



Blackhawk Bicycle and Ski Club

SPOKE SIGNALS

WWW.BLACKHAWKBICYCLECLUB.ORG

April 2012 Rockford, IL Volume 41 Issue 4

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

It is mid-March as I am writing this article, though it seems like June. The temperature today was 80 degrees, about 30 degrees above the norm for this date. It has been great for getting in some early season miles, though I realize this is too good to remain like this until June. It is possible to still get a snow fall though it will disappear quickly. If this weather trend should continue through next winter, we might want to begin scheduled rides in January instead of mid March, but this may be a bit premature in our planning for next year. I know, next year we could get bombarded with snow storms and temps in the below zero category.

If the weather should be this mild next winter we may need to think about changing the name of our club to the Blackhawk Bicycle and *sometimes* Ski Club. To be able to get on the bike every month since last fall through March has really been exceptional. For those of you who have not had an opportunity to do much skiing in our neck of the woods this winter, I extend my condolences. I hope you traveled north or to the mountains to find some real snow.

I am holding off on turning on the air conditioning at home, it just seems too early to start it up. With the money we saved this winter on heating bills, you can now put that into your gas tank to offset the steep increase in gas prices.

As your president, I cannot take complete responsibility for our great weather, except to mention that since I bought my new bike there have been plenty of opportunities to ride. Nor can I take responsibility for the gasoline prices, just get on the bike and spend less time driving.

Now is a good time to remind everyone to get in the habit of practicing bike safety on the roads. If leaving from Bauman Park, please obey the stop signs and ride no more than 2 abreast. Let's show our neighbors in Cherry Valley that we appreciate using their roads and respect the rights of motorists. Share the road, and since it is still early in the biking season, motorists may not be so aware of bikers. Extend respect to motorists as we appreciate their efforts to be respectful of our presence on the roadways. Have a safe and enjoyable riding season.

Mike Michalik

APRIL 11

**Board Meeting
6:00**

**Club Meeting
7:00**

**YMCA
Harding Center**

**"KNIVES OVER
FORKS"**

Pat Beam will present this documentary film which stresses the advantages of a plant based diet over an animal and processed food diet.

**ROAD CLEANUP
April**

Our first road clean up of the year will be after the Saturday morning ride on Saturday April 14 leaving from Baumann Park. Please stay after the ride and help with this worthwhile club project. Many hands make the work light, and make us all fast guys....



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NEWSLETTER POLICY

You are invited to submit articles to be printed in the next issue of Spoke Signals as space allows.

Articles may be emailed to:

Ann Morgan mbira46@comcast.net

The deadline for submission of any material in the newsletter is the 15th of the preceding month. Please understand that it may sometimes be necessary to edit articles for space. Any member may place an ad in the "For Sale" column for one month. It may be renewed by contacting the editor prior to the 15th of the next month.

Changes of address/phone number/email address must be sent to Victoria McAdams at vickiemca@hotmail.com.

Newsletters are no longer returned to the club if your address or email address has changed. Members must request the change. You may choose to receive the newsletter by email or by mail.

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Ski Racing	Position not filled	
Ski Touring	LANI FERGUSON	815.962.4211
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**BLACKHAWK COUNTRY ROADS
MAY 26 - 27**

Memorial Day Weekend is fast approaching and we need the following volunteers.

- SAG chairman for Saturday
- SAG
- Man rest stops
- Work in the kitchen
- Provide cookies and cakes
- Set up on Friday and tear down on Sunday

Contact

Rick Plantz 399-1404 rplantz@aol.com

Linda Tipton 871-6379
faithnbs@aol.com

Shelia Felder 639-9289 tsfelder@comcast.net

Dick Bowers 222-8088 dickandmelo-dy@aol.com

Steve Hotlen 399-1319
s.hotlen@comcast.net

Betsy Dietz 226-0611
betsywd@comcast.net

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to the following new members who joined us in February. We look forward to meeting you, or skiing with you, or riding with you soon! When you see them, say hi to **John Irving**, **Cindy Garner**, and **John Taylor**, the newest BBSC members.

