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Produced by Greg Billing

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Phone - (202) 518-0524

Fax - (202) 518-0936

Email - waba@waba.org

Website - www.waba.org

Send requests, changes of address or general messages to the WABA office. Address submissions to RIDEON, or email: rideon@waba.org.

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Capital Bikeshare's Size to Double in 2012

The District of Columbia is no stranger to the idea of bikesharing. In August of 2008, DC unveiled SmartBikeDC, the first public bikesharing system in North America. Though interest was high, SmartBikeDC was positioned as a "pilot program" and was never intended to expand beyond its initial size (10 stations with 120 bikes). Reactions to the idea of bikesharing were mixed, but SmartBike proved that bikesharing could work in the US. And work it did. Over the next two years, bikesharing programs popped up in Denver, CO and Minneapolis, MN. Both were successful enough that when the District Department of Transportation began looking around for a system to replace SmartBikeDC, they settled on the Bixi bikesharing system Minneapolis used (as well as Montreal and London).



Building on the an unbelievably successful first year, Capital Bikeshare will double in size in 2012. Pictured above is the ubiquitous sight of the iconic bright red bikes on the local streets.

Last September, the District and Arlington launched their new bikesharing program, Capital Bikeshare or CaBi, with 1100 bikes spread across 100 stations. It was an immediate success, and the program's momentum barely slowed during the winter months. Innovative encouragement programs like the "Winter Weather Warrior" contest helped to keep riders engaged and to reward intrepid bicyclists. The winner of the contest took 780 bikeshare trips in less than 60 days. It also helped that the bikes are bright red and equipped with automatic lights (to aid in visibility), heavy and fairly slow (to reduce dangerous or high-speed bicycling) and everywhere (to get drivers used to driving around them).

By the spring, Capital Bikeshare was a nationwide phenomenon, and word quickly spread that major American cities like Boston, New York and Chicago were actively pursuing their own bikesharing programs. On Easter Sunday, Capital Bikeshare set a one-day ridership record of 4,197 trips. Just over two months later, on the Fourth of July, that record was shattered: 6,077 trips!

As the program's 1-year anniversary approached, Hurricane Irene and a gloomy September seemed as

though they were going to keep the numbers low, but early on the morning of September 20, 2011, exactly one year to the day since the launch of the first bright red bikes, one lucky rider took CaBi's one millionth ride.

This fall, DDOT plans to add another 32 stations, and Alexandria, VA recently approved a measure to add some stations of their own. Similarly, in Maryland, the towns of Bethesda, Rockville, Silver Spring and College Park have all expressed interest. And not to be outdone, the District and Arlington have announced another expansion for the spring/summer. Capital Bikeshare is on pace to double in size over the next year.

A year ago, DDOT was cautiously optimistic about the system's chances. They were hoping that the first year would bring them 8,000 members taking 500,000 trips. It seems safe to say that Capital Bikeshare has wildly exceeded those expectations. As if the millionth trip weren't enough, currently CaBi's 18,000 members take more than 4,000 trips every day. Even better, Capital Bikeshare has done what bike advocacy and bike education alone haven't been able to do: make bikes convenient, commonplace and cool.

700 Bikes Parked at 2011 Solar Decathlon Bike Valet



Cold and wet weather isn't a match for local bicyclists as WABA parked 700 bikes at this year's Solar Decathlon bike valet.

The popularity of this year's bike valet at the Solar Decathlon is proof that bicyclists can easily acclimate to DC's bouts of rainy weather. From September 23rd to October 2nd, families and friends from near and far layered up and hopped on their bikes to visit the Department of Energy's premier event. The 2011 Solar Decathlon challenged teams of 15,000 collegiate participants to design, build, and operate cost-effective, energy-efficient, and attractive solar-powered houses. And WABA was thrilled to take part!

This annual competition brings together young and bright-minded students to show consumers how to save money and energy with affordable clean energy products that are available today. This year's winner, The WaterShed Team from the University of Maryland, designed a house inspired by the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem that utilizes constructed wetlands to harvest, recycle and reuse water. The University of Purdue came in second place with a design that featured a heat pump hot water heater that uses the ambient air inside the house to produce hot water, and an air-to-air heat pump that serves as the house's primary heating and cooling source. With such a cool event it's no surprise that so many cool people came by bike.

