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The "RAMBLER"

**Decembr-r-r-r
2006**

Clinton River Riders Bicycle Club

Couldn't put the "Brrr" on any future winter month so even though it's 42 degrees out there today I think there might be a slight chance for some "Brrr" by the time Christmas rolls in. Besides we skiers need the "Brrr" in order to get the "ahhhh" white stuff.

Speaking of stuff, did you know the BWR stuff crammed in our little 5 x 10 shed is getting a new home? Yep, it's moving to a 10 x 10 shed. Now we can get more stuff like 20 new jerseys. Yes again, a new jersey order is going in. But to get a jersey you have to be a club member. You might think you're a club member because you got this newsletter, but guess what? Yes a third time, you won't be a club member if you don't send in your club dues which are due in January. Send your check to our treasurer and then you can read more newsletters and buy a club jersey.

Regarding future newsletters, my 3 year contract is coming to an end. Actually it ends this month if we count from when I started but legally it ends in February when we elect new officers which this year includes a new president. Bill Stimpson has decided to not run a third year. Rumor has it John Tarantino would like to see his name at the top of the newsletter again, but then there would be an opening for Ride Director. Not sure how this is going to shake down but there will be openings for you to get involved. So start stretching your arms vertically and be ready to jump up to the occasion. The club needs YOU!

John also announced that he and Marilyn will once again be hosting the Finance Committee meeting at their house. This is the meeting that determines who gets what when. So if you want to know why who got what plan on attending this meeting. When? Sunday January 14th at 6:00PM. Where? 6042 Malzahn, Shelby Twp. 24 Mile and Mound area. But not only what gets decided. Marilyn usually comes up with some delicious you know what's for who when.

If you were here on the 2nd of December-r-r-r you probably spent the night at Sabo's on Moravian Road where the club held it's annual Award's Banquet. A good time was had by all thanks to John and Marilyn who organized the event with much help from Julie Windhorst, Doug MacDermaid and others including Santa himself. J & M enjoyed the event so much that they have decided to host next year's event as well. Give them a pat on the back next time you see them. You can do that on the 14th when who will decide what.

There's a magical time in a boy's life (probably girls have it too), and I think it starts after they master adult plumbing and before they take that first big step into a grade school classroom. It's a time when the world seems like one huge adventure. The daily learning curve shoots up like a rocket and each day is filled with amazing new sights, sounds, smells and tastes. It's like playing an air guitar from morning to night. This a great time for parents too. They watch their son's wide eyed growth with amazement, pride and happiness.

But sometimes, life throws kids a mean curve ball that sends them into harms way. This is what happened to Rick and Shiela Jones' grandson Sammy. One day he's playing with his friends and the next he's in the hospital with an inoperable brain tumor. At 4-1/2 years his magical time has turned into the worst kind of nightmare. It's like an adult problem has been placed on this youngster. It's unfair and it's mean. He's going to need help on this one. More help than his parents, grandparents, doctors and nurses can give. A problem this big is going to need the help of many, many people. People who care.

