



MasterLink

The Magazine of the Bicycle Touring Club of North Jersey

National Bike Month - page 9

Ramapo Rally, a little history - page 7

Ride, Picnic, Swap - page 11



President: Olivia Sharp
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
Publicity: Sharon Hurwich
Rally Chair: Chuck White
MasterLink: Bob DeMair
Webmaster: Dave Pawlyk

May 2026, Volume 49, Number 5. Circulation: approx. 1,500 via electronic download. MasterLink is published 12 times per year as the official publication of the Bicycle Touring Club of North Jersey, PO Box 853, Ridgewood, NJ 07451. Our website is www.BTCNJ.com. ©2022 by the Bicycle Touring Club of North Jersey, all rights reserved. "MasterLink", "BTCNJ", "BTCNJ.COM", "Bicycle Touring Club of North Jersey" (words and logo), and "Ramapo Rally" are trademarks of the Bicycle Touring Club of North Jersey.

Protection of the Intellectual Property of BTCNJ® We welcome your creative suggestions for promotional activities using the Club's brands, however, the Club's name, slogans, designs and logos are its intellectual property, which embody the "goodwill" of the Club as developed over the years through service to its members and the community, with thanks to the volunteer efforts of countless members. In order to preserve and protect our goodwill, it is critical that all use of the Club's intellectual property be properly regulated. Please do not reproduce or simulate the Club logo, the names "BTCNJ" or "Bicycling Touring Club of North Jersey", or any other brands such as "Ramapo Rally" and "MasterLink" on shirts, caps, jerseys, bottles, stickers, or any other merchandise without authorization of Amy Avitabile.

MasterLink Submissions: Materials for MasterLink are due the 21st of each month for publication in the following month's issue. Please send articles, photos, letters, or comments to my email at MasterLink@btcnj.com. Materials may be edited by the MasterLink staff for length and clarity. Publication of materials submitted is at the discretion of the Editor. Articles and photographs submitted to the MasterLink may be used in other BTCNJ media at the Club's discretion. Due to copyright laws, any articles, photos, cartoons, art, etc., that have appeared in other publications may not be published in MasterLink without written consent of the copyright holder. Photos in MasterLink may not be reused or republished without prior permission.

MasterLink

May 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 **Clip Notes**
- 4 **The Ramapo Rally**
- 5 **Welcome New Members**
- 6 **BTCNJ Social Activity**
- 7 **Ramapo Rally History**
- 9 **National Bike Month**
- 10 **Club Event Calendar**
- 11 **Ride, Picnic, Swap**
- 13 **Plan a Tour**
- 14 **Captains Corner**
- 15 **The New E-bike Law**
- 16 **BTCNJ Tour Schedule**
- 17 **Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

Cover Image by **Marcy Squadron (April 4 ride)**

MasterLink banner design **Bruce Armenante**

Proofreaders: **Harriet Einschlag, Debbie Ungerleider**

CLIP NOTES

By Olivia Sharp, President BTCNJ

Between the Happy Hour, upcoming rides, and everything on the calendar, it's clear the season is in full swing. The past few weeks have also been a good reminder of how quickly everything starts to come together this time of year—early morning rollouts, fuller ride groups, and familiar faces returning.

With May also being National Bike Month, it's a nice reminder that what's being celebrated—getting out, riding, and making it part of everyday life—is already part of what we do.

And it's not just the riding—it's the rhythm of it. That rhythm doesn't just show up on the bike—it carries into everything around it, too.

We're seeing that in a lot of ways right now. The Happy Hour was a great example—an amazing turnout and a really nice reminder of how much people enjoy just getting together off the bike. A big thank you to Avrin for organizing such a great event. It's not always easy to pull those together, and it showed. It's also a good reminder that the club isn't just about the rides themselves, but everything that happens around them.

At the same time, planning for the Ramapo Rally—one of the biggest days of the season—is well underway. There's a lot that goes into making that event happen, and it really takes a group effort behind the scenes to pull it off. We're always looking for volunteers, and it's a great way to get involved in a different way. And if you haven't registered yet, now is a good time—before the next price increase.

