



DECEMBER 2025

MasterLink

The Magazine of the Bicycle Touring Club of North Jersey

YEAR IN REVIEW

Submit Your (CURATED) Photos by 12/15

REMEMBERING ETHAN BROOK

BTCNJ Past President and 35-Year Member

DUST OFF YOUR DANCING SHOES

Bike Prom Tickets are on Sale Now!



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Vice President: Avrin Slatkin
Secretary: Joyce Haddad
Treasurer: Len Ruvolo
Rides Captain: Keith Schlanger
Membership: Regina Toomey Bueno
Spec Events/Volunteer Dev: Marc Soloff
Tours: Lou Schleifer
Advocacy and Safety: Anastasia Conlon
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MasterLink

December 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 Clip Notes
- 4 Captain's Corner
- 5 Events
- 6 New Board Member Spotlight
- 8 2025 Photo Contest
- 9 Remembering Ethan Brook
- 13 Anniversary Party
- 14 Volunteer of The Month
- 15 5 Questions with a Ride Leader
- 16 Show Thanks
- 16 2025 Show Off Your Miles
- 16 Welcome New member
- 17 Safety Matters
- 19 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

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CLIP NOTES

By Olivia Sharp, President BTCNJ

As the days grow shorter and the layers grow thicker, it's tempting to think the cycling season is coming to a close. But if there's one thing I've learned from this Club, it's that the ride never really ends. The seasons shift, from long summer days to brisk winter mornings, but the energy, generosity, and camaraderie of our community carry on. You can feel it in the chatter at the start of a chilly group ride, the mid-ride coffee stops, and that quiet little glow of knowing you showed up, even when the couch looked more inviting.

This issue marks my first Clip Notes as your new Club President, and it has given me a chance to reflect on what it truly means to lead a community like ours. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to guide such a vibrant, welcoming, and deeply passionate community. When I first joined, I never imagined how profoundly it would enrich my life; through new friendships, countless miles, and more laughs (and flats) than I can count. This Club has a unique way of turning a simple ride into something much bigger: connection, adventure, and a true sense of belonging.

Our leadership is a reflection of that spirit, and I want to extend a heartfelt thank-you to our outgoing President, David Goldstein, for his



incredible energy, dedication, and steady guidance over the past three years. I also want to thank our outgoing Secretary, Donna Patronick, for her thoughtful service, our outgoing Vice President, Scott Avitabile, whose dedication has been invaluable, and our outgoing Special Events Chair, Janine Cheresnick, whose creativity and tireless efforts brought so much joy to our community. Without Janine, we wouldn't have Bike Prom, one of the highlights of our social calendar.

As we look ahead, I'm delighted to welcome Avrin Slatkin as he steps into the role of Vice President, Chuck White as our new Rally Chair, Regina Bueno as our new Membership Chair, and Marc Soloff as our new Special Events Chair; you can get to know Regina and Marc better by reading their profiles in this month's issue of the MasterLink. In his role as Special Events Chair, Marc will help lead the

fun and create more moments that bring us together. And speaking of fun... Bike Prom is right around the corner, so be sure to grab your ticket before they're gone!

I'm especially grateful for the way this Club keeps moving — not just in miles, but in heart. Whether it's celebrating a friend's birthday with a special ride (and even a slice of cake at the stop), noticing when someone could use help, or simply being there to offer support during a challenging time, members show up for each other in ways that go far beyond the pedals. It's in these everyday moments, both big and small, that the true heart of our community shines.

As the temperatures drop and winter layers

replace short sleeves, the rides may feel brisker, but our love of cycling, and of each other, doesn't hibernate. As we head into winter, I encourage everyone to keep that spirit alive; whether it's joining a Club ride, hopping on Zwift, volunteering, or simply checking in with a fellow rider you haven't connected with recently. The seasons may shift, but our sense of community remains strong.

Here's to keeping the ride going, the friendships growing, and the heart of BTCNJ alive; in every mile we ride and every moment we share.

See you on the road (or trail, or trainer).

CAPTAIN'S



CORNER

DID YOU KNOW?

ZWIFT RIDES COUNT TOO!

Did you know that BTCNJ ride leaders can post Zwift rides as official Club activities? Yup! When the roads get icy and the daylight disappears, you can still lead your crew — virtually. Zwift rides are allowed December through March, giving everyone a fun way to stay connected (and stay warm).

