

The Prez Sez:

On April 13th, Phil Clarke, Mike Munk and I attended a Bike Summit at the Department of Transportation's Multimodal Building on Congressman Dickinson Drive here in Montgomery. Representatives from Bicycle Clubs in Huntsville, Birmingham, and Anniston also came as well as representatives from the Department of Public Health and the Department of Transportation. We spent the morning dis-

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cussing the transportation needs of cyclists across the state. After lunch we split up into separate groups for a brainstorming session that focused on an overall plan of action to help coordinate efforts across the state to improve cycling safety. Out of that afternoon session emerged a general directive that highlighted three areas of concern: engineering, education, encouragement (advocacy).

Engineering:

— **Designated bike routes** - Huntsville has recently completed a designated bike route complete with signage and maps. Such plans can be implemented in all major metropolitan areas of Alabama using existing streets and thoroughfares without a great expenditure of funds. The State of Alabama could also designate several bike routes that crisscross the state and advertise them in tourist brochures.

— **Trails and bike lanes** - The success of the Swayback Trail in Wetumpka and the Chief Ladiga rails to trail project in Anniston are good examples of what can be done for off-road riding. Montgomery could initiate a riverside trail as part of the new riverfront development. Also, without an exorbitant increase over the current outlay for paving and upkeep of highways, state and local governments

could widen shoulders enough for bike lanes, and remove or at least narrow the rumble strips on current roads with wide shoulders.

Education:

— **Driver's Education** - More questions on the current driver's exam about how motorized and non-motorized vehicular traffic coexist would raise awareness of safety issues among motorists.

— **Health Education** - The trend toward obesity among Americans points toward the need for better education about diet and exercise. For most adults, the initial reason for becoming involved in cycling is for the health benefits gained from regular exercise.

— **Continuing Education** - The Effective Cycling courses offered through the League of American Bicyclists will help alleviate the fears that many adults have about riding bikes on the road.

Encouragement (Advocacy)

— **Public Relations** - Suffice it to say that cyclists in Alabama need to join together to strengthen our voice in city councils and in the state legislature. Several ideas for better public relations met with approval at the Bike Summit. Among them were a new statewide SHARE THE ROAD billboard campaign, SHARE THE ROAD license plates, public service announcements on local television and radio stations.

— **Planning and Political Process** - This could come under education as well. Many of the desired outcomes listed above require a thorough knowledge of local political processes. The process of advocacy begins with every local bicycle club. On the local level, we will invite city council representatives, city and state engineers, and health officials to speak at our monthly meetings. On the state level, we are currently working on a second Bike Summit that will reach more clubs and interest groups.

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June rides start at Thorington Road Baptist at 7 a.m.

July rides start at Emerald Mountain Parkway at 7 a.m.

Sunday rides start at the John Hall Store in Cecil at 1:30 p.m.

If you're planning to ride, put an e-mail out to the e-mail list (see page 6) and let everyone know you're going and how far you want to go!

For more ride information, go to

www.mgmbikeclub.org

and go to Ride Schedule.

June-July Saturday Ride Directions

June Saturdays—7 a.m. — Thorington Road Baptist Church. Take Vaughn Road east of Montgomery and turn right on Ray Thorington Road; the church is on your right in about a mile.

July Saturdays—7 a.m.— Emerald Mountain Toll Bridge. Park in the convenience store parking lot just on the Elmore County side.

To get to bridge from Montgomery: The expensive way is to take Wares Ferry Road east to Dozier Road. Turn north on Dozier Road as though you were going to the golf courses. Follow Dozier Road to the toll bridge. The parking lot is just beyond the toll bridge on the Elmore County side. Park at the far east end of the parking lot. The cheap way is to take US 231 north past the Tallapoosa River ridge. Turn right onto county road 8 (Redland Road). After a mile or two, turn right onto county

road 4 (Rifle Range Road) and go about a mile or so. The Emerald Mountain store and toll bridge will be on your right. Park at the far east end of the parking lot.

If you're planning to ride, put an e-mail out to the e-mail list (see page 6) and let everyone know you're going and how far you want to go! . ☺

Upcoming Club Meetings:

June 18, 2002

July 16, 2002

6:30 p.m. at Bell Rd. Library (Lowder Branch)
Check

www.mgmbikeclub.org

for details and last-minute changes!

Amputees Across America Ride July 4 from Selma

Three riders, including local cyclist John Keating, will be riding from Selma to Montgomery on July 4 as part of their cross-country tour to promote awareness for amputees.

All three riders are amputees themselves. Joe Sapere and Jerry Suggs both have had one leg amputated below the knee, and John Keating, who spoke to the club recently, lost his left arm at the shoulder and his left leg below the knee about twenty years ago.

The club has donated \$100 and an MBC jersey to the event. The riders have asked as many MBC riders as possible to come out and ride from Selma with them. Full vehicle support will be provided along the way, and it will be a great way for the club to receive publicity in connection with the event, which will be covered by local media. Check www.mgmbikeclub.org and www.amputeesacrossamerica.com for more details. ☺

Time Trials Continue; Predict-a-Time and Official in June

Time Trial season is well under way at the Deer Creek subdivision. To get there, take Vaughn Road east of Montgomery and turn right into Deer Creek just past Ray Thorington Road. Tip: if you see Wynnlakes on your left, you've passed it. Time Trials are on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. during daylight savings time, and get progressively longer (and shorter) as daylight permits.

June 12 — Predict-a-Time. Remove or cover your watch and computer, tell Jerry how fast you're going, and then just do it! Prizes will be awarded.

June 26 — Official Time Trial. Pay \$5.00 entry fee and compete for prizes including Cycle Escape gift certificates.

For a more information, including an incredibly complex ANALYSIS of time trial results by resident cyclist, computer programmer and 1975 winner of the Price, Watergate and Cheatum *Caveat Emptor* prize for his thesis on the correlation of beer pricing and water consumption by small municipal systems, Vern Gibson, go to www.mgmbikeclub.org. and select **Time Trials** from the menu. ☺