

The Mellow Vêlo

April 2008

The Newsletter of Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition

It's Alive!



Hillandale Trail Work Update

by Joel Maynard

Trail construction at hillandale has been evolving rapidly thanks to the help of an ever changing cast of volunteers contributing an impressive 130+ hours of branch cutting, stump pulling, and rock and dirt shuffling. It's amazing how much progress can be made in only 3 satisfying hours on Saturdays with a few people and how much more can be done when more people show up – what better way to work... (continues Page 2)

Coalition formed, ready to rock.

After meeting once a month for over one year, the steering committee, established to guide the merger of Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Club and Shenandoah Mountain Bike Club into one svelt and sexy, valley-dominating machine, can almost take a break, almost. Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition is looking for people who would like to get involved in the local cycling, trail building and advocacy scenes. Check the website for specific times and locations of monthly Coalition meetings and trail work opportunities.



Advocacy Update

by Len Van Wyke

There have been a number of projects completed over the past few years. These include: The Arboretum trail that connects Neff Avenue to University through a service road in the JMU Arboretum, the connector from North Dogwood along Chicago to Greystone, the second phase of the Port Republic Road widening, the opening of the Rocktown trails in Hilandale Park, the new bicycle racks installed around... (continues Page 2)

LET'S RIDE!

• www.SVBCoalition.org

Hillandale Trail Work Update (continued)

off your Friday night indiscretions! Work has centered on re-routes and/or armoring problematic wet sections to decrease habitat for the invasive species known as the “**dreaded 3-inch mud-rut maker**”. Evidence suggests that this problematic and ignorant beast may be migrating from northern urban centers to our region. Lots of back-wrenching work was put into clearing the existing trail-network after some particularly punishing ice and wind storms recently. Several of the green trails have been intensively studied for flow irregularities by our crack team of dedicated field technicians, which has resulted in the installation of several styly berms “just where you want it”. New green and blue trails were built this winter that stem off of a new intersection in the interior of the park, dramatically increasing the loop combinations one can ride. The new blue trail plunges down several natural bedrock drops with several red options for those of you who like your coffee black, but with friendlier ride-arounds if you’re not looking for air-time. Slummin you missed the boat? Don’t worry, there’s a lot more trail work to be done! • Slated for near future work: 1) more red and blue trails in the “deep interior” that promise to break more than a few egos. 2) more trail enhancements as poorly-drained and flow-compromised sections are identified by an exhaustive and unprecedented trail testing effort. 3) more maintenance of storm blow-downs and keeping vegetation in check. 4) Log-rides options.

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

**IT'S ON THE SECOND MONDAY
OF EACH MONTH:
7:30 - 9:30 @ CLEMENTINE
DOWNTOWN HARRISONBURG**

Advocacy Update (continued)

the city, the MPO-funded bike/ped education spots on a few radio stations, the bike/buggy path along part of U.S. 42, and the purchase and distribution of 4,500 kids’ helmets by Cindy Reeves of RHM & Safe Kid of the Central Shenandoah Valley (through a grant). • There are also quite a few current/future projects. These include: Signage for the N/S Dogwood bike route, a multi-use path on the Linda Lane extension to the new school complex (and a rotary!), the third phase of the Port Republic Road project (sidewalks and bike lanes out to the county line), designs for sidewalks and bike lanes on Reservoir, and designs for bike/ped access on the monstrous Stone Spring - Erickson Avenue connector project. • There are also some projects which have stalled. These include: A connection between Westover Park and Thomas Harrison MS (the relevant land owner apparently had a change of heart), and the Safe Routes To School grant for some roads around Keister Elementary (which apparently we got in 2006, but have yet to receive the dough). • On the JMU front, Aaron Smith-Walter is putting together a **comprehensive bike parking map and bicycling brochure**, and is trying to expand bike parking facilities on campus. No word on any improvements in the near future to the woeful state of the bicycle network on the west side of campus. • On the political front, transportation planner Donovan Branche left her position with the City of Harrisonburg at the end of February. Thanh Dang seems to have taken over as front person for bike/ped issues for the city; she is currently trying to devise an efficient plan for communicating with the community. And City Councilman Charles Chenault will be up for reelection in the fall; he has been a valuable asset to the bicycling community. • In general, there has been a flurry of bicycle projects in the past five years or so. Whether these counteract the negative impact of the crazy growth this area has shown over the same period is a matter for debate, but it is certainly true that these projects have helped counteract the negative impact of sprawl.