If you want to give it a try, all the step-by-step instructions are waiting for you on the Club website in the Documents section. Fire up the smart trainer and keep those pedals turning all winter long!



CLUB EVENT CALENDAR

Anniversary Party

Saturday, January 17, 2026

Indian Trail Club, Franklin Lakes NJ

Celebrate the anniversary of our very own BTCNJ at the 48th Anniversary Party on Saturday, January 17, 2026 at the Indian Trail Club in Franklin Lakes, NJ. Enjoy a great night, including hors d'oeuvres, an elegant buffet, a raffle with cool prizes, and dancing. Soft drinks are provided, and adult beverages are available from the cash only bar. Members and their guests are invited. Space is limited.

Tickets go on sale on December 1 for \$70. Price after December 31 is \$75. Tickets will be \$85 at the door.

Once again we will be fundraising for FanFare, our very own live band, which was enjoyed by all last year. If you would like to contribute, we are accepting donations (no more than \$20 suggested donation) we would be grateful!

Venmo: @Janine-Cheresnick or Zelle: Janine Cheresnick 914-523-1652

For more information contact Janine at: jmcbreeze32@gmail.com

Thank you in advance to all our generous contributors who made live music possible!!

Year in Review

Thursday, February 12, 2026

Ridgewood Public Library, Ridgewood NJ

Come relive the best moments of the year with your BTCNJ community! From epic climbs to coffee stops, big group rides to scenic miles, we'll revisit the highlights that made 2025 a standout season — every mile ridden, every new friendship formed, and every moment that made the year unforgettable, all because of you. We'll look back at the rides that defined the season, highlight your favorite photos, celebrate the spirit you bring to our club, and connect with fellow riders as we look ahead to even more adventures.

The winners will be announced after the video. Deadline for submissions is 12.15.25. Good luck!



NEW BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Regina Toomey Bueno Membership Chair



I believe I have been a member of BTCNJ (with some lapses here and there) for 27 years. When my husband Hugo and I joined, we had two small children, full-time careers, and a house that needed a lot of work, so finding time to ride with the Club was difficult. And when we did ride, we were rarely able to ride together. For many years, our membership was more aspirational than actual.

But times change. Our son Andrew and daughter Alexandra started their own lives, and we became empty nesters. We started doing regular rides with the Club after work – particularly the Monday ride from Oakland with Eric Lopaty and on Wednesdays out of Glen Rock with Chris Nerrie and Bob Goodfriend. We made great friends in BTCNJ and became really committed cyclists. Hugo and I completed our first Century ride this year (the picture is us at the end of the Seagull Century).

I had a lengthy career in Hospital Administration and spent the last 13 years as the Senior Administrator of Oncology Services for Garnet

Health System. I retired about a year ago. My goal with retirement was to commit to spending my time well, both volunteering for things that I feel are important and that I enjoy, and spending time doing things I love.

I am a longtime volunteer with the American Cancer Society, serving on the Volunteer Board for the Lower Hudson Valley, the Executive Leadership Team for Relay for Life of Rockland, and proudly raised over \$2,500 this year for Making Strides Against Breast Cancer. I am also Associate Director of Mahwah Pride and serve on the Mahwah Historic Commission.

In terms of doing what I love, I have ridden more Club rides this year than ever before and recently became a Ride Leader. We went on the Amagansett weekend this year and had a wonderful time with a great group of BTCNJ members that made me even more committed to the Club. As Membership Chair, my goal is to ensure that BTCNJ keeps growing and attracts new members who will contribute to our future. All ideas are welcome!

NEW BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Marc Soloff
Spec Events/Volunteer



I joined BTCNJ on September 18, 2013, right around the time I volunteered to create my first year-in-review video. I figured it would be a simple, one-time project, but a dozen videos later, the Club had become a much bigger part of my life.

In April 2014, I joined the Board as MasterLink Editor, and in December 2017, I stepped into the role of Club President. Serving the membership in both positions was an honor and remains one of the most meaningful experiences I've had with the Club.

Some of my favorite memories come from volunteering with my kids at the Ramapo Rally and the Ramsey rest stop. It became our little family tradition year after year. I've also been a Ride Smart instructor, and I'm a current ride leader, helping newer riders build confidence and enjoy the sport the same way so many

people in the Club helped me.

