2018 Florida Bicycle Association Annual Awards

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Visit floridabicycle.org/annual-awards for more annual award program information and 2018 recipients. 2019 nominations will open in October!
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Your membership makes a difference for all bicyclists in Florida.
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Correction to Tom D'Ambrosio's photo featured in the Winter 2019
Message on pg. 19. The photo was actually taken on the Cape Haze
Pioneer Trail not the Boca Grande Trail. We thought we'd feature both
photos in this issue with the correct trail names.

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Working Together to Build a Bicycle-friendly Florida

Our Mission: is to encourage more people to bicycle through education and advocacy.

Our Vision: is for bicycling to be safe, accepted and encouraged in Florida.

Our Purpose:  
• Protect and advance the interest of bicyclists  
• Educate the public about sharing roadways and paths with people on bicycles  
• Encourage the creation of great places to ride  
• Continue to grow as a financially stable, well-managed organization

Help Us Grow the Base! Give to FBA

The Florida Bicycle Association was founded by people like you who want to make Florida a better place to ride a bicycle. Our projects and programs that benefit bicyclists are made possible primarily through membership and sponsorship to our organization. Simply put, without membership, sponsorship and donations, the Florida Bicycle Association would not exist. Keep bicycle enjoyment alive in Florida and help us in the fight against bicycle fatalities, Join FBA!

Did you know your membership donation to FBA is tax-deductible?

FBA is a 501(c)(3) educational and charitable nonprofit corporation. You can join FBA online or download and mail an application from our website, www.floridabicycle.org. You can request an application to be mailed to you by contacting Becky Afonso at 813-748-1513.

Does your place of employment offer matching gifts to non-profits? Think FBA!

Bicycling is one of life’s simple pleasures to enjoy, not fear. Join or donate to the Florida Bicycle Association and let’s ride together for Florida bicycling excellence. Contact Becky Afonso at becky@floridabicycle.org for more information on ways to donate to FBA.

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**Back to the Basics: A Refresher on Bicycle Safety**

by Cp. Michael R. Nelson, Collier County Sheriff’s Office, East Naples Community Policing

Whether we are just starting riding or have been riding for a lifetime, every once in a while a couple of pointers or reminders can help us remember things, so here are mine to you. Many of the accidents and injuries to bicyclists that Law Enforcement and EMS encounter are due to missing the basics of owning and riding a bicycle.

The first thing I talk about when we teach bicycle safety is the rider. Keep your head in the game and pay attention to what is going on around you: traffic, trail or road conditions, weather – is your bright sunny day turning dark and rainy?

Then comes attire. What are you wearing? A few simple rules: first and foremost is definitely no bare feet or flip flops! Then, no sandals, heels or open-toed shoes. If your footwear has laces you should tuck them in. You don’t want to have your shoelaces caught in the chain, pedals or crank arms of your bicycle. The results could cause serious injuries and at the very least a bruised ego. Next, if you are wearing long pants, wear a strap around the lower part of the pant leg to prevent your pant leg from the same potential fate as your shoelaces. As for a shirt, make sure it fits well, is comfortable and breathes well. Wear light or reflective clothing. Dark colors can make it hard for people to see you.

A properly fitted helmet worn correctly is a must, and if it’s more than five years old it needs to be replaced. Speaking of helmets, everyone under the age of 16 by law must wear a helmet. There are many helmet-mounted mirrors that work well and make it easier to see behind you.

The last two items are glasses (sun or prescription) and riding gloves. Get glasses which fit well, protect your eyes, keep out dirt and debris, and enhance your view. A wrap-around style is preferred to cut down glare and minimize eye strain. For prescription wearers, there are soft vinyl lenses that you can put on inside sunglasses that are relatively inexpensive and work well. Make sure your gloves fit well, can absorb moisture, and do not bunch to avoid blisters.

Now it’s time to check over our bicycles. Here are some basic maintenance questions we need to ask before we ride. Are the tires at their proper air pressure? Are the rims straight? Are the spokes tight, not broken or missing? Is the chain tension correct? When was the last time the chain was cleaned and lubricated? Has the chain been checked for stretch and wear? Are the seat and handlebars properly adjusted and tight? Are your bicycle brakes operating properly, or in need of new pads? If your bike is a multi-speed bike, are the derailleurs properly adjusted, and are all your control cables clean and lubricated? Are reflectors in place? They must be white in front, with a red one in the rear. They must be plainly visible. Lights must be used (illuminated) from dusk to dawn, or the rider risks a citation or an accident.

If all of these considerations and equipment checks are good, then let’s ride. If not, let’s fix or repair them so we can be safe and enjoy our ride.

Now that we are ready for our ride, the last thing I want to leave you with is to file your flight plan. In other words, make sure someone knows where you are riding, your route and approximate time frame. Always carry your cell phone, your identification, allergy information and some money. You may not need them, but you will be thankful to have them if you do need them. Remember to bring hydration (at least water), drink it regularly while you ride, and a snack to keep you fueled and going.

Happy and safe riding! Enjoy yourselves!

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**Solving the World’s Problems on Bicycles**

by Eric Draper

My favorite T-shirt was given to me by my son. Whenever I wear it, it reminds me of a conversation we had during a ride. We were rambling while we talked about the world’s issues, and he said “There’s no problem that can’t be solved by bicycles. If not the world’s problems, then at least mine or yours.”

Later that day, I thought of seven ideas that guide me on and off the bike.

- Pedal your own bike – be self-reliant, resourceful and independent.
- Stay in motion – moving forward keeps you balanced, no matter the obstacle.
- Keep an eye on the horizon – at the bottom of a big climb, focus on reaching the top. Destination gives momentum to the ride.
- Reduce resistance – in everyday life, you need to reduce friction, streamline your profile and drop the excess weight. For your bike and for yourself, stay lubricated, light and fast.
- True your wheels – Avoid wobbles and flat spots. Manage (spoke) tension to stay centered and flexible.
- Ride with a group – you’re safer and faster with the tribe.
- Like Miracle Max says in “The Princess Bride,” “Have fun storming the castle!” Life, like riding a bike, should be fun.

Is there a problem without a bicycle solution?

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**FBA Request**

The Sunner Landing Bicycle Club (SLBC) holds a general membership meeting the first Monday of every month. FBA Executive Director Becky Afonso attended the Feb. 4 meeting to discuss the upcoming Florida legislative session.

Becky with FBA/SLBC members John Komoroske & Dave Lawrence. (top) Becky on stage using the “Schoolhouse Rock!” method to explain how a bill becomes a law. (left)
Seems we have played this game before and clearly, we have to keep playing the game until we win. Focus. Eye on the prize. Never give up. It is not a quick trip (although we wouldn't complain if it were), it is the long way home.

This is work, make no mistake. Work that the FBA takes on every day as part of our mission to encourage more people to bicycle through education and advocacy, and our vision for bicycling to be safe, accepted and encouraged in Florida. Relationships with elected officials play a part in our mission and vision. A part that takes place day and night, and not just during session. Here’s how it works:

Post session – we review bills that passed or didn't pass. We inform membership of the outcome and engage membership to provide input to craft our next legislative platform.

Off session – FBA Board approves legislative platform; the platform is posted on our website and we start reaching out to key legislators to inform them of who we are, what we need and to ask for support and bill sponsorship.

Pre session – we make contact with House and Senate staff and legislators to reiterate who we are, what we need and to ask for support and bill sponsorship.

Session – we encourage our membership to stay engaged and follow bills of interest to our platform as they make their way through the legislative process. FBA makes personal visits to legislators and their staff for face-to-face meetings to address who we are, what we need and to comment on any concerns.

Post session – we review bills that passed or didn’t pass. We inform membership of the outcome and engage membership to provide input to craft our next legislative platform, and so it goes.