Growing Pains: Letter from the Big Cheeses

by Thomas Jenkins & Ben Wyse
Current co-presidents of SVBC

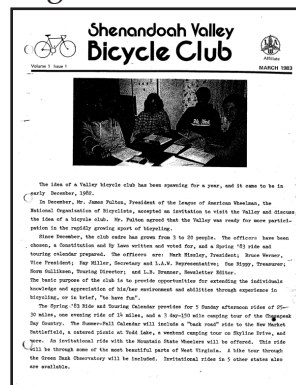
Have you ever had a nephew, cousin, friend or even your own child and watched that human being grow through that age, the age of growth. You see that special person one day and the next thing you know their pants are four inches too short. Then they talk and what was that high pitch voice bellows out a deep sound that rattles the floor. The sudden growth, the changes that happen, well they are called growing pains; something SVBC has been feeling since the combining of the two local cycling clubs. The Coalition sympathizes with that child who is excited and is a little scared about the recent changes and what is to happen next. The Coalition is riding the same roller coaster. SVBC may not wear pants but is looking for those who could help fill the new sized drawers. Similar to that overzealous mom, SVBC has brought home some large pants with a lot of room, space for everything from mountain biking, road biking, transportation, youth and local bike advocacy. The little voice of the two previous cycling groups has now changed too, and is starting to speak, speak a little deeper, voice carrying a little farther. As that young adult's voice resonates farther, more heads turn, we need this to happen with SVBC. We are not asking for the existing members and over extended volunteers to speak louder, but hope through many smaller voices we will resonate one large voice, the voice of all cycling. • You might notice some physical changes with the local cycling scene, similar to human growth this happens, sometimes in fast spurts. The fast periods of growth don't last forever; they can sometimes hurt and can be incredibly confusing. The changes with the local bike clubs can be for the better, but it is up to all of us to make sure. The parent who sees the new adult who is now busting at the seams play outside, getting muddy with other kids in the neighborhood realize that despite the physical changes **the inner kids still remains**, and hopes it always will. Let's make sure the inner kid still remains with the Coalition, let's get out and ride our bikes. Nothing makes you feel more like a kid than riding a bike.

Blast From the Past!

by Marshall Hammond

I thought it would be fun to present in the 1st Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition Newsletter a reminder that there have been many before us. Sometimes we think we were the ones that invented the wheel and double triangle design to put it on, but we are the beneficiary of many who saw the bicycle vision in the Valley a long time ago. So the "Blast from the Past" will present articles and selections from previous SVBC (Club) newsletters. All the newsletters were scanned by Ne-ups and will be available soon on the SVBC web site. If you want to browse other editions before that happens the link is <http://www.svbikeclub.org/newsletters/newsletters.htm>. • Here is the opening article, retyped for you, from: Volume 1 Issue 1 of the Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Club Newsletter, March 1983. • **The idea of a Valley bicycle club has been spawning for a year, and it came to be in early December, 1982.** • In December, Mr. James Fulton, President of the League of American Wheelmen, the National Organization of Bicyclists, accepted an invitation to visit the Valley and discuss the idea of a bicycle club. Mr. Fulton agreed that the Valley was ready for more participation in the rapidly growing sport of bicycling. • Since December, the club cadre has grown

from 3 to 20 people. The officers have been chosen, a Constitution and By Laws written and voted for, and a Spring '83 ride and touring calendar prepared. The officers are: Mark Nissley, President; Bruce Werner, Vice President; Ray Miller, Secretary and L.A.W. Representative; Sue Rippy, Treasurer; Norm Guliksen, Touring Director; and L.B. Branner, Newsletter Editor. • The basic purpose of the club is to provide opportunities for extending the individuals knowledge and appreciation of his/her environment and abilities through experience in bicycling, or in brief, "to have fun". • The article continues with a ride calendar for Spring '83. As you can see the Valley has been active on the cycling scene for quite sometime.



