Announcing Shenandoah Weekend 2019
I am sad to report that a recent Club ride was marred when riders were harassed and forced off the road purposely by a motor vehicle driver. At the time this is written, one cyclist is still in critical condition. We hope for a full recovery. Please see Anne Hyman’s article for more information.

I am writing most of this on Bike-to-Work Day. This is the first time in many years, pouring rain dates excluded, that I have not participated. Working from home has its advantages and at least I looked at my bike today! There are several Club members who routinely use their bicycle to commute to work and others who do so at least today. I would like to recognize and thank the Club volunteers who may have given up the opportunity to ride today in order to help market the Club and Back Roads Century at the rest stops. Thank you. Without volunteers like yourselves, our Club would not be able to function.

Rosslyn Stop

Ed Hazelwood
Stephen Krill
Joan Oppel
Alan Romick

Ballston

Bob Manka
Fulton Armstrong

Georgetown

Barbara Heffernan
Freedom Plaza
Anne Hyman
Sue Gunter
Denise Cohen
Warren Farb
Jessica Hirschhorn

Takoma Park

Linda Borst Koko

Bethesda

Ron Tripp

The new Co-Chairs for the Backroads Century, Margaret McBride and Dalis Davidson, are continuing the planning and set up for the Back Roads Century weekend. Registration is open on the website. If you plan on attending the Saturday ride through the Antietam Battlefield, you must sign up; it’s capped at 200. Volunteers and a Volunteer Coordinator are still needed. If you like people and would like to help, please contact Margaret, Dalis, or myself (rbernstein55@yahoo.com, “Volunteer” in Subject Line) or sign up on the website to volunteer for this need (https://www.potomacpedalers.org/back-roads-century-volunteer-form). The Century is on Sunday, September 22.

I want to thank Carol Linden for agreeing to volunteer as the Chair of the Nominating Committee. I am hoping that this more formal means of soliciting ExCom members will give us something we have not had for at least three years; a full slate of enthusiastic volunteers anxious to improve their Club for members to vote upon. Please contact Carol (cdlinden@hotmail.com) or another member of her committee to volunteer to be nominated and use “Nomination” in the subject line.

Stay tuned for information concerning the Annual Tour de France Party ON July 12th. We have a new venue this year at The G.O.A.T. in Arlington.

Thank you and keep the rubber side down.

Bob B.
We’re bringing back the coveted summer weekend trip to the Shenandoah Valley! Join us in July for a weekend of rolling hills, sightseeing on pedal and foot, and excellent company. We’re introducing a revamped weekend with an exciting, comfortable new venue in Woodstock, which features a mix of old favorite points of interest and new sightseeing opportunities. Cycling AND hiking routes will take riders and explorers through the New Market Battlefield, close to the George Washington National Forest, and through the rolling and verdant hills of quiet Northwest Virginia.

**When:** July 19-21, rides can begin as early as noon on Friday so block some time to enjoy the area!

**Where:** We’re moving! Our Shenandoah weekend will now base in Woodstock, VA at the newly-renovated and award-winning Holiday Inn. Rides launching of Woodstock for the weekend will vary in distance, ability, and points of interest.

**How:** We have plenty of riding and out-of-saddle activities planned, including a warm up ride on Friday afternoon, a welcome social on Friday night, a Saturday BBQ (with new, expanded vegetarian options!), and trips to points of interest that can range from antiquing to fishing, spelunking and wine tasting. Don’t feel like exploring on two wheels? Hikers can enjoy the beautiful National Forest with suggested routes, complete with cue sheets and topographical maps! And, as always, a trip to the famous Route 11 potato chip factory.

**Who:** PPTC members and non-members are welcome! Pricing tiers cover single and double occupancy for hotel rooms, the welcome social, the Saturday dinner, and cue sheets. Spouses and non-riders are welcome!

**Cost:** A single occupancy is $310 for PPTC members/ $340 for nonmembers, and double occupancy is $180 per person for PPTC members/ $210 for nonmembers (please inquire for triple and quad occupancy pricing).

Questions? Please contact Deb Reynolds at deb.cla.dr@gmail.com for more information.
Special Statement From The Vice President 05/21/19

Friday, May 31, 2019

Fellow PPTC Cyclists,

May is a month to celebrate the bicycle. National Bike Month creates focus on a eco-friendly means of transportation, fitness, and community. I like to think that our membership celebrates Bike Month every month of the year here in our region, thanks to fairer weather and intrepid cyclists who and create and ride winter-friendly routes. This month’s nationwide celebration culminated last weekend on May 17th and 18th with Bike to Work Day and BikeDC, along with many group rides taking advantage of the beautiful, long overdue Spring weather. Volunteers from PPTC engaged thousands of cyclists at Bike to Work Day and BikeDC, speaking of the incredible riding and camaraderie our cyclists enjoy with their membership.