Gary Haelewyn, Editor

CLINTON RIVER RIDERS 2006 WEEKLY RIDE SCHEDULE

Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays	Saturdays	Sundays
<p>7:00 P M CLUB MEETINGS 2nd Monday of the Month Mt Clemens Library (downstairs) 150 Cass Ave just west of Southbound Gratiot on the North side of Cass across from Mt Clemens High School. Refreshments served.</p>	<p>9:00 A M Stony Creek Boatr Launch Meet TJ Hill for the hardest and fastest mountain bike riding weather permitting. If weather is inclement, meet at Onyx Skate at 10:30 for ice skating. Call TJ 586-293-0162 for more info.</p> <p>.The Friends of Macomb Orchard Trail meetings are on the 4th Tuesday of the month at Camp Rotary on 29 Mile road. Please see our website at www.orchardtrail.org . We are very eager to share the trail with everyone but need to hold off until next spring when the bridges are completed.</p>		<p>9:00 A M Stoney Creek Boatr Launch Meet TJ Hill for mountain bike riding weather permitting. If weather is inclement, meet at Onyx Skate at 10:30 for ice skating. Call TJ 586-293-0162 for more info.</p>	<p>8:30 A M Meet <u>Bill</u> & Annette Smith for a 40 mile ride at 15-18MPH Call Bill at 248-652-2278 OR email him at bsmith02@comcast.net no later than Wednesday for the ride starting location.</p>	<p>9:00 A M Stony Creek West Branch Parking Lot Meet T J Hill for a ride at the pace of the slowest rider to unknown destinations (Good beginner ride)</p> <p>9:00 A M Schultz Funeral Home 8-1/2 & Gratiot Meet for a 25-30 mile ride at a 14-16 mph pace with brakfast afterwards. This ride continues throughout the winter as long as the roads are not icy or snow covered.</p> <p>9:30 Hiking Stoney Creek West Branch contact Catherine Serra at catherine-serra@yahoo.com or 248-4951-630 no hike if raining</p> <p>www.icebike.com</p>	<p>9:00 A M Stony Creek Boat Launch Meet T J Hill for 50 miles mostly dirt road ride with a lunch stop in Lake Orion at about the 30 mile mark.</p> <p>10:00 A M Cadieux Café Cadieux rd, between Warren and Mack) 30-40 mile ride at an intermediate pace. Usually the pace and route depends on who shows up.</p>
			<p>CHANGES Call John Tarantino 586-677-0482 or email him at redtandom@aol.com</p> <p>Newsletter changes: Email Bluecyclist@yahoo.com</p> <p>HOTLINE: 586-819-0222 (Press 1 for latest updates)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Velodrome Events</p> <p>http://www.velodromeat-bloomerpark.com/</p>		<p>Meeting Treat List Volunteers Nov—Windhorst's Dec—</p>

L I G H T S A R E R E Q U I R E D F O R A L L E V E N I N G R I D E S

AVG = Cyclometer Average at end of ride

Ride Leaders should carry cell phones and emergency numbers

MPH = Cyclometer Speed while riding

Birthdays

Bday	First	Last Name
01/02	Denise	Kosen
01/06	Dave	Baker
01/11	Debbie	Angst
01/13	Marilyn	Tarantino
01/16	Ed	Lindow
01/17	Frank	Mottershead
01/19	Shelley	Buchler
01/20	Dennis	Carlson
01/21	Karen	Warner
01/21	Michael	Freeman
01/23	Cathy	Osip
01/26	Nino	Pacini
01/29	Joyce	Dzuris

JANUARY

Jan 8th—Club Meeting

Jan 13th—Square Dance— Join Art and Carol Meerhaeghe for this annual fun event. \$40 per couple. Call Art or Carol at 586-268-7465 for tickets and details.

Jan 14th—Finance Committee Meeting—John & Marilyn Tarantino's house 6:00PM. Call John or Marilyn at 586-677-0482 for more info.

Jan 27th Snow and Go Trip—Join Bruce Freeburger for his annual drive up and ski down day. Call Bruce at 586-354-2320 **or email** Bruce@BIKESonTV.com

February 4-6 Bruce is planning a **TWO Day trip to the Caberfae area** where word has it there is some "M" mountain so challenging few people have lived to tell about it. Call Bruce for details.

Message from weetandem@yahoo.com (Julie Windhorst) at 12/12/06 10:01 pm

As most of you are aware, Rick and Sheila Jones had received very sad information last Wednesday regarding their 4 year old grandson Sammy. This picture was taken of Sammy on his first bicycle.

Sammy Jones was diagnosed with an inoperable cancerous brain tumor. The family is currently in Memphis, TN at St. Jude's Hospital for treatment.



Bill and I have set up an account at TCF Bank and anyone who would like to make a donation to this special account may do so by stopping in at any TCF Bank in the area. The only thing you will need to specify is the account name. We have called this account the "Samual Jones Miracle Cure Fund."

If any of you do not feel comfortable walking into a TCF Bank you may make your checks payable to the "Samual Jones Miracle Cure Fund" and mail the donaton in care of Bill and I at our home address, 3160 Barkway Drive, Sterling Heights, MI 48310. For those of you who reside out of state you may mail your donations to the TCF Bank located at 40770 Dequindre Road, Sterling Heights, MI 48310.

The only request we ask is if you can find it in your heart to make a contribution and then please let us know by sending us an e-mail or a phone call. We would like to maintain a list to give to Rick and Sheila.

If you have any fundraising ideas or contacts please pass them our way.

