



Photo of Courtney Campbell path bridge between St Pete & Tampa, by Pat Rose of Largo

Sarasota Manatee Bicycle Club

January, 2016



Annual General Membership Meeting & Ride

Saturday, January 16th at Twin Lakes Park, 6700 Clark Rd (SR 72), a half mile east of I-75 on the south side of Clark Rd.

Before the meeting, there will be 4 or 5 ride groups leaving at 9:00 AM; Ride Leaders to be announced later.

After the rides there will be hamburgers, veggie burgers, hot dogs, and drinks provided by SMBC. Members will be asked to provide a side dish. If your last name begins with A to I, bring a salad; J to R, a dessert, and S to Z, a side.

Following lunch, there will be an important business meeting followed by two bike-maintenance clinics: 1: Changing a Tire and 2: Chain & Cassette maintenance; Instructors to be announced later.

Business meeting agenda:

- Recap of SMBC activities in 2015
- Election of 2016 Board of Directors. See a biography of each candidate later in this newsletter.
- Presentations by **Linda Dinero**, formerly of the City of Sarasota Police Department and **Deputy Cathy Duff** of the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office.

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Members Who Joined SMBC in November, 2015

Total SMBC Membership: 526

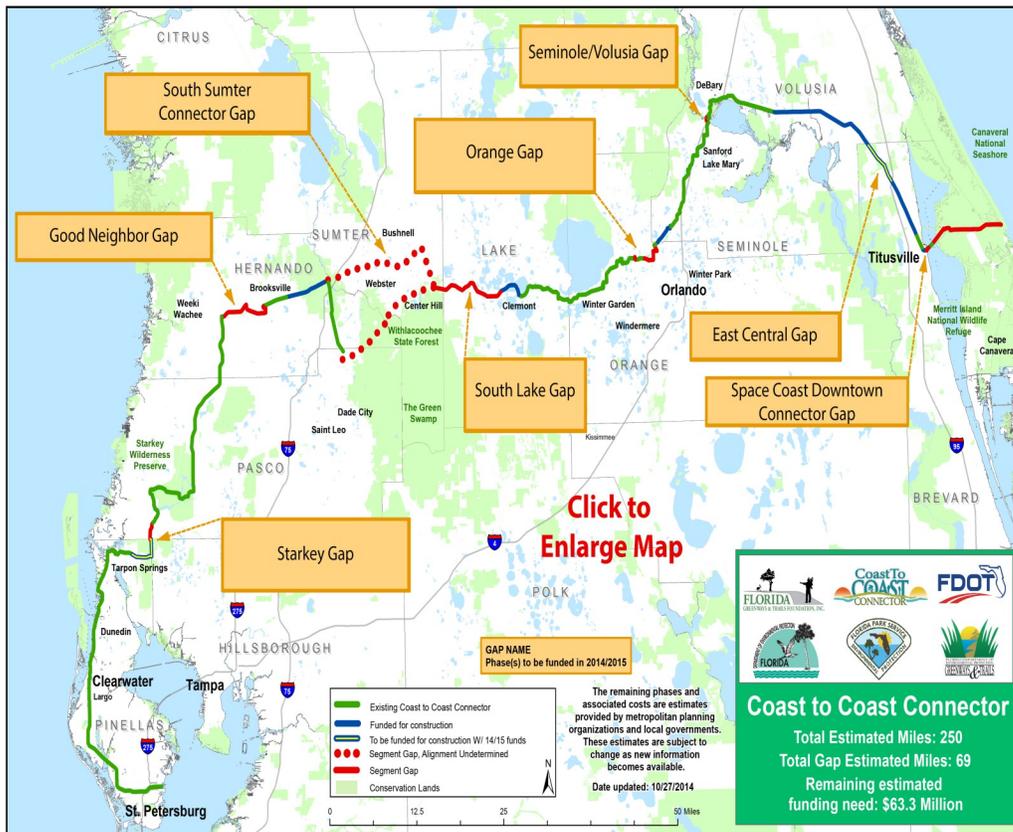
Name	City	Name	City
Carla L. Boehme	Bradenton	Regina Bussing	Sarasota
Emmanuel Charron	Long Boat Key	Laura Charron	Long Boat Key
Denise Cormier	Bradenton	Daniel Levensgood	Birdsboro, PA
Kathy DiBiase	Long Boat Key	Sam DiBiase	Long Boat Key
Ed Doucette	Englewood	Margie Doucette	Englewood
Bill Ewell	Osprey	Janie M. Ewell	Osprey
Clifford E. Kress	Long Boat Key	Simi Kress	Long Boat Key
Leonard G. Murphy	Sarasota	Richard S. Lipov	Sarasota
Garry Nelson	Sarasota	Jay W. Walsh	Sarasota

Welcome all, to the pleasures of Sarasota Manatee Bicycle Club

FLORIDA BIKE TRAILS - Florida's Coast to Coast Connector Trail

Most cyclists are aware of the trail networks that exist nearby. In many areas they are wildly popular. The Pinellas Trail, for instance, leads from St. Petersburg through Tarpon Springs. Thereafter, the Suncoast Trail runs from New Port Richey along the Veterans Turnpike and terminates near Brooksville. But there is a large gap that exists from the terminus of the Suncoast Trail to the beginning of the West Orange Trail in Clermont. The Seminole Wekiva Trail then picks up north of Orlando. But each of these trails was developed independently. As a result there are gaps that need to be closed in order to create a continuous trail system.

