

The Mellow Vêlo

September 2010

The Newsletter of Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition

TURN AND FACE THE STRANGE, CHANGES

Erickson Avenue/ Stone Spring Road Phase I Opens

By Thanh Dang

On August 18, a crowd gathered to celebrate the opening of Phase I of the Erickson Avenue/ Stone Spring Road project. Phase I construction, centered around Erickson Avenue's intersection with South High Street (Route 42), included relocation of a section of railroad tracks and Pear Street, and widening of a 0.23-mile section of Erickson Avenue that includes the addition of 4-ft wide bike lanes.

Ben Wyse and his children Sam and Martha, Beth Schermerhorn, Adam Campbell, and Carl Droms helped celebrate by participating in ribbon cutting and in the ceremonious first ride down the new roadway. They were the first bicyclists to ride the new bike lanes!

The next phase of construction began in July and will continue through 2013. Phase II of the project extends between South Main Street to near Peach Grove Avenue. Existing Stone Spring Road will be widened and include bike lanes, the bridge over I-81 will be replaced and a new bridge over the railroad tracks and Blacks Run will be constructed. More information about this project is available at www.ericksonstonespring.org.



H'burg Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan Passes With Full City Council Support

By Thomas Jenkins

After initially being tabled by City Council, two weeks later they passed the 2010 Harrisonburg Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Over 100 local bicycle and pedestrian advocates packed Council chambers during the first presentation of the new draft plan which had previously been passed and recommended by the City's Planning Commission. It will take some time—months and years—before any major improvements are on the ground, but progress has already been reached with new bike lanes on Main Street, Park Road and Central Avenue. If you would like to view the new plan visit the City's website (www.harrisonburgva.gov) and search "Bicycle Plan." Thank you to everyone who participated in the process of the new plan.



www.SVBCoalition.org

LET'S RIDE!

Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Festival at OCP Recap

By Jonathan Schrag

This year's Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Festival, in its 19th year, took place at Our Community Place on July 31, 2010. It was another huge success, with more riders than ever before! Just shy of 300 riders took to the roads around Rockingham County on a cool, cloudy Saturday morning. The ride offered 100, 50, and 25 mile rides, and this year, a new addition was a 12 mile, family-friendly ride. As usual, we could not have pulled off the ride without the help of the Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition. They marked all of the routes, double-checked cue sheets, and generally advised us on how to make the bike ride the best experience for everyone. In addition, many volunteers on the day-of helped to make the event a success. Thank you all! Our Community Place raised nearly \$5000.00, which helps us continue to provide three free meals a day and a safe place for many of Harrisonburg's homeless men and women. Our Community Place also runs a work program with a unique payroll system that helps people to pay court fines, rent, utilities, and other necessary life expenses, and most recently, we have started a Christian work recovery community where seven people, along with OCP staff, are committed to recovery on our farm in New Market. For more information about our programs and activities or to volunteer or make a donation, please check out our website: www.ourcommunityplace.org.

**DON'T MISS THE SVBCoalition
MEETING AND SOCIAL!!**

**SECOND MONDAY
OF EACH MONTH:
7:30 - 9:30 @ CLEMENTINE
DOWNTOWN HARRISONBURG**



21st Annual Ice Cream Ride Recap

By Neups

Ten bikes and eleven riders (so that means one tandem) came out for the recent Club sponsored Ice Cream Ride. More than one person was out for their first Club ride - and one of them came out even though she had just moved to town on Monday and was still unpacked. It's good to know she had her priorities straight and knew where her bike gear was. The day was quite pleasant and the group rode its way north, west, and eventually south of the city. We took in the sights of Montezuma, Bridgewater, and Mount Crawford. Eventually we made it to Dayton as we followed the bike lane up Route 42. After checking out the new railroad crossing onto Pear Street, we checked out more bike paths on Central and then Main streets. At Kline's we feasted on ice cream (ask Katy about her small banana split). Then it was back to Mr. J's North to wrap up the 35-mile or so ride. Thanks to all who came out.



Letter to Mom From OCP Bicycle Festival Participant

By Gary Grant

Arrived in Harrisonburg from Earlysville around 7:30 a.m. for the 8 a.m. start. They had an enormous table set up under a tent with bagels and fruits and donuts and granola bars and drinks, etc. All on the house. They got us going around 8:15 a.m. Very well organized and safe ride.