Along the way, I was named Volunteer of the Month and Volunteer of the Year, recognitions that meant a lot because BTCNJ runs on the dedication and generosity of its members.

Outside of cycling, I play pickleball, run occasionally, and generally try to stay active so I can keep up with the B* group and dip my toe into an A ride every now and then. In the colder months, I'm on my Scott Speedster 20, and once the weather warms up, I switch to my Look 785 Huez, which, as the legend goes, was liberated from Rhonda Pekow's car.

BTCNJ has given me friendships, purpose, and a community I'm genuinely grateful to be part of. Every mile, every project, and every volunteer shift has made this Club a meaningful part of my life.



YEAR IN REVIEW

SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS BY DECEMBER 15TH

Once again, photographs submitted for the Year in Review will be considered for the BTCNJ Photo Contest. Prizes will be awarded for the best photos. Winners will be announced right after the YIR Membership Meeting on February 12th.

PLEASE CURATE YOUR SUBMISSIONS. It is a large task to sort through. Please don't photo dump.

Take some time to check out others' photos, and give them a like.

Please read all the category options before selecting where to place your pics. There are some additional titles to help with the editing process.

Rules: Eligible photos must have been taken on a 2025 BTCNJ ride, tour, or event. The Club member submitting the photo will be considered the photographer for the photo, so only submit photos that you took.

Categories: Best Action Photo, Best Rally Photo, Best Group Photo, and Photographer of the Year.

Submit your photos using the links, according to the subject category, which you can find by clicking below.

SUBMIT PHOTOS



REMEMBERING ETHAN BROOK

by Don Schlenger

Ethan Brook, who passed away at age 83 in October, was a 35-year member of BTCNJ and one its most dynamic and devoted leaders. His generosity, humor, and tireless energy helped shape the Club into one of the nation's most prestigious.

Ethan and his long-time friend Richard Fine discovered the joy of adult cycling in their mid-forties, pedaling together between Nyack and Piermont. After hearing about a BTCNJ ride, they joined the Club and soon began leading rides themselves. On one of these outings, Ethan met Barbara Augenblick, who would become his lifelong partner and BTCNJ "teammate."

Some of Ethan and Richard's most memorable events were the annual all-night Midnight Manhattan bike rides, one of which drew 150 riders.

After retiring, Ethan became active with Bike New York, where he and Richard delighted in teaching kids through its Learn to Ride program. He also loved volunteering with the Big Apple Greeter program, meeting visitors from all over the world.

Energetic BTCNJ Officer

The joy of seeing the world on a bike, meeting people, and leading others was a perfect fit for Ethan—and he went "all in." He joined the BTCNJ Board in 2006, serving first as Public



Relations Chair (2006–2007), then Membership Chair (2008–2009), Club President (2010–2012), Past President (2013), and finally Ramapo Rally Chairperson (2014–2015).

Ethan poured creativity and enthusiasm into every role. He built relationships with local bike shops, ensuring BTCNJ brochures on every counter. He placed articles about Club rides and local cycling in the Bergen Record's Thursday Sports section for nine years. During his decade on the board, Ethan's outreach helped membership double to nearly 1,500.

As Ramapo Rally Chair, he secured generous corporate financial sponsorships as well as major food contributions. His efforts expanded the Rally's "village" of exhibitor

booths and boosted attendance to about 1,200 riders, at one point filling every Campgaw parking lot to overflow.

Ethan infused every role with warmth and humor. In one of his President's Columns in the MasterLink urging people to pre-register for the Rally, he wrote: "Then there's the issue of my mother. She has baked chocolate chip cookies for the Rally for the last few years. She's 90 years old. She can't stay up all night and bake. Give me a break. I need a count....And one more thing. Please do not dance the night before or the day of the Ramapo Rally. Someone, some mystical force or deity might mistake this for a rain dance. We can't take chances."

European Tours

Perhaps Ethan's greatest contribution was organizing and leading BTCNJ's overseas tours. His first was in 1999, when he led eighteen members on a two-week adventure through France's Dordogne region. The trip began with a setback—a baggage handlers' strike at de Gaulle Airport delayed everyone's bikes and luggage—but the group rolled with it, and the tour was a hit.