Thousands visited the competition to tour the innovative house designs. Though visitors were encouraged to take advantage of a free shuttle and public transportation, traveling by bike was the fastest and most enjoyable method in town. As always, an on-site bike valet was useful and appreciated. The change in location, from the mall to the fabulous West Potomac Park, made bicycling the most attractive way to travel to and from the event.

WABA would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to everyone who helped out with this year's valet, especially all of the volunteers who came out and parked over 700 bicycles. We were thrilled to have the return of Henry Mesias, WABA's former Education program coordinator, for two weeks to help coordinate the valet during our busy fall season. And one of our bike valets wouldn't be the same without Jason Clock, WABA's super volunteer and premier cookie baker. There's nothing like a warm snickerdoodle when you're parking bikes on a chilly day! We would also like to thank the US Department of Energy and Perkins + Will for their support and this opportunity to encourage bicycling at large events and connect with so many new faces. We look forward to next year's competition!

UPCOMING EVENTS



WABA Member Holiday Party

December 2011 - Check waba.org/events for date

Join WABA as we celebrate the holiday season with drinks and merriment together. This members-only holiday party is your chance to meet other WABA members, catch up with your riding buddies, and celebrate WABA's achievements in 2011!

Mark Your 2012 Calendars!

BikeDC

May 13, 2011

The Washington & Arlington Community Bike Ride is back again in 2012 with more fun and excitement. Learn more at www.bikedc.net.

Bike to Work Day 2012

May 18, 2011

The region's largest bicycle event in 2012 will be even bigger. It's an event not to miss with over 45 regional pit stops, free prizes, food and drinks and much more. Celebrate bicycle commuting and encourage new riders on this awesome bicycling day!

WABA Event Information & Registration:

<http://www.waba.org/events>



WABA VOLUNTEERS

are the muscle behind the machine!!



VOLUNTEER CALL

Volunteer nights are a great way to meet other members of the local cycling community and maybe even run into some old friends. Volunteer nights typically occur on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month. Some volunteer nights are filled with admin tasks while others are trainings and meetings for future events. WABA will often provide food and beverages, and if you attend three volunteer nights in one year, you will receive a one-year WABA membership or membership renewal! Check the volunteer calendar at www.waba.org/get_involved for accurate times and dates.



Join the WABA group on [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/wabadc)

[facebook.com/wabadc](https://www.facebook.com/wabadc)

- Connect with local riders.
- Have fun!



[flickr.com/photos/waba](https://www.flickr.com/photos/waba)

- Check out photos of current events.
- Share your photos in the WABA Event Photos pool



twitter.com/wabadc

- Stay up to date on the latest WABA happenings
- Connect with local riders!

» NEWS

WABA Celebrates International Walk to School Day

This year WABA celebrated International Walk to School Day on October 5 at Anne Beers Elementary in Ward 7. Along with Children's Hospital, the Safe Kids Campaign and our special guests, the US Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood and Federal Highway Administrator Victor Mendez. WABA helped lead "walking school buses" from four locations throughout the neighborhood.

MPD bike police officers roamed the route and assisted in leading the buses. Dozens of children woke early to walk together with community leaders and many parents and grandparents joined in as well. With assistance from the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math coordinator (STEM) at the school, the students were very enthusiastic and knew all the health benefits and environmental improvements that result from car free transportation and even the improved test scores that all come from incorporating exercise into their daily lives.

Many parents commented on the usefulness of walking kids to school in a big group since many walk already, but with this method, the kids are more visible when crossing the streets. Several parents were considering

a long term adoption of the concept, since they could take turns walking kids to school and picking up other students at the walking school bus "stops".

Our hard work in Fairfax County also paid off this year. With strong and welcome support from Fairfax County Public Schools, the Fairfax County Council of PTAs and the Fairfax County Police Department, 27 schools participated in International Walk to School Day. Fairly well-spread throughout the county, but concentrated along the Beltway, these schools show the demand for healthier, active ways to get to school. This is such a great base to grow and build upon and when our Fairfax County Safe Routes to School task force met to evaluate IWTSD in the county, we were full of ideas to expand next year's effort.

We are planning to make and distribute promotional videos to correlate with FCPS healthy living and environmental video series are planned as well as maps showing the participants and the hoped-for expansion of schools next year. If you'd like to do more to get Fairfax County schools to participate in walk to school events and planning, please contact gina@waba.org.