Enter the Florida Coast to Coast Connector Trail (C2C). When completed in 2020, this trail system will be connected and create a 250 mile trail from downtown St. Petersburg to Titusville on the East Coast. For once, we can thank the legislature for something useful.



During the last session, the legislature directed the Florida Department of Transportation to allocate \$25 million per year to the Florida Shared-Use Non-motorized Trail Network (Sun Trail). That money is already being put to use and local governments are competing for access to it. Sixty nine miles of trail will be required to link St. Petersburg and Titusville. Many of the segments have already been funded or planning is underway.

This is an exciting time for anyone in Florida interested in the development of our unique trail

system. The long-term plans call for 2,500 miles of trails throughout the state. It will put Florida in the top echelon of

states with developed trail systems. Local governments have come to realize that local trails create an enormous economic impact. They point to Winter Garden and Dunedin as the poster cities for positive economic development from local shared use paths.

With the help of external grants, the Florida Greenways and Trails Foundation has partnered with Day Communications, Inc., to fund a newsletter updating progress on the C2C, helped facilitate a series of C2C leadership summits, and organized funding for the development of standards and design elements to be used in completing trail segments. You can find links to their newsletters and an informative, albeit redundant, 22-minute video on the C2C at <http://fgtf.org/>

Jim Dodson is an experienced bicycle accident lawyer. He is the author of the *Florida Bicycle Accident Handbook* which answers the most commonly asked questions by injured cyclists. If you have questions about a Florida cycling accident this valuable resource is available to you free of charge at www.jimdodsonlaw.com.

FLORIDA BIKE TRAILS – Rails to Trails

Explore Florida trails and find comprehensive trail guides including Florida trail maps, descriptions, photos and reviews. Whether you're getting outdoors for recreation, fitness, commuting or travel you'll discover top trails for bicycling, hiking, running and more on TrailLink.com. Get outdoors and explore all Florida has to offer including popular trails like Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail and Withlacoochee State Trail. With more than 107 trails covering 1153 miles you're bound to find one perfect for you.

<http://www.trailink.com/state/fl-trails.aspx>

SMBC Board of Directors Meeting – December 9

The full minutes of the meeting are accessible by Members only on the SMBC website under the **About SMBC** tab and **Board Minutes** subtab.

Board Members in attendance: Bud Gaunce, Tom Roberts, Mike Hart, Simon Oliver, Tom Bridges and Patty Riley.

The board approved motions for:

1. The expenditure of \$750 for the purchase of 15 children's bicycles for Open Door and Our Daily Bread in Bradenton (photo below) and \$1,000 for the purchase of 19 bicycles for Sarasota Toys for Tots.



2. The continuation of the Ride from Shops program.

3. Changing insurance to the League of American Bicyclists/American Specialty Insurance.

4. The expenditure of \$875 annually for insurance to protect the Board of Directors, Ride Leaders and SMBC Volunteers from personal liability suits.

Other Actions:

Announced the candidates for the 2016 Board of Directors as: continuing members **Bud Gaunce, Maureen Boyd, David Hodgkinson, Jim Schneck, Tom Roberts, Tom Bridges** and new candidates **Cindy Mannis, Tom Mannis, Nora Miller and Bill Norris**. See biographies of candidates below.

President Gaunce thanked outgoing members Vice President **Mike Hart**, Secretary **Patty Riley** and Safety Chair **Simon Oliver** for their service to the club.

The January 27th meeting will be held at 6 PM at the Fruitville Library on Fruitville Road, and the February 10th meeting will be held at 6 PM at Everglades University on Osprey in Lakewood Ranch.

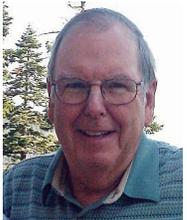
2016 SMBC Board of Director Nominees



Maureen Murphy Boyd: I have been a member of the SMBC since 2010 or 2011; some of that time as a snowbird and as a full-time resident since April 2012. I ride with the 16-18 and the 18-20 groups and love to change up the routes I ride. My favorite rides are anything that takes us by the beaches. During 2013 and 2015 I was the Membership Chairperson for the club. I find this position to be an exciting challenge as we try to keep our current members and continue to bring in more new members each year. I feel the biggest hurdle we face in the immediate future is getting the club members more connected on Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Yahoo Groups) so we communicate more through those areas and stay in touch all year long. I truly believe the club is moving in the right direction with the focus being on safety first and serving the local bike community second. We are a busy, fun club full of good people that does great things for the local community. Happy New Year!



