November 2026

BICYCLE TOURING CLUB of NORTH JERSEY

btc nj

MasterLink

The Magazine of the Bicycle Touring Club of North Jersey



Year In Review
Submit your photos now

Notes from Cape Cod
One Trip. Many Perspectives

Where the Island Ends
A Whale of a Time in Amagansett

Kit Happens
Two Categories. Two Winning Designs. One Great Club

Good Food. Great Company
Come for the Pot Luck Stay for the Meeting! (and meet your new board)

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Treasurer: Len Ruvolo
Rides Captain: Keith Schlanger
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MasterLink November 2026

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CLIP NOTES

By Olivia Sharp, President BTCNJ

November has a way of turning our thoughts toward gratitude. It's a time when we think about the people who matter most to us and the moments, big and small, that make life richer.

As cyclists, we're often focused on what's ahead. We're checking the calendar, planning the next ride, watching the weather, and thinking about the roads we still want to explore. There's always another route to try, another hill to climb, or another ride to look forward to. And, before we know it, another season has passed.

But looking back gives us a chance to appreciate what we might have overlooked along the way. Maybe we're grateful for a ride that challenged us, a new route that surprised us, or a beautiful morning when the roads were quiet and everything seemed to fall into place. Maybe we're proud of how far we've come, even if we didn't reach every goal we set. Or maybe we're simply thankful that we had the time, health, and opportunity to get out on the bike and do something we love.

Of course, some of our favorite memories have nothing to do with the ride itself. They're the conversations along the way, the unexpected laughs, or the familiar faces that make us smile when we arrive at the start. Sometimes it's the route or the challenge we remember; other times, it's simply how a ride made us feel.



Not every ride was memorable, and not every day went as planned. But a season doesn't have to be perfect to leave us with plenty to appreciate. When we step back and look at it as a whole, even the ordinary rides and familiar routines become part of something we're glad to have experienced.

As the days grow shorter, the clocks change, and the landscape takes on its gray, wintry look, it's easy to feel a little melancholy about the end of the riding season. The bikes may spend more time indoors, and those long, sunny days on the road can suddenly seem a long way off.

But this is a good time to look back and remember what the season gave us. Think about the roads we explored, the challenges we met, the beautiful days we spent outside, and the moments that made us smile. Those experiences don't disappear when the weather changes. They're ours to keep, and perhaps they're something to be especially grateful for as we head into winter.

Whatever the winter brings, we can hold on to the memories of a season well spent and be grateful for the opportunity to do it all again next year.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours!

CLUB EVENT CALENDAR



November Annual Membership Meeting and Pot Luck

Thursday November 12, 2027, 7:30 PM

Paramus Public Library

116 E. Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652.

Join your fellow club members for a festive evening as we celebrate our outgoing, incoming, and continuing Board Members and kick off the holiday season together!

It's a great opportunity to relax, catch up with friends, meet fellow cyclists, and celebrate another year with our club. Please bring a dish to share—whether homemade or store-bought—and come ready to enjoy good food, good company, and some holiday cheer.

We hope to see you there!

A Few Rules:

- No open flames.
- Food should be ready to serve.
- Bring enough for 4 or 5 people...not just for yourself.
- No adult beverages.

Bring a serving utensil...not sterling silver. Make a small name card with the name of your dish, and any allergen info (dairy, nuts, gluten...).

We will provide paper goods and beverages.

Food Drive: Help us give back this holiday season! Once again, we'll be holding a Food Drive at the Club meeting to support local families in need. Food insecurity continues to be a significant issue in New Jersey, and every donation can make a difference.

- Supermarket gift cards
- Canned meat including tuna and chicken
- Canned soup, Vegetables, Beans and Fruit
- Macaroni & cheese
- Peanut butter & jelly
- Pasta & tomato sauce
- Cereal & oatmeal
- Cleaning supplies

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Food Drive in the past, and to Bill Telgheder for once again spearheading this important effort. We hope you'll consider bringing an item or two

EXECUTIVE BOARD OPENINGS

YOUR CLUB NEEDS YOU! PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING OUR BOARD.

Curious about what happens behind the scenes at BTCNJ? Come be a part of it! Serving on the BTCNJ Executive Committee (AKA Board) is a great way to learn more about how our amazing club works and, more importantly, to have a say in where we go from here. Help us keep BTCNJ rolling and make the club even better and more valuable for you and your fellow riders.

