

1st Coast Update...

## Traffic Skills 101 training draws eager learners

by Jeff Hohlstein, LCI

The First Coast Chapter held two classes last quarter and has refined its class schedule to one day, primarily by providing study packets and homework assignments several days before the class.

The August 28 class was the largest FBA First Coast class ever, with 11 students – three made the trek from St. Petersburg to attend. The morning was spent in the classroom and afternoon doing parking lot drills.

A survey of graduates of the past 15 months provided some helpful feedback. Everybody thought the course was either extremely (67%) or very valuable (35%).

The top three most helpful elements were lane positioning (94%), safety & bicycle law (94%), and drills (82%). 77% used proper lane positioning and 82% used scanning and signaling on every ride.

However, 29% never practice the instant turn and 18% never practice the Quick stop, yet several credited these maneuvers with having kept them safe in an emergency: Quick stop (41%) and Instant turn (29%).



Tim Mulligan of St. Petersburg executes a flawless instant turn. Photo Credit: Elisa Johnson

The next Traffic Skills 101 class in Jacksonville will be November 6. Learn more about it at [www.FBAfirstcoast.org](http://www.FBAfirstcoast.org).

Visibility in numbers...

## Central Fla. Bike Bus launches

by Kitzzy Aviles and Jason Buckner

There are two Cycling Savvy graduates who chose to use alternate transportation despite a 15-mile commute to work from downtown Orlando to the University of Central Florida and Research Park.

We commute to work by bike two to three times a week, and ride the Lynx bus on other days. Wanting to empower others to do the same, we began the Central Florida Bike Bus.

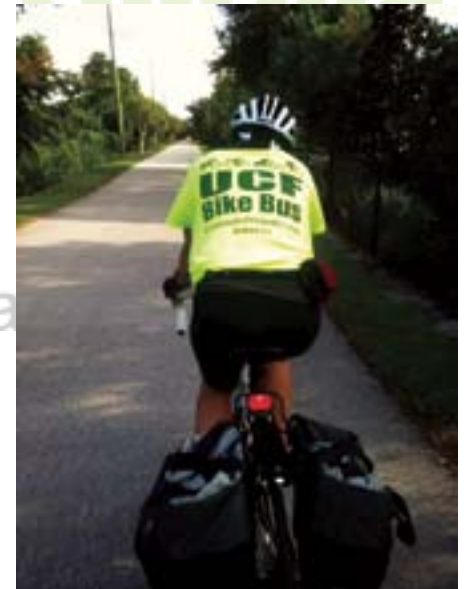
The Central Florida Bike Bus is dedicated to bringing together cyclists who want to commute by bike using the same roads as other vehicles.

By riding as a group on a regular schedule and following all traffic laws, we improve our visibility and show that cyclists and motor vehicle drivers can coexist in a positive and productive way.

The bike bus currently has one route, from Downtown Orlando to the UCF area two to three times a week. We hope to add more routes and schedules as passengers increase.

*continued on page 13*

An economical, green and FUN way to get to work or school!



## FDOT and FDOH Collaborate on 'Walking School Buses'

by Pat Pieratte, Safe Routes to School Coordinator

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has been working with Florida Department of Health (FDOH) to advance the mutual goals of FDOT's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program and FDOH's Chronic Disease Prevention program.

FDOH Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, just beginning to work on an application for stimulus funds to make progress on three health issues, including physical activity, wanted to do something related to SRTS for their physical activity intervention. I immediately suggested Walking School Buses, since it is an inter-generational activity. In this program, children get more physical activity, but so do the parents, grandparents or other adults who walk them to school.

I drafted the Walking School Bus portion of their application, and we have been working closely together ever since. FDOH's Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) grant includes the hiring of 15 people—13 Regional Coordinators, a statewide Coordinator and an administrative assistant.

Each Regional Coordinator spends about 13 hours a week on Walking School Bus issues. They contact their counties' school boards and/or superintendents and then individual schools to discuss the goals of the Walking School Bus program and find out which want to participate.

FDOH has held two training sessions for the Regional Coordinators, and we have helped with the SRTS/Walking School Bus portion. Jason Jackman, from the University of South Florida's Center for Urban Transportation Research, also participated in these sessions.

At both sessions, I distributed some educational and promotional items which will be helpful in their work. I encouraged the FDOH CPPW Regional Coordinators to work with their FDOT District SRTS contacts to help identify which schools are good candidates for Walking School Buses. The Districts have been very excited about having more help in meeting their SRTS goals. The CPPW Coordinators have also found the Community Traffic Safety Teams to be very

helpful in identifying prospective schools, and to help correct traffic problems which could hinder the Walking School Buses.

Using statewide SRTS funds I purchased hand-held signs and pencils for the Districts, to be shared with the CPPW Coordinators and used for International Walk to School Day and Walking School Buses. More promotional items will be arriving later. The Districts have shared additional resources purchased with their District funds, such as promotional items to reward children who walk to school.

With the help of the CPPW Coordinators, we can reach our goals much more quickly and thoroughly. In most areas of the state we have had only a limited number of people working at the local school level to explain SRTS and how they can get involved. Please consider volunteering as a Walking School Bus Driver at one of your local schools. With everyone's help we can reach our goals much more quickly!

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## ASK A CYCLING ATTORNEY...

**Are fixed gear bikes legal?**

by Christopher G. Burns, Esq.

**Q:** My son is enrolled in one of Florida's big state universities. He has asked me to buy him a "fixed gear" bike for transportation around campus.

He tells me this way he won't need a car, and fixed gear bikes have "street cred." He says they are easier to maintain because they don't have a derailleur or cogs on the back. Just one gear and go.

I know bike shops sell fixed gear bikes, so they must be legal, right? Do they have brakes?

**A:** First: "fixed gear bikes" or "track bikes" may or may not have a hand brake. Most of the fixed gear bikes sold at bike shops do have a hand brake.

With fixed gear bikes without a hand brake, sometimes favored by bike messengers, it's anybody's guess whether such fixed gear bikes are legal under Florida law. A judge or jury could decide either way. The law is vague. There are arguments pro and con.

What is clear - Florida law requires that all bikes must have brakes.

Florida Statutes 316.2065(14) says:

*Every bicycle shall be equipped with a brake or brakes which will enable its rider to stop the bicycle within 25 feet from a speed of 10 miles per hour on dry, level, clean pavement.*

This law defines the performance standards required. However, this law doesn't define

"brake." Nowhere does it say you must have a "hand brake" or "caliper" or "coaster." What type of brake is acceptable? It would be up to a judge to interpret this law and decide.

In the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "brake" is defined as "a device for arresting or preventing the motion of a mechanism usually by means of friction."

Some argue that with a fixed gear bike, the chain and gears are the brake. When you apply pressure backwards to the gear, it stops the bike.

Others argue that the legislature intended bikes to have a coaster brake or hand brake.

While traditional road and mountain bike brakes are tested to meet the performance standard, how would you test a fixed gear bike to see it met the performance standard of stopping from 10 miles per hour within 25 feet?

I would strongly urge my son not to ride a fixed gear bike (without a hand brake) due to the uncertainty of the law.

I think riding without a mechanic foot or hand brake in traffic is quite foolish. It's dangerous enough in a velodrome.

By riding a "fixie," he may get a traffic citation for failure to have a brake. If he was

involved in a crash on the road and was injured, his ability to be compensated might be severely compromised.

The at-fault party or insurance company would argue vehemently that my son acted unreasonably. They would claim he was reckless for riding a bike without legal brakes.

Most jurors don't ride bikes. Most jurors may conclude that choosing to ride such a bike is dangerous. Such a jury might blame all or part of the crash on the cyclist riding the "fixie."

*Christopher G. Burns, Esq. is an attorney who has 25 years experience in representing cyclists, mostly in cases involving wrongful death and serious bodily injury. He is an avid cyclist who has participated in organized rides around the United States and in Europe. Mr. Burns is also a long-standing sponsor of cycling clubs and race teams in Florida. He has also served on numerous boards, clubs, and governmental organizations in advocacy issues related to cycling. He can be reached at ph: 904-632-2424; email: burns@terrellhogan.com. He is happy to take your phone calls or emails.*



**HAVE YOU BEEN INJURED WHILE CYCLING?**  
(I have. That's why I'll fight so hard for you.)

Chris Burns is not your typical personal injury attorney. As an avid rider, he combines his experience on the road with his expertise and insight in the courtroom. This unique perspective provides cyclists across Florida with the representation they deserve.

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## Bicycles for the Homeless...

**Recycling cycles for the community**

by Charlie Morris

**M**illions of hard-working, responsible families are at risk of losing their homes as a result of job losses, medical crises, a car accident, or a death in the family. During 2009, more than half a million

individuals in families needed emergency shelter or transitional housing. At least 300,000 were under the age of 18, according to HUD reports.

Chronic homelessness is often the public face of homelessness. "Chronic" has a specific definition, involving either long-term and/or repeated bouts of homelessness coupled with some sort of disability. The chronic homeless often end up living in shelters and consume a majority of the homeless assistance system's resources. It's a common misconception that this group represents the majority of the homelessness population; rather, they account for about 20 percent. The cost to individuals and society is high. The mortality rate for these men and women is four to nine times higher than for the general population. Health care is the major expense to society due to

frequent and avoidable emergency room visits, inpatient hospitalizations, sobering centers, and nursing homes.

In 2009, the Department of Veterans Affairs estimated that there were approximately 131,000 homeless vets, approximately 20 percent of the entire homeless population. Veterans often become homeless due to a



war-related disability. Because of physical disability, mental anguish, post-traumatic stress, etc., many veterans find difficulty readjusting to civilian life. This can translate into unsafe behaviors, including addiction,

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President's report...

## What to do?

**H**ow can the bicycling community respond to tragedy like the death of Admiral Leroy Collins Jr. who was killed while riding in Tampa on July 29th? First, accept the fact that there are no "accidents." Traffic crashes have causes.

Second, understand that reducing the causes of traffic crashes is the only way to prevent future crashes. The best memorial you can make to someone that has been killed is to help prevent a similar tragedy from happening again.

So, what are the causes of most fatal bike crashes? You know; say them with me:

1. Bad driving (drunk, distracted, and reckless driving, speeding, running red lights or stop signs), and

2. Bad bicycling (riding at night without good head and tail lights, running stop signs or red lights, riding against the normal direction of traffic).

### But what can you do?

- ❑ Fight for better motor vehicle traffic enforcement and against drunk driving.
- ❑ Support state legislation against distracted driving.
- ❑ Support use of red-light cameras.
- ❑ Speak up for traffic calming and other street designs that reduce speeding.
- ❑ Ride the right way and insist that the people you ride with do the same.

Riding the right way is more than just following the law.

Riding the right way means understanding all the extra hazards if you ride on the sidewalk.

Riding the right way means using your lane position on the road to make sure you are visible to other drivers so they will pass you safely and cannot right hook you.

We need to shift the idea of what is acceptable in Florida. Do not throw up your hands and say "we have a pro-driving culture." Good driving and good bicycling can become normal in our society.

Think of the things that are no longer acceptable: discriminating against minorities, smoking in public, exploiting women, endangering children. (See the TV show "Mad Men" for more examples.)

We can make bad driving and bicycling as unfashionable as the two-martini lunch. And, unlike a lot of previous changes in society, we already have the law on our side.