**May your home
be your trailhead.**

Join the trail community that's getting Illinoisans moving, under their own power, outside.
trailsforillinois.org
Facebook: [trailsforillinois](https://www.facebook.com/trailsforillinois)



THE PRESIDENT'S NEW RIDE

I have no idea what I did to insert a picture of Judy Lichtenauer's new bike into the space that was to contain Mike Michalik's new bike. It is a good thing this is a volunteer position as editor, or I would lose my job because of the many mistakes I seem to make.

This is the REAL picture of Dr. Mike's new bike. Sorry about that Mike.

Ann Morgan





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CROSS COUNTRY SKI BREAKFASTS RESUME IN NOVEMBER

Unusually warm, almost hot, temperatures in mid-March? Many Club members are back out on the roads pedaling their bicycles. Cross country ski breakfast season has come to an end! BBSC cross country ski breakfasts will resume in November

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

At the March 24th BBSC banquet, 5 Club members received pins for hours skied in 2011.

The skiers and their respective hours skied are listed below:

Ron Morris - 40 hours
 Greg Bachman - 35 hours
 Lani Ferguson – 16.5 hours
 Linda Tipton – 11 hours
 Victoria Mc Adams – 4 hours

Our 2012 ski season has ended rather abruptly due to unseasonably warm weather. While you clean the bike chain, locate the cyclometer or do necessary yard work, take a few minutes now to make sure you put the skis away for storage in good condition. If you take the time in spring to clean the bases and put on a protective coat of wax, your job will be easier next fall.

While you are out biking this spring, summer and fall, don't forget to do some cross-training for next winter's cross country skiing. Hiking, walking, Nordic walking with poles, stretching, roller skiing (for the brave and coordinated) and other weight bearing activities are ways to use the upper body muscles that biking may neglect.

Have a great "off-season",

Lani Ferguson

Cross Country Ski Chairman

H - 1-815-962-4211

C - 1-815-494-6086

e-mail: twinbike1@aol.com



2011 AWARD RECIPIENTS

BERT ECK - Linda Tipton

DICK GREEN - Betsy Dietz

CLUB SERVICE - Kennerly Clan

MOST IMPROVED CYCLIST - Beth Greenlee

MOST IMPROVED SKIER - Lynn Bonnett

SKIING ATHLETE - Karen Denny

Congratulations to all of you, and thank you for the work you do for the club and the inspiration you provide which makes our club so great.

CLUB MEMBER HURT IN BIKE ACCIDENT

Beth Greenlee, who now lives in Geneva, IL but is still a BBSC member and rides often with our club, was seriously injured in a biking accident on March 14. Nearing the end of a Fox Valley Bicycle Club ride, the person riding next to Beth, for no apparent reason, lost control of his bike and slammed into her. Beth went down hard breaking five ribs, puncturing a lung, and badly damaging her right shoulder. She spent a night in ICU and a few days in the hospital. Shoulder surgery will be required in the near future. Expected recovery time is four months.

FAST TRACKS

February 26, ABD Indoor 6.2 rolling mile time trial, Batavia, IL

Beth Greenlee	W50-54	1 st
Victoria McAdams	W60-64	1 st
Don Lowe	M50-54	3 rd
Patricia Beam	W75-79	1 st
Gerald Beam	M75-79	1 st

March 11, Kenosha Velosport Spring Crit, Pleasant Prairie, WI

Don Lowe	M50-54	1 st
Patricia Beam	W75-79	1 st
Gerald Beam	M7579	1 st

Race close to home in Cherry Valley on April 15. Other information about future races is available:

www.ambikerace.com

WEEKLY RIDES

Day	Time	Type of Ride	Meeting Place	Type	Dist.	Contact	Information
Tues.	9A	Leisure/Moderate paced groups	Indoor Sports Center, 8000 E. Riverside Blvd., Rkfrd	flat/rolling	25/46	Fred Kennerly, 398-6861, starline@aol.com	18 mile ride-Breakfast at Boone County Family Restaurant; No one left behind. 46 mile ride-pie in Clinton
Thurs.	9A	Leisure/Moderate paced groups	Faith Center Church South parking lot, 4701 S. Main St., Rkfrd	flat/rolling	26/41	leaderless	26 mile ride-Breakfast in Winnebago, 41 mile ride-Breakfast in Pecatonica
Fri.	9 A	Moderate	Boone County Fair Grounds, 8791 IL76, Belvidere, IL	flat/rolling	42	Castor Armesto, 323-4390' armesto@att.net	No one left behind. Breakfast in Harvard
Sat. SE Ride	9A	Moderate/fast paced groups	Baumann Park, Cherry Valley, IL	flat/rolling	30	leaderless	Breakfast in Belvidere. No one left behind.
Sat. NE Ride	9A	Moderate/fast paced groups	Guilford High School parking lot, 5620 Spring Creek Road, Rkfrd	flat/rolling	26/41	leaderless	Groups breakfast in both Belvidere and Kirkland.

APRIL SUNDAY RIDES

DATE	TIME	LEADER	RIDE	START	DIST	TYPE	INFORMATION
Apr 1	10A	Dick Bowers 222-8088	Belvidere to Harvard	Boone County Fairgrounds, Belvidere	40	flat	Breakfast in Harvard
Apr 8	1P	Leaderless	Easter Show And Go	Baumann Park, Cherry Valley	20/30	flat	Riders choose route
Apr 15	10A	Scott Humphrey 847-456-3548	Spring Break	NIU Parking Lot E on State St., Rockford	30	flat	Lunch in Poplar Grove
Apr 22	10A	TBA	Prairie Tanker Tour	Capron School, Capron IL	22/39	flat/rolling	Long to Clinton
Apr 29	9A	Dave Morgan 874-6824	Lake Geneva	Sharon Park Sharon, WI	50	flat/hilly	Lunch in Lake Geneva

Gray rows indicate eco rides. Ride your bike to the start. A name will be drawn to receive a prize.

SUNDAY RIDE CORRECTIONS

DATE	TIME	LEADER	RIDE	START	DIST	TYPE	OTHER
Sept 23	9A	Jim Lowe 543-1679	Memorial Ride	Roscoe Middle School	36/50	Flat/rolling	Lunch at Sophia's in Roscoe
Sept 30	9A	Lynn Bonnett 540-7168	Genoa Loop	Baumann Park Cherry Valley	53	Flat	Lunch in Genoa

DON AND ROBIN'S CALIFORNIA ADVENTURE

Last October Robin and I had the opportunity to ride in California. Having done three Trek Travel tours in recent years, Robin researched their web site for recommendations for hotels and ride itineraries. We also wanted to work in a ride on the Pacific Coast Highway from Carmel.

We flew to San Francisco on October 16, rented a van and drove to the Vintage Inn, located in Yountville, a beautiful town between Napa and St. Helena, a perfect base for the first three days of cycling and fine dining.

I had previously uploaded some of the better known Napa Valley ride routes into my Garmin 800 computer. This proved to be very handy for biking on roads you've never biked before.

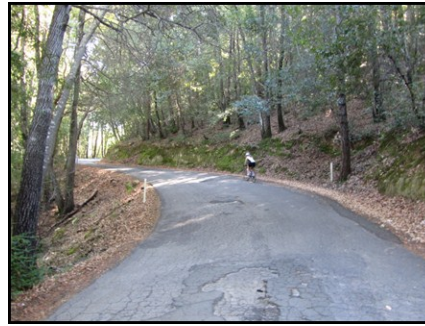


View from our balcony in Yountville

The first day presented perfect weather and a beautiful breakfast on the patio. We unpacked and assembled our travel bikes and headed NW to do the Franz Valley loop. We stopped in St. Helena at Velo Vino, a wine and cycling venue owned by the Clif Bar Company. A couple of cyclists there gave us some feedback on our route and offered to escort us to the outskirts of town.