Thursday Trailwork Series

Come lend a hand on Thursdays at your two favorite local off road riding venues: Massanutten Western Slope and the Rocktown Trails at Hillandale Park. Trail work begins at 5pm each Thursday but please feel free to join anytime after 5pm on the trail. Location will be posted on the svb-coalition.org forum by Thursday noon. The 1st, 3rd & 5th Thursday work will be at Massanutten while 2nd & 4th Thursdays will be at Hillandale.

Massanutten Western Slope Access

Sometimes we all forget that the trails at Massanutten are not open to the Public. For the forth year in a row SVBC will partner up with Massanutten to allow SVBC members access to the Western Slope Trails. With an 8 hour trail work commitment (less then 1 hour a month) you will receive a pass good through the end of 2008!! If you can't make Thursday Trail Work there is always behind the scenes help that is needed associated with the Western Slope (race set up, marking trails, cooking for Hoo-Ha, funding for tools, etc). Massanutten has already stepped up their enforcement this year, individuals on the Western Slope will need a pass on them at all times as well as a parking pass on their dash. For more info contact Thomas: tj@shenandoahbicycle.com.

Be Part of the SVBC Advocacy Committee

SVBC is looking for a few good cycling residents who would like to help make Harrisonburg and the surrounding counties (Rockingham & Augusta) a little (or more) bike friendly. The advocacy committee will meet on a regular basis to help move cycling transportation forward. We are especially in need of County residents who can help represent cycling issues in the Augusta and Rockingham Counties. If interested please contact Paul Johnston: ptjohnst@hotmail.com .

Support Your Local Bike Shops!

East Coast Bike Academy, Marks Bike Shop
Mole Hill Bikes, Shenandoah Bicycle Company

Some Upcoming Events...

April 13th: Harris-Roubaix "A Celebration of Gravel Roads". An annual event for all cyclists including skinny tires, fat tires, tandems, trailers and fix gears. The ride leaves from Court Square in Downtown Harrisonburg at 12:00pm and consists of a group ride for about 8 miles towards Singers Glen, from here a 12-15 mile loop is marked. The loop consists of beautiful paved and gravel roads. The first one finished with three laps is crowned the victor of the Harris-Roubaix.

April 19th: Tighlman Road Cleanup This is a great event where SVBC partners with the George Washington National Forest to help clean up Tighlman Road. Last year we had over 25 folks and would like to have more this year. A great family event, if you have a pick up truck bring it!! There will be a mountain bike ride afterwards. Trash pick up will go from 9-12 along Tighlman Road. For more info contact Marshall Hammond: marshall_hammond@merck.com

April 26th: Hillandale Trails Grand Opening and Trail Run. 10am Trail Run/Race. 12:00 Group Mountain Bike Rides/Routes for anyone interested. Pump Track tread work and learning sessions. Food, T-Shirts, Prizes, Trail Work. Come celebrate the new Rocktown Trails at Hillandale Park with this fun run. Membership drive and benefit run. \$20 for the run (includes T-Shirt!) \$15 for the run if you are an SVBC member or join on day of race. All other events free, and all proceeds from the run go back to the maintenance and signage of the trails. For more info e-mail Kyle at lawrence.kyle.d@gmail.com

May 12-16th National Bike to Work Week and National Bike to work day is May 16th. The League of American Bicyclists, along with local cycling clubs like SVBC, is promoting Bike-to-Work Week and Bike-to-Work Day. Think of all the gas and money you could save!! For more info: <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bikemonth/>