Florida law recognizes the bicycle as a vehicle and bicyclists have the same rights

David Henderson



and responsibilities as other vehicle drivers. Bad driving is illegal.

We are not fighting for our civil rights we are fighting to make real what all Floridians already want: safer streets for everyone.

When a tragedy like the death of Adm. Collins happens many people want to do something about it but may not know what.

You have a responsibility to step up and memorialize someone in the only way that really matters.

Help prevent a future tragedy.

Do you have a question about the laws related to bicycling?

## Ask Geo @ FBikeLaw.org\*

George Martin



### Dismount at Crosswalks?

(September 4, 2010)

**Q:** I asked: My wife and I rode our bicycles to a (football) game tonight. We were riding down a street,

through traffic. We crossed through the crosswalk and were told by police that we were not allowed to ride our bicycles through the crosswalk. We immediately dismounted our bikes. I would love to keep riding bikes to games, but what's the deal here?

**A:** There is no state statute that requires bicyclists to dismount when crossing a roadway within a crosswalk. When on a sidewalk or in a crosswalk, bicyclists have the same rights and duties as pedestrians.

### §316.2065 – Bicycle Regulations

(10) A person propelling a vehicle by human power upon and along a sidewalk, or across a roadway upon and along a crosswalk, has all the rights and duties applicable to a pedestrian under the same circumstances.

Bicyclists must always yield to pedestrians on a sidewalk or crosswalk, and must give an audible signal before passing.

(11) A person propelling a bicycle upon and along a sidewalk, or across a roadway upon and along a crosswalk, shall yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian and shall give an audible signal before overtaking and passing such pedestrian.

Giving the audible signal does not relieve cyclists of the responsibility to yield to pedestrians. In other words, cyclists cannot expect pedestrians to get out of the way just because they yell at them. Sidewalks and

crosswalks are first and foremost for pedestrians.

Bicyclists have a further responsibility to reduce speed and exercise due care to avoid colliding with pedestrians. I believe crowds of pedestrians could be interpreted as one of the special hazards indicated in this statute.

### §316.185 – Special Hazards

The fact that the speed of a vehicle is lower than the prescribed limits shall not relieve the driver from the duty to decrease speed .... when special hazards exist or may exist with respect to pedestrians or other traffic .... and speed shall be decreased as may be necessary to avoid colliding with any person, vehicle, or other conveyance on or entering the street in compliance with legal requirements and the duty of all persons to use due care. The sidewalk is part of the "street or highway" in the statutory definition.

None of the above indicates a requirement to dismount, but does indicate a higher responsibility of a cyclist on a sidewalk or crosswalk.

There may be a local ordinance in effect or special order for such events, which does require additional actions of cyclists on sidewalks and crosswalks.

I recommend taking this information to the police department in question and asking them to clarify the rules that you and others must follow for these events. If different from the above, ask them for reference to any statutes, ordinances or regulations that are the basis for their statements. You might also ask them to publicize the requirements for all attendees for these events so everyone will understand the rules. Please advise me of the response.

### Crosswalks and Turning Vehicles

(August 27, 2010)

**Q:** Debbie asked: I was riding on a sidewalk/bike path. Headed west had green at

As a part of the Bicycle Law Enforcement Program, we have established a website to provide a place to ask questions about the laws. The following are examples of the kinds of questions we have received to date from cyclists, police officers and attorneys. These have been severely edited for space. See the full questions and answers at the site.

intersection. A car headed east had a green light and was stopped in left lane, then turned left. I caught her out of the corner of my eye as I entered crosswalk, slammed on the brakes before either she hit me or I hit her. There was no contact with vehicle but I was injured. Who has the right of way? Would her auto insurance cover bills and loss of work?

**A:** Bicyclists on the sidewalk have the same rights and duties as pedestrians.

### §316.2065 – Bicycle Regulations

(10) A person propelling a vehicle by human power upon and along a sidewalk, or across a roadway upon and along a crosswalk, has all the rights and duties applicable to a pedestrian under the same circumstances.

Drivers must yield to bicyclists (Same rights as a pedestrian) in a crosswalk or so close as to be in danger.

### §316.130 – Pedestrians; Traffic Regulations

(7)(a) The driver of a vehicle at an intersection that has a traffic control signal in place shall stop before entering the crosswalk and remain stopped to allow a pedestrian, with a permitted signal, to cross a roadway when the pedestrian is in the crosswalk or steps into the crosswalk and is upon the half of the roadway upon which the vehicle is traveling or when the pedestrian is approaching so closely from the opposite half of the roadway as to be in danger.

Drivers must yield to pedestrians and other vehicles within the intersection.

**§316.075 – Traffic Control Signal Devices**  
(1) .... the lights shall indicate and apply to drivers of vehicles and pedestrians as follows:

(a) Green indication

1. Vehicular traffic facing a circular green signal may proceed cautiously straight

through or turn right or left unless a sign at such place prohibits either such turn. But vehicular traffic, including vehicles turning right or left, shall yield the right-of-way to other vehicles and to pedestrians lawfully within the intersection or an adjacent crosswalk at the time such signal is exhibited.

Drivers turning left must yield to other vehicles approaching from the opposite direction. The statute does not say that the vehicle must be in the roadway.

### §316.122 – Vehicle Turning Left

The driver of a vehicle intending to turn to the left within an intersection .... shall yield the right-of-way to any vehicle approaching from the opposite direction .... which is within the intersection or so close thereto as to constitute an immediate hazard.

To determine fault in this incident, it would be necessary to know the speed of the cyclist and whether the cyclist was (reasonably) so close as to constitute an immediate hazard when the motorist entered the crosswalk.

To determine if the costs incurred will be covered by insurance, you should contact your insurance company and that of the driver. You should provide the information above to your attorney who will be able to assist with insurance information and the determination of fault.

Headsets (July 30, 2010)

**Q:** David asked: If a deaf person is allowed to ride a bike, why can't headphones be worn while riding a bike?

**A:** My answer must be that it is illegal. If you are asking why the law is in place, I don't have access to the legislative intent and don't have the answer.

continued on next page

Executive Director's report...

## Path cyclist vs. road cyclist

**H**ow do we take advantage of our diversity and not let it be an embarrassment? It wasn't until the 70s that the Uniform Vehicle Code, the national code that defines vehicles and their uses, began to reflect that bicycles could and should be official vehicles. This included rights and responsibilities for using roadways just like cars and trucks.

Before then, the bike was a device or a toy and few gave it much vision since we were a fully car-powered nation. Bikes had little diversity and were mostly single speeds and for neighborhood use. The 70s fuel shortages and innovating brains began connecting dots when choices were few and fuel was hard to find. Bike plans for cities began to sprout up in Tucson, Santa Barbara, and San Diego looking more like comic books. They proposed bold roadway changes by very creative and thoughtful people.

But a dilemma followed – "Should we mix them with cars or put them on paths?" These 11 words have found little agreement

since the 70s and the debate often makes the cycling community look like a pack of fools.

On one side the effective cyclists, those that know that the roadway is safer and more effective, want funds spent on roadway improvements and education. They show studies about how sidewalks and paths have more crashes and only cause confusion with all the walkers, joggers and cyclists mixing seemingly undirected. The other side has a perspective that greenways and trails are the incubator of future fully grown cyclists and see trails as the place children and others meander their way around neighborhoods in unpolluted air without the threat of errors that could get them flattened by a heavy vehicle.

Both groups are correct but there is little common ground. This often leads to outrage over who has the best facts and where the monies should be spent. Often this disagreement leads to the projected improvement projects doing a disappearing act.

To complicate this is the middle ground of paved shoulders and bike lanes at the edge of the roadway. Neither road nor trail, this is where all the debris that falls in the lane is blown and where grates, cracks, storm water and their facilities live. It is the leftover

space filled with everything the bicycle cannot endure and for most planners it is the solution of under or misinformed choice. It is the default and what we get when we cannot agree and explain otherwise.

This complicated mess leaves the cycling community at a zero net gain and covered with mud. This has continued in cycles for two generations with no end in sight. The politicians take advantage of our disagreement and just take the funds elsewhere where it can be spent without argument.

Fact is: we need both types of improvements and both types of cyclists. Some riders will never be happy around or in traffic. The reality of a two-ton vehicle anywhere near them every few seconds just isn't emotionally manageable.

Others will be uneasy riding around unpredictable children, walkers, joggers, and many uncontrolled intersections as they negotiate trails.

Reality is: the roadway works well for trained and experienced cyclists and they are a noisy bunch but correct. Reality is: trails and greenways are the training grounds for children, families and a needed safe and air pollution free place for older adults, special

Laura Hallam



needs and recreational users of all types. Both are multi-use. Both are excellent...period.

We must fully agree and develop a written and understandable mission to get both types of facilities and training commonplace. Trails take more capital funds. Roads take more education.

If we want a say in how our transportation system functions we must have a vision that is in agreement and understandable to those that fund and support it. 100 percent of us need to understand that only if we agree on what is needed will cycling ever be seen as safe, predictable and universal. Trails and roadways give it the survivable diversity that could make it thrive.

A national transportation education program that certifies pre-car drivers on bikes first could go a long way with clearing up all the issues over a generation. Being confident, competent and predictable on a bicycle before they get behind 4,000 pounds of steel would produce diversity of insight and change many opinions forever.

## Ask Geo

*continued from previous page*

Surrounding sounds are cues we can use for our safety. The statute that applies is not specific to bicyclists, but includes all vehicle operators and provides for the use of hearing aids.

### §316.304 - Wearing of Headsets

(1) No person shall operate a vehicle while wearing a headset, headphone, or other listening device, other than a hearing aid or instrument for the improvement of defective human hearing.

(2) This section does not apply to:

(d) Any person using a headset in conjunction with a cellular telephone that only provides sound through one ear and allows surrounding sounds to be heard with the other ear.

(There are other exceptions that do not apply to bicyclists, other than police officers on bicycles.)

### Toolkit for Other States?

(September 5, 2010)

**Q:** Ian asked: Are there bicycle law toolkits for law enforcement in other states? I live in Maryland and would love to get something like this to my local law enforcement officials.

**A:** I am not aware of any similar resource for other states. I am also not aware of a pro-

gram like the Bicycle Law Enforcement Program that we are developing that goes into the details of the laws.

There is an excellent national training course for officers that is available, but since it is intended for all states, it does not cover the details of each states' laws.

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Enhancing Bicycle Safety: Law Enforcement's Role

This is a CD-ROM self-paced interactive training for all law enforcement officers. It includes seven content sections with videos and a final evaluation. Content includes: Why Law Enforcement; Understanding Bicycle Crashes; Applying Traffic Laws to Cyclists; Specific Laws for Cyclists; Enforcement Techniques; Crash Investigation and Reporting; and Review and Next Steps. Completion of the final evaluation prompts a certificate of completion and the achieved score. Based on their state-defined passing score, the learner may be eligible for in-service training hours. Estimated contact time for completing the training is approximately 2 hours. To request a copy, contact NHTSA's Safety Countermeasures Division at 202-366-1739 or email Paula Bawer at [paula.bawer@dot.gov](mailto:paula.bawer@dot.gov).

Eventually, when we have completed the Program for Florida, we hope to adapt the materials to the laws of other states. That's a long way off, though. We have our hands full now...with just Florida.