James Schneck: I am a five year member and current Treasurer on the Board and a full time resident of Florida. I usually ride solo on the quiet roads east of I-75. I believe SMBC should provide training and educational programs that are open to the community to learn how safe and enjoyable it is to ride at any age with our club.



Tom Roberts: 11 year SMBC member, part time resident, Moderator of the SMBC-Members egroup. I ride primarily with the C groups on Wednesday and Friday; Board member for four years. I want to make it easier for SMBC members to communicate with each other and help redesign the web site to be user friendly. I think the direction the club is going in promoting bike safety and community involvement is vital to our community and our success as a bike club.



Bud Gaunce: I joined SMBC in May of 2009 and have been honored to serve in various positions and am currently club president. The club has seen a metamorphosis in culture since I first began and I credit that to the hard work of the current and previous boards. I would be honored to continue on the board and feel that the new board should focus on: A) Safety, with classes for club members and ride leaders as well as bike safety rodeos for kids and safety classes for the general public. B) Membership-retention and growth which are imperative for our continued success and C) Make the SMBC website more user friendly.



Tom Bridges: I am a seven year member of the club. I am a full time resident and ride twice a week. I believe the club should increase our membership. I have been a member of the social committee for the last three years and have tried to make our social rides more interesting. The Van Wezel, poker and pace rides were my ideas. In 2016 we should continue to make our rides more fun.



David Hodgkinson: Retired Civil Engineer. British born but now an American Citizen. Has lived in Sarasota for nine years. Joined SMBC in 2007. Ride leader. Organizer of the last seven Cyclefests.



Cindy Mannis: I have been a member of SMBC for two years. Prior to that I coordinated The ShoreFire Century, the major fund-raising community ride for a northeastern US bicycle club for four years, then served as that club's Vice President for two years and President for two years. I am also a League Cycling Instructor (LCI) of the League of American Bicyclists (LAB). My goals for SMBC are to continue to teach smart, safe cycling to help assure that the SMBC group rides are safe; grow the membership, and help Sarasota become a LAB “Bicycle Friendly Community.”



Tom Mannis: I have been a member of SMBC for two years since moving to Sarasota in 2014. Prior to that I served as The Ride Leader Coordinator for four years in a bicycle club in the northeast. I have been a League Cycling Instructor (LCI) of League of American Bicyclists for five years. My goals include teaching smart, safe cycling to help people feel more secure about getting on a bike, riding on the road with other vehicles, creating a mindset that bikes are treated as vehicles and to ensure that people on bikes know how to ride safely and legally.



Nora Miller: I have been a member of SMBC for two years. I ride in the 16-18 groups on Wednesdays and Fridays. To me, one of the most important aspects of riding is safety. My definition of safety is being aware of what is going on around me at all times; avoid taking any unnecessary chances; anticipating potentially dangerous situations; and not creating an unsafe predicament for other riders or myself. Based on my past work experience, and having ridden bicycles for sixteen years, it is my hope the SMBC and board will benefit from my contributions.



Bill Norris: Florida full time resident. Member of SMBC for last five years. Ride leader and social committee member. Ride Wednesday and Friday. Completed the Florida Traffic and Bicycle Safety Education Program. Will work diligently to improve safety education and increase participation in club social rides.

Smart Cycling Class

Do you know all you need to know to safely ride a bike with traffic? Do you feel you know enough to teach your children how to ride cautiously and conspicuously while on their own? When you drive your car, are you confident on how to share the road with people on bikes? The League of American Bicyclists (LAB) has a Smart Cycling program that gives you the tips, tools, and techniques to confidently answer YES to each question. Their classes are taught to children and adults across the country by certified League Cycling Instructors (LCI).

SMBC is fortunate to have four members who are LCIs and will be giving the Smart Cycling Classes in January, 2016. The classroom instruction will be given by LCIs **Cindy and Tom Mannis** at the Gulf Gate Library Conference Room on the second floor from 10 AM to 2:15 PM on Thursday, January 14th. Space is limited to 14 students so register early for this class on the SMBC website. While LAB charges for the Smart Cycling Classes, the SMBC LCIs are offering the course free of charge to both members and non-members.



The outdoor Bike Skills portion of the class will taught by LCIs **Bud Gaunce and Ralph Monti** on Thursday, January 21st at a time and location to be determined.

