GHOST BIKE

What is a "ghost bike"? To someone who has never seen one, that is the first question that spontaneously arises in their mind. To those that have seen one, it is a strong testament, a beautiful "slap in the face" that they are unlikely to forget any time soon. The impression is haunting, perhaps something akin to seeing a "ghost". Indeed the image is simple and stark, an all-white bicycle, riderless, parked along the way. There may be an inscription, or other embellishment, but the message of caution speaks for itself. A memorial, a witness, an unspoken warning or reminder, that here, or near here, a cyclist made his final ride. In this case, it was one of our very own, Patrick Ytsma, of Bethlehem.

On December 8, Pat joined the ranks of the statistics, just one of seven or eight hundred riders per year that lose their life to an automobile. Pat's unique life story has been reported and eulogized, and continues to be so. It is not the intent of this publication to provide another obituary. Yet, Pat's cycling life was special, and his passionate advocacy of safety while cycling and courteous sharing of the road by all users set him apart from other fatalities. Even more so, he achieved this status not merely by words, but by relentless example. He was an inspiration to cyclists and non- cyclists alike. So much so that more than fifty riders escorted his funeral procession and a week later nearly 300 rode in his memory, retracing his last ride.

What then is a ghost bike and what does it mean? The first ghost bike appeared around 2003 and since then others have been noted around the world. Although they are mostly alike, each one is also different. There are no rules, no organizations, no fundraising. Often, the creators of a ghost bike are anonymous and may or may not have any personal connection to cycling, safety advocacy, or the individual memorialized. Rather, the spirit of the deceased inspires others to make a statement, a silent statement, but a powerful visual message of honor to all who see it. Obviously, the meaning is in the eye of the beholder. It may mean many things to many people. The obvious commonalities are that it is a remembrance, and that remembrance is projected into a hope, a desire, a reminder that all who pass by it may share the road in safety and in peace. Other than that, it is a form of art, and any attempt to define it for others would only constrict its message and the beauty of its appearance. The one thing that is certain, is that once you
**GHOST BIKE, continued**

have seen one, you will never have to ask the question "what is a ghost bike?" again. You will know. It is our prayer that this first ghost bike to appear in the Lehigh Valley be among the last, and that all take heed to its witness, to both cyclists and motorists, pedestrians and passengers, to take care for one another as we go our separate ways.  

**EXCITING MEETING**

That's got to be an oxymoron, right. Having worked in an office environment for most of my life, I came to really dislike most meetings. They frequently had little to do with my job function, and took time away from the work I was supposed to be accomplishing.

January's LWA membership meeting was different. (Let me digress here to reiterate that the club has monthly **MEMBERSHIP** meetings, not board - or bored - meetings. All members and interested parties are invited/encouraged/urged to attend.) There has been a lot of activity recently, so if you don't generally read the minutes, here's a few highlights.

Club members Laurie Ohleger and Brad Yeakel did a superb job of creating and installing a **GHOST BIKE** in memory of Pat Ytsma. It is located at the north end of the Fahy Bridge in Bethlehem, near the place where Pat was struck by an automobile while bicycling on December 4, 2011. Pat later died of these injuries. Thanks also to Martha Miller for donating the bike. It is a fitting tribute to Pat.

Thanks also to the many club members who participated in the memorial ride for Pat. For those of us who attended, it was a touching experience. Following the ride, Pat's friend and LWA VP of Touring, Geoff Rogers, shared some thoughts and memories of Pat.

The club voted unanimously to donate $500 to the memorial fund that has been established for Pat's children. Club members are urged to make individual contributions.

George 'G' Mack has accepted the position of Editor of the LWA newsletter, the Quick Release. Please keep him informed of any special activities or events. Many of us enjoy reading about the cycling adventures of other members.

Paul Smith will be organizing and publicizing **Out of Bounds** events, for those interested in cycling beyond the Lehigh Valley area.

Richard Baldock has taken over as Membership Administrator, assisted by Rob Smith. Thanks.

Debby Terfinko and Karen O'Brien will be in charge of the popular Monday night post-ride **Grill and Chill's**.

