



August 2010 Bulletin

"Prez Sez" by Derek Chu, NYCC President

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| NYCC News | -- Rolling Along -- Becoming One With the Road |
| Join the club | -- September 25 -- Escape New York Volunteers Needed |
| NYCC Events | -- Independence Day Weekend -- NYCC Lights Up West Point |
| Bulletin | -- NYCC Member Discount |
| Escape New York | -- NYCC Website Update |
| NYCC Stuff | -- Volunteer for NYCC |
| Contact us | |
| Archive | August Bulletin Articles |
| FAQ | 1. NYCC Call for Volunteers: Achilles Tandem Cycling is Recruiting New Ride Captains |
| Sitemap | 2. NYCC Member in Focus: Notching a Century With Big Hills, High Altitude and Views That Will Leave You Agog |

Submit!

Have you a hankering to express yourself in prose? Do you have a wealth of information to share with the NYCC membership? Have you just returned from some far-flung spot and wish to tell everyone about it? Submit! Submit!

August Bulletin Articles

- 1. NYCC Call for Volunteers: Achilles Tandem Cycling is Recruiting New Ride Captains**
- 2. NYCC Member in Focus: Notching a Century With Big Hills, High Altitude and Views That Will Leave You Agog**

"Prez Sez" August 2010

By **Derek Chu**, NYCC President

ROLLING ALONG – BECOMING ONE WITH THE ROAD

"It is by riding a bicycle that you learn the contours of a country best, since you have to sweat up the hills and coast down them. Thus you remember them as they actually are, while in a motor car only a high hill impresses you, and you have no such accurate remembrance of country you have driven through as you gain by riding a bicycle."

-- Ernest Hemingway



The "Big Wheel" was my first form of self-propelled wheeled transportation. Growing up in Holliswood, Queens, NY, I loved that I could pedal as fast as my own power would let me around my driveway and in the house – to my Mom's great frustration!. Just as Hemingway wrote, I sure knew first-hand all the bumps in our concrete driveway and our carpet too – that is until Mom banned me and my rumbling Big Wheel from the house! In later years, my Big Wheel sat abandoned after I learned to ride my bike in the P.S. 178 schoolyard.

Ahhh! I loved the freedom my yellow Huffy bike gave me to explore my entire neighbourhood. Soon I took my first "real job" (babysitting and picking a neighbor's weeds for \$1 a bag don't count as paycheck-issuing jobs) delivering the afternoon edition of the *New York Post* with a paper route of over 20 customers. My Dad and I installed a wire basket on my beloved Huffy to shuttle the newspapers. I earned a few dollars a week cycling my newspaper routes and I quickly knew the landscape like the back of my hand -- the location of each of my customer's house, and every street, pothole, street sign and hill within a 10-block radius.

In 2010, my treasured Big Wheel and yellow Huffy lie in the recesses of my parents' house. I now own a steel and a carbon bike that I alternate riding on NYCC rides. The radius of my riding has expanded by at least 100 miles and just like I did on my Big Wheel and Huffy, I am still enjoying learning and knowing the landscape of New York City and its environs. Hemingway definitely had it right: you have no such accurate remembrance of country you have driven through as you gain by riding a bicycle.

SEPTEMBER 25 -- ESCAPE NEW YORK VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



NYCC's signature event -- the 1,500+ cycling extravaganza -- Escape New York or ENY -- draws near. More volunteers are needed, especially folks who can help with SAG driving, navigation and basic bicycle maintenance. The Club comes together each September to offer this fabulously FUN and well-organized event. Contact enyinfo@nycc.org with your volunteer interest!

The hundreds of hours of detailed planning and organizing by Escape New York Director Ellen Jaffe and her ENY Committee will soon culminate in a whirlwind day of fantastic cycling. Thank you Ellen and team! We look forward to another well-executed cycling extravaganza!

INDEPENDENCE DAY WEEKEND -- NYCC LIGHTS UP WEST POINT

"Summer lovin' had me a blast.... Summer lovin' happened so fast..."