At the halfway snack-drinks-and-bathroom station (a country church about 13 miles out), a volunteer checked to make sure we were still all accounted for regardless of how far ahead or behind the group we were. At the finish line, we had to check in again to make sure they knew we had all gotten back safely. Everyone got a t-shirt and more snacks and drinks and then a HUGE lunch at 11 a.m.

Lunch included pizza bagels, zucchini and summer squash hot dish, macaroni salad, green beans, watermelon, cantaloupe, cookies, and four kinds of drinks. Now that I think of it, I believe it may have been a vegetarian lunch. They even had real plates and real tableware from the homeless shelter kitchen. After eating, they had us deposit our plastic cups and dinnerware in one place for washing and re-use, had a container for compostable leftovers, and recycling bins for plastic bottles and metal cans.

The food was excellent and plentiful! In talking to a bike ride organizer, he said Costco is a major contributor of food to the shelter. The shelter prepares three meals a day, 365 days a year with such donations. Didn't hear how many they feed each day, but it must be a lot. People who stay at the shelter, including families, also have opportunities to work on day labor crews and a farm. The goal, of course, is to get folks trained, re-trained, and back on their feet from layoffs, hard luck, homelessness, or drug and alcohol issues.

The ride was great. Beautiful day and beautiful countryside. Excellent roads and little traffic except for a couple spots. Three or four major hills, but nothing I couldn't handle. It was the

last hill, though, coming back into Harrisonburg, that was the shock to my system. As we came around a last turn from the countryside, all of a sudden it was like looking at an airport runway to the clouds. It had to be a mile and a half long and you could see the whole length of it from the very bottom. All you could do was shift the gears down into the lowest chain ring and lowest rear sprocket, get into a pedaling rhythm to suit your ability, and just churn skyward. Thank goodness it was still fairly cool and overcast.

I was struck by the variety, age, and kind of dingy condition in some cases of many of the bikes people were riding and so many of them were riding on very narrow racing tires. I'll take my wider tires any time. We were just one of four groups of riders that took off on different length rides and different routes between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

It's also very eye-opening to find out how fast people can ride their bikes, up hill, and for miles and miles. While biking is a lifetime activity, even the chunky and flabby riders 20, 30, 40 years younger than me can really boogie on their machines. The lead riders were pretty much out of sight as soon as we got out of town. The advantage to being older and slower, though, is perhaps a deeper appreciation of the views and rural scenery. The road markings and signage were great along the route. I really didn't even need the map of the route, but it was fun to check the map and see where I was.

I felt most tired just before the halfway point and just after it. I think I tried too hard to keep up with a pace that was beyond me in the first half of the ride. The route turned out to be 25.8 miles. I made it around in two hours of riding, so I was riding a bit faster than I normally do. I carried three water bottles with me, but only needed two.

The fresh air, freedom, and great scenery along the route made it all worth it — that and some wonderfully long coasting descents that let you recover from the hills and breathe easy.

By the way, there were two white-haired guys I'm guessing in their 60s who rode recumbent

bikes that they “pedal” with their arms. They had orange flags on fiberglass rods sticking up above them as they cruised. When they’d get to the top of the hill and start their descents, it was like watching ships disappear over the horizon with the tops of their masts last to be seen.

There was also a 35 year old guy who was biking with a trailer hooked to the back of his bike. His two pre-school age sons were zipped into the trailer. It was like he was pulling a screened tent on wheels. At lunch, I sat across from him and his wife and boys. When we were talking, his wife (who is going on a 60 mile ride in the mountains Sunday!) said her husband is “just not human” when it comes to biking. She said few can keep up with him. Maybe that’s why she’s going on a separate ride while he watches the boys. Very nice chatting with them — and with many others. So many of the riders have done so many rides it’s interesting to listen to their stories.

I will say that my chest is pretty sore after the ride, especially the upper right side. Feels like post-surgery muscular soreness. Probably over-did it a bit and also the effect of 26 miles of vibrations from the handlebars. The most I’d ever done in one ride before today was 21 miles. Before leaving home, I printed out a sign on my computer that read: “Quadruple heart bypass surgery - 04/21/10 - Thanks, Dr. Ailawadi.” I pinned it to the back of my biking jersey and got a lot of congratulations along the route and also upon arriving back at the Bike Fest picnic grounds. I think I may autograph the sign and mail it to Dr. A to let him know I made him famous in the Valley.