Our website has been updated. Thanks to Terry Terfinko for leading this effort. We now (finally) have an accurate count of our membership - 223 individual memberships and 66 family memberships. PLUS - you can now easily check the status of your membership. Just log into the website and click on 'renew subscription' - it will show you how many days are left before your membership expires. Cool.

**With special thanks, to Martha, Vern, Geoff, and Mark and the family and friends of Patrick Ytsma.**

**Laurie Ohleger and Brad Yeakel**

The Ride of Silence will again be a club event in 2012. Mark your calendar for May 16.

New club jersey's are in the works. More info to follow.

So there's a lot of stuff happening, and this is just a summary. Read the minutes for all the details (see NOTE below*). There are a few rides on the calendar for those hardy souls who are willing to brave the elements. If you are going to be out cycling in the cold, post your ride on the LWA website and share it with others. You'll feel warmer.

Thanks to all of the board members and officers who continue to donate their time and talent to making this a great club. 2012 is going to be a great year. I hope to see you on the road, and soon.

Following the meeting, Dave Sheffield gave an interesting presentation on his family's hike in Norway last year. At the February meeting, he will be sharing about his experience at last year's Tour de France. He and Nancy had the opportunity to observe a stage from one of the lead cars and from a helicopter. Sounds exciting!

**Jack Hellfrich, LWA President**

*A NOTE ON MEETING MINUTES*

Meeting minutes are not posted to the website until approval at the next month's meeting. Look for minutes for January's meeting after the February meeting date, etc.

**LWA WEBSITE UPGRADE COMPLETED**

The LWA website has been upgraded to the latest release and several new features are now available. Here are the key features:

1. New member menu. This menu will appear under the login section after you log in. It includes a selection to renew your membership. By selecting "Renew Subscription" you can check your expiration date and renew if near expiration. The "Member Info" selection will allow you to review and edit your membership information, such as, Email, password, address, etc.

2. New Facebook Link will display the latest updates from the Lehigh Wheelmen Facebook page. If you have a Facebook account, "Like" the LWA page.

3. Automatic Email notification when your membership is within 30 days of expiration.

**Terry Terfinko, Website Manager**
MY MOST MEMORABLE PPRAC DAY

Bicycling is always an adventure, especially on the Pennsylvania Perimeter Ride Against Cancer (PPRAC). So after eight PPRAC rides consisting of forty-eight days and over four thousand miles of cycling spanning a period of fifteen years, a few days are stand out. This one was my most memorable.

It was Thursday, day four on the 2003 PPRAC tour from Oswego, NY to Palmeton, PA. Our route this day was seventy-five miles from Williamsport to State College, PA, the shortest single-day distance of the week. The roads were wet and the morning was foggy and damp as our group set off en masse, crossed the Susquehanna River and climbed a steep hill out of town.

The climb separated the pack into smaller groups, which resulted in Sharon Merkel and I riding together. Sharon and I were friends from previous PPRAC rides, and I worked with her husband, Mark, at Mack Trucks. We crested the hill and then just let the bikes run on the long, straight downhill. Sharon was riding about fifty feet ahead of me when suddenly, there was a loud explosion and Sharon and her bike seemed to disappear in a cloud of smoke, sparks and flying debris. We had been traveling at about 32 mph (verified later on my cycle computer), and I struggled to make sense of what I was seeing and hearing. The explosion was so violent and unexpected that my immediate impulse was that Sharon was possibly not going to survive this crash.

Somehow, probably as a result of many years of racing road bikes and riding mountain bikes, Sharon kept her bike under control and upright following the initial impact. It flashed through my mind that she might actually be able to survive this blowout, but that because of our speed, a crash was unavoidable. It takes a long time to slow a bike without the use of a rear brake, and time seemed suspended for a while. But as she skillfully brought the bike to a stop in the middle of our lane, I happily realized that not only was she not going to die, but she was going to walk away from this completely unscathed.