Sincerley, Bill and Julie Windhorst
weetandem@yahoo.com
586-939-6073

CRR Members

I want to thank the club for the wonderful fruit basket I received. It was very thoughtful and kind of you (the card telling Dave to keep cleaning and cooking for me was truly GREAT)! My knee arthroscopy went well and I'm limping around pretty good now. This sure has been a medically challenging year for us.

Looking forward to a healthy, active 2007.

Hugs - Gail Komendera

SANDRA MEETS PAINT CREEK CLOSE UP OR

(How to Have Fun on a Mountain Bike)

For those who haven't heard the details of Sandra's inaugural mountain bike ride on Sunday, November 16, 1986 the story seemed too good to me—T.J.—to pass undocumented.

I had loaned Sandra one of my mountain bikes so she could participate in the Clinton River Riders Paint Creek Trail ride from Yates Cider Mill to Lake Orion and back, a 25-mile round trip. North of Rochester there are three bridges on the abandoned railroad right-of-way in various stages of deterioration. One is definitely walkable only, the other two are rideable with caution due to the spacing between the railroad ties. Riding across requires a wheel lift at the start, then bump, bump, bump until you drop back onto the trail.

Following the lead of the six other more experienced mountain bike riders in the group without hesitation, Sandra had successfully negotiated the crossings on the Northbound journey to Lake Orion full of exuberance over the new biking experience. On the return trip after breakfast, however, she was not quite so adept. On the first bridge crossing she half crashed with her left foot becoming jammed between two railroad ties and the bike bearing down on her. David Heck jumped off his bike and ran back to lift Sandra's bike off her and help extricate her foot from between the railroad ties. Feigning no pain and trying to conceal a limp, Sandra quickly remounted the bike on the opposite side of the bridge to resume the ride, hoping to appear undaunted by the mishap. As the next bridge crossing came into sight, Sandra was mentally determined not to let the prior crash intimidate her. Following Sue Pavlat, who was successfully negotiating the crossing, Sandra made it onto the bridge, but was not in control due to an uncalculated approach to the six-inch elevation to the bridge level. About a third of the way across the bridge the front wheel turned to the right and dropped between two railroad ties. Falling to the left, Sandra hit the bridge then somersaulted off the edge into Paint Creek with the bike following suit, but further into the middle of the Creek.

Upon surfacing from about two-and-a-half feet of water—after determining which direction was up—Sandra managed to get her feet under her and grapple for a hold on the edge of the bridge above her, all the while emitting the sounds of a somewhat panicky female. The bike helmet passed the impact test in the Creek bed and, unbelievably, eye glasses, although mud speckled, were intact and in place.

Meanwhile, the other riders who had been behind their ill-fated club member and had witnessed the scene unfolding as if in slow motion, quickly sprang into action. Duane Niemann and Jerry Pavlat scrambled down the bank to the Creek, Duane to the left of the bridge and Jerry to the right lest the current sweep the submerged cyclist under the bridge. Duane's outstretched hand provided the necessary assistance for Sandra to make a quick exit from the Creek.

While climbing out of the water, however, Sandra first became aware that the bike had followed her into the Creek. Since she was already soaked, Sandra reasoned that should walk out and retrieve the bike from the middle of the Creek, but the others insisted she get out of the water and leave the bike rescue to them. Sandra reluctantly complied with the directive to leave the new red Schwinn in Paint Creek, as by now it seemed that the bike was being inched downstream by the current. After some discussion among the other riders about the best method for extricating the bike from its water berth, long-limbed Teddy Gonder mumbled "Oh, what the heck. I've been in colder water than this," and proceeded to remove all layers of clothing from the waist down except his bike shorts, which he hitched up as far as he could and waded out into the unknown depths and debris of Paint Creek. Teddy managed, with a long reach, to get a finger-hold on the front wheel and inch it toward him, but with great difficulty as the tubing and a pannier, carrying extra "dry" clothing, had filled with water. Immediately upon exiting the Creek, even before redressing, Teddy, alias "Mr. Fix-it," set to work on the bike. After removing the seat post to allow a portion of Paint Creek to return to its course, Teddy would have started to work on the bottom bracket if the others hadn't insisted he put his clothing back on before he, too, became a candidate for hypothermia in the 35 degree

temperatures.

While the bike rescue was in progress, Sandra and Suzie Pavlat had run off in search of a nearby house in which to get Sandra changed into drier clothing voluntarily supplied by various members of the group. No one answered the door at the first house, and Sandra and Suzie found the second house being guarded by an unleashed, barking black dog. Just as the two were about to turn tail to find a third house, the residents drove into the driveway. Having just returned from a successful deer hunting trip they were more engrossed in showing their buck to the two bikers than in letting them into the house immediately.

