

RIDE N



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WABA is a proud member of the League of American Bicyclists (www.bikeleague.org) and the Thunderhead Alliance (www.thunderheadalliance.org)

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY BIKE BUDGET UPDATE

HELP BUDGET FOR BIKES
IN THE CITY OF FAIRFAX

WABA AT NATIONAL BIKE SUMMIT

WABA PROVIDES VALET BIKE PARKING AT NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

BIKE TO WORK DAY IS FRIDAY, MAY 19TH!

Join thousands of DC area cyclists for a celebration of bicycling as a clean and fun form of transportation at Bike to Work Day 2006! This year's event will take place on Friday, May 19th at 21 "pit stops" around the Washington region. Each pit stop will offer breakfast, entertainment, dynamic speakers and chances to win bicycles and other prizes. Register by May 12th and receive a FREE Bike to Work Day t-shirt. All registered riders will also be automatically entered into a raffle for a chance to win a free bicycle valued up to \$1,000 from City Bikes.

Are you considering taking the plunge of commuting by bike to work, but don't know

how to ride there? WABA volunteers will be leading "commuter convoys" from across the area to and from downtown DC. Each convoy leader is an experienced bicycle commuter that can assist you with safe riding and equipment tips as well as the best route to your destination. However, if riding with traffic still seems a bit intimidating, sign up for one of WABA's FREE Confident City Cycling classes and learn how to do it safely and efficiently. Please visit www.waba.org for details.

WABA believes bicycling commuting changes lives. Commuting by bike reduces pollution, improves individual health

and puts people more in touch with their surroundings and community. Have you dropped 40 lbs. biking to work? Have you calculated how many thousands of dollars you've saved by ditching your car? Did you meet your lycra clad, funny shoe wearing significant other at a stop light while on your bike? Are you a first time bike commuter? We want to hear your success stories. Please email them to Jeff at Jeff@waba.org.

As always, Bike to Work Day is a rain or shine event. We are hoping for shine. Register online today at www.waba.org.

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PROGRESS MADE

ON MONTGOMERY COUNTY BIKE BUDGET

In a shock to local bicyclists, the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) budget for FY 2007-2012 proposed by Montgomery County Executive Doug Duncan offers significant cuts in funding for bike programs. If passed as is, the new budget will result in a decrease of funding for bicycle projects on the order of 40% for the next three years. Even more alarming is when the budget is projected out when in 2007 funding for bike projects decreases by over 75% over 2006 levels. Such a dramatic reduction in funding puts several key bikeways programs at risk, including:

➤ Rock Creek Trail Bridge

The current budget would delay this important safety project by two years. A delay in this project could result in the loss of key federal transportation enhancement funds. State funds set aside for the bridge are also at risk.

➤ Matthew Henson Trail

Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) is ready to start construction on phase II of this new facility, but the proposed budget pushes the funding for design and construction off by three years. Doing so could result in the loss of permits already obtained for the trail.

➤ Annual Bikeways Program

It has long been WABA's position that bikeway funding in Montgomery County was inadequate. Currently there is no full time staffer dedicated to bike projects at the MNCPPC which itself recommends increasing funding for bikeways from the current \$300,000 a year to \$1 million. In addition, more funding needs to be set aside to maintain and improve the existing bikeway infrastructure.

Alarmed at the risk to these key projects and others, WABA and local advocates arranged meetings with the individual members of the Transportation and the Environment Committee of the Council, which oversees transportation spending, to press our case for more funding.

We are happy to report that thanks to our efforts we have strong indications that both the Rock Creek Trail Bridge and the Matthew Henson Trail will be restored to their original schedule, and that funding to the bikeways program will be increased. However, the fight is still not over. If you live in Montgomery County, WABA strongly urges you to contact the County Council and urge them to support better bicycling throughout the county by protecting these key programs increase funding for the bicycle program. Send your comments to the Montgomery County Council at: county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov.

For more information, including a full budget analysis and more talking points, visit the website of Montgomery Bicycle Advocates at www.mobike.org.