What had happened was not just a flat tire, which would have been bad enough. Sharon's rear rim, which had been compromised from years of use, had suddenly shattered along the circumference. The rear wheel, tire and tube were a huge mangled mass, jammed between the chainstays and seatstays. The 'cloud' of smoke I had seen was a combination of the talcum powder on the inner tube exploding out from between the tire and broken rim, and the remains of the rear tire dragging on the pavement. She essentially skidded to a stop with no rear tire and only part of a rim. It was an amazing display of bike handling skill.

As I pulled up alongside of her, I'm not sure who was more relieved, but I think we were both crying tears of joy.

Amazingly, the BikeLine support van arrived instantly - I think we were both still in shock, standing in the middle of the road. With precision that would have done justice to a NASCAR pit crew, our mechanics, Papo and George, procured a replacement wheel from the back of the van, threaded Sharon's cassette onto it, mounted a tire and tube, and installed it on her bike.

We were literally back on the road within minutes, I think before we fully absorbed what had actually occurred. The sun burned off the fog as we rolled out through the Pennsylvania countryside, enjoying a beautiful day. This was made all the more memorable by the realization of how close we had come to a real disaster. I don't think we stopped grinning for the rest of the week. I still smile whenever I think about that day.

Jack Helffrich

NEW EDITOR’S FIRST NOTE

Welcome to the first newsletter from the new newsletter editor. When I “got the call” to become the editor of Quick Release, I did not hesitate to accept the nomination or question my qualifications for the position. The questions and doubts came later; however, the motivation for my acceptance was clear to me from the start.

I am happy to be the new newsletter editor because it allows me in some small way to contribute to the LWA and to the cycling community of the Lehigh Valley which has invited me as it has invited so many fellow cyclists into becoming part of something bigger than being a single cyclist on a single bike on a solitary ride through the countryside. The LWA recently celebrated its 60th anniversary. I think of those years as 60 years of providing a family or community for those who often significantly share only one common characteristic, the love of cycling. It’s not about the bike, but the bike creates the bond, and an organization like the LWA promotes and strengthens that bond as it helps its members celebrate cycling and make connections which never would have been made without it. Many of us started cycling alone or with existing friends. The LWA allows us to cycle with others who in many cases become our friends.

So, thanks to the members of the club who invited me or volunteered me into becoming the newsletter editor. I hope I don't disappoint.

Thanks also to Sallie Urffer, Quick Release editor for the past three years, who assisted me in the transition to this, my first newsletter. Yours will be a tough act to follow.

Thanks also to Terry Terfinko, club webmaster, who made many helpful suggestions for the production of the newsletter.

Thanks also to all members of the LWA who have welcomed me into their community. I look forward to your input and suggestions for Quick Release. Don’t hesitate to email me your thoughts, questions, ideas, pictures, and, best of all, articles. See you on the road.

G. Mack
OUT OF BOUNDS EVENTS

Special events and rides sponsored by other clubs are regularly posted on the LWA website under the LINKS tab---Out of Bounds. If you would like to post an event on the website, send relevant information to Jack Helffrich, LWA president, jackhelffrich@hotmail.com, or Terry Terfinko, club webmaster, terfintt@gmail.com.

In addition, Paul Smith will be organizing and publicizing Out of Bounds events, for those interested in cycling beyond the Lehigh Valley area. Check out the Paul’s article below.

Terry Terfinko, Website Manager

RIDING SOMEPLACE DIFFERENT

We all know that the riding here in the Lehigh Valley is great, but there are lots of other places that have great riding, and it is fun to get away from time to time to explore new areas. This year the club will be organizing a few such events, traditionally called “Out of Bounds” rides, which we hope will be appealing to club members. I have volunteered to coordinate these rides, and will be announcing dates and details as I get things set up.

Right now I’m working on three weekend get-aways. One is a weekend on the eastern shore of Maryland in mid April. Several of us went down there in 2010 and had a great time exploring the roads near St. Michaels and Oxford MD. I’ll have rides planned for Friday, Saturday and Sunday. This is a great area for early season since the terrain is virtually flat and it’s easy to put together routes of various distances for all abilities. The area has lots of things for non-riders to do as well. Look for details on the website in February or via e-mail.