Once inside the house, Sandra began peeling off layers of wet clothing in the bathroom, unrealistically hoping with each piece it wasn't completely soaked through. Suzie, too, was peeling off pieces of her perspiration-damp, dry clothing to add to the collection given to them by the others. When reassemble, the two relatively scantily clad bikers emerged, giggling, from the bathroom with Suzie carrying the homeowner-supplied garbage bag filled with what felt like 25 pounds of Sandra's Paint Creek swim wear.

Thanking the homeowners for the use of their bathroom, Sandra and Suzie scampered, as best one could with a 25-pound bag of wet clothing, back to the scene of the "splash." "Big John" Edry, who had orchestrated the rescue efforts, handed Sandra the only dry item retrieved from the water-filled pannier—a Granola Bar. Not feeling hungry at that point, Sandra tucked the faded package away as a souvenir, while Duane stuffed the bag of wet clothing into the now drained pannier and fastened the

load onto the back of his bike. Teddy was still emitting restrained noises regarding the resuscitated bike's bottom bracket. David "RAAM" Heck and his one-man support crew, Jerry Pavlat, had remounted their mountain bikes and charged at breakneck speed to the starting point to bring back a van to a predetermined intersection of the trail in case it was needed by the "splash" victim. Appreciative of the concern and crisis management shown by her biking comrades, Sandra, however, was resolute in her determination to finish the ride under her own steam. With the need to continue moving to stay warm, the thinly clad women suggested they all start riding along the trail to the designated intersection to meet Jerry and Dave with the van. Once there the van was not yet in sight, so Sandra and Suzie rode in circles to keep the blood pumping. When the van arrived Sandra was chagrined when the others still expected her to be "sagged in." Still feeling exuberant about her first mountain bike ride, Sandra insisted on finishing the last few miles of the Paint Creek Trail. With some hesitation, Jerry and Suzie climbed into the van alone to head for home, while the remaining four bikers dubiously accompanied Sandra, two in front and two behind, along the trail back to Yates Cider Mill.

There were no more bridges to cross, only a wide plank, approached with cautious determination, across a water-filled low spot near Yates. All were relieved to be back safely after the Paint Creek Rescue Ride and Sandra has this wonderful tale to tell about the joys of mountain biking. Only Dave was somewhat disappointed that Sandra wouldn't agree to a reenactment of the "splash" scene so it could be captured on videotape. Should anyone else care to start in a video performance of mountain bike agility on the Paint Creek Trail, Sandra would be only too happy to be the director.

Written in collaboration by,

T.J. Hill, and

Sandra Studebaker Cryderman

Newsletter Business Advertising Monthly Rates

\$10 Business Card size, \$35 1/4 page size, \$50 1/2 page size, \$100 Full page size

Club members only may send advertisements to bluecyclist@yahoo.com, and a check, payable to Clinton River Riders mailed to Gary Haelewyn 41706 Merrimac Cir, Clinton Twp MI 48038. Up to 6 months can be prepaid.

**Community Foundation
For Southeast Michigan**

A Greenways forum was held at Greenfield Village to develop trails and walkways in local communities. The thrust of this meeting was to develop proposed inter connecting pathways to surrounding communities. A major issue was to help communities complete the existing trail proposals. A long term maintenance plan was developed for preservation of existing trails and connecting routes.

The Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan is comprised of St. Clair, Livingston, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw, Wayne and Monroe Counties. Our representative for Greenways is Gerard P. Santoro, Senior Planner for Macomb County. We had over 250 people attending the meeting. Several proposals were reviewed to connect trails from one county to the adjoining counties.

In our case, the Michigan Airlines Railroad went through St. Clair, Macomb, Oakland and Livingston Counties. Our Oakland county side becomes the Clinton River Trail. Unfortunately the St Clair side was lost to private development. It had run along 32 Mile , Division, and Fred Moore highway. However, St Clair is developing a new park just off Gratiot and is planning a bike path along Gratiot with a latter connection to Bridge to Bay Trail.