For the 2019 session, we have a few bills of interest in play:

HB 107 and SB 76, originally described as, "Use of Wireless Communications Devices While Driving; Creating the Florida Ban on Wireless Communications Devices While Driving Law". We state "originally" as things can happen when heard in committee that can change the bill as originally filed. To this point, a strike-all amendment was adopted in the first committee SB 76 was heard, and now a CS (committee substitute) bill will move to the second committee. Same bill number, but now it is known as "Florida Driving While Distracted Law."

HB 71 and SB 158, originally described as, "Provides criminal penalties for a person who commits a moving violation that causes serious bodily injury or death; or causes the death of, a vulnerable road user; requiring that the person pay a specified fine, serve a minimum period of house arrest, and attend a driver improvement course; requiring that the court revoke the person's driver license for a minimum specified period; defines 'vulnerable road user'." We state "originally" as things can happen when heard in committee that can change the bill as originally filed.

Yes, we have played this game before and we have every intention to keep playing until we win. Focus. Eye on the prize. Never give up. It is not a quick trip (although we wouldn't complain if it were), it is the long way home.

Visit our Legislative Platform web page (https://floridabicycle.org/fba-legislative-platform/) to subscribe to our legislative update e-newsletter.

Texting While Driving Must Become Unacceptable and Illegal by Jim Dodson

It is incomprehensible to me that Florida has not made distracted driving because of cell phone use a primary offense (permits the police to stop and ticket someone for using a phone while driving). The facts are not in dispute. The National Safety Council reports that cell phone use while driving leads to 1.6 million crashes each year. Translation: one in four vehicle crashes in the U.S. are caused by someone texting and driving. This should be considered a national emergency! According to State Representative Jackie Toledo of Tampa, 200 Floridians were killed in 2017 by someone thought to be texting or searching the internet while driving. Unbelievable!

Think about this for a second. Is it that important to risk the life of someone who is lawfully going about their life on foot, on a bicycle or driving because of a driver’s burning need to look something up, send or respond to a text, or dial their phone while they are operating a car, which the law in Florida rightfully considers, a "dangerous instrumentality."

Representative Toledo wrote a powerful piece in the Tampa Bay Times on December 30, 2018. She recounted the death of 9-year old Logan Scherer of Riverview who was tragically killed while riding in the back seat of his parents SUV on Interstate 75. How could that happen? It's quite simple, a distracted driver slammed into their vehicle while driving 100 mph. A driver’s remorse is no consolation.

Representative Toledo has filed House Bill 107 for the upcoming legislative session. Her bill bans texting, as well as the act of holding a cell phone, while driving, making it a primary offense. A companion Senate bill has also been filed by Senator Wilton Simpson of Trinity.

As cyclists we should be taking the lead in earnestly supporting the effort to ban texting while driving and the use of any hand held device while driving both unacceptable and illegal. I urge each of us to contact the sponsors of HB 107 and SB 76 and urge its passage. Take a minute and do it today. It will surely make a difference.

You may easily review and track each bill using the following links: House: myfloridahouse.gov/default.aspx Senate: https://www.flsenate.gov.

As for me, I will work along with the Florida Bicycle Association and others to make it illegal to use a hand held device while driving. I hope you will join us. This is an issue of critical importance to cyclists.

Jim Dodson is a cyclist, bicycle safety advocate, FBA board member, author of Florida Bicycle Accident Handbook, and an experienced injury & bicycle accident lawyer. His primary office is in Clearwater, and he represents injury victims throughout Florida. “Legal information is not legal advice. Nothing in this article may be considered legal advice. Questions for Jim? Call 1-888-340-0840 or visit floridacyclinglawyer.com. There is never a charge to talk about your case.”
A Proposed Fix for Florida’s Schizophrenic Approach to Bike Lanes

by Hugh Aaron, President, Bike Walk Indian River County

Hugh and his wife, Laura, co-founded Bike Walk Indian River County, Inc., a 501(c)(3) community coalition dedicated to making Indian River County a safer, more accessible and more comfortable place to ride and walk. Hugh was awarded the FBA’s Citizen Advocate award for 2015. Questions or comments regarding this article should be emailed to hugh@theaarons.com.

In a perfect world, we would have a statewide network of paved, shared use paths that would allow us to ride our bicycles anywhere in Florida without having to get on any busy roads. Unfortunately, such a network does not exist and, despite the best efforts of many people in Florida to get more shared use paths built, it is unlikely that we will see a comprehensive statewide paved trail network in most of our lifetimes. That means that if we want to ride more than a few miles from our home, at some point, most of us will find ourselves on a busy road riding alongside fast moving motor vehicles.

In the absence of a comprehensive paved trail network, the most practical way for bikes and cars to co-exist in Florida may be for all arterial and collector roads to have bike lanes.1 For purposes of this article, the term “bike lane” is used to refer to any paved shoulder that is marked with bike lane symbols, and in some cases, bike lane signs.

While the existence of a bike lane is no guarantee of safety, I’m confident that most Florida Bicycle Association members would agree that riding in a bike lane is typically safer and more comfortable than riding on a major road with no bike lanes.

To its credit, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) clearly recognizes the value of safe bike lanes. FDOT’s standards for the construction of roads that are part of the “State Highway System” (SHS) are set forth in the “FDOT Design Manual” or FDM. Section 223.1 of the FDM states that it is FDOT’s policy to “Provide a bicycle facility on all roadways on the SHS, except where its establishment would be contrary to public safety; e.g., limited access facilities” (such as interstate highways and the Turnpike). So far, so good.

Even better, Section 223.2.1.1 of the FDM goes on to provide that the preferred option for bike lanes on State Highway System roads is “a 7-foot buffered bicycle lane.” Again, a wide bike lane does not guarantee that a bicycle rider will not be hit by a car. However, 7 feet of pavement dedicated to bicycle riders provides a nice buffer between the motorists and the bike riders.

At this point, you might be feeling pretty good about bike safety in Florida now that we have a “7 foot buffered bike lane” standard. Unfortunately, all is not well for bicycle riders in the Sunshine State. The FDM standard only applies to roads that are part of the “State Highway System.” The State Highway System is limited to roads that are constructed and maintained by FDOT. Roads that are constructed and maintained by local counties and cities are not part of the State Highway System.

For example, in Indian River County where I live, there are only three roads and three bridges that are part of the State Highway System. The roads are US 1, State Route 60 and State Route A1A. In general, only roads with names that start with “US” or “SR” (for State Route) are part of the State Highway System.

This leads to the question of “what is the bike lane width standard?” for all the county and city roads in Florida that are not part of the State Highway System? The answer to that question is found in a separate standards manual commonly referred to as the Florida Greenbook.2

Section 9.1.B of the Greenbook states: “Bicycle lanes shall have a minimum functional width of 4 feet. At least 1 foot additional width is needed when the bicycle lane is adjacent to a curb or other barrier, on-street parking is present, there is substantial truck traffic (>10%), or posted speeds exceed 50 mph.”

While the Greenbook standard of 4 or 5 feet is designed as the “minimum functional width,” in my experience, public works engineers treat it as the definitive standard notwithstanding the “minimum functional width” language. I am not aware of any road in Florida, other than State Highway System (i.e., FDOT) roads, that has a bike lane wider than 5 feet.

This leaves us with two very different standards. If FDOT builds a road and there is sufficient right of way available, the road will typically include a 7 foot buffered bike lane. Here in Indian River County, FDOT recently repaved a section of 17th Street converting a narrow paved shoulder to a 7 foot buffered bike lane.3 Although it is a small stretch of road, the repaved section of 17th Street went from being downright scary to being quite comfortable on a bike. Likewise, FDOT has committed to adding a 7 foot buffered bike lane to a long section of State Route A1A in Indian River County that is being resurfaced next year.