RIDEON

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WABA AT THE NATIONAL BIKE SUMMIT

WABA staff and volunteer advocates from across the region participated recently in the National Bike Summit, an annual event that draws hundreds of bike advocates from across the country to the District of Columbia. The purpose of the Summit, which this year drew a record 370 participants, is to provide an opportunity for education and networking, as well as to meet with representatives in Congress to discuss the most important issues facing cyclists on the national level.



Hosted by the League of American Bicyclists, numerous sessions were available to discuss new federal funding sources for bike projects, the Safe Routes to School Program, the future of online bike mapping and much more. The main federal priorities of this year's Summit were:

- **The passage of the Bicycle Commuter Act (HR 807)** which would extend the transportation fringe benefit currently offered to transit and van pool users to those that commute to work by bike.
- **Funding the "Conserve By Bike" program** that was passed as part of the 2005 Energy Bill. The Conserve by Bike Program authorizes \$6.2 million to create 10 pilot projects across the country that would examine the benefits of switching car trips to bike trips. Funds for this program need to be appropriated this year.
- **Tracking High Priority Projects.** The Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Equitable Transportation Efficiency Act-A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) set aside close to \$15 billion in funding for high priority projects, but there is little oversight of the program. (Please see Bike Summit on page 5.)

2006 Bike & Gear Swaps from WABA & The Bicycle Place

- » Got extra bikes or cycling gear?
- » The kids outgrown their bikes?
- » Want to upgrade your ride?
- » Need a new bike rack, saddle, wheel set, etc?

Then WABA's Bike and Gear Swaps are the place for you! WABA's Bike and Gear Swaps are a great place to find great deals on all manner of biking equipment while raising money for better bicycling. 15% of sales go to benefit WABA's education and advocacy programs throughout the year. Vendors who sell over \$100 worth of merchandise will receive a \$10 gift certificate to the Bicycle Place!

When: The swaps will be held from 9am-2pm on the following days:

- » Saturday, April 8th
- » Saturday, May 13th
- » Saturday, June 17th
- » Saturday, September 9th

Where: Parking lot behind the Bicycle Place at 8313 Grubb Road in Silver Spring, MD.



Confident City Cycling Classes 2006 — FREE!

Want to use your bike to go where you need to go? Learn to safely share the road with cars, other bikes, and pedestrians.

WABA, with the support of the DC Departments of Transportation and Recreation, presents a choice of six free classes in 2006 for cyclists 16 and over. Each class will be held for three hours on a Saturday morning. Topics include:

- » Rules of the Road and Lane Positioning
- » Avoiding the Common Causes of Crashes
- » Improving Pedaling Efficiency
- » Useful Accessory Equipment
- » Basic Bike Maintenance & Repair

HURRY AND REGISTER NOW! Please provide safetyed@waba.org with your name, email, and phone number for last-minute contact or call the WABA office at 202.518.0524.

Check out www.waba.org for a list of dates and locations. Would you like WABA to conduct a Confident City Cycling seminar in your office or community event? Email Susanna at susanna@waba.org

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A PAVED GEORGETOWN BRANCH TRAIL?

In a letter to Park and Planning, Montgomery County Councilmember Nancy Floreen has suggested that the Georgetown Branch Trail, the extension of the Capital Crescent Trail east of Bethesda be paved to solve chronic erosion issues. The issue will be taken up when the County debates its operating budget later this spring. Stay tuned!

HELP BUDGET FOR BIKES IN FAIRFAX

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors is currently reviewing its fiscal year 2007 budget that could contain new funding for bicycle programs and related staff. Recent signs are encouraging. Thanks to the support of WABA members and Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling (FABB), the Fairfax Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted a motion in December directing county staff to better incorporate bicycling in the transportation infrastructure. To ensure that the county follows through on recommended initiatives, Fairfax bicyclists should contact their supervisor to push for the following initiatives:

- » **Hiring a full-time bicycle coordinator.** Fairfax needs a full-time staff member focused on bicycle improvements to make them happen.
- » **Creating on-road bike routes NOW.** Many Fairfax roads could include bicycle accommodations such as bike lanes without any further redesign. The Board directed county staff to examine roads that may accommodate bike lanes without additional construction. Ask that the country follow through on this.
- » **Producing a county-wide bicycle map.** Working with the bicycling community to develop a bicycle map would represent an excellent investment. Far more bicycle trips would be taken for recreation and transportation if bicyclists had a good map delineating trails and safe on-road routes.
- » **A bicycle pilot program.** Ask the county to put funds into creating a pilot program that would establish an interconnected network of trails and on-road accommodations in a specific area of the county. A good location for the pilot would be Tysons Corner, where bicycle facilities

could significantly reduce cartrips if they are incorporated into the planned redesign.

