



July 2010 Bulletin

"Prez Sez" July 2010 by Derek Chu, NYCC President

- [NYCC Website to be Overhauled This Summer](#)
- [Here's Why We're Jumping for Joy About Our New Website](#)
- [What's the Deal With the New Website?](#)
- [Things May Change but Volunteers are Still Needed](#)

July Bulletin Articles

1. [2010 A-SIG and C-SIG Graduates -- Welcome to the NYCC Fold](#)
2. [NYCC All-Class Ride: All Class Volunteers, or Hal and Grace's \(and Lauren, Irasema, Glendon, Scott and John's\) Excellent Adventure](#)
3. [NYCC Member in Focus: Cycling in 50 Countries and 50 States](#)

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[Bulletin](#)
[Escape New York](#)
[NYCC Stuff](#)
[Contact us](#)
[Archive](#)
[FAQ](#)
[Sitemap](#)

"Prez Sez" July 2010

By **Derek Chu**, NYCC President

NYCC WEBSITE TO BE OVERHAULED THIS SUMMER



*"Ch-ch-ch-ch-changes
 Turn and face the strange.....
 Strange fascination, fascinating me
 Ah, changes are taking the pace I'm going through"*
 — "Changes," David Bowie (1971)

Since 2002, the current NYCC website has evolved under the careful direction and expert programming skills of NYCC member, web guru and overall "Jedi Master of the Web" Peter O'Reilly. Peter has volunteered many thousands of hours to the Club in building and maintaining the website. His contributions, high energy, and devotion to NYCC cannot be measured, but on behalf of the many thousands of NYCC members who have used the site — "Thank you, Peter!"

Over the years, with the capable assistance of 'web elves' like Timothy McCarthy and numerous webmasters, NYCC.org has been an amazing website that has effectively communicated and served the Club. As the Club nears 2011 – our 75th Anniversary "Diamond Jubilee" year – the Board of Directors has embarked on a process to overhaul the website.

Since late November, the Executive Board has been engaged in a careful analysis and an objective, transparent review of the website. We have spoken to many Club members and received the professional advice of Club members from various technical and communications backgrounds.

HERE'S WHY WE'RE JUMPING FOR JOY ABOUT OUR NEW WEBSITE



"Because things will change, can you feel it now?"
— "Change," Taylor Swift (2008)

So here's why we are jumping for joy about our upcoming new website — improvements galore!!

- **Improved Ability to Serve and Communicate with Membership.** As our website progressed and evolved through the years, numerous behind-the-scenes processes (not associated with the website itself) have become highly labor-intensive and cumbersome for certain NYCC board members to do their volunteer communications jobs. We needed to streamline the convoluted technical processes for the sake of speed and efficiency. Also, just as importantly, a technology upgrade was urgently needed in order to recruit, and keep engaged and sane our current and future volunteer Board members and Club leaders assigned to work in the NYCC communications arena.

- **E-Commerce Limitations.** Until March 2010, NYCC used Active.com exclusively for electronic commerce activities, e.g., membership registration, Club gear orders, Club weekends, and event registration. In March, the NYCC web team smoothly switched the Berkshires Weekend Dinner and West Point Weekend registration to PayPal. The web team installed a temporary storefront software called "OpenCart" to manage the orders. As a result of the analyses that OpenCart allows, the web team and Board of Directors are able to learn more about and accurately identify NYCC's current e-commerce needs, allowing the Club to be more responsive to evolving membership behavior. Going forward, NYCC will use PayPal for all of its e-commerce. "Escape New York" will, however, continue to use Active.com for its event registration.
- **PayPal Savings.** In addition to PayPal being widely used, safe and secure for e-commerce, it offers staggering cost savings to the Club. The PayPal savings versus Active.com is as follows:
 - **Active.com fees:** 6.75% + \$1.25 per registration
 - **PayPal fees:** 2.9% + 30¢ per transaction

The incredible savings and streamlining of our e-commerce processes makes PayPal a wise move for the Club! In 2010, NYCC has already saved hundreds of dollars with the Berkshires and West Point Weekends registrations.