Minimize your carbon footprint NOW and take off those unwanted pounds at the same time. Self mulching. Get one of these today. Photo by Ed Logan.

A word from your membership director...

## Thanks!

Deb DeVoe

Thank You for your membership and dedication to Cycling Advocacy. FBA is very appreciative of your membership and awareness of cycling issues.

Many of you are aware that this position is a "part time" job for me and have been very patient and understanding when those "Thank You" letters are a little slow.

Your help is needed! Help me keep your donations appropriated to the correct category. Some are renewals, some are donations to a specific program, some are straight donations, and when we request "year-end" donations, even some of those go to a specific program. It is very important that I know where your donation is meant to go. Paperwork, if provided (membership application or renewal notices), is very important. If you thought your "year-end appeal" was your renewal, it is important to understand this donation is separate from your renewal and that is how the donation is credited.

If you have opted to receive your renewal via email, be aware that I need to have updated email addresses as they change. I have had many kick back to me. You then receive a paper "final" renewal a few months later.

Our numbers are down this year, our economy is slow, so when members do not renew that means our funds are limited. Every membership counts, each donation, regardless the amount, helps keep our programs going.

Your Membership Counts!

\*DISCLAIMER: The purpose of this column is to inform about bicycling laws. The material provided here and through other means is for general informational purposes only and shall in no way constitute or be construed as legal advice by the officers, directors, agents or employees of the Florida Bicycle Association. If your experience in a court of law or on the streets differs from that presented, we want to know about it, but George Martin and the FBA are not accountable for a ruling contrary to our interpretation of Florida Law or other consequences of cycling. You should seek legal advice on a particular situation.

Central Florida Chapter...

## Bike/Walk Central Florida Update

by Brad Kuhn

The third quarter has been go-time for Bike/Walk Central Florida as we put words into action. We have divided our board into three teams focused on our three key goals of:

1. Enacting complete streets policies in Orange and Seminole Counties.
2. Improving connectivity and safety on our trails.
3. Encouraging more people to bike/walk.

We have developed a series of recurring monthly events, anchored by our First Friday drive-time ride to promote bicycles as alternative transportation.

And teamed up with other Central Florida bicycle advocacy groups on several fun rides – including evening ice cream rides, and Sunday morning farmers market shopping trips. We've even launched a regularly

scheduled "Bike Bus" from Downtown Orlando to the University of Central Florida, that includes a smart-phone tracking app to show prospective riders where the bus is on the route and when it will arrive.

Within the past month, we've teamed up with Commute Orlando to promote Cycling Savvy and Bike/Walk Central Florida at local health fairs.

We've begun discussions through our Safe Routes to School initiative to launch Walk and Roll Wednesdays, a monthly healthy kids initiative.

And we've entered discussions with a local bike shop to launch a Bike Valet in Downtown Orlando and at select community events.

People are beginning to recognize our name. We have almost 80 fans who follow the newsfeed on our Facebook page, and

another 80 or so people who have registered on our website or signed up for our mailing list at events.

The board is energized and committed to making a difference. First out of the box: A public health challenge to the use of bollards as traffic control devices on trails in Orange County. Staff has developed a Powerpoint presentation and we hope to take our case to the county in October.

Plans are moving forward for a 17-acre mountain bike park near the Fashion Square Mall, as well as Sunday Parkways open streets events beginning Spring 2011. We learned recently of plans for a new bike trail to be built along Alafaya Trail in Southeast Orange County, which would put our paved trail network over the 100-mile mark.

Downtown Orlando's new entertainment venues have all made bike facilities manda-



tory, and backers of Sunrail have been approached by a cadre of vendors pitching various alt-trans commuter stations and bike-share programs. And several mainstreet communities have made bike racks a priority purchase item.

Participation in our scheduled rides has grown from nine, to more than twenty, and we've just scratched the surface. Next month we will launch our first scheduled walk – a one-mile, trainer-supervised powerwalk around Lake Formosa.

I look forward to providing you all with more details about our task force initiative in the next *Messenger*.

Florida's signature bike touring event gets a boost...

## \$30K grant will help Bike Florida promote spring 'Florida's Eden' tour

A fresh \$30,000 grant will help boost turnout for Bike Florida's 18th annual mass spring tour next year.

Through 2005, the tour – Florida's largest – annually drew close to 1,000 cyclists. This year the number was 350. Visit Gainesville awarded the grant to help fill hotel rooms during the weeklong ride that will take place March 26 to April 1.

"Everybody loves this spring ride," said Bike Florida Executive Director Hope Howland-Cook on receipt of the grant. "But we've needed new marketing dollars to help

reach beyond the cyclists who, though they keep coming back year after year, come back in decreasing numbers because of age, infirmity or these days of just plain not having the money."

The 2011 ride will take place entirely along trails and back roads of Alachua County. Alachua is home to both Bike Florida and to Florida's Eden, the Gainesville-based "place" advocate, that steered the grant through Visit Gainesville, the Alachua County tourism marketing agency.

Thanks to the grant, Howland-Cook says Bike Florida will be able to promote the tour in top cycling states that include Washington,

Wisconsin, Maine, Minnesota and Oregon. She'll have money for a shuttle bus to help move people around who choose not to ride an entire day's portion of the tour – planned for about 300 miles altogether --- and also for nightly entertainment.

Earlier this year, when the spring tour looped some 300 miles around DeLand, 97 percent of the cyclists came from outside Volusia County. Howland-Cook expects the same ratio of out-of-county cyclists to locals.

Bike Florida also operates a series of week-long fall-winter tours based in St. Augustine that follow the St. Johns River-to-Sea Loop, a 260-mile route that incorporates mostly

back road cycling with about 45 miles along paved, off-road trails.

The company is supported in part by the Florida Department of Transportation and by the Transportation Technology Center of the University of Florida that it helps staff.

Bike Florida also supplies regional trainers for the UF-based Florida Bicycle and Safety Education Program. Among its programs, Bike Florida gives away helmets through organizations such as the Epilepsy Foundation.

For additional information and to register for Bike Florida tours, log onto [www.bike-florida.org](http://www.bike-florida.org).

## Bicycles for the homeless

continued from page 2

abuse, and violence. These difficulties can lead to homelessness.

Young people often become homeless due to familial disruption, including divorce, neglect, or abuse. Unaccompanied youth are often unconnected to services or shelters. One quarter of former foster youth experience homelessness within four years of exiting foster care. Too often, youth are separated from other family members when shelter policies force older adolescent males to be housed in adult shelters. The numbers of homeless youth are staggering. According to Schoolink staff, a joint YMCA-Sarasota County School Board program, there are between 800 and 1,000 children in Sarasota County alone that are homeless or on the verge of being homeless. The number in Manatee County is even greater. Keep in mind that these numbers are those people the social service agencies know about.

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the number of homeless people in Sarasota and Manatee counties increased by 34.5 percent between 2007 and 2008.

One of the continuing needs of local social services agencies that serve the homeless in Sarasota and Manatee counties is for bicycles. To a homeless person, a bicycle provides transportation to job interviews, jobs, school, medical appointments, and social service agencies. A bicycle increases the possibility of finding a job and it gives the individual a greater sense of independence and increased self-esteem.

In response to these needs, in June of this year, a group of avid cyclists in greater Sarasota formed Bicycles for the Homeless Inc. (BFHI), a not-for-profit corporation. BFHI has three objectives. The first is to donate bicycles to homeless individuals and those in need, including children, through

social services agencies and other nonprofit organizations that assist the homeless. The second objective is to educate the homeless on bicyclists' rights, Florida bicycle laws, safe riding techniques and practices, and bicycle repair and maintenance. The third objective is to provide bicycle maintenance and repair support where possible.

Our business plan is to solicit donations from people who own bikes that they no longer use, need or want. We appeal for cash and bike donations through homeowner associations, religious organizations, service clubs, the media, and bicycle shops, events and organizations, such as FBA. South Florida is an epicenter of retired and aging folks who have a bike or two, but eventually give up riding. Our focus is on obtaining youth and adult fat tire bikes and bike parts and accessories in good working order so we don't spend a lot of money on repairs.

For adult bikes, we include front and rear lights, a rack, and a bike lock with chain. We also provide each recipient with a copy of FBA's lime green Florida Bicycle Law Enforcement Guide. Bikes provided for youth include a rack, a bike lock with chain, the Guide, and a helmet. Helmets are donated by Epilepsy Services of Southwest Florida. We do not add lights to youth bikes, as we don't want to encourage them to ride at night. Eventually, as our resources increase, we hope to include a water bottle, a bell or horn, and a small seat bag with a patch kit, spare tire, and a few basic tools.

As of September 3, 2010 we have distributed 13 bikes (11 for children), have 4 more youth bikes ready to go, and 8 adult bikes under evaluation. We just received our IRS 501(c)(3) tax exemption rating and are gearing up to solicit money and bikes. For more information about BFHI or to see how you can help, check us out on the Internet at [www.BicyclesForTheHomeless.org](http://www.BicyclesForTheHomeless.org).



Weight loss, that is...

# Chopper pilot counts Key West trip as a loss

by Herb Hiller

He'd never toss an energy bar wrapper anywhere except in the trash, but Army-disciplined Al Melvin isn't giving a second thought to shedding pounds all up and down the East Coast Greenway as he likely becomes the first person any of us ever heard of to cycle the near-600-mile route both ways on a single journey through Florida.

Why?

Sure, to regain his lost military trim – 30 lbs. added after botched back surgery that ended almost 20 military and civilian years as a helicopter pilot and left him adding pounds like a U-pick basket in a melon patch.

More so, because he wants to speak out about what he calls “the shameful health care for military veterans,” whom he feels go neglected from a too often uncaring civilian world they've defended.

“Maybe it's because military service has become all voluntary,” Al says.

“When there's nobody in the family in uniform, that kind of leaves people unaware that fellow Americans are not only dying in Iraq and Afghanistan. They're coming home wounded, sometimes needing lifelong care, and they're getting short-changed as if they were just some weapons program we can no longer afford.”



Left: Al, age 21 with Cobra. Pleiku, Vietnam, 1968. Right: Al, age 59, with Division of forestry Cobra at retirement in 2006.

Al, 63, from Milton in the far western Panhandle, decided to make his case along the East Coast Greenway because that route mea-



sure about right for what he has in mind. A month of 50-mile days?

Yes. Do-able. Al was meant to have started October 1 in Port St. Lucie, cycling north to

Fernandina Beach and south to Key West before heading back to where he began. He planned to ride solo. During nine years in the U.S. Army, Al served from 1968 to 1970 as a Cobra helicopter pilot in the Central Highlands of Vietnam, and then as an air ambulance pilot with the Army National Guard. He later flew for Mobil Oil in the Gulf of Mexico, for the Florida Division of Forestry, and worked as an air traffic controller in Anchorage, Alaska and in Leesburg, Virginia.

He's riding a Trek 830 Antelope, equipped with lights, pulling an Aosom two-wheel tag-along bike trailer, which will weigh about 60 pounds when loaded with lightweight clothing, tent and sleeping bag, first aid and shaving kits, batteries, high energy snack bars, water, and emergency equipment.

He'll wear a Camelback hydration system, helmet, and gloves. A handlebar bag will hold additional personal items.

A locking, weather resistant hard-side cargo bin mounted on the rear bike rack will hold repair gear.

“Depending on the weather,” Al said before departure, “I plan to camp along the way, to rough it as much as possible.”