Another event is in conjunction with the Southern Tier Bicycle Club and is a camping weekend in which numerous Wheelmen have participated in the past. It is called the Great Finger Lakes Bicycle Tour June 8 - 10. Details and registration information are at http://www.southerntierbicycleclub.org/. If you are interested in going along for a great time all you need to do is register and send an e-mail to pocono723@yahoo.com to let me know you'll be going. I hope we get a big group this year. The campground is really nice and the organizers do a great job with the event.

The third event I hope to be able to offer will be a ride in the Amish area of Lancaster country. We’ll be staying in a very nice hotel near Intercourse, PA, and riding the network of rural roads that will take you deep into the Amish farmlands. If there is enough interest we can even ride to Charlestown, MD on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay. The tentative dates for this event are May 10 - 12. I’ll have specifics in February on the website.

I hope this idea generates sufficient interest and that a tradition of going places as a club becomes part of the club’s activities. Many bicycle clubs host things like this and they seem to be well attended, so check your calendars and consider joining other club members riding someplace different.

Paul Smith, Out of Bounds Coordinator

TUNE UP BEFORE SPRING

Whether done by yourself or your local bike shop, tuning up and maintaining your bicycle will ensure an enjoyable, trouble-free start to the upcoming biking season.

Basic bike maintenance, including checking and adjustment of shifting and brakes, lubing joints and cables and checking tires for wear can easily be done yourself. Overhaul or adjustments of the headset, bottom bracket, hubs, derailleur and truing of wheels require experience or a local bike mechanic. If you are not familiar with your bike’s parts and their necessary care then you have several options:

- Attend classes on bike maintenance and repair. Visit Coalition for Appropriate Transportation for more info. on mechanics classes available in the Lehigh Valley.
- Take your bike to your local bike shop for a professional bicycle tune-up.
- Buy a good book on bike maintenance and repair. Study it and practice!
- Visit different websites, like Bicycling Magazine, to find How To guides.

A resounding comment many bike shops make, is that people wait until cycling season begins to get their bikes tuned-up. The problem is that bike shops become overwhelmed and your tune-up may become delayed. So instead, visit your shop now, while the temps are low and the shop is slow. They will take their time, they may be able to work on it while you wait or turn it around within a day depending upon what is needed for your bike.

So what is in a tune-up? Services provided by bike shops vary, but for the most part they usually consist of:

- Brake check, adjustment or repair
- Shifter and cable check, adjustment or repair
- Wheel True
- Hub check and adjustment
- Headset check and tightening
- Bottom Bracket check and adjustment
TUNE UP BEFORE SPRING, continued

- Crankset and drive train inspection
- Chain check, adjustment and lube
- Tire check
- Tighten loose bolts
- Overall safety inspection
- Any parts replaced will be additional cost.

So you want to do it yourself - here is some information that may help you.

If you choose to do the tune-up yourself make sure you have the appropriate tools. Visit Bicycling Magazine's article on essential bike tools. Tool kits are available that will provide you with the essentials. Visit Park Tools to find where to purchase or Spin Doctor Essential Tool Kit both are a good set of starter tools for your home workshop and don't forget a workstand, it will save your back.

Chain: Check for wear and replace if necessary. There is a tool for measuring wear between chain links. Otherwise count 20 links on your chain (pulled tight). The pin-to-pin measurement should be exactly 10 inches. If longer by 1/16 inch or more, you need a new chain. If OK, clean the chain with an old toothbrush or a bike chain cleaning machine (available at most bike shops) and citrus solvent, then lube.

Bolts - Starting from the front of the bike and working toward the rear tighten all bolts, but make sure they are not too tight if you have carbon fiber parts or frame. Don't forget the chainring, crankarm and water bottle cage bolts. On threadless headsets, check the stem-clamp bolts but leave the bolt on top alone (leave for the shop).

Chainrings and cogs - check for any bent teeth and clean. Clean with an old toothbrush or cog brush and citrus solvent. If there are bent teeth, you should replace.

