

March 2026



MasterLink

The Magazine of the Bicycle Touring Club of North Jersey



Photo of the Year - Colleen Cornell

See all the photos - Pages 8-12

Volunteer of the Month - Cedric Chow, page 8

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MasterLink

March 2026

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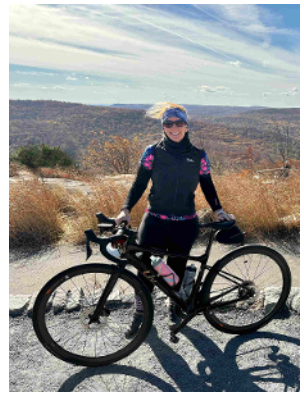
Cover Image by **Colleen Cornell**

MasterLink banner design **Bruce Armenante**

Proofreaders: **Harriet Einschlag, Debbie Ungerleider**

CLIP NOTES

By Olivia Sharp, President BTCNJ



March is the month that lives in the in-between. The days stretch a little longer, the light shifts, and the idea of riding outside starts to feel possible again — not quite here, but close enough to start imagining.

This is the quiet work of the season. It's the walks, strength sessions, shorter rides, or simply getting back into a routine after a long winter. It's checking the weather one more time before heading out, adding (or shedding) a layer mid-ride, and remembering that every bit of movement counts, even when it doesn't yet feel like "real riding."

If your rides aren't long right now — or if riding still feels a bit awkward or harder than you remember — that's completely normal. March doesn't have to be about big miles or ambitious goals. For many of us, it's simply about reconnecting with the bike, building a little consistency, and trusting that fitness returns in its own time.

Wherever you are right now is exactly where you're supposed to be. Some members have stayed active all winter. Others are just beginning to think about getting back out there. There's no single timeline and no pressure to be anywhere other than where you are today.

This month is also a great opportunity to take care of the practical side of riding. If your bike has been sitting for a while, consider bringing it to your local shop for a tune-up. A bit of attention now — checking tires, brakes, and shifting — can go a long way toward making those early rides feel smoother and more enjoyable.

As you look ahead, be sure to check the club website. There's a lot of great information there beyond our ride listings, including upcoming events and tours.

March is also shaping up to be a great month to connect off the bike. We have an upcoming Ride with GPS meeting on March 12 at 7:00 PM — a fantastic opportunity to sharpen your route-planning skills, ask questions, and learn tools that can make your riding season smoother and more enjoyable. A big thank-you to Avrin for pulling this together and making it happen for the club.

Rally registration officially opens on March 1. The Rally is one of those events that comes together because members step up. In the coming weeks, we'll be reaching out for volunteers to help make it happen. Whether it's your first time helping or you're a returning volunteer, your involvement plays a huge role in creating the welcoming, well-run experience our club is known for.

And if you haven't already, be sure to check out the Year in Review, which is linked on the website and is truly a must-watch. It's a wonderful snapshot of the miles, moments, and community that defined the past season. Thanks to Cedric, our Volunteer of the Month, and to Avrin and Joyce for the movie-style premiere (popcorn included)

However you're spending these early weeks — riding, planning, learning, or just easing back in — you're part of what makes this club special. Enjoy the in-between. Take care of your bike, take care of yourself, and stay connected. I am excited for what's ahead and look forward to sharing the miles with you soon.

CLUB EVENT CALENDAR



Early start time 7:00 PM!

Save the Date: March 12 , 7:00 pm. BTCNJ General Meeting

ROUTE PLANNING WITH RWGPS

Come in person to the Ridgewood Library or join us virtually via Google Meet.

We will host a Route Planning webinar presented by Dylan Mead from Ride with GPS, where we'll walk through how to create better club routes using the Ride with GPS Route Planner. We'll start with core route planning fundamentals before moving into more advanced planning and editing tools, making this a great fit for folks of all abilities and comfort levels—including experienced route creators who should still pick up a few useful tips. The session includes a one-hour presentation followed by a 15-minute live Q&A.

Did you know BTCNJ members get a free RWGPS membership at the club level and a discount on the basic and premium levels?