Interested? Please reach out to **Olivia Sharp** or **Len Ruvolo**, or talk to any current Board member about a position you might be interested in. Nominations can also be made in person at the November Membership Meetings.

The slate for the 2027 Board will be presented at the November Membership Meeting.

A few things to know:

- All BTCNJ members are eligible to run for any Board position, even if the current person in that position has indicated that they would like to continue.
- If more than one member runs for the same position, there will be a vote.
- Terms for new Board members begin December 1, 2026.
- Board members are generally expected to attend monthly Board meetings, which are held on a weekday evening beginning at 7:00 PM. Most meetings are currently held via Zoom.

Open Positions

SECRETARY (elected to a 2-year term and eligible to run for an additional 2-year term). The keeper of the minutes, the master of the details, and the person who helps make sure the Board knows what was said, what was decided, and what needs to happen next. Takes meeting minutes, maintains official records, and handles Board correspondence and other administrative duties. If you're the person who remembers what everyone else forgot, keeps things moving, and actually knows where the important stuff is, we need you!

Please contact outgoing Secretary Joyce Haddad for more information about this position.



YEAR IN REVIEW

THE MILES. THE MOMENTS. THE MEMORIES

HELP TELL OUR STORY!

Upload your favorite ride photos and videos for our Year in Review

HOW TO SHARE YOUR PHOTOS

1. Click the link to the right.
2. Scroll to your ride or event, click upload.
3. Type in your name.
4. Click the green UPLOAD button.
5. Pick your favorite photos or videos from your phone or computer and follow the prompts.



PHOTO GUIDELINES

- **Be selective:** Submit your best photos and avoid duplicates or similar shots. Please limit photos of yourself, significant other, your regular riding group, and bike.
- **Check quality:** Avoid photos that are blurry or too dark. Photos may be cropped or color-corrected as needed.
- **Choose the right category:** Review all categories before uploading. Videos are welcome in the appropriate categories.

BTCNJ Photo Contest

Photos submitted for the Year in Review are automatically eligible for the BTCNJ Photo Contest! Prizes are awarded in each category. Winners will be announced after the YIR Membership Meeting, where some winning photos will be displayed.

Rules: Photos must be taken during the year at a BTCNJ ride, tour, or event. The submitting member will be considered the photographer.

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

THANK YOU

FOR BEING PART OF AN AMAZING YEAR ON TWO WHEELS!

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

by Keith Schlanger

ATTENTION, RIDE LEADERS!

Review Your Points & Explore This Year's Rewards

Check Your Ride History

Please take a moment to review your ride history and ensure all posted rides have been marked as "Completed" with points assigned. You can view your current points under the My Account section of the BTCNJ website.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Keith Schlanger as soon as possible.

2026 RIDE LEADER REWARDS

You have worked hard to earn points throughout the year now its time to choose your rewards. Rewards are based on your total points at the end of the year.

15–29 Points
Choose ONE of the following:

1. Ride Leader Jersey
2. Ramapo Rally (Single Entry)
3. BTCNJ 1-Year Membership Renewal (Single Member)
4. BTCNJ 6-Month Membership Renewal (Family)

30–44 Points
Choose TWO of the following six options:

1. Ride Leader Jersey
2. Ramapo Rally (Single Entry)
3. BTCNJ 1-Year Membership Renewal (Single Member)
4. BTCNJ 1-Year Membership Renewal (Single Member)
5. BTCNJ 6-Month Membership Renewal (Family)
6. BTCNJ 6-Month Membership Renewal (Family)

45 or More Points
Choose ONE of the following reward combinations:

1. Full Kit: Ride Leader Jersey and matching shorts/bibs
2. Ride Leader Jersey, BTCNJ 1-Year Membership Renewal (Single Member), and Ramapo Rally (Single Entry)
3. Ride Leader Jersey and BTCNJ 1-Year Membership Renewal (Family)

4. BTCNJ 2-Year Membership Renewal (Single Member) and Ramapo Rally (Single Entry)
5. BTCNJ 1-Year Membership Renewal (Family) and Ramapo Rally (Single Entry)

Note: The BTCNJ 2-Year Membership Renewal can only be selected once every two years.