On the other hand, the Indian River County Public Works Department is currently in the process of repaving several sections of 58th Avenue, a road that falls under the County’s jurisdiction. Even though 58th Avenue is a heavily traveled road with a high speed limit, it is being repaved with a 5 foot unbuffered bike lanes in accordance with the Greenbook minimum standards.

The two photos above show the same couple riding on two different sections of SR A1A on the same day. The first photo shows them riding on a section with a 4 foot bike lane. The second photo shows them riding a section with a 7 foot bike lane. Which looks safer and more comfortable to you? Where does this leave us? Unless something changes, going forward road projects that fall under FDOT’s jurisdiction will typically be built with a 7 foot buffered bike lane under the FDOT Design Manual standards. On the other hand, road projects that fall under the jurisdiction of a county or city will typically be built with a 4 (or maybe 5) foot unbuffered bike lane under the Greenbook standards.

Now here is the really crazy part — both the FDM and the Greenbook are published and maintained by FDOT. In other words, we have one state agency, FDOT, maintaining two different sets of standards for Florida bike lanes. This means that roads that fall under FDOT’s jurisdiction will typically be built with wider, safer bike lanes. Roads that fall under a county or city jurisdiction will typically be built with narrower, more dangerous bike lanes.

It defies logic that the safety of a bike lane depends on which governmental agency is responsible for building and maintaining the road. All Florida bike lanes should be built to the same standard.

The fix is easy, at least on paper. All FDOT needs to do is revise Chapter 9 of the Greenbook to mirror the FDM chapter on Bicycle Facilities so that we have one uniform set of standards for all Florida bike lanes regardless of who has jurisdiction over the particular road.

Editor’s note: The FBA is in communication with FDOT regarding ways to address the problem of two different standards for Florida bike lanes, as outlined in Hugh’s article.

1 Section 102.2 of the FDOT Design Manual defines “arterial” roads as “[E]divided or undivided roadways that provide continuous routes which serve through traffic, high-traffic volumes, and long average trip lengths.” That same section defines “collector” roads as “divided or undivided roadway which serves to link arterials with local roads or major traffic generators.”

2 https://www.fdot.gov/roadway/fdm/fgb.shtml

3 The term “buffer,” as used on the FDM, refers to double white lines separating the travel lanes and the bike lanes. It is not, however, a physical barrier. A bike lane with a physical barrier is referred to as a “protected” bike lane.

4 https://www.fdot.gov/roadway/FloridaGreenbook/FGB.shtml

5 The section of 17th Street that was repaved is part of the State Highway System because it is considered an extension of the 17th Street bridge over the Indian River Lagoon. All such bridges are considered part of the State Highway System and therefore fall under FDOT’s jurisdiction.
FBA Positive Spin

The 2018 November crash in Broward County that took the lives of two cyclists, Denise Marsh and Carlos Rodriguez of Cycling Family Broward, has renewed interest for bicycle safety and education in south Florida. To that point, Marcos Magalhaes of Visa Miami Velo, contacted FBA on December 6, 2018, to request one of our educational presentations. Visa Miami Velo raises money for charity through their love of cycling by participating in events such as Bike MS.

On February 15, 2019, FBA executive director Becky Afonso made the Share the Road presentation to members of Visa Miami Velo and other Visa employees at the corporate office in Miami. The 20-minute presentation went nearly an hour as participants asked questions for clarity and shared stories of personal experience. Discussion of best practices and confirmation of what Visa Miami Velo is doing right led to an overall positive experience.

As Marcos reported after the session, “I received good feedback from everyone, some pointed out how unaware they were before your presentation. I also learned, and was glad to know that as a team captain, I am not far off your recommendations.”

Bike to Work Days: Practical or Theatrical?

We’ve all heard about them, seen them or maybe even participated in them: the classic Bike to Work Day ride, where dozens (if not hundreds) of people pedal behind their local Mayor, happy to smile for the camera, but secretly wondering “what are we achieving?”

I have organized a number of these events myself, each time reflecting on how to make the event less theatrical and more practical. These types of events are attractive to people working to influence travel choices; why not offer an easy, slow-paced, police-escorted ride to encourage people who don’t bike to work to try it for just one day? People will inevitably show up for these events, representing every walk of life with every type of bike.

The question I am left with each time is, “but what did they learn?”

Riding with the Mayor or Commissioner (continued on page 12)

Visa Miami Velo

Our mission at FBA is to encourage more people to bicycle through education and advocacy. Our free presentations are available to the public. Contact becky@floridabicycle.org for more info.

Bike MS lunch/break fundraising for Visa Miami Velo members.

Whether you’re cycling along side the horses and carriages near Nazareth, PA...

or strolling along the ancient roadways in Jerusalem, Israel...

…it’s a small world when it comes to the common courtesy of SHARE THE ROAD.

Scearce, Satcher & Jung, P.A.

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Kenneth L. Scearce, CPA
David A. Satcher, CPA
Carla M. Hansen, CPA

(407) 647-6441 Office    (407) 645-0099 Fax
1030 W. Canton Ave., Suite 210, Winter Park, FL 32789
Inverness’ plan for trailside depot

AAA will transport you and your bicycle to any point of safety within the limits of your coverage. AAA Bicycle Service is available in Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Tennessee, Wisconsin and portions of Illinois and Indiana. Bicycle transportation service is counted toward your allotted roadside assistance service calls per member, per membership year. It’s one more way AAA helps members relax and enjoy the ride!

The Florida Trail Town Program continues to draw interest among communities around the state. At the January 23 Florida Greenways and Trails Council meeting, Inverness, Palatka, Deltona and Everglades City were designated as new trail towns, making for a total of nine Florida trail towns.

Inverness

Inverness, located along the 46-mile Withlacoochee State Trail, has embraced bicycle tourism as an economic driver. With good signage, amenities, numerous events, and safe bicycle and pedestrian passage through downtown, Inverness is creating a highly visible gateway to downtown along the trail. Inverness is plan on much more than a corridor on a shelf. Spearheaded by city manager Frank DiGiovanni, they raised $14 million to create their trail gateway which includes re-designing their trailside parks, turning an abandoned warehouse along the trail into a farmer’s market and events center, and transforming an abandoned railroad depot into a trail facility with amenities. Construction and renovations are underway with a major phase to be completed by October.

“The City of Inverness takes cycling seriously, and has improved roads and recreational opportunities all along the trail,” said DiGiovanni. “Inverness holds a Florida Rating from the League of American Cyclists, but extending our planning efforts and bringing credibility to Inverness as a welcoming community. We are excited and couldn’t be more pleased.”

“Inverness is a Bronze Rating from the League of American Cyclists, but the Trail Town designation confirmed our planning efforts and brought credibility to our community.”

Palatka

Palatka is another emerging trail mecca, situated along the Palatka-to-Jacksonville State Trail, the St. Johns River Greenway, the historic Bartram Trail in Putnam County, and the Florida National Scenic Trail. The town is alive with activities. The St. Johns River Center provides trail information and maps and they’ve turned the former Bentz warehouse into an aesthetic linear park that makes you want to get out of your vehicle and begin exploring. The Palatka Bicycle Workchek draws hundreds of participants each year.

Palatka has several high-profile trail champions and an active citizen’s organization, the Putnam Blueways and Trails CSO. “Palatka’s recent designation as a Florida Trail Town has created a renewed focus and optimism on the economic revitalization of the downtown business district for merchants and property owners.” Said Robin Correa, Palatka’s Trail Town Committee Chair. “We have a strong core of people that work together closely and keep recreational opportunities our primary focus.”

“The enthusiasm exhibited by city staff and other stakeholders in the promotion of the trails and city amenities is to be commended,” said Donald Morgan, Northeast regional trails coordinator for the Office of Greenways and Trails. “It is a shining town with innovative trail projects and a promising future in trail and economic development.”