You must register to attend virtually by submitting your information at:

<https://calendly.com/ride-with-gps111/ride-with-gps-meets-the-btcnj>



TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

James Anderson	Summit	NJ
Ethan Green	Easton	PA
William Ottaway	Albany	NY
Thanasy Peppas	Fort	NJ

Steven Peterson	Summit	NJ
Himja Sethi	Parsippany	NJ
Ugras Uzun	Brooklyn	NY

2026 Ramapo Rally

Sunday, August 30, 2026

by Chuck White

As I write this, it is February and 15 degrees in New Jersey! And it doesn't look like it will be warming up soon! My thoughts have turned to skiing, my eyes turn to the weather to see when the next snow will hit, and my bike is in the basement staying warm. So why am I thinking about the Rally?? In August?? One of the tips that Joyce told me last year was "start early". So I am!

My first experience last year was a mix of efforts and emotions. Running errands and planning, culminating in a day long rush so that 400 riders could get out on the road and enjoy our rides on a warm summer day.

We're still planning on our ride to start at Campgaw, this year on August 30th, and I am pleased to announce even at this early date that our Platinum sponsor, Vaccaro Law, has returned for 2026! Mountrax has reached out hoping to continue our relationship, and updated sponsorship proposals have started to get distributed to new financial and healthcare institutions. Previous sponsors will be next on the list. We are hoping for continued good fortune with the weather and another successful Rally!

Registration opens

March 1

Member registration is planned to open on March 1st, with non-member registration scheduled for March 15th. Watch for a club announcement for early bird registration and pricing! BTCNJ members get an early opportunity to take advantage of a great discount.

All of these efforts depend on our amazing volunteers! We put in a lot of effort from Friday morning to Sunday evening. Why do we do this? Because it is the right thing to do to support our sport, hobby and biking community. If there's one thing I could ask for volunteers is MORE MUSCLE to set up and dismantle the Rally. Our volunteer sign up site will be available soon. Sign up as soon as you can!

A few small changes we are exploring:

A lead to distribute cards and print media to delis, bakeries, and other favorite rest stops.

Reserved sponsor parking. They deserve it!

How about an ice cream truck along the way, or at the finish to go along with the sprinklers? I'll be asking for contacts to see if we can make that happen.



9/11 National Memorial Trail

25th Anniversary Cycling Challenge

In honor of the 25th anniversary of September 11, 2001, the September 11th National Memorial Trail Alliance invites cyclists of all levels to participate in the 25th Anniversary Cycling Challenge—a meaningful, year-long series of 20+ cycling events along the 9/11 National Memorial Trail.

The Challenge offers a unique way to engage with the trail through remembrance, discovery, and connection. Riders can explore different sections of the trail, accumulate miles, earn awards, and reflect on the lives lost and the resilience shown in the aftermath of 9/11. Whether you are a seasoned cyclist or just beginning, the Challenge is designed to be accessible, flexible, and deeply meaningful.

The 9/11 National Memorial Trail connects the three permanent memorial sites in New York City, Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and Arlington, Virginia, creating a powerful physical and symbolic journey between these places of remembrance. Riding the trail is not just about the miles—it's about honoring history, fostering community, and moving forward together.

To learn more, Bruce White will join us at the March Membership Meeting to speak about the Cycling Challenge, the Trail, and how members can get involved.

A full list of participating events and official Challenge rules can be found at: <https://www.911trail.org/25th-anniversary-cycling-challenge.html>



VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Cedric Chow

by Marc Soloff

Some people ease their way into our club. Cedric joined BTCNJ because he did not want to get dropped.

His introduction to the club began on a solo ride across the Tappan Zee Bridge. He heard a cyclist call out, "Passing on left," and just as he prepared to let him go by, the rider added, "... and 20 more behind me." A quick glance at the long line forming behind him made Cedric think, "Nope, I do not want to be passed by a whole group." He picked up the pace, got ahead of them, and met the group on the other side of the bridge.

The lead cyclist was Eric Schmidt, and Keith Schlanger introduced himself as the Rides Captain. They were welcoming, encouraged him to join, and Cedric signed up that very evening.