**...For more events go to:
www.SVBCoalition.com
and check out the Forum.**

The Featured Road Ride



Start at HILLANDALE PARK, 1st parking lot on right

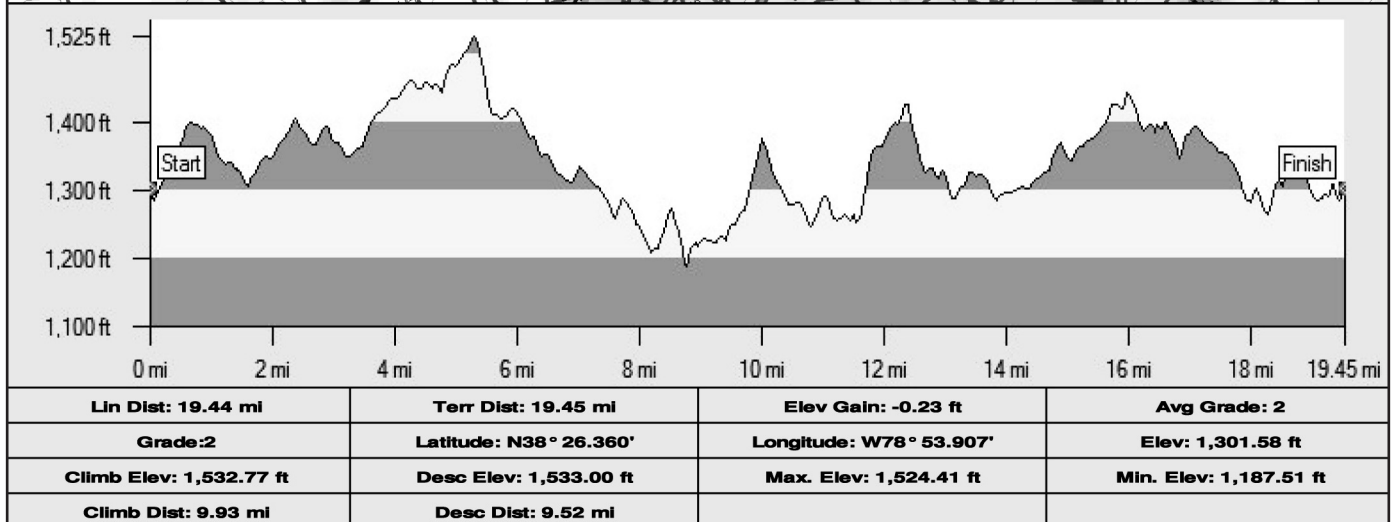
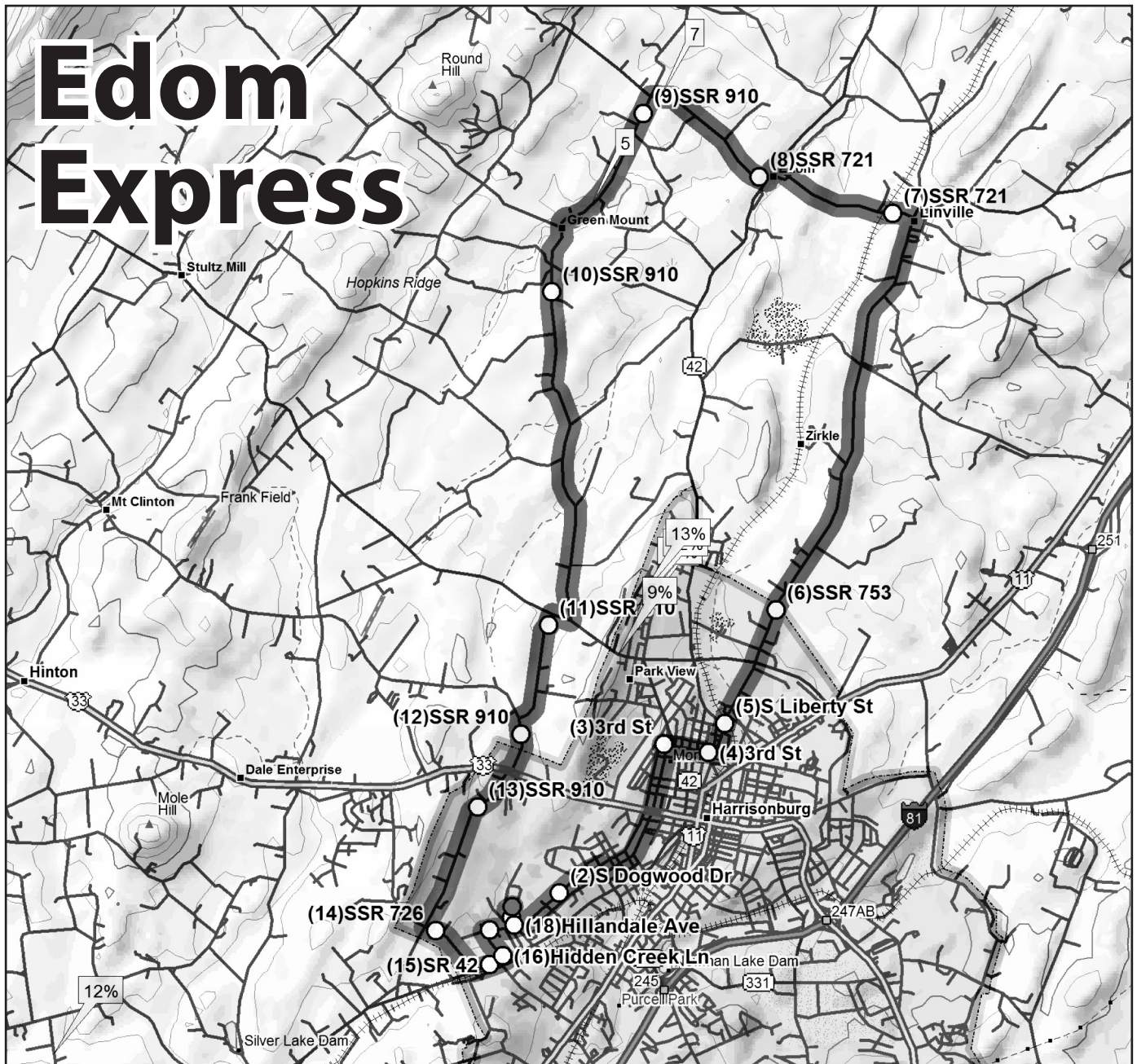
Dist			Turn		Road	Total	Dist
0.04	mi	Turn	left (SSE)	on to	Hillandale Ave	0.04	mi
0.15	mi	Turn	left (NE)	on to	S Dogwood Dr	0.19	mi
0.86	mi	Turn	right (SSE)	on to	Maryland Ave	1.06	mi
0.07	mi	Turn	left (ENE)	on to	Chestnut Dr	1.13	mi
0.27	mi	Bear	left (NNE)	on to	S Willow St	1.40	mi
0.95	mi	Turn	left (E)	on to	3rd St	2.34	mi
0.45	mi	Turn	left (NNE)	on to	S Liberty St	2.79	mi
0.93	mi	Go	straight (NNE)	on to	SSR 753	3.72	mi
3.83	mi	Turn	left (WNW)	on to	SSR 721	7.55	mi
1.23	mi	Turn	left (SW)	on to	SR 42	8.78	mi
0.12	mi	Turn	right (NW)	on to	SSR 721	8.90	mi
1.22	mi	Turn	left (S)	on to	SSR 910	10.12	mi
4.66	mi	Turn	right (WNW)	on to	SSR 763	14.78	mi
0.16	mi	Turn	left (SSW)	on to	SSR 910	14.94	mi
1.38	mi	Turn	right (WNW)	on to	US 33 (W Market St)	16.32	mi
0.03	mi	Turn	left (SSW)	on to	SSR 910 (Garbers Church Rd)	16.35	mi
1.47	mi	Turn	left (SE)	on to	SSR 726 (Erickson Ave)	17.82	mi
0.55	mi	Turn	left (ENE)	on to	SR 42	18.37	mi
0.27	mi	Turn	left (NW)	on to	Hidden Creek Ln	18.64	mi
0.29	mi	Turn	right (E)	on to	S Dogwood Dr	18.93	mi
0.25	mi	Turn	left (NNW)	on to	Hillandale Ave	19.19	mi
0.15	mi	Turn	right (NE)	on to	parking lot	19.33	mi
0.04	mi	Finish	at	Finish		19.38	mi