Unfortunately, during this weekend of celebration, a driver of a motorized vehicle on River Road in Maryland critically injured one of our own, who was returning to Riley's Lock from a group ride. This driver harassed and menaced three cyclists who were lawfully and safely riding along- causing a serious crash and devastating harm to one of them- and fled the scene. In a way, it feels like this driver critically injured all of the good faith and trust between cyclists and motor vehicle operators we work so hard for. Legislation has been passed recently both in DC and Maryland to bolster rider safety, but the fruits of those labors have not been realized on the roads. Earlier on the day of the Maryland incident, a driver crashed into the ghost bike of Dave Salovesh on Florida Avenue in DC. VisionZero initiatives to completely stop needless cyclist injuries and deaths have a long way to go.

When I was a child, Mister Rogers taught me to look for the helpers in times of crisis. Cyclists are some of the greatest helpers I’ve ever met, and members of PPTC are no exception. Our ride leaders for the Riley’s Lock ride acted admirably during the incident and were able to reach the victim’s emergency contact because she signed into the ride. Upon hearing the news from this accident, the Maryland and DC cycling communities mobilized immediately- local riders are still sharing the news and combing through footage from onboard cameras from their recent rides. PPTC members visited the hospital to support the victim and her family, and the victim’s husband has requested we keep searching for any footage of the vehicle in the area from the weekend of the incident, and share findings with local law enforcement. Cyclists are also responding by bringing much needed attention about rider safety to the media, legislators, and motor vehicle operators. The outpouring of love and support for a fellow cyclist in a time of undue crisis gives me hope that with enough of this collective energy in helping one of our own, we can use this momentum to change the current dialogue to help and protect this entire area’s community of cyclists.

That energy manifests every time put our helmets on and roll out. We’ll still keep doing it because we aren’t going to let one person’s malicious actions break the bonds of community and enjoyment we give and receive by riding our bikes. That said, PPTC will be implementing refreshed safety policies and rider processes, so be on the lookout for those at the start of each ride, no matter where you are in the region. These policies and procedures will ensure that we can spend a little less time worrying and more energy focusing on what this month is all about- celebrating the bicycle.

Be safe. Ride well.

Anne C.M. Hyman
Vice President, Special Events, PPTC
Ride the Back Roads Century
Sunday, Sept. 22, 2019!

Early bird price ends June 15; second price break ends July 31

By Margaret McBride & Dalis Davidson, Co-Chairs

Register early for the PPTC Back Roads Century Sept. 22, with rides from 25 to 100 miles out of Shepherdstown, WV, through the lower Shenandoah Valley. All routes start and finish at Shepherd University’s historic Popodicon Mansion. Four rest stops provide food, drink and mechanical support.

Rides end at Popodicon with a catered meal, music and more. More information, including registration is at http://www.potomacpedalers.org/2019-back-roads-century. The event is capped at 2,000.

Check out the new BRC jersey design for 2019 in Sport and Race Cuts!

We need volunteers both before and during the event! Volunteers who provide a minimum of 4 hours of support will receive a $25 rebate after the event. We can’t put on the Back Roads Century without volunteers. Thank you! The century is the main fund raiser for PPTC. In addition, grants and donations go to local Shepherdstown organizations.

With rides and events on Saturday and Sunday, come for the day or stay for the weekend. Two free group rides on 9/21 feature the Antietam National Battlefield, just across the Shenandoah River, and end at the Antietam Creek Vineyard. These rides are capped at 200. Registration required.

Discounted hotel rooms are blocked until mid-August. More info is at https://www.potomacpedalers.org/shepherdstown-nearby-lodging along with other lodging recommendations.
Celebrating National Bike Month - May 2019
The nationwide celebration of the bicycle made a special stop in the DMV for Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 17th and BikeDC on Saturday, May 18th! Volunteers from PPTC helped out at key rest stops for Bike to Work Day, and also at the finish line festival for BikeDC. It was great to see everyone rolling, rallying, and representing Potomac Pedalers. Thanks to our many volunteers who helped out that weekend, and special thanks to Bob Manka for his excellent coordinating efforts for this year’s BTWD, and Ed Hazelwood for his spectacular assistance for BTWD and BikeDC!
Come Ride with Us!