If you want to become an LCI you must first complete the Smart Cycling Class and pass the exam. It so happens that LAB is offering an LCI 3-day class in Punta Gorda on February 26-28th and several SMBCers are planning to take that course assuming, of course they pass the Smart Cycling Class.

If you would like to know more about the Smart Cycling or LCI classes, contact one of the instructors:

Cindy & Tom Mannis at cindy.mannis@verizon.net, **Bud Gaunce** at bud.gaunce@gmail.com or **Ralph Monti** at ralphm@mediaconsults.com.

Three Women Who Changed the Course of History On Bicycles

by Hilary Angus originally appeared on [Momentum Mag](#) on March 5, 2015



“Susan B. Anthony, famed suffragette leader and women’s rights reformer, once said of the bicycle, 'I think it has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. It gives women a feeling of freedom and self-reliance.' Anthony described the image of a woman on a bicycle as 'the picture of free, untrammelled womanhood.' It may seem surprising that the bicycle could have played such a pivotal role in the women’s rights movement. What exactly was it about this familiar two-wheeled transportation device that lent itself so freely to unparalleled social change?”

[Read the rest of Hilary's article](#)

[Another article about Women and Bicycling from the League of American Bicyclists](#)

Memorial Ride – The Empty Saddle Ride

On Saturday, March 5th, 2016, SMBC will hold its first ongoing annual ride to remember former members who have moved on to the great Velodrome in the sky. The event will be called the *Empty Saddle Ride*. The ride will start with the entire group riding a short distance, slow and in silence, to a serene location. The procession will be led by a tandem bike with the stoker's seat empty and the bike covered in white and adorned with flowers. At the service, the names of members who have passed on will be read aloud from a ledger, starting with the earliest year of record and finishing with the names of those who have passed most recently. Following the service, riders will break up into their preferred ride-pace group for a 2-hour ride back to the start location for lunch and time for remembrances. This event is in addition to the worldwide *Ride of Silence* that will be held Wednesday, May 16, 2016, in which SMBC participates. The Ride of Silence remembers those cyclists who have been killed due to a bicycle/motorist crash.

The potential locations for the *Empty Saddle Ride* are under consideration. However, we seek your contribution now by providing the names of deceased members along with the year of their death, if known. The only criteria is that the deceased was a member of SMBC, regardless of when or for how long. They do not have to have been killed in a bicycle-related accident. Please send the names of those you wish to be remembered to [Empty Saddle Ride](#) at any time during the year. Thank you. The SMBC Social Committee and Board of Directors.

Bicycle Stuff Exchange

1. Wheels for sale: Shimano Ultegra WH-6800 Road Bike Wheel Set. 2-Way Fit: Tubeless or Clincher. 4,000 miles. One year old. \$370 to \$550 new, asking \$250. [Charlie Morris](#) - [Video about the WH-6800 wheel set](#)
2. For Sale: [Clcle Ops](#), indoor ride trainer. Like new, \$125. Retail \$350. **Rick Myerburg**, 941-923-7205 rsm1945@earthlink.net
3. For Sale: 58 cm 2001 Fuji Team, hand-built aluminum frame, Reynolds carbon fiber fork, Time carbon fiber seat stays. Shimano Dura Ace components, Mavic Kysarium wheels, Speed Play Ti Frog pedals. Asking \$1100. **Art Wester** 201-220-9185, artw0125@gmail.com. The bike is located in Sarasota.
4. For Sale: Scott CR-1 Pro road bike, red and black, all carbon. Components: Shimano gray Ultegra. Compact gearing with Mavic Ksynium Elite wheels. M54 frame with Specialized Armadillo tires. Cyclometer included. Mint condition, only \$1,995. Call: **Jeff** 410-322-6737.
5. For Sale: Specialized Dolce Elite Women's Bicycle. Electric blue. Very good condition; regularly maintained. Features: Drop Handlebars, Gator Hardskin tires, computer, new seat, platform pedals, brake extenders. Size: Small, for person 5'2"-5'3", 34" high, 18" from front of seat to handlebars. \$375.00. Contact **Susan Shucker** at [941-706-3383](tel:941-706-3383), or sshucker@hotmail.com.
6. For Sale: 2006 Giant OCR men's bike. Good shape but needs pedals and new handle taping. Frame tubing Material: ALUXX Butted Aluminum, Forks: FormulaOne carbon fiber; Hubs & Rims: Zero XSR-3, I have the specs if someone needs more info. Original cost \$1100. Asking \$275 or close offer. **Paul Petrus**: Home: [\(941\) 388-8427](tel:941-388-8427), Cell: [\(315\) 430-0328](tel:315-430-0328), E-mail: PJPetrus@hotmail.com
7. Bicycles & Racks for Sale
 - (A) In superior condition red and black 2009 51cm Carbon Fiber Jamis Xenith Pro, 700 Wheels, bicycle computer, 2 Bottle Holders, Owner's Manual, with Shimano M324 Pedals, \$1,895
 - (B) In superior condition all white 1989 Raleigh Technium, Chill all aluminum, size 13 inch adult mountain bike, 26 inch wheels, 1 Bottle Holder, stored for 31 years, Owner's Manual, \$295
 - (C) In good condition red 1983 Peugeot, Chromalloy, new 700 Wheels, 1 Bottle Holder, Model PB-14, Owner's Manual, price \$275
 - (D) Superior condition Thule 2 Bike Hitch rack, T2 916/917XTR, keys, instructions, \$175
 - (E) Superior condition Saris 3 Bike Trunk rack, \$95All items are located in Sarasota. Contact Joe Boston, 941-927-4433 or jwboston1935@verizon.net
8. For Sale: Scott CR-1 Pro road bike. Red and black, all carbon. Components all Shimano gray Ultegra. Compact gearing, Mavic Ksynium Elite wheels, M54 frame, Specialized Armadillo tires, cyclometer and Shimano SPD pedals. Mint condition and garaged for new owner. Current owner has second bike. Only 1700 mi. Sale price, \$1995. Retail value with components, \$3400. Call Jeff for further information, [410 322 6737](tel:410-322-6737).
9. FREE, as in \$0: Small ladies SMBC jersey. Dave Clarke/Linda Young [941-776-2769](tel:941-776-2769)
10. For Sale: 54 cm Bianchi Campione grame, magenta, fully lugged Tange double-buttet Cro-Mo seamless tubing, Kestrel carbon composite EMS fork, Shimano Dura Ace 9-speed 7700 component group. Includes two water bottle cages, a Cateye computer and Look clipless pedels. Asking \$895. Contact Steve at skatzman@live.com or phone or text at [407-340-4257](tel:407-340-4257). Located in Osprey.