That was July 2025. Eight months later, he volunteered to take on one of the most demanding projects in the club: the Year in Review.

If you have ever tried to assemble 2,600 photos into a cohesive, entertaining, not-too-long video, you understand what that commitment means. I have personally created a dozen Year in Review videos over the years, so I know exactly how much work goes into it. It is hours of sorting, sequencing, editing, adjusting music, reworking transitions, then refining it again and again until it feels right.

This year, Cedric did more than continue the tradition. He moved it forward.



For the first time in the history of our Year in Review, AI was introduced in a meaningful way. I recognized the use of Gemini immediately. The tour patches were a standout, and several of the AI-driven segments genuinely caught the audience off guard. You could feel it in the room when certain moments landed. There were laughs, some visible surprise, and that quiet attention that tells you people are fully engaged.

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Cedric Chow

What I appreciated most was that he did not simply replicate the established format. Over the years, I developed a structure that worked and became familiar. Cedric respected the foundation, but he was not limited by it. He introduced new segments and a different rhythm that gave the video a fresh feel. It felt current without losing the spirit of what the Year in Review is meant to capture.

What many people may not realize is that this was also a family effort. His son even planted a few Easter eggs throughout the video. I did not catch them during the screening, which probably means I need to go back and watch it again. That detail alone says a lot about the heart behind the project.

Cedric described the biggest challenge as weaving together thousands of photos and videos into something cohesive. That is exactly right. The magic of the Year in Review is not in any single image. It is the story that emerges when those moments are thoughtfully stitched together.

Eight months into his membership, Cedric stepped up and delivered that story for all of us.

I know firsthand that this can feel like a thankless job at times. So Cedric, thank you. The club saw the work. The audience felt the impact. And we appreciate the time and care you put into it.

Well done.

Year in Review Photos



2025 BTCNJ Photo Contest

By Chuck Solomon

“You don’t take a picture; you make a picture”

Ansel Adams

Once again our members captured some great images in 2025. Whether using a phone camera or a sophisticated DSLR our Club members “made” pictures that showed the excitement and joy of riding and the spirit of riding with BTCNJ. After all, our rides often include all the ingredients for excellent photos: color, movement, surroundings, and emotion. Congratulations to the winners in each category and to those earning honorable mention.

A special acknowledgment to Colleen Cornell who shot the Picture of the Year and Debbie Ungerleider who earned Photographer of the Year. And to Marcy Squadron who continues to find new creative ways to shoot group photos on her rides.

Photo Tip: Watch those backgrounds! Cluttered or distracting backgrounds can ruin a good photo.

The winners of the 2025 BTCNJ Photo Contest:

Action Photo

Winner Colleen Cornell 1

Honorable Mention Louis Kalmar 2

Judy Lustig 3

Michael Kerlen 4

Group Photo

Winner Nick Caviello 5

Honorable Mention Marcy Squadron 6

Marcy Squadron 7

Allison Cobb 8

Marcel Altherr 9

Rally Photo

Winner Louis Kalmar 10

Honorable Mention Chuck White 11

Debbie Ungerleider 12

Louis Kalmar 13

Picture of the Year Colleen Cornell 14

Photographer of the Year Debbie Ungerleider 15,16,17



Picture of the Year - Colleen Cornell



Year in Review Photos



Year in Review Photos



Year in Review Photos



To see who took each photo see the key on page 9. The photos will each have a number on the right side, either top or bottom.

History Corner

Early American Women Pioneers of Professional Bicycle Racing

By David Goldstein

If you casually follow professional bicycle racing, of course you follow the Tour de France, and likely the Giro d'Italia and La Vuelta a España, all men's multi-stage cycling events, with over 300 years of combined history. Even more serious fans will be forgiven for thinking women's professional racing is a relatively new phenomenon. After all, the first event titled Tour de France Femmes was held only in 2022 (a one-off tour event for women was held in France in 1955, and a multi-stage tour in France was held under different names from 1984-2009). The first Olympic cycling race was not until 1984. With more attention in the US cycling world on women's racing following (briefly local hero) Kristen Faulkner's two golds at the 2024 Olympics, and this being Women's History Month, let's take a look back at a few of the earliest professional cycling women pioneers in the U.S., who faced the long uphill climb against sexism, misogyny, and racism.