Everglades City

Everglades City is a gateway to the Ten Thousand Islands and an important hub for several paddling trails, including the Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail. The town is also bike-friendly as evidenced by bicycle racks throughout town and at the airport. “What struck me about Everglades City was the level of community involvement,” said Kate Bernier, South Regional Trails Coordinator for the Office of Greenways and Trails. “This is an area that was heavily impacted by Hurricane Irma, but residents have since worked tirelessly in restoring their town, keeping recreational opportunities their primary focus.”

Hawn Grimm is the mayor of Everglades City. “Our small island town situated in the middle of the greater Everglades area has many amenities for both our residents and visitors, including a city park, a museum, restaurants, lodging, a hardware store, grocery store and historic buildings dating back to the 1920’s,” he said. “We are a bicycle / walkable community with kayak and canoe rentals and guided tours. During the Florida Trail Town designation we’ll see a lot of new development that will provide the best possible experience for our visitors.”

Serving AAA Members, even on two wheels.

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Finding Your Nature Through Bartram
by Robert Seidler – filmmaker/Florida off bottom oyster aquaculturist/entrepreneur and FBA member who loves Florida, its place, people, nature and history. He grew up in Pinellas County, moved to Tallahassee to attend college and found his nirvana in Sopchoppy and Wakulla County.

This is a story about a feeling, a feeling that began in the 1700s and is still real and available today.

John and William Bartram were a father and son team of adventurers and botanists who were the first Europeans to document and comment on northeastern Florida. They visited as a team at first, but then for the second adventure, son William set out on his own resulting in beautiful prose and mind-altering drawings.

William’s trip was full of adventure to a land rich in flora, creatures and new experiences. I read his book “The Travels of William Bartram” in the late 90s. From that revelation I produced a segment of a nature series that I was working on for PBS about him, but the mystery has always continued.

In December 2018 I was invited to participate in an adventure celebrating the Bartrams’ travels in and around Palatka. This section of Florida was their most adventurous zone and I thought maybe this would lead me to the mystery. I grabbed my bicycle, kayak and hiking poles and departed. I just had this “feeling” about this adventure.

Palatka and the area is becoming a true multi use trail hub city - really the first in the state - slated with many connecting trail systems leading an explorer, cyclist, paddler or hiker in almost any direction.

Then, you have the St. Johns River system in the heart of Palatka doing its thing moving water, trees, soils, creating islands and removing islands - just full of motion and life. The river is all around the various terrestrial bodies that were created not to move around but for movement around, ideally by foot or bicycle tires.

Natural movements are everywhere and changing landscapes to boot. That feeling is getting stronger. The river in Bartrams’ time was the highway.

William Bartram encountered natives, rivers full of alligators, plants never seen by the then so-called civilized world, natural cool springs, and diverse and distinctive ecosystems never imagined.

Why did he pen it all so beautifully and draw it all so devoutly? Because to him it was his special place, a place of diversity, quiet, challenges, the unknown, the unimagined and that's the feeling.

Presently, Palatka and St Johns County have “The Bartram Trail,” an interconnected, interwoven trail system following their Travels around the area all listed and visitable with links to more content and history at your desire.

Docents who we met on the Bartram Adventure Tour are Bartram experts that can meet with you or guide you to see and feel as the Bartrams’ did. That Feeling is still present. That mystery, discovery and adventure lingers in wait for those that choose to explore again and again through the generations.

The Bartram Inn where we stayed is a Bed and Breakfast in Palatka awaiting your reservation to begin your adventure stocked with information, guides and a period atmosphere that would make the Bartrams’ rejoice.

All you have to do is imagine a Florida under discovery and you, too, can become a Bartram yourself. Finding your nature is the biggest business you can achieve and spending a week by bicycle (and canoe/kayak and on foot) revisiting the places and ways of the first explorers is a great way to begin.

Bartrams’ nature is still here to be discovered by anyone who cares. Visit BartraminPutnam.com

Ride Leader to Ride Marshal Certification Workshop - First Year Progress Update
by Mary Beth Garcia, Ride Leader to Ride Marshal Program Director

Since creating and launching the Florida Bicycle Association’s Ride Leader to Ride Marshal certification workshop in fall of 2017, we are pleased that over 120 Ride Leader cyclists have attended and have been certified. The participant feedback has been positive and very encouraging to us as we learn with every class and strongly believe feedback is a “gift” this first year with the new program.

- 100% of the participants stated they will recommend FBAs RLRM certification workshop to others.
- 98% of the participants are very satisfied with the course and the workshop experience with 2% being somewhat satisfied.
- The participants found the interactive classroom format and the ability to learn from others in the room very helpful.
- The participants feel the most important learning topics in the course are:
  - Bike safety, always and cyclists’ rights on the road
  - Communication, on the road coaching and how to brand your club or organization through cycling professionalism
  - Crash and rider down tips
  - The riding with children and trails etiquette
  - Modules included by request

We are proud of the partnerships formed or further engaged with several bike clubs and organizations throughout Florida through the RLRM certification workshop. Thank you to North Florida Bicycle Club, Sarasota Manatee Bicycle Club, Spacecoast Freewheelers Bicycle Club, Gulf Coast Velo Cycling Group, Coastal Cruisers Bicycle CLub and the Village Idiots who have all hosted RLRM workshops. Additionally, we have had many teams, clubs and individuals who have attended our Public RLRM workshops.

Springtime in the Loop (continued from page 5)

promote and protect the River to Sea Loop and its corridor and connecting trails. St. Johns River-to-Sea Loop Alliance always welcomes advisors, volunteers and anyone interested in working with them. Contact at info@sjr2c.org or river2sealoop.org.

Trail Towns in the Loop: Doug Alderson and Donald Morgan of OGT congratulate representatives from Palatka and Deltona on Trail Town designation at Ocala.

SUPPORT EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

HELP MAKE FLORIDA A BICYCLE-FRIENDLY STATE WITH THE PURCHASE OF A “SHARE THE ROAD” LICENSE PLATE.

- Renew your plate with a Share the Road plate.
- Replace your old plate 90 days early with a Share the Road plate.
- Exchange your plate for a Share the Road plate at any time.

Share the Road specialty plates are available at your local Tax Collectors office or online at ShareTheRoad.org.

PROCEEDS BENEFIT BIKE FLORIDA AND THE FLORIDA CYCLE ASSOCIATION
Finding the Wild in Florida’s Wilderness – An Off-Road Cycle Across South Florida

I had read with interest suggestions of a bike path next to Tamiami Trail (US 41) between Naples and Miami but was disappointed to learn of mounting opposition and stalled progress. It occurred to me, however, that it might be possible to cross the southern part of the state relatively traffic-free by using existing double track trails, gravel roads and levees across county, state and national parks. Could there really be enough wilderness in the third most populated state in the US to string together 150 or so continuous off-road miles? I aimed to find out.

After weeks of reviewing Google satellite maps and making several scouting rides, I had sketched out a rough track across the state. I started my trip on the east side and rode west to take advantage of a forecasted east wind. My starting point was the Southern Glades Trail, part of the South Dade Greenway, which runs along the C-111 canal terminating just off US 1 a bit north of Key Largo. After some confusion due to construction and a covert bike path next to Tamiami Trail, just a 20-minute drive to the east. I would describe this segment as generally smooth. Another 11 miles north of US 41 as “medium” gravel and the track despite the beautiful view. I crossed Tamiami Trail to the levee access road just after a tight squeeze through a pedestrian gate with my loaded bike, I crossed the canal. Another seven miles of riding on rough gravel and broken pavement brought me to Ingraham Highway leading into Everglades National Park and the Ernest F. Coe Visitor Center. My prior scouting trip to the area had paid dividends as I knew that continuing north across the road would lead to a blocked canal crossing. Instead, I turned left on Ingraham Highway for the first paved section of the trip for approximately one mile before turning right on the well-groomed Frog Pond Trail.