In Macomb County, a lot of discussion went into the Freedom Trail extension along Schoenherr Rd, Utica Rd, Dodge Park, Clinton River Park, through Utica area, River Bend Park and the Clinton River Pathway. This will tie into the MOT near 24 Mile Rd. and Dequindre. Gerard Santoro mentioned the MOT should be completed by the spring of 2007.

An extension of the Bridge to Bay Trail was also discussed. It would come around Selfridge Air base and connect to the Freedom Trail.

Additional hub connections to Memphis and Richmond were added. Memphis is a hub area for St. Clair county trails.

City of Warren has several lead-in-trails in the City complex near 12 Mile and Van Dyke. They would eventually like to develop a greenway along the Red Run Drain to Freedom Hill Park.

The old Edison corridor now owned by ITC (International Transmission Corporation) may be developed as a pathway as well. This will provide a major north-south connecting way.

MTGA (Michigan Trails and Greenway Alliance) was honored for their work in trail development. The award was accepted by Nancy Krupiarz, Director of MTGA.

Jeff Foster, VP for Programming, Detroit Public Television offered their support for trail and greenway development. This is a lot of advertising to the people in all the communities. They deal with a smaller audience but a much more dedicated group for community action.

Mike Eberlein, Director of Safe Routes to school, MDOT spoke of the needs to connect the trail and greenways to school locations. Currently 15% of the children walk or bike to school. Federal funds are available for Trail connections within two miles of schools. They have an interesting website. www.saferoutesmichigan.org They also have a handbook available for school and public use. 1-800-434-8642

Each county representative spoke on what is happening in their community. Gerald Santoro spoke for Macomb County on MOT and Freedom Trail. Additional connections to HCMA parks in the county. Joe Youngblood, Shelby Park and Rec. and MOTC representative attended with Dave Moore, Shelby Park and Rec.

FMOT Friends of Macomb Orchard Trail was well represented with Chuck Mabely, Dave & Lee Rumohr and Mike Sproul attending. This allowed us to attend several of the individual county break-out sessions. It was great to share our struggles and triumphs with similar groups in our area. I would also like to thank the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan and Ford Motor Company for hosting the event and an awesome lunch. www.cfsem.org

If you haven't been to Greenfield Village in recent years you should really take a day and go. We were greatly surprised at the new exhibits, and roadways added in the last two years. It makes going from one exhibit to the other extremely easy now.

David Rumohr Director FMOT



Memorable Detroit 2006 Half-Marathon
by Sandra Studebaker

Three hours, 8 minutes, 55 seconds! That was the better-than-predicted time in the 2006 Detroit Free Press / Flagstar Bank Half-Marathon for this recently turned septuagenarian. I had learned, last fall, of the addition of a half-marathon for runners and walkers to the annual event that utilizes both the Ambassador Bridge and the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel, connecting the U.S. and Canada, for its scenic full marathon course. Wanting to participate in this international event and to commemorate my upcoming entry into a significant new age group, I resolved to take part in the half-marathon in 2006. I knew I could go the distance of 13.1 miles and that a training regime would make it a good experience. As it turned out, had I not opted for the non-competitive walk category I would have been the sole female finisher in my age group in the competitive walk category. Oh, well! It was still a memorable experience in more ways than one.

Sunday 29 October 2006 began clear, but cool, in the pre-dawn hours following two days of continuous rain. Almost 16,000 marathon and half-marathon participants lined up in designated chutes on both sides of Washington Boulevard at Grand Circus Park in downtown Detroit for a simultaneous start at 7:15 a.m. Where was I when the start gun sounded? Having arrived a bit later than planned, I was still in one of a myriad of porta-johns set up on an adjacent empty lot that had turned to a sea of mud puddles by the previous days' rain. It was close, but I managed to be among those that crossed the start line within four minutes of the gun--an improvement over last year's seven minutes to clear the chutes, the announcer said.

The route went out Michigan Avenue past the landmark Tiger Baseball Stadium, then turned left on Rosa Parks Boulevard, eventually crossing I-75 twice before heading directly toward the Ambassador Bridge. Even before walkers reached the four-mile mark at the U.S. side of the bridge, bright sunshine made it seem almost like a summer day. It was on the bridge approach that I caught up with CRR bicycle club members Julie Windhorst and Micki Solonika, who were walking together and had been seeded ahead of me in the start chutes. After slowing briefly to say "hi" to the gals, and accidentally jostling Micki in the crowded conditions, I "hunkered down" for the anticipated climb to the crest of the bridge. With a determined focus on forward locomotion, I reached the Canadian side of the Ambassador Bridge realizing I had not taken in the much-touted view of the Detroit River and environs.