- **Membership Data Limitations.** Active.com is used to collect NYCC's membership information. Active.com is an effective event registration tool but it is not a membership management tool. It has been a hectic and time-consuming manual process to maintain an up-to-date and accurate NYCC membership database. NYCC member Bob Cowin has, for many years, contributed hundreds of hours of his time to maintain and manage a Microsoft Access database and Excel member files for many NYCC Membership Directors. Thank you, Bob!

Bob, your role is soon to be made obsolete. Thanks for hanging in there over the past year!

- **Content Management.** The Content Editor and Webmaster have struggled to efficiently make updates and changes to text and pictures on the current website. The new website will enable fast and glitch-free edits and updates to NYCC content and insertion of photos. It will also offer new clear navigation that will provide a first-level dais for content — removing the need to dig deeply into the website to locate information. The combination of an improved content management system and transparent website navigation will ensure that the users of the website (both front-end visitors and back-end content providers) will experience a delightfully easy-to-use and streamlined NYCC website!

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THE NEW WEBSITE?



"The more things change, the more they stay the same"

— French proverb

The basic content of the NYCC website will largely remain the same, but what will change is the overall site design, navigation, rides submission system, ride library, and Message Board.

One really exciting change will be the new RSVP system for rides (RSVP Ride System) where the data of members registering in advance online will provide ride leaders with a pre-populated ride waiver/sign-up sheet of pre-registrants. Ride leaders are sure to appreciate how the easy-to-read pre-filled sign-up sheets will facilitate the gathering of rider information and signatures required NYCC insurance requirements.

As has been communicated in my "Prez. Sez" columns this year, the Board of Directors has followed a disciplined and transparent process for the website overhaul. Following is a brief timeline of our steps:

- **Nov./Dec. 2009:** Benchmark with other local Bike/Running Clubs — We contacted the webmasters of numerous local recreational clubs to learn and research web technology, including Prospect Park Track Club, Westchester Cycle Club (WCC), Bike New York, and NY Flyers. In November 2009, an NYCC team (Crystiina Avram, 2010 Membership Director; Joe Hunt, 2009 Membership Director; Bob Cowin, Active.com/MS Access Guru; and Derek Chu) visited with Bruce Wells, the WCC webmaster, to learn about WCC's membership processes and website. Bruce was extremely helpful in sharing his ideas and work for WCC.
- **March 2010:** A 12-page Request for Proposal (RFP) reflecting NYCC's web requirements was sent to several web design firms for comment and bid. We received input and suggestions on the RFP structure from several Club members in the Information Technology and Communications business.
- **April 2:** Deadline for firms to submit their bids. The NYCC webmaster Jim Reaven and the web team narrowed the vendors to two finalists.
- **April 13:** A special meeting of the NYCC Board of Directors

was held so that the two web vendor finalists could make their formal presentations and pitches.

- **April 16:** Deadline for Board members to vote on their choice. The selected firm is Studio K&M in partnership with DOOR3 Business Applications, Inc.
- **May/June:** Finalize project scope and implementation schedule. Project begins.
- **August:** Projected completion and release of new NYCC.org website!

THINGS MAY CHANGE BUT VOLUNTEERS ARE STILL NEEDED!

The wheels of NYCC turn because of the sweat, tears and love of many volunteers, including the Board of Directors. Yet we still need more volunteers to help NYCC continue to function smoothly. Please donate your time to NYCC.

If you were in a SIG, we hope you will lead a ride or donate your time and skills to one of NYCC's Committees, including membership, content writing, the Diamond Jubilee Gala, and others. Contact us with your specific interest, regardless of your background – if you are in finance, marketing, or PR, a writer, an event planner, teacher, police officer, athlete, etc. We need your help. Email us at president@nycc.org

2010 A-SIG and C-SIG Graduates



Another round of A- and C-SIGGIES have earned their NYCC wheels and are now full-fledged graduates of the SIG programs. NYCC proudly shares the names of each of this year's A- and C-SIGGIES and welcomes them into the fold!

