



# SPOKE 'N' WORD

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE VELOTEERS BICYCLE CLUB



JULY 2007

## BOARD UPDATE

Congratulations to our 2007- 2009 newly elected board members: Jim Fuller, James Waller, Chip Hahn, Darren Oxford and Martha Poston.

To meet the new board and learn about club initiatives, attend the next Veloteers Club business meeting on August 20 at 7:00 PM at The Jolly Cyclist. All club members are welcome to attend.

### **What is a " Veloteer? "**

Veloteer is derived from combining two words, "Velo" and "Volunteer". Velo is from the Latin for "swift" as in "velocity" and was used by the French to describe an early type of bicycle, the "velocipede". Velo is now a common prefix for bicycle related subjects. Tennesseans (as we all know) are referred to as "Volunteers," a nickname given to us by others who admired the "volunteering" spirit of Tennesseans in such wars as the Battle of 1812 and the Battle of the Alamo. We still proudly carry this nickname.

### **Our Mission: Promote interest, educate, and encourage fun and safe participation in bicycling of all forms. Towards this primary endeavor, we strive to:**

- Make regularly scheduled group rides and other cycling events and activities available to cyclists of all abilities.
- Foster fellowship among cyclists and/or those interested in cycling.
- Encourage and support bicycle safety education by providing related information and services to club members, the community and government officials.
- Advocate, defend, and protect the bicycle as a legal vehicle used for recreation, health, and transportation Represent the interests of cyclists and advance "share the road" values with legislative and administrative groups on proposals relating to matters affecting cycling activities (i.e. the establishment and maintenance of bicycles facilities, traffic regulations and enforcement, educational efforts and programs, etc.).
- Provide a channel of communication to members, other cycling clubs, and the community, via the website and newsletter, to share information about club activities and other information related to cycling.
- Promote the positive image of cyclists in the community through example.



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## VELO GEARS

WRITTEN BY TIM COBLE

### Climbs, Cars, Cows and Change

I'll probably have to turn in my cyclist card for admitting this, but I hate riding downhill. Not those casual, relaxing grades that let you catch your breath and grab a drink, mind you – I'm as fond of those as the next person. I'm talking about those white-knuckle descents that only serve to confirm that all of your sphincters are still in working order. Instead, give me a good climb any day. I'll never be one of those svelte mountain goats who dances their way to the top of a climb without breaking a triple-digit heart rate (much less a sweat), but the last time I checked nobody ever needed a body cast and reconstructive surgery after falling off their bike on their way *up* a 17% grade. If for no other reason than that, I'll pick grinding up a hill just about every time. But in spite of my fondness for a good old-fashioned incline, I'm realizing more and more lately that certain uphill efforts can't be solved by compact chainrings and good conditioning.

I've been doing a lot of riding in downtown Nashville this year, taking advantage of the city's growing network of bike routes and dedicated cycling lanes. It's given me a chance to experience

a completely different type of riding and to see parts of our city that I literally never knew existed. On the whole, it's been a fantastic experience, but it's also underscored the fact that we have a long way to go in making "Share The Road" a reality. Thanks to the largely un-sung efforts of groups like Walk/Bike Nashville and the support of individuals within various government agencies, Nashville is becoming – at least from an infrastructure standpoint – an increasingly bike-friendly place to ride. Additionally, new legislation has been passed with the intent of making Tennessee roads safer places for cyclists, and events like the Tour de Nash are helping to give local cyclists a higher, more positive profile in the community. What's been missing, to a large degree, is something that infrastructure and legislation can't provide: understanding and good will from those with whom we share the streets. That challenge is proving to be the *Alpe d'Huez* of cycling advocacy.