The Franz Valley loop we took a relaxing 57 mile country ride with 1,800 feet of climbing. Tame compared to some other loops. Perfect for a first day ride. However, there was a mile of some fairly serious 'up' NE of Calistoga on Franz Valley Road and some equally fun 'down' into Calistoga.

The second day we ventured north to do the Pope Valley route, a beautiful ride around Lake Hennessey up gentle mountain climbs en route to Pope Valley. After running into the Trek Travel group, we biked north onto the famous Ink Grade Road, a scenic 3 mile, 1120' climb. Along the way we encountered the first California Redwoods. After 3 miles of climbing we were treated to a spectacular descent of 1600' over 7.5 miles down White Cottage Road with some amazing views of the valley below.



Robin making her way up a great road in the Redwoods.

On our final day in Yountville we decided to do a short, easy ride. After we took off I discovered I had accidentally entered into the Garmin the 'Toughest Climb in Napa'. Oops! I broke the news to Robin and shared with her our options. After six years of marriage she has yet to utter an unkind word to me. Robin, being one tough trooper, had agreed to a one mile ride of pretty touch terrain, but, this was unbelievable! After reaching the top, I waited for Robin and started practicing a profuse apology. I started to LOUDLY utter words of encouragement and apology, but, as it turned out, she was too tired to repeat the number of expletives she had uttered while making her way up that Oakville mile. Whew!

After two nights of fabulous food and wine, we decided to eat like 'normal' people and had steak, fish tacos and beer at a neighborhood eatery while watching the World Series.

Thursday we packed our bikes in the van and headed south through Marin County, across the Golden Gate Bridge along the Pacific Coast Highway to Carmel by the Sea.

Friday we unloaded the bikes for our ride down the PCH to Big Sur and back. Our plan was to ride south, lunch at a restaurant called Nepenthe near Big Sur, and ride back enjoying 30 miles of amazing scenery; beaches, cliffs, crashing waves, desert dunes, rolling pastures, and a redwood forest.



The next day we drove from Carmel to Santa Barbara along the PCH, through Limekiln State Park, a redwood forest, a glance at Hearst Castle in San Simeon and the elephant seal beaches.

After a night in Santa Barbara, through Hollywood, unbelievably smoggy LA Basin, we drove on to Palm Desert where I had a conference.

SONORAN DESERT RIDE

Tucson, AZ, March 3-11



I think it was Hazel who planted the seed in my mind that a special bike ride for my 65th birthday would be fun, so I credit her with this awesome bicycle tour. I searched the web for a ride around my birthday and I found vacationbicycling.com and adventurecycling.com each with a trip in the Sonoran Desert. The cost was within \$50 for each, but one was great hotels and one was camping. Paul Mollway, help me make the decision!

Knowing no one, I arrived in Tucson, walked to the bike shop 3 miles away and rode back down the bike lane on Broadway. My roommate turned out to be a psychotherapist from Brooklyn, NY that had never ridden over 28 miles at one time. There were 16 cyclists in all with 5 of us singles who immediately bonded and hung out together for the entire ride.

We rode out of Tucson to Green Valley with a stop at a Spanish Mission. I was struggling and I kept thinking it was my winter out-of-shape status or maybe a tire going flat, but when we stopped in the shade of a telephone pole and I looked back to see the uphill road that I'd been riding for miles and miles and I knew why I was tired! Madera Canyon was the optional ride that day. From Green Valley we rode to Rio Rico and started to see border patrol cars everywhere. We were 15 miles from the Mexican border. The altitude chart that Joe gave us showed we were now at 3650'. That explained why I wanted to stop and "take pictures" so often as I was panting for breath. (Rockford is 715' in elevation.) We rode I-19 in two spots because the border patrol had closed the frontage road so everyone had to go through their check point. A close-up of our smiling faces is on their bank of cameras along the interstate! The next day was off to Sonoita and up to 4885' with outstanding scenery! A rest stop at the Nogales International Airport (1/2 the size of Rockford's) got us talking to two helicopter pilots that worked for the border patrol.

