

# Chainstay

## The Peninsula Bicycling Association



March-April-May 2020

Volume 50, Issue 1



room instruction, 1-2 hours of traffic skills and collision avoidance training, followed by a short group ride. This class is the prerequisite for the LAB League Cycling Instructor (LCI) certification. See [here](#) more info

**Saturday March 14th: Virginia Capital Trail Clean-Up** 9:30 am to 11:30 am 4 starting locations including Jamestown Settlement and Charles City Courthouse

Sign up [here](#)

**Monday March 17th: PBA Ride Leader Training Class** - Tregg Hartley, PBA's Training Director and certified LCI instructor, is offering a Ride Leader Training Class. This is an informal session covering rules of the road, bike safety, planning rides, etc. The training will be held at a club member's home in Newport News from 6:00 - 8:00 PM. If you would like to attend this training, email Tregg at [pbafatmanriding@gmail.com](mailto:pbafatmanriding@gmail.com) and he will send you the address.

**Saturday, May 2nd:** American Diabetes Association's 2020 Tour de Cure: Hampton Roads, Suffolk Executive Airport

**Saturday, May 23rd** "Pedal for the Pig" \*

**Saturday/Sunday, May 30-31:** Bike MS: Colonial Crossroads. Start locations: Richmond, Smithfield, Williamsburg One and two day options.

**Saturday, July 11th** "After the Fourth Ride" \*

**Saturday, August 8th** "Don Hubbard Memorial Ice Cream Ride" \*

**Saturday, September 12th** "Surry Century" \*

\* Details for these events coming soon.

### Inside This Issue

President's Corner.....	3
Club Stats & Challenges.....	4
Getting to Know You .....	5
Touring the Conch Republic By Rob Myer .....	6
Annual Awards & Recognition Dinner.....	7
The Virginia Senior Games By Melanie Payne.....	9

How to Turn a Getaway into a Cycling Vacation In the Sunshine State By Mark Van Raam .....	10
What is March Madness? By Jamie Abston.....	10
I Took the Train to Richmond By Tom Carmine.....	11
How to Know When to Replace Your Helmet.....	12
You Can Travel Alone By Tom Carmine.....	13
In Brief...Member News .....	14

### PBA Board Members and Directors

President	Jamie Clark
Vice President	Justin Wilbur
Treasurer	Tom Carmine
Secretary	John Srock
Advocacy Director	Open
Safety/Training Director	Tregg Hartley
Marketing Director	Beverly McLean
Communications Director	Todd Goodhead
Newsletter Director	Melanie Payne
Ride Director	Jen Faas
Program Director	Robb Myer
Membership Director	Richard Armstrong

### Additional Positions

Volunteer Coordinator	Open
SAG Coordinator	John Srock
Awards/Statistics Coor.	Robb Myer
Webmaster	John Bright, <a href="mailto:john_s_bright@yahoo.com">john_s_bright@yahoo.com</a>

### PBA Board Meeting

The PBA Officers and Executive Committee meet on the first Sunday of each month at changing locations. See the webpage for location and contact Jamie Clark to have your topic added to the meeting agenda. *All PBA members are welcome to attend and contribute to discussions which will form the direction of the club.* Business also includes planning PBA events.

**PBA Website:**  
[www.pbabicycling.org/](http://www.pbabicycling.org/)



**Join the Peninsula Bicycling Association on Facebook** to interact with other PBA members and for up-to-date announcements.

### PBA Club Affiliations



The Chainstay is published quarterly or as required for announcements and items of member interest. Send all Chainstay submissions to Melanie Payne, [PBAmel@aol.com](mailto:PBAmel@aol.com). Send all other club business to the P.O. box listed on the last page (*bottom of membership application*). Chainstay is produced using Microsoft Publisher 2016. PBA's website is hosted by Wild Apricot.

### PBA RIDE SCHEDULE



**Spring/Summer Rides Will Be Starting Soon! The standing weekly rides run April—September.**

Check the PBA website at [www.pbabicycling.org](http://www.pbabicycling.org) and the PBA Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/pbabicycling/> for ride announcements and other important information.



Happy New Year everyone!!! Although we are coming into the third month (March) of this year, it still seems appropriate for this edition of our newsletter to wish everyone good health and prosperity for 2020. Wow, into another decade!!! Can you believe it? And, it is a Leap Year as well.

So, we begin the journey of a new year with some bright spots for the club—one being our Awards and Recognition Night at the Winter General Membership Meeting held at the County Grill and Smokehouse in York County on February 12<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to all those who were given awards and recognized for their achievements. There are too many to mention here, but it was great to see a turnout of over 50 club members and the multitude of shirts presented for those accomplishments. I think the Board did a great job in coming up with the Special Recognitions and we had a bit of fun deciding who to acknowledge and what type of accolade it should be named. All those club members who received the recognition truly deserve it, and thanks to Robb Myer for organizing the evenings presentations. Another optimistic change is the re-making of the club's jersey and pants as well as a minor modification to the logo. This will be revealed shortly to the membership once specific pieces have been finalized.

It has been a bit of a tough start to 2020 in terms of the weather. There has been a sprinkling of beautiful and warm days, and of course this being winter, several cold, windy, and unpleasant days as well. Such is the nature of Virginia weather, right!!! It's been great to see some cyclists willing to brave the elements at times to relish in the companionship and uplifting effect of a bike ride and we will soon be able to completely shake off the doldrums of winter and basking in the grandeur of cycling.