Building on that success, Ethan and Barbara went on to lead twenty more two-week European tours, with as many as forty participants. Even with three- and four-star accommodations and custom jerseys, the trips cost a fraction of commercial tours.

Planning for each tour began the preceding fall. Communications with hotels, transportation companies, and local bike clubs was initially back and forth by fax and the occasional phone call. Ethan pored over Michelin maps and plotted routes by hand. "If I had worked for someone," he joked, "I would have been fired long ago."



Assembling bikes on the morning of arrival



BTCNJ Andalusia Tour



Those of us who were fortunate enough to join these tours had tremendous adventures, and developed lasting friendships and fond memories.

In the early years, we all had to pack our bikes in boxes or hardshell cases, which meant hiring additional vans or trucks to transport everything. On arrival day in Europe, after a long bus ride to the starting point, we had to assemble the bikes through our haze of jet lag. (In the later years, Ethan found a Dutch company that would rent good bikes, freeing the group to end tours in different cities.

Ethan compiled descriptions of all the sites we would see, infused with his humor. Describing the Chateau de Chambord in the Loire Valley, Ethan wrote, "Apparently after spending more than two decades having it built, Francois I himself only actually spent seven weeks in the castle. Rumor has it that a King's hunting party consisted of around 2,000 people. It was difficult to organize a time when they could all get away together."

In the days before GPS, each participant received a packet of black and white copies of the Michelin maps and a highlighter to trace out each day's route. Cue sheets weren't so much turn by turn as "head to this town, then head to that town." Most mornings began with the ritual of packing forty duffel bags ("30-inch max, NO wheels") into the van. As accommodations were often in cities,

— “ —
Ethan was always ready to help others, relished every moment of friendship, and could make anyone smile with his vast joke inventory and quick wit. The quality of our future dimmed a little when a mensch like Ethan left us.

—Richard Fine

— ” —

sometimes the entire group of riders had to pick its way through a maze of narrow streets and bike paths to get out of town. Days were filled with scenic rides (rain or shine), café lunches, or picnics gathered from village markets, and hunts for Magnum ice cream bars.

As if the European tours weren't enough, Ethan and Barbara led two tours in California. They truly put the "Tour" in Bicycle Touring Club of North Jersey.

Ethan's legacy continues to inspire all of us who share his love of cycling and community.



Forty BTCNJ riders in Münsterland

- 1 1999 Dordogne, France
- 2 2000 Provence, France
- 3 2001 Tuscany & Umbria, Italy
- 4 2002 Dordogne, France
- 5 2003 Emilia-Romagna, Italy
- 6 2005 Vienna, Austria & Prague, Czech Repub...
- 7 2006 Provence, France
- 8 2007 Burgundy, France
- 9 2007 Mosel River, France and Germany (Bike...
- 10 2008 Normandy, France
- 11 2009 Costa Brava, Spain
- 12 2009 Frankfurt to Ludwigsburg (Bike-n-Barge)
- 13 2010 Toulouse, France
- 14 2011 Puglia, Italy
- 15 2012 Loire Valley, France
- 16 2013 Bavaria, Germany
- 17 2014 Alsace-Lorraine, France & Germany
- 18 2015 Denmark
- 19 2016 Andalusia, Spain
- 20 2017 Münsterland, Germany
- 21 2018 Dordogne, France
- 22 2019 Cotswolds, England



Ethan's European Tours



Celebrate the anniversary of our very own BTCNJ at the 48th Anniversary Party on Saturday, January 17, 2026 at the Indian Trail Club in Franklin Lakes, NJ. **It's just \$70 per person through December 31** for a great night including hors d'oeuvres, an elegant buffet, and dancing to a live band (donation are requested to help pay for the band). Soft drinks are provided, and adult beverages are available from the cash only bar. Cocktail attire suggested. Members and their guests are invited. Space is limited. Price increase to \$75 on January 1, or \$85 at the door.