2026 RIDE LEADER KIT DESIGN CONTEST

For the third consecutive year, we are offering Ride Leaders two distinct kit designs to choose from, reflecting the different aesthetic preferences within our club.

Two Design Categories

CLASSIC
Clean, coordinated, and traditional cycling-inspired designs.

BOLD
More graphic, creative, and eye-catching designs.

Both categories offer different design approaches, and neither category is considered better than the other.

CHECK OUT THIS YEAR'S DESIGNS!

The submissions for this year's Ride Leader Kit Design Contest appear on the following pages. Eligible Ride Leaders will also receive all entries by email.

Take a look, choose your favorites, and make your vote count!

Voting Process

Ride Leaders who have earnedat least 10 points by November 1, 2026, will receive an email with instructions on how to vote for the winning 2026 Ride Leader Kit Design.

Eligible leaders will rank their Top 3 designs in order of preference:

- 1st Place: 5 points
- 2nd Place: 3 points
- 3rd Place: 1 point

The design receiving the most points will be declared the winner in each category.

Tie-breaker: If the two highest-scoring designs are separated by a margin of no more than 10%, a runoff vote will determine the winner.

BOLD DESIGNS

Ride Leader Jersey Contest • Jersey and matching bib/shorts





Design BA



Design BB



Design BC



Design BD



Design BE



Design BF



Design BG

CLASSIC DESIGNS

Ride Leader Jersey Contest • Jersey and matching bib/shorts



Design CA



Design CB



Design CC



Design CD



Design CE



Design CF



Design CG

5 QUESTIONS WITH A RIDE LEADER

Marianne Ansari





Earliest memory on a bike.

In my early teens, my first bike was a Schwinn. The bike was too big for me, so much that I had to remain standing to pedal. I rode that bike to all of my babysitting jobs; no helmet and barefoot in the summer.

What was your first bike?

My first serious Adult bike was a Cannondale synapse which I purchased in 2013.

What was you most memorable ride?

A 40 mile ride in Yellowstone National Park with my daughter.

What is my favorite route?

So many favorite routes! Any part of the Empire State Trail NY.

What is your favorite coffee/snack shop and what do you like to order?

It's a tie between Sook Pastry in Ridgewood NJ and Dottie Audrey's Bakery Kitchen in Tuxedo Park NY. Always an almond croissant at Sook and whatever grabs me at Dottie Audrey's - everything is fresh and delicious!

BTCNJ Tour Schedule 2027!!

Ready for your next adventure?

Planning for next year is already underway, with four exciting tours already on the schedule! But there's always room for more adventures, new destinations, and fresh ideas. Now is a great time to start dreaming about where you'd like to ride, explore, and connect with fellow BTCNJ members in the year ahead.

Have a destination in mind? Why not turn it into a BTCNJ tour! Whether it's a weekend getaway, a cycling adventure in a new region, or a favorite destination you'd love to share with fellow members, your idea could be the start of something special. You don't need to have every detail worked out to get started. Leading a tour is a wonderful way to share your love of cycling, explore new places, and create memorable experiences with fellow club members.

Take a look at the tours currently on the schedule, and if you're inspired to lead an adventure of your own, visit the BTCNJ Tours Page and reach out to the BTCNJ Tour Chair for more information. We'd love to see what you come up with — because the next great BTCNJ adventure could be yours!

Ride Name	2027 Dates	Tour Leader(s)	Highlights	Cost*	Status
Gravel, Gardens, and Gulf Stream	May 29-June 4	Lou Schleifer	Ride 4 different Rail Trails in PA, spend our rest day strolling through Longwood Gardens, and then ride along the Jersey Shore	TBD	
The Berkshires, MA Bike Tour	Jun 6-9	Tom Wieser / Chuck Goodgal		$396	Opens Dec 7 at 8pm
New Paltz Gravel	June 25 - 27	Lou Schleifer	Gravel riding on the Wall kill Valley rail trail, the O&W RT and Minnewaska	TBD	
Amagansett, NY	Sep 18-20	Robert DeMair	Ocean front hotel. Happy hour and a group dinner. Rolling roads sporting ocean views. Hiking and pickleball.	TBD	Opens May 3 at 8pm

Amagansett Memories

The Amagansett weekend took place on September 18-20 with 68 people attending. Along with many of the regulars, we welcomed new members. We had many members add an extra day before and after the weekend for some extra riding and beach time due to very attractive resort rates. Beachgoers were treated to some whale watching not far offshore. There were rides posted each day. Friday and Saturday were beautiful riding days alongside the light wind conditions typical of the shore. Dinner was catered by Citarella and served outside at the resort. Many hands make for light work and we had plenty of help heating the food in various rooms then moving it outside to be served.











TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS



Sid Brodsky	West Orange	NJ
Reese Campbell	Ridgewood	NJ
Larry Leaf	Montclair	NJ
Mark Mangogna	Montclair	NJ
Scott Nelson	Annandale	NJ
Jake Rabinowitz	River Edge	NJ
Patrick Siu	Millburn	NJ
Steve Vaccaro	New York	NY
Pamela Weber-Leaf	Montclair	NJ
Laura Wilson	River Vale	NJ
Urszula Wisniowski	Rutherford	NJ



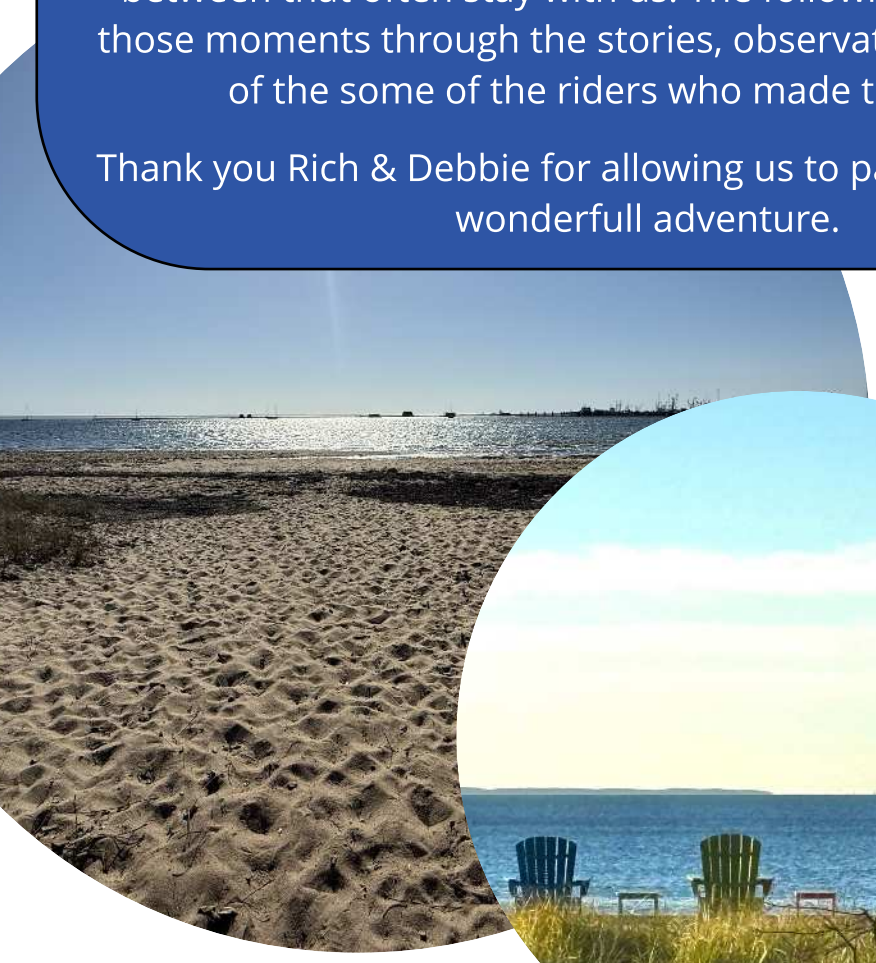


The Cape Cod Files

Thirty-seven BTCNJ members. Seven days exploring Cape Cod by bike. Coastal roads, salty breezes, memorable meals, and plenty of camaraderie along the way.

Every trip has its miles and milestones, but it's the moments in between that often stay with us. The following pages capture those moments through the stories, observations, and musings of the some of the riders who made the journey.

Thank you Rich & Debbie for allowing us to participate in such a wonderfull adventure.