WABA Ends Successful 2011 Season of Mobile Bike Shops

East of the River Initiative

In an effort to make a greater impact and reach more people, Bike House mechanics, and WABA staff hosted free bicycle repair shops twice a month at 10 different locations, from Oxon Run to Deanwood.

These events ranged from small gatherings outside of local stores and libraries to what felt like neighborhood bike parties in big open parks. By the end of the summer, we had regular visitors showing up under the big gray WABA tent and blue Bike House umbrella with new friends, family members, pets and —to mechanics' and guests' great delight—the occasional box of popsicles.

Every mobile bike shop started at the Bike House garage in Mt. Pleasant, DC where 5 to 7 Bike House volunteers gathered to pack up their trailers and ride as a convoy together. When the convoy arrived at each mobile bike shop destination there was always a gathering of people, bikes in hand thanks to Dupree Heard, our former Wards 7 & 8 Bike Ambassador. Dupree ensured that every bus shelter, light pole and bulletin board in the area displayed a WABA Mobile Bike shop flier. Fliers rapidly became the most effective form of promotion for our work, so effective that sometimes bicyclists showed up with fliers in hand.

After setting up shop—which consisted of a few bike stands, a custom-made trailer with a built-in umbrella and a table to store parts and equipment—the Bike House's mechanics jumped into action. The mechanics taught guests of all ages how to work on their bikes, from the most basic repairs like brake and derailleur adjustments to overhauling bottom-brackets and internal hubs. The number of residents who came out to work on their bikes ranged from 5 to 45 people. The day with the lowest turnout at the Penn Branch Shopping Center skewed the data because we realized shortly after arriving that we chose the same date and time as the first Redskins game of the season!

Our most popular day was at a park in Congress Heights on a beautiful afternoon. The wait-list for minor repairs was so long that a fellow who had initially showed up to work on his own bike ended up volunteering to lend a hand. He circled up a group of excited children and led an impromptu class on patching flat tires.

Throughout the summer, we formed new connections with bicyclists and local bike advocates. In the majority of our conversations with bicyclists east of the river, we heard parents, teenagers and the elderly all express appreciation for riding and the need for a safer



A Local DC resident learns to fix his bike from a Bike House volunteer at WABA's downtown Anacostia mobile bike shop.

experience. We heard the desire for bike shops and rides. And most of all, we heard gratitude for WABA's free education, outreach and repairs.

While DC's bike culture has grown to accommodate thousands of new riders in the past 8 years, there is still much work to be done to continue expanding the network of facilities and to encourage and educate new riders. As ridership in the DC area grows, we must make sure that it grows equitably and that existing transportation inequities are addressed. Through several fun forums, we connected with bicyclists in Wards 7 & 8 by providing essential services, creating new spaces to connect with bicyclists, and getting more bicycles safely back on the road.

We look forward to continuing this program East of the River next year and are seeking foundation funding to renew and expand our offerings. We owe special thanks to The Bike House, a local bike repair cooperative, for providing mechanical support for these mobile bike shops, and to DDOT for providing the initial funding. We are especially grateful to our members and supporters who donated to the East of the River program and allowed us to bring the mobile bike shops to additional neighborhoods, provide rides and giveaways, and celebrate cycling East of the Anacostia all spring and summer.

November 2nd DC Hearing on Enforcement and New Assault Prevention Law

By the time you read this, WABA will have already testified before the DC Committee on the Judiciary at a hearing on both the enforcement of bicycle laws within the District and the Assault of Bicyclists Prevention Act of 2011—a bill proposed and supported by WABA.

But given the time and effort it takes to get this newsletter in your hands, as I sit here typing this I have not given that testimony yet. So in thinking of how to overcome the time lag and explain to RideOn readers what will have happened, or might have happened, by the time this arrives in your mailbox, I also have the opportunity to think about what we hope will have happened.

We hope that the report from the Office of Police Complaints will be taken seriously.

In our testimony before this Committee in February we, along with dozens of cyclists, complained about poor protection and improper citation of bicyclists. Story after story was told on a common theme: many police officers who respond to crash scenes do not understand bicycling and wrongly cite or fail to protect bicyclists. After hearing this, Councilmember Mendelson asked MPD for an explanation and forwarded the issue to the Office of Police Complaints for further investigation. Now, the Office of Police Complaints has issued a finding agreeing with our testimony and finding systemic problems in MPD's response to bicyclists. Thus, MPD should not be allowed to say that these problems are illusory or our complaints unfounded. They are real, as attested by the District's own Office of Police Complaints. They need to be addressed.