As is almost always the case when it comes to changing people's minds, acceptance for cyclists is not something that can be legislated, mandated or otherwise forced upon people against their will. Instead, it's a gradual, incremental process that is either advanced or undermined every time a motorist encounters one of us on the road. Ultimately, we're all ambassadors for our sport and we bear an unavoidable responsibility to represent each other in a positive light. How I interact with a motorist today is likely to have a direct influence on how that driver treats not just me, but the cyclists that they come upon tomorrow. With that in mind, I've been paying particular attention to the things that I do to shape the perceptions

that our four-wheeled companions develop. Beyond simply choosing not to be overtly antagonistic or confrontational, I've started making a concentrated effort to be courteous, considerate and downright friendly – if only to confound some people's expectations.

One of the ways that I've tried to put this into practice has been to follow one of the best pieces of cycling advice that I've ever received: "Act like a car." To rephrase that in a way that's less open to misinterpretation, "If you're on a bike, don't do anything that a good driver wouldn't expect to see another [sane] driver do." Sometimes that means not switching lanes erratically or not riding up the shoulder past a line of stopped cars at a red light. Other times it's as simple as signaling a turn, yielding the right of way or coming to a complete stop at an intersection. In any case, the bottom line is that when cyclists choose not to ride as if they have a special exemption from the rules of the road, we're less likely to incur the wrath of motorists who might already be predisposed to view us in a negative light. It's bad enough when cyclists are criticized for doing things that we have every right to do; it's even worse when we add fuel to the fire by doing something that puts us clearly in the wrong.

A corollary to my friend's advice: "Act like a person." I've been told that when we ride past a field of horses or cows the animals are often spooked because they see us zipping by atop these strange machines and don't realize that we're humans. I'm convinced that the same is true of many motorists. Seeing two wheels rolling down the road trips a mental circuit breaker that reduces us from

human beings to some kind of vaguely threatening inanimate object. As with livestock, sometimes all it takes to flip that switch back on is a simple wave, kind word or even just making eye contact. Anything that communicates, "Hi, I see you, and I'm not going to do anything bizarre or dangerous" can almost magically put us back into the realm of intelligent human beings – albeit ones with questionable taste in clothing.

There's obviously no magical solution that will instantly place cyclists in the good graces of every motorist that we encounter. However, there's a lot that we can do to build familiarity, trust, acceptance and maybe even a bit of respect among a larger proportion of drivers. Just as conquering a long climb is a matter of turning the pedals over one revolution at a time, gaining greater acceptance on the road happens one interaction at a time. If enough of us take that to heart, maybe we'll be able to turn "Share the Road" from a bumper sticker sentiment into a reality that makes everyone on the road happier, friendlier and safer.



## AVOIDING THE RIGHT HOOK

WRITTEN BY *Richard E. "Rich" Corbett* - Certified Master Cycling Instructor & Senior Regional Trainer, Platinum 2008 Steering Committee Chair

What is a right hook? If you don't know, you should! A right hook is when a motorist passes you, brakes, and then turns right in front of you, causing or almost causing a collision. Most often, you run into them, but only after they have broken the law by cutting you off.

Recently there have been several of these crashes, and, sadly, the police do not always understand the physics of this classic motorist fault crash. So you need to know some basics as to 1) how to prevent them from happening, 2) how to avoid them as they begin to develop, and 3) what to do if you still get cut off by a motorist who does not know basic traffic law and courtesy.

### Prevention

Be aware of the intersections and drives on your route that people regularly turn at, and watch (with a rear view mirror) as you approach these, and if you see a motorist coming from the rear whose arrival timing might put them in conflict with you, do two things: 1) put your left hand/arm out in a slowing/ moving left signal (hand and arm straight, pointed at about a 45o angle to the left), then 2) move a foot or two to the left to emphasize your presence. Motorists who are going to turn right will almost always slow and go behind you, and those who are going thru the intersection will move left a little and pass you.