We have set solid dates for all of our steadfast events during the year—the Pedal for the Pig on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, the After the Fourth Ride on July 11<sup>th</sup>, the Don Hubbard Memorial/Ice Cream Social Ride on August 8<sup>th</sup>, and the Surry Century on September 12<sup>th</sup>. I am sure many of you will be joining me at these events and hoping for gorgeous weather for them.

There are also a multitude of cycling events around Virginia as well as in nearby states, and others even further away, depending on one's limit of traveling distance. A GREAT source of finding bicycling events here in our state is Cycle Virginia's webpage at [cyclingva.com](http://cyclingva.com). I personally have found various events to participate in through this webpage. The great thing about the site is that you can choose what type of riding you want to do, from gravel/cyclocross to mountain trails, road rides, and also century and fun rides. Apparently, Virginia is ranked in the top 10 nationally for being a Bicycle Friendly State, and Number 1 in the southern region of 13 States by the League of Bicyclists. Let's keep this going!!!

I have my 'list' of bicycling events that I hope to complete for the year and I'm sure many of you have one as well and maybe there are some identical rides on those lists that we'll be seeing each other on. We will have the club's webpage updated for 2020 of all the Standing Rides, both weekly and monthly, as well as the Annual Rides soon, so that when the weather truly breaks there will be no excuse for not knowing where and when to go for a group ride!!!

Ride On Everyone!!!

*Jamie Clark*



#### From the Editor

This was an exciting issue to put together because the number of member article submissions is increasing with each issue.

Thank you to all who submitted stories, photos and ideas. Keep them coming! (Although, it seems like there is a lack of female member input. Come on ladies!)

The next quarterly issue will be published on June 1, 2020.

Melanie Payne— [pbamel@aol.com](mailto:pbamel@aol.com)

#### Welcome to All New PBA Members

PBA is a bicycling and social club for people of all ages. Club cycling is the best way to get into riding on a regular basis, meet other cyclists, learn about equipment, riding techniques, and the best places to ride on and off the Peninsula. Membership also includes a 10% discount on selected items at most local bike shops. Come ride with us! Please note: *Your first yearly Peninsula Bicycling Association membership is automatically included with your Pedal for the Pig or Surry Century registration.*

We look forward to riding with you! And a big thank you to all members who have renewed their membership.



#### New and Renewing Members Since January 1, 2020

**Michael Brewer**

**Jammie Cooke**

**Kristen Findley**

**Letron Glover**

**Elizabeth Glover**

**Jacquelyn Holmes**

**Tarcela Mitchell**

**Angela Newman**



#### A Challenge For All Ages

The Birthday Club is very popular with 50 year old and older members, especially the Rocky Road set, but feedback from the

millennials has been "How about us?" We listened and are happy to have the "Born-2-Ride Challenge." To qualify:

- \* Ride your birth year 12 times in 2020.
- \* Ride no more than two in a single month.
- \* If born in 1962 or later, ride 62 miles.
- \* Periodically, send birth year, date and miles to Robb Myer, Awards/Statistics Coordinator.

#### And the Birthday Club Continues for 2020

There are three age categories for the Birthday Club.

Vanilla: Age 50-59

Peaches and Cream: Age 60-69

Rocky Road: Age 70 +



If you have ridden your birthday miles, email Robb ([threespeed67-pba-ride-leader@yahoo.com](mailto:threespeed67-pba-ride-leader@yahoo.com)) with your birthday, age, date and miles ridden so you get your name on the list to be eligible for prizes at the annual January membership meeting. Birthday Club guidelines can be found on the PBA website at <http://pbabicycling.org/Member-Challenges>

#### 50/50 CHALLENGE

Ride 50 or more miles in each of PBA's signature rides—"Pedal For The Pig" & "The Surry Century".

#### 2020 PBA Bike Journal Update

PBA members have already recorded 13,136 miles (as of February 27). PBA currently in second place of all the Virginia clubs listed. Logging your miles on [bikejournal.com](http://bikejournal.com) is an excellent way of tracking your miles. Kudos to our top ten riders (in alpha order as of February 27):

**Kevin Butler**

**Jamie Clark**

**Helene Drees**

**Todd Goodhead**

**Sally Jackson**

**David Jones**

**Richard Maruyama**

**Robb Myer**

**Jaesun Riley**

**Mark Woolery**



# Getting to know you...



This issue's spotlight member is **Todd Goodhead**. Todd is an easy-going, quiet guy who gets a lot done for PBA. He has served on the PBA Board for three years and continues to do so. Let's learn more about Todd.

## Tell us a little about yourself.

I was raised in rural Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, home of Yuengling Beer. I first moved to Richmond and lived there for seven years before moving to Newport News in 2011 when I met my riding and life partner, Beverly. My career has changed with each move. In Pennsylvania, I was the VP of a family-owned convenience store chain. In Richmond and several years in Hampton Roads, I was a field engineer on financial equipment. Today, my tech skills are utilized to keep Starbucks beverage equipment up and running. (You're welcome!) I've been involved in PBA for about seven years and this is the third year I've been on the Board.