REGISTER NOW

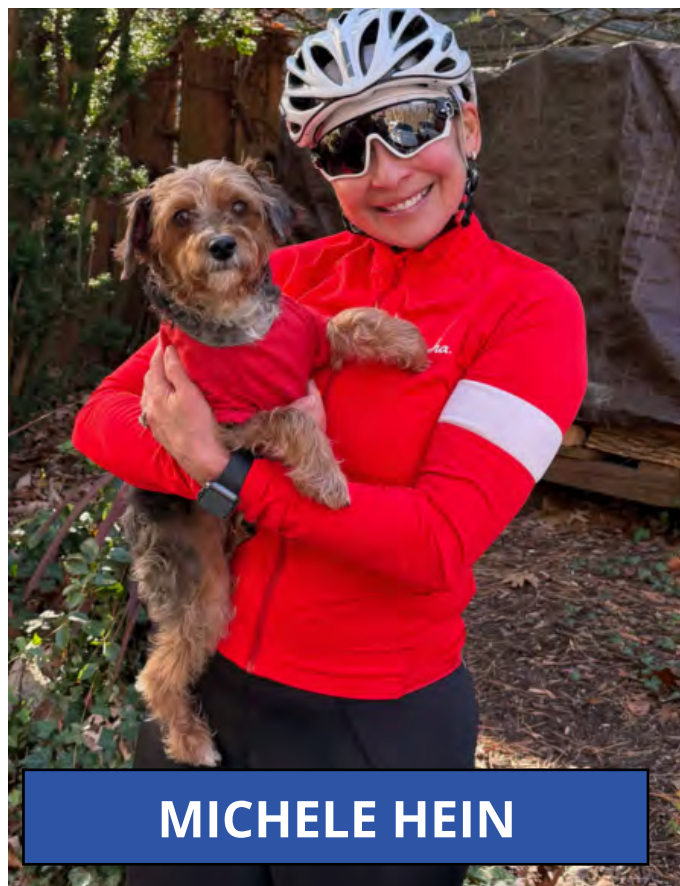
VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

By Janine Cheresnick

Our Volunteer of the Month is Michele Hein. Michele is a relatively new member, having joined BTCNJ in 2020. Since joining, she has led an impressive total of 85 rides and co-led 84 rides (169 total). This year Michele has led a total of 29 rides and co-led another 16.

Though new to cycling, Michele loves it! She showed up to her first road bike ride with her used 2017 Liv Enve Pro she purchased on the recommendation of a friend, choosing a C* ride, not sure of her abilities. The other riders were sure she was on the wrong ride because her bike was “too good.” The ride was a lot of fun and everyone was kind and encouraging. As luck would have it, the riders were correct! Michele quickly went from a C* to a B and then settled at a B* pace where she has found her home. She now rides a 2020 Canyon Endurance CF SLX 8.0 etap which she absolutely loves. Since becoming a rider, Michele has joined a few other clubs but says that BTCNJ is “truly special” because everyone is so inclusive and she loves being a member.

When joining one of Michele’s rides you can expect a fun-filled, but fast paced ride, with averages between 16-20 mph. It is important to Michele that riders have fun on her rides while also maintaining safety. She is careful to respond to the needs of each rider, customizing her rides to meet the skills of those who have signed up. An added bonus when joining one of Michele’s rides is her medical background as a board certified Emergency Medicine PA. There have been multiple instances where her skills have come in handy, intervening when a concern arises. On a recent ride, a member had a medical emergency and her quick assessment



MICHELE HEIN

and decision-making skills ensured the rider went to the ER quickly to alleviate risk.

One of Michele’s favorite rides is from Oakland to Smartworld because it is both hilly and picturesque. She also enjoys leading a quick ride to David’s Bagels because the bagels are delicious, with her favorite being the cinnamon bagel with walnut cream cheese. Michele would love to lead more rides but she feels her options are limited due to her work schedule, so she focuses on ensuring her rides are enjoyed by all.

Fun Fact: Michele loves dogs and those familiar with her rides like to joke that if you’re on one of her rides there will certainly be a dog to cuddle somewhere.

Congratulations Michele, thank you for all you do for BTCNJ!

