | | |
| 12/26 | 9:30AM | JCC | Pick Up Ride | TBD | | |
| 1/2/2005 | 9:30AM | JCC | Polar Pick Up Ride | TBD | | |

A Bicycle Built For Who?

Chris McNamara

After receiving “Free Hug” coupon books for her birthday three years in a row, my girlfriend, Maggie, decided it was time for a more tangible gift. She wanted something fun, something we could enjoy together. So, after she rejected the mechanical bull I brought home, I went hunting for a tandem bicycle.

Finding a bicycle-built-for-two is no easy trick. To begin with, the tandem is the rarest of the bike species. Like free hugs, they’re extremely hard to find. Secondly, newer models cost a ton. Apparently, there’s a large competitive tandem racing circuit, which warrants the manufacturing of these pricey bikes. I often wonder about the world of competitive tandem racing. Is Wrigley’s Doublemint a major sponsor? Do the twins from “Sister Sister” commentate? Does the racer in the back seat ever fake pedal to throw races?

I’ve even started daydreaming about a futuristic world of high stakes tandem racing—sort of a Blade Runner-meets-The-Sound of Music thing. It’s after the nuclear apocalypse, and humanoids can only rely on their wits, their brutality, and their tandem bicycles to win the right to live another day. I dream of the armored handlebars, the mutant teammates, the twin groupies...

Sorry about that.

After a few months of searching, I found the perfect bike—a ’73 Schwinn in mint condition. According to the bike repairman who sold it to me, the tandem was discovered in an elderly couple’s garage, where the wheels had melted to the floor. He scraped the bike off the floor, paid the elderly couple (I think—he left that part out), and brought the bike to his shop where he replaced the tires and most likely turned back the odometer.

When I saw the bike I knew that my birthday shopping was over. I did not realize, however, what I was getting myself into.

While riding the bike home, I recognized that owning a tandem put me in a strange new social strata—that of the “alternative biker.” Other alternative bikers let me know I was in the club right away. A mustachioed strongman on a unicycle tipped his hat to me. A man pulling a rikshaw gave me a wave. A grandma on a three-wheeler blew me a toothless kiss.

I thought I’d seen the worst, until a spandexed, 50-year old rider pulled up next to me on a recumbent bike and called me, “Brother.” To clarify, recumbent bikes are those modes of transportation that eliminate the tiring sitting-upright aspect of cycling. The word recumbent is of Latin origins, meaning “prone to cat naps.” I’ve actually seen recumbent bikers reclining on their pillowed seats, pedaling horizontally while gobbling hot fudge sundaes off their swollen bellies.

Being referred to as “brother” sealed the deal. I was officially one of them. But I still struggled to find ways to make the tandem cool. I tried to ride the bike solo from the back seat. Not a good idea. I did side-saddle tricks while Maggie pedaled from the back. Not a good idea. I tried to ride double-double by loading four passengers on the bike. *Really* not a good idea.

In the end, I conceded to being an alternative biker. And the strange this is, once I accepted the bike, I began to notice some of the qualities I'd previously overlooked. The front seat, for one, is a beauty. Sitting on the cushioned pad and shock-absorbing springs is like sending your ass on vacation. The back seat isn't nearly as comfortable, but, as I tell Maggie, bruises heal and chicks dig scars.

Another great quality of the tandem is purely financial. The bike has paid for itself in taxi fares. Maggie and I ride to parties while other partygoers drop cash on cabs. When the party is over, we hop aboard the tandem and sway home. (We make sure our tail light is on.) There's even a metallic storage rack on the back, which can perfectly accommodate a twelve-pack of beer. If I happen to be overserved at the fete, Maggie takes the front seat. *"Yes, officer, the man behind me is passed out, but as you can clearly see, I control the steering and brakes, so we're legal...right?"*

A final perk of tandems applies only to the rider in the back. Maggie, who almost always rides shotgun, has the option not to pedal, and she's perfected the art of appearing to work while actually just resting her feet on the pedals. I once turned around while pedaling uphill and caught her painting her toenails. (As I write, she's shopping for a recumbent backseat.)

Like unicorns, there are few ways you can ride a tandem and not look foolish. The trick, I've learned, is to forget about the stares and the laughter, forget about how silly you look, and ride with pride.

Of course, it never hurts to have armored handlebars.