However, as early word got around about his ride, offers began coming in for at-home hospitality. In Fernandina Beach, Amelia Island Trails invited Al to speak. In Miami, Green Mobility Network has arranged a meeting for his time there.

*continued on next page*

Photo: St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra and the Beaches VCB

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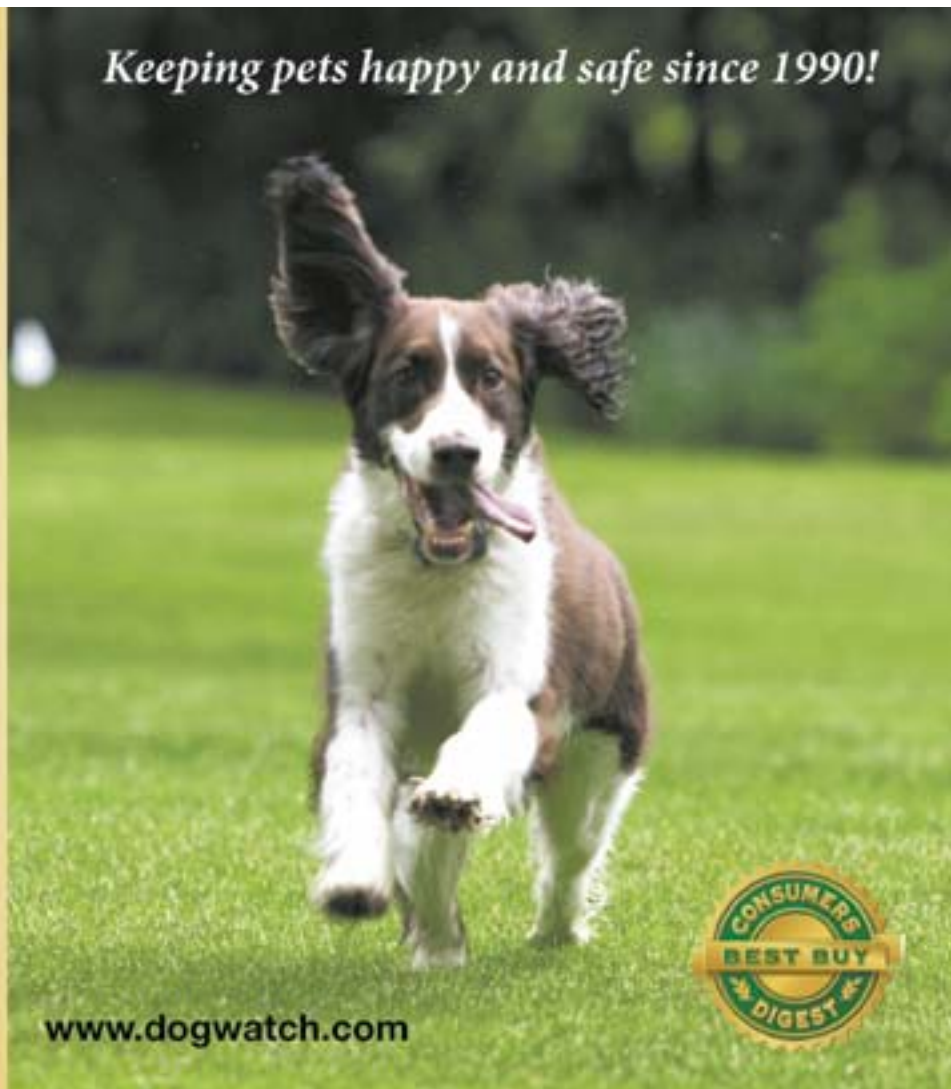
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## Shedding pounds along the East Coast

*continued from previous page*



*Al at age 63 with bike and trailer.*

Before the ride, Al, unemployed, was soliciting sponsors and donors to help meet his expenses but also to raise funds for the American Legion for use in its veterans assistance programs. He asks that donors channel their contributions through American

Legion Post #78, 6025 Spikes Way, Milton, FL 32570.

Al began his journey as an ordinary cyclist.

"I've occasionally biked the Blackwater Heritage Trail here in Santa Rosa County.

Other than that, my riding has been limited to local area exploration, with no trip taking more than five or six hours." He spent all September training.

Al ended his flying career piloting the same type helicopter that he cut his teeth on 35 years before. He calls the Cobra "a rocket ship with rotor blades that also became part of my body, an extension of a seventh-sense, difficult to put into words, but nevertheless experienced at the cellular level.

"When that bird soared, my spirit soared. When she shuddered and didn't feel right, I was out of sorts and apprehensive as well."

His love affair with the Cobra ended after nearly 10,000 accident-free flight hours when he twisted his back trying to keep his machine from damage ahead of an advancing thunderstorm.

That led to surgery for three fused vertebrae

Al says, "Having spent most of my life looking down on earthbound creatures, and capable of accurately predicting where I would be at a given time, I now find myself grounded in reality, walking and pedaling like everyone else, looking up frequently, and wondering how on earth anyone ever gets around without a helicopter."

Of his ride, Al's wife of 38 years, Sylvia, a teacher and freelance writer, jokes, "Most men have a midlife crisis in their 50s. Al waited 'til his 60s."

You can reach Al on his ride at 850/529-4473, [arotorhead@earthlink.net](mailto:arotorhead@earthlink.net).

Not just another pretty face...

## VISITFLORIDA's new trails page



How big a boon to Florida trails and Florida cycling?

VISITFLORIDA's new trails-tourism website was scheduled in early October to start telling the world about Florida cycling and all other non-motorized trails. A first report of website use will come in the winter edition of the *FBA Messenger*.



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SideWalks4Kids...

# Turning tragedy into advocacy for a safer Cape Coral

by Holly Ford

**C**ameron was 15 when on the tragic night of June 23, 2010, he died instantly from massive head, neck and torso injuries. He was hit by a car while riding a bike and didn't have a chance for survival.

Even if he had, I wonder if he would have been crippled or brain damaged.

We recently moved to Cape Coral, Florida from Missouri, where we lived in the suburbs of St. Louis.

There were sidewalks, crosswalks, speed limits of 25 or 35 mph.

There were no 45 mph school zone speeds and we had more signs and flashing yellow lights operating before and after school each day, slowing the speed down to 15 mph.

There were also crossing guards in front of the elementary schools helping the children cross the street.



This was something I took for granted and now regret!

Cape Coral is completely unsafe for our children to walk or ride bikes. The city has not planned for this community to travel this way.

Cape Coral is designed as a passing through community for tourists – not designed well for a neighborhood or real community growth.

It has the potential for sidewalks and bike lanes with great schools, shopping and medical facilities. But no one made it a priority over the past 40 years of development for pedestrians, only for cars.

Now advocators like BikeWalkLee, Florida Bicycle Association and Complete Streets initiatives are trying to make a difference.

They communicate daily on your behalf to try to fix things, urging cities and city planners to “Do the Right Thing,” by fixing our streets.

The importance is obvious as children and others have been injured and killed. Please Join In on the discussions and volunteer!

They need supporters and community reac-

tion to this issue as our streets and lives become busier everyday.

No one would think that city planning would be so extremely important, but it is.

Families in Cape Coral – and towns and cities across Florida – need to become more involved to protect children and others from the ever mounting dangers of traffic.

Awareness is what's needed now in our community. The need for Complete Streets for all users is long overdue.

Everyday we are at risk of another tragedy.

Please visit my website for suggestions at [www.sidewalksamerica.org](http://www.sidewalksamerica.org).

Please Oppose “Super Street” until the City of Cape Coral, makes our streets safe for all users!

New FBA board members...

## Hope Howland-Cook



**H**ope Howland-Cook, a Florida native, is the Executive Director of Bike Florida & Share the Road.

Hope has a master's degree in Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management with a specialization in Ecotourism and Cultural Heritage Management, from the University of Florida. Hope also has graduate certificates in historic preservation and livable community development.

While working on her degree, she was a graduate assistant for Bike Florida. She has been with the organization since 2005.

She began working with the Florida Traffic and Bicycle Safety Education Program (FTBSEP) housed at the University of Florida and became Program Director for Bike Florida in 2008.

Hope has been the Executive Director of Bike Florida & Share the Road since 2009. She is a League Cycling Instructor and a regional trainer for the FTBSEP.

Hope is a member of the National Bike Tour Director's Association where Bike Florida & Share the Road has led seminars on how to make bicycle tours safer. She has worked to increase exposure of the programs



Above: Hope Howland-Cook fits a helmet at a recent bike event. Right: Ted Wendler

and develop partnerships with organizations such as Florida Dept. of Transportation, Pedestrian/Bicycling Safety Resource Center, Office of Greenways and Trails, East Coast Greenways Alliance, Safe Kids, Florida State Parks, Visit Florida and many others.

Hope's goals for FBA are to increase the active membership of younger cyclists and minority populations and to increase partnership development and exposure of FBA programs.

Hope currently lives in Gainesville and enjoys riding the Gainesville-Hawthorne and San Felasco trails as often as she can.

She hopes to one day be able to keep up with her Ironman fiancée, but only sees that happening with the investment of a tandem. In the meantime, she has no problem with enjoying the ride!

## Ted Wendler

Ted Wendler has had a life-long interest in cycling. From his early days riding his coaster-brake bike to parochial school in Miami to his later days as a licensed rider racing ten-speeds for a Schwinn shop in Jacksonville where he worked and mastered the art of wheel building.

While in Oregon, Ted went to Eastern Oregon State College and worked as a private contractor for the Forest Service conducting stand exams and climbing trees. Ted moved back to Florida to be near his family and lived in Sarasota working as a finish carpenter commuting the 15 miles to work each way by bike to build cabinets and wooden boats. While in Sarasota, Ted pursued another life-long interest in sailing and could often be seen on the bay on his catamaran year round in every kind of weather imaginable.

Eventually, Ted went back to school to finish his degree and graduated from the University of South Florida with a BA in psychology. Upon graduation, Ted moved to Tallahassee to attend Florida State University and enjoyed riding his bike on the St. Marks



Trail and in the Apalachicola National Forest. While in graduate school Ted worked with children's advocate Budd Bell in the Florida State Legislature and completed his degree in clinical Social Work. Out of graduate school, Ted worked with adolescents and young adults as a field-therapist in a wilderness treatment program and rode his bike on the Paisley Trail in the Ocala National Forest during his time off. The three-foot law brought Ted out of the woods and onto the roads of West Volusia and brought the Florida Bicycle Association to his attention. Currently, Ted is working towards licensure as a therapist and purchased plans to build a sailboat to take advantage of the many sailing opportunities near his home in DeLand.

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Lobbying for Safer Bicycling!

## Pedal and paddle through 'Florida's Eden' with Bike Florida 2011

by Hope Howland-Cook

**P**lanning for the 18th annual Bike Florida spring tour is underway and it appears that this year's tour will be nothing short of spectacular. Their staff has developed a wonderful route that will combine the city feeling of Gainesville with the natural beauty that surrounds it.

The ride is being called "Florida's Eden" for the natural beauties cyclists will be exposed to along the way.

Riders will depart from Gainesville on March 26 and return on the first of April, after a week of 30-50 mile rides. Bike Florida looks to maintain the consistency of excellence they have provided in years past. While on the tour riders will have the pleasure of stopping in some of Florida's lovely yet least

publicized cities: High Springs, Newberry and historic Micanopy.