The Board of Supervisors will be working on the budget through April. To contact your supervisor, please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/board/.

Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling, a grassroots initiative of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association, seeks to make bicycling an integral part of the transportation network of Fairfax County



SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2006 WINTER GALA AND BENEFIT AUCTION DONORS

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WABA ANNUAL GALA & AUCTION IS A SUCCESS!

by Paul DeMaio, WABA Board member



Even with the impending doom of eight inches of snow predicted to fall beginning on the evening of the Gala & Auction, I just had a feeling that we would still have a great showing. After all, we all know bicyclists are a hardy stock. Many of us bike commute to work and risk the possibility of [gasp] sweat. Others go for a weekend ride of 15 miles or more—a feat deemed ludicrous by the non-bicyclist.

As the first party-goers began arriving at the Finnish Embassy by car, foot, bus, and bike, each entered with a dusting of white flakes on their black coat. A stomp, shake, or convulsion would release the flakes to the floor where their melted brethren rested in pools. One by one, party-goers arrived, filtering into the Embassy and walking down the elegant wood staircase into the great Finland Hall. Despite the snow, 250 WABA supporters showed up.

Everyone looked to be enjoying the food and drink, the silent and live auctions, catching up with old friends and meeting new ones, and dancing the night away. The event was a big success for WABA as we succeeded in raising over \$30,000 for our safety and education programs.

When I think of Finland, I think of snow. I also think of unpronounceable words with double a's and a sea-based diet. To make the event seem more Finnish, I'd like to thank our Weather Committee which arranged for the snow. It wouldn't have seemed quite as Finnish without it. A big thank you is also needed for WABA staff, the Gala and Auction committee, the wonderful volunteers on which WABA depends, and all those who support WABA and its mission. We couldn't have done it without you.

As I biked home through the snow-blanketed streets of D.C. at midnight, I thought about what a great time I had and what a wonderful group WABA truly is.

WABA STAFF WELCOMES SUSANNA MURLEY

We are pleased to announce the hiring of Susanna Murley as WABA's new Membership and Development Manager. Her job as part of WABA's staff will be to find ways to expand our membership base, strengthen WABA's reach into the communities we serve and to raise funds for WABA's programs.

As a graduate student who was poor on cash but possessing a fabulous gold Bianchi, Susanna Murley started loving bikes. For her it was free and timely transportation that got her to class, the laundromat or the grocery store (whether that means she's impatient and cheap or efficient and economical, we aren't sure yet). She has significant ties to the DC community through the Younger Women's Task Force, DC Metro Chapter as the Communications Director. Susanna graduated from Saint Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota and attended the University of Delaware for her Master's degree in English.

SIX THOUSAND BIKES FOR THE WORLD DONATED BY WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE AREA CYCLISTS

Bikes for the World recently completed its first year as a WABA-sponsored project with unprecedented results. Over 6,000 bikes were donated by individuals and institutions in the greater Washington-Baltimore region to projects of community benefit both locally and abroad.

Most bikes collected by Bikes for the World go overseas. During the past year, more than 1,250, including 200 new Roadmaster mountain bikes donated by the Brunswick Corporation, went for tsunami recovery in Sri Lanka. All bikes were donated to individuals affected by the tsunami, via an ecumenical network under the supervision of the Sri Lanka Association of Greater Washington.



