

The Spoke 'n Word Newsletter

May 2008

Vol. 8 Issue 28

Happy May Merrymeeting Wheelers!

Spring is here and the riding season is in full swing. We have lots in store with plenty of rides and volunteer opportunities for everyone.

This years banquet was another hit, with a great turnout, and it could never have happened without the help and hard work of our dedicated club members. Thanks to Elly Cary, Charlie Cary and Bob Bruce for all you do. Thank you to Dick Moseley and his crew for another wonderful meal, great service and the use of his beautiful Inn. The club's officers were voted in. Bob Bruce was re-elected as the club's Treasurer and as Secretary. I'm grateful to have Rick Smith on as our new VP. He's got a great attitude with good energy. His first area of focus will be tackling our club's web-site to get it current.

Looking for volunteer opportunities? We need volunteers for the Brunswick Bike Rodeo coming up on 5/10. The Kiwanis club donates helmets for children in the local area. Our club helps to make sure those helmets are fit properly. If you'd like to help out please call or email me. The rodeo runs from 9-12, we usually show up early (8/8:30) to set up. No experience fitting helmets necessary!

We have lots of room for members on the MWBC Trek Across Maine Team. Give me a call or email if you're interested in joining. It's a great fundraiser and an even better ride.

Please don't forget to send in your annual dues. Our annual renewal was effective 4/1/08.

The LL Bean Time Trial is this Sunday 5/4. If you're not participating they could use some volunteers. If you have time and are interested in helping out please contact Sue McCarthy at suemccarthy@aol.com

Schedules are filling up fast, as they always do this time of year. I hope to see you all out on the road soon.

Jennifer, Pres.

CLUB INFO

President: Jennifer Berube, 798-9916 (Cell), 373-3050(W), email: myasertscycler@yahoo.com

V. President: Rick Smith, 666-8300, email rickvickdani@suscom-maine.net

Sec/Treasurer: Bob Bruce, 882-7206 (h) email: bobbiker@gwi.net

www.merrymeetingwheelers.org

Coming Up!

Weekly rides From the Gazebo in Brunswick:

Monday Women's ride 6:00

Wednesday general club ride 6:00

Saturday Ride 9:00

Mark Wheeler's Ride:

Saturdays From Taste of Maine in Woolwich 8:45

BBC / Center Street Cycles

Saturdays 8:00

Tuesdays 6:00

Brunswick Bike Rodeo 5/10/08

May 12—16th Commute another way week!

www.commuteanotherwayweek.org

5/20 BCM Benefit at Flatbreads in Portland

(Some members have expressed an interest as going down as a group to show MWBC support. Please email if you might be interested)

Wednesday 5/21 7-8:10 Ride of Silence

York Beach Ride 5/25

Check out the ride schedule on the club's website or the calendar on BCM's site for more information.

Meetings are held at the Midcoast Presbyterian Church, 84 Maine St., Topsham

Club Meetings are the last Monday of the month with the exceptions for Holidays & during summer months.

Debris on the Road

By Bob Bruce

What is debris? Webster says it is (1) the remains of something broken down or destroyed (2) an accumulation of fragments of rock. Everybody probably has their own definition of this word also. It depends what we are talking about. I want to talk about debris and cycling. I think it fits both of Webster's definitions and more. It is any thing on the road that is not part of the road. Pieces of the road are no longer part of the road.

Why is this important? If you have ever run over a piece of this debris you know what I am going to talk about. Running over debris can do serious damage. Any thing from a scare to a full-blown accident can happen. I once hit a short two-inch section of tail that damaged my front wheel beyond repair. The real problem came when I almost put the bike down. I was on a short cement bridge. If I had gone down left I would have been run over by a car. If I had gone down right I would have hit one of the cement abutments. Either way could have meant serious injury or possibly death.

It is import that we don't run over any debris of any kind if we can possible miss it. Quick evaluations will have to be made to miss or hit. That means when we are riding we have to focus on just that. It is okay to have other thoughts but don't let them dominate your thought process to the point of being the only thing you are thinking about.

Have you ever seen a rock on the road and then run right over it? Most of the time that happens because you focus on the rock. We tend to steer towards what we focus on. Motorists do the same thing. I ride on a lot of roads that have shoulders. It is a little nerve racking to watch motorist drift over the white line onto the shoulder after they have gone by me. There is good in that also. They were so focused on me that they steered towards me. I guess it is a good thing they were not completely focus on me. Dave Clements of Casco Bay Bicycle Club (CBBC) was hit just that way. If that is not true than the driver tried to hit him and I refuse to believe that.

As we ride along the roads of Maine we will find all kinds of debris from small rocks, which can cause flats, to animals, dead and alive, to glass and parts from cars. The first thing to do is to make sure our tires are pumped up to the recommended air pressure. That pressure is listed on the side of each tire. It should be at or close to the maximum. This will limit pinch flats. It will also help with glass cuts. It will be harder for the glass to penetrate the tire.

The next point is to focus our look beside what the debris is. That will carry us on a path beside the debris. While riding through a mess of little rocks where roads enter the one you are on try to pick the best line through or around the rocks. Practice this while there are only a few things to miss. It helps to make the time pass on the ride also.

The next step is to carry tools with us to make small repairs on the road. Things to repair a flat and a spoke wrench are the most essential. Flat tools are obvious what we do with them. I carry a spare tube and a patch kit with a pump. Spokes break from stress and from impact with an object on the road. You can true a wheel enough to get home and replace the spoke.

There is an old saying that goes this way, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". That goes for riding around debris also. Nobody wants to spend riding time fixing a problem caused by running over something.

The last line of defense is the cell phone. If you damage the bike beyond ratability than you will need a ride home. I have left the bike in the bushes and hitchhiked home to return and get the discarded bike. This can be dangerous. People that find things on the road figure that salvage makes them free to take. I am sure we have all done that at some time.

The worst place to run into debris is where there is a curb. The curb does not allow the wind to blow the debris off the road. It causes it to build up at the curb. Places like bridges become especially dangerous for that reason. Some drives tend to throw their bottles over the rail into the water. They only need to miss one of them to cause a tire problem for cyclists.

I once met a rider on the road that only carried a cell phone. He had a flat and had just called for a ride home. I had to chuckle but it worked for him. He only rode close to home. The bottom line is "don't run over debris on the road".

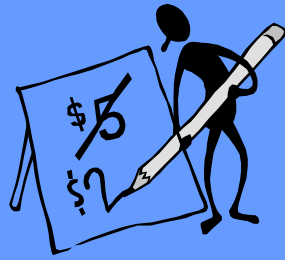
Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance	\$5460.14
Interest	9.02
Dues	460.00
Banquet	804.00
50/50 Raffle	67.00
Inn Raffle	107.00
Total	\$6907.16

Expenses

Banquet	\$1465.39
Service Charge	2.80
Total	\$5438.97

A full financial report for 2007/2008 is available upon request.



"Center Street Special"

10% off all parts & accessories

Offered by Center Street Cycles located at 11 Center Street in Brunswick ME 729-5309



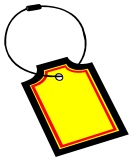
Bath Cycle & Ski

Route 1 Woolwich

10% discount on all bike parts & cross country ski equipment 1-800- Bikeman



SWAP SHOP



Do you have something you want to buy, sell, or trade?

*Send info to myasertscycler@yahoo.com
OR bobbiker@gwi.net*