Should sleep well tonight, I would think. Probably do a measly 10 mile Earlsyville round-tripper tomorrow morning to work out what I expect will be some day after kinks and stiffness.

Getting A Leg Up

By Tim Richardson

After fitting people on bikes for some time now, it has become very apparent just how important the seat positioning is. Most people consider the seat

height but few consider the fore/aft adjustment. The modern bicycle is lightly flawed in one area of its geometry, the seat tube angle which can have a negative affect on the riders knee position over the pedal. To promote muscular balance of the quads, hamstrings and glutes it’s important to have the center of the knee joint centered over the pedal spindle when that foot is at three o’clock in the pedal stroke or feet parallel to the ground. If you are behind the spindle you are relying more on your hamstring/glutes, and being way out in front of the spindle will demand excessively from your quads. Both of these situations will not promote muscle balance and can eventually lead to injury.

To check your position, set yourself up on a trainer or sit on bike in a door frame and get a buddy to help you with the next bit. You can make a cheap plumb bob by tying a small dense bit to a piece of dental floss that’s roughly 2-3 feet long. Position yourself on bike seat where you would most likely sit and pedal to find your normal gait, now stop with either foot facing forward which makes the crank parallel to the ground. At this point find the lump just below your kneecap and drop the makeshift plumb bob from the bottom of this lump and see where the string lines up in relation to the pedal spindle. Make sure the dense bit tied to the string is not touching the ground. More often than not, when I am fitting someone this is where we see the knee is too far behind the spindle which means the quads are under utilized. Here is where you get to use tools: find the fastener that holds your seat’s fore/aft adjustment, slacken this bolt just enough to allow for moving the seat forward enough to get your string somewhere inside the pedal spindle and then tighten the bolt. Sometimes geometry (seat tube angle) won’t allow for enough movement here which means you might need a different seat post with less offset. Try the new position with your knee over the spindle and after a few rides you will start feeling better results from your legs as well as having a sense of more power to the pedals.



SVC28

By Art Fovargue

Well, they tell me the Shenandoah Valley Century has snuck up on us again, and that it is less than 4 weeks away. If you check out the Century page on the SVBC website (<http://www.svbcoalition.org/events/century/>) you'll get all the information, such as, this is the 28th annual SVC, and, once again, it is on the second Sunday of September, 9/12.

As always, rides of 25, 50 & 100 miles are offered, with many other combinations possible because of the routes' loop design. Of course the food will be as good as usual – the paninis at the finish (yum)& new this year, a limited number of special pies at the check point. We have some great door prizes including a \$100 gift certificate to the Joshua Wilton House, gift certificates from Wilderness Voyagers, The Sole Source and Indigo massage, and some superb photographs from Strawderman Photography. All for the same old price of \$12 before September 5. So if you haven't registered yet, mark your calendar & send your registration in – 300 rider limit.

And, of course, there are many **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:**

Sunday, August 29, 9:00AM, Wildwood Park, Bridgewater: Arrow Painting ride - on this ride we'll mark the roads for the different Century routes. We'll break into groups & each group does a different 25 mile loop. Lots of riders mean quick work.

Sunday, September 12 (yes Century day) – as always we are in true need of a few good volunteers – at least 1 sag driver, 3 friendly people to help register (& that is at 7AM), at least 2 valet service attendants, a gopher or two, and 4 or 5 volunteers for the checkpoint. So if for some strange reason you are not riding that day, or your mate, sibling, best friend or other close relative has nothing to do that day, please let me know. A chance to show your talents. Email me at century@svbcoalition.org. No reasonable offers refused. Thanks for listening,

14th Annual Shenandoah Mountain Bike Festival

By Tammy Jinkson

The annual fall celebration at Stokesville, known as the Shenandoah Mountain Bike Festival will happen once again October 8-10. This is the 14th year for the festival which provides a fun filled weekend of great riding, camping, friendship and trail work. Last year this event raised over \$4,500 for SVBC and donated 250 hours of trail work for the local trails, but the festival is not put on by a paid staff, it is brought to you by volunteers like yourself. For a full schedule of the weekend activities, registration information and volunteer sign up visit the SVBC site .