The largest number of bicycles—four 40 foot shipping containers carrying almost 1,800 bicycles—went to the Panama Association of Goodwill Industries, the affiliate of Goodwill International in that country, where people with disabilities enjoyed gainful employment fully-staffing the entire operation, from servicing to retailing the bikes in low-income communities. Other bikes going overseas during 2005 went to Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Barbados, and Ghana.

In the Washington DC area, BfW donated smaller numbers of bikes to the Project Hope and Harmony, serving day laborers in Herndon VA, and to DC Village, serving homeless and abused families (in cooperation with City Bikes). Together with Griffin Cycles, BfW

provided a bicycle, lock, and helmet to a Katrina evacuee resident in DC and requiring transportation to work. With the technical support of the Bicycle Place, BfW provided a loaner bike, for exercise and stress relief, to the visiting father of an Iraq veteran recovering at Walter Reed Hospital.

Several area bike retailers, such as Bikes@Vienna, City Bikes and Bob's Bikes, currently accept bicycle and parts donations on behalf of BfW. Still others, including Bonzai

Bikes, Hudson Trail Outfitters, and REI, are hosting bike collection events on specific days later this year. For further info on Bikes for the World and a schedule of upcoming collections and drop-off sites, visit www.bikesfortheworld.org, or link from the WABA home page.



ARLINGTON COMMUNITY BIKE RIDE: MAY 27TH



WABA invites you to join us in celebrating the wonderful trails and bikeways of Arlington County, a bronze level Bicycle Friendly Community award winner, at the Arlington Community Bike Ride on Saturday, May 27th.

Pedal either 8 or 17 miles and learn how many places you can go on two wheels! The majority of both routes will take place on bike trails, but both will involve some on-road riding. The cost of the ride is \$15 per person for those who register before May 24. Children 13 and under are free. On-site registration the day of the event is \$20 per person. All participants will receive a t-shirt, refreshments, opportunities to make new friends, and a chance to win a new bike! Children also may participate in a free Kids Bike Rodeo to learn and practice safe riding skills. WABA's Confident City Cycling classes are open to adult registrants leading up to the event.

Visit www.WABA.org or call 202.518.0524 for more information about the ride.

Bike Summit (continued from page 2)

- **Funding the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program.** Funding for this program of the National Park Service has been cut by over \$500,000 in the latest budget.



In addition to raising national issues, WABA used this as an opportunity to highlight local concerns. In DC, we discussed the recent general management plan for Rock Creek Park and the Met Branch Trail. In Maryland we raised

the issue of the lack of a trail along the ICC and explored funding options for a new trail along the Suitland Parkway. And in Virginia we talked about the effects of the widening of I-66 on local trails.

Also part of the Summit was a reception for Bicycle Friendly Communities award winners which include Arlington, DC and Rockville as well as the traditional Congressional Bike Caucus Ride and post-Summit happy hour hosted by WABA.

Special thanks go out to One Less Car and the Virginia Bicycling Federation for coordinating hill meetings. For more information about the national issues facing bicyclists, visit the website of the League of American Bicyclists at www.bikeleague.org.

GET RIDE ON ELECTRONICALLY

Due to a snafu with our old database, we have lost the information of those members wishing to receive Ride On electronically. Help WABA save trees (and money) and sign up to receive Ride On via email today! Simply send a message to waba@waba.org or call us at 202-518-0524.

WABA TO PROVIDE VALET PARKING AT NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

Having trouble finding bike parking on the mall during big events? So were we!

Thanks to the Downtown DC Business Improvement District and the District Department of Transportation WABA was able to provide safe, convenient and FREE valet bicycle parking on the National Mall as part of the National Cherry Blossom Festival. Hundreds of cyclists left their bikes in WABA's care to enjoy the cherry blossoms lining the Tidal Basin without worrying about security. The valet bike parking is part of an ongoing effort by the Downtown BID and DDOT to promote alternate means of transportation to special events downtown.

That sounds cool! How did it work?

As cyclists rode up to the small island at 15th and Independence Ave SW, where the valet service was located, there were greeted by a volunteer who helped them fill out a claim check and rolled the bike into the corral. When you were ready to ride home or to your next destination, you simply presented a volunteer with your claim check and picked up your bike.