The Accidental Trendsetter

The dedication I had to the recent Cape Cod trip began with my journey in cars, buses and parking lots so that I can manage leaving a few days early to get to a family wedding. But that wasn't my favorite part. My favorite part was the rest day! The rest day began with 25 miles of hilly, windy riding and a free day in Provincetown, a very artsy town celebrating the love of people for being themselves! The night ended with a group dinner and several people purchasing the same sweatshirt I purchased. I started a trend! Had a great time!

~Gail Bodin

The Long Way ... to Ice Cream

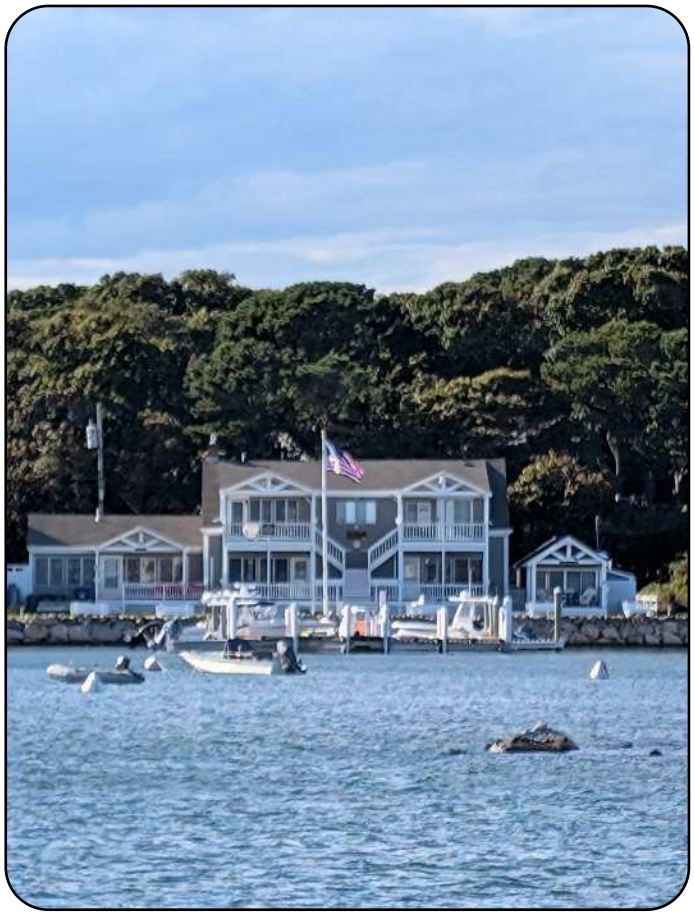
The highlight for me was Martha's Vineyard - spending a sunny and blue-sky day riding past multiple lighthouses, colorful gingerbread decorated houses, majestic homes looking over the water - then off-roading thru a wildlife refuge on a muddy, sandy lane - and topping it off with ice cream with biking friends.

~Patty Rindge





A Day of Island Discoveries



What a great day we had on Martha's Vineyard! First and foremost, the weather cooperated, with sunshine and temperatures in the low 60s. Of course, there were a few exposed stretches where we occasionally got walloped by hefty crosswinds!

But what really made the day special was the sheer variety of things we saw along the way. Beautiful cedar-shingled homes dotted the landscape, some perched high on hills overlooking the water, others nestled practically at sea level along the shore. We passed a lighthouse atop the bluffs, with stunning ocean views, rode through charming little towns, and explored the upscale streets of Edgartown, where we stopped to indulge in ice cream.

There were historic planes on display near the airport, countless beaches, and ocean views from every imaginable angle. I found myself wishing I had a pair of those Meta glasses that can capture photos and videos on command! I wanted to preserve the magic of seeing civilization and the rugged beauty of the sea existing in such close proximity.

As we boarded the ferry back to Falmouth, I managed to capture one last shot from the boat. I can only hope that single image holds together all the wonderful memories of a day filled with scenery, exploration, and the simple pleasure of discovering an island by bike.

~Lou Schleifer

A Week of Berry Good Memories



We enjoyed chilly, refreshing mornings and warm afternoons, taking in so much more of the scenery than we ever could have by car. I loved cruising around Martha's Vineyard with a small group of friends. I had never seen a cranberry bog before this trip, but I saw one after another as we cycled through Massachusetts!