We also have the Membership Appreciation Ride coming up on May 9th (rain date May 16th), which is always a nice opportunity to come out and ride. It's one of those events that tends to bring a mix of familiar faces and newer members together, which is always nice to see—and if you're newer to the club, it's a great place to jump in.



And not too far behind that, is one of the highlights of the season—the club picnic in June.

With so much going on, it's worth checking the website regularly to stay up to date on rides, events, and any changes. Things tend to fill up quickly this time of year, and it's easy to miss something if you're not looking. If something catches your eye—whether it's a ride, an event, or a way to get involved—it's a good time to jump in and try something new.

So yes, things are picking up. And it's easy to get a little caught up in it—how far, how fast, what's next. It happens without really noticing.

But the best parts of riding aren't usually the ones you plan for. They're the rides you almost skipped, the ones that turn out better than expected, the days where everything just clicks a little more than usual.

That's the part of the season we're in right now. So as things get busier, this is just a small reminder not to rush through it. The season goes quickly—this is the part you don't want to miss.

Rally Update



RAMAPO RALLY
RAMAPORALLY.COM



6 Beautiful Routes,
12, 25, 50, 62, 100 and 125 miles

Customize Your Route With Short Cuts
4 Month BTCNJ Club Membership*
Fully Stocked Rest Stops
Breakfast and Lunch
GPS & Cue Sheets
SAG Support
*Non Members Only

Rally preparations are in full swing!

Even though spring is barely here, we are already working on multiple tasks to hold our 49th Ramapo Rally on August 30th.

Registration platforms are open. If you're going to ride the Rally this year, register now before the price goes up again in May.

Permits for Campgaw and rest stops are in place and many volunteer positions are starting to fill up.

Print media are in place including membership cards, two Rally cards, and a Rally poster. These will be distributed to bike shops, delis, bakeries, and other favorite stops. By the way, we could use several volunteers to help distribute cards over our cycling footprint.

Sponsorship efforts are starting to pay off with Vaccaro, LMNT, Athletic Brewing, and Spine and Health all returning so far. Numerous mailings have targeted healthcare, finance, Subaru, and even Curly's ice cream! And look out for more info on the 'Give me 4 feet' jerseys that might be available at the Rally!

We've been busy! Help make this Rally a success! — *Chuck White*





TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Robinson Ardila	Clifton	NJ		
Julian Boden	Jersey City	NJ		
Peter Brzezinski	West Nyack	NY		
Martin Cole	Verona	NJ		
Kelly Fanshawe	Piermont	NY		
Lina Foster	Franklin Lakes	NJ		
Jonathan Friedman	Fair Lawn	NJ	Stephen Manzano	Mendham NJ
Robert Handler	Pearl River	NY	Robert Matina	Wyckoff NJ
Santiago Iglesias	Wallington	NJ	Hailey Patel	Jersey City NJ
Oksana Kinker	Guttenberg	NJ	Jackeline Paulino	Little Ferry NJ
Steven Lacob	Passaic	NJ	Lucia Portali	Hasbrouck NJ
Ellen Lazzaro	Leonia	NJ	Gabor Posta	Hawthorne NJ
Orrin Main	Jersey City	NJ	Donna Puizina	Lafayette NJ
			Michael Sackler	Suffern NY
			Amol Srivastava	Morris Plains NJ
			Ameya Tembhekar	Harrisom NJ
			Aga Tynan	Ho-Ho-Kus NJ
			Joseph Vaccarella	Boonton NJ
			Delon Veleski	Midland park NJ
			Edward White	Hendersonville NC

Get Social With BTCNJ



by Olivia Sharp

Did you even know BTCNJ has a social side? For many members, the rides themselves are the social scene—but there's more happening off the bike, too. We're active on Facebook, Instagram, and Strava, sharing photos, stories, events, and all the moments in between. It's a great way to stay connected, see what others are up to, and get a feel for the club beyond your usual rides. Take a look, give us a follow, and when you post, don't forget to use our hashtags so we can find and share your rides. Tag your photos, show off your adventures, and help tell the story of BTCNJ—because the fun doesn't stop when the ride ends (and yes, we're definitely scrolling).