That sounds FUN! I want that at my event!

If you are an event organizer and would like to have valet bike parking at your event, email Maggie at maggie@waba.org and she will get you set up.



THE SPIN ZONE RADIO SHOW MAKES AIR WAVES

If you want something done right, do it yourself. Or, if you wish there were more people talking about bikes, start a radio show. Meet lucky cyclist Al Rickard, who started his show, The Spin Zone, to talk about the great sport of bike riding and how cycling can make your life better. The show airs on the third Sunday of every month from 1-2 pm on WMET 1160 AM. WABA is proud to support this long-time member in his new role.

Al started riding as a serious recreational cyclist when a few of his friends encouraged him to ride. He was impressed with how good he felt when he got off the bike. "Once you start riding, you're hooked. After a long ride, I feel 20 years younger." He stated to make the commute from Chantilly, VA to DC, a 28 mile ride mostly on trails—a ride that was safe and fun, and secured his commitment to the show's mantra: "Cycling can make your life better." As president of Association Vision, a PR marketing company, he's an expert ally in for the bicycling community. He had prior experience as a radio host, but wanted to do a new radio show about something he's passionate about. So, he did it himself and funded The Spin Zone out of pocket.

Al is filling a critical space in promoting bicycling in the DC area. "Everyone has a bike, or has ridden a bike. The only reason they don't ride is because they haven't. I want to help people take the bike down from the rafters, clean it off and get back out and ride." His show will help everyone get out riding, whether you are an inexperienced, recreational or racing bicyclist. "Find a

group of people to ride and do it together. The DC area is great for riding. There are trails to ride on safely, we should all take advantage of them."

On April 16, WABA's own Eric Gilliland will be a guest and talk about our annual Bike to Work Day and bike commuting in the DC area.

If you have any ideas or questions about The Spin Zone, or if you would like to become a sponsor, send an e-mail to Al Rickard at arickard@associationvision.com.



Tune into the Spin Zone to hear WABA member and host, Al Rickard

WABA 2006 ADVOCACY CALENDAR

Mark your calendars for the following recurring bicycle advocacy meetings throughout 2006. For a bi-weekly update on advocacy activities, sign up for WABA's e-bulletin "Quick Release" by sending a message to waba@waba.org.

» BikeWalk Alexandria

First Monday of each month, 7:30 to 9:00pm at St Elmo's Coffee Pub, 2300 Mt. Vernon Avenue. Contact: Jerry King, jjkingconsulting@yahoo.com, 703-684-1688.

» Arlington County Bicycle Advisory Committee

First Monday of even-numbered months. Arlington County Govt. Center (#1 Courthouse Plaza), 2100 Clarendon Blvd (Clarendon Metro), ground floor conference room off main lobby. For more info, contact Charlie Denney, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, by phone 703-228-3633 or email cdenney@arlingtonva.us.

» Coalition of the Capital Crescent Trail Board Meeting

Second Monday each month, 7-9 pm. Bethesda-Chevy Chase Services Center, 4805 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda. Visit www.cctrail.org for more information.

» D.C. Bicycle Advisory Council Meeting

First Wednesday of odd-numbered months, 6 - 8:00 pm. Contact D.C. Bicycle Coordinator, Jim Sebastian, for more information, by phone 202-671-2331 or email jim.sebastian@dc.gov

» Fairfax Countywide Non-Motorized Transportation Committee

Second Wednesday of each month. 7:30 pm. Call WABA representative James Frew, 703-442-7848, for information.

» Metropolitan Branch Trail Coalition

Second Thursday of each month, 6:30-8:30 pm. Contact Paul Meijer for more information by phone 202-726-7364 or email meijer@cua.edu.

» WABA Board Meeting

Second Monday each month, 6:30-8:30 pm. Contact the WABA office for location and agenda by phone 202-518-0524 or email waba@waba.org.

» Montgomery County Bicycle Advisory Committee (MCBAG)

3rd Tuesday of the month from 6:30 - 8:30 pm. Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, Maryland, 10th floor conference room.

» Prince Georges County Bicycle & Trails Advisory Group (BTAG)

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

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