After riding about a mile north on the Frog Pond Trail, I came to a three-way intersection. Again, thankful for having made a prior trip to the area, I knew to continue straight on the smaller (and less obvious) of the three tracks. Traveling north for another 1.5 miles brought me to a second intersection. By turning east, yes backtracking - but only for a mile, I arrived at the Everglades Trail, essentially the northern extension of the Southern Glades Trail but now on the correct side of the blocked canal crossing. From there I enjoyed a wide and smooth gravel boulevard for 14 miles. The relief of my hands and backside did not last, however, as after crossing SW 168th Street the Everglades Trail devolves into chunky gravel over broken pavement for another three miles and the end of the official greenway at SW 136th Street.

Despite the end of the official trail, the path continues north of 136th and Google Maps at least continues to label it as the “Everglades Trail”. Unlike other gated access points thus far, though, the gate to the north lacks a pedestrian opening. Signage on the gate says no motorized vehicles but nothing is stated about pedestrians or bicycles. Taking that as permission, I hefted my laden bike up and over the gate and continued my way.

This portion of the trail was a mixture of large stones fused with broken pavement and topped off with loose gravel and was by far the roughest track of the day but also the most beautiful. As the farms dropped away, the view from atop the levee was not of a river of grass, but an endless sea of grass stretching as far west as the eye can see and rippled by the east winds.

As US 41 came into focus, I was not entirely reluctant to leave this rough track despite the beautiful view. I crossed Tamiami Trail to the levee access road just a short way to the west. I would describe the riding conditions on the levee path north of US 41 as “medium” gravel and the path is generally smooth. Another 11 miles brought me to the ValueJet 592 Memorial and my end point for my first day, having covered just about 55 miles. After some directional confusion, my wife located me and we enjoyed a nice overnight in Doral, just a 20-minute drive to the east.

(continued next issue)
Bike to Work Days (continued from page 7)

to their office may get them to work, but what about the folks who need to get to their own office half a mile away and have never done this before? What happens when the police escort reports for regular duty and the absence of lights and sirens dilutes the courage of the aspiring bike commuters? What have we done by inviting all these people to “bike to work” when all we’ve accomplished is the safe delivery of their local elected official? Can we really expect someone to make the change to commute by bike based on this singular experience?

While I do not have the perfect answer, I do have some ideas on a better approach. Bike to Work Day event organizers have the opportunity and the responsibility to educate the people who show up to their events. Here are my ideas on how we could all do this a little better:

1. Register riders in advance – and communicate with them in advance!

Encouraging pre-registration not only enables you to prepare for how many riders to expect, but provides you with a direct connection to share additional information. From straightforward messages like advising people to visit a parking lot. Use the time before the ride begins to demonstrate basic bike skills and encourage people to participate by adding in a competitive element.

2. Demonstrate basic bike skills before the ride begins, from starting and stopping to using your gears and braking.

Nothing quite kills the momentum of a great Bike to Work Day ride like people eating gravel before anyone even leaves the parking lot. Use the time before the ride begins to demonstrate basic bike skills and encourage people to participate by adding in a competitive element.

3. Have a contingency route to lead people back to the meetup point.

Do not abandon people as soon as you reach City Hall or after awards are distributed. Organize and lead a group ride back to your meetup point, even if it means people end up back at their cars and drive away.

4. Ask for feedback and follow up.

Use that pre-registration info, i.e. email addresses, to ask for input on how the event went, what they learned and whether they’d be interested in trying it again. Then, when someone says “yes” to biking to work on a non-event day, follow up and support them along the way.

5. Never give up.

Getting people to change their habits is hard – but it’s always worth it, especially when the choice you want people to make will change their lives for the better. Even if your local Bike to Work Day event starts out as more theatrical than practical, never stop trying to improve it and see the events for what they are: an opportunity to change the world.

Join FBA Today!

Your membership makes a difference.

Add your voice for the future of all bicyclists in Florida.

Name ____________________________

Gender: □ Male □ Female

Business/Club/Agency __________________________

Address ______________________________________

City ____________________________ State __ Zip __________

Phone ____________________________

Email ____________________________

Membership type:
□ Individual ($25) □ Student/Snowbird ($15)
□ Family ($35) □ Club/Business/Agency ($100)
□ Supporter ($50) □ Champion ($250)
□ Benefactor ($100) □ Legacy ($500)
□ Other/additional donation ____________________________

Membership include a FREE subscription to the FBA Messenger!

Please mail check to: Florida Bicycle Association
PO Box 2452, Oldsmar, FL 34677

Or go online to: www.floridabicycle.org

POLK COUNTY NEWS

Finding Yourself, Pedaling off the Pounds

by Jack Cormier

First, he gave up drinking soda. Water replaced his former beverage of choice. In two months, he lost 30 pounds.

The next step, of course, was to join a gym.

“But walking on a treadmill is about as fun as waiting for the grass to grow,” said Winter Haven resident John Shepard.

A former gym rat and high school athlete himself, Shepard had ballooned up to 350 pounds. Bored with the sterile gym environment, he took his personal battle of the bulge for a walk.

“But it still wasn’t as exciting as I wanted it to be,” said Shepard, who lived in Pinellas County at the time.

Today, a much more svelte Shepard — he weighs in at around 200 pounds — is a regular cyclist in groups in and around Winter Haven in Polk County. Both his weight loss journey and physical move to Polk County are thanks to cycling.

“Today, a much more svelte Shepard — he weighs in at around 200 pounds — is a regular cyclist in groups in and around Winter Haven in Polk County. Both his weight loss journey and physical move to Polk County are thanks to cycling.

“Just moments from the Pinellas Trail, Shepard’s first ride, he thinks, was about five miles.

“From five it went to seven, seven to 10. Before I knew it, even the overpasses that were so difficult at first became easy,” he said. “On weekends I’d be up to a 12 or 13 mile-per-hour pace. I rode as often as I could.”

But the more miles he racked up, the more he feared for his life.

“One day I’d go off the trails, Pinellas is a dangerous place to cycle,” he said.

A connection with a past flame in Lakeland brought Shepard — and his bicycle — to Polk County.

A second move brought him to Winter Haven.

“This is a great community for a cyclist,” he said. “You have the Bike Shop of Winter Haven, the Winter Haven Cycling Club and great roads. In a mere two-and-a-half miles you can be in the middle of nowhere. This county is full of great roads to ride on.”

He feels the roads are safer for cyclists as well.

“Life here is at a slower pace,” he said. “Most folks are laid back. The towns are smaller and the drivers are friendlier. We’ve had groups of up to 50 cyclists and everyone was courteous. People in Polk are understanding and compassionate.”

There was an added health benefit to his riding in Polk County as well.

“When I moved out here, the one old bad habit I kept was smoking,” Shepard said. “I had smoked for 34 years. Once I started riding up and down these Polk County hills, I quickly realized that if I wanted to keep up I needed to quit. It has been six-and-a-half years now.”

There was another benefit to his riding in Polk County, too.

“I met my girlfriend,” he said. “We have similar experiences — she lost 100 pounds cycling too.”
Questions about the laws related to bicycling?

Ask Geo @ FLBikeLaw.org*

by George Martin

As part of the Bicycle Law Enforcement Program, FBA maintains FLBikeLaw.org to provide a place to ask questions about the laws. Questions come direct to FBA via the “Contact FBA” form from floridaencycle.org as well as other sources. Herein is a very limited sample of questions and answers found on the site. Go online for more.

**Bike Lane Card on Window**

Howard asked: Can you place a card stating it is illegal to park in bike lane on windshield of car that is parked in the bike lane?