Hashtags:

#BTCNJ

#RamapoRally

#RideBTCNJ

#BTCNJLove

#CyclingNJ

#BikeLove

Links:

Facebook BTCNJ Group: <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/18Xe3EfyhQ/>

Facebook Ramapo Rally Group: <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1NEAaEajoz/>

Instagram: Instagram

Some Ramapo Rally Trivia and Anecdotes

by Chuck White

What we now know as the Ramapo Rally started back in 1978. That fact alone made me pause. In 1978, I was two years out of college, working at New York Telephone (the original Bell System) and I think I had my first road bike. A gold steel Raleigh Rampar with shifters on the downtube. Indestructable!

But in 1978, the first club "Rally/Century" consisted of two 50-mile routes starting from the Ramsey Fire Station. One route went down to Lincoln Park and the second went to South Mountain in Rockland County (High Tor, north of Congers). Back then, riders wore red windbreaker jackets with patches they collected over the years. Bell was making helmets, and riders used sew up tires!! Components were French or Italian. There was no Shimano at that time. It was an honor to have as many patches as possible. The first patches were designed for BTCNJ and later moved to LAW (League of American Wheelman) patches.

Below is an excerpt from the very first ride that was to become the Ramapo Rally, entitled

"Century, Century"

Come all ye riders to the first BTCNJ-LAW sanctioned century, half century, quarter century to be held on Sunday September 17th 1978, rain or shine

Meeting place is the Fire House-Island Ave.-Ramsey, New Jersey, opposite the high school. Registration will start at 7:00 AM and will continue through 9:00 AM. Cost-\$2.00. Patches will be awarded. SAG wagon service will be provided.



The century route will cover 100 plus miles through Bergen, Passaic, and Rockland Counties. The half century, 50 miles will cover Rockland and Bergen Counties and the quarter century, 25 miles will cover Bergen County only.

LAW requires that riders must complete in 12-6-3 hours or less, respectively to earn a patch. Maps and cue sheets will be provided to allow riders to proceed at their own pace. A New York and New Jersey road map (EXXON) will provide further details.

The rides have been laid out to maximize pleasure and minimize pain. Anyone with reasonable cycling proficiency at their level, should find no difficulty in completing their chosen ride.

This is an opportunity for all members to earn a sanctioned LAW patch and participate in a grand and traditional event. Let's have a big turnout.

Editor's note - I joined the club in 1993 and signed up for the Rally which started at Pequannock Valley Park. I recall signing up for the half century but got lost and did my first Metric century. -RFD





by Olivia Sharp

National Bike Month: One Community, Many Ways to Ride

May is National Bike Month—a chance to step back and recognize just how many different ways biking shows up in our lives, especially this time of year.

National Bike Month was established in 1956 by the League of American Bicyclists (originally founded in 1880 as the League of American Wheelmen). Back then, cyclists were pushing for better roads—long before cars took over. Today, the League continues that work year-round, focusing on safety, education, and advocacy to make riding more accessible and communities more bike-friendly. If you're curious, the League's website has a lot of information on National Bike Month and related events, along with some interesting data on biking nationally and at the state level.

Part of that effort shows up in Bike to Work Week and Bike to Work Day each May, encouraging people to swap four wheels for two—even if just once. Maybe that means riding to work, running an errand by bike, or just choosing the bike when you normally wouldn't. It doesn't have to be a big shift to count.

Cycling isn't one thing. It's the weekday ride, the weekend ride, the commute, the trip to run errands, the short spin when you only have an hour, the longer ones you plan your day around, and for some, it's even how they make a living. It's structured for some, completely casual for others, and a mix of both for most of

Our club lives mostly in that recreational space—rides, routes, and time spent together. It may not always match what gets highlighted during National Bike Month, but it's part of the same bigger picture. This is where a lot of people find their rhythm with riding—and where it becomes something they stick with.

At its core, biking is simple. It's fun. It gets you outside and moving. It's good for your health, easier on the environment, and compared to most other activities, relatively affordable. It doesn't require much beyond a bike and a little time.

If National Bike Month does anything, it's a reminder to pay attention to that—and maybe do one small thing differently. Ride somewhere new. Invite someone who's been thinking about getting back on a bike.