A Call For Cycling Limericks!

Turn off the TV, sharpen your pencils, and get to work.
What else are you going to do over the holidays?
Next issue will feature the best (or worst) of what is submitted.
Here is an example to get you thinking:

There once was a cyclist named Lance
Who loved riding all over France,
He'd ride so darn fast,
He'd never get passed,
Will he try for a seventh, perchance?

Submit your entries to CrankMail@wowway.com.
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TEAM AND CLUB NEWS

Please contact **Bob Turba** (rturba@jewels.com) with your race results. Bob has compiled an impressive summary of our results for the year. Twenty-four members made up 212 entries this year.

Need extra uniforms? Contact Marty Marsic (Mmarsic@aol.com) a few extras are available.

PDQ riders had a good year in the weekly **Westlake Training Series**. The final season overall standings have **Bob Turba** in 28th in the **A-Race** and in the **B-Race**, **Jason Rapp** and **Dave Kovach** tie for 7th, **Jeff Plas** 10th, and **Al Marcossion** 25th.

Dave Kovach finished 3rd and **Bob Stefancin** took a cash prime at the Westlake **B-Race** on September 14th.

Dave Kovach finished 2nd and **Mehul Gala** took a cash prime at the Westlake **B-Race** on September 21st.

LAKE ERIE RACING ASSOCIATION

For the most up to date calendar, please visit the Lake Erie Racing Calendar on the PDQ website (www.pdqccleveland.org).



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LEW Club Weekend & Holiday Ride Schedule

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------|--|
| Nov. 7 | 9:00 | Red Flannel Metric Century, Oberlin - 32 or 63 miles. Contact the Lorain Wheelmen for directions and details at (440) 775-1501. |
| Nov. 14, 21, 28 | 10:00 | Olmsted Falls East River Park - winter ride if roads are dry. |
| Dec. 5, 12, 19, 26 | 10:00 | Olmsted Falls East River Park - winter ride if roads are dry. |
| Jan. 1 | 10:00 | Annual New Year's Day Ride starting from Scenic Park: rain, sun or snow. If the weather is truly terrible we meet and go to Einstein Bagels for bagels and coffee. |
| Jan. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 | 10:00 | Olmsted Falls East River Park - winter ride if roads are dry. |

Ride Start Locations

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Olmsted Falls | Olmsted Falls East River Park on Lewis Road between Bagley and Water Street, across from Chestnut Grove Cemetery. |
| Scenic Park | Parking lot at marina in North Rocky River Reservation, off of Valley Parkway 1/2 mile south of Detroit Road, in Lakewood. |

Weekly Rides

The weekday rides are over for 2004, and will return in the spring. Please check the LEW website for any last minute news or pickup rides. The Wednesday night rides out of Fairview Park will continue year-round at 6:30 PM, if roads are dry, from the parking lot behind the Post Office (at West 220th Street & Lorain Road), from now on. For details, contact Doug Barr at 440-734-1715 (ospdoug@aol.com). For the off-season rides from November thru February, the Ride Leader (and pace) will be chosen by those members attending the ride.

Doug Barr will resume the Saturday Morning Urban Assaults, on an impromptu basis, starting possibly in November, if roads are dry. These rides travel throughout the West Side neighborhoods, through the city center and over to the East Side for lunch at some of our favorite restaurants. The pace is moderate, 12-15mph, 16-18 at most, but riders had best be prepared for cold weather and typical city street conditions. Members wishing to participate are urged to contact Doug in advance by e-mail (see above), and can expect notification by e-mail prior to the intended ride.

LEW WEB keeps club informed of late breaking news

To keep informed of late breaking news and location of rides during the year check the LEW club site out at: <http://www.lakeeriewheelers.org>. The LEW club e-mail list is at lakeeriewheelers@yahoo.com. If you aren't receiving weekly ride updates and have e-mail, let us know and we'll put you in the address book.

The 2004 Ohio Bike Path Series

Another season of Bike Path Rides comes to a close, and we wish to thank everyone who participated, either as riders or as ride leaders; we had some excellent turnouts this year, and hope to see everyone again in the spring. The October ride was the last one for the season, and was attended by a dozen people who accompanied Dan Izuka & family along the ABC Trail from Alexander Road to Kent, under cloudy and cool autumn weather.