Then only related statutes concern advertising materials into a motor vehicle or obstruct the safe operation of a motor vehicle.

s. 316.2055 – Motor Vehicles, Throwing Advertising Materials In

It is unlawful for any person on a public street, highway, or sidewalk in the state to throw into, or attempt to throw into, any motor vehicle, or offer, or attempt to offer, to any occupant of any motor vehicle, whether standing or moving, or to place or throw into any motor vehicle any advertising or soliciting materials or to cause or secure any person or persons to do any one of such unlawful acts.

Advertising materials are frequently placed on parked vehicles without any apparent conflict. It is recommended that you quote the statute on the card.

s. 316.1945 – Stopping, Staying, or Parking Prohibited in Specified Places

(1) Except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic, or in compliance with law or the directions of a police officer or official traffic control device, no person shall:

(a) Stop, stand, or park a vehicle: 6. On an exclusive bicycle lane

**Whistles**

Michael asked: Due to a recent accident our club is reviewing safety on club rides. The club may require ride leaders and sweeps to carry and use whistles. I have doubts as to whether this is legal, having read somewhere that vehicles in the state of Florida may not use whistles.

Although a motor vehicle is required to have a horn, no vehicle may legally have a siren, bell or whistle. A horn would seem to be acceptable on a bicycle, but not required.

s. 316.271 – Horns and Warning Devices

(1) Every motor vehicle when operated upon a highway shall be equipped with a horn in good working order and capable of emitting sound audible under normal conditions from a distance of not less than 200 feet.

(4) No vehicle shall be equipped with, nor shall any person use upon a vehicle, any siren, whistle, or bell, …

**Quadricycle Rights & Duties**

Steve asked: Do y'all think it would be a good idea to have the law changed to specifically define quadricycles as bicycles so that they can be legally ridden like any other bicycle?

I assume you are referring to human powered quadricycles. You are correct that a quad is not a bicycle since it has four wheels.

s. 316.003 – Definitions

(4) Bicycle – Every vehicle propelled solely by human power …. having two tandem wheels, and including any device generally recognized as a bicycle though equipped with two front or two rear wheels...

However, that does not limit the operation of such a vehicle on the roads, since the rights and duties are not just for the operator of a bicycle, but for the operator of any human powered vehicle.

s. 316.2065 – Bicycle Regulations

(1) Every person propelling a vehicle by human power has all of the rights and all of the duties applicable to the driver of any other vehicle...

The fact that it is a human powered vehicle allows operation on a sidewalk.

(9) 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.

s. 316.1955 – Driving upon Sidewalk or Bicycle Path

(1) …a person may not drive any vehicle other than by human power upon a bicycle path, sidewalk, or sidewalk area...

The only time a motorized bicycle is allowed on a sidewalk or bike path is when there is a local ordinance permitting it.

The primary circumstance that would make the vehicle different from a bicycle regarding rights and duties would be adding an electric assist motor, which is legal for a motorized bicycle but not for a motorized quad vehicle, since the quad vehicle has four wheels and is not a bicycle.

…and every motorized bicycle propelled by a combination of human power and an electric helper motor capable of propelling the vehicle at a speed of not more than 20 miles per hour on level ground upon which any person may ride...

A motorized quad would be considered a motor vehicle and must meet all the requirements for such a vehicle. Another circumstance affecting the rights and duties might be a local ordinance prohibiting the operation of bicycles on sidewalks.

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As of May 31, 2019, the most recent data of the Florida Bicycle Association (FBA) shows that the Florida Bicycle Lane Card is illegal to use. FBA recommends that riders follow the laws and regulations related to bicycle lane cards and avoid using them. For more information, visit FLBikeLaw.org.

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Ride Leader to Ride Marshal Certification

(continued from page 10)

in Auburndale. We appreciate our friends at the Polk County Sports Marketing sports complex for sponsoring our Public workshops.

We are pleased to be a strategic safety partner with VeloSport in South Florida. Through our partnership with VeloSport, FBA is responsible for recruiting, vetting and training all Ride Marshals for all of the VeloSport Events, i.e. CycleFest, Bella Giro Ride and the upcoming Garneau Grand Fondo, on March 24 at Gulfstream Park in Hallandale, FL.

Last, but not least, a BIG THANK YOU to our sponsor of the program, FDOT—Alert Today and Alive Tomorrow initiative for printing and branding the Florida Bicycle Association’s Ride Leader to Ride Marshal certification program materials. Our RLRM training kits look super and we truly appreciate your support and sponsorship of this important program in Florida.

Thank you for your support. We look forward to more workshops and more opportunities to train and engage our Ride Leaders in Florida in the future. Tailwinds and hope to see you in one of our upcoming RLRM certification workshops soon! Please contact Mary Beth for more information @ marybeth@floridacycle.org or 305-389-5156.
**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. Data are gleaned and summarized from an online calendar database maintained by Roger Pierce and published on the FBA web site. To add an event to his (and our) calendar, e-mail to fbtc@piercepages.com or go online to post your own entry. See complete calendar, including many out-of-state rides we don't have room to print here, at [www.floridabicycle.org/touring](http://www.floridabicycle.org/touring).

### APRIL

**April 29-30 (Fri-Sat) Brooksville & Inverness Bike Florida Silver Anniversary Tour**
**Starts at Brooksville Tom Varn Park, 301 Darby Lane, Brooksville, Multiple ride options over 6 days.**
https://raceroster.com/events/2019/19050/silver-anniversary-tour

**March 30 (Sat) Plant City Dean’s Ride**
**Starts at 7:30 a.m. at Hillsborough Community College-Plant City Campus, 1206 N Park Rd, Plant City 33563.**
https://raceroster.com/events/2019/18660/deans-ride

**March 30 (Sat) Palm Coast Up with Down Bike Ride**
**Starts at 8:00 a.m. at Mezzaluna Pizzeria, 101 Palm Harbor Pkwy, Palm Coast 32137.**
https://raceroster.com/events/2019/20082/up-with-down-ride?aff=0CWS4&aff=0CWS4

**March 30-31 (Sat-Sun) Naples Pan-Florida Challenge**
**Starts all day at North Collier Regional Park, 15000 Livingston Rd, Naples 34109**

**March 31 (Sun) Lake Nona Tour de Cure**
**Starts at 7:30 a.m. at Lake Nona Town Center, 6900 Tavistock Lakes Blvd, Orlando 32827.**
http://main.diabetes.org/site/TR/str_id=12679&pg=entry

**March 31 (Sun) Homestead EBC Freedom Ride**
**Starts at 7:00 a.m. at Homestead-Miami Speedway, 1 Speedway Blvd, 33035.**

**April 1-5 (Mon-Fri) Miami Florida Tour de Force Bicycle Ride**
**Starts at Denny's, 1450 NE Miami Gardens Dr, Miami 33179, Full or partial day options.**
http://floridatourdeforce.org/register/

**April 6 (Sat) Multi. Loc. Dolphins Cancer Challenge**
**Starts at various times at multiple locations all ending at Hard Rock Stadium, 347 Don Shula Dr, Miami Gardens 33056.**
http://dolphinscancerchallenge.com

**April 6-7 (Sat-Sun) Cocoa Beach Cross Florida Ride**
**Starts at 7:00 a.m. at Shepard Park, 200 E Cocoa Beach Causeway, Cocoa Beach 32931, 90, 77 & 167 miles.**
https://raceroster.com/events/2019/18045/38th-annual-cross-florida-ride

**April 7 (Sun) Estero Cycling for Fallen Heroes**
**Starts at 7:30 a.m. at Trek Bicycle Store of Estero, 8001 Plaza del Lago Dr #101, Estero 33928.**
https://www.active.com/estero-fl/cycling/races/8th-annual-cycling-for-fallen-heroes-2019