-- Danny and Sandy, "Grease"

Over 120 Club members enjoyed some "summer lovin'" and cyclin' during the three-day Independence Weekend Club event at the U.S. Military Academy with thousands of miles of cycling (all told), excellent food, and a wonderful dinner cruise under the sparkling fireworks in the evening sky. The Board of Directors and I wish to express our thanks and deep gratitude to July 4th Weekend at West Point Event Organizer Lucia Deng for a spectacular Club weekend full of camaraderie, sweltering temperatures, and great cycling!

Almost a year ago, Lucia raised her hand (via the NYCC Message Board no less) and out of the blue volunteered to run the 2010 West Point event. Thank you also to Basil Ashmore and all the ride leaders who led groups that weekend! A great time was had by all in spite of difficult weather conditions thrown in the mix by Mother Nature.

NYCC MEMBER DISCOUNTS



A reminder that all NYCC members receive special discounts at select bike stores. NYCC's hard-working Membership Director Crystiina Avram reminds Club members that we receive discounts ranging from 8 to 15% at most of the area's local bike shops, including:

- Bicycle Habitat, Bicycle Renaissance, Conrad's,
- Gotham, Larry's, Piermont Bikes,
- SBR, Sid's Strictly Bikes,
- Toga Nyack, Toga West Side,

Our newest discount is with Eastern Mountain Sports (EMS) Soho -- 50% off bike tune-ups and 20% off repairs, labor and parts is going on now for members through the end of October.

To view the Membership card and discounts at our Members-only password protected site, please [click here](#).

NYCC WEBSITE UPDATE



Please visit us again soon.

As discussed previously in our Club Bulletins, great changes are coming to the NYCC website. The update to our website continues to be an intricate work in progress. As a 501(c)7 not-for-profit organization with limited resources, we are fortunate to be working with talented web design firms Studio K&M and Door3 Business Applications. They are working to meet the many technical requirements of the new website. We are trying to keep delays to a minimum, but as with any construction work, they are to be expected. More time is needed before the updated NYCC website goes live.

NYCC's current content on the website and in the eWeekly are managed and edited by only one very diligent "eagle eye" -- NYCC's Content Editor Eunice Martinez (2009 C-SIG and 2010 B-16). Eunice is also leading the charge to populate our webpages with dynamic content.

Please be patient while we work to roll out the revamped NYCC website. We expect it will be well worth the wait!

VOLUNTEERS FOR NYCC

*"Cause you know that baby I, I'm your biggest fan.....
Papa-Paparazzi"*

-- Lady Gaga, "Paparazzi"

Don't be a bystander! Recall when you and your bike became one with the roads you rode and now continue to ride with NYCC. Help us to keep offering those great rides to new and current members by volunteering to help NYCC in any way you can. Volunteer to help NYCC and I'll be your biggest fan!

Contact President@nycc.org

NYCC CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Achilles Tandem Cycling is Recruiting New Ride Captains

By Anthony Green, Team Leader, Achilles Tandem Bike Team

For 25 years, the Achilles Track Club has provided disabled athletes

with opportunities to engage in healthy athletic competitions and events throughout New York City. The Achilles Tandem Bike Program expands on the programs that Achilles offers and serves as a forum where disabled athletes can learn the skills needed to participate in quintessential New York events such as the Five Boro Bike Tour. Tandem cycling is a wonderful way for people with disabilities to exercise, have fun and bond with able-bodied friends or loved ones.

The Achilles Tandem Bike Program was inspired by Artie Elefant, a 63-year-old Achilles athlete who lost most of his vision due to retinitis pigmentosa over 20 years ago and was diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukemia. In spite of these obstacles, Artie continues to train and compete in various endurance events, including marathons, triathlons, and bike tours with the assistance of volunteer guides from Achilles.

"I am a visually challenged 63 year old male, but nearly 20 years ago my loss of vision forced me to stop riding my bike," said Artie. "Thanks to the Achilles Track Club's Tandem Bike Program, I am back on the road again enjoying the feel of the wind in my face and the open road. I am now able to create an entirely new set of memories and experiences, which is why tandem biking can be so great for a visually challenged person such as myself or any other person with adaptive sports needs. There really isn't anything as rewarding as feeling the terrain of the road and the smell and sounds of the world as you ride through it. These are feelings that I have only recently rediscovered through the joys of tandem biking."

Achilles owns 10 tandem bicycles that are stored in Central Park, and its program of bi-weekly rides will be available for Achilles members of all ages, fitness levels, and abilities. If you are interested in trying a tandem as an Achilles Member or as a guide, please contact Anthony Green at anthony.green@concepglobal.com.