If you have anyone you would like to nominate for Volunteer of the Month, please email me at jmcbreeze32@gmail.com

5 QUESTIONS WITH A RIDE LEADER

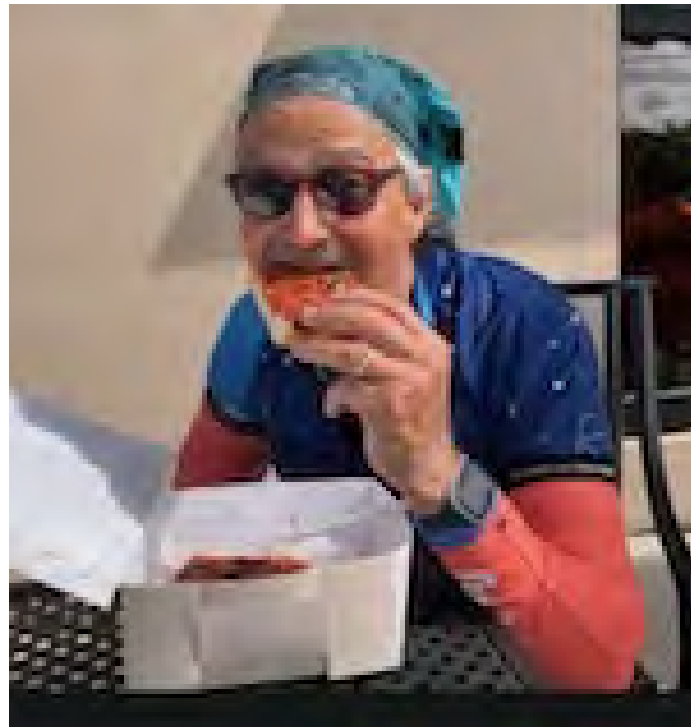
LEN RUVOLO

What do you enjoy most about being a ride leader? If a movie was ever made about my cycling life, it would be titled “The Reluctant Ride Leader”. In my 11 years with BTCNJ, I’ve been at my happiest as a clamiest when riding behind seasoned expert leaders like Messrs, Ralph Pantuso, and Peter Bellin. For reasons known and unknown, B rides were harder to find in 2025 so I’ve led or co-led close to half of the 90 rides I’ve been on this year. My typical ride is 40 to 60 miles with some hills at a mid B pace. I like to think I’m starting to get the hang of it and people seem to enjoy my rides.

What’s your favorite route? Any route to New Paltz. I sort of grew up there, spending my entire summers until age 13 at my grandfather’s summer home. I love riding on country roads.

What was your first road bike? A steel Schwinn World that I bought in 1975. I used it for family rides on the bike path to Jones Beach and also rode it on several Bike New York tours with my kids and brothers. My son Steve, who is a much stronger rider than me, converted it to a Fixie and rides it to this day in the outer boroughs of NYC.

What are you currently riding? When I joined the Club, I was riding an aluminum Marin triple,



with a carbon fork and a kick stand. I removed the kick stand after several weeks of getting stink eye from fellow riders. I now mostly ride a 2018 Cannondale Synapse DI2 Hi-Mod Carbon Ultegra 11 speed – without a kick stand.

What were your most memorable BTCNJ rides? Two NYC rides stand out. The first, led by Lou Wassong, was in 2014 - my first year with the Club - and took us over five bridges and into three boroughs with lunch at the Red Hook Fairway overlooking the Statue of Liberty. More recently, I loved Dom Mancuso’s four-ferry ride to Coney Island and lunch at L&B Spumoni Gardens. Oh, and this year I had the privilege of leading the metric century to Shelter Island which is another favorite.

Bonus fun fact. When I turned 70, my good buddy Cal Feingold persuaded me to lead a “ride your age” birthday ride. I’m still leading a “ride your age” each year with some of the same riders who did the first one with me seven years ago. Century ride in 2048, anyone?

SHOW THANKS

'We must find time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives.'

-John F. Kennedy

Know a fellow member who goes the extra mile—leading great rides, volunteering behind the scenes, or bringing something special to our cycling community? Nominate them for Ride Leader of the Month, Volunteer of the Month, or suggest an interesting member to be featured in the Masterlink!

Send your suggestions (and a few words about why) to our Masterlink Editor, Bob DeMair, at masterlink@BTCNJ.com.

Let's celebrate the people who make BTCNJ such a great Club!

SHOW OFF YOUR MILES!

We look forward to publishing our BTCNJ members' 2025 riding accomplishments, along with any other accomplishments you have achieved this year, in the February MasterLink. Feel free to add to the brag by including other statistics, like how many hours or days you rode, elevation gain or anything else interesting or significant about your riding achievements.

Submit yours by using the "Yearly Mileage" link on BTCNJ.com on your Account page (look on the right side of the page) to enter your info. In order to be included in the February MasterLink, update your 2025 mileage total by January 15.



TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Paolo Adajar, Montclair, NJ
David Bergado, Bergenfield, NJ
Eula Bergado, Bergenfield, NJ
Lonny Buinis, Saddle Brook, NJ
Allen Chan, Brooklyn, NY

Steven Chung, Bergenfield, NJ
Paola Garcia, Suffern, NY
Larry Grossman, Short Hills, NJ
Bob Sommer, Ridgewood, NJ



CAN YOU SEE ME NOW?

By Anastasia Conlon

We always want to fit in a ride before the cold drives us indoors. However, when we ride in the warmer afternoons of late fall, or squeeze in a ride before work, we can run into the diminished light. Sunset on December 1, for example, is 4:29 PM, and 20 minutes later is dusk. Most of us can see well up to sunset, and even dusk, but how visible are we to drivers? They have the additional challenge of sun blindness since the sun is both lower in the sky and the leaves are off the trees. Two things are critical for safety; being visible to drivers and being easily recognized as a cyclist.

The April 2025 issue of Masterlink, "Safety Matters" discussed how improving visibility via daytime running lights reduced bicycle accidents by 19%, and also reduced the severity of accidents that did happen. If that minor improvement in visibility can have that effect, what can changing the color and reflectivity of your jersey do – which obviously is a much bigger object to see than a 2-inch light in daytime?

The eye is most sensitive to light at a

wavelength of 555 nm under normal lighting conditions, which to us appears as a yellowy green.^{[REFERENCE](#)} Yellow is the next best, followed by blue.^{[REFERENCE](#)} While green can optimize visibility, it depends on the background. Studies on motorcycle visibility show that improving contrast between the background and rider is the best way to improve visibility.^{[REFERENCE](#)}

In short, for a ride in the country among green fields, a green jersey would not be the best choice to improve your visibility. Likewise, on the grey days of late fall, surrounded by bare trees, wearing grey/tan/brown or black renders you virtually invisible.

Perhaps because green is ubiquitous in many environments, there is very little data on accident rates in green jerseys. However, there is data on the next best thing, the use of yellow jerseys. A study showed a 47% reduction in multiparty accidents when a yellow jacket was worn while cycling, and a 55% reduction in multiparty accidents involving a motor

vehicle. [REFERENCE](#) Note that this is more than twice the improvement over the use of daytime lights!

And what about fluorescent colors? A normal bright color reflects about 90 percent of the color present in the visible spectrum. Fluorescent colors can reflect as much as 200 to 300 percent by using a larger portion of the visible spectrum, so the eye perceives a more intense color. On the road, this increases the distance from which an object is seen. Some studies show that fluorescent clothing is five-and-a-half times more visible than conventional clothing.

Reflectivity is particularly important to aid driver recognition in low light conditions, and it's most valuable where it shows the movement of the body, namely, to enhance

biomotion. A study of driver recognition of pedestrians in low light conditions showed that reflective tape placed strategically to indicate biomotion (for example, pedals or spokes on a bike, ankles and knees), increased the distance that they were seen by 42%, thus reducing the driver's reaction time by the same amount. [REFERENCE](#)

Summarizing then: Maximize the contrast between your jersey and your cycling environment, and where the background allows, your safest colors are green, yellow and blue - and fluorescent versions of those are the best! But don't forget to include reflective tape or reflectors to indicate your motion. Pedals, spokes, knees and ankles are all good locations to optimize your chance of being both seen and recognized.



BTCNJ Board Meeting

November 25, 2025

The meeting was held via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by President David Goldstein at 7:05 PM

Present:

David Goldstein, President
Avrin Slatkin, Vice President
Joyce Haddad, Secretary
Len Ruvolo, Treasurer
Lou Schleifer, Tours
Anastasia Conlon, Advocacy & Safety
David Pawlyk, WebMaster
Keith Schlanger, Rides Captain
Olivia Sharp, Membership Chair
Chuck White, Rally Chair

Absent:

Janine Cheresnick, Special Events
Robert DeMair, MasterLink Editor

The meeting began with a discussion about the preparations for the upcoming Pot Luck Dinner. Avrin agreed to be in charge of setting things up and bringing in supplies. The group also addressed board member changes, formally welcoming Avrin (VP) and Chuck (Rally Chair) as voting members, and Joyce as Secretary, effective December 1. They discussed rescheduling the monthly board meetings from Tuesdays to the first Monday of the month.