We hope that MPD will agree to meaningful training of officers.

In response to complaints about the lack of training of officers, MPD often asserts that it is using an online training tool. Unfortunately, the information in this online training was not shared with WABA or members of the cycling public—so we cannot state with any certainty that it is sufficient and appropriate. And regardless of the content of the training, it is not enough. A short online module does not communicate the realities of cycling or the complexities of how the law and the increasingly complex facilities in the District work together (or fail to work together) sufficiently to law enforcement officials. We need MPD to agree to real training and to designate specific officers to be well-trained in bike law who can act as resources for their peers.

We hope that the PD-10 crash reporting form will be changed to include bicycling.

As we mentioned in our February testimony and the OPC report confirmed, data collection on bicycle crashes is hampered by the lack of proper data gathering on police crash report forms. This simple fix would make data much more accessible to advocates and better track the enforcement actions of MPD and promote accountability.

We hope that MPD will better engage with the cycling community.



WABA Executive Director Shane Farthing testifies before the DC Committee on the Judiciary's Hearing on Bicycle and Pedestrian Enforcement in February 2011.

WABA has worked over the years to build relationships with MPD representatives—including giving free memberships to many officers—but we continue to have no regular, designated point of contact on police issues. Likewise, MPD is an occasional, but not dedicated, participant in the District's Bicycle Advisory Council. At a bare minimum, MPD should appoint a representative to the BAC. But ideally, they will go further and dedicate an officer or task force to bicycling issues.

We hope the Committee will be convinced of the need for the Assault of Bicyclists Prevention Act and allow it to proceed to a full vote.

This anti-assault and harassment law, modeled on a Los Angeles ordinance passed in July is intended to give the cyclist recourse when intentionally assaulted or harassed while cycling. Currently, criminal charges are seldom brought in these cases—even when extensive evidence of illegal behavior is available—and civil representation is inaccessible except where the action results in severe injury. This proposed law would create a civil right of action that allows for attorneys' fees in order to allow assaulted cyclists to have their day in court. This bill was co-introduced by nine of the District's thirteen councilmembers and would likely pass if allowed out of committee.

In sum: We hope to be moving forward and making on-the-ground improvements.

Our testimony in February put these issues on the agenda and led to several series of meetings and to legislative proposals. As a result, we have a formal concrete findings from the Office of Police Complaints that reinforces the legitimacy of concerns and drives home the need for them to be addressed. And we have a bill, introduced by a majority of the members of the DC Council, to provide bicyclists access to justice after an assault.

This is significant progress that has taken thousands of hours of work—and thank you for your contributions that allow us to put in those hours. But now it is time to push forward. I hope that by the time you read this we will be in the next phase, discussing bolstered training on the real issues facing cyclists, improved crash reporting to gather meaningful data on cycling crashes, and receiving meaningful input from and engagement with the law enforcement community in DC. And I hope that we will be nearing a vote in the full Council on the Assault of Bicyclists Prevention Act.

If you can't wait until the next RideOn to find out what actually happened, follow the action at www.waba.org/blog.

2011 ADVOCACY CALENDAR

Find out what's going on in your area and share your concerns!

Mark your calendars for the following bicycle advocacy meetings in 2011.

★ Alexandria Bicycle Advisory Committee

Third Monday of each month, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm, at the Durant Center (1605 Cameron Street, Alexandria VA). Contact information - email: alexandriabpac@gmail.com, website: <https://sites.google.com/site/alexandriabpac/>

★ Arlington County Bicycle Advisory Committee

First Mondays of the month, 7:00 pm. Arlington County Govt. Center (#1 Courthouse Plaza), 2100 Clarendon Blvd. (Courthouse Metro). For more info: David Goodman, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, at 703-228-3709 or dgoodman@arlingtonva.us.

★ Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail Board Meetings

No meetings scheduled at time of printing. See the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail for the latest information at <http://www.cctrail.org/>

★ D.C. Bicycle Advisory Council

First Wednesday of odd-numbered months, 6:00pm - 8:00 pm. For more info: DC Bicycle Coordinator, Jim Sebastian at (202) 671-2331 or jim.sebastian@dc.gov.

★ Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling

Usually third Wednesday of each month in Vienna. For more info: Bruce Wright at bruce.wright@comcast.net.

