



SPOKE 'N' WORD

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE VELOTEERS BICYCLE CLUB



HOLIDAY EDITION 2007

“The virtuous man finds pleasure in hills.” Confucius

Happy Holidays to All



IN THIS ISSUE

LEBANON BICYCLE CAFÉ	1
VELO GEARS	2
DANGER ZONES	4
CHRISTMAS PARTY	4
EUROPEAN DECLINE	5
HAPPENINGS	6

LEBANON'S NEW BICYLETTE CAFÉ

WRITTEN BY JENNIFER GHOLSON

A French café in Lebanon, in and of itself, is pretty exciting! But a name like the Bicylette Café made it irresistible!

Several Veloteers and I decided to refuel at the new Bicylette Café after the Lebanon Saturday ride. We had to know if it would live up to it's name! Granted, it is usually not too difficult to please a bunch of hungry cyclists after a ride. Nonetheless we felt this was a special treat.



Pictured - L to R - Lynda, Shelley, Denise Jennifer, Bob and Jim



Pictured - L to R clockwise around table - Lynda, Mike, Shelley Jim, Bob and Denise

We met Chris Burgess, who is the chef and owner along with his wife Sharon, of the Bicycle Café. Chris and his wife are “bikers” but they ride a bike of a different variety than the store’s theme; they ride a Harley-Davidson. The story of how they ended up opening a French bicycle themed café in Lebanon is interesting. Chris and Sharon were looking to start a new project. While at a theatrical production in Mt. Juliet which their son was involved in, they happened to meet-up with a Mill employee and learn that the location where Lady Godiva used to be was available. As they were fine tuning their plans, they learned that the bike path at Don Fox Park which currently connects to the train depot and Jimmy Floyd Recreation Center was going to be extended to the Mill. This put the cycling theme in their mind. But the deal was sealed as they were walking around the Mill and came across someone selling an old tandem bicycle. They told him if he would give them the bicycle they would give the Café a bicycle theme and hang the tandem over the stage. He gave them the bicycle. The tandem has not been hung over the stage yet but it will be soon.

The atmosphere at the Bicycle Café was great for a relaxing post-ride carb reloading and socializing session. For lunch on Saturdays, the Bicycle Café serves pastries and breads, quiches, grilled Panini sandwiches, salads and soups. Our lunches were fresh tasting, healthy and reasonably priced. We all had a pleasant lunch! The soup du jour was pumpkin soup and it was superb! They also have a breakfast and dinner menu. Currently, they are open Monday thru Saturday for lunch and Wednesday thru Saturday for dinner. They are located in the Mill in Lebanon at 300 N. Maple St. just off the square. They have live performances. For schedules of performances or other information, you can call them at 615-449-9990. We enjoyed our dining experience and think you will too!



[VELO GEARS](#)

[WRITTEN BY TIM COBLE](#)

THE NEXT BEST THING TO BEING THERE

Early this spring I received an interesting e-mail from my sister who lives in Pennsylvania. She’s been a casual cyclist for several years, but her e-mail informed me that she had just committed to taking on the 75-mile leg of a late-September MS ride running

from just outside of Philadelphia to the Atlantic coast near Ocean City, Md. Her simple request to “Help!” engaged me immediately and I soon had a week-by-week training regimen mapped out for her. Much of my summer was spent vicariously enjoying her preparations and nervous anticipation. In addition to coaching her through the joys of intervals and hill training, I did my best to get her ready for some of the mental aspects of a long-distance ride. Fortunately, she would be taking the plunge with a friend who is an experienced cyclist and with her 16-year-old son who more than makes up for his lack of riding experience with pure youth and enthusiasm.

Fast-forward to the day of the big ride: My wife will gladly confirm how distracted I was all day, wondering how Sis and her “team” were doing and wishing I could be out there doing it with them. Finally, the phone rang and a very tired but elated voice informed me that everyone had finished with flying colors and that they were already looking forward to next year. A few days later I received another e-mail containing my sister’s “Top 10” memories of the ride. I immediately related to just about every one, as I’m

guessing, could virtually anyone who has ever participated in a big, organized ride like this one. With my sister's permission, I thought I'd share her list with you.

1. Leaving home at three-thirty in the morning, but within twenty miles starting to see other people with bikes on their vehicles headed east. We were waving at each other, assuming we had indeed run into fellow lunatics headed to the same place.

2. Waiting to start. Yes, I was nervous, but it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and I wanted to remember it all.