Nearly 300 miles, beautiful scenery, new discoveries, and wonderful friends made this such a memorable adventure.

~Laura Haftek



A Ferry Ride . A Family Surprise.

We were booked on the 10am ferry from Provincetown to Boston Harbor, weather permitting; fortunately it was a nice morning. We rolled a short distance from our hotel to the ferry dock and waited to board, as we boarded, the crew instructed us to place our bikes in the bike rack at the front of the boat. There wasn't a lot of space, but we managed to get most of them stowed. To our surprise, as soon as the ferry left the dock, two crew members began rearranging and securing all our bikes. Some of us watched with concern as our bikes were moved about, while others took the opportunity to relax with a coffee or catch a nap.



Halfway across, I received a message from my sister, who lives in Richmond, Virginia, asking me what pier we'd be pulling into. She heard I was traveling thru Boston that day and coincidentally had arrived in town the evening before to visit her daughter and her seven-month-old granddaughter for the weekend.

It was such a lovely surprise to see her, even if only briefly, as it had been several months since we'd last been together. Thank you, BTCNJ, for making our unexpected reunion possible!

~Bill Ardiff

Whale, That Was Amazing



Whale watching was a nice break from the saddle. We were 4 days into the Cape Cod tour arriving into Provincetown from a 52 mile ride. Tom, Jim, Ulla, Peggie and myself decided to take our rest day aboard The Dolphin VIII.

Boy, what a day we had! There was plenty of action in the water! We saw whales and their calves breaching, flipper slapping, trumpeting and making flank dives! Our tour was explained by a trained naturalist who reported we saw about 25-35 Humpbacks, 50 gray seals, and 60-80 Dolphins in mixed pods.

~Giselle Heitzner



Whales and Cycling Tales



The BTCNJ Cape Cod trip was a fabulous opportunity to enjoy a fall bike tour across Massachusetts, with river trails, rail paths, and tree-lined routes on warm sunny days. On Martha's Vineyard, an unexpected Garmin-guided trek through sand, gravel, and deep-pitted trails tested our fortitude, but camaraderie and humor kept us moving forward. In Provincetown, a whale-watching tour was fabulous, with 25–30 adult whales and their calves breaching, rolling, and flapping their fins as if waving hello. These experiences added to the enjoyment of the tour beyond riding and scenery, creating great memories and bonding the group. Thank you, Debbie and Rich, for a wonderful and safe tour!

~Peggy Frizzell

One Last Evening Together

As much as I look forward to all the cycling to places I've never been, my favorite part has nothing to do with riding. I've been on several Rich and Debbie tours, and the last night is a pizza night, usually in the hotel lobby. Many of us know each other from being on club rides within our usual groups.

Tours give us the opportunity to know each other through breakfasts, volunteering to help with SAG or loading the UHaul, Happy Hours, spending rest days hanging out at the shuffleboard court, getting Fairy Hair, and just being together. What starts on Day 0 as a group of people riding bikes becomes a community of friends who have sweated and sweared up hills, had picnic lunches by the beach, and ridden in Friday afternoon traffic in Boston.

The last evening, we're back at our cars, feeling accomplished by what we've done and ready to spend one last evening together. This is the evening Debbie and Rich may share their tour planning secrets (or not). There's no pressure to get up and ride the next day on unknown roads. No more rides, no more sandwich stations. Just a lot of good memories, good local pizza and a bunch of new friends we may not have encountered on a typical BTCNJ ride.

~Allison Cobb







Life...On Tour























Life...On Tour

















Life...On Tour





















BTCNJ Executive Board Meeting Minutes

Date: October 12, 2026

The meeting held virtually on Zoom, was called to order by Olivia Sharp at 7:00pm

Present:

Olivia Sharp, President

Avrin Slatkin, Vice President

Keith Schlanger, Rides Captain

Len Ruvolo, Treasurer

Lou Schleifer, Tours

Robert DeMair, MasterLink Editor

Anastasia Conlon, Advocacy & Safety

David Pawlyk, Webmaster

Chuck White, Rally Chair

Joyce Haddad, Secretary

Regina Bueno, Membership Chair

Absent:

Marc Soloff, Special Events

Sharon Hurwich, Publicity

Cookie Ride Planning

The meeting began with a discussion about the upcoming cookie ride scheduled later in the week with Olivia confirming she would pick up the cookies. There was a concern that the weather may be too cold which may impact the number of riders participating if it's too cold that day. Keith Schlanger mentioned that he was still trying to get more cookie rides posted in the A and C level rides.