Headset - check for tightness: apply the front brake and roll bike forward and backward. Wrap your hand where the headset and fork meet. If you hear any knocking sounds or feel any play then loosen the stem bolts, then using the top bolt adjuster tighten the headset and then retighten the stem bolts. You can also remove the front wheel and rotate the handlebars from side to side. The steering motion should feel smooth, with no binding or rough spots.

Bottom bracket: Shift the front derailleur to the smallest chaining and then lift the chain off. Spin the cranks. It should feel smooth with no roughness or excessive resistance. Check for lateral play by trying to wiggle the crankset.

Hubs: Spin the front wheel so it spins 2 or 3 times. It should spin freely and come to a stop with a slight back and forth motion, rather than an abrupt stop. If it is not rubbing on the brake shoe, an abrupt stop is probably caused by improper adjustment of the hub and bearings. Next grasp the rim or tire and lightly wiggle the wheel from side to side. There should be no lateral play. Repeat for rear wheel after removing the chain.

Pedals: should spin freely. Make sure the pedals are securely fastened to the crankarms (may need pedal wrench). Clean any mud or dirt from the pedal body and lube moving parts. Remember to check your shoe cleats and tighten the screw as well as checking for wear, replace if there is a lot of wear.

Cable housing: inspect the cables for signs of rust, fraying or kinks. The cable housing shouldn't be cracked. Replace anything that is stretched, rusted, frayed or kinked. If all is ok, lube the sliders and cables. Plastic-lined cables usually don't need lube.

Brakes and brake pads: check for wear. Grit, small pebbles, dirt, water and other elements wear down the pads and possibly rims. Check for metal shavings embedded in the brake pads and remove if found. Use a gentle scrubby to clean the rims where the brakes engage. Brake pads have grooves or markings that indicate when to replace. Know what your bike needs, there are different types of pads for alloy versus carbon rims, etc.

Tires and tubes: check for any wear, flattened rubber tires, cracks or bubbling. Exposure to the elements causes the rubber on tires and tubes to deteriorate and become brittle over time. Replace if necessary.

Sallie Urffer

LWA CLUB MEETINGS

Held the 3rd Monday of every month.

Next meeting is:
February 20, 2012
7:00 PM-8:00 PM

MEETING LOCATION:
The Education Center at the Integrated Health Care Facility located at 250 Cetronia Road, behind The Tilghman Square Mall.
Enter the lobby, then take the elevator to the third floor and turn left. The entrance to the Education Center is the first door to the left.

Meeting minutes are posted on the LWA website after approval at the next month’s meeting.
NOTE FROM VP OF TOURING

Well it looks like winter has finally arrived, but the good news is that the days are getting longer. It'll be spring before you know it. There are several rides that I would love for everyone to put on their calendars for the coming season.

First up is Wed. May 16th at 7:00pm, the Ride Of Silence http://www.rideofsilence.org/main.php. We are organizing a local ride for this worldwide event raising awareness of the presence of cyclists and for remembering and honoring those cyclists injured or killed.

Second, on Sun. June 10th, is the Pat Ytsma Ride Safe Bike Tour http://www.patytmsabiketour.com/. All proceeds from this ride will go to a fund for the education of Pat's two children.

Third, tentatively scheduled for Sun. Oct. 7th is the Gap Gallop, an annual favorite which we will try to have better weather for this year.

Stay safe and warm and hopefully I'll see you on the road.

Geoff Rogers, VP Touring

BUT, DON'T STOP NOW!

It's cold outside, there's snow and ice on the road, the ski resorts are finally open, and Jean Pinelli is still riding and posting her rides. On Saturday, January 21. Jean and I only did 8 miles on the D&L trail but it was a real work out. When you ride in the snow you have to put in a lot of effort just to ride fast enough to keep your balance, and when you steer to balance, your front wheel often slides. The extra effort is worth it. You get a good work out, and the views with the leaves off the trees are a lot different than in the summer. Come on out and ride. There's still some winter left.