## When did you first get interested in cycling for sport?

I started riding bikes when I was five years old on a Huffy 5-speed chopper with a banana seat. Over time, I graduated to BMX and 10-speed Schwinn's. After high school, I discovered women and alcohol and took a break from cycling. In my mid-20s, in the Greg LeMond era, a group of friends decided to get back into road cycling. This was also in the beginning of the MTB age and I lived in the Blue Mountains, so naturally we hit the mountain trails, too. These days I average about 4,500 road miles per year and I'm ready to try out gravel riding very soon.

## What is your favorite PBA memory and/or ride?

I would say my favorite PBA experience was the 2019 Surry Century. Beverly and I played an active role in

preparation and planning, from packet pick up to cleaning up after the ride, including sweeping the 50-mile route. After speaking with many of the riders during the event and hearing such positive reviews, I was proud to be part of such a positive active community event.

## Since you are an experienced cyclist, what advice would you give a new cyclist?

First, go to one of the local bike shops (LBS) and test ride some bicycles to find the style bike that fits the kind of rider you aspire to be. Buy the best equipment you can afford and know that if this sport becomes a lifelong hobby, you're going to get really close (and spend more money) with that LBS.

Take a bike safety class to know the rules of the road and how to stay safe on two wheels. PBA offers them periodically or ask about the PBA mentor program. Check out PBA group rides to find one that matches your speed and distance. Then ride, rinse, and repeat.

## What has been your favorite ride either local or out yonder?

One that I always enjoyed is the Covered Bridge Classic in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. I rode it when I lived in PA and when my schedule permits, I'd like to join the PBA contingent who travel up for it each year (Aug 16, 2020).

## We all know that it can be difficult to get out and ride some days. What motivates you to keep riding?

Regular cycling contributes so much to maintaining a level of fitness. I want to be healthy, happy, and fit as I grow older.

## Describe your perfect day on a bike.

I love riding with a group of friends at a comfortable/challenging pace on a temperate, sunny day with the promise of beer, food, and socializing at the end.

## If you could ride with two famous people (living or dead; cyclists or not), who would they be?

Albert Einstein, because he had a fascinating mind and would be an interesting conversationalist to pedal with. I'd also love to ride with Greg LeMond because he did so much to further the recognition of cycling in America.

## Touring the Conch Republic

By Robb Myer



Growing up in South Florida, I don't share the desire to retire to the Sunshine State that many of my riding compatriots do. I do however, love January to early Spring tours and have for the past 15 years been able to enjoy these rides. This year it was a week riding the roads and trails of Big Cypress National Preserve and the Everglades National Park followed by a weeklong tour of the Conch Republic, i.e. Florida City to Key West and back. My wife Annette accompanied me the first week and my son, Robb and I joined a group of six from the Tampa area for the second self-supported week.

So, what's the derivation of the name Conch Republic? The nickname of Key West High School is the "Conchs" and the locals have longer referred to themselves as "conchs". When in 1982, the US Border Patrol set up a roadblock/inspection point leaving the keys, the result was a negative effect on tourism. When attempts by the Key West mayor to have them removed failed, the city council declared themselves the independent "Conch Republic" and declared war on the US, then surrendered and applied for foreign aid. While they did not get any foreign aid, the roadblocks were removed, and tourism soared. With that background, the bike tour began by crossing the Card Sound Bridge followed by the Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail with its 23 bridges.

We were very fortunate, as the winds were kind and the temperate ranged from 60 F when we started to the low 70 F's early afternoon. In keeping to our "inhale the local flavor" credo we stayed in small family owned motels and frequented interesting eateries with names like Alabama Jacks, Sunrise

Cuban Market & Café, Cafe Moka, The Stuffed Pig, Mrs. Mac's Kitchen, La Niña and Blue Heaven among others. The route was three days to Key West, a local day in Key West and three days back, making the routes for 1 & 7, 2 & 5 and 3 & 6 nearly the reverse of each other. The first and last days were 35 miles and the rest around 55 miles. We arrived early enough each day to go to the beach, pool or do some local bike touring pannier free. On the first and last day there was little open water, but the view from the bridges the rest of the time was fabulous.



And along the way, we stopped by the largest spiny lobster, hurricane monuments, "Blue Hole", Key Deer Visitor's Center, "Southernmost Marker", US 1 "0" Mile Marker, numerous marinas and beaches. My son and I roll on Continental Gatorskins and completed the 350 miles without a single flat, however there were seven flats among the rest of the group, most occurring on the bridges where there is a lot of debris in the bike lanes. I recommend you bring along three extra tubes, a patch kit and emergency tire boot pack. There are bike shops in Key Largo, Marathon and Key West, but no guarantee you will be close to one when in need.



If the call to ride the coastal loop around Puerto Rico doesn't reach me for next January, I'll make another tour of the Conch Republic. If you are interested in touring with us, please let me know.

## Annual Awards and Recognition Dinner February 12, 2020 at The County Grill

It was a delicious and exciting "ribs and recognition" evening at the County Grill on February 12. Ten PBA members received special recognition awards, that included local bike shop gift cards, and 79 PBA member challenge qualifiers were recognized and those present received their tee shirt tailored to the challenge that was met. A complete list can be found on the following pages.

The highlight of the evening was the "Lifetime Achievement" award to Ron Hafer. During the past twenty-eight years, Ron, a much loved PBA member, served as Vice President, Ride Director and Event SAG Director. He has mentored many of us on the joy of riding recumbents and more recently, e-bikes.



### SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

<b>John Atwood</b>	Magellan	For exploring/wandering during group rides
<b>Frank Dixon</b>	Double Exposure	For participating in multiple rides at the same time
<b>Jamie Clark</b>	Ralph Lauren	For being a cycling fashionista
<b>Logan Jackson</b>	Doogie	Most promising young rider
<b>Sally Jackson</b>	iearnedmynewbike	Most improved rider
<b>Sandy Butler</b>	Dawn Patrol	For arriving before sunrise to set up
<b>Diane Herbert</b>	Dawn Patrol	and register riders for Pedal for the Pig
<b>Debbie Wells</b>	Dawn Patrol	and the Surry Century
<b>Cindy Wong</b>	Dawn Patrol	
<b>Ron Hafer</b>	Lifetime Achievement	Well-earned!

### MEMBER CHALLENGE RECOGNITION

Name	Mileage Level	Challenge	Birthday Club
<b>Rodney Abare</b>	1,000		
<b>Donald Alexander</b>	5,000		
<b>Tom Alford</b>	1,000		
<b>Jennifer Allen</b>	1,000		Peaches & Cream
<b>Richard Armstrong</b>	5,000		Vanilla
<b>John Atwood</b>	2,500		
<b>Tom Bauer</b>	2,500		
<b>Rodney Beltz</b>	1,000		
<b>Allan Bergano</b>	1,000		
<b>Keith Bruffey</b>	2,500		
<b>Kevin Butler</b>	5,000		
<b>Sandy Butler</b>	1,000		
<b>Tom Carmine</b>	1,000		Peaches & Cream
<b>Linda Carter</b>	2,500	Born-to-Ride	Rocky Roads
<b>Bob Carter</b>	2,500	Born-to-Ride	Rocky Roads
<b>Joey Chapman</b>	1,000		
<b>Jamie Clark</b>	5,000		Vanilla
<b>Richard Costello</b>	2,500		
<b>Melody Daniels</b>	1,000		
<b>Frank Dixon</b>	1,000		
<b>Helene Drees</b>	5,000	50-50	
<b>Robert Drees</b>	1,000		Peaches & Cream
<b>Jennifer Faas</b>	1,000		
<b>Todd Goodhead</b>	2,500		
<b>Craig Hanson</b>	1,000		
<b>Tregg Hartley</b>	2,500		
<b>Mike Henning</b>	2,500		Rocky Roads
<b>Tom Howard</b>	1,000		
<b>Sally Jackson</b>	5,000		
<b>Patrick Johnston</b>	10,000		
<b>Inae Kellam</b>		Century One	
<b>Rob Liles</b>	1,000		
<b>Raleigh Martin</b>	1,000		
<b>Shirley Martin</b>	1,000	Century One	Vanilla
<b>Richard Maruyama</b>	2,500		Rocky Roads
<b>Beverly McLean</b>	2,500		
<b>Tarcela Mitchell</b>	2,500		
<b>Robb Myer</b>	7,500	Born-to-Ride	Rocky Roads

(Awards & Recognition Dinner continued)

Name	Mileage Level	Challenge	Birthday Club
<b>Chris Nida</b>	5,000		
<b>Michael Noehl</b>	1,000		
<b>Bob Ornelaz</b>	1,000		
<b>David Palagy</b>	1,000		
<b>Melanie Payne</b>	2,500		Rocky Roads
<b>JaeSun Riley</b>	1,000		
<b>Bob Silva</b>	1,000		
<b>Jake Smith</b>	1,000		
<b>Vic Sorensen</b>	2,500		Vanilla
<b>Mark Suiter</b>	2,500		
<b>Stephanie Thomas</b>	1,000		
<b>Rich Trayford</b>	1,000		
<b>Mark VanRaam</b>	1,000		
<b>Dale Watkins</b>		Century One	
<b>Debbie Wells</b>	1,000		
<b>Mary Wikswo</b>	1,000		
<b>Stephen Wood</b>	2,500		Peaches & Cream
<b>Mark Woolery</b>	5,000		
<b>Steve Zajac</b>	2,500		
<b>Raul Zevallos</b>	2,500		
<b>Barb Zevallos</b>		Century One	Peaches & Cream

**The Virginia Senior Games Registration is Open Through April 15**

By Melanie Payne



If competing in a cycling event is on your bucket list and you are at least fifty years old, this event will fulfill that goal. A few years ago when the Virginia Senior Games were held in Newport News, I decided to enter the cycling event. I did the time trial and but opted out of the road race for safety reasons, since it was pouring rain. And guess what? I won my age group! Of course, I was the only one in my age group probably due to the weather conditions (you know us older folks are more cautious), but nonetheless, I could say I won a medal and qualified for the National Senior Games in Alabama. Bucket list—won and done!



This year cycling is the *only* event being held outside of Henrico County and it is right in our backyard at Freedom Park. Here is the information for this year's cycling events:

**Sport Cycling Events Time-Trial & Road Race**  
Tuesday, May 12: Time Trial - 2:00 p.m.; Road Race – 3:30 p.m.

**Location** - Freedom Park 5537 Centerville Road Williamsburg, VA 23188

**Format of Event**

The course will be closed to traffic during the races. Vehicular access to the park will be prohibited after 1:30 p.m. and will

resume for a short period of time between the end of the 5K race and 3 p.m. If you are only participating in the 20K, we recommend you arrive before 1:30 p.m. as we cannot guarantee how long before 3 p.m. you will be able to gain access to the park.

**Awards** - Gold, Silver, and Bronze Medals will be given for Men's, Women's, and Mixed Divisions in each age category (50-54; 55-59; 60-64; 65-69; 70-74; 75-79; 80-84; 85-89; 90-94; 95-99; 100+). All medal winners will be recognized immediately following competition. Individuals age 50 or older by December 31 of the competition year are eligible to participate, if properly registered. The Senior Games strongly recommends that each participant consult his or her physician in regards to practice and participation in this program or any similar physical activity program.

The next National Senior Games will take place in Fort Lauderdale, FL, November 5-18, 2021. Qualifying for The Games will take place, *this year*, at the 2020 State Qualifying Games so it will be an exciting and well-attended event since it is a qualifying year.

So who wants to join me for this enjoyable and rewarding cycling event, and perhaps, qualify to take a trip to Fort Lauderdale in 2021?

Register at <https://www.vrps.com/events/vsg-virginia-senior-games/>

## How To Turn a Getaway Into a Cycling Vacation in the Sunshine State

By Mark Van Raam

In early December I made my way to Clearwater Florida to attend a Chicago tribute band concert by a Russian band that I discovered on YouTube. As I researched the area, I found more things to add to my trip. Cycling, a Christmas Parade, helping to assemble 900 bikes for needy children, and a WWII Victory ship tour were all part of my week in Florida.



To cut down on driving, my trip included taking my car on the overnight Amtrak Auto Train which runs from Lorton to Sanford. It runs both ways every day of the year, and once at the end, your car is off loaded and away you go.



Over the week, I managed to cycle the whole Pinellas Trail, a circular route around Tampa Bay, participate in a Christmas Parade in very thick fog in Indian Rocks Beach, and St. Pete Beach and Ft. De Soto . All in all, I rode about 220 miles over cool to very hot temperatures.

This was my first time renting an Airbnb and it worked out great. It was a studio apartment with my own hot tub and private entrance in a private home. It was a block from the Pinellas trail in Largo and close to stores, a laundromat and in a very quiet neighborhood.

The Pinellas trail is a wide paved trail with overpasses over the busier streets. It passes through many communities and is over 40 miles long. At the northern end, it connects to a brand-new trail in Pasco County. It's part of the future Florida Coast to Coast bike trail (<https://www.bikeflorida.net/coast-to-coast.htm>). One of the communities along the Trail is Tarpon Springs which is a Greek community with many restaurants and sponge diving.

I was also able to do a meet up PBA members Elaine & Marty Cardwell and Mike Bikowski, who live in The Villages.

With a little pre-planning, you can turn your winter getaway into a great cycling adventure.



## What is Marsh Madness Cycling?:

By Jamie Abston



Marsh Madness Cycling (MMC) provides a holistic approach to the cycling community encompassing a series of rides - from gravel, to mountain, to road and also, bike maintenance workshops. It is designed to promote all of cycling, bring in new members of all ages, interests and abilities to the Peninsula Bicycling Association while supporting local businesses such as the Corner Bistro and Jimmy Da Greeks Deli through sponsorships, charitable rides and events. MMC is enhancing PBA by connecting the gaps between all age groups of riders, as well as types of cycling avenues.

MMC is exploration of our world, on two wheels. The kits and t-shirts you have seen on the PBA Facebook group have been designed by a local artist incorporating the natural beauty of our local area. The title, "Marsh Madness," unites our cycling paths with our awesome landscape of natural wetlands by incorporating colors and details of marsh grass. The design also features an osprey, one of the dominant birds of prey in our area.

Not only are the kits and t-shirts unique in design, but they also come with benefits. The sponsors' logos will be featured prominently on the back and open up discount opportunities for participants, as well as partnerships for charitable community fundraising events.

MMC is working to expand PBA's monthly standing ride schedule. MMC currently offers monthly standing rides and pop-up rides for road, gravel and mountain biking. Check the PBA website and Facebook page for these rides, as well as on the Strava Marsh Madness Cycling Club page. MMC is also has a running group and those events can also be seen on the Strava Club page.

# I Took the Train to Richmond

By Tom Carmine

Shortly after the Virginia Capital Trail was completed, Amtrak started its bike friendly service to and from Richmond. The only problem is the schedule is not friendly to Williamsburg departures unless you want to leave late in the day.

My opportunity to take the train to Richmond and bike back to Williamsburg came in November. Our original plan was to ride from Jamestown to Richmond on Friday and return on Saturday, but my friend, Steve's work schedule changed at the last minute making it impossible for us to bike to Richmond on Friday. We already had a room booked at the Richmond hostel, and we had cleared the weekend with our wives, so I suggested we take the 5:10 PM train and just ride back on Saturday.

One-way tickets costs \$42—\$22 for the passenger and \$20 for the bike. Bikes go into the cargo car which is equipped to handle 12 bikes hung on hooks. If you use the Amtrak website to reserve your ticket you can see how many bike slots are available. In Williamsburg, you have to roll your bike to the front of the train and lift it to the conductor. Then you run to the back of the train to board and find a seat.

Parking for the train station is impossible. In fact, it is impossible to park overnight in most of Williamsburg since none of the Colonial Williamsburg and City lots permit overnight parking and the nearby neighborhoods require permits for street parking. I arranged to leave my truck at a friend's house near the College which left us a very short ride to the station.