With 3.5 miles to traverse in the city of Windsor, all thoughts were likely focused on reaching the entrance of the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel before the dreaded 9:45 a.m. cut-off time. Half-marathon walkers had a maximum of 2.5 hours to reach the tunnel before it would be re-opened to automobile traffic. Failing that deadline, walkers would be picked up and bused back to the finish but would be unable to cross the finish line. Maintaining a consistent 14-minute-per-mile pace, I wasn't concerned about the omnipotent bus and reached the 8-mile underwater mark in the middle of the tunnel in less than two hours. Having run through the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel in two marathons in the late 1980s, the overall experience wasn't new. What was new, however, was an electronic timing device in the tunnel similar to that at the start and finish lines, recording each participant's progress across the underwater international border. Given heightened border security, I'm assuming that everyone needed to be accounted for. The ping, ping, ping of walkers' timing chips passing the electronic beam was barely audible in the cacophony of young voices bouncing continuously off tunnel walls and ceiling. To some, it was a relief to be out of the tunnel even though that meant an up-hill grade to street level.

From the tunnel, the route turned westerly at Jefferson Avenue, then circled down and under a portion of Cobo Convention Center before

beginning an unexpected circular climb away from the riverfront--giving exception to the notion that Detroit is flat. At the 10-mile mark I recognized fatigue setting in. But, aided by several strategically placed "Spirit Stations" I completed the remaining 3.1 miles at a reasonable pace--although with less than exemplary racewalking technique. The return course again utilized a portion of the broad expanse of Michigan Avenue before it circled through several streets in the neighborhood of Ford Field. The exhilarating descent onto the artificial turf of Ford Field for a climactic finish at the 50-yard line is to be experienced. Following a practice smile for one of the official photographers outside the structure, I cautiously navigated the steep indoor ramp while numerous younger runners blasted by me on both sides. Not so emboldened on the descent, it was still one happy septuagenarian who walked triumphantly across the finish line.

But, had it not been for the advice of CRR club member Sheila Jones, I might not have been at the start line that morning. Knowing I had to be up at 4 a.m., I had gone to bed at 8 p.m. the night before and slept soundly until awaking shortly after midnight with a rapidly swelling tongue. Having experienced this manifestation of angioedema several times before--most recently in early October--I knew that it could mean a hurried trip to the nearest Emergency Room for resolution and a stay of several hours to guard against possible closure of the upper airway. No way did I want to be in the E.R. on race day!! I had been looking forward to, and preparing for, this significant event for too long to miss taking part in it. What to do? Spouse T.J., hastily dressed and still groggy, was waiting for my decision.

Without hesitation, I decided to apply what Sheila had recently advised me about getting prescribed medication into the blood stream rapidly. So I broke open four capsules (double the dose I had been taking) of the antihistamine Benadryl, mixed the powdery contents in a small amount of water and drank the bitter mixture. Wallah!! I could hardly believe it, but within minutes the swelling began to subside. By 1:30 a.m., and a bit light-headed from the Benadryl, I was back in bed. Sleep didn't come, but that was probably a good thing as I could monitor the situation with the tongue and didn't have to worry about sleeping past the get-up time. With the help of Sheila's council, bull-headed determination and, likely, a healthy dose of divine intervention I achieved my goal--and, with a respectable time. It was, indeed, a memorable experience in more ways than one. Do I want to participate in next year's 30th annual Detroit Free Press international event? You bet!! Hopefully it will be without the need for Benadryl and with more than four hours of sleep.



Snakes on the trail and freezer bag cooking by Al Barton

Date: Fri, 17 Nov 2006 09:57:20 -0500

I wanted to give you an update on the mountain bike trip in Maryland with Matt Barton which occurred on Nov.3-5. The original plan as laid out by Matt was for a S24O. That, as you know, is Rivendell speak for a self contained overnight trip that is less than 24 hours in duration. This trip followed a few days vacation with the Mrs. B in New York City where, let me tell you, I earned many valid kitchen passes for the bicycle trip we going to take next year to Kazakhstan or some other place (aka Montana). Anyway, the plan for the S24O blew apart when Woji and Stash found out about the S24O and decided to join and then changed the entire agenda. Woji and Stash were in my Marine Corps unit and are now mountain bike supertourists living in the Allentown, PA area and members in good standing of the Potomac Area Wheelmen. Woji's new plan called for 2 overnights at his hunting cabin in the mountains of Maryland. Mind you, these are the mighty Appalachian Mountains, not at all similar to the mountains of Macomb County.