On The Road

By Len Van Wyk

I have sat in too many transportation meetings where people exchanged stories about various bicyclists doing illegal, and sometimes bone-headed, things. Such stories do not advance the cause of improving our bicycling network.

One anti-bike argument goes something like this: why bother making any bicycle improvements when bicyclists don't obey the law anyway? You can dissect this argument all you want, but it is out there.

Like it or not, every time you are visible to motorists, you represent the bicycling community. So, even if you reject the fact that obeying traffic laws is the safest way to ride, you should be aware that every illegal move you pull has the potential to irritate everyone who witnesses it. Since some of these witnesses could have influence over future infrastructure decisions, it is in your best interest to watch your behavior when riding.

George Washington National Forest Saturday Trail Work

By Thomas Jenkins

Every Saturday this September and October, SVBC will once again be giving back the trails of the National Forest. Meet at Food Lion on Route 42 South, ready to roll out at 9am, expect to be back between 1-2pm. Bring good working attire (boots, gloves, water) SVBC will supply the tools and instructions.

Rocktown Trails at Hillandale Park Trail Work

By Theo Jinkens

The 2nd and 4th Thursdays of September and October will have SVBC out at Hillandale Park working on the Rocktown Trails. Over 300 volunteers hours have gone into the trails this year, most of them spent doing massive clean up from the heavy winter snow fall. Time has also been spent developing a new red loop. Look forward to a future green loop this winter.