And if it resonates, there are also ways to support it more broadly—whether that's getting involved in local advocacy, participating in community efforts, or following the work organizations like the League are doing year-round.

However you ride, it all counts.

And maybe that's the whole point.

CLUB EVENT CALENDAR

May 9th — Member Appreciation Day - rain date May 16th



Leaders, Riders, we appreciate you. Oakland provides an excellent place to start rides at all levels. Plenty of parking and rest room facilities. Come hang out with your friends in all of the ride categories.

June 20th — BTCNJ Annual Picnic



Join us for the annual picnic and rides. Check out the article in this edition for details. Suggested items to bring by last name are recommended.

August 30th — Ramapo Rally

It takes over 100 volunteers to put on the Ramapo Rally. The rally is our biggest event of the year and an opportunity to host riders from all over. We need volunteers in all areas but we especially need members who can move supplies. There are many jobs which can be performed and allow you to ride on Sunday.

[Volunteer Here](#)

Ride, Picnic, Swap

Saturday June 20, 11:00AM - 2:00PM



Saturday, June 20, 2026

Location:

Pascack Brook County Park

[150 Emerson Road, Westwood, NJ](#)

Now that the weather is finally turning into Spring, our attention also turns to everyone's favorite Club event. The annual BTCNJ picnic will be on Saturday, June 20, from 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM, at the Pascack Brook County Park in Westwood. Our Club Picnic is a great way to socialize with your BTCNJ friends as well as get to know other members. All BTCNJ members and their families are invited. A special invitation is extended to new BTCNJ members and those who haven't previously attended.

Rides:

Rides of all levels will depart from Pascack Brook County Park in the morning before the picnic and return between 11:30 AM and 1:00 PM. All rides will be posted in advance, so just decide on the level and distances you'd like, and picnic with us upon your return—or not ride and have more time for eating and shmoozing.

Rides will leave from the parking lot near the tennis courts. There are several parking lots at Pascack Brook Park. Please park close to one another so that we have room for all. NOTE: parking is only in designated places in the park, and any overflow must find street parking outside the park. For those who may have forgotten from past years, the police are only too happy to issue parking tickets for those not in actual spots.

Volunteering:

In order to ensure our picnic's success, we need volunteers for different tasks. If anyone has a truck or large van (or two people with SUVs) and can help with getting bulky items from our storage facility – Friday afternoon prior to the picnic - it would be most appreciated. Also needed is help with set-up, clean-up, manning the food tables, and working the grill area. We thank you in advance for your assistance. To volunteer, contact us at chris.nerrie@yahoo.com.

The Food:

Our culinary experience has always been a combined effort on the part of BTCNJ and our members. BTCNJ will provide charcoal broiled beef burgers, veggie burgers, hot dogs, paper goods, as well as assorted cold beverages (alcohol is prohibited). As always, our own Meandering Mark Swanek will once again take the helm at the grill.

Additionally, we encourage you to bring your favorite dish to the buffet table for sharing. If you are comfortable, please bring one potluck dish that will feed 6-8 people. Review the categories that follow, find the letter your last name begins with and the category of food you are recommended to bring; we have switched it around this year so as to encourage rotation. Of course, if you have a favorite specialty outside of the categories below, bring it on! Vegetarian dishes are welcome. Lastly, if you have a moment, send us an email at chris.nerrie@yahoo.com as to what you intend to bring so we can fill in the gaps.

A - G: Salads, Pasta, and veggies

H - K: Main dishes, Fruits and Desserts

L - Q: Fruits and Desserts

R - Z: Snacks, Chips, and Dips

The best way to keep food fresh for the picnic while you are riding is to bring a cooler or other container with ice and leave it in your car. Please don't drop off food at the picnic site before you leave for your ride as there aren't enough coolers to keep everything fresh. Do not bring raw meat that needs to be cooked.