### Avoidance

Be prepared, as you approach these locations to brake and or swerve/turn to the right, if someone sneaks past your prevention measures. This means you must be extra alert as you cycle, especially as you approach intersections and driveways. You don't need to be fearful, just alert. Emergency braking (do you know how to do this?), and/or a quick turn to the right (do you know how to do this?) can stop or steer you out of the path of an illegally turning motorist. Both these maneuvers are taught in the LAB Road I Course.

### Mitigation/follow-up

If all your efforts fail, hopefully you are smart enough to be wearing a helmet, and that you strike the offending vehicle at as shallow an angle as possible (the quick turn will let you either avoid the collision or hit it at a very shallow angle).

If a crash occurs, and if police respond, be sure to ask the Officer " Have you had any special training in bicycle-motor vehicle crash investigation?" If they answer no then ask if an officer with such training could carry out the crash investigation.

### Summary

Ride aware - know what is going on around you and think 'what if' as you ride along- know what you will do if various, predictable things happen.

Be prepared - know how to do emergency braking, and quick turns, as these two maneuvers can save you.

Know what to ask - be sure to ask any police officer who responds if they have had the special training to be able to do a competent crash investigation.

Ride safer by doing these things and your cycling will be more enjoyable, as you will ride with confidence, not fear.

For more information, see <http://www.bikesafety.org/>



## WE DU RUN RUN

SUBMITTED BY *JANE BACON*

**"My goal was just see if I could to do it and not come in last."**

I decided to get involved after learning about the Du Run Run from one of my friends who runs half marathons and was going to participate this year. The Music City Du Run Run is a duathlon charity event benefiting the

Second Harvest Food Bank. It consists of a 2-mile run, an 11.2-mile bike ride, followed by another 2-mile run and is presented by the Greater Nashville Athletic Club and the Second Harvest Food Bank at Metro Center. This year was the third annual event which takes place on Father's Day. There were 311 participants this year and over 550 pounds of food were donated.

I thought the charity was for a good cause and the event sounded like a lot of fun. My goal was to just see if I could do it and not come in last. I felt like the cycling would not be a big deal but I was apprehensive about the running as it had been a few years since I had done any real running. I didn't want to do it alone so I solicited Janine Swinford to join me and she signed up too. Then we found out Beth Travers was participating too so I was happy to have one more "50 and over" to join us.

Janine and I were not serious trainers, although we did go to Metro Center about 5 weeks before the event to do a trial run of the course. The run started from the Second Harvest Food Bank parking lot and the bike ride consisted of two loops of the Greenway at Metro Center. After that we ran 3 - 4 times together in my neighborhood and cycled on the club rides.

Considering there were only 28 of us who were 50 and over (21 men and 7 women) out of 311 participants, Beth, Janine, and I felt pretty good at the end of the event. We even saw Carl (Pedersen) there to cheer us on!! For the three of us, the running was by far the most difficult as well as the transition from cycling to running the last 2 miles. We were given a space on

a rack with about 10 other bikes. Our space consisted of about 2 feet in front of the bike for shoes, helmet, gloves, etc. There was no where to sit to change shoes so you stood if you didn't want to sit on gravel and had to change shoes as fast as possible.

At the end of the race, Beth, myself, and Janine came in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd for our age group and overall we placed right in the middle of the 311 participants, most of whom were in their 30's and under. We decided that 50 rocks!! The most fun part of the event for the three of us was kicking a few 30-year-old butts!! They also had food, post race massages, door prizes as well as prizes for winning in the different categories, and live music. It was a very well organized event.

The Music City Du Run Run is something I will do again, but next year I really will train for it. My goal will be to beat my time for this year. I would encourage anyone who wants to do some cross training to sign up and participate because it really was a lot of fun. Save the date - June 15, 2008. Check them out at <http://www.musiccitydurunrun.com>

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## CENTURY-A-MONTH CLUB CELEBRATED

In Nov 05, Jennifer Gholson enticed five fellow Veloteers to join her in riding a century per month. It was a simple concept - ride one century per month for twelve months and accept an award for your endeavors at the end of the year.