Women Only Rides

We are proud to have sponsored, for the third season in a row, a series of *Women Only* rides, in order to enhance the opportunities for the club's female members to ride in companionship with one another, as well as encourage other Cleveland-area women bicyclists to join. We enthusiastically and gratefully thank Bonnie Vargo for her efforts to organize these rides. Thanks very much, and we hope to see you all again in the spring.

Touring Division News

Tom Meara would like to extend his thanks and gratitude to all participants in this year's touring activities, as well as towards all who volunteered their efforts on behalf of the Touring Division.

Cross Country Skiing at Chapin Woods

When it's snowing, or the streets are snow covered, members often drive east to Lake County for some great cross-country groomed ski trails at Chapin Woods between 10:00 am and noon on Sundays.

The October Club Meeting

After reading the minutes, we heard the treasurer's report, which indicated a comfortable balance remaining for club's needs. It was announced that the winter ride schedule is now in effect: you show, we go, if the road is dry. Following this, Tom Meara mentioned that CrankMail is requesting club photographs, for use as CrankMail covers during the coming year.

Club president Russ Marx mentioned that dues might be raised to cover increasing club costs and CrankMail publishing costs. The proposal to raise dues will be discussed at an upcoming officer's meeting, at which time we will be certain of how much to raise. We anticipate that the dues may be \$23 for individuals, and \$30 for families.

Please extend thanks to Jim Boland, who has graciously offered to host the club Holiday Party at his residence (details below). At the party, we will also hold elections for club officers, who will be nominated during the November meeting (see below, also).

Changes to the club by-laws were proposed, covering Article V (Membership):

Section B will be amended to read "*Membership rights and privileges shall be extended only to those whose dues are paid to date and do not engage in actions that disturbs other members enjoyment or ride in a manner that endangers other riders*".

Also, a new **Section D** will read "*Membership can be withheld or revoked by unanimous agreement of three officers when rider engages in conduct that harasses or unduly disturbs other members, or who rides or acts in a manner that endangers the well being of other club members*".

The amendments were proposed, moved and seconded, and will be voted upon at the November meeting.

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Unclassified ads are free to *CrankMail*-served club members and subscribers for two appearances and appear both here and on *CrankMail's* World Wide Web site. Nonmembers/nonsubscribers pay \$5.00 for this service. Ads are intended for personal, noncommercial, bicycle-related purposes only. Ad copy should be type-written to help assure accuracy. Ads are accepted by mail, also by email if no payment is due. Limit to about 30 words; no more than three ads from the same individual in an issue. Please include your Area Code with your telephone number. *CrankMail* reserves the right to edit ads to fit space and format requirements. In the event of typographical or other error, the publisher's only obligation shall be to publish a corrected version of the ad in which said error appeared. The publisher makes no warranty of the integrity of the advertiser or quality of goods offered.

KHS Tandemania Sport, blue, M/S size, 21-speed tandem. Includes rack, computer, water cage and rear suspension seat post. Bike has less than 5 road miles! Must sell. \$750. Call Reed 216-514-1791.

Expires November 2004

Wanted: used bike trailer. A recent addition to our family wants to get out on the road but his feet don't reach the pedals yet. Call Dale, 216-433-5399.

WANTED: USED TRAIL-A-BIKE. Please call 216-932-6159 if you have one you're no longer using.

Lemond Nevada City Road Bike with less than 100 miles on it. Awesome condition. Needs new tape, but is otherwise unscarred...Size 51 inches. I wish I didn't have to sell it, but it's just not the bike for me...the top tube is too long for me, but could be perfect for you! 216.225.0366

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2002 Mongoose Cipressa, Super lightweight, 105 Components with Ultegra rear. Columbus tubing with carved carbon rear stay and carbon fork. Includes Flight Deck system installed. Near mint condition. Very low mileage. Hate to sell but injury forces sale. Size small. More details upon request. kipik@sbcglobal.net

HELP WANTED, CrankMail is looking for a **cycling events reporter** to be responsible for a one page listing of everything happening on the local cycling scene each month. This would include races, rallies, speakers, charity events and anything else in the area or state that would be of interest to the cyclist. This person would be responsible for collecting, formatting, and submitting that page ten times per year. It could be a lot of fun, we just don't have the time. If interested, contact crankmail@wowway.com.

Expires February 2004

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