★ Metropolitan Branch Trail Coalition

Second Thursday of each month, 6:30pm - 8:30pm. For more info: Paul Meijer at 202-726-7364 or meijer@cua.edu.

★ Montgomery County Bicycle Action Group (MCBAG)

September 15, October 20, November 17 6:30pm - 8:30pm, 100 Edison Park Drive, 4th Floor, Gaithersburg, MD 20878

★ Prince George's County Bicycle & Trails Advisory Group (BTAG)

Meets quarterly. Contact Fred Shaffer for details at Fred.Shaffer@ppd.mnccpc.org.

★ WABA Board Meeting

September 19th, 6:30pm - 8:30pm at the WABA Office. Contact the WABA for agenda at (202)518-0524 or waba@waba.org.



Advocacy news, upcoming events, safety education and much more...

» The WABA Quick Release Blog: www.waba.org/blog



Be Seen & Stay Warm This Winter Riding Season!

Riding in Cold & Wet Weather

Cold Weather Riding

When riding in the cold, it is important to remember that fluid consumption is vital as the body still perspires. You may be cold at the start of your ride, but it usually doesn't take long to build up body core heat. Body core heat will not keep your fingers, toes, nose or ears warm. Remember to take care to protect these extremities from frostbite and wind chill. You need to be able to remove or add clothing as you ride. Fabrics that wick are more comfortable. Loose insulating layers will trap air between them, which is vital for circulation and temperature control. Eyes get cold also, so wrap-around sunglasses or ski goggles are good protection. Make sure you are dressed warmly enough so that if you have to stop for an extended period you can stay warm.

Wet Riding

Maintaining clear vision when riding in the rain is vital. Road grime, rain, and spray off other vehicles are all serious inhibitors of being able to see where you are going. Rain creates a visual dullness for all road users. Visibility, both yours and others, is critical! Wear a bright yellow rain suit, use a bright headlight and equip your bicycle with a red rear light. Take extra measures to be seen. Blinking lights help alert other road users to your presence. Staying warm is another vital health consideration. It is better to be perspiring than to be shivering in a cold rain. Select rain suits with vents and zippers to provide ventilation.

Few people find riding in the rain to be the optimum conditions for cycling, but sometimes you just have to. Try to make yourself as comfortable as possible. A disposable shower cap (the kind they give you at hotels) makes a great helmet cover or seat cover to keep rain from running through your helmet and into your eyes. A visor on your helmet helps deflect rain.

Fenders and mud flaps, both front and rear, help keep bicycle wheel spray from getting on the rider. Brakes don't grip wet rims quickly. Plan ahead to stop and expect much longer stopping distances. You will need to pump your brakes to squeeze the rims dry before they will begin to brake effectively. After riding in the rain, clean and lubricate your chain and derailleur. Bicycle bearings will also need cleaning and lubrication more often after rain riding.

You must be extra attentive to road surface conditions when riding in the rain. Wet roads are slippery. Tar, grease, and oil accumulations mixed with rain reduce the traction of bicycle tires. Road hazards are even more dangerous when wet. Go easy on curves; reduce speed and sharpness of turn to reduce the possibility that your bicycle may slide out from under you. Standing water and piles of wet leaves should never be ridden through - they can camouflage surface defects.

If you ride near the ocean or on roads that are salted in the winter, you need to give your bike a bath in clear water frequently. Be careful not to use a high-pressure stream on your bearings

Riding After Dark

Reduce your speed

This is especially important on roads you do not know. Surface obstructions and defects are harder to see at night. Stay alert! Motorists do not expect to see you. Nighttime brings a higher incidence of impaired motorists due to fatigue, poor night vision, and alcohol. Remember that wet roads reduce the effectiveness of headlights. Relatively dim bicycle lights may get lost in a mass of brighter lights, so never assume a motorist has seen you. Always assume you are invisible! Make every effort to properly equip yourself and your bicycle for optimum visibility for everyone.

Intersections

Be extra careful at intersections and when making left turns. Motorists are not expecting to see you. Do not get caught in an intersection as the light turns red. Slow down if necessary so you can stop on the yellow. Generator lights reduce your acceleration ability, so sprinting is more difficult. If you must wait for on-coming traffic before turning left, stop before entering the intersection, not in it, as you would in daylight.

Lighting Your Bike

It is a good idea to take a nighttime survey once you have your bicycle equipped as you would like. Have someone else ride your night-equipped bike with your personal visibility gear to see how easily they can be seen. Then make any necessary adjustments for optimum visibility.