Optional ride to the local wineries that day! Then off to Tucson the next day peaking at 5102'. Of course, Georgia and I did the optional loop through Saguaro National Park (we were the only two who did it). Our last day of riding began at our original hotel and went up Gates Pass and then on to Sonoran Desert Museum, peaking at 3104. (I'm still panting!) Every day was ride to the next hotel, ride the extra mileage option, get in the hot tub, take a shower, eat dinner, then get out the clothes for the next morning and try to stay awake to read one chapter in your book. LOVED IT! There was nothing flat and boring

I can't say enough about Vacation Bicycling (Joe and Chan Fox) and the Tucson area. Joe and Chan were so organized and fun and attentive to each rider! They left the hotel each day after all riders were gone and drove to the next hotel to drop the luggage trailer and they marked the road turns with a VB and arrow each day. Then they'd drive the van back and park at various spots to refill our water bottles (it was so dry! I'd be parched ¼ mile down the road after I drank!) and ask if we wanted them to take our jackets. They knew who was out last (usually Georgia and I riding the extra mileage) and they'd wait until the last person had passed to set out to the hotel. We each had the combination to the lock on the luggage trailer so whenever you arrived, you could retrieve your luggage. Joe is a very strong rider. Chan didn't ride this tour this year, but said she did it last year so she knew it was "doable" for everyone. I'm guessing she's a 10-mph-rider. They made sure that the ride was great for all levels of riders. Please check out vacationbicycling.com. Great value! They said this was their most difficult ride. When they left Tucson, they headed for Santa Fe to develop a future tour there. They use NICE hotels! (Extra night at the Tucson hotel was \$122 for a King.) This is first-class bicycling!

Tucson is SOOOOOO bike friendly! Bike lanes everywhere! Bicycles everywhere! You can ride Broadway, through the middle of Arizona University, or up Mt. Lemmon! I never encountered an impatient motorist. When the bike lane finally ends out in the country, there's a sign with a picture of a bicycle with the words, "Share the Road". I stayed three days after the tour and rode by myself. There's a Tucson cycling web site with a whole list of local rides with cue sheets, maps and elevations! I had made arrangements ahead of time to ride with the Cactus Cycling Club on an extra day, but when Dick and I got there (through the 20+ mph headwind), their spokesperson said their ride was cancelled saying "We have good weather here 365 days a year. We don't have to ride in this wind."

Shipping your bike? I used bikeflights.com. I found this to be the cheapest way, \$37 each way for my bike. They email you a FedEx label and if you pay \$4 extra FedEx will pick up at your residence. I shipped in a used cardboard bike box, but you can use anything. I found that the size of the box is more important in the fee than the weight of the box.

I'm on cloud nine! My senior citizen trip was fabulous!

Betsy Dietz

BLACKHAWK BICYCLE AND SKI CLUB

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL AND APPLICATION

Make checks payable to
Blackhawk Bicycle and Ski Club
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P.O. Box 6443, Rockford, IL 61125-1443

NAME:		AGE:	
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CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:	PHONE:
FAMILY MEMBERS:		E-MAIL	
DUES: Individual \$15, Family \$20		NEW: <input type="checkbox"/>	RENEWAL: <input type="checkbox"/>
ENCLOSED \$:			
SIGNATURES OF ALL BBSC MEMBERS IN YOUR FAMILY:			
INTERESTS (circle choices):			
Touring	Racing	Mountain biking	Tandem
Cross country skiing			
WHAT COMMITTEE WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO HELP? (circle choices)			
Invitational ride	Banquet	Picnic	Touring
Racing	Advocacy	Adopt a Road clean up	Other:

The Blackhawk Bicycle and Ski Club, its members and officers assume no responsibility for personal injury, damage to equipment, theft, or other loss taking place on any club ride or other activity. Riders under 16 years of age must be accompanied by a responsible adult. In submitting this application, the applicant agrees to the above liability release and holds the Club, its officers and members harmless.



Blackhawk Bicycle and Ski Club

P.O. Box 6443
Rockford, IL 61125-1443

APRIL 2012