Somewhat surprisingly, women participated in professional high wheel bicycle racing at least from the late 1870's. Surprising because the high wheel was considered too dangerous for women, and the explosive popularity of the bicycle among women is generally traced to the introduction of the "safety" (or modern) bicycle (two similarly sized wheels, with inflatable pneumatic tires) in the 1890's (see the September 2025 MasterLink for the important role the safety bicycle played in the women's rights movement).

The first known women's high wheel race took place in 1879 in San Francisco. The first female star of professional high wheel racing was **Louise Armaindo**, a Canadian living in Chicago

and former circus "strongwoman" and trapeze artist. She initially raced mostly against men, but she would also issue challenges to and race against other women high wheelers. In 1882, she rode over 843 miles in 72 hours of racing, competing and winning against top male cyclists (12 hours a day over 6 days), and setting the American long-distance record. Armaindo won thousands in prize money, racing on tracks in front of thousands, defeating most men, and the few women who dared to challenge her. By the mid-1890s, the clunkier, slower, but far safer modern bicycle had largely supplanted the high wheel, and Armaindo and the other female high wheel racers have been largely forgotten.

The first female superstar of safety bicycle racing was **Tillie Anderson**, a Swedish immigrant to Chicago. Records indicate she won 123 of 130 races in the 1890's, often 6-day events with several hours of racing per day on velodrome tracks in front of large crowds. A great-niece rescued Anderson from obscurity, and she was inducted into the Bicycle Hall of Fame almost 100 years later, in 2000.

Although not a racer per se, **Annie Kopchovsky**, a Jewish-Latvian immigrant to the U.S., was the first woman to ride a bike around the world, starting in Boston in June 1894, age 24, wearing long skirts, a corset, and a high-collared blouse. Newspapers called her journey, which she completed in 15 months, "the Most Extraordinary Journey Ever Undertaken by a Woman." (I have not been able to figure out how she rode across the Atlantic or Pacific).

History Corner

Kittie Knox was one of the most remarkable, courageous, early female racers. She was the first African-American to join the League of American Wheelmen (LAW), in 1893. The following year, non-Whites were banned from LAW, although Knox retained her membership amid controversy, and continued to race in LAW-sponsored events. As she participated in races around the country (in bloomers), she faced racism and sexism. For example, she was barred from a LAW-sponsored race in Asbury Park, and newspapers were as likely to comment on her appearance (with terminology not to be repeated here) and clothing as her racing skills.

In 1902, a racer, **Dottie Farnsworth**, was killed in a non-racing circus cycling event. The response from the male-dominated biking establishment? A ban on women racing, which brought an end to the golden years of women's bicycle racing in the U.S. It would be many decades before women began to take their rightful place in the world of professional cycling.

History Corner is a very occasional MasterLink column devoted to Club, local, national or global bike history. Your contributions on a topic of interest to you are welcome.



Tillie Anderson



Kittie Knox, Asbury Park, circa 1895

Sources and for more information:

<https://www.bicycling.com/culture/a35866989/historic-women-in-cycling/>

<https://bikeleague.org/womens-bike-history-tillie-anderson/>

<https://blog.library.si.edu/blog/2020/05/26/breaking-the-cycle-the-kittie-knox-story/>

[https://www.schwinnbikes.com/blogs/compass/no-limits-wheels-of-empowerment?](https://www.schwinnbikes.com/blogs/compass/no-limits-wheels-of-empowerment?srsltid=AfmBOoqhtj7eoEDimkEouJ9HcGhfeNIEOnkqssl4phAv4FcBwFvBj3Sy)

[srsItd=AfmBOoqhtj7eoEDimkEouJ9HcGhfeNIEOnkqssl4phAv4FcBwFvBj3Sy](https://www.schwinnbikes.com/blogs/compass/no-limits-wheels-of-empowerment?srsltid=AfmBOoqhtj7eoEDimkEouJ9HcGhfeNIEOnkqssl4phAv4FcBwFvBj3Sy)