Your Club Can Use Your Help – Free Memberships Possible

As SMBC has grown, there are more requests by members for more rides on different days at different times and the desire for more one-off events such as an overnight ride or one-day out-of-town rides. The current Social Events are popular and well attended. Members like the idea of combining a ride with a meal or visiting a local attraction. In the past we have toured the Van Wezel, Tropicana Field and Solomon's Castle.

In order to expand our Social and Ride calendars, we will need more volunteers as ride leaders, ride sweeps, secondary ride leaders, event organizers or to help with menu and food preparation. There are also opportunities to volunteer for Child Bike Rodeos, safety and ride-leader instruction, or represent SMBC at other organization bicycling events. The membership has a long-standing tradition of volunteering for Cyclefest which is what has made that event so successful for 41 years. We could use the same level of involvement in other club activities. These needs are especially great during the Winter Season when our ridership doubles or triples.

You may want to consider leading a ride once a month or even less often. You could also be useful as a Sweep or Secondary Ride Leader for large groups. If you do, you would earn a FLAP (Frequent Leader Awards Program) point for each ride. You can exchange 10 FLAP points for a free year's single membership, or use less than 10 FLAP points as partial payment on your membership. Current club and ride leaders will be happy to help you become an effective and safe ride leader and can even help you design a fun and safe route. It is not as hard as you may think. Plans are underway to develop Ride Leader training options.

You don't have to be a member of any committee to help out. Just let us know that you are willing to help and we will accommodate your interests. We don't care if you have been a member for years or just joined last week. Thanks in advance for helping grow SMBC.

Interested in leading a ride: contact Ride Coordinator **Dave Clarke**, david@ladyjane.com

Interested in Menu & Food preparation: contact Social Committeewoman **Edie Perkins**, edithp12@verizon.net

Interested in volunteering otherwise: contact President **Bud Gaunce**, bud.gaunce@gmail.com

Avoid Being The Gorilla!

By Ralph Monti

What do car technology, human vision testing and safe bicycling have in common? Actually, quite a bit and here's why.



Let's start with human vision testing. Have you heard of the term "Inattentional Blindness"? Inattentional blindness is the failure to notice an unexpected stimulus that appears in one's field of vision when other attention-demanding tasks are performed.

Inattentional blindness is not an eye defect, but rather an attention error. It typically kicks in when humans are overloaded with stimuli, and it becomes impossible to pay attention to all stimuli in one's field of vision. The best known example of inattentional blindness is the "Gorilla on the Basketball Court" test, a version of which you can view on:

http://www.theinvisiblegorilla.com/gorilla_experiment.html.

[Read the Rest of Ralph's Article](#)

The Best Songs About Bikes

Get stoked for your next ride with *Bicycling* magazine's playlist of two-wheeled hits

By Caitlin Giddings, November 9th, 2015 [Bicycling](#) magazine

“What gets stuck in your head while you ride? My brain likes to fixate on lyrics about bikes—particularly the Moldy Peaches' "I just want to ride bikes with you," and Team Dresch's "I wish I was riding bikes with you." (Apparently my subconscious needs more riding partners.)