Edom Express

Here's a short ride to get you back in the groove for 2008. It's a nice one for those days when the wind is blowing in from the north and you want a tailwind to help push you home. The highest point on the ride is just after you pass the Donnelley plant on Kratzer Road. The climb just before Greenmount Church will get your heart pumping.

Let me know what you think of this format as this should become a regular column and we plan to get these maps up on the website before long. -Neups

Edom Express



Why Argue? Just Ride.

by Sue George

Some of the major players in the sport of cycling have been acting like quarrelling school children on a playground, but fortunately, cycling as a participatory sport still seems to be going strong – perhaps because so many of us are lucky enough to go out and ride and race without any thought to what cycling's bigwigs are doing. So what's been going on anyway? • To give some background, the international governing body of cycling, **the UCI, has been battling with the Amaury Sports Organization (ASO), the organizers of well-known races like the Tour de France and Paris-Nice, for well over four years.** It all started with the inception of the ProTour which is the sport's highest-level international road racing series. Of course, both the ASO and the UCI want to call their own shots and be the top dog and often, those calls conflict. The riders and teams have been getting caught in the middle and there's no end in sight. • Here's an example of a typical battle in the ongoing war. The UCI says it gets to dictate what teams do its ProTour races, but ASO doesn't like that and asks to withdraw its Paris-Nice race from the ProTour series so it can decide whom to invite to its own race. UCI says "ok", but when major teams like Astana - the team of the 2007 Tour de France winner Alberto Contador and the team whose roster and management also happen to bear a striking resemblance to the now disbanded Discovery Channel Team - are excluded from the list of invited teams, the UCI withdraws its sanctioning of the event. • Thumbing their noses at the UCI, ASO applies directly to the French Cycling Federation for sanctioning and receives it. The UCI gets pissed off and threatens that any riders and teams who race Paris-Nice after all will face punishment – possibly including fines of many thousands of euros and suspensions from UCI competitions. The UCI even threatens that French Federation that it may face consequences like not having its riders (road, track & mountain bike) banned from participating in the Beijing Olympic Games in August. Caught in the middle, the associations for the riders and teams all vote to race anyway as racing is their livelihood and what keeps their sponsors happy. Like I said before... think quar-

relling school children on a playground. • Fortunately, on a brighter note, cycling as a participatory sport seems very much on the rise. Over two fine spring days in March, there was lots of news about growth. USA Cycling reported continued expansion as of mid-March with an increase of 3.4% of members from 2007 to 2008 when comparing numbers from the same time each year. In 2007, 61,564 member licenses were sold in the US, an increase of 3.3% for mountain bikers and 3.7% for road, track and cyclo-crossers. • In New York state, the Tour of Battenkill said it expects to reach registration totals of 1,500 people signed up for its single loop road races (which feature some challenging gravel road climbing sections) scheduled for one weekend day in April. That will make it even larger than the ever-popular Sea Otter event. • And finally, the UCI announced the number of registered teams went up from 66 in 2007 to 95 in 2008. • Now, of course, a majority of cyclists don't race, but if these numbers are any indication of general enthusiasm for the sport, things are looking up – whatever the guys in the suits decide to do next.

Kids Ride, Too!

by Zach Benevento

Lets create the Shenandoah Valley Kids Bicycle Club together! I like to ride my bicycle to school every day, around town, and on mountain bike



trails to have fun and be pollution free. I want to get other kids together to have more fun and make a difference. • The Kids bicycle club's mission: To bike for fun, be pollution free and help save the planet. • Ideas of what we might do: Go on bike rides on mountain bike trails

and on country roads. Promote safe bike routes to school and in town and pollute less. • Ages that can join: Once you learn how to safely ride a bike until you are out of high school. • Contact: Zach Benevento Telephone: 540-433-2363

The Mellow Velo

The Newsletter of Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition

Post Office Box 1423, 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 1423, 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 (Includes all members of household) | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Big Wheel Membership | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Two Wheel Membership | \$100 |

☐ 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 Email 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 email or by posting notices on its website. Any notice that SVBC is required to provide to me pursuant to the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act may be sent to me via email at the address listed above.

Member Signature

Date

Signature of Parent / Guardian (under 18)

Date