2010 A-19 SIG Graduates

David Abelson	Kevin Layman
Paul Adams	Philip Lee
Cyna Alderman	Jeff Levine
Erika Blank	Sally Lloyd-Jones
Ellen Borowka	Abraham Marcus
James Buchanan	Mary-Margaret Martin
Ben Campbell	Joseph Parsons
Lesse Castleberry	Ryan Rademacher
Patrick Chin-Hong	Freda Ready
Jae Cho	Jennifer Redmond
Eric Clark	Irasema Rivera
Aaron Cook	Edwin Roberts

Oliver Davis	Daniel Rosenberg
Felicia Ennis	Victoria Ross
Geraldine Estrada	Jessica Schpero
Gordon Finn	Damon Strub
John Greenwood	David Torres
Michael Grinthal	Mikel Travisano
Mark Haller	Paul Trowbridge
Neil Hilkemeyer	Michael Weitzman
Erica Jacobs	Vero Wiles
Numzy Jupurrulaa	

2010 A-SIG Classic Graduates

Arden Rodgers	Daniel DeLuna
Frederick Grim	Josh Ragsdale
Mark Heller	Harry Wood
Craig Murgatroyd	Lauren Aronoff
Scott Reynolds	Lucia Deng
Andrew Hallett	Jason Spears
Bernardo Palomera	Peter Caesar
Charlie Collins	Sam Kopkind
Jean-Pierre Prusack	Lisa Mazzola
Richard Beckman	Crystiina Avram
Arvi Sreenivasan	Joel Anderson
Hugh Cagl	Russell Bogin

2010 C-SIG Graduates

Group 1

Kathy Kendall
 Katija Koehler
 Phyllis Lehon-Richman
 Ronna Levy
 Lynnaia Main
 Francesca Migliori
 Julie Owen
 Paul Richman
 Joel Spivak

Group 2 (The Mitchkins)

Avzaradel Andre
 Behrins Ashley
 Behrins Bradford
 ReginaBrewton-Smith
 Leslie Chin
 Laurie Cohen
 Cecilia Daley
 Paul Farr
 Debbie Forstenzer
 Andrew Forstenzer
 Jennifer Handler
 Andre Hunter
 Joan Lindemann
 Alejandra Negrete
 Olga Nekrasova
 Crystal Poon
 Rachel Siegel
 Bruce Siegel
 Minerva Tantoco
 Julie Waslyn
 Alice Wilder

Group 4 (The Crusaders)

Sylvia Alonso
 Susanne Brabrand
 Denise Brott
 Sonia Calabrese
 Erica Chow
 David Elbaum
 Bill Gans
 Jade Harris
 Diana Hsu
 Micah Ilowit
 Bharat Jalan
 Jessica Johnson
 Siddhesh Karmali
 Sree Kant
 Emily Kripitz
 Adam Offenhartz
 Deena Patel
 Menachem Penzoh
 Lauren Press
 Cara Schroeder
 Selin Zalma

Group 5 (The C Ya's)

Jeffrey Atkinson
 Vasco Bilbao-Bastida
 Henry Capellan
 James Cavin
 Clifford Emmanuel
 Rolando Felix
 Stephanie Gottlieb
 Jessica Greenwood
 Alex Holmes

Group 3

Brian Acosta
 Daria Aumand
 Vanessa Clark
 Sanja Erceg
 Lauren Gilker
 Glendon Gordon
 Lynn JangJan
 Jonathan Merrill
 Linda Nastaszewski
 Ariel Newland
 Rebecca Olerich
 Darren Ortsman
 Ron Panzok
 Christopher Snow
 Allison Snyder
 Betty Wu
 Mia Ziering

Gun Keresteci
 Danielle Kosecki
 David McCreary
 Kaylene Meyer
 Eve Nunez
 Susan Orr
 Ketul Patel
 Robert Stinson
 Leslie Valte
 Don Varley
 Andrew Weinstein

A Note From 2010 C-SIG Group 3 Leader Jim Reaven**NYCC Member since 2003**

The most interesting thing about C-SIG Group 3 is the degree to which it lived up to its position in the C-SIG as the middle child. This year, like every year, Group 3 was an interesting combination of skilled bike riders who are in need of conditioning and miles in the saddle, on the one hand, and well-conditioned people who learned to ride as adults and who need to be taught fundamental bike skills (for example, to stop and start the bike with their butt off the saddle and one foot on the ground) on the other hand. Due to the wide range of skills and challenges, some people made tremendous progress and this is really satisfying to the leaders... Becky Olerich and Lynn JangJan stand out as having improved greatly.