We took the early Amtrak AM train from Union Station in Washington, DC to Brunswick, MD. The train did have a Baggage car since this is a long distance train going all the way to Chicago. The conductor allowed us to bungee the bikes together in the baggage car thereby avoiding the expense and time associated with disassembly and boxing. It was only 80 miles to Brunswick and were there in the time it took for 2 cups of coffee and shoot the breeze about the upcoming elections. When I unloaded the bikes from the baggage car, I noticed that Woji and Stash did not have any panniers. They informed that they drove their gear to the cabin 2 days previous. Matt and I had rear panniers with our sleeping bags, clothing, and some limited rations. I took along my usual survival rations of cans of sardines and peanut butter. Across from the train station was a grocery store where I purchased some trail mix and 3 bottles of cold Killians which I stuffed into my sleeping bag. Matt purchased a bottle of something called Wild Turkey. I loaded the gear onto the Rivendell borrowed from Matt and we were ready to depart by 9:30AM.

Matt was riding his Gary Fisher while Stash and Woji had new, full suspension Cannondales. Woji announced that he had the route programmed on his GPS which indicated a distance of 47 miles to the cabin. We would use a combination of local blacktop rural roads, gravel roads, and fire trails to reach the cabin.

The initial portion of the ride for 15 miles was a piece of cake using very smooth roads into the town of Frederick, MD where I spied a Tim Horton's and made a mild sprint as it was necessary to dispatch all the coffee consumed earlier and reload with 2 more cups. This was starting out to be a real good trip!! After leaving Frederick where I stripped off some layers, The party was over, so to speak as we moved onto gravel roads heading in the northerly direction and serious climbing began at Wolfsville. I downshifted all the way to the 22 tooth front chain ring and was there for the rest of the day. Woji and Stash started to ride more aggressively and I did not have the guts to maintain the pace but was able to keep them within site. At Cavesville, we crossed the Appalachian Trail but did not ride on it due to the massive boulders and steepness of the terrain. We arrived at the cabin at 4:30PM and it was getting pitch black dark. During the unpacking of my right pannier the bottle of Wild Turkey appeared. Matt, smiling all the time, had put the bottle in there while I was in serious discussions at the coffee stop. My Killians were still cold and hit the spot while I organized my bunk. The evening meal was delicious but more about that later.

The next morning I woke up before day break hearing the sound of barking dogs. It sounded like a large pack nearby. After coffee time, I dressed and went out into the dark looking for the dogs. In about 100 yards, I came upon a double chain link fence with razor wire on the top. I estimated the fence to be 10' in height. The dogs were somewhere inside of the inner fence. I assumed it was a prison area and there were signs which said "no trespassing allowed." Returning to the cabin I consumed a double portion of oatmeal and we left the cabin for 50 miles of gravel roads and trails in the mountains. I said hello to the 22 tooth chain ring very early in the day. It was a very warm, clear day and the temperature was quickly at 60 degrees. Stash said we were entering Snake Ridge Trail and be careful. He was Not kidding. He often pointed left and right with his frame pump pointing at nothing I could see. We stopped and observed a large rattler coming across the trail. There were snakes everywhere!! After running over my 2nd

copperhead, Woji gave me a lecture that it was not a good idea as it makes the snakes very mad and probably harms them. Soon, I informed the group that I wanted to get the \$#! outta this place right now. In an effort to escape the snake pit, we dropped down into a steep rocky ravine covered with wet leaves where I fell twice tearing the hide off my right shin. Very quickly, we were on a narrow one lane blacktop road where I saw that same double fence line and a sign that said Catoctin Mt. State Park with "keep out" signs. I thought this rather strange for a state park. Shortly, a block building appeared with high tech cameras, blazing lights, and signs stating the area between the fences was heavily mined. I also observed twin towers manned with machine guns aimed at the road. We approached the building and US Marines told us to stop and identify ourselves. This was no prison or state park--this is Camp David, the weekend retreat of the US President. Stash had prearranged the visit as we are all ex-military. We were allowed to walk into the facility with a guard who showed us the very rustic but well maintained buildings built for President Eisenhower. The German Shepard guard dogs became my friends when I handed out the trail mix.