3. Starting!

4. Riding! Yes, it was a blast! It was a beautiful day, but I felt prepared enough not to be scared, and it was just plain fun. There were people along the way with signs encouraging their friends, and the volunteers were constantly encouraging.

5. To skip several miles, the moment when

I turned off of the second steep bridge into Ocean City itself and realized that all of the hard parts were over. Oddly enough, it was all I could do to keep from crying because such a big dream had come true.

6. Approaching the finish line. As we turned onto the last stretch, they had temporary fences set up just like at bike races. I never dreamed I'd ever be on *that* side of a fence like that. My temptation was to try to go fast and not look like an old lady, but my friend wisely said, "Just slow down and enjoy the moment." My husband and daughter were even near the finish line waiting.

7. Parking my bike in a field of thousands of others and walking away without locking it. Everyone there was on the same side!

8. Going back to the fence and waiting for the chance to cheer my son as he arrived.

9. Walking shoulder-to-shoulder with my son

and comparing notes about a day that we had experienced together. The chance to share that with him was *very* special!

10. I know there must be more, because there has to be an even ten... Okay - the whole day! Oh - calling you and telling you about it.

The icing on the cake came when my sister handed the cell phone to her son, who informed me that part way through the ride he found himself in a group of more experienced riders who had struck up a conversation and had taken the time to show him some of the finer points of riding in a group. Thanks to their friendliness and encouragement, he felt confident enough to join them in tacking on an extra leg and rounding out the ride to an even 100 miles. Not only did my nephew turn his first big ride into a century, he did it in just over six hours. Oh, to be young again!

So no, I didn't ride a single mile of this event, and not once did I break a sweat training for it. But every time I

look across my desk and see the picture of my sister and her son, decked out in full riding kit, sweaty, tired and smiling ear-to-ear, I'll re-live one of my favorite riding memory of 2007 and will be reminded of just how much cycling can bring families together.



DANGER ZONES

With construction going hot and heavy where many of us ride, temporary hazardous areas for cyclists jump up overnight. It is the purpose of this section to alert Veloteers of new hazards when they appear, so that riders can prepare to proceed cautiously through the area or avoid it altogether. The hazard will remain in the listing until the work is complete and conditions are back to normal. If you know of a new hazard where you ride, please e-mail nickbiker1@aol.com so that it can be listed in the next newsletter.

- **Lebanon Road bridge over Stones River going east.** Work has begun on the new west-bound bridge across the Stones River, and this has left the east-bound bridge in a squeeze. The Lebanon Road

bike lane merges into traffic at the east-bound bridge, and the big wide shoulder that was once there is no more. Instead, you're now in the right lane traffic crossing the bridge. If you make it across the bridge, you exit immediately into the right turn lane for traffic to Central Pike. **Extreme caution** is advised if you're trying to pick up the bike lane on the other side of Central Pike.

- **Dodson Chapel Road from Central Pike to Bell Road:** Construction is now going full guns on the Brown Farm urbanization north of the I-40 overpass. Lane closures are frequent, dump trucks are in and out most of the time and there often is a bulldozer in the road. **Avoid** if at all possible.
- **Old Railroad Bed Road between Mt. Juliet and 109:** Road closed between Rutland Road and Beckwith for bridge reconstruction. **No particular hazard** unless you crash into the barrier. Detour around via Rutland Road and Beckwith Road will add about a mile to your ride.



VELOTEERS PARTY ON THE RIVER

The Veloteers' annual Christmas Party will be on Saturday, Dec. 1 at 6:00 p.m. The location, the same as last year, is an incredibly unique house on Old Hickory Lake that is filled with interesting items from around the world (complete with a numbered guidebook) yet it is extremely comfortable and relaxing. Please come at 6:00 pm to tour and walk around. At 7:00 pm dinner will be served. At 12:00 a.m. we will all turn into pumpkins if we are not out the door by that time. Spouses and children are welcome but alcohol is not. We are requesting that you bring a dessert (though don't feel bad if you don't) and that you RSVP to Martha Poston at: mfpgrits@tds.net

Directions:*****DO NOT GOOGLE OR MAPQUEST. YOU WILL GET LOST!*****

If you do get lost call James at 598-4451

The address is 1007 Riverside Rd, 37138. From The Jolly Cyclist: Head North on Old Hickory BLVD for 6.5 miles. Turn right on Hadley Ave for 0.5 miles. Turn right at 11th Street. This road leads straight

to the house. Parking: You will have to park on the street, 11th is probably the best but it doesn't matter. Do not feel bad about parking in front of or next to someone else's house because people who live here know to expect it. Make sure you are parked on the correct side of the street.