Most state laws identify a headlight and red rear

reflector for riding from dusk until dawn. Reflectors and lights lose effectiveness when dirty, so keep them clean. What lighting you select depends on your riding environment (lighted city streets, dark rural roads, etc.) and conditions (rain, fog, etc.). Lights can be either battery or generator powered.


Regardless of the type of light you select, remember to carry a spare and the tools necessary to change it. Not having a spare could make for a dark, dangerous ride. Dual headlights give you a ready spare.

Visibility from the Rear

A red rear reflector is the law in most states. A yellow reflector, which is more reflective than red, may be an acceptable supplement. Rear lights offer a steady and blinking light. Where and how you mount the light or reflector is very important. Lights are designed to be mounted in a very particular orientation for maximum visibility. Mount lights high enough on the bike to be visible. The seat post is the highest part of the bike, and an excellent place to mount a taillight. Be careful not to block the light with cargo or bags on the bicycle's rear rack. Rear rack mounted lights are also good, but subject to vibration that can break the mount. Mount reflectors low enough to be visible within the low beams of most motor vehicles. A good location is the left seat stay.

Helmet mounted lights offer flexible movement of the light beam. A white light mounted on the front of your helmet enables a more selective view of possible hazards in front or to the sides. The movement of helmet-mounted light often causes motorists to question what they are seeing and then decrease their speed. A good choice is to combine a bike-mounted light and helmet light for optimum visibility.

Additional protective equipment is desirable when cycling in limited visibility. Items to consider include: reflective clothing such as vests, leg and wrist bands; reflective stripes on clothing or shoes; pedal or spoke reflectors; reflective tape on crank arms, panniers, or other parts of the bike; and reflective tape on your helmet. Remember that reflective material gradually loses effectiveness as it wears, and needs to be replaced periodically. The more you look like a Las Vegas casino, the more visible you will be to motorists when riding at night.



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ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW

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Representing Injured Cyclists Since 1972

WABA Welcomes New Education Coordinator: Dupree Heard

Dupree Heard has become our new Bicycle Education Program Coordinator this summer. Dupree started his relationship with WABA nearly two years ago by helping at a WABA "Volunteer Night" and soon after he was volunteering as a DC Bike Ambassador. Dupree received his bachelors' degree from St. Louis University in Political Science and he is also a graduate of Howard University Law School. Prior to working for WABA, Dupree had worked in Central Asia with the Peace Corps as a University English teacher. As an attorney, he has worked as a law clerk in DC Federal Court. Later he worked as a mediator in the DC area.

As the Education Program Coordinator, Dupree is responsible for WABA's Maryland Bicycle Education Program. He also helps to manage WABA's adult and youth education programs in Virginia and the District of Columbia. During his short time with WABA, Dupree has already been involved with several large events including the "Worldwide Day of Play" held on The Ellipse south of the White House and with County Cable Montgomery producing a video to teach beginners how to ride a bike. Dupree hopes to expand WABA's education curriculum to include more classes for beginner cyclists. He hopes to host more bicycle education classes in lower income areas of the city especially in wards 7 & 8. He also wants to introduce more people to the joys of commuting by bicycle. While living in DC, Dupree began a torrid love affair with the bicycle and he is extremely pleased to work in an



Dupree Heard, WABA's new Education Coordinator geared up in his urban commuting gear.

organization that continues to advocate for his passion. Dupree is a daily bike commuter who takes part in long distance multi-state rides and is training for a triathlon to be held in the spring of 2012. When he is not training for a race or riding his bike to wherever, you can find him cooking vegan meals, teaching salsa dancing, sailing on the Chesapeake or reading something quite odd.



Teach Someone How to Ride a Bike in an Afternoon!