To view an ABC Eyewitness News video about the Achilles Tandem Bike Program, please [click here](#).

NYCC MEMBER IN FOCUS

Notching a Century With Big Hills, High Altitude and Views That Will Leave You Agog

By Susi Wunsch, NYCC Member since 2005

You've probably heard of America's Most Beautiful Bike Ride (AMBBR), a 100-mile clockwise circumnavigation of Lake Tahoe in California and Nevada.

Perhaps you've wondered, "Does it live up to its name?"

The answer, based on my participation in this year's ride, is a whole-hearted "Yes!" In a recent blog post, I described this vista-fest of crystalline water, snow-capped peaks and majestic pines as "toss-you-against-a-wall and smack-your-senses-around breathtaking." And that is probably an understatement.

Although AMBBR wasn't my first century, it presented a few new

challenges, including shipping my bike cross country and grinding up big hills at altitude. Preparing for, traveling to and riding in this event yielded some tips that may be helpful to NYCC members who are considering AMBBR '11 or, more immediately, its sister ride on September 12, [Tour de Tahoe -- Bike Big Blue](#).

As a start, you'll find all the details about AMBBR, including glorious photos and an elevation chart, [here](#). I've found that my cycling friends' curiosity has focused primarily on hills and altitude, so are the basics:

- Two big climbs bookend this ride: An 800-ft. climb to a rest stop overlooking Emerald Bay begins at Mile 11 and a 1,000-ft. climb to Spooner Junction starts at Mile 81. In between, many short, rolling ascents and descents provide plenty of opportunity to take in the views.
- A 72-mile ride option circles the lake only; the century adds an out-and-back to Truckee, CA, beginning at Mile 32.
- The altitude ranges from 6,300 to 7,300 ft. To put that into perspective, the elevation of the Central Park Reservoir is approximately 118 ft.
- Organizers note that AMBBR is for conditioned recreational cyclists, not beginners. This is a national ride for [Team in Training](#), which fielded 1,500 of the more than 3,000 participants.

Register early: I signed up online in January for the June 6 ride. Like many desirable destination events, AMBBR has sold out in recent years.

Follow a training plan: I maintained a fitness base with spin classes during the winter months and then began building incrementally toward my century goal in mid-March using this [12-week training program](#). If your typical ride is mostly on the flat, I would recommend seeking out as many hill training opportunities as you can find in the Tri-State area, including group rides to Bear Mountain with NYCC.

For a pre-AMBBR warm-up and confidence booster, I rode the [Bloomin' Metric](#) in Norwalk, CT as one of the final "long" rides of my training.

Prepare for thin air: A couple of weeks before the ride, my online research on preparing for altitude included this tutorial, [here](#).

A couple of acclimatization basics:

- Arrive early if possible. (I landed at my friends' Lake Tahoe cabin 3 days in advance of the ride.)
- Stay well hydrated.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and certain medications that may affect breathing.

I felt some effects of the altitude on the first day in Tahoe City, notably in shortness of breath climbing stairs from the lakefront; my headache could probably be ascribed to reining in my caffeine habit. Fortunately, I did not notice any problems with the altitude on event day.

Your bike on a plane: I chose to transport my bike roundtrip between New York and San Francisco via commercial airline. American Airlines charged \$100 each way. I rented a hard plastic case for \$10 per day, less the 10% NYCC discount from [Sid's Bike Shop](#) in Chelsea. While I pride myself on cycling self-sufficiency, I think I made the wrong call in disassembling and packing the bike myself, first time out. A mechanic who tuned my bike in Tahoe City discovered damage to my top tube, and, although it's impossible to establish cause and effect, I'll always wonder if I screwed up. My advice: Have your local shop pack the bike. Ask to watch if you plan to do it yourself in the future.

Of course, the other option, endorsed by many of my cycling friends, is to ship directly to a bike shop in Tahoe for unpacking, re-assembly and tuning. I passed on this option because 1) it was more expensive and 2) the long lead times would have taken my only road bike out of commission for longer than desired.

Go ahead, over pack:

- Temperatures and weather conditions at Lake Tahoe vary widely. (It had snowