

Florida State Parks - Voted America's Best

By Bob Michaels

The 151-unit Florida Park System was recently voted best in the nation. The Gold Medal Award Program recognizes "excellence in park and recreation administration."

This is a major achievement that we should acknowledge to every State Park employee we deal with. Signs at the entrance to every park, badges worn by all park service personnel and lapel pins for all volunteers commemorate the award.

The award is based on written applications and a video and is sponsored by the National Sporting Goods Association and the National Recreation and Park Association and is awarded every other year.

Florida was selected for the Gold Medal by a panel of nationally recognized authorities in park and recreation management. Other finalists vying for the award were state park systems in Missouri, Tennessee and Virginia.

Fran Mainella, director of the Florida

Division of Recreation and Parks, graciously acknowledged that this award could not have been possible without the efforts of the 1,900 park service partners and the 5,000 volunteers.

Her "right hand man" John Baust, Director of Operations is an avid mountain biker and father of a competitor on the local mountain bike race scene.

An increasing number of state park facilities provide off road bicycling trails and almost all provide opportunities for greatly reduced traffic road riding.

Admission to Florida's State Parks is only \$1 per person if you enter on a bicycle, but will cost you \$2.25 extra if you bring your car with you.

A free 48-page guide to Florida State Parks can be requested at the Florida State Parks web site:

www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/emailus/parkguide.htm.

Or write to the Florida Park Service, Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks, Mail Station # 535, 3900 Commonwealth Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000.

End-of-year Appeal Brings Show of Support for FBA Programs

from page 1

lined in the grant, and payments do not commence until after work has begun. Therefore, FBA needs to provide some funding "up front."

To my amazement and relief, you came through! Leading the charge was a donation of stock that was sold for \$7,767 from a couple who prefer to remain anonymous. Donating stock is a wonderful opportunity to support a worthy cause and at the same time avoid paying capital gains tax.

If you donate appreciated stock to FBA, you can deduct the fair market value at the time of donation on your tax return (subject to certain income limitations) and you will not have to pay capital gains tax on the appreciated value.

With the market at all time highs, you might like to consider this option in the future. Be sure to consult with your CPA or financial advisor.

We are also grateful to

Kimberly Cooper from St. Petersburg who donated \$1,000.

"I can do this because I do not own a car," Kimberly said. Way to go, Kimberly!

And we would like to thank Dr. Joseph Warren from Maitland who donated \$500, showing great faith after we lost his first check of \$250 in a freak copier accident.

Many other contributors are gratefully acknowledged in the list on page 2.

Clubs providing extra support at year end include the Tampa Bay Freewheelers, who donated \$2,000, and the West Palm Beach Bicycle Club, who donated \$500. Total support from Florida clubs in 1999 is listed on page 2.

FBA is succeeding because so many of you want it to, and you are providing the support needed to get the job done. My sincerest thanks to each of you who are a part of making FBA happen!

2020 Plan Contains Vision for Future Transportation Needs

By Carol Wilson

FBA was invited this past fall by the Florida Department of Transportation to participate in an update process of the 2020 Florida Transportation Plan.

This plan, which I will refer to as 2020 FTP for short, presents the strategy for meeting Florida's future transportation needs. It outlines the goals and objectives that will guide the development of transportation facilities and services for the citizens and visitors of Florida into the next millennium.

The 2020 FTP update process is a wonderful opportunity for FBA to represent bicycling interests at the top level of transportation planning for the state! FBA owes a big thank you to Martin Guttenplan, an FDOT employee and a member of the FBA Advisory Board, for aiding FBA involvement in this very important planning process.

The long-range transportation goals of the 2020 FTP are intended to guide the develop-

ment of short-range objectives and strategies, which in turn guide program and project decisions at the state and local levels.

The 2020 FTP already contains much language that is supportive of bicycling. The Florida Department of Transportation's stated mission as presented in the 2020 FTP is "to provide a safe, interconnected statewide transportation system for Florida's citizens and visitors that ensures the mobility of people and goods, while enhancing economic prosperity and sustaining the quality of our environment."

To accomplish this mission, the Department has outlined four main goals and accompanying objectives.

Goal 1 - Safe transportation for residents, visitors and commerce. One of the objectives under

this goal is to reduce the rate of motor vehicle crashes, fatalities and injuries and bicycle and pedestrian fatalities and injuries on highways.

Goal 2 - Protection of the public's investment in transportation. Protection includes careful maintenance, planning and design.

Goal 3 - A statewide interconnected transportation system that enhances Florida's economic competitiveness. One of the objectives listed here includes managing and preserving designated transportation corridors in cooperation with local governments and through advance acquisition of right-of-way.

Planning for transportation corridors includes consideration of land use and zoning restrictions.

Goal 4 - Travel choices to ensure mobility, sustain the quality of the environment, preserve community values and reduce energy consumption.

This is perhaps the most strongly worded goal in support of bicycling because bicycling does all of these things!

Objectives under this goal include reducing dependency on the single occupant vehi-

cle and accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians wherever appropriate on state highways.

According to the 2020 FTP, "Florida's reliance on the automobile has created demands for continued expansion of the highway system. This reliance has overshadowed investment in other means of transportation. Reduced reliance on the single occupant vehicle cannot be realized without better intergovernmental coordination among land use, transportation and environmental planning processes... The Department will promote and utilize alternatives such as carpools, vanpools, expanded bus systems, intelligent vehicle and highway systems, high occupancy vehicle lanes, bikeways, pedestrian corridor overpasses, multi-use trails, employer incentives that encourage ridesharing and support facilities such as bike racks and office restrooms with showers. In addition, the Department will consider the use of flexible design standards and other techniques to achieve more livable communities."

This is strong language coming from the top that you can use to leverage your position with your local community elected offi-

Please see 2020, page 6

"Florida's reliance on the automobile has ...overshadowed investment in other means of transportation."

— 2020 FTP

End of the year reviews...

Workshops, Advocacy Coalitions From Panhandle to Key West Report Progress in Creating Awareness of Bicycling Issues

By Dwight Kingsbury
& Carol Wilson

Aided by a publicity blitz of Panhandle newspapers and heralded by the full moon that arced

over a

shimmering Gulf of Mexico, the Bike Action Panhandle workshop drew about 30 participants to the Destin Community Center on Saturday, October 23.

The workshop was organized locally by Mary Anne Koos and Carol Pulley, bicycle/pedestrian coordinators with the West Florida Regional Planning Council and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 3, respectively. Attendees represented a wide range of interests, had many messages to deliver.

Numerous guest speakers included the

Developers of upscale [Okaloosa County] projects have been eager to include paths and sidewalks for the power-walking, jogging, cruiser-cycling demographic to whom they are marketing.

director of the Fort Walton Beach, Panama City and Pensacola MPOs, Mike Zeigler. Mary Anne Koos delivered a presentation on state standards for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and maintenance of traffic.

Evelyn Hershey, from the Gulf Breeze area, told us how she organized her neighbors into a self-taxing capital improvement district to build a "pedestrian path" (shoulder marked by edge line and raised pavement markers) along a spatially constrained suburban road.

Multi-use trail enthusiasts were well represented. We discussed potential funding sources for these and other facilities.

Some attendees had very local projects in mind. The absence of paved shoulders or sidewalks in neighborhoods seemed to be a sore point.

Okaloosa County planner Pat Blackshear said developers of upscale projects have been eager to include paths and sidewalks

for the power-walking, jogging, cruiser-cycling demographic to whom they are marketing.

She hasn't been able to persuade them, however, to allow interconnecting paths between their exclusive gated communities and other neighborhoods, although children may be considerably inconvenienced.

The workshop wrapped up with discussion groups organized by region. Attorney Steve Medina expressed his full support for expanding the relatively new WOW Trails! organization to encompass on-road bicycling issues as well (see Steve's update on page 10).

Cyclists agreed that they needed to work together toward a concept of a bicycle-friendly region, and that the off-road, on-road and trail camps needed each other's cooperation and support.

The remaining workshops of the quarter were characterized by a similar level of fast and furious idea exchange among the presen-

ters and participants alike.

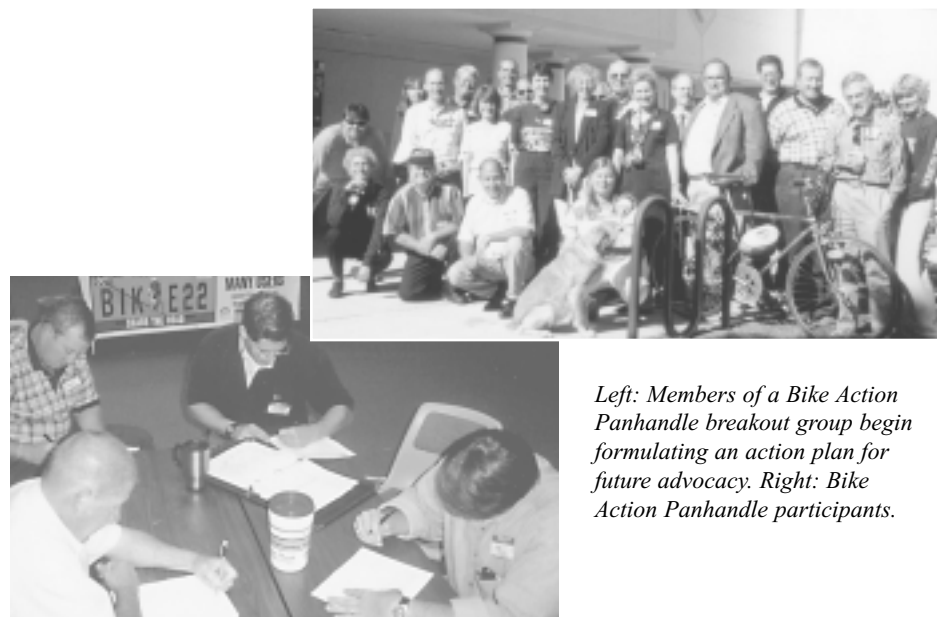
2020 FTP Can Provide Leverage for Local Bicycle Advocacy *from page 5*

cials! The 2020 FTP update process seeks to determine what changes are needed to the 2020 FTP to respond to new ideas and changes in the social, economic and environmental factors affecting our transportation system and travel needs since the 2020 FTP was originally adopted in 1995.

The 2020 FTP is already off to a good start. A Steering Committee is managing the update process. Three Advisory Committees, reflecting a balance of stakeholder interests and perspectives, are reviewing issues and developing consensus on recommendations to the Steering Committee.

The three Advisory Committees address Mobility; Sustainability/Preservation; and Economic Development.

The update process consists of a series of seven Advisory Committee meetings in



Left: Members of a Bike Action Panhandle breakout group begin formulating an action plan for future advocacy. Right: Bike Action Panhandle participants.

Broward County

The Broward County workshop on November 13 drew approximately 14 people. Richard Tornese PE, Design Section Manager for the Broward County Engineering Division, gave a detailed overview of engineering for bicycle facilities.

Phil Matson of the Broward County Transportation Planning Division provided

workshop attendees with an in-depth education about "where the money comes from and where it goes."

Mark Horowitz, bicycle/pedestrian coordinator and local workshop coordinator, gave a presentation on Broward County's Greenways Plan, pointing out the many canal right-of-ways in Broward that present a tremendous opportunity for trail facilities.

Mark's slide show included many slides of canals that he had artistically enhanced

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Tallahassee. I attended the first meeting in October where opening issues were discussed.

Mighk Wilson represented FBA at the second meeting and Linda Crider plans to attend the remainder of the meetings.

At key moments and at all meetings in the plan update process, the public will be invited to offer input and make suggestions for the Steering Committee and Advisory Committees to consider.

The Steering Committee will present its final update report based on the consensus recommendations of the Advisory Committees to the FDOT Executive Committee in June, 2000. The Florida Department of Transportation Executive Committee, chaired by the Secretary and composed of top FDOT management, is responsible for reviewing and adopting the FTP on behalf of the department. The 2020

FTP Update will be followed by initiation of the 2025 FTP development process.

The Florida Legislature and the Governor's Office, through leadership of relevant committees and by participation of key legislators on the steering committee, will be briefed at the outset of the process, provided interim progress reports, the final consensus report and the final plan.

To learn more about the FTP 2020 Update, you can go to the FDOT web site at <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/> and click on Florida's Transportation Plan.

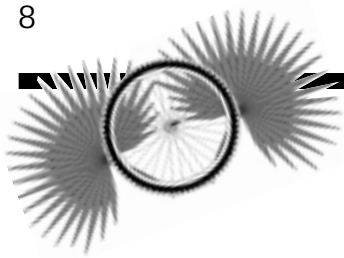
State-wide Contacts

Here's a list of coordinators for bicycle/pedestrian issues. Get in touch with the one(s) nearest you to share your thoughts, concerns, outrages, hopes and dreams. They can tell you what's going on in your county, where the critical meetings are and what the county's long- and short-range plans are. They want and need to hear from you and others in your county who are advocates for improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities, safety and education programs.

State of Florida

Local Government Contacts as of January 2000

ENTITY	LASTNAME	FIRSTNAME	POSITION	PHONE	EMAIL	BPAC CONTACT
Bay County Public Works	Bryant	Keith	Traffic Operations Engineer			
Brevard County	Meyer	Barbara	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(407) 690-6890		Yes
Broward County	Horowitz	Mark	Bicycle Coordinator	(954) 357-6661	mhorowitz@broward.org	Yes
Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO	Wagner	Nancy	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(941) 639-4676		Yes
City of Boca Raton	Puerta	Joy	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(561) 416-3410	jpuerta@ci.boca-raton.fl.us	Yes
City of Gainesville	Dixon	Linda	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(352) 334-5074	dixonlb@ci.gainesville.fl.us	
City of Juno Beach	Peduto	Damian	"Director, Planning and Zoning"	(407) 626-1122		
City of Key West	Malcolm	Jim	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(305) 293-6495	kwcbike@aol.com	
City of Tallahassee	Hunter	Jeff	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(850) 891-8090		
City of West Palm Beach	Stillings	Timothy	Senior Transportation Planner	(561) 659-8031	tstillin@ci.west-palm-beach.fl.us	Yes
Clay County	Fraser	Susan	Director	(904) 269-6375		
FDOT District 1	Sherrard	Tony	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(941) 519-2304		
FDOT District 2	Cavin	Tom	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(904) 381-8762	tom.cavin@dot.state.fl.us	
FDOT District 3	Koos	Mary Anne	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(850) 638-1547	maryanne.koos@dot.state.fl.us	
FDOT District 4	Caicedo-Maddison	Beatriz	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(954) 777-4336	beatriz.caicedo@dot.state.fl.us	
FDOT District 4	Young	Richard	Asst. Bicycle/Pedestrian Coord.	(954) 777-4323		
FDOT District 5	Pinell	Karen	Special Projects Coordinator			
FDOT District 5	Takacs	Marianne	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(407) 482-7859	marianne.takacs@dot.state.fl.us	
FDOT District 6	Dube	Christopher	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(305) 377-5595	christopher.dube@dot.state.fl.us	
FDOT District 7	Nosworthy	Ken	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(813) 975-6426	ken.nosworthy@dot.state.fl.us	
FDOT District 8	Vacant		Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(850) 877-7275	steven.ovenden@dot.state.fl.us	
Flagler County	Gildred	Harry	Chairman of BPAC			Yes
Hernando County	Dix	Dennis	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(352) 754-4057		Yes
Hillsborough County	Rowicki	Mike	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(813) 272-5940		Yes
Indian River County MPO	Riger	Jacob	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(561) 567-8000x1455		
Jacksonville MPO	Sheffield	Jeff	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(904) 630-1911	jeffs@coj.net	Yes
Lake County	Vacant		Alternative Transportation Planner	(352) 343-9655		Yes
Lee County	Getch	Andy	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(941) 479-8510		Yes
Manatee County	Salisbury	Troy	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(941) 749-3070		Yes
Martin County MPO	Karwaski	David	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(561) 288-5495	dkarwask@martin.fl.us	Yes
MetroPlan Orlando	Wilson	Mighk	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(407) 481-5672x318	mwilson@metroplanorlando.com	Yes
Miami-Dade County	Henderson	David	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(305) 375-1647	davidh@co.miami-dade.fl.us	Yes
Monroe County	Stratton	Trish	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(305) 289-2500		
Naples-Collier County MPO	Yang	Beth	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(941) 403-2400	colliermmpo@colliergov.net	
Ocala/Marion County MPO	Shrum	Jeff	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(352) 629-8529		
Palm Beach County MPO	Phillips	Wendell (Bil)	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(561) 684-4170		Yes
Pasco County MPO	Burbridge	Katherine	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(727) 847-8193		
Pinellas County	Smith	Brian	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(727) 464-4751	bsmith@co.pinellas.fl.us	Yes
Polk Transportation Planning Orgn	Kordek	Ryan	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(941) 534-6486	ryankordek@polk-county.net	Yes
Sarasota County	Boudreau	Alexander	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(941) 378-6191	aboudrea@co.sarasota.fl.us	Yes
St. Lucie County MPO	None					
Seminole County	Smith	Amanda	Planner	(407) 665-7339	asmith@co.seminole.fl.us	Yes
State of Florida	Kingsbury	Dwight	Asst. Pedestrian/Bicycle Coord.	(850) 487-1200	dwight.kingsbury@dot.state.fl.us	
State of Florida	Petrtsch	Theo	Pedestrian/Bicycle Coordinator	(850) 487-1200	theo.petrtsch@dot.state.fl.us	
Sumter County	Roe	Robby	Planner	(352) 568-6625		
Volusia County MPO	Bollenback	Lois	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(904) 322-5160x22		
West Florida Reg. Planning Council	Pulley	Carol	Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator	(850) 595-8910	pulleyc@wfrpc.dst.fl.us	Yes



Inside City Limits Houston's Memorial Park Has Its Ups and Downs

By Rudy Miller

On a recent business trip to Houston I had an opportunity to ride the awesome mountain bike trails at the city's Memorial Park for two hours before riding back to my hotel and stashing the rental bike in my room.

The next day I rode the same park for about six hours. The last two were with Jim Harlely who was introduced to me via telephone by the president of the Houston Bicycle Club.

Jim was fun to ride with, great to talk to and knew all the best rides and which direction was most fun on each.

He is a big guy who can really ride. I worked hard keeping his pace and rhythm. When he realized I had good technical skills he took me to more and more difficult trails.

In the last hour we went to a special section where only really skilled riders go. On the way in, we had to ride under the railroad tracks on a concrete slope with at least a 45 degree angle. We rode right across the side with the slope dropping fast to our left into traffic. If I hadn't ridden sideways on sandstone in Moab, UT, I doubt I would have trusted the bike's tires to not slip out.

After the tracks we climbed the bank on a very narrow, hardly used trail, turned right and headed parallel to the tracks under some power lines. Then there was a quick left into the bushes and suddenly we were on the most challenging and exciting ride I have ever experienced.

We negotiated lots of curves and ups and downs then a sharp left (or right) and suddenly would drop straight down a cliff. Actually these 20 to 25 foot drops were more like 75 to 85 degrees, but they looked nearly vertical.

The "free fall" built tremendous speed that tapered out adequately at the bottom before momentum hurled us back up the opposite side at the same "straight up" angle.

and exciting ride I have ever experienced.

The author contemplates "getting technical" with a tree along the Suwanee River. Common sense prevailed.



photo: Randall Williams

They were way too steep to walk.

We dropped down these cliffs with no brakes and some speed as we came over the edge. The "free fall" built tremendous speed that tapered out adequately at the bottom before momentum hurled us back up the opposite side at the same "straight up" angle.

I screamed in surprise and fear as I went over the edge of the first one. I thought I was mince meat. The bottoms were 15 to 25 feet across and you could feel great "G" forces.

I found I could pedal over the top edge, coast down and up, then as the bike slowed to pedaling speed, crank over the opposite top lip, and round a few curves before dropping into another. The riding surface is all

hard, smooth clay and everything was under a jungle canopy.

What an adrenaline rush! I yelled "Stop!" to Jim after the fourth one. I just needed to calm down and regain my composure.

It is an in and out trail so you get to do each of the dips both directions.

And there are lots of them.

As we approached each dip, Jim would bellow, "UP!!!" the local term for "Rider Up!" Hearing no answer we would zoom in and rocket out.

Mind you, this all within the city limits and inside a city park. It could be a model for some Florida cities.

Until then, Houston is only a short flight away.

Five Boro Tour Puts Cyclists in a NY State of Mind

By Bob Michaels

*31,000
riders in*

New York City:

Manhattan...the

Bronx...Queens...

Brooklyn...Staten

Island...Central Park ...five

major bridges

including the Verazanno Narrows...Greg LeMond leading the ride...Mayor Rudolph Giuliani starting the ride...riding the Staten Island ferry as part of the route...too many sag stops to count.



Matt Michaels and Dad rode the 42-mile Five Boro Bike Tour on single speed off-road bikes that proved to be more than adequate for New York's mostly flat terrain.

photo: Bob Michaels

This was the 23rd annual Five Boro Bike Tour. Sponsored by the NYC Youth Hostel on the first Sunday in May each year, it is the largest organized ride in the United States.

It's one day, 42 miles, but only in New York City can one cram so much to see and do into one short ride and call it a tour.

New York City is flat, much like Florida. However, many cautioned us about the "climbs" over the bridges since we were riding single speed bikes.

Yes, these bridges are tall enough for the QE2 to pass under. But all were very gradual and easy.

The ride itself was typical New York City.

Multitudes of staff used bullhorns to continually shout "slow down, pick it up, merge left, turn right" while 31,000 well-mannered cyclists ignored them and rode peacefully by.

My son, Matt, and I stayed at the New York City Youth Hostel, the largest in the world. It's on the upper West Side, a huge five-story building that sleeps 624 people.

The accommodations and service were extraordinary. We took advantage of the \$4 daily subway pass to visit Times Square, the Empire State Building, Madison Square Gardens, Grand Central Station, the Museum of Natural History, Chinatown, Little Italy, Greenwich Village, Uptown and Downtown.

We even took the three-hour Circle Line cruise around Manhattan Island. We rode through downtown traffic for 103 blocks from the end of the ride back to the hostel. It was a busy three-day weekend.

You can find out more about the upcoming 5-boro tour at www.5bbc.org