Each city has a unique feeling and sense of self pride which can only be felt in person.

High Springs highlights the most important resource available, water, which was extensively studied by the late Wes Skiles.

In Newberry, participants can try their luck on an Olympic regulation archery field or engage in a number of physical activities at the Easton Newberry Sports Complex.

Cyclists are in for a real treat as they enter America's quintessential historic community, home to the fictional Dr. Benjamin Stone, of Micanopy. Micanopy is an award winning community for antiquing and deep south experiences, and the backdrop for the Michael J. Fox film, "Doc Hollywood."

This unique route through the hidden treasures of Florida's quaint towns and historic hamlets, turquoise springs and rivers, rich forests and rolling pastures covered with wildflowers, truly gives riders an experience of Florida's Eden.

"For those who can not attend the entire week, we offer two three-day packages" says ride director Rachel Weissler.

The Gainesville Getaway option allows riders to begin the tour on Saturday, March 26, and experience all the wonderful attractions in Gainesville, home of the Florida Gators.

Participants can also choose the High Springs Holiday which is ideal for those who want to cycle as well as experience paddling adventures at the springs and on the rivers along the way.

"The ride is geared for all levels of cyclists, so whether you are an avid cyclist or a first timer this ride will be fun," states Bike Florida & Share the Road executive director Hope Howland-Cook.

Buckle that helmet and be prepared to see Florida in a way that many people are unaware exists. Visit [www.bikeflorida.com](http://www.bikeflorida.com) for more details and registration. Feel free to email [info@bikeflorida.org](mailto:info@bikeflorida.org) or call (352) 224.8602 Bike Florida staff for further assistance.



Representative Adam Fetterman, accepting his FBA annual award for Elected Official Champion of the Year at the Treasure Coast Cycling Association's Labor Day Holiday Group Ride in Stuart. Following the award presentation, Adam joined the group of nearly 100 for a 58 mile ride. Florida legislator Fetterman represents bicyclists in District 81 and in Tallahassee.

Hurry! There's still time...

## October is Florida Greenways and Trails month

**O**ctober is Florida Greenways and Trails Month, the perfect time of year to celebrate and enjoy Florida's natural outdoor playground!

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Greenways & Trails (OGT) invites Florida's communities to host events featuring the state's beautiful greenways and trails and highlighting their recreational and economic benefits.

Recognizing the value of trails and greenways to the state's tourism industry, the Sunshine State's official tourism marketing corporation, VISIT FLORIDA, has launched an exciting new "Trails-Tourism" component to its website.

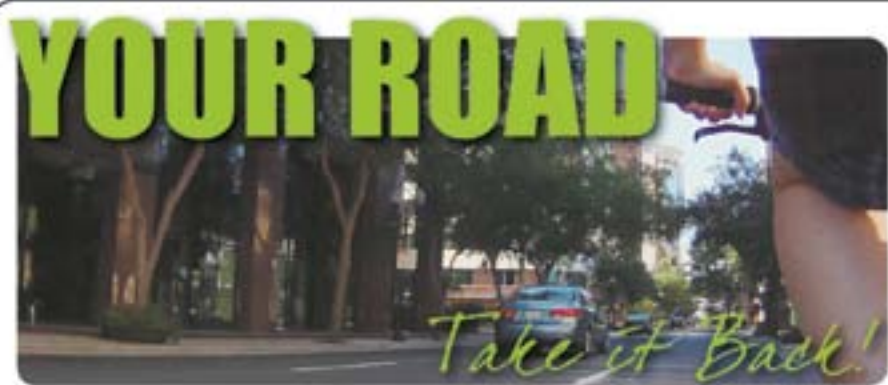
In bringing together trail descriptions and maps with information about lodging, restau-

rants, outfitters and other travel related services, trails and greenways now join the ranks of destinations such as beaches, resorts, golf courses and themed attractions.

The VISITFLORIDA.com "Trails-Tourism" feature premiered on October 4--be sure to visit the website and help us spread the word about this great new resource.

To reach a statewide audience with news of your Greenways and Trails Month event, we invite you to complete the registration form which is available at [FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com](http://FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com).

Trail-related activities will be posted on the OGT website throughout October. You may return the form by email, fax or mail. For more information, call toll free: 1-877-822-5208 or visit [FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com](http://FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com).



Check out FBA's all-new cycling education program! We will show you simple strategies to eliminate obstacles and ride with ease and confidence in places you might never have thought possible.

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# Selected State-wide Contacts

Here's whom to call about your bicycle/pedestrian/transportation concerns.

We ran out of room, so many contacts are not included. Go to [www.floridabicycle.org/statecontacts.htm](http://www.floridabicycle.org/statecontacts.htm) for the complete list.

AGENCY/FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	NAME	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
FDOT Central Office			
State Safety Officer	Marianne Trussell	850.245.1500	marianne.trussell@dot.state.fl.us
State Pedestrian & Bicycle Coordinator	Dennis Scott	850.245.1527	dennis.scott@dot.state.fl.us
State SRTS Coordinator	Pat Pieratte	850.245.1529	pat.pieratte@dot.state.fl.us
Asst. Pedestrian-Bicycle Coordinator	Dwight Kingsbury	850.245.1520	dwight.kingsbury@dot.state.fl.us
Florida School Crossing Guard Program Administrator	Providance Nagy	850.245.1757	providance.nagy@dot.state.fl.us
Ped-bike traffic safety grants	Ralph Salvas	850.245.1526	ralph.salvas@dot.state.fl.us
ADA Coordinator	Dean Perkins	850.414.4359	dean.perkins@dot.state.fl.us
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Polk County TPO	Ryan Kordek	863.534.6558	ryankordek@polk-county.net
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Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (MPO)		850.891.6801	
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City of Tampa/Parks & Rec Dept/Greenways & Trails Coordinator	Karla Price	813.274.5134	pr07@ci.tampa.fl.us
Other state & federal agency staff			
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FTBSEP assistant	John Egberts	352.392.4042x1370	safety@hnp.ufl.edu
FDEP Office of Greenways & Trails	Jim Wood	850.245.2052	jim.m.wood@dep.state.fl.us
FDOE Student Transportation/Director	Charlie Hood	850.245.9924	charlie.hood@fldoe.org
Florida Tech Transfer (T**2) Center/Co-directors	Janet Degner, Nina Barker	352.392.2371x227	jdegn@ce.ufl.edu
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Florida Pedestrian/Bicycling Safety resource Center	Wanda Wilkerson	352.273-1680	mediacenter@ce.ufl.edu

## 2010 Florida Bicycle/Pedestrian Law Enforcement Guides are available

Thanks to the Florida Pedestrian/Bicycling Safety Resource Center, the Florida Bicycle/Pedestrian Law Enforcement Guides reflecting 2010 statute changes are now available, including the mandatory bike lane law which went into effect September 1.

This handy booklet, updated annually to reflect statute changes, has been distributed to nearly 100,000 individuals since 2001.

You can download a copy or request copies for you and your friends by contacting FBA.

### New text includes:

#### Roadway position [§316.2065(5)]

A person operating a bicycle on a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic under the conditions existing must ride in the lane marked for bicycle use or, if no lane is marked for bicycle use, as close as practicable [safe] to the roadway's right-hand curb or edge, except under any of the following situations:

\* when passing another vehicle

\* when preparing for a left turn

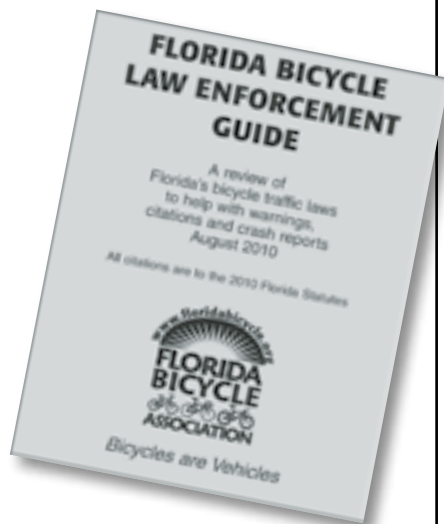
\* when reasonably necessary



to avoid conditions including (but not limited to), a fixed or moving object, parked or moving vehicle, pedestrian, animal, or surface hazard

\* when a lane is too narrow for a bicycle and another vehicle to travel safely side by side.

A cyclist operating on a one-way street with two or more marked traffic lanes may ride as close to the left-hand edge of the roadway as practicable.



Visit the FBA website to review a complete description of the Bike Lane Law and to download a copy of the guide.

Lots of distracted drivers...

## You had better pay attention

by Dan Moser, FBA Program Manager



When cycling I generally stay away from features clearly designed for pedestrians, but sometimes conditions dictate otherwise.

Recently I was using a crosswalk in order to traverse a major intersection when almost directly in front of me I witnessed a red light runner slam into another vehicle, totaling both cars.

Because I was so close to the event and able to get there immediately I was the first person to attempt to render aid. Fortunately for both drivers and their passengers everyone appeared to be uninjured.

Considering there were children in both vehicles and that the victim of the red light runner was nine months pregnant, the fact that all involved seemed OK was yet another affirmation of seatbelt and child car-seat use.

As I was assisting the motorists get their children out of their vehicles I asked the person who obviously caused the crash if she had been on her phone as she never even appeared to hit her brakes.

But she assured me she wasn't talking or texting. A while later I asked again how she managed to enter the intersection on a red light after at least half-a-dozen vehicles that had a green signal were well into their left turn.

It was then that she admitted her child was fussing in the back seat (thankfully, appropriately strapped into a child car seat) and she was turned around dealing with the situation as she approached the major intersection.

About an hour after leaving the scene of the crash and completing the tasks I was intending to before being sidetracked it dawned on me that I very well could have been the victim of this red light runner.

As I recalled the timing of events (it appeared as slow-motion as I watched it unfold in front of me) I realized that had I

not waited until the pedestrian signal turned to "WALK" I would have been right where the offending driver passed over the crosswalk.

Needless to say, unlike everyone in cars who were involved, I wouldn't have walked away from this one (I estimate the driver moving at 40-45 MPH).

Like many of us who are at the mercy of traffic operations managers, I often am frustrated by the second-class status we get when we use pedestrian features.

We all know that in order to make vehicle traffic flow as quickly and efficiently as possible (making the "car sewer" work,) crosswalk users are frequently made to wait longer than is appropriate or equitable.

In this particular case I could see that even though I hadn't yet gotten the "WALK" signal it was probably safe to start crossing since all vehicle signals were such that, other than right-on-red movements, no one should have been crossing my path.

But for some reason I decided to wait for what turned out to be a mere few more seconds until the "WALK" signal illuminated, a decision that turned out to be the difference between life and death.

I'm relating this story of distracted driving to remind everyone who is a vulnerable road user to be ever vigilant and not be distracted yourself lest we become a victim.

And because we're without the protection of a metal and plastic cocoon with many safety features we'll likely pay a high price if others – or we - screw-up and we're not paying enough attention to see it coming and be able to react.

This goes for vehicular cycling as well as sidepath riding, walking, and running. In my case I feel very fortunate to have been following the rules precisely and being hyper-aware of my surroundings at a very busy, high-speed intersection.

## Show Your Support and Help Get the Word Out

Educate other users that bicycle drivers are allowed the full use of the lane on most of our roads\* with an FBA static cling. Only \$2.00 (mailing included). New and renewing members get this free!

Order via FBA's online store at [www.floridabicycle.org](http://www.floridabicycle.org)



\*Florida Statute 316.2065(5)(a)3.



### 2nd Annual Florida Bicycle Club Leadership Workshop

Make sure your bicycle club is represented Saturday, November 20, 2010, in Clermont in conjunction with the 31st annual Horrible Hundred.

This year, we have expanded the workshop to include leaders other than just presidents, plus we have extended the time period from two to four hours to allow more topics with interactive discussion.

Club leaders, *this workshop is for you*. Make sure your club is represented.

**Date: Saturday, 11/20/10**

**Time: 2:00-6:00 pm**

**Location: TBD, Clermont, FL**

**Fee: FREE**

**Registration opens 10/15/10**

Workshop co-sponsor, the Florida Freewheelers, will once again provide one complimentary Horrible Hundred registration per club for individuals attending the workshop. The Horrible Hundred is Sunday, 11/21/10.

## Bike Bus commuters

continued from page 1

The inaugural ride took place on August 23, 2010, the first day of the fall semester, to get motorists used to seeing cyclists commuting on University Blvd. early on.

Only the two of us rode on that first ride, but it wasn't long before other students joined the group. During the month that the bike bus has been operating, it has gained 3-4 regular riders and others join from time to time, including a few who were on the sidewalk but gave road riding a try as we passed with the group.

We chose University Blvd. because it is the most direct route to UCF and many students and employees live near this main road. It is well-maintained, has good pavement, and is six lanes wide, giving motorists plenty of room to go around the bike bus.

Other students and coworkers wanted to bike to work, but they did not feel comfortable riding on the road.

This left them with two options: take the sidewalk, putting them in more danger; or take the trail, which doubled the distance they traveled.

The bike bus gives them a better option, improving their confidence and helping them feel as comfortable driving their bike on the road as they do driving their car.

While there are multi-use trails that parallel the route, it is not feasible for those that live along University Blvd. without going several miles out of their way.

There are more obstacles on the trails, such as walkers, bollards, and recreational cyclists traveling in all different directions.

The arterial roads that connect to the trails also have a myriad of problems including narrow two-lane roads, poorly maintained asphalt, and dangerous bike lanes on high speed roads.

We were a little anxious during the first few rides as we got used to sharing the road with cars. Learning to ride assertively with both the correct lane position and demeanor

greatly decreased our anxiety and increased our enjoyment of the commute.

Instead of being trapped in a car, we enjoy the sunrise, socialize, and exercise while commuting to work or school. While we get occasional commentary from motorists, none have threatened our safety.

The vast majority have been courteous by keeping their distance, changing lanes long before reaching the bike bus, and allowing other cars to merge into their lane.

In an effort to increase ridership and visibility, Jason created the Bike Bus Tracker at <http://bikebustracker.com/>. This website helps passengers better plan their bike commute by being able to see the location of the bus in real time.



It also shows upcoming rides when the bus isn't running, alerts when the bus is delayed, and distance and estimated times of arrival.

We are very encouraged by the growing interest in the bike bus and the cycling culture in Orlando. The future of the bike bus is exciting, and this is just the beginning.

Our hope is to inspire others and help them organize their own bike buses.

We're always looking to meet new riders, so if you're in the Orlando area, hop on the bike bus!

### More information:

<http://commuteorlando.com/bikebus/>  
<http://www.facebook.com/cfbikebus>  
<http://twitter.com/cfbikebus>  
<http://www.bikebustracker.com>

## Bicycle Tourism Facts:

- Bicycling ranks number three on the list of most common vacation activities and number two for outdoor recreation in the U.S. with 60 million Americans enjoying the activity.
- More Americans bicycle than golf, ski and play tennis combined.
- American consumers purchase 19 million bicycles each year, 20 percent more than cars and trucks combined and 25 times more than boats.
- Bicycle tourists typically travel in groups with friends or family members.
- In an Adirondack survey of people who visited or were considering a visit for bike tours, the average group size was five.
- Those who take long-distance, multi-day bicycling vacations spend \$100 to \$300 per day on food, lodging and other items.

Source: Parks & Trails New York and the New York State Canal Corp.

## Pace line riding requires concentration, etiquette

by Jeff Hohlstein, Director, FBA First Coast Chapter



Riding in a paceline is exhilarating and exciting. It's the most efficient way for a group of cyclists to get on down the road. It is also demanding, requires concentration and can be unforgiving. In one Florida bicycle club many of last year's crashes happened in pacelines.

So as the 2010 fall riding season begins in earnest, it's time to review some of the basics.

The efficiency of paceline riding comes from being in the 'wind shadow' of the rider ahead. Typically, that shadow extends as a V behind the leading rider, widening to include the whole line behind. The closer you are to the rider ahead, the more you will benefit. Personally, my heart is 15-20 beats per minute slower in a paceline as opposed to pulling or riding solo, same speed.

### Safety:

It is best to maintain your front wheel distance one to two feet behind the wheel of the rider ahead.

**Never overlap wheels.** If your front wheel touches the lead rider's rear wheel you will almost certainly go down.

**Never stare at the rear wheel of the rider ahead.** It can be mesmerizing and **you'll get no warning** of approaching problems.

### In the pack:

Maintain your position and watch for obstacles.

As safety permits, repeat calls and point out road hazards.

### The last position in the pack:

This is the housekeeping position. Drink from your water bottle, eat a banana, stand up to stretch, whatever.

### Aero bars:

It's important to maintain solid control of the handlebars and have hands close to the brakes. Therefore, aero bars should never be used in other than the lead position.

### Standing:

You should never stand up to stretch while still in the paceline; first get out of the line and then stand and stretch.

### Pulling:

If you don't have the strength to pull at the front, you may do one of two things.

- Either go through the rotation and when you get to the front, pull out and return to the rear once the former leader is clear
- You may also choose to remain at the rear and open up a hole as people drift back in their rotation.

### Fatigue:

The enemy of a paceline; regardless of the reason, anyone who becomes fatigued trying to keep up with the paceline should let it go ahead, and join into a more suitably paced line.

### Florida Laws:

Some equate a paceline to a "bus" moving down the road. However, according to Florida law, each rider is the operator of their own individual bicycle and as such, must obey all traffic control devices, including stop signs, and yield the right of way as appropriate.

This often means breaking up the paceline at intersections and if some of the group gets caught at an intersection, the people that got through should continue slowly until the other riders have caught up.

### Changing lanes:

The most efficient way to change lanes is for the lead rider to signal and call out their intention and for the command to be passed to the rear. When it is safe to return to the lane, the rear rider announces that they are doing so. The announcement is passed forward and everybody makes the switch.

### Paceline size:

The larger the paceline, the more skill is required. Some groups limit their pacelines to eight to ten riders by breaking into several paceline groups if necessary. The decision to do so rests with the Ride Leader based upon his/her knowledge of the group's proficiency.

For more about paceline riding you might want to check out [www.cascade.org/EandR/riding\\_tips\\_paceline.cfm](http://www.cascade.org/EandR/riding_tips_paceline.cfm) <http://hubpages.com/hub/Bicycle-Pace-Line-Etiquette> <http://home.comcast.net/~mutant325/bike/paceline.htm>

The mission of the Florida Bicycle Association (FBA) is to inspire and support people and communities to enjoy greater freedom and well being through bicycling.

The Florida Bicycle Association was incorporated in 1997 for educational and charitable purposes. FBA is a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations, including membership dues, are tax deductible. A copy of the current financial statements may be obtained by contacting FBA, P.O. Box 718, Waldo, FL 32694. To join FBA complete the form in this newsletter and send with your dues, or join online at [www.floridabicycle.org](http://www.floridabicycle.org).

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## Upcoming Bicycle Touring Events in Florida

This printed version is ABRIDGED from promotional material provided by tour organizers. We're not responsible for accuracy of information or quality of these rides. Use the contact information for more details about each ride. Ask your friends. Data are from an online calendar database maintained by Roger Pierce. To add an event to his (and our) calendar, e-mail to [fbtc@piercepapes.com](mailto:fbtc@piercepapes.com) or go online to post your own entry, as noted in the article above. See complete calendar, including many out-of-state rides we don't have room to print here, and all the hype we edited out at [www.floridabicycle.org/fbtc/](http://www.floridabicycle.org/fbtc/).

### October

October 17 (Sun) *Dade City*

**Tampa Bay Freewheelers Hilly 100**  
18/34/63/100 miles through the challenging hills of Pasco and Hernando Counties. Pasco-Hernando Community College, 36727 Blanton Rd., Dade City, FL 33523. Registration and light breakfast snacks 6:30 am. Mass start 7:30 am. <http://TBFreewheelers.com>

October 17 (Sun) *Lake Mary*

**Ride 2 Recovery Reunion Ride; Seminole Cyclefest**  
Ride side-by-side with Wounded Warriors. 24/58 miles through picturesque townships and lakes of Seminole County. Registration opens 7:00 AM at David's World Cycle, Lake Mary. Mass start at 8:30 with rest stops approximately 15 miles apart staffed by the American Legion Auxiliary. Tee shirts to all participants and hot dogs at ride finish. \$50, \$35 military, wounded warriors free. All monies collected go to support the rehabilitation of wounded veterans. [www.ride2recoveryflorida.com](http://www.ride2recoveryflorida.com), 615-351-6111. [www.ride2recoveryflorida.com](http://www.ride2recoveryflorida.com)

October 17 (Sun) *St Augustine*

**Victor D'Alessio Memorial River Ride**  
30/40/50 mile, well marked routes along the St Johns River. Start: 9:00 Riverdale Park on SR 13, in St. Johns County, approximately 12 miles West of St. Augustine. NO FOOD OR WATER STATIONS ON THE ROUTES. Convenience stores are available if needed. Donations for the Lance Armstrong Foundation are accepted. All money donated will be sent to the LAF by the Daytona Bike Club in memory of Victor D'Alessio. If you bring some, there will be food available after the ride. Bring a covered dish to share with others (4 or so servings is plenty). Ice and coolers for food storage are available and refreshments provided. Contact: John 386.793.9292 [www.daytonabikeclub.com/](http://www.daytonabikeclub.com/)

October 18-22 *Cross City*

**Gulf Coast Highlight Tour**  
Tour package consists of 5 days and four nights cycling on Florida's beautiful Gulf Coast, Visit Historic Yulee Sugar Mill; see the Mermaids perform at Weeki Watchee Springs and the Manatees at Crystal River...and more. [www.gulfcoasteventstours.com/](http://www.gulfcoasteventstours.com/)

October 23 (Sat) *Polk City Trail Head*

**Gen James Van Fleet "Tour de Green Swamp"** Ride options range from one mile up to 60 miles for more experienced cyclists. Registration is \$12 and the first 100 participants will receive a "Tour de Green Swamp" T-shirt. The ride will include assorted "go-green" treats for all and will be supported with sag stops. All proceeds will be donated to the not-for-profit Florida Greenways and Trails Foundation, Inc. Registration is free for children 10 and under who come in costume! The ride will start from the Polk City Trailhead, with registration beginning as early as 7:30 a.m. and continuing until 1:00 pm.

October 23-24 *Gainesville*

**Gainesville Cycling Festival and Santa Fe Century** Two centuries in two days! (Or enjoy the shorter options for a weekend of bicycle touring.) tour through the lush forest and pasture land north of Gainesville up through the

Santa Fe River valley. Rides start at 8:30 am from the North West Boys and Girls Club at 2700 NW 51st Street in Gainesville. Enjoy a 100/55 mile ride, or the 18/28 mile Millhopper Ramble family fun ride, with well stocked rest stops. Full info on the web site. <http://gccfla.org/gcf>

October 24 (Sun) *Flemington*

**Horse Farm Tours**  
The Horse Farm Tours start in Flemington on CR 329 (Interstate 75 CR 318 exit). Registration will be open till 9 am. If you want to start with a group, we'll send you off at 8:30 am. Otherwise, you can start whenever you wish. With 25, 30, and 45 mile routes to choose from, there should be a distance to satisfy everyone in the family. The terrain that you will encounter as you wind through the horse farms is rolling. If you are from the coast, it will be a different challenge than just riding over the odd canal bridge. But many of you will want to make frequent stops to take in the scenery, and perhaps have a conversation with a horse. <http://gccfla.org/gcf/>

October 24 (Sun) *Gainesville*

**30th Annual Horse Farm Hundred**  
The Gainesville Cycling Club's tour through the picturesque horse farms of northern Marion County. We have the best stocked rest stops in Florida! The 102 mile ride (and a 55 mile option that doesn't get into horse farm territory) starts at 8:30 am at Lofton High School at 3000 East University Avenue. Bagels and muffins will be available before the start. <http://gccfla.org/gcf/>

October 24 (Sun) *North Port*

**Tour de North Port "Plenty of Green!"** 15/35/65 miles. Ride through the pine flatwoods of North Port, past the Myakkahatchee Creek, and Little Salt Springs, a 10,000 year-old archeological site. \$35 includes breakfast, SAG support, rest stops, lunch, and a free commemorative ride t-shirt if pre-registered by Oct. 10. Registrations can be done online up through Oct. 22 ([www.peoplefortrees.com](http://www.peoplefortrees.com)) Check-in/on-site registration (\$40) begins at 7AM at Dallas White Park, 5900 Greenwood Ave. North Port. Presented by People for Trees, Inc. [www.peoplefortrees.com/](http://www.peoplefortrees.com/)

October 30 (Sat) *Miccosukee*

**27th Annual Spaghetti 100**  
Enjoy a day of touring the roads (paved or dirt) of North Florida and South Georgia for a day, followed by a sumptuous spaghetti dinner with lots of accoutrements. There are five (5) ride options: Classic Options: 100 miles or 100 kilometers on paved rural roads. Dirt Options: Epic (85 miles), Challenge (metric century), and Epicette (42 miles) on unpaved (dirt) roads. All ride options will be supported with marked routes, rest stops, and emergency SAG. For registration, directions, and ride information please visit the Capital City Cyclists Website (link below). [www.cccyclists.org/spag10info.htm](http://www.cccyclists.org/spag10info.htm)

October 31 (Sun) *Cocoa*

**Spacecoast Freewheelers 22nd Annual Intracoastal Waterway Century**  
Cocoa Village, 100/63/28/14 miles. Registration opens on Saturday from noon to 5pm at the Cocoa Village Civic Center on Delannoy Ave in Cocoa Village. Day of ride registration opens

at 6am at the same location. Mass start at 8am for the 100/63 mile, followed by the 28/14 mile riders. Riders will pass through the Kennedy Space Center going near Space Port USA. You'll ride quiet tree-lined roads along the Intracoastal Waterway and down beautiful River Road lined with turn-of-the-century estates. The registration fee includes 5 rest stops with plenty to eat and drink, roving SAG support, an after ride meal, t-shirt, and a well-marked route. Contact Paul Chrostowski, 321.960.6536 [www.spacecoastfreewheelers.com/events.htm](http://www.spacecoastfreewheelers.com/events.htm)

October 31 (Sun) *Dunnellon*

**2nd Annual Dwight Fitzgerald Memorial Ride benefiting the Boys & Girls Club** This is the Second annual bike ride to honor Dwight Fitzgerald, a local resident, friend, family man, cyclist. Proceeds from this event will go to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Marion County. The ride will start at beautiful Rainbow Springs Park, with rides of 33, & 64 miles thru the hilly roads of western Marion & southern Levy counties. We had very positive feedback from last year regarding the route. 7:00 am check in, 8:00 mass start. \$30 entry fee includes breakfast snacks, lunch, & early registrants will receive a ride t-shirt. Families are welcome to enjoy the park, swim, canoe & kayak. Entries postmarked by Oct 15th will be guaranteed a t-shirt. Visit our website (see below) for the entry form. You may also call Blue Run Bicycles in Dunnellon @ 352-465-7538 for more info. Entries may be mailed to Blue Run Bicycles, 11352 N Williams St., Suite 310, Dunnellon, FL. 34432. Please make checks payable to 'Boys & Girls Clubs of Marion County' [www.bluerunbicycles.com/](http://www.bluerunbicycles.com/)

### November

November 4-7 *Chiefland*

**Chiefland Fall Bicycle Fest**  
Come join us for the 3rd Annual Chiefland Bicycle Fest! Up to four fun-filled days riding on Florida's Gulf Coast Trails. All rides start in Chiefland. Choose from several options to these destinations - Trenton, Cross City, and Cedar Key. Tent camping included or RV and hotel options available. Food option. Phone: (727) 457-6994. [www.chieflandbicyclefest.com](http://www.chieflandbicyclefest.com)

November 5-7 *Madison*

**29th North Florida Tour**  
Three days of family fun - cycling, dancing, eating, & more! Overnight sleeping (camping or cabins) at Camp Cherry Lake, Madiso. Bike rides from 4 to 100! Very nice lunch provided on Sat. & in the PM shrimp, music and dancing. Routes are flat to rolling, low traffic, great for tandem riders, routes marked, maps & packets, SAG service. 5 meals incl. in fee; kayak guide for kayaking/boating; swimming-Blue Springs or C.C.L., fishing, prizes. Info - [www.northfloridatours.com](http://www.northfloridatours.com) or 770-313-7553, Margaret. [www.northfloridatours.com](http://www.northfloridatours.com)

November 6 (Sat) *New Port Richey*

**Brake the Cycle of Poverty Bike Ride**  
The ride will take place from 8 AM to 12 PM at Jay B. Starkey Park. The park is located at 10500 Wilderness Park Rd in New Port Richey, FL. 60/33/13/3 mile rides. The trail is on a closed course, and riders may turn around at any point. The cost is \$20 in advance,

\$25 the day of the ride. Children under 12 are \$10. All proceeds will benefit Pinellas Hope and the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. Online registration is available at <http://Bit.ly/BraketheCycle>. Please contact Katherine Dobbins at [cchdintern@dosp.org](mailto:cchdintern@dosp.org) or call Katherine or Sabrina Schultz at (727)344-1611 with any questions regarding this event. <http://events.r2o.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e30c4n95ea4f1d84&llr=p8pcb9dab>

November 7 (Sun) *Tampa*

**Cure on Wheels 3rd Annual Ride**  
Location: Flatwoods Park. This year's rides include: 7 Mile All Children's Hospital Family Fun Ride (NEW!), 25 Mile Tour De Moffitt Ride, 62 Metric Century Ride, 100+ Century Ride and 14 / 25 Mile Mountain Bike Ride (NEW!). <http://cureonwheels.org>

November 7-14 *Key Largo*

**BubbaFest - Florida Keys**  
A bicycling vacation. You will bicycle the entire Florida Keys system, down and back. Starting in Key Largo to Key West and back to Key Largo. Lay over days in Marathon and Key West. This is a fully-supported event with great food. Swim with the Dolphins. Snorkel. Dive. Sun-sets like only the keys can provide. See you on the beach where it is...ALL Good! [www.BubbaFestBikeTours.com/](http://www.BubbaFestBikeTours.com/)

November 7 (Sun) *Bradenton*

**Gulf Coast Cycle Fest**  
7:00 AM local time Main Street at Lakewood Ranch 8100 Lakewood Ranch Blvd 35.00 One full day of superb cycling in beautiful southwest Florida. Riders may choose carefully mapped and supported routes, 100/62/35/15 mile distances. This is not a race and is designed to be a family event for cyclists of all abilities. Breakfast provided along with a lunch served by MacAllisters Grill & Tavern. Registration opens at 6:45AM. Routes close at 3:00PM. This year will feature door prizes, high quality shirts, goody bags with socks, massages, photos and much more for participants. Register by October 1, 2010 for a guaranteed performance shirt. [www.smbc.us/cyclefest.html](http://www.smbc.us/cyclefest.html) [Active.com](http://Active.com) Online Registration

November 7 (Sun) *Lake Mary*

**Salute to Freedom Bike Ride**  
100/66/33 cycling event - our 9th year - to support Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Florida. Our ride offers police support, great SAG stops, road marshals and bike shop maintenance trucks along the entire route. We have a VIP registration that has massage therapy, private cooled tent and a personal trainer after the ride. We serve breakfast and lunch (with veggie options) Great ride every year. All riders receive tshirts and medals (VIP receive embroidered polo). Drawing for 3 day trip to Boston w airfare included, only \$10 per ticket. [www.SalutetoFreedomBikeRide.com/](http://www.SalutetoFreedomBikeRide.com/) [Active.com](http://Active.com) Online Registration

November 7 (Sun) *Cooper City*

**SBW Adopt-a-Bike Ride**  
Metric Century - 62/32 miles. SBW's 26th year for this event. New Route for 2010. Ride in western Broward County's quiet roads. Fully stocked rest stops, marked route, SAG, post-ride lunch included. T-shirt, raffles and giveaways. Registration and packet pick up

Sat. 11am-3pm Sunday 6:00am. Pre-registration on Active.com. Free Family Ride (inside Park) 12:00 PM. Proceeds go to the club's Adopt-a-Bike program providing bike & helmets for disadvantaged and physically challenged children in Broward County. <http://southbrowardwheelers.com/centuryActive.com> Online Registration

November 14 (Sun) *Jacksonville*

**Bike 26.2 with Donna**  
Hanna Park. Bike 26.2 with Donna is a cycling event to raise funds to finish breast cancer. An official event of 26.2 with Donna, 100% of race proceeds and raised funds will go to bench top breast cancer research and to support the critical needs of those living with breast cancer. Everyone from beginners to advanced riders may participate. The 26.2 mile route begins and ends in Hanna Park. Schedule of Events: 7 AM - Pre ride registration and check in, Dolphin Plaza, Hanna Park :: 8:30 AM - 26.2 ride start, 2 Loop Challenge start :: 9 AM - 6 mile beach cruiser ride start :: 9 AM to Noon - Post Ride celebration, food, drinks and live entertainment [www.breastcancermarathon.com/](http://www.breastcancermarathon.com/)

**Many more rides in November and December. See the FBA online calendar at [www.floridabicycle.org/fbtc/index.html](http://www.floridabicycle.org/fbtc/index.html)**

### December

December 4-5 *Mission Inn Resort*

**Lake County PAL Ride**  
The Lake County Police Athletic League, along with the Mission Inn and WAM Events present the first Annual fundraising ride weekend benefiting the PAL youth cycling program. Rides are for cyclists of all skill levels and age groups. Among the ride options are our two featured rides; The ALPS of Florida 45 mile tour on Saturday and the Wandering Country Century on Sunday. This event is sanctioned by USA Cycling and requires a USAC release form (available onsite at [www.wamevents.com](http://www.wamevents.com)). Register online at [www.active.com](http://www.active.com) or mail to WAM Events. The Mission Inn will host the event with start and finish at the Resort ([www.missioninnresort.com](http://www.missioninnresort.com)). The Alps of Florida begins at 8:30am on Saturday. The Wandering Country Century begins at 8:00am on Sunday. During the ride on Saturday, riders will receive timing chips for participation in the KOTA or the QOTA, (the fastest man or woman to the top of the highest peak). One man and one woman will be awarded an official 2010 PAL team jersey. For riders who want to be timed, transponders will be available. Not only can your family and friends join you for a great bike ride through beautiful Lake County, but kids under 10 years old can also participate in a super safe ride on the grounds of the Mission Inn which boasts 7 miles of road! Each "kid" will receive a medal for their participation. Lake County PAL is a non-profit organization. That means your contributions along with a portion of your registration is tax deductible; Proceeds benefit the Lake County Sheriff's mission of providing cycling as an alternative for our kids, as well as assisting to promote the Share the Road initiative; You'll be able to purchase professional photographs of yourself participating in this first annual fundraising event.