**April 7 (Sun) Lakewood Ranch Ride 2 Remember**
**Starts at 7:30 a.m. at 7051 Wireless Ct, Sarasota 34240.**
https://www.imathlete.com/#/

**April 7 (Sun) Amelia Island Katie Ride for Life**
**Starts at 8:00 a.m. at Atlantic Recreation Center, 2500 Atlantic Ave, Amelia Island 32040.**
event&eventId=537

**April 13 (Sat) Tampa Cycling for Autism**
**Starts at 8:30 a.m. at Whiskey Joe's, 7720 W Courtney Campbell Causeway, Tampa 33607.**
https://www.interbayrotary.org/events/cycling-for-autism/

**April 13-15 (Sat-Thur) Live Oak & Cherry Lake 39th Florida Bike Safari (3 & 6 day options)**
**Starts at the Suwannee County Fairgrounds, 1302 11th St SW, Live Oak. Multiple options daily.**
https://www.floridabykesafaris.com/index.php

**April 13 (Sat) Minneola Team C2C Spring Ride**
**Starts at 8:30 a.m. at Minneola Trailhead Park, Minneola.**
http://2019.teamc2c.org

**April 14 (Sun) St. Pete Tour de Cure–Greater Tampa Bay**
**Starts at 7:30 a.m. at Albert Whitted Park, 480 Bayshore Dr SE, St. Petersburg 33701**

**April 27 (Sat) West Melbourne Cycle Jam for the Kids**
**Starts at 7:30 a.m. at Space Coast Field of Dreams, 3053 Fell Rd, West Melbourne 32904.**
https://sceic.donorpages.com/CycleJam2019/

**April 27 (Sat) Dade City Green Swamp Grindalh**
**Starts at 9 Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve – West Tract, 13347 Ranch Rd, Dade City 33525.**
https://www.facebook.com/events/124965154182419/

**April 27 (Sat) Vernon Tour de Ranch**
**Starts at 8:00 a.m. at Vernon Elementary School, 3665 Roche Ave, Vernon 32462**
25, 64 (dirt) & 62 (road) mile options
https://www.active.com/vernon-fl/cycling/tour-de-ranch-2019

**April 27 (Sat) Seffner Hillsborough Co. Sheriff’s Office Fallen Heroes Memorial Ride**
**Starts at 7:00 a.m. at McDonald Elementary School, Seffner, 25 & 50 mile options.**
https://hcsocharities.com

**April 28 (Sun) St. Augustine Tour de Forts Classic**
**Starts at 7:30 a.m. at St. Augustine High School, 3205 Varella Ave, St. Augustine 32084, 26, 40, 59, 77 & 100 mile options.**
https://raceroster.com/events/2019/19533/tour-de-forts-classic

**April 28 (Sun) Venice Sharky's Ride the Beaches**
**Starts at 7:30 a.m. at Sharky's On the Pier, 1600 Harbor Dr S, Venice 34285, 15, 35 & 70 mile options.**
https://raceroster.com/events/2019/21627/sharkys-ride-the-beaches

### MAY

**May 2-5 (Thu-Sun) White Springs SBA Spring Pedal ‘n’ Paddle Festival**
**Starts at Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park, White Springs. Multiple mile options daily on and off road.**
http://suswanneebike.org/events/springfest.php

**May 4-5 (Sat-Sun) Championsgate Bike MS: The Citrus Tour**
**Starts at Omni Orlando Resort at Championsgate, 1500 Masters Blvd, Championsgate 33896**
https://secure.nationalmssociety.org/site/TR/str_id=30196&pg=entry

**May 5 (Sun) Ocala Ride for the Arts Gran Fondo**
**Starts at 8:00 am at Marion Cultural Alliance Inc., 23 SW Broadway St, Ocala 34471.**

**May 11 (Sat) Monticello Monticello Bike Fest**
**Starts at 8:00 a.m. at 420 West Washington St, Monticello 32344.**
https://raceroster.com/events/2019/21046/mtinicello-bike-fest?aff=0CWS4&aff=0CWS4

**May 11 (Sat) Gainesville & Flemingdon Ride to Remember**
**Starts at 8:00 a.m. at Boulware Springs Park, 3300 SE 15th St, Gainesville 32641 & Flemingdon Community Park, 18200 N Hwy 329emington 32667.**
http://gccfla.org/rtr/

**May 15 (Wed) Clermont Ride of Silence – 8 miles**
**Starts at Esplanade Park, 400 SW 2nd St, Dania 33004**
Ride of Silence

**May 15 (Wed) Miami Ride of Silence**
**Starts at Crandon Park Marina, 4000 Crandon Blvd, Key Biscayne 33149**
Ride of Silence

**May 15 (Wed) Naples Ride of Silence**
**Starts at Spartan Park, 3000 SE 15th St, Naples 34102. 10 miles**
Ride of Silence

**May 15 (Wed) Vero Beach Ride of Silence – 10 miles**
**Starts at Veteran Memorial Island Sanctuary, Vero Beach 32963.**
http://www.caamevents.com/event/ride-of-silence-vero-beach/?instance_id=2175

### JUNE

**June 1 (Sat) Chiefland Tour de Melon**
**Starts at 7:30 a.m. at Charles Strickland Recreational Park, 2340 Old Fannin Rd, Chiefland 32626. Trail – all distances, Road – 50 & 100 mile options**
https://raceroster.com/events/2019/19151/tour-de-melon

**June 9 (Sun) Clermont ICSF Ride – 8 miles**
**Starts at Waterfront Park, 330 3rd St, Clermont 34711.**
Ride of Silence

**June 15 (Sat) Spring Hill Crankin’ Out Cancer – 30, 42 & 61 mile options**
**Starts at 7:30 a.m. at Evom Lounge, 14251 Powell Rd, Spring Hill 34609.**
https://raceroster.com/events/2019/21399/crankin-out-cancer?aff=0CWS4&aff=0CWS4
FDOT Statewide Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator: Mary O’Brien, 850-414-4283
www.floridabicycle.org/resources-by-the-f-dot for more FBA member club & shop info.

FDOT Districts

**District 1**
Cities: Bradenton, Fort Myers, Naples, Sarasota
Counties: Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Lee, Manatee, Okeechobee, Polk, Sarasota
FDOT Bike/Ped coordinator: David Agacinski, 239-225-1959; Bike/Ped Safety Specialist: John Kubicki, 863-519-2447; SUN Trail Coordinator: David Agacinski, 239-225-1959
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Caloosa
FBA Member Bicycle Shops: Acme Bicycle Shop, Bike Route (Fort Myers), The Bike Route (Naples), Fort Myers Schwinn Cyclery, Pedelec SQB LLC Electric Bicycles, Road & Trail Bicycles, Pedego Electric Bikes (2 locations, Naples), Road and Mountain Bikes, Trek Bicycle Store (Naples, Cape Coral, Estero, Fort Myers), The Bike Shop Winter Haven, Bicycles International, Island Bike Shop (Marco Island, Naples), Naples Cyclery, LeRoy’s Bikeworks, Western Bikes (Naples)

**District 2**
Cities: Gainesville, Jacksonville, Lake City, St. Augustine
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Derek Dixon, 904-360-5653; FDOT Bike/Ped Safety Specialist: Jennifer Graham, 904-360-5653; FDOT SUN Trail Coordinator: Barney Bennette, 386-961-7878
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Gainesville Cycling Club, North Florida Bicycle Club, Suwannee Bicycle Association
FBA Member Bicycle Shops: Champion Bicycle Shop, Bike Sport, Champion Bicycle Shop, Bike Tech (2 locations), Cornwall Cycles, Cycle Central, Cycle Sport, CycleSport, Emerald Coast Cyclists, CK’s Bike Shop, Fall Line Cycles, Fort Myers Schwinn Shop, Bike Route (Fort Myers), The Bike Route (Naples), Fort Myers Schwinn Cyclery, Pedelec SQB LLC Electric Bicycles, Road & Trail Bicycles, Pedego Electric Bikes (2 locations, Naples), Road and Mountain Bikes, Trek Bicycle Store (Naples, Cape Coral, Estero, Fort Myers), The Bike Shop Winter Haven, Bicycles International, Island Bike Shop (Marco Island, Naples), Naples Cyclery, LeRoy’s Bikeworks, Western Bikes (Naples)