On Friday evenings, students and commuters pile into the station. After loading our bikes and carrying our paniers onto the train, we found someone in every pair of seats forcing us to sit with someone who was hoping for some alone time.

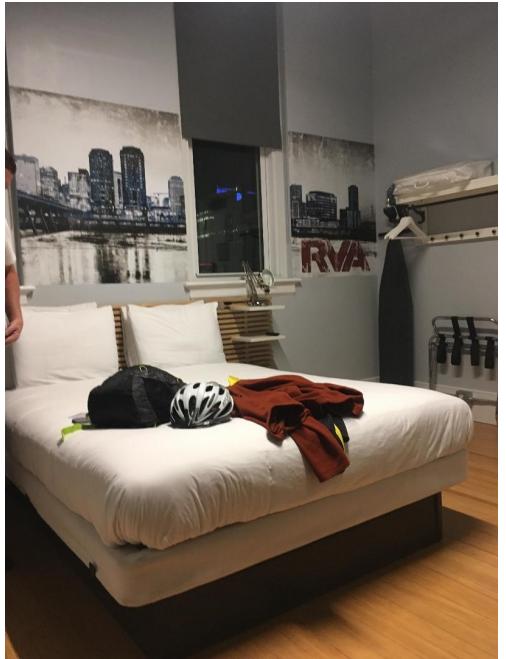
## We want our bikes!

Our trip was almost over before it started. We were some of the last to get off the train and when went forward to the cargo car there was no one there to give us our bikes. The turnaround time in Richmond was short forcing Steve to run back to train to get the conductor's attention. Meanwhile I am calculating when they will be returning if the train pulls out with them. I figured they might be back on the 9:30 AM train on Saturday, and we could still ride home.

The Richmond train station is located within sight of the end of the VCT and the Canal Walk and right across the street from Bottoms Up Pizza where we locked our bikes to the patio fence and took our paniers inside. Having stuffed ourselves, we set out for our mile ride to the hostel on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

The hostel in Richmond opened in Richmond in 2015 with the support of generous contributions from a number of Richmond businesses and donors who saw the need for low cost tourist housing in the downtown area. The building was

once the Otis Elevator facility, but has been renovated into a first class hostel accommodation. You can get a bunk in one of the six person bunk rooms for less than \$35, but we had reserved a private room with an in-room bathroom for much less than the Holiday Inn Express down the street and with a whole lot more character.



If you arrive by bike, you go to the back and ring the doorbell. Bikes can be stored and locked to racks at the ground level. Upstairs is the registration desk, the lounge with pool table and the kitchen which was serving hot cider and cookies. I have now stayed in six different hostels, and they have all been unique and fun experiences.

## The Zombie Apocalypse

Saturday morning came with bright sunlight streaming through our loft style windows. Breakfast consisted of toasts, bagels and fruit. Outside, it was a November with only a high of 45 expected. We bundled up and set out across Bell Island and back across the Potterfield bridge before we reached the trailhead about 10:30. It was still cold with a slight wind in our face as we rode up and down the



hills out of Richmond. Unlike the Jamestown end of the trail, there were few trees to block the wind, and it persisted all day.

When we reached the rest area near the entrance to the Berkley Plantation, we pulled off for a snack break. This was as far as I had ridden from Jamestown, but we were both surprised at how trashed the area was when compared to our last visit. As we stood there a guy came over to ask if we knew where he could order pizza for delivery. He went on to explain that the area

(continued on next page)

### *(I Took The Train to Richmond continued)*

was going to be used for filming several scenes from the Walking Dead on Monday, and he had been hired sit in his car all weekend and protect the props from vandalism. He simply wanted some hot food.

We rode on leaving the man to his peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and enjoyed lunch at Cul's Courthouse Grill along with six other bike travelers from Richmond. The three couples were biking to Williamsburg for the weekend and would be riding back on Monday. We followed them as far as Monticello Avenue where we peeled off the trail to ride the bike lanes back into Williamsburg to pick up my truck. We finished our trip 60 miles from the start and just a few minutes before dark. I was never really cold, but I was also never too warm and I was very happy to have had a beanie under my helmet.

If you do an overnight to Richmond and leave your vehicle at Jamestown, leave a note on your dash that you are on the Trail overnight. If you leave from Chickahominy Park, the campground office has a form to allow parking by the recreation center.

The Trail is a true treasure for our area. Get out there and enjoy it.

---

### How To Tell When You Need to Replace Your Helmet

Thankfully, gone are the days when wearing a helmet was considered "uncool." Now it's a requirement for not just organized rides and races, but many cities have made it illegal to ride without a helmet—especially for minors.

It makes sense—in a sport where a thin layer of Lycra is often all that's between the ground and your skin, it's important to protect your head with something *a bit* more substantial.

Modern road helmets are an engineering marvel. They strike a fine balance between protection (from multiple angles), aerodynamics, ventilation and weight, and most of the mainstream brands have developed some impressive offerings at a variety of price points. Some helmets now even feature built-in technology to reduce concussions and crash sensors that work as a safety beacon.