Crash Course in Cretian Culture, Cuisine and Climbs

by Lou Schleifer

I never would have thought of joining a cycling Tour of Crete all on my own. Lucky for me, Bruce Rayvid, another BTCNJ member, sparked my inspiration. I met him while riding the very successful Vermont/Adirondacks Tour led by Rich Brookler and Debbie Ungerleider. When that Tour ended, Bruce emailed all the participants with a compelling image and write-up for his up coming Tour of Crete during the Fall of 2025, excerpted from his own description of it on PeopleCycling.org. I was hooked and signed up immediately.

Once in Crete, our first day featured a short, 20-mile shakeout ride to confirm that everyone who opted to use one of the Tour Guide's bikes was properly fitted. I was surprised to see the quality of the rental bikes provided: top-notch carbon fiber road bikes, including a clutch of bright-green Bianchi's. There were also a few sturdy eBikes with gravel worthy tires. Little did I know that the absence of my Garmin—which was preloaded with all the routes, but MIA in my luggage—would work against me.

Photos from the tour

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/UdFcLsGh2sqeXP9h9>

Road Shock (and Awe)

As we gradually wound our way out of town from our ocean front hotel in Agios Nikolaos, with a new cruise ship berthed out front each day, we soon hit a respectable climb that went straight up a street lined with upscale shops. I was near the front with what would turn out to be some of the strongest riders on the Tour and felt good about that. As I was overtaken by the real climbers near the top, my good buddy Kenneth—a fellow BTCNJ gravel rider—called out, "Hey Lou! What are you doing?" Unlike me,

he had his Garmin mounted on his bike and knew exactly what lay ahead of us. He also knew quite well what my performance limits were on the bike.

A while later, after we were out on the open road and riding our way along the scenic coast, we started another climb. Once again, I poured on the power to hang with the same group as before. It soon dawned on me that we were climbing up a mountain, and my lungs would surely explode if I tried to maintain the group's pace. I downshifted and slowly fell back from the pack. This was my first and most important lesson learned on the Tour: pace yourself on each and every climb, because they're always longer than you think. Moreover, every day's ride in Crete involves multiple climbs and descents. Even so, the days naturally fell into two distinct buckets: those consisting of only kind grades, and those that had a heavy dose of punishing grades mixed in. Thankfully we had more days of the former type, which helped to keep us motivated when forced to cope with one of the latter.

At the halfway point of our out-and-back ride, we all boarded a ferry boat heading towards our first cultural exploration: the island of Spinalonga. Upon disembarking, we received a guided tour around the island, with the highlights of its rich history as a prized naval asset to whatever power ruled the region at the time, and to its later infamy as a leper colony from 1904 until 1957, when an antibiotic cure for leprosy was discovered.

This private tour led to my second lesson learned about this trip: it offered so much more than just cycling. Bruce had described it as a fully

Crash Course in Cretian Culture, Cuisine and Climbs

by Lou Schleifer

immersive experience in Greek culture in his Tour write-up. And our guide, Steven Frost, the owner and manager of Greek Cycle Holidays, a Brit who spoke fluent Greek, worked on bikes as needed, rode them when time permitted, drove the van with our luggage and was a Michelin-rated Chef earlier in his career, was delivering on Bruce's promise, and then some. Steven's friendly and tireless sidekick, Tassos, was always there to help us out on the road, even if that occasionally meant using his race-winning cycling skills to go back down a mountain that he'd just climbed with us in order to go collect some wayward riders and bring them back into the fold.

Learning to Love the Local Cuisine

All but one night's dinners were included in the cost of the Tour, and they always followed the same crowd-pleasing format: once all 20 of us were seated together we would first each have our pick from amongst the house red or white wines, beer, and sparkling or tap water. Then the fun began. Steven would pepper us with a kaleidoscope of appetizers designed to expose us to the prominent dishes of the island. It reminded me of dining at a Tapas bar. It became quite the challenge to still have a hearty appetite once the main course finally arrived. But this wasn't such a bad problem to have. And once we finished dessert, we always participated in a meal-ending toast with a shot of throat-warming Raki, with an exclamation of, "Yamas!", which means, "to our health!"