Beyond that, the 2010 Group 3 enthusiastically accepted the protocols of group riding. Half way through we had a really good line and everyone participated in watching out for the person behind them. When put in the front of the line, some people showed they are natural group-riding leaders by being very conscious of their responsibilities to the long tail of riders behind them... Lauren Gilker and Darren Ortsman did outstanding jobs in front. Others really understood pacing -- starting slowly but leading us at a surprisingly strong and steady pace -- Linda Nastaszewski and Betty Wu were memorable at this.

And thank goodness for our social leaders. This year some strong riders, who are also worldly business people, especially Sanja Erceg, saw to it that beer was on the agenda at the end of the warmer rides. This was aided by the wonderful refreshment location knowledge of co-leader Andie Cortes-Comerer, the refreshment sophistication of Jonathan Merrill, and the bar-food-ordering prowess of Glendon Gordon and Christopher Snow.

As the middle child group, Group 3 didn't choose a name... we would have needed two names at the least... but we embraced our fate and had a great time.

A Sweet Note of Thanks From the 2010 A-19 SIG to Their Ride Leaders



To view an enlarged version of the photo-card above, click on the image.

NYCC ALL-CLASS RIDE

All Class Volunteers, or Hal and Grace's (and Lauren, Irasema, Glendon, Scott and John's) Excellent Adventure

By Grace Lichtenstein, NYCC Public Relations Director

Take two NYCC board members who don't like shopping much and are used to buying food microwave-ready in small groceries, add a U-Haul rental van, a six-pack of watermelons, a thirsty bunch of club riders and a deli in Westchester... toss in two big knives, a dollar-store bag of tablecloths, other picnic supplies, the Second Avenue subway construction, one colossal Costco, four full-strength additional volunteers and one game-but-wounded road warrior... and you've got an idea of the volunteer effort that helped make the June 13 annual All-Class NYCC ride the largest and one of the indisputably successful group outings in the Club's history.

As a member of the Club for 20+ years, I have participated in numerous "big" outings, including Berkshire weekends, all-class rides, newcomer rides and Escape New York. But like most everyone else, I was largely ignorant of how much behind-the-scenes hard work and – Surprise! Fun! – goes into making these events tick.

Hal Eskenazi, the Club's Special Events Director, on the other hand, knows a lot about the sweat and toil behind the scenes since that's his specialty. What he didn't know was that when he recruited me as his co-pilot on the watermelon run the night before the All-Class Ride, he was choosing someone who not only hates to shop for more than a quart of milk, but who had never before encountered the

parallel universe called Costco.

Hal was jovial as he parked in the humongous building on East 117th Street in East Harlem that houses Manhattan's Costco. That's when I discovered shopping was not his favorite pastime either.

"The first time I did this at a Costco in Queens, I thought, 'Welcome to my worst nightmare,'" he said.

We strolled inside.

OMG.

There it was, a store on steroids, one that made Fairway look like a 7-11.

On every side were floor-to-ceiling warehouse shelves of everything from iPods to mega-bundles of Brawny paper towels, from pallets of shrink-wrapped cases of bottled water as far as the eye could see to fish-oil capsules in jars so big you'd grow gills before digesting them all.

"They've got everything here," said Hal. "In fact, if I put a bar code on your forehead you'd be for sale here too."

More than an hour later, we pushed several carts loaded with bottled water, watermelons, and three kinds of cookies. A box of cookies jumped out of the cart onto the pavement. Hal picked up every last one, turned around, and returned it for a fresh box.

The U-Haul rumbled downtown on Second Avenue over a roadway that thanks to the Second Avenue subway construction resembled the landscape in the movie "Wall-E." Watermelons rolled around the back of the van like bowling balls. I was certain the whole cookies we bought would be pummeled into a van-full of crumbs by the time we got to Kingsland Park the next day. Hal and I had a quick dinner and parted to rest up for the next day's activity.

I could tell you about driving through East Harlem the day before the Puerto Rican Day parade, or the phone call from Derek Chu in Central Park telling us there were 200 riders (more than we anticipated), or the last-minute run to Rite-Aid by Hal to pick up extra water. Let's just say that against all odds, we made it north to Kingsland, where we met up with the other volunteers – Lauren Hutton Gilker, Irasema Rivera, Glendon Gordon, John Kalish and Scott Wasserman, the latter recovering from a serious shoulder accident, but game nevertheless.