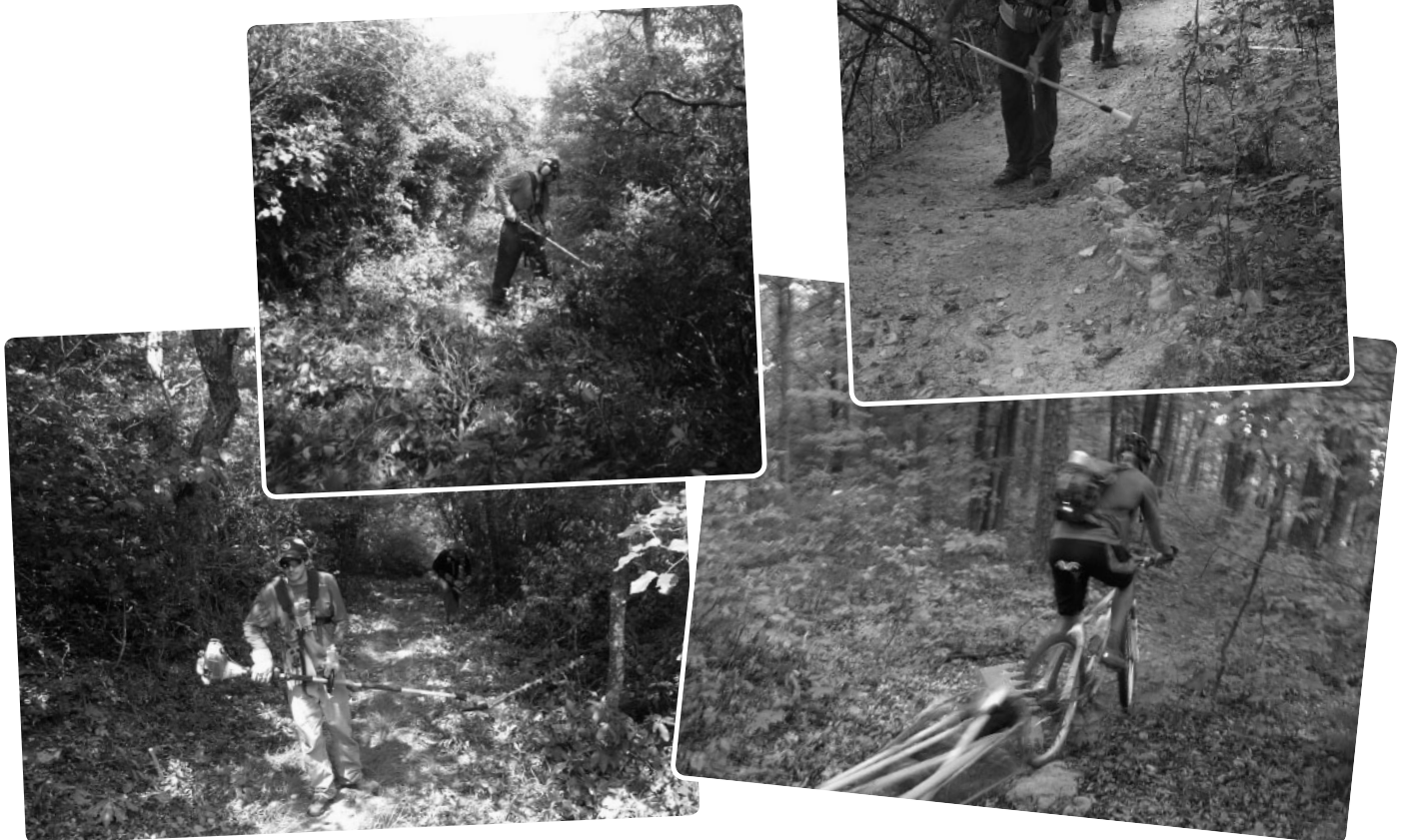
Upcoming Events

Shenandoah Valley Century September 12
DR100 Charity Event September 18
Shenandoah Mountain Bike Festival October 8-10

Weekly Events

Monday Chill Social Mountain Bike Ride
Tuesday Fast Road Ride
Tuesday Women's Mountain Bike Ride
Wednesday Social Road Ride
Thursday Tempo Road Ride
Thursday Evening Trail Work
Friday Six Pack Mountain Bike Series
Saturday AM Trail Work

For more information on Upcoming Events and Weekly Rides and Trail Work, please visit our website: SVBCoalition.org.



Western Slope Trail Work

After a hard working spring campaign building the new short track and updates to the cross country course, SVBC took a break from working on the trails of Massanutten during July and August. Trail work will resume the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Thursdays this September and October, remember this will be your last opportunity to earn your 2010 season pass if you have not already done so....a new trail on the way!!

Western Slope Trails Will CLOSE for Hunting Season

Starting November and lasting through January the trails at Massanutten will be closed to biking Monday-Saturday due to hunting. Please respect the hunters and rules of Massanutten, it is a privilege to have these trails open to bikes so please stay away except for Sundays.



Don't miss out on the Thursday Trail Work action!
www.svbcoalition.org

The Mellow Velo

The Newsletter of Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition

Post Office Box 1014, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22803

Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition Membership & Donation Form

Please return this signed, completed form along with your check made payable to: SVBC, PO Box 1014, H'burg, VA 22803

Name(s): _____ Address: _____

_____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Annual Membership Dues: SVBC membership runs on an annual basis beginning January 1st of each year. The Coalition is a 501(c)(3) organization so your membership and donations are tax deductible and will be used to further our Mission.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership | \$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership (# of cyclists over 12 _____) | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Lifetime Membership | \$300 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Lifetime Membership (# of cyclists over 12 _____) | \$500 |

Additional Donation \$ _____

Membership / Donation Total \$ _____

- Please keep my contribution anonymous. I prefer to receive the SVBC Newsletter at the supplied e-mail address.

Insurance release: In signing this release for myself, or the named entrant, I hereby agree to absolve and hold harmless the Coalition, the Coalition officers, the members, and any other connected with events sponsored by the Club in any way whatsoever, for blame or liability for any injury, misadventure, harm, loss, or inconvenience suffered. I understand that the Coalition is not responsible for, and is not insurer of, my personal safety. I also hereby consent to and permit emergency medical treatment in the event of injury or illness. I shall abide by traffic laws and practice courtesy and safety in bicycling, including wearing an approved helmet at all times. Consent to E-mail Notification & Communication: In signing this release for myself, or the named entrant, I consent to receive communications from SVBC electronically and agree that SVBC may communicate with me by e-mail or by posting notices on its web site. Any notice that SVBC is required to provide to me pursuant to the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act may be sent to me via e-mail at the address listed above.

Member Signature

Date

Signature of Parent / Guardian (under 18)

Date