Absorbing the Local History and Culture

Beyond Spinalonga, we also had a fascinating Tour of the ancient Minoan Palace of Knossos. This featured a guided Tour of the many buildings and structures on this expansive site, along with a discussion of the lifestyle and religious nature of the royalty who lived there.

We also saw a sampling of artworks and some artifacts, as well as discussion of some mythical topics, including the labyrinth and the Minotaur. At the end, we took turns taking photographs as we stood on the oldest known road in all of Europe, which goes back to 2,000 BC.

But my favorite cultural experience was the guided tour of the Arkadi Monastery. This happened on our last riding day after we had all climbed from our stylishly modern, sea-level hotel in Rethymno to the fertile plain upon which the Monastery was built in the 11th century, at the respectable altitude—especially when reached by bicycle! —of 1700 feet. Our guide covered a lot of ground about the life and purpose of those at a Monastery, whether Monks or Nuns. She also covered the unwavering struggle of the Cretan people to maintain their Orthodox Christian faith, even when the country was overrun by an invading force. This includes that fateful day in 1866 when the Monastery was surrounded by 50,000 Ottoman soldiers who demanded a complete surrender of all those inside the Monastery's walls. In violent defiance of this order, some rebels holed up inside detonated the gunpowder store, killing not only themselves, but also 1,500 Ottoman soldiers.

Greek Cycle Holidays - Custom Tours, By Design

One could be forgiven for wondering how it's possible that a Michelin-starred Chef could end up in the bicycle-touring business. But then one might also wonder how it's possible to become an Executive Chef at the Hilton without ever attending Culinary School. Suffice it to say that when Steven sees a new challenge

Crash Course in Cretian Culture, Cuisine and Climbs

by Lou Schleifer

that motivates him, he dives right in.

Back in 2019 when a woman inquired about renting his Villa on the island of Evia while she participated in a bicycle tour of the Peloponnese with some friends, he decided to put his own knowledge of Greece—his home for the previous 20 years—to the test. He offered to design a custom cycling Tour for her group. She agreed. Time would have been tight for his first-ever bike trip planning purposes, if not for an unusual blessing in disguise: the arrival of the pandemic. This bought Steven 2 years to thoroughly research and design the Tour. The final result thoroughly delighted his clients. In fact, they've inspired and booked additional Tours with him ever since.

So, if you've ever wondered about visiting Greece, exploring its history and tasting its finest cuisine, then look no further. Steven, with help from Tassos, can easily design and run the ultimate cycling Tour to meet the interests of you and your cycling buddies.

But if you're like most of us and Greece is, well, "Greek to you" too, then take the much easier, pre-packaged solution: simply look to Bruce Rayvid to custom-tailor the perfect Grecian cycle-touring experience with Steven's input. Bruce will then post the result as a Tour offering up on the PeopleCycling.org website.

Either way, I promise that you'll have a wonderful experience. Yamas!



BTCNJ Tour Schedule

Ride Name	2026 Dates	Tour Leader	Email	Cost*	Status
New Paltz Gravel	May 21-25	Lou Schleifer	Lou185bw@gmail.com	\$445	Open
20th Annual memorial Day W/E Tour	May 22-25	Linda Krauss	lkrauss@att.net	\$565	Opening for a single woman
Wonders of Eastern Pennsylvania (Philadelphia Tour)	June 5-7	Tom Wieser	tom.wieser@outlook.com	\$360	Open
Adirondack Cycling and Camping Tour	July 31-Aug 3	Lynne Avery Gary Tracy	leavery132@gmail.com	TBD	save-the date
Chamber Music, Charlemont, MA	July 30-Aug 2	Jane Porges Jerry Szubin	thejerry88@gmail.com	\$200	Opens for Email Sign-up at 8PM March 4
Pioneer Valley Tour Hadley, MA	Aug 21-23	Joan Brickman Don Schlenger	joanbbiking@gmail.com don.schlenger@gmail.com	\$330	Opens for Email Sign-up at 6PM on March 10
Amagansett, NY	Sep 18-20	Robert DeMair	robertdemair@gmail.com	\$295	Opens for Email Sign-up at 8PM 4/6 - 4/8
XNHAT+ Bikkepacking New Hampshire	Oct 5-9	Avrin Slatkin Jerry Szubin	aslatkin@hotmail.com thejerry88@gmail.com	\$550	Open, Deposit of \$50 due by March 30
Cape Cod - Boston (Point to Point)	Oct 3-11	Rich Brookler Debbie Ungerleider	rbrookler@yahoo.com dlynunger@yahoo.com	\$1,300	Open for one single male