WABA has experienced enormous success with its new adult Learn to Ride program. We started teaching adults to ride bicycles in May of 2008 and while growth was initially slow (40 in the first 2 years) this past year alone we taught 230 new bicyclists. Comparatively Rich Conroy and Emilia Crotty from Bike NY have taught 2,354 cyclists of all ages since 2008 and Susan McLucas of the Bicycle Riding School in Massachusetts has taught thousands since 1986. So, we still have some work to do at WABA—and here's how you can help. We actually get far more requests to learn how to ride a bike than we can currently handle and we will revamp our program next year to begin including youth as well as providing this life enriching opportunity to a wider audience. But maybe you know someone who really wants to learn and you're a cyclist, so it makes sense that you should be able to teach someone how to ride one of these 'contraptions', right? It turns out it can be difficult to teach someone, but it doesn't have to be. Here's the method:

First, remember that you are teaching someone who is completely new to cycling so concepts that you take for granted as a regular cyclist will be foreign and you should try to explain terms such as "pedaling", "stopping" and "counter-steering", which the uninitiated will not know how to perform on a bike. Use a bike with a freewheel and brake levers (no coaster brake). Save complex explanations of bike laws and how to ride in traffic for later sessions with qualified bicycle instructors, since this information will not be useful until they actually know how to ride. Start off with a straight forward, simple helmet fit (level on the head, straps around the ears and chin strap tight). Explanation of bike parts should also be kept to a basic, need-to-know minimum such as: handle bars, pedals, chain, brake levers, tires/wheels and seat. Having the student perform a quick A-B-C check (air, brakes, chain) will help your student become familiar with their bike.

Give brief overview of the teaching method and demonstrate what the students should expect 4 levels

1. Pedals off, steering and balancing;
2. One pedal on, power pedal position;
3. Pedaling, using both pedals;
4. Riding a bike!

Tip: While practicing this specific method, do not hold onto the rider or their bicycle. Holding on hinders the rider's balance and prolongs the entire learning process.

- Remove both pedals (the left one is reverse threaded; tip for both pedals—put wrench on nut, pedal forward to remove, pedal back to install)
- Make sure that the bike rider wears a properly fitting helmet; shoelaces and pant legs are tucked in or



The first few pedals of a Learn to Ride student. You can teach a friend to ride a bike in a few easy steps.

rolled up.

- Check that the bike seat is low enough that the rider can touch her/his feet flat on the ground.
- Explain how to mount/dismount the bicycle by swinging one leg over the frame or by leaning the bicycle frame toward the ground and then stepping over it and raising the frame back up.

Step One

Have the rider practice slowly pushing the bike with both feet while sitting on the bike.

Removing both pedals may help during this stage. Teach the concept of counter steering: while seated on bike lean to one side and show that by turning handle bars in the same direction of the lean that the bike will come back to center (don't put your foot down, steer into the lean).

If a very slight incline is available, having the rider start at the 'top' of the incline helps the rider gain momentum (5-7 mph). This momentum makes lifting both feet off the ground a bit easier.

Tip: Remind the rider to keep his or her chin up, pointing in the direction he or she wants to go (not looking down) and to keep elbows straight—"No noodle arms!"

Wait until the bike rider is comfortable doing this procedure before moving onto the next step.

Step Two

Install the right (R) pedal (or dominant-hand side pedal). Have the rider put one pedal forward in the "Power Pedal Position", step down on the pedal and coast forward while the other foot is out to the side. Then pull the pedal back up and repeat. "Power Pedal Position" - if the front chain ring was the face of a clock, the pedal would be in the 2 o'clock position.

Tip: Reinforce the concept of counter-steering to help straighten the bike during start-up.

Step Three

Install both pedals (the left (L) one is reverse threaded; tip for both pedals—put wrench on nut, pedal forward to remove, pedal back to install)

When rider begins to feel comfortable balancing have her/him try pedaling a few strokes while steering straight ahead. Remind him or her to look up and ahead and "no noodle arms". Normally, with natural progression the rider will begin linking pedal strokes.

Tip: The student should not look down for the second pedal, bend the second leg all the way up and the second pedal will be under it.

Step Four

Somewhere right after both pedals are installed and the first few pedal strokes have been linked the magic happens (get your camera ready) and your student will be riding!

Tip: If you encounter difficulty go back one previous step and ensure mastery before progressing to the next level.

Practice correct mount and dismount procedures. Raise the seat height so that the rider is on tip-toe when seated.

- Rider should start standing over top tube with right foot on the right pedal in the power pedal position (left foot on ground)
- In one motion push down on right pedal to propel the bicycle forward and raise the body up off the ground with the left foot
- Sit on the saddle
- To dismount, while squeezing the brakes to slow the bike, slide forward off the saddle and stand on the right pedal at bottom of pedal stroke
- When the bike is almost stopped, keep squeezing the brake lever and put the left foot on the ground.