Potomac Pedalers

8 www.potomacpedalers.org
Hey Potomac Pedalers - Have you ever wanted to bicycle the complete C&O Canal towpath from Cumberland down to Georgetown? For many DC area cyclists, the C&O Canal ride is a “bucket list” item that many of us would like to do, although the logistics often prove to be an obstacle.

Well now, here is your opportunity to “Pedal the Potomac” along the complete C&O Canal and ride through our own incredibly scenic national park. The C&O Canal National Historical Park follows the Potomac River from historic Cumberland, Maryland through to Georgetown in the District of Columbia. The C&O Canal National Historical Park is the ninth most visited National Park in the nation, with over 5 million visitors a year. It features a 184.5 mile towpath that for most of the trail is adjacent to the Potomac River. It is the ride to Washington that has been a mainstay for DC area cyclists since the 1970’s.

Check out the TGBT Ride video.

“The stretch of 185 miles of country from Washington, DC to Cumberland, MD is one of the most fascinating and picturesque in the Nation. It is a refuge, a place of retreat, a long stretch of quiet and peace…a wilderness area where we can commune with God and nature, a place not yet marred by the roar of wheels and the sound of horns.” – William O. Douglas, Associate Justice United States Supreme Court

The Great Bicycle Tour (TGBT) is a fully supported point to point bicycle tour of the C&O Canal that serves as an annual fundraiser for the San Mar Children’s Home near Boonsboro in Washington County, MD. It is a 4-Day cycling event that is tailored for both beginning cyclists to the hardened endurance athlete.

Vide: 2017 TGBT of the C&O Canal

The TGBT Ride includes:

- Transportation by charter bus to the start of the C&O Canal.
- All meals and snacks.
- Free parking for your vehicle throughout the event.
- Rest stops every ten to fifteen miles.
- Camp fees paid for the first two nights or transportation to nearby hotels.
- Hotel on the third night.
- Transport of all gear throughout the event.
- T-shirt, water bottle and a TGBT patch.
- Return to your vehicle by charter bus from Georgetown at end of event.
- A lifetime memory.
Best ridden on a gravel bike, mountain bike or hybrid, the C&O Canal towpath is a flat dirt surface trail which traverses forests, farmlands and historic bridges and tunnels usually within sight of the Potomac River. The route also includes the historic Paw Paw Tunnel, a 3,118 ft. tunnel that was completed in 1850, to allow barge travel through a mountainous area of Allegany County. The Paw Paw Tunnel is a “must ride” for thousands of U.S. and international cyclists each year, each sporting a functional head light for the trip through the mountain.

Note: The TGBT is a fundraising event, although it is not prohibitive in price and can be ridden by those not seeking to raise thousands of dollars. It is considered affordable by many past riders judging by the services and facilities offered along the route. The San Mar Children’s Home offers community services, family services and mental health services to children and youths in Washington County. San Mar is also a long time supporter of bicycling and bicycle events in the Hagerstown area and is the host location for the annual Cumberland Valley Century in Washington County. https://sanmarhope.org/

Both camping and hotel options are available to riders along with meals, sagging and rest stops.

For additional information or for registration information on the TGBT:
https://sanmar-tgbt.org/
https://sanmar-tgbt.org/schedule/

Historical background: The Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Canal was started in 1828 as canal construction project to provide access from Georgetown to the commercial wealth in the Ohio Valley. Eclipsed by Baltimore’s B&O Railroad, the C&O Canal operated from 1834 to 1924. Communities grew along the canal as coal, lumber and agricultural products floated down the waterway to market. After closing due to destruction from floods, the canal and towpath fell into disrepair. It was proposed for a highway corridor in the 1950’s. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas rallied support for developing the C&O Canal as a linear park, and in 1971, it was formally designated as a National Historical Park. https://www.nps.gov/choh/index.htm
(to the tune of “The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald” by Gordon Lightfoot)

The legend lives on from the first Pedalers on down Of the spring cycling weekend we call “Lewes” Not “Loose” or “Louies”, but Lew-is., it is Otherwise, the locals give you a frown.

With a group of seventy-four, hosts Lorraine and Cindy wanted more Because the Beacon Motel was still filling And everyone knew that more than just a few Would brave the April winds unfurling.

The weekend is the pride of the Potomac Pedalers Cycling Club rides. The welcome letters says there have been as many as twenty-two, other say as many as thirty. Whatever the count, one thing is true, The alumni like to drink and get flirty.