In what seemed like no time, we had laid out the fabulous wraps and side dishes delivered by the Riverfront Deli in Valhalla, put the water bottles on ice, sliced several watermelons, strategically hid half the cookies so there would be plenty left for later-arriving groups, and prepared plenty of garbage disposal barrels.

About 11:40am, the first A-riders began to trickle in. For the life of me, I can't recall what anyone said from then on, because I was too busy unveiling platters of potato salad and slicing still more watermelon. By 12:30, we had a happy crowd of hungry NYCC members thrilled to partake in the event that's not supposed to exist: a free lunch.

Many people took a moment between bites to thank us. I was amazed that we had enough food, and even more amazed that

although I didn't ride myself, I felt very gratified at helping to make the annual ride a success. I have a brand-new appreciation for those who volunteer for the numerous events that make our club so terrific, and admiration for those like Hal who take on the responsibility of planning them.

All class volunteers, indeed.

NYCC MEMBER IN FOCUS

Cycling in 50 Countries and 50 States

By Jay Jacobson, NYCC Member since 1993

(Note: Dates in parentheses refer to related articles I wrote which are in the archives section of the nycc.org website)



I lived my first 40 years as a totally non-athletic couch potato. Sometime around my 40th birthday I lost 50 pounds. To complement and maintain my new thinness, I must have needed some type of exercise. One day I picked up a clunker bike in my garage and soon I was three towns away and within a few weeks I was doing 50-mile roundtrips.

Since then I have ridden about 150,000 miles on six continents – that's more than **25,000,000 pedal strokes!** Much of it has been on 15+ years of NYCC rides, both as a group member and ride leader. I have ridden on some A and C rides but prefer the relaxed pace of B rides. On B rides, I can appreciate some of the stunning scenery in the tri-state area (February 2008) and chat with fellow riders.

In the past eight years, I have had about 2,000 cyclists join the NYCC rides I have led. I have a repertoire of about a half-dozen rides called "Jay's Lo Hud/West Bank Vista" series. *Bicycling* magazine called these some of the country's best group rides. Lance Armstrong recently said that the ride between Manhattan and Piermont (my hometown) is among the best in the U.S. On many of the rides, cyclists have visited our mini-biking/touring museum. We are the only active club members who live in the biking mecca of Piermont (September 2005).

I have done two 1,000 mile solo (April 2006) trips, each in 9 days – that's 9 straight centuries. One was from New York to Chicago and

the other was from Memphis to Minneapolis.

I have taken almost 80 group rides of five days or more in the U.S. and overseas with bike touring companies (July 2005). Over 30 of these have been with 2 companies – Backroads and Ciclismo Classico.

Having cycled in all 50 U.S. states, I then completed cycling in all the Canadian provinces and I cycled in my last Australian state and territory in 2009. I have also cycled in virtually all the regions of France (and all of its overseas departments and territories), Italy, Switzerland and New Zealand. Two of our favorite cycling venues are islands, Hawaii (April 2005) and Corsica (February 2005). I have taken between 7 and 10 cycling trips to each of these gorgeous areas!

Particularly memorable bike trips were taken in Brazil (January 2006), Morocco (April 2007), two bike tours of South Africa, Vietnam (December 2006) and India in early 2010.

I think cycling is a wonderful way to see these countries and connect with their people. Since I consult historical climate statistics for each place I travel, I rarely run into bad weather. However, once in a while on a rainy day, we are herded into a bus for a day of museums, churches and shopping. I can then appreciate my customary mode of two-wheel travel!

Some of the best cycling was done on our tandem (June 2006) with my stoker and wife, Joan.

Over the years, I have met hundreds of bicyclists, including such notable racers as Lance Armstrong, Greg LeMond, Frankie Andreu, prominent writers, announcers, bike manufacturers and bike touring company owners. (November 2005)

Writing pieces on these experiences has given biking and travel a new dimension. I was quoted in *Time* magazine and interviewed by several newspapers and television stations. I have given talks on the subject of bike touring before a number of groups.

Saying it has been much fun would be an understatement! Hopefully peace, \$\$\$ and health will permit me to continue for many more years.

I love to talk about cycling. Email me at joanandjay@aol.com with any questions you may have.

(Additional articles can be found on bootsnall.com – insert Jay Jacobson in search box in the upper right corner of homepage.)

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