THE DECLINE OF THE EUROPEAN MYSTIQUE

WRITTEN BY NICK SULLIVAN

I was flipping through Bicycling magazine the other day when I came across an advertisement for a Motobecane bicycle from BikesDirect.com. That got me wondering whatever happened to the grand old European bicycles that were so plentiful on American roads a few decades ago..

I'm talking here about the mass-production, off-the-rack bikes, not the pricy small-production custom jobs produced by the little shops that still dot the European countryside. I can't remember how long it's been since I've seen a Motobecane, Peugeot, Raleigh, Dawes, or Astro-Damler on the road. Even Bianchi sightings are rare.

Back in the 1970's, though, it was a different story. Mass-produced European manufacturers flooded the

American market with good bikes at a reasonable price. One could go into the Bike Pedlar and have a choice of four or five bike brands in a range of prices; then walk across West End to Cumberland Transit and have a choice of four or five more.

The operative words for those times were choice and competition. One's lucky today to go into a bike shop and find more than one or two brands of road bikes.

Back then, the bicycling mags were loaded with advertisements for bicycles and parts – full-page color spreads and such. Today, the big ads in Bicycling appear to be mainly reserved for automobiles, clothes, and shoes, although this January/February issue had a nice spread on Pinarello.

Schwinn, America's own cycling giant, was still very much a major player in the adult market back then. The Varsity was the big bike on campus; the LeTour was a fairly-decent club tourer, and the Paramount was an honest attempt to compete against the sleek European racing machines. But, Schwinn's system of sales and distribution sometimes left an area without a store for long periods of time, and one had to look far and wide to even find a Schwinn to buy.

Entry-level European bikes were sometimes pretty heavy

and junky, with the manufacturers own tubing and components, but they were available and came with the so-called European mystique at no extra charge. To get Reynolds or Columbus, Campy and Cinelli, one had to go to much higher-priced bikes, naturally.

One thing the European makers didn't skimp on were their paint jobs, lettering and decals. Their bikes were pretty – from the cheapest to the priciest. There were purple bikes and black bikes, lime bikes, orange bikes and rose bikes, and, of course, Bianchi's famous Celeste. I believe the prettiest bike I've ever seen was a burgundy Raleigh Competition, or it could have been a Pro. Anyway, wish I had bought it. It was a colorful and heady time for the American bicycle consumer back then.

But the good times for the European bikes didn't last long. Change was in the wind. The Japanese were on the way – if not with good bikes, at least with great Shimano, Suntour, and other components that would have Campy playing catchup to this day. On the domestic front, Cannondale was introducing its funky-looking aluminum frames and up in Wisconsin, Trek would soon be gearing up to build the bicycle company that would conquer the world.

Meanwhile, the Europeans

were getting the big heads and shooting themselves in the feet with components that were incompatible with anything else and other marketing maneuvers that were designed to keep their bikes on top. This was especially true of the French – where one had to buy French parts if one wanted a French bike. Of course, bike shops here didn't want that inventory on their hands when there was SunTour, Shimano, and Campy to be stocked. There were other economic forces at work, too, which I don't pretend to understand or explain, but they essentially left the European bike manufacturers in ruins and the cycling world is poorer for it. One by one, many of the grand old bike companies of France, England, Italy, Austria and beyond went belly up. Oh, one can still buy a Motobecane, a Dawes, or any one of a number of old European names. But they are European in name only. They are now owned by Asian manufacturers and are made who-knows-where by who-knows-whom somewhere over there.

A couple of years ago while in London, I set out to find a bike shop to see what the Brits are riding these days. On the fashionable South Bank, I finally found a shop right after it had closed for the day. I looked through the showroom

window, and as far back as I could there were only Treks hanging everywhere. Oh well. About that time my traveling companions reminded me it was time to adjourn to a nearby pub where there were about 40 different British microbrews on tap. At least in some things, the European mystique still lives. Cheers!



From the Editor ...

Do you have content for the Veloteers newsletter? Please continue to submit your stories, photos and items of interest as Word documents or jpg files to nickbiker1@aol.com for future publication. The next edition of *Spoke 'n' Word* is schedule to appear about Feb. 1 as the pre-season edition.



ORGANIZED RIDES

WE RIDE IN THE WINTER TOO

so watch your email for e-Comm updates and check out the Web site at www.veloteers.com.

HAPPENINGS

More information on these rides/events is available on the Event Calendar www.Veloteers.org

Weekly: Check out the club web site for ride fitness level requirements and additional ride details.