In the interest of drumming up more bicycle-themed jams for my mental roster, I asked everyone at *Bicycling* to submit some of their favorite bike songs and compiled them all into the playlist below. Do you have a favorite bike song? What would you add?”

[Check out the list](#)

Ride 2 Recovery's Honor Ride

I work for Ride 2 Recovery which is a non-profit adaptive cycling program for Wounded Veterans. We have an Honor Ride on February 13th in St. Petersburg, FL.



The Honor Ride is a non-competitive cycling event where active service members, injured veterans and the general public all get to ride together. Rides vary from 10-100 miles and are designed for all skill levels. Injured veterans ride for free. The Honor Ride raises crucial, life-changing funds in support of our local [Project HERO](#) programs, which have proven results helping wounded, ill and healing veterans improve their physical and mental health at no cost to them.

[See more about Ride 2 Recovery](#)



[Register to do the Honor Ride](#)

Submitted by **Jeff Krawczyk**, Event Operations at Ride 2 Recovery

What Color Bike Do You Like?

By Donald Myers

“People ask what kind of bike do you like? 'I like blue bikes best.' But, that's getting ahead of my story. Over time, my bike life passed through three periods, red, black and blue. Each period, more or less, spoke of changes in self image. Today, I'm in my fourth phase, grey-black-white.

Before my red period, at seven, in 1937, I had only a vague idea of the influences of color. My most pressing goal was to ride a two-wheeler. My sister possessed a secondhand girl's bike with thick, orange-red balloon tires. I hated the bike because it was a girl's bicycle. I hated the unnatural tire color. I hated her.”

[Enjoy the Rest of Don's Article](#)

2016 Southwest Florida Tour de Cure

Sunday, April 10, 2016 at Lakewood Ranch, Main Street



If you are interested in helping Stop Diabetes and raise critical funds for diabetes research, education and advocacy, Tour de Cure is a great event for you. Please go to the following web site: diabetes.org/swfloridatour

For riding, press [Join A Team](#). Our team is the [Sarasota Manatee Riders](#). This is the fourth annual ride for our team. Team members ride the 35, 62 or 100-mile route in Lakewood Ranch.

If contributing, press [Donate](#). You may contribute to any person on the Sarasota Manatee Riders. We had ten team members last year so we hope to have as many riders this year.

For riding, it costs \$15 to register. The American Diabetes Association wants participants to raise a minimum of \$200. Thank you for your support to Stop Diabetes.

Jim Hoseth, Team Captain, jahoseth@gmail.com, 941-312-4954



*MBCers Jim Hoseth
& Tom & Barit
Roberts*

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Items for *The Newsletter*: Members and non-members are encouraged to email bicycle-related items to be considered for publication in *The Newsletter* at any time to any member of *The Newsletter* Editorial Committee: [Charlie Morris](#), [Carol Moehrke](#), [Ralph Monti](#), [Nancy Janus](#) or [El Parent](#).

Disclaimer: Consult your physician and follow all equipment safety instruction before beginning any training program or using any gear or equipment discussed in *The Newsletter* or on *SMBC.us*. Consult your physician or dietitian before beginning any diet or consuming any product discussed in *The Newsletter* or on *SMBC.us*. No medical, health, legal or other information discussed in *The Newsletter* or on *SMBC.us* is intended to be, nor should be construed as “medical advice” or “legal advice.” Consult your physician or attorney to discuss the specifics of any issue you might have.

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Inattentional blindness is not an eye defect, but rather an attention error. It typically kicks in when humans are overloaded with stimuli, and it becomes impossible to pay attention to all stimuli in one's field of vision. The best known example of inattentional blindness is the "Gorilla on the Basketball Court" test, a version of which you can view on: http://www.theinvisiblegorilla.com/gorilla_experiment.html.

Here's how it works: People are asked to watch a video showing basketball players passing several basketballs to each other. Before the video starts the group is told to concentrate carefully on and count the number of times the players pass the basketballs. After the video begins, the players start passing the basketballs to each other, but midway in the video a person dressed as a gorilla walks into the frame of the video and poses directly in front of the camera. When the video ends, the study leader asks the group if they were able to count the basketball passes. Most said they were sure of their count. When the leader asks if they noticed anything unusual, almost half of the people said no. When the video was re-run to show what they missed, the group is startled to see the posing gorilla because they were so focused on the basketball-passing stimuli.

Now let's talk about car technology. You and I are driving automobiles that are rolling technology wonders. Car technology is moving so fast *The New York Times* recently published an article stating that CD changers are being phased out. Research shows very few people are using this "archaic" technology, opting instead for smart phone ports, web-based music streaming, and all types of technology gizmos. Car designers are delighted because most wish to use the CD rack space for newer, driver-interactive technologies, including enhanced navigation systems and other cutting edge stuff.