Executive Board Positions

The next topic of discussion was the upcoming executive board position openings starting January 1, 2027.

Rally Chair Position: Chuck White discussed potential Rally chairs and co-chairs for next year's Rally. He plans on following up with those interested to introduce the position in its entirety and on revising the Rally Playbook to support the new chairperson and provide clear guidance and support.

Chuck agreed to send a survey to rally participants and share photos from this past year's event, including collecting and organizing rally participant data from previous registrations.

Tours Position: Louis Schlieffer reported on his conversation with Paul Buch, who will take over for Louis as Tours Coordinator, about website responsibilities, where he provided feedback and offered assistance. He also stated that he will create detailed instructions with screenshots for posting tours.

Membership Position: Regina Bueno confirmed that Peggy Frizzell will serve as the new membership chair starting in January.

Treasurer Position: Len Ruvolo reported that Al Rocco will take over as Treasurer by mid 2027, with Len, our current Treasurer, serving as co-treasurer together with Al until then.

Rides Captain Position: Keith Schlanger reported that he will be looking for a member to learn the Rides Captain role until such time one is ready to take over when Keith's term ends.

Secretary Position: Joyce Haddad is in discussion with some candidates. The position is still open.

Publicity Position: This position to replace Sharon Hurwich is still open.

Jersey Design Contest Planning

Keith Schlanger updated the group about the jersey design contest indicating that there are three submitted entries, with designs being reviewed against the criteria.

Olivia and Keith agreed to extend the deadline if needed and will reorganize the content in the newsletter, moving the jersey design to the top of the upcoming newsletter. The group discussed concerns about low submission numbers and potential confusion about the contest's purpose, with Keith emphasizing the importance of clear communication about the contest being open to all members, not just ride leaders and that one doesn't need to be an artist to submit a design.

.

Membership Dues Increase

The group discussed increasing membership dues by $5 starting January 1st. This would go into effect when memberships renew after January 1, 2027. There was concern about the potential impact of a significant increase on member retention, particularly among less active members. After discussion about the impact on the different membership tiers, they agreed to increase $5 per year for the single membership rate with family memberships remaining at twice the corresponding single membership rate. Olivia Sharp proposed tabling the vote until next month to coincide with publishing a comprehensive explanation of the club's finances in the Master Link, including details about the Club's reserve fund and insurance costs.

Following further discussion, a formal vote was held, and the motion passed, with the group noting the importance of clearly communicating the financial reasoning behind the increase, which is expected to be done in the December MasterLink.

Year In Review Photo Collection Planning

The group discussed plans for collecting photos for the Year-In Review meeting held in February They are aiming to open the process in November and close it in December, with a target date of February 11th for the YIR meeting at the Paramus Library. They agreed to reach out to Cedric to confirm the photo collection process, potentially using Cluster, while considering the technical abilities of their older membership. Howard Goldman has stepped up to produce the videos.

Anniversary Party Planning Meeting

The committee discussed plans for the upcoming Anniversary Party which will take place in March 2027. It was noted that ticket sales would likely open in January and emphasized the need to determine costs and entertainment options like a DJ or band before then.

Ride Captain's Report

Keith presented statistics showing a projected 1,600 rides through the next three months, which would fall short of the 2,000-ride goal and represent a 300-ride decrease from the previous year. He reported that there were 188 rides this September which is a 25% drop-off from last year mostly in the B category. In September 2025, there were 7.7 people per ride on average; in September 2026, there were 7 people per ride.

Treasurer's report

Len Ruvolo presented the financial results showing a year-to-date operating loss of $11,000 through the end of the third quarter, compared to a profit of $1,000 for the same period last year. The change was primarily due to decreased Rally income, lower revenue from dues and the timing of anniversary party expenses/income. Liquid Assets stood at $103,000, down from $114,000 at the same point of the prior year.

The next board meeting is scheduled for November 2, 2026.

The meeting was adjourned by Olivia Sharp at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Haddad, Secretary