Dean Hower

MANAGING YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Have you ever wondered when your membership expires? You could look on your membership card or check it on the website. Look for the membership menu on the left hand side of the screen under login. Select Renew Subscription.

The number of days remaining before your membership expires will be displayed. When the number of remaining days drops to 30, you will receive an Email notification from the website.

Membership cards will be mailed within 2 weeks of membership Join/Renewal. If you do not receive a card after 2 weeks, contact Richard Baldock, Email: rv314159@rcn.com

Terry Terfinko, Website Manager

CLASSIFIED ADS FOR MEMBERS ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTICLES FOR SALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BICYCLE FOR SALE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannondale R400 - CAAD3 aluminum frame- Made in USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ht. - 52cm. Step over ht. 30-1/4&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color - Blue Wt. - Approx 22-1/2 lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivetrain - Tiagra 27 speed (triple front, 9-speed rear)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedals - Coda SPD Computer - CatEye Mity3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rims - Mavic XP11 Tires - (New) Vredstein (blue)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two bottle cages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike is in very good condition Price - $400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact - Jack at 484-347-3541</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOR RENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 HARD-SIDED BICYCLE TRAVEL CASES</strong>, Club owned, for rent to members for up to 4 weeks. $25 for 1 or 2 weeks, $50 for 3 or 4 weeks. Plus security deposit required for any rental. Contact Dick <a href="mailto:McCreight@dick.mccreight">McCreight@dick.mccreight</a>@juno.com</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WANTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ads must be private buy/sell/wanted/etc. having to do with bicycling and/or other sports. <strong>Ads must be submitted by the 20th of the month to appear in the following month's newsletter.</strong> Send ads to <a href="mailto:gbmack@ptd.net">gbmack@ptd.net</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LWA Discount Sponsors

Receive a 10% Discount with your LWA membership card!
(unless otherwise noted)

**Action Wheels**
530 W. Broad St. #1
Bethlehem, PA 18018
610-866-1113
www.action-wheels.com

**BikeLine Allentown**
1728 Tilghman St.
Allentown, PA 18104
610-437-6100
www.bikeline.com

**BikeLine Bethlehem**
2112 Schoenersville Rd.
Bethlehem, PA 18018
610-691-0943
www.bikeline.com

**Cycledrome**
8150 Hamilton Boulevard
Trexler Town, PA 18087
610-398-6631
www.cycledromebikes.com

**Cutters Bike Shop**
418 E. 3rd St.
Bethlehem, PA 18015
610-419-4207
www.cuttersbikeshop.com

**Fitness Central Bike Shop**
4337 Route 309, Schnecksville, PA
18078 PH 610.769.7300 Fax 610.769.7511
www.facebook.com/fc.shop

**Eric J. Loch Diamonds & Fine Jewelry**
3370 Lehigh St.
Allentown, PA 18103
610-967-3479
www.lochsjewelers.com
**Free Lithium battery

**Keswick Cycle Co.**
408 N. Easton Road
Glenside, PA 19038
215-885-7433
www.keswickcycle.com

**Longswamp Bed & Breakfast**
1605 State Street
Mertztown, PA 19539
610-682-6197
www.longswamp.com

**Saucon Valley Bikes**
824 Main St.
Hellertown, PA 18055
610-838-1500
www.sauconvalleybikes.com

**Sleeping Dog Professional Cycles**
330 W. Weis St.
Topton, PA 19562
610-682-1000
www.sleepingdogprocycles.com

**South Mountain Cycles & Coffee Bar**
303 Main St. Lower Level
Emmaus, PA 18049
610-967-4490
smcbikes@ptd.net

**Spokes Bike Shop**
16590 Route 61
Hamburg, PA 19526
610-562-8900
www.spokesbikeshop.com

**Village Bicycle Shop**
7 South Village Circle
Reinholds, PA 17569
610-742-4786
gs391@verizon.net

**Weaver’s Bike Shop**
729 Park Rd.
Fleetwood, PA 19522
610-944-9565
www.weaversbikeshop.com
*10% off parts and accessories