The Swap:

From jerseys to tire irons and beyond, do you have some excess bike related clothing and gear in good shape that other Club members might love to have? We especially would like to help our new members get bike-related gear and clothing! Harriet Einschlag will once again be holding the much-loved Gear Swap. A table for clothing and accessories will showcase these treasures. Please bring your swap gear to the designated table prior to your ride, in a bag with your name on it. The swap event will open for browsing once the rides are completed. We ask anyone who takes an item to make a reasonable nominal donation depending on the item.

Contact: Chris.Nerrie@yahoo.com

Get Inspired to Plan a Bike Tour

by Lou Schleifer

In a few short weeks—on Memorial Day weekend, to be precise—I will be hosting my first bike Tour for the club. Make that my first bike Tour EVER.

The funny thing is that I just realized I can't recall exactly when I made the decision to take the leap of faith to pull it off. All I remember are those weeks that I kept scheming, and/or dreaming how a Tour might be structured, if it was up to me, while looking at Google Maps and comparing it with gravelmap.com, the website that shows gravel segments throughout the U.S. Part of the allure was that it really was up to me, since nobody else in the club had yet stepped forward to offer such a Tour.

As I look back now at some of those earliest ideas, I shake my head at how outlandish they were. I was toying with gravel rides that I hadn't yet seen, in cities that I had never visited before, and trying to string them together into one grand loop. Central to this idea was the plan that after we rode each featured gravel area, we would pack up our suitcases and bikes and drive to the next city, where we would check into a new hotel for the next days' ride(s). Why not? After all, Rich Brookler had pulled off Tours just like this, that involved driving between cities. Ok, for those of you that don't know, for a few years now Rich has been running point-to-point Club Tours that rival those of commercial outfits for their ambitious itineraries, complex logistics, and expert execution, albeit without the hefty retail price tag.

I had been canvassing his opinion during some of my scheming & dreaming episodes, and he was a great sounding board. But somewhere along the way, it finally dawned on me that what made the most sense was to go with what I know. Without a doubt, that's New Paltz, New York, since I had vacationed there for many summers, and always emphasized gravel riding wherever I could find it. I also knew all the best restaurants in town.

What place do you already know about that offers great riding experiences, but that hasn't been covered by an existing Club Tour? Alternatively, what place has captured your attention as a possible destination for great rides? In either case, are you familiar with other non-riding amenities and/or activities in the area? Like lodging possibilities, good restaurants, parks, museums and/or interesting cultural exhibits? It's always a plus to have some non-riding activities in store for those occasional rainy days!

Ok, we both know that I can't tell you to plan a bike Tour for the club; inspiration has to come from within. But I will say this much: if you have some excitement bubbling up inside you about a place that offers great riding possibilities, and you're keeping it a secret from the Club, may I humbly suggest that you start some scheming and dreaming of your own?



by Keith Schlanger

Ride's Captain's Corner: Consistency Across Categories

I believe our ride categories should be defined by speed, not by fundamentally different riding styles. As riders progress, the goal should be adjusting to the pace—not relearning how to ride in a group.

There are a couple of practices commonly seen on B* rides and above that could benefit nearly all of our categories.

First, communication is more focused. Riders are generally quieter, and only hazards that are directly in the riding line—such as potholes near the wheel path—are called out. Obstacles well outside the line don't need to be signaled. Every time a rider removes a hand from the handlebars to point, there is added risk.

The front rider serves as the eyes of the group, responsible for choosing a safe line and avoiding obstacles. Everyone else should follow that wheel smoothly—like a snake moving as one. Riders should always assume a car may be behind them and ride predictably. Calling out every car on a busy road can become background noise and reduce the effectiveness of important warnings.

On B* rides and above, the workload is shared. The Ride Leader does not pull for the entire ride—riders take turns at the front so no one person does all the work. This doesn't mean forming an aggressive paceline, but it does mean rotating responsibly.

A quick reminder on rotation:

- When you're ready to come off the front, flick your right elbow to signal.
- Move smoothly off to the left.
- The next rider should maintain the current pace—not increase it.
- The last rider should let the rotating rider know they're at the back so they can rejoin safely.

The goal is to build consistency across all categories. That way, as members move up, the only adjustment is speed—not a completely different riding style.

Since every ride includes a mix of experience levels—and everyone has moments of inattention—a brief pre-ride reminder can go a long way in keeping things safe and smooth.