The weather on Friday took a turn for the worse when the skies opened up at two o’clock. The rain came down canceling Fred’s and Barry’s rides, Navigating the downpour would have rendered us foiled. At four the sun began to shine, we took that as a good sign Until the winds of April came slashin’ When Saturday morning arrived, they predicted gale force Should we delay, leave later and still risk crashin’?

Barry Taylor’s ride left for Oak Orchard as scheduled and Cindy Marisch’s ride left for Prime Hook on time. The winds were unrelenting but seemed easier than finding words to make this poem rhyme.

Some riders baled, others persevered, some ditched their bikes and opted for yoga with Lorraine She might have given guidance on pranayama as she gave her asana that took away the pain Either way, everyone was ready for the BYOB cocktail reception As it was time to relax and celebrate with other cycling friends Who shared their year, month, and days of cycling adventures without exception.

When suppertime came, the cyclists headed downtown for dinner at the Blue Sea café. The cook came out and greeted the line, feeling confident the food was just fine. At seven pm, the sternos went out under the empty trays along the once plentiful buffet.

Does anyone know what could be more appealing than a scenic Sunday ride to Rehoboth beach? The day dawned sunny and calm, at least 35 cyclists signed up to ride, And it sure beats sitting in a pew listening to someone preach. Along azalea-lined streets bordered by tall pines, Fred was out front a leadin’,

Out via the Junction and Breakwater Trail, back by Gordon’s Pond, and a new trail that ends at the Beacon.

The legend lives on of the cycling event we Pedalers call the Lewes weekend. The wind may slow us down and the rain may weaken But nothing will stop us from drinkin’ and eatin’!
One day 18 years ago, I traveled to Pittsburgh to meet a 96-year-old woman named Sydney Taylor. At the time, I was a reporter for the Boston Globe, and I wanted to write a magazine story about her father, Major Taylor. A half century before Jackie Robinson broke the color line in Major League Baseball, Taylor had become the first American-born black world champion in any sport. He was a cyclist at a time when bicycle races were the most popular athletic competitions in America.

Sydney, named after the Australian city where she was born, and her father had raced, told me stories both sad and wonderful. She remembered cheering for her father at races in Paris, where he had become the first American-born black world champion in any sport. He was a cyclist at a time when bicycle races were the most popular athletic competitions in America.

After the Boston Globe magazine published the story, I was overwhelmed with reaction from readers in the days when comments came via old-fashioned letters. It was published the weekend after the September 11 attacks, and many people told me Taylor’s story had given them something inspirational at a time when they needed it. The response led me to think about writing a book that would tell not just about Taylor’s life, but also about the era in which he lived, when the racist policies of the Jim Crow era intersected with the ostentatious grandeur of the Gilded Age.

Taylor, it turned out, was one of the most chronicled African-Americans of his day, the late 1890s and early 1900s. Thousands of articles were written about him around the world, in myriad languages. He was a favorite subject of early practitioners of sports photojournalism. Over the years, I collected many of these stories and photographs, read histories of the era, and gradually began assembling material for a book.

The more I studied Taylor and his time, the more his courage and skill impressed me. It was hard enough to win against the world’s fastest cyclists. His competitors tried to keep him off the race course — ostensibly due to Jim Crow restrictions, but in reality because they knew he could beat them and disprove the false rationale for their prejudice. His races were promoted as “white versus black,” and he embraced his role, knowing that he could provide hope at a time when the government so often used its power against African Americans.

Taylor became the world’s fastest man, setting records for speed and becoming champion at an international competition in Canada. He was, as the subtitle of the book puts it, America’s first black sports hero. Today, while many people may have never heard of him, more cyclists and non-cyclists alike are increasingly embracing his story, creating and joining clubs that carry his name. Often, I have found myself on a club ride, or elsewhere, pedaling next to someone who happens to be wearing a jersey bearing Taylor’s image. I cannot resist the urge to tell them that I once interviewed Taylor’s daughter and that my shelves are filled with stories of his career. More than once, I said that one day I would finish a book about him.

Now, all these years later, that book is being published on May 7. I invite you to read his story, and, if you are able, to join me at a talk at Politics and Prose on Sunday May 19 at 5 p.m. (after your ride is finished!). The bookstore location is: 5015 Connecticut Avenue NW Washington, D.C. 20008

For more information about the talk, visit: https://bit.ly/2USJ5sM

For more information about the book, and to contact me, visit: www.michaelkranish.com