To underscore this premise, in 2014, I attended a technology webinar featuring the chief technology officer of a major car manufacturer. He was presenting the latest tech-capabilities of today's car designs. At one point he quipped that "the actual driving of the car itself would someday be the *distraction* rather than all the interactive high-tech stuff." He meant it as an amusing aside and was playing to his audience (a room full of electrical engineers). He earned the requisite laugh but, as I listened to that quip, I cringed at the thought of the many cyclists today's interactive technology puts into danger. If drivers are so preoccupied with car technology, will they be paying less attention to what's on the road? How are cyclists protected? Will more cyclists be like the missed gorilla on the basketball court?

Given this trend, is there something that can be done to protect cyclists? And what is our role to help protect ourselves and fellow cyclists? It's clear and simple—continue to lobby federal, state and municipal lawmakers for better road enhancements designed for safer cycling. And beyond that, make a personal commitment always to cycle in a safe and responsible manner.

To be sure, safe riding must be second nature on all our rides and being responsible cycling ambassadors is a big part of the equation. Unfortunately, not every cyclist is a safe rider and their bad habits put themselves and other riders in danger. Motorists could be driving their cars momentarily engaged with some high-tech accoutrement. You're in the middle of the road or crossing an intersection ignoring a red light or stop sign. Suddenly you're in their path, but they simply don't see you. You've become the transparent gorilla in their field of vision. Of course, these scenarios can and do happen, even when we are riding safely. But why increase the odds of an accident by riding irresponsibly? The "Share the Road" axiom goes both ways, as does a cyclist's inattentional blindness when transfixed by a GPS, heart monitor and other tech accoutrement affixed to his handlebars. As we continue to be a big part of cycling's growth, let's commit to being good cycling ambassadors on the road by practicing safe and responsible riding.

What Color Bike Do You Like?

By Donald Myers

People ask what kind of bike do you like? “I like blue bikes best.” But, that’s getting ahead of my story. Over time, my bike life passed through three periods, red, black and blue. Each period, more or less, spoke of changes in self image. Today, I’m in my fourth phase, grey-black-white.

Before my red period, at seven, in 1937, I had only a vague idea of the influences of color. My most pressing goal was to ride a two-wheeler. My sister possessed a secondhand girl’s bike with thick, orange-red balloon tires. I hated the bike because it was a girl’s bicycle. I hated the unnatural tire color. I hated her.

My dislikes didn’t prevent me from stealthily taking her bicycle to teach myself to ride. I placed the bike on the sidewalk in front of our duplex, stepped over the step-through, mounted the pedals and careened down the sidewalk. Even if I had wanted to, I didn’t know how to use the brakes. After a few yards, I wobbled off the walk into a boulevard tree. The bicycle came out okay. It was a rugged old thing, but I broke my upper middle permanent front tooth.

At eight I entered my red period. My parents presented me with a brand new bright red Schwinn. The red lived up to its reputation. It shouted “all boy,” “all courage,” “all energy.” As I remember it, the red bike made a bigger impact on me than the new 1947 maroon Plymouth woody station wagon they gave me nine years later. Red revved my soul. Maroon discombobulated my thermostat.

During the summers of ‘38 to ‘41, I doodled around in Minneapolis’s Lyndhurst park, inside the tennis court fence, dodging net posts and cracks in the green painted asphalt. Sometimes, when no one knew where I was, I rode to the drugstore to sip a wicked cherry coke while perched on the edge of a too-tall, round, red swivel stool covered in Naugahyde.

On Saturday afternoons, I ventured to the end of my universe, a mile and a quarter from home. I biked little-known streets, mysterious back alleys, and over an arched walking bridge across Minneapaha creek twenty feet below. I rode by an Art Deco gray concrete water tower decorated with medieval knights to my preliminary destination, the White Castle, to eat three five-cent hamburgers packaged in miniature cardboard castle boxes. The process of getting to an afternoon matinee was as fascinating as the movie and the popcorn.

My black period began in 1959 when my wife’s parents gave Roz and me matching black English Raleighs for our first wedding anniversary. Black seemed to say we were grown up, smart and sophisticated. The Raleighs were state of the art steel bikes. A few elements were unusual. Two of the most useless were the small skinny black air pumps, and the black leatherette bags full of silver bike tools attached to the backs of our brown leather saddles. The two most useful were caliper brakes instead of the Schwinn’s coaster brakes, and the Sturmey-Archer three speed shifters, instead of one speed.