But when should you replace your helmet? What situations warrant a helmet be discarded? Like a bike chain, a helmet isn't good forever. There are a few ways to tell if you need to replace your helmet. *Spoiler alert: If you're unsure, it's better to be safe than sorry. We're talking about your noggin after all.*

#### Every Five Years (or so)

It's commonly accepted knowledge that cyclists should replace their helmet every three to five years. While this is a loose rule and depends on how much you ride and the condition of the helmet, it's a great starting point when determining if your helmet should be replaced. Even without a major crash, five years of small bumps, drops and



exposure to weather can break down the foam and leave you less protected in case of a spill. Like bike and component technology, helmet technology also improves at a rapid rate, so after five years there will be plenty of innovations that will increase the protective qualities of the replacement helmet.

#### Major Impacts

Generally speaking, if you crash and hit your head, it's time to replace your helmet. The thin plastic shell around the helmet can be pretty resistant to scratching and tearing, but even the smallest impact can compromise the structure of the internal foam shell.

A helmet's main job is to disperse the energy from colliding with the ground away from the head, and this is accomplished by the foam cracking and breaking down under impact. If it has done its job once already, it won't be as effective the next time you take a tumble—and this can lead to serious (sometimes life-threatening) injury.

#### Other Damage

We've mentioned checking for structural damage after a major impact, but it's always a good idea to regularly inspect your helmet for *any* damage—no matter if you've crashed or not.

Check the outer shell for tearing or dents, check the straps for fraying, make sure the plastic buckles are in working order make sure the closure system stays snug and double check that the pads are securely in place.

Remember, issues are uncommon if the helmet hasn't been subjected to any sort of trauma, so if any of these features have been compromised, it can be a sign of a bigger, underlying problem and it's time to consider replacing your helmet.

#### How to Maximize Your Helmet's Lifespan

We know helmets aren't cheap, but luckily there are a few ways to make sure your helmet lasts as long as possible.

First, always store your helmet indoors and in a dark, dry location. Exposure to UV sunlight and moisture can degrade the outer shell and internal foam liner over time, making it less effective in a crash.

Next—and this one is easy—be careful with your helmet. Don't throw it into the back of your car or pack it at the bottom of a checked bag when you fly. It's designed to be durable, but try to limit the bumps and scuffs whenever possible.

Lastly, keep it as clean as possible. Sunscreen and sweat don't play nicely with the foam layer in your helmet, so it's important to keep it clean. Wash by hand with mild detergent and hang dry (in your garage, not in the sun) after especially sweaty and grimy rides.

From Nystrom, Michael. "How To Tell When You Need to Replace Your Helmet." [https://www.active.com/cycling/articles/how-to-tell-when-you-need-to-replace-your-helmet?cmp=18N-PB2000-S20-T9-cycling-AR3&eps=title\\_134](https://www.active.com/cycling/articles/how-to-tell-when-you-need-to-replace-your-helmet?cmp=18N-PB2000-S20-T9-cycling-AR3&eps=title_134)

## You Can Travel Alone

By Tom Carmine



If you raised kids they probably went through a phase when they did not want to go anywhere unless they could take a friend. So, if you were able, you might even have packed an extra playmate for your week at the beach just to placate your child.

As adults some of us have not outgrown that phase and as a result,

we never go anywhere by ourselves. When I retired five years ago, I realized that being married to a non-cyclist meant that if I was going to take bike trips, I would have to do them on my own. So, two weeks after receiving my last paycheck I loaded my truck and drove to Buffalo for the start of the 2015 Cycle the Erie Canal tour, an eight-day 400-mile trip to Albany.

The advantage of joining an organized tour is you may arrive by yourself, but you are seldom alone. The Erie trip had 725 participants who were mostly campers and mostly solo travelers. People who do these trips are generally gregarious people so you talk to your camping neighbors and sit down with strangers at meals and rehash your day. If you find someone who truly drives you nuts, well you can usually avoid them the rest of the week.

Since Erie, I have done over ten trips where I headed off by myself to join a group ride. I have met people from all over the US and many of us keep in touch by Facebook. When you repeat rides, you often have reunions each year. When I did my first NC Coastal Ride in 2013, I got in with a group going to dinner and met Paul who coincidentally would be joining me just a few weeks later in Adventure Cycling's Introduction to Road Touring class in Williamsburg. Paul and I now catch up every spring at the Coastal Ride.

Not all my trips have been sponsored rides. In 2017, I decided to pedal through Cape Cod, Nantucket, and Martha's Vineyard for a week on my own and stay in hostels. I have done a number of self-planned adventure trips with a friend, but this was the first time I was truly doing solo travel. As I rolled by bike down the Plymouth wharf that first morning to catch the ferry to Provincetown, I was struck by the appropriate wording on a sign that I passed—"Should I stay or should I go?"

Yes, there was some uneasiness about being so far from home, but the week went well for all the reasons one should choose to travel solo. First, it was my time. I did not have to worry about anyone else being happy. It was my schedule. I could decide to stop at what I wanted to see and eat where I wanted to eat.

Solo travel helps build your self-confidence and it forces you to be engaging. People are naturally curious when you ride up on a bike, and you are curious when you encounter other traveling cyclists. I stopped to talk with two guys on the Cape Cod Rail Trail just outside of Provincetown that first day, and I found out that they had bicycled from Boston and they were planning to take the night ferry back to Boston from Provincetown.

On organized rides you have most of those same advantages. As you ride you naturally meet other riders along the way that you chat with for a few miles. On the Erie, we had little license plates on which we wrote our name and hometown. That was always the conversation starter when you came up behind someone on the trail followed by, "Is this your first time?"