The meeting then focused on reviewing the Club's financial performance, with Len reporting the YTD bottom line was at break-even compared to a \$5,400 loss last year. Our total cash balance is \$113,000 which is \$3,000 higher than last year. The improvement is the result of Rally profits that resulted primarily from better managed costs, higher entrance fees, and the \$5,000 sponsorship from Vaccaro Law. The group discussed banking options for any excess cash that was not already in a CD. Lou suggested a money market fund from other than TD Bank (which does not offer a high interest non-CD product) which Len will look into. Len will arrange new debit cards for Olivia and Avrin. Keith will have access to the debit card account information for use when ordering the Club jerseys instead of laying out his own funds for reimbursement later.

The Executive Committee brought up increasing the annual Club dues, with members agreeing to maintain the current \$25 rate. With the Rally's self-sufficiency and the current healthy financial status (necessary for covering potential loss of sponsorship as well as operating expense increases), the idea of an increase was turned down. They also cited concerns about member retention since only 1/3 of the 1,200 members are active cyclists.

The Committee addressed the progress of the Ride Leader jerseys. Lori's design is being finalized. Alex's first draft of the design will be completed by late November. They are aiming to coordinate colors between both designs and are ahead of schedule as order requests go out at

the end of January. Keith mentioned that we need to renew our contract with Pactimo for 2026. We presently get 35% off custom list pricing and their YKK zippers are hard to match. He is still open to other jersey vendors if they can compete with price and quality.

The meeting went on to discuss frequent ride cancellations. Keith noted that the high cancellation rate for rides was mostly in the C* category, even with 4-5 people signed up. Keith agreed to investigate the reasons behind these cancellations, as they seemed to occur more frequently than expected. The conversation then shifted to the New Ride Member designation. Currently the classification for "New Members" holds for one year regardless of how many rides they have joined. This was originally intended to allow Ride Leaders to be aware of how much group riding experience the New Member had. The board discussed and agreed to change the New Member designation period from one year to nine months, with the New Member status being visible only to Ride Leaders and Executive Committee members.

The group then discussed restructuring ride leadership positions. The group decided to eliminate all Ride Lieutenant roles except for the D-ride Lieutenant, while keeping the ride committee and incentives structure intact. They agreed to remove the positions from the website and not award new points for these roles in 2026.

Discussions about Volunteer of the Month and Year were addressed. Olivia proposed an updated process for choosing Volunteer of the Month and Year. Members could submit nominations for these volunteer positions and other recognitions through the MasterLink.

The meeting went on to discuss dangerous intersections and Club tours. Olivia suggested periodically writing ML articles about challenging intersections, which Anastasia expanded upon by proposing a comprehensive database accessible to members and advocacy groups. The group agreed to gather feedback from Ride Leaders and members about dangerous intersections. Regarding Club tours, Avrin proposed a new tour, and Lou shared his experience with international tours, suggesting partnering with local tour operators. The meeting also mentioned the passing of Ethan Brook, a former Club President and active member. A tribute article in the MasterLink is being planned.

The Anniversary Party (Bike Prom) will be held January 17. There will be a live band; same as last year. The cost will be \$70 thru December 31 and increase to \$75. The price at the door (day of) will be \$85. The board considered exploring alternative venues for future events due to rising costs, with Anastasia suggesting Ramsey Golf and Country Club as a potential option.

The Club meeting schedule was the next topic. Avrin proposed to create a formal proposal for future meetings including potential speakers and happy hours.

The final topic was on planning the Year In Review (YIR) and various organizational tasks. Olivia discussed setting up Cluster for photo submissions and the need for a cutoff date, with December 15 agreed upon. The group decided to create a calendar event for the YIR, with links to photo submission categories. David Pawlyk provided guidance on updating the website to make the submission process accessible to members only. The board also discussed open positions, including Membership Chair, which Regina expressed interest in. David Goldstein reflected on ongoing challenges, such as member retention and Rally planning, and expressed

gratitude for board members' efforts. The conversation ended with plans to finalize the YIR setup and continue discussions on Thursday at the Pot Luck.

The next board meeting is scheduled for December 1, at 7:00 and will be held via Zoom. The meeting was adjourned by David Goldstein at 8:50PM.