In the 1960s, we rode for exercise not speed, and as an excuse for being outdoors. We rode a three-mile loop around Lake Harriet on a bumpy, narrow, cracked and potholed asphalt walking path. In the summer of 1966, a photographer from the Minneapolis Morning Tribune, recognizing adult biking as an unusual story, took a black and white photo of me riding around the lake with my three year old daughter Liz in a child’s rumble seat mounted over the rear fender. And, of course, we didn’t ride with bike helmets. No one did.

The world caught up to us. There was a huge bike awakening. It seemed as if every adult in Minneapolis, at the instigation of the park service, started to ride around Lake Harriet for exercise and fresh air. We moved away from this mass hysteria to the edge of Northfield, Minnesota, fifty miles south, and changed our biking habit from exercise to commuting around town. Then we moved to the side of a mountain in Warren, Vermont. Instead of cycling, I spent years perfecting parallel ski turns. The Raleighs rusted. We sold them as antiques.

When I was 77, almost an antique myself, we moved to New London, New Hampshire. That was the beginning of my blue bike period. I became a short long distance rider capable of climbing little mountains. Besides slaying numerous

steep hills on long rides around our town, I drove and rode to a variety of quaint locations all over the state. My cycling distances averaged 20 to 25 miles. Including lunch, excluding driving time, my peddling times averaged about four hours. Not quite up to the speed of light, or bounding over tall buildings, however, I was willing to rescue damsels in distress.

My bike was an aluminum hybrid Trek 7.3 in sky blue. The sky blue was meaningful to me simply because I like blue. I consider blue beneficial to my mind and soul. Biking up and down small mountains made me feel as if I had found the key to the fountain of youth. I found myself amazed that I could ride miles when most old men in town my age barely were able to walk from their cars to their post office boxes.

One thing everyone knows about war is that armies march on their stomachs. I picked rides for their treat potential. For instance, I liked to ride from Portsmouth along New Hampshire's thirteen miles of sea coast in order to stop at the Beach Plumb for a king size lobster roll and almost a pint of brown and white chocolate chip ice-cream.

My gray-black-white period began in Sarasota in 2014. Roz gave me a Leprechaun's pot of gold for my birthday to enable me to buy my first road bike. I decided on a composite 18-pound gray-black-white Giant Defy with Shimano 105 shifters. I chose the Giant because it was less expensive than comparable bikes, and it was reported to have slightly better parts. Frugal is in my DNA.

When I bought the bike, I wasn't certain I'd like a road bike. I had never ridden one. The demo bikes I tried all felt uncomfortable. On my practice rides, the handle bars seemed too far away. The sellers assured me that if I bought their bikes, they would be able to make suitable adjustments. I secretly wanted a road bike as badly as I wanted to learn to ride my sister's bike. I wanted to be a real biker. Real bikers, the guys that were always passing me, rode road bikes.

Real bikers ride road bikes to obtain speed and distance. The Defy allowed me to achieve speeds in excess of twenty miles per hour. Old ladies were amazed. Usually, I averaged thirteen miles an hour over a twenty mile distance when not loafing or facing into a stiff wind. However, real bikers ride bikes that fit them like the spandex they wear. I don't wear spandex, However I went into a funk, not because of the lack of spandex which I can't get comfortable with in my mind, but because my peddles didn't fit.

I had to reach too far to hold on to the handle bars. The guys at the bike shop where I made the purchase tried to solve the problem. They switched out the bracket that holds the handle bars to the fork three times, and they fiddled with my seat adjustment forward, back, up and down. Nothing worked. I felt trapped. I couldn't ask them to take the bike back as months of riding had passed. Finally, I figured out that the culprit was Giant. I blamed Giant then because their sizing, small, medium, and large, fits between the even sizes of competitors bikes. I felt I needed a 56. The Giant Medium I bought was in reality a 57.

My mind wondered towards thinking about replacing the bike. If I were to do that I would hold out for a color to please me. I pined for a light blue, a dashing red, or a dignified black.

Giant changed their color combinations for 2015 to black with orange trim. If I bought a new 2015 Giant it would also come with disc brakes and I could move up to Ultegra components. I convinced myself that if I made those improvements, perhaps I might even get over my fear of clipless pedals and pop for those as well. Wishing is fun. But I'm a scrooge. Besides, Giant doesn't fit me and I'd have to pay way more for a different bike. In my heart, and inside my pocketbook, I knew I was chasing the wrong girl.

Then I discovered a right guy, Chris Slack, of Pinnacle Wheel Works in Sarasota. Attractive bikes in the window drew me in. After two hours of fiddling, and \$250, he made the bike fit. Then I bought three new additions: a bike computer with cadence, clipless pedals and shoes. Now, I'm almost happy.

Now, I don't regret not having disc brakes or better components, but I miss the uplift to my soul of not having a bike color I love. You can learn to live with anything. I'm resigned to live with my grey-black-white for the rest of my life, but if I ever win the Florida Lotto, the first thing I'm going to do is buy a new bike... painted blue.