Pre-Ride Key Reminders:

- The front rider sets the line—ride predictably and choose a safe path.
- Always assume a car may be behind you; hold your line and avoid sudden movements.
- Call out hazards in the riding line; ignore those well outside it.
- When you take the front, maintain the current pace.
- When starting from a stop or making a turn, roll out gradually and ensure the group is together before resuming speed.

The New E-Bike Law

by *Anastasia Conlon*

On January 19, Phil Murphy signed a new e-bike law that will affect some of our membership. Unfortunately, there remains a great deal of contradictory language in the new e-bike law, which has a 6-month grace period. This has caused confusion particularly with regard to the requirements of Low Speed Electric Bicycles, those allowed by BTCNJ, and Motorized Bicycles, which are not approved for club use.

Low Speed Electric Bicycles by definition have pedals, two wheels, pedal assist up to 20 mph, and no throttle. Motorized Bicycles have pedals, two wheels, and a throttle with a top assist speed of 28 mph.

Low Speed Electric Bicycles (LSEB) require a license and registration for all users. The registration requirement specifies display of a license plate on the bicycle. Riders between the ages of 15-16 are required to obtain a special license; riders ages 17 and older may use their drivers license. Cyclists, whether owning or renting, are required to obtain appropriate documentation and coverage appropriate for their bicycle, and to be able to show law enforcement that they are indeed in compliance with the law. Bikeshares are specifically excluded from the law's requirements, however.

It is unclear whether LSEB riders require insurance, since the section of the law that describes requirements for LSEB does not mention liability insurance but in a later section the law states that riders must present proof of insurance to law enforcement if requested.

There is also some confusion as to whether LSEB is a subcategory of "Motorized Bicycles" or a stand-alone category.

It's unclear how the Motor Vehicle Commission may implement the requirements of this law for licensing and registration procedures. Obviously, this will impact the rider's ability to obtain appropriate documentation and coverage.

Of concern is that the 6-month grace period does not clearly prohibit law enforcement agencies from stopping users or issuing citations in the near term. Because the law goes into effect immediately, it is possible that law enforcement agencies may begin stopping riders, requesting proof of documents, and issuing citations. Some local police departments are reporting immediate enforcement, particularly for age requirements.

The law states that nonresident owners of Motorized Bicycles must comply with the laws that govern licensing, registration, and insurance in their own home state and that the new requirements in New Jersey will not apply to them. The law does not address nonresident uses of LSEB, but since it's unclear per above whether LSEB are a subcategory of Motorized Bicycles, actual insurance requirements are unclear.

The New Jersey Bike Walk Coalition is working to address these issues, and has a blog on the subject. We also encourage our New Jersey members to contact their legislators so that this law doesn't put undue burdens on Low Speed Electric Bike cyclists.

Article extracted from the NJBWC blog

<https://njbwc.org/faq-nj-ebike-law/>

BTCNJ Tour Schedule

Tours are filling fast and several are already closed or waitlisted — see below for what's still available, then head to the website for full details and instructions on how to sign up.

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 one couple and a single female or male
Wonders of Eastern Pennsylvania (Philadelphia Tour)	June 5-7	Tom Wieser	tom.wieser@outlook.com	\$360	Three rooms free and space for a single female
Chamber Music, Charlemont, MA	July 30-Aug 2	Jane Porges Jerry Szubin	thejerry88@gmail.com	\$200	Open
Pioneer Valley Tour Hadley, MA	Aug 21-23	Joan Brickman Don Schlenger	joanbbiking@gmail.com don.schlenger@gmail.com	\$330	Open
Amagansett, NY	Sep 18-20	Robert DeMair	robertdemair@gmail.com	\$295	Waitlisted
Cape Cod - Boston (Point to Point)	Oct 3-11	Rich Brookler Debbie Ungerleider	rbrookler@yahoo.com dlynunger@yahoo.com	\$1,300	Waitlisted
XNHAT+ Bikepacking New Hampshire	Oct 5-9	Avrin Slatkin Jerry Szubin	aslatkin@hotmail.com thejerry88@gmail.com	\$550	Waitlisted
* All costs are PPDO			PPDO = Per Person Double Occupancy		MasterLink 16