Congratulations, by now your student is riding a bike and smiling from ear to ear. If not, that's OK too -- not everyone gets it on their first try. In either case, more practice is needed. It's advisable to wait a few days between practice to allow the new cyclist a chance to rest and to allow the muscle memory to set it. The first couple of bike trips should be on a quiet bike path or trail. After they are comfortable riding a few miles, sign them up for a Confident City Cycling class with us to learn the next level of skill necessary for riding a bike on streets.

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Scan the above QR tag with a smartphone reader or visit the following website: <http://www.waba.org/a/rideon-winter-2011>

2011 50 States & 13 Colonies Ride: A Huge Success

This year's 50 States & 13 Colonies Ride was a resounding success for WABA and a major accomplishment for those who biked 15 to 64 miles up and down and up some more, across The District's expansive asphalt terrain. To those who have never participated, this ride may sound downright masochistic, and okay maybe there's some truth in that, but the pleasure is well worth the pain. Riders discovered new pockets of the city, formed lasting bonds along the way, and earned the right to say, "I biked the 50 States!"

We couldn't have asked for a more pleasant, rain-free September day. Of the 500 registered participants, 400 gathered at Kalorama Park to collect their cue sheets and bike maps and enjoy fresh fruit while lining up in the start area. Before the ride set off, WABA staff relayed some basic safety tips, group riding techniques and gave fair warning of the route's inherent difficulties. We advised riders, "It's not a question of whether or not you will get lost, it's a question of when you will get lost."

Fortunately, when folks missed the "unmarked alley on 15th St SE" or rode past Texas Ave. SE, they weren't lost for long. And that's due in large part to our ride support; the veteran 50 States Rider corps who have joined us for the past 8 years; and the dedicated ride marshals, stationary marshals and volunteers, who led the packs and swept the route. Some participants like to think of 50 States as a day to get out and explore the city on their own while relying on paper and intuition, however the general experience is one of teamwork and encouragement. We overheard one woman say, "for being an unsupported ride, I've never felt so supported on a ride!" And for that we owe a big thanks to the camaraderie of our 50 States rider community and our hard-working volunteers!

We also owe this year's success to our rest stop support. Thankfully, our staff was able to quickly zip across the city to follow the ride and set up rest stops with Zip Car's gracious contribution of two SUVs. Normally WABA staff stick to two wheels but we had no choice, we had to be car-nivores for the day. These SUVs kept our riders hydrated and energized by carrying 500 gallons of water donated by Drink More Water and 500 energy snacks donated by the The Nation's Triathlon.

Riders weren't the only participants taken care of along the route—the bicycles received some TLC, too. Mechanics from Takoma Park's The Green Commuter assisted riders at the start area, DC's BicycleSPACE

provided bike maintenance at the Anacostia rest stop, The Bike House, a volunteer-run Co-op taught riders how to do basic repairs during lunch at Eastern Market, and The American University Cycling Team spent their afternoon wrenching at mile 59 on AU's campus. Thanks for your time, energy and help, guys!

Lastly, we are most appreciative of the contributions from the latest and greatest, bike-centric brewers in town, The New Belgium Brewery, who sponsored the 51st State After Party. This year's ride would not have been complete without a couple frosted Fat Tire Ales, "I Biked the 50 States!" T-shirts and bike goodies to commemorate the day. And of course that couldn't have happened without The Grill From Ipanema, our gracious hosts, who provided delicious food, a patio perfect for cheering on the returning riders, bike parking and half of their dining area space for hundreds of sweaty lycrites!

We hope you enjoyed yourselves, made some friends and found a greater appreciation for your city along the way. We sure had a good time. As always, the success of any WABA event furthers our mission by funding our regional advocacy work, and the 50 States Ride has proven to become one of our favorite fundraisers. We appreciate any feedback to improve this event for years to come. Please email nelle@waba.org with comments.



Three proud 50 States Ride finishers showing off their "I Biked the 50 States" t-shirts.



50 States Riders on the D St NE



Jo Reyes from The Green Commuter makes some last minute adjustments for a 50 States Rider at the start area.

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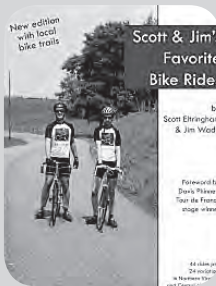
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400 Cyclists Ride the 50 States

WABA's famous 50 States & 13 Colonies Ride was a sell-out success again this year

RIDE » N

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