Back at the cabin I washed and dressed my leg wounds. Matt put a little Wild Turkey on the cut areas and I went berserk. Once again the meal service was terrific and was furnished by Matt. All the meals were served in one quart freezer bags that were prepared at his home. All you needed to do was add boiling water and wait about 10 minutes. He had the recipe book in a pannier. The book is entitled Freezer Bag Cooking: Trail Food Made Simple by Sarah Svien. I since have purchased this small book and tried some other meals and it is great. Go to www.freezerbagcooking.com and see for yourself.

The following day was special because on the way back to Frederick we hiked on a section of the Appalachian Trail to an abandoned fire tower that we climbed and could see for miles the remaining fall colors of the area. I will never forget that view. Sorry, I did not have a camera. We arrived back at Union Station at 5:30PM and rode the 1 mile to Matt's historic 1730 brownstone in the Capitol Hill area where I finished the Wild Turkey.





**Clinton
River
Riders**

Gary Haelewyn
41706 Merrimac
Clinton Twp MI 48038

Application Form - Clinton River Riders Bicycle Club

1. ACKNOWLEDGE, agree, and represent that I understand the nature of Bicycling Activities and that I am qualified to participate in such Activity. I further acknowledge that the Activity will be conducted over public roads and facilities open to the public during the Activity and upon which the hazards of traveling are to be expected. I further agree and warrant that if at any time I believe conditions to be unsafe, I will immediately discontinue further participation in the Activity.

\$12.50 Individual (over 18)

\$15.00 Family

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip _____
State _____ Home Phone (____) _____
email _____
Birthday _____

Additional Family Members

Name _____ Birthday _____

New Member Renewal

Yes, please add me to your list of active volunteers who help promote bicycling at the local, state, and federal level. I may be called upon to write a letter or attend a meeting.

Please make check payable and mail to:

Clinton River Riders

34506 Utica Road

Fraser MI 48026

**RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY,
ASSUMPTION OF RISK, AND INDEMNITY
AGREEMENT ("AGREEMENT")**

IN CONSIDERATION of being permitted to participate in any way in The Clinton River Riders Bicycle Club ("Club") sponsored Bicycling Activities ("Activity"), I for myself, my personal representatives, assigns, heirs, and next of kin:

2. FULLY UNDERSTAND that: (a) BICYCLING ACTIVITIES INVOLVE RISKS AND DANGERS OF SERIOUS BODILY INJURY, INCLUDING PERMANENT DISABILITY, PARALYSIS AND DEATH ("RISK"); (b) these risks and dangers may be caused by my own actions or inactions, the actions or inactions of others participating in the Activity, the condition in which the Activity takes place, or THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE "RELEASEES" NAMED BELOW; (c) there may be OTHER RISKS AND SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LOSSES either not known to me or not readily foreseeable at the time; and I FULLY ACCEPT AND ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS AND ALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOSSES, COSTS AND DAMAGES I incur as a result of my participation in the Activity.

3. HEARBY RELEASE, DISCHARGE, COVENANT NOT TO SUE AND AGREE TO INDEMNIFY AND SAVE AND HOLD HARMLESS the Club, the LAW, their respective administrators, directors, agents, and employees, other participants, any sponsors, advertisers, and if applicable, owners and lessors of premises on which the Activity takes place, (each considered on e of the "RELEASEES" herein) FROM ALL LIABILITY, CLAIMS, DEMANDS, LOSSES, OR DAMAGES ON MY ACCOUNT CAUSED OR ALLEGED TO BE CAUSED IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE "RELEASEES" OR OTHERWISE, INCLUDING NEGLIGENT RESCUE OPERATION.

I HAVE READ THIS AGREEMENT, FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS, UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING IT AND HAVE SIGNED IT FREELY AND WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT OR ASSURANCE OF ANY NATURE AND INTEND IT TO BE A COMPLETE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF ALL LIABILITY TO THE GREATEST EXTENT ALLOWED BY LAW AND AGREE THAT IF ANY PORTION OF THIS AGREEMENT IS HELD TO BE INVALID, THE BALANCE NOT WITHSTANDING, SHALL CONTINUE IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT.

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

ALL RIDING MEMBERS MUST SIGN