BTCNJ Executive Board Meeting

Date: April 6, 2026

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

Present:

Olivia Sharp, President

David Goldstein, Past President

Avrin Slatkin, Vice President

Len Ruvolo, Treasurer

Joyce Haddad, Secretary

Lou Schleifer, Tours

Marc Soloff, Special Events

Keith Schlanger, Rides Captain

Chuck White, Rally Chair

Regina Bueno, Membership Chair

Anastasia Conlon, Advocacy & Safety

Absent:

Sharon Hurwich, Publicity

Robert DeMair, Masterlink Editor

David Pawlyk, Webmaster

Ride Captain's Report

Keith Schlanger reported that the club jerseys are ready and labeled, with three pickup options provided to ride leaders: Miller's Happy Hour April 8, Bike Maintenance clinic on April 30, and Member Appreciation Day on May 9. He noted a concerning trend of declining ride postings, particularly for higher category weeknight rides, and planned to investigate the issue further.

The group agreed to implement the two-point incentive for D-level rides starting in May, with the program running through September. They addressed concerns about ride pacing with the D category but left it up to the ride leaders and riders. Keith suggested it would be more appropriate to reclassify D rides to: "10 mph or less".

Treasurer's report

Len Ruvolo presented the first quarter financial report, noting a \$17,000 net loss primarily due to upfront expenses for insurance and ride leader jerseys. He explained that while membership dues were down by \$1,000 (17%), the organization's total liquid assets of \$97,000 remained \$9,000 higher than the previous year. Len also reported issues with TD Bank regarding new debit cards for Avrin and Olivia, which had to be reordered due to system problems.

Tours

Lou Schleifer discussed scheduling a Tour Leaders' Thank You party for May 17th in Montclair. He suggested planning a pizza party for current and former tour leaders which was approved by the board. There were discussions addressing concerns about spam emails being sent using club members' names, which led to a discussion about website security features. David Pawlyk had implemented a solution to hide personal information from non-members, but it was discovered that the contact button functionality had been removed. The conversation ended with Lou checking the website to verify the contact button's status.

Membership

Membership Appreciation Day is scheduled for May 9th at the Oakland Recreation Center. It was decided that Oakland offers better parking, no permit requirements, and a variety of route options for different skill levels. Regina Bueno reported reaching out to approximately 40 bike shops to promote club membership. She noted that the list of bike shops on our website offering discounts needed to be updated. Chuck and Regina are coordinating their efforts to promote the Club and Rally to all these bike shops.

Publicity

Sharon Hurwich will be on vacation for a portion of the summer. In her absence, she is training Allison Cobb on Sendgrid. The group discussed updates on social media responsibilities. Allison Cobb and Gail Bodin both agreed to help with social media and will be meeting with Amy Auitable and Sharon Hurwich (along with Olivia Sharp, Chuck White, and Joyce Haddad) to have access to these formats. It was noted from the recent club survey that members primarily get news from Facebook rather than the website or the Masterlink.

Rally Update

Chuck White reported progress on promotional materials for the Rally. He announced Liberty Subaru's sponsorship offering up to four display cars. While Kessler declined to sponsor again, Chuck noted they are still seeking healthcare and financial services sponsors, though progress is being made with other companies like Element Hydration and Athletic Brewing returning as sponsors.

The team discussed rally planning and ride leadership arrangements. They reviewed current registration numbers, with approximately 43 people registered so far, and discussed the need for specific outreach to volunteers for muscle group support.

Special Events

Marc Soloff opened up the discussion for the Anniversary Party for 2027. The group discussed considering either March 6th or 13th, agreeing that March would be a good time for the Anniversary party, though they noted the need to check for any conflicting Jewish holidays. Marc presented ideas for the Anniversary party, including hosting it at Portobello's.

Safety and Advocacy

Anastasia has agreed to write a condensed article about the new e-bike law that goes into effect July 1st for the Masterlink

The next board meeting is scheduled for May 4, 2026.

The meeting was adjourned by Olivia Sharp at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Haddad, Secretary