**District 3**
Cities: Destin, Panama City, Pensacola, Tallahassee
Counties: Bay, Calhoun, Escambia, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Wakulla, Walton, Washington
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Olen Pettis, 850-330-1543; FDOT Bike/Ped Safety Specialist: Andrew White, 850-330-1653; FDOT SUN Trail Coordinator: Olen Pettis, 850-330-1543
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Capital City Cyclists, Emerald Coast Cyclists
FBA Member Bicycle Shops: The Great Bicycle Shop

**District 4**
Cities: Fort Lauderdale, Fort Pierce, Palm Beach, Stuart, Vero Beach
Counties: Broward, Indian River, Martin, Palm Beach, St. Lucie
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Larry Merritt, 954-777-4683; FDOT Bike/Ped Safety Specialist: Tom Miller, 954-777-4073; FDOT SUN Trail Coordinator: Lauren Rand, 954-777-4499
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Boca Raton Bicycle Club, Vero Cycling Club, Treasure Coast Cycling Association, South Broward Wheels Bicycle Club
FBA Member Bicycle Shops: Orchid Island Bikes and Kayaks, Trek Bicycle Store (Boca Raton, Boynton Beach, Fort Lauderdale, Sunrise), Contes’ Bike Shop (Boca Raton, Ft. Lauderdale), Bike Tech

**District 5**
Cities: Cocoa Beach, Daytona Beach, Kissimmee, Melbourne, Ocala, Orlando
Counties: Brevard, Flagler, Lake, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter, Volusia
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Michael Ziarnek, 386-943-5251; FDOT Bike/Ped Safety Specialist: Chad Lingenfelter, 386-943-5336; FDOT SUN Trail Coordinator: Heather Garcia, 386-943-5077
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Florida Freewheelers, Sumter Landing Bicycle Club, Spacecoast Freewheelers Bicycle Club, Ocala Mountain Bike Association
FBA Member Bicycle Shops: Village Cycles (2 locations), Orange Cycle, Full Circle Cycle, Fox Firestone Bicycle Shop, The Ride Xperience

**District 6**
Cities: Key West, Miami
Counties: Miami-Dade, Monroe
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Shereen Yee Fong, 305-470-5308; FDOT Bike/Ped Safety Specialist: Isis Sotolongo, 305-470-5187; FDOT SUN Trail Coordinator: Elizabeth Stacy, 305-470-5308
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Everglades Bicycle Club, South Florida Triathletes, Key West Bicycle Association
FBA Member Bicycle Shops: Mack Cycle & Fitness, Elite Cycling & Fitness, No Boundaries Sport, Bike Tech (2 locations)

**District 7**
Cities: Brooksville, Clearwater, Port Richey, St. Petersburg, Tampa
Counties: Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas
FDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator: Alex Henry, 813-975-6405; FDOT Bike/Ped Safety Specialist: Ginger Regalado, 813-975-6970; FDOT SUN Trail Coordinator: Alex Henry, 813-975-6405
FBA Member Bicycle Clubs: Florida Panthers Tandem Club, St. Petersburg Bicycle Club, Suncoast Cycling Club
FBA Member Bicycle Shops: Bike Sport, Chainless Drive (Clearwater, Palm Harbor), Jim’s Bicycle Shop, University Bicycle Center, Oliver’s Cycle Sports, Ride-N-Roll Cyclery (Seminole, Largo)
The Bicycle & Autism: A Common Denominator of Our Society

by Minerva Santiago

Two hundred years later and despite the countless advances in society, agriculture and technology, the bicycle not only still exists, it thrives as a staple part of our humanity. What makes an invention so sustainable and resilient throughout the ages? It’s simplicity. The bicycle’s simple design and predictable mechanics not only make it accessible to many, but more importantly, inclusive for all!

Meet Derek, a young bicycle mechanic and entrepreneur, whose love and affinity for simple things in life, accentuates his love for the bicycle. Many have and still struggle to envision Derek as a capable bicycle mechanic/entrepreneur because of his autism and limited verbal communication. But his love for bicycles has helped him not only overshadow his limitations with his abilities, but also educate the community that surrounds him that limitations do not equate to incapacities.

Derek launched his own small business, Bike Dr. Derek, last year as a platform to create his own meaningful future of purposeful employment. What started off as a basic affinity for bicycles has evolved into a unique business, a community of friends and business partners, as well as a promising future.

Why bicycles you may ask? Well, let’s start with some common themes with autism such as an attraction to spinning, repetitive movements and simplicity. It is no secret that individuals with autism all around the world gravitate towards items that spin and movement experiences that are repetitive and predictable. Sound like a bicycle to you?

One friend of Derek’s is Dr. Stephen Shore, an adult with autism who says that his love for bicycles was based on the simple design and how he could easily pull it apart and put it back together. Dr. Shore’s parents once battled to keep him from being institutionalized, and they did so by allowing him to be led by his interests. His fascination with bicycles led to his first business out of his college dorm room that largely paid for his own tuition.

Bicycles are in many respects a “common-denominator” in our society. No pretense is needed nor felt when perched upon a beach cruiser or mountain bike. There is no distinction between the millionaires or the impoverished, and no difference between the young and the old. Upon the seat of a bicycle, the rider is simply a person enjoying the careful balancing act of the ride. Nothing more, nothing less.

Additionally, bicycles are not only the most portable means of transportation, it also happens to be a highly portable business. Virtually in every corner, every community, on every mountain or trail, there are bicycles that need cleaning, tune-ups and sometimes outright replacements.

Hence, becoming a bicycle mechanic not only allows Derek to have meaningful work, but also allows him to thrive in his career no matter where his life takes him. The business already plugs him into his neighborhood and in return, opens his world to the broader community.

Derek has been sharpening his skills as a bike mechanic with an entire team behind him and a wonderful teacher in front of him. Jeff Torkelson, founder of the Recyclable Bicycle Exchange (RBX Foundation), began working with Derek almost two years ago and to this day continues to help Derek work on his Bike Dr. Derek clients weekly at the RBX shop in downtown Fort Lauderdale.

The name of Jeff’s organization has certainly become very symbolic throughout this experience. Much more than bicycles are exchanged as a result of this mentor/student relationship. Jeff, having never worked with an individual with autism with limited verbal communication, has no doubt gained much from his many exchanges with Derek. All of the many other individuals who cross paths with Derek through his business, likewise, gain needed insight into the abilities beyond autism, and such exchanges will no doubt turn a page for the many other individuals with autism seeking meaningful employment.

Derek, now a young bicycle mechanic and entrepreneur, exchanges business cards, exchanges ideas and most importantly, exchanges life stories with so many he comes to meet in the bicycling community and beyond. Truly, the bicycle exchange has taken on far more meaning, with far greater impacts than we could have ever imagined.

Boaz & Minerva Santiago (Derek’s step-dad & mom) are founders of PicEin Works. As parents to two children with autism, they knew that traditional employment is not the right fit for all individuals with developmental disabilities. Their focus has always been to provide awareness, information, and tools to show that self-employment is a viable option for all and that individuals with developmental disabilities should have the opportunity to pursue meaningful employment, just like the rest of us. As result their son Derek now owns and operates Bike Dr. Derek with the help of an amazing cast of supportive community members.