* All costs are PPDO

PPDO = Per Person Double Occupancy

MasterLink 18

Chamber Music, Riding, Camping, Eats! 3rd year!

Charlemont, MA

July 30-August 2, 2026

*Alternate date: August 6-9, 2026

Tour Leaders: Jane Porges, Jerry Szubin

The Marlboro Music Festival, founded in 1951 has transformed the world of chamber music and played a vital role in developing generations of new musical leaders. This year Marlboro celebrates 75 years.

<https://www.marlbormusic.org/> Campers will have the option to attend up to three concerts, Friday, Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon. The drive from the campground to the festival is ~40 minutes.

Accommodations will be tent camping for 3 nights, at Foolhardy Hill, campground in Charlemont Mass. Foolhardy sports a full outdoor kitchen and other amenities. <https://www.foolhardyhill.com/>

As in the past, first night's dinner will be takeout to the campsite. Friday, Saturday and Sunday breakfasts will also be planned at campsite.

Group rides will be offered Thursday afternoon, Friday, Saturday and possibly Sunday morning. Multiple routes suitable for C* and B riders will be made available, including an optional day ride for spectacular views at the top of Mount Greylock, Mass' highest peak at 3,491 ft.

\$200 tour fee includes camping for three nights, takeout dinner Thursday night, and breakfasts.

*This tour is contingent on securing campground reservations. Foolhardy Hill takes reservations starting May 1, so to maximize the opportunity to run the tour we are offering a primary and back up date.



Chamber Music, Riding, Camping, Eats! 3rd year!

Music festival tickets will be organized when we have confirmation of campground, after May 1 when we will be able to confirm the tour date. We will offer the option to purchase Marlboro tickets as a group and in past years have received substantial group discounts.

Limit 8 riders, thereafter a waiting list. To register, email Jerry Szubin atthejerry88@gmail.com. If the tour sells out, tour slots will be filled by a lottery. Send \$200 tour fee.

Payment options: Zelle Jerry

atthejerry88@gmail.com, or Snail mail payment to:
Jerry Szubin · 18 Black Rock Terrace, Ringwood, NJ
07456.

NOTE: We will notify you of the final date, change in campground or cancellation if necessary, as soon as we become aware.



BTCNJ Executive Committee Monthly Meeting

Date: February 2, 2026

The meeting was held via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by President Olivia Sharp at 7:00 PM

Present:

Olivia Sharp, President

David Goldstein, Past President

Avrin Slatkin, Vice President

Joyce Haddad, Secretary

Lou Schleifer, Tours

Sharon Hurwich, Publicity

Marc Soloff, Special Events

Keith Schlanger, Rides Captain

Chuck White, Rally Chair

Regina Bueno, Membership Chair

Robert DeMair, MasterLink Editor

David Pawlyk, WebMaster

Absent:

Anastasia Conlon, Advocacy & Safety

Len Ruvolo, Treasurer

Year-In- Review

Olivia began the meeting discussing preparations for the upcoming Year-In-Review and Anniversary Party. Olivia and Avrin previewed the completed YIR and raved about how well it turned out and that it was completed well in advance. Cedric did an amazing job managing the overall content. The group discussed logistics for the presentation, including highlighting winning photos and coordinating with Chuck Solomon for his selections. They addressed serving refreshments at the event, with Joyce and Avrin taking charge of those details. Olivia shared her efforts to increase engagement on social media platforms, particularly Instagram.