Now what do you do about your non-cycling spouse? If you can, include them in your trip. When I finished the Erie trip, we were shuttled back to Buffalo by bus. While I was on the shuttle, my wife was flying to Buffalo where I picked her up at the airport. We spent several days seeing Niagara Falls, Toronto and some of the little towns that I had cycled through on our drive back to Virginia. I turned my trip into a joint vacation. I did the same thing when I finished the Katy trail in Missouri. Linda met me in St Louis, and we made a vacation out of the return trip.

The world is full of solo travelers, and they range from the less adventurous types like me to those who travel solo all around the world in all kinds of extreme conditions. My point is simple—do not stay home for lack of a travel companion. Embrace the adventure. If you still have qualms, read my September 2019 *Chainstay* article on overcoming Trip Anxiety Disorder entitled "It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time".

## Become a PBA Cycling Mentor

By Jamie Clark

Have you ever thought about instructing or been approached by another cyclist to impart some of your knowledge of BICYCLING? Or maybe you've wondered what are some good routes in my area, or how do I prepare for a ride, or what's the best bike/equipment out today?

**The PBA Mentorship Program.** This is a voluntary program where we place members in pairs to foster the sport of biking and hopefully promote friendships. The idea is to pair riders together who would benefit mutually from the connection. Whether it be imparting general tips of how to ride, to proper gear for certain types of rides, how to prepare for a distance ride, good etiquette while riding, etc., or just having someone else to ride with on occasion.

If this seems like something of interest to you, please email me [sibertigr4@aol.com](mailto:sibertigr4@aol.com) at with the following information:  
**Name—Gender—No. of Years Riding—Pace you ride at—Want to be a Mentor or Mentee? Preference of Gender & Pace to be matched with—Your email or phone # number.**

## In Brief.....Member News and Items of Interest

**Congratulations** to our new Ride Leaders!

**Melody Butler Daniels**  
**Jennifer Allen**  
**Rodney Abare**  
**Debbie Wells**



They successfully completed the Ride Leaders class with **Tregg Hartley** and are now qualified to lead their own rollouts. **Bob and Linda Carter** also did a refresher course. Watch for their announcements of upcoming rides!

- ◆ The new jersey committee has been working hard and has redesigned the PBA jersey to more of a coastal theme. The Board has seen the draft design and loves it. A manufacturer is being chosen and as soon as it is available, an announcement will be posted. Watch for upcoming details soon.
- ◆ **Bicycle Advisory Committee Members needed for JCC and York County Historic Triangle Bicycle Advisory Committee (HTBAC)**



A regional advisory board where members are appointed by, and represent, the participating governing bodies. The James City County Board of Supervisors (BOS) appoints 2 members for a 1-3 year initial term (can be renewed for three year terms thereafter). Citizens interested in serving on a County Board or Commission can call 757-253-6609 or 757-564-2160.

### ◆ Need Maintenance?

If your bike is having an issue and you need some maintenance then Marsh Madness Maintenance nights are for you. We can schedule a maintenance night around your issue or just bring it to the next scheduled maintenance night. To set up a session or to talk about your issue contact Doug Furst at [furst6@googlemail.com](mailto:furst6@googlemail.com)



**Saturday Poquoson Peddlers Enjoying The Outdoors (and Indoors) on a Chilly January Day**

### PBA New Year's Day 2020 Rides

#### Huntington Park Annual Ride



#### Corner Bistro New Year's Ride





### LOCAL BIKE SHOP DISCOUNTS



Don't forget that our local bike shops, **Trek Bicycles Yorktown**, **Village Bicycle** and **Conte's** (in Tech Center, Newport News) offer PBA members a 10% discount on supplies and accessories. Check with each shop for their specific discounts. Thank you Trek Bicycles, Village Bikes and Conte's for supporting PBA!



**Join the Peninsula Bicycling Association** at <https://pba44.wildapricot.org/membership> or use the form below.

## PBA Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Age (if under 21) \_\_\_\_\_

Type of membership  Individual  Family  New Member  Renewal

How are you willing to assist?  Ride Leader  Event Support  Publicity/Marketing  Adopt-A-Spot

Reasons for Joining:  Club Rides  Tours  Newsletter  Advocacy  Socializing

Names and emails of family members who ride \_\_\_\_\_

**RELEASE:** In signing this application, I (we) hereby make it known to whomever it may concern, that during Peninsula Bicycling Association activities--with full realization that there are known and unknown hazards to these activities--I (we) do hereby assume all risk for injury, loss, or damage foreseeable or not, which I (we) and/or any children under the age of 18 in my (our) care may sustain as an accident to such activities. I (we) warrant to make no claim at law or equity against the Peninsula Bicycling Association or any participant arising out of any injury, loss, or damage from whatever cause during a bicycling activity PROVIDED HOWEVER, that this release shall not be construed to limit my (our) right to proceed any class of persons specifically excluded herein, who negligently cause injury, loss, or damage to the persons named on this application.

All persons over the age of 17 and parents/guardians of minors must sign below. **Unsigned forms will be rejected.**

Signature(s)

**Dues: Individual \$15, Family \$20 per year**

**Mail to: Peninsula Bicycling Association, P.O. Box 12115, Newport News VA 23612-2115**