The Ultra Marathon Cycling Association

([www.ultracycling.com](http://www.ultracycling.com)) has a similar program called the Year Rounder Challenge. The rules for our rides mirrored the UMCA rules. According to their rules, for routing reasons some centuries are just under 100 miles. For this purpose, a Century is a ride of 90 - 149 miles. For credit, we had to complete at least 90 miles in a 12-hour period including off the bike time (and maintain an 8.33 mph average after that). We were also allowed to make up missed rides meaning sometimes we rode two centuries in a month to make up for the prior month.



Left to right - Bob Ostrowe, Glenn Brown, Denise Garland, Jennifer Gholson and Carl Pedersen. William Anderson was out of town at photo time.

In July, Jennifer Gholson hosted an awards dinner for the club and families including a plaque presentation to recognize the three finishers of the century-a-month club, Glenn Brown, Denise Garland and Carl Pedersen.

“Centuries are the highlight of many endurance riders' seasons: the fun of a day on the bike with friends and the challenge of riding 100 miles” said Gholson while forming the club in 05. Participating in the century-a-month club did not disappoint.



# SPRING CITY CYCLING CLUB "ALL YOU CAN EAT" CENTURY RIDE

*SUBMITTED BY MICHAEL HOLDERER,  
CENTURY DIRECTOR*

The 115-year-old Spring City Cycling Club of Huntsville, Alabama will host the 23rd Annual All-You-Can-Eat Century on September 15, 2007. There will be four shaded rest stops with abundant snacks, restrooms or port-a-johns, radio dispatched SAG support, maps, well-marked roads, and beautiful scenery. Also included is the famous post-ride all-you-can-eat meal.

Start/Finish Location:  
Madison County High School  
74 Brock Road, Gurley, AL 35748  
On Hwy 72, 10 miles east of Huntsville-  
[www.springcity.org/century](http://www.springcity.org/century)  
Michael Holderer 256-883-9982.  
Among the faster cycling courses in the beautiful Tennessee Valley, the ride follows a gently rolling loop on low-traffic roads through Madison, Franklin and Lincoln Counties of Alabama and Tennessee.

The 23, 52, 64, 86 or 102 mile options offer cyclists everything from a relaxing tour to a challenging work-out. Crossovers create the shorter mileage options. There are just two "significant" climbs at the 40 and 70-mile marks. Finish your ride with a shower at the school and the delicious meal, catered by Nothing But Noodles.



# IT'S PICNIC TIME!

**When: Saturday August 11**  
**Where: Cedars Forest Lodge at Cedars of Lebanon State Park**  
**Time: 4 pm until 8 pm**

Bring your favorite covered dish. The club will supply the meat, paper products, utensils, soft drinks, tea, water and ice. Please RSVP to [mfpgrits@tds.net](mailto:mfpgrits@tds.net) and also what you plan to bring to ensure variety.

Make plans to join fellow Veloteers, their family and friends for our annual picnic.



From the editor: It is hard to believe that two years have gone by since I began compiling our club newsletter. The time has come for me to turn over that responsibility to someone new. If you are interested, please send an email to [info@veloteers.org](mailto:info@veloteers.org). Don't be shy - we have a multitude of talent within our club.

As always, thanks for reading and I look forward to seeing you on the road. Denise Garland

We thank our club sponsors:



The Jolly Cyclist  
5514 Old Hickory Boulevard,  
Hermitage, TN 37076.  
<http://allanti.com/index.cfm>  
615-885-0881



The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Team In Training  
For more information call  
Monica at 331.2980 or visit  
[www.teamintraining.org/tn](http://www.teamintraining.org/tn)

## HAPPENINGS

**More information on these rides/events is available on the Event Calendar**  
[www.Veloteers.org](http://www.Veloteers.org)

**Monday, Aug 20, 7:00 PM  
Veloteers Club Business Meeting, The Jolly Cyclist, Hermitage.**