Anniversary Party Planning

The upcoming Anniversary Party in 2027 was the next topic. The group was considering venue options and budget implications for covering the band's cost. The Indian Trail Club has 2 available dates for next year.

The Board discussed future plans for the club's anniversary celebration, including potential alternatives to the traditional format. The conversation focused on exploring new ideas while remaining mindful of overall costs and budget considerations. Additional information will be gathered and reviewed before any decisions are made.

Ramapo Rally Planning and Strategy

Chuck opened the discussion on the Ramapo Rally and confirmed that this year's event will be held on August 30. Early registration for club members will open on March 1, followed by public registration on March 15. The group discussed the ongoing need for volunteer support. Chuck highlighted challenges with volunteer sign-ups and registration, particularly the difficulty in attracting younger club members to assist with more physically demanding tasks such as setup and post-event breakdown.

The Board discussed the importance of securing volunteer commitments earlier in the planning process to ensure adequate coverage across all roles. The potential use of Meta advertising, along with existing email lists for mass communication, was discussed as a way to help drive pre-event registration and volunteer engagement.

Financial Report

The Treasurer was unavailable during this meeting. An updated financial report will be available in the March minutes, providing a complete overview of current finances.

Rides Captain's Report and Club Jersey Updates

Keith reported that the weather was not our friend, with 13 fewer rides on the road compared to last year. Total rides on the road were 21. Eleven virtual rides compared to fifteen the year before. Regarding the ride leader Jerseys, both designs, "The Wave" and "Blue Smoke," have been submitted to Pactimo for production. The Wave is in the proof stage and requires some corrections. Regarding Blue Smoke, they are waiting for Pactimo to send back their mock-up so they can proceed with proofs. Emails were sent out last week to Ride Leaders to make their choices. Once they get the 3D rendering for Blue Smoke, the Club Store can open and there will be a link on the website, Facebook, and Instagram. Lead time is currently 28 days. If the designs are finalized for production by the 9th, and all the Ride Leaders' orders are submitted by then, one can expect the Jerseys somewhere around mid-April.

MasterLink

The Volunteer of the Month for March has been selected and will be disclosed in the March MasterLink. Lou is planning to finish an article about Crete for the MasterLink. The group decided to include information about the 9/11 ride challenge in the Masterlink. David G. brought up the idea that since March is women's history month, he will submit an article on that topic. Bob expressed concerns about last minute editing of the MasterLink and the group agreed to send articles in a timelier fashion. The group also agreed to change the terminology for their email publication from "newsletter" to "magazine" or "e-magazine" to better reflect the quality of the content produced by Bob.

March Club Meeting

The group discussed logistics for the upcoming event featuring Dylan Mead from Ride with GPS, which will be hosted both in-person at the Ridgewood Library on March 12, and virtually via Google Meet. Avrin confirmed that while the Ride with GPS link will be controlled by the host, there will be a separate process for in-person attendees to submit questions via text or paper, which Avrin will enter into the chat. They also discussed inviting Bruce White, from the 9/11 Challenge to speak at the March 12th meeting once the RidewithGPS presenter has finished.

Membership Survey and Marketing Plans

The meeting focused on two main topics: a new member survey and postcard marketing initiatives. Dave P. will set up a survey engine to collect information from all members about their membership experience and communication preferences, targeting both new and existing members. The team discussed plans for postcards to promote club membership, with Regina aiming to distribute them by the end of February. Chuck and Joyce are separately working on Ramapo Rally cards that will be updated with the new dates shortly. They discussed coordinating the delivery of these cards to all the bike stores. The board discussed updating club promotional materials, with Chuck and Sharon coordinating to replace outdated photos in Canva. Regina reported on a recent press release for membership promotion and shared a request for a gift membership, which led to a discussion about potentially creating an easier process for handling gift memberships in the future. The board also agreed to implement a member referral program and agreed to explore partnerships with bike shops by offering free 4 or 6 month trial memberships to new bike buyers.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 PM by Olivia Sharp

Respectfully Submitted,

Joyce Haddad, Secretary