# I nearly rear-ended a car!

Dwight Kingsbury



It was on an ordinary Saturday afternoon that I nearly crashed into the car ahead of me at a closing speed of about 25 mph. On my motorcycle.

I was riding in the outside southbound lane of Capital Circle Northeast, a six-lane arterial in Tallahassee. I had been looking for a moment at something—I don't remember what—off to the left, between the 10 and 11 o'clock positions.

When I looked back to my lane, I was closing rapidly on the car ahead of me. The driver was closely following the driver ahead of him, but his brake lights were not on; why the lead driver was moving so slowly I never had time to determine.

This is it, I thought.

I can't possibly brake in time. In a couple seconds, my (helmeted) head will fly into the cargo hatch of that car. I'll survive, but my friends will wonder why I didn't show up to attend the FSU-Wake Forest game at Doak Campbell Stadium with them.

Squeezing the front brake lever (rear brakes also applied), I shimmied toward the rear of the car.

It seemed stupid to just plow into to it, so I steered left. Maybe I can split the lane, I thought.

Barely clearing the left rear corner of the car, I shot ahead on the lane line, checked the left mirror, merged into the lane to the left, and passed the lead driver, who receded in the right mirror.

A moment's inattention had nearly caused me to crash. What could I have done, other than watch traffic ahead more closely, that could have reduced my risk?

I could have ridden in an inside lane! Inside lanes on multilane arterials have con-

flicts, of course, but on a road with a median to separate directions of traffic, the outside lane usually has the most disruptions in even, predictable flow.

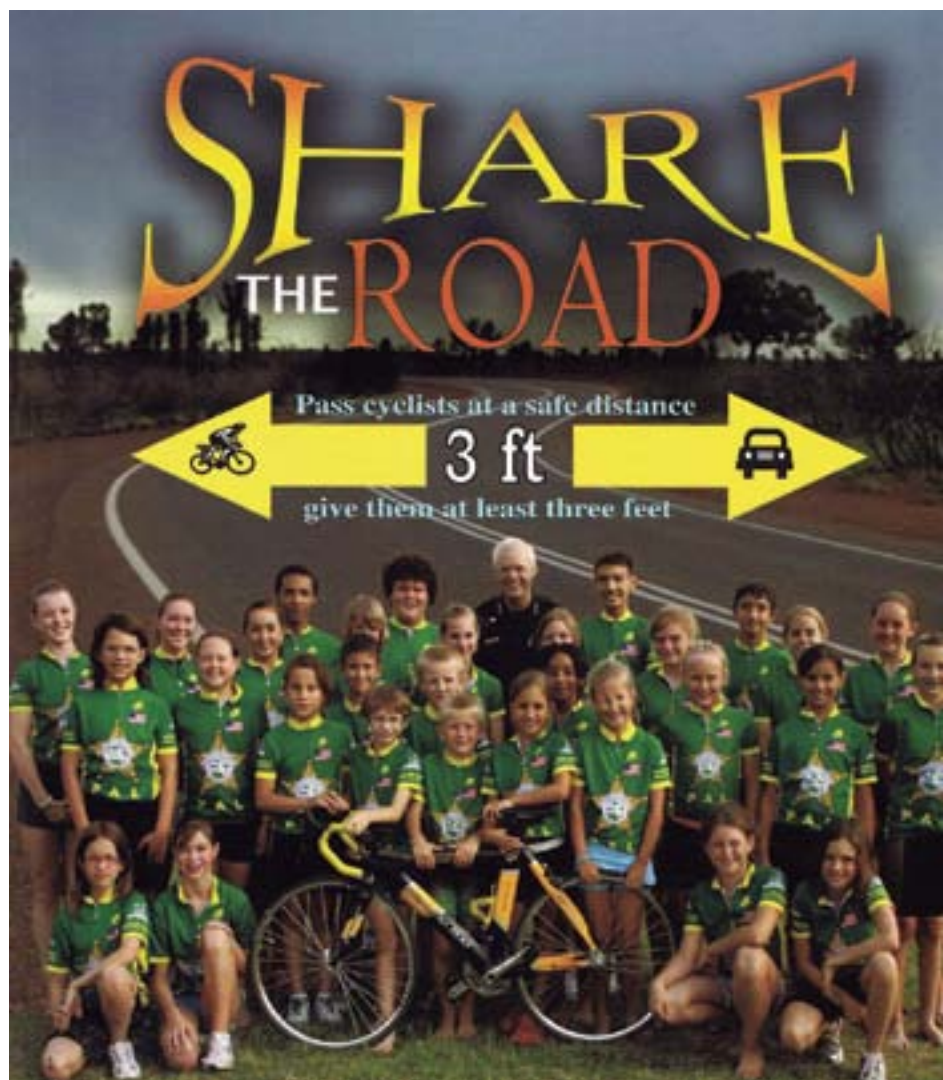
Traffic in an outside lane expands and contracts like a Slinky toy when drivers enter and leave the arterial at driveways and intersections, shoot across to median openings, overtake slower traffic that favors the lane (motor scooters, mopeds, cyclists, etc.), or reduce speed to hunt for a business on the roadside.

Collision risk is due not just to differences in speed and direction, but to failure of drivers (like myself, see above) to be fully aware of developing conflicts.

Cyclists, of course, don't have the option of using inside lanes. Under section 316.2065(5), F.S., though, a cyclist may adjust position "when reasonably necessary to avoid any condition...that makes it unsafe to continue along the right-hand curb or edge."

Suddenly swerving left, of course, is never a good idea. What did the mother abbess whisper to the nun in "The Sound of Music" when the Nazi authorities were waiting impatiently for her to open the abbey doors for them? "Slowly, slowly."

Approaching a commercial driveway or side street, make any necessary adjustments gradually, unhurriedly, well in advance. Let your path be visible and predictable!



Lake County Police Athletic League youth, promoting bicycling safety programs, get to star in ads, posters and billboards around the county. Plus they wear those cool jerseys. See the note in the FBA bike touring columns [page 14] about their scheduled December PAL ride event.

## Mini-athletes swim, bike, run

On Friday, October 1, to celebrate living a healthy life, Pre-K – 2nd grade Sweetwater Episcopal Academy students in Longwood participated in a mini-triathlon at the school.

The children swam a lap in the pool, bicycled around a circuit, and ran around a "track" on the field. 4th and 5th grade students assisted the Pre-K and Kindergarten students throughout the triathlon.

Sweetwater Episcopal Academy encourages physical education; with children receiving 150 minutes of PE a week.

The students trained for the triathlon with a Bicycle Safety Week that taught proper bike riding and safety, along with swimming at the school during PE.

Add your voice for the future of bicycling in Florida.

JOIN FBA TODAY

Membership includes the FBA Messenger!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

Bike Club Affiliation(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Member Category:  \$15/student/living lightly  \$25/individual  \$35/household  \$100/club/corporate/agency

Ride Preferences:  On-road  Off-road  Touring  Racing  Commuting

I have taken a Traffic Skills 101 or Road I (formerly Effective Cycling) class  Yes  No; Approximate year taken: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a League cycling Instructor (LCI)  Yes  No

May we contact you about volunteer opportunities?  Yes  No

List any special skills or interests: \_\_\_\_\_

Charge my  Visa  MasterCard

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_ Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable and mail to:  
Florida Bicycle Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 718, Waldo, FL 32694

## Charlotte County Health Department is a 'Bicycle Friendly Business'

The League of American Bicyclists recently awarded the Florida Department of Health, Charlotte County Health Department, a Bronze award for being a Bicycle Friendly Business.

Charlotte County is the first health department in the country to receive this recognition.

"We at the Department of Health strive to lead by example when it comes to healthy lifestyle choices that incorporate a balanced diet and exercise," said Ana Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H., Florida State Surgeon General. "We are pleased for the Charlotte County Health Department and know that

they will continue to embody the behaviors that led them to this recognition."

"We are truly honored to be recognized by the League of American Bicyclists as the first health department in the country to be recognized as a Bicycle Friendly Business, said Charlotte County Health Department Administrator, Steven Mitnick. "With this award, we challenge other businesses in Charlotte County to make their businesses more bicycle friendly for their employees and customers."

The Port Charlotte facility has installed secure bike lockers and showers for commuting staff. There are decorative yet functional conveniently located bike racks available for the public to use. Newly hired staff are

encouraged to ride to work and are provided with an information packet that includes a guide developed by staff for staff called CCHD Tips for Successful Bicycle Commuting, the Florida Bicycling Association (FBA) guidelines to laws that apply to cyclists, FBA's guidelines for safe cycling practices, and a map of Charlotte County bike paths.

"This Bicycle Friendly Business is making a difference for employees, customers, and communities," said Bill Nesper, Director of the Bicycle Friendly America Program. "Charlotte County Health Department promotes bicycling as a viable form of transportation and gives their employees choices and options that make biking to work easy, fun and healthy."



## Blue Plate Special



Bubbas Pampered Pedalers, based out of Rockledge, FL, is more than a business to Bubba Barron. Cyclists nationwide regularly enjoy his services, plus gain a life-long friend. Says Bubba, "It's all good!" [www.bubbaspamperedpedalers.com/](http://www.bubbaspamperedpedalers.com/)

Bike Florida and FBA share in promotion of and proceeds from sale of Share the Road specialty license plates. Income from the plates is earmarked specifically for education and awareness programs for bicycle and motorist safety.

Get your own Share the Road license plate at your county motor vehicle registration office. For a list of county offices, go to [www.dmvflorida.org/dmv-offices.shtml](http://www.dmvflorida.org/dmv-offices.shtml).

Good News, Mr. Smith! The IRS now allows your employer to give you a tax-free reimbursement of up to \$20 per month for reasonable bicycle related expenses as a qualified bicycle commuter.\*



We can keep you up to date with the latest rulings affecting cyclists everywhere, offering quality tax and financial accounting services with the confidence and solid reputation that comes from over 30 years of quality service to the Central Florida business community.

We're proud to support FBA and its mission to promote good health and well-being in our communities through bicycling.

## Scarce, Satcher & Jung, P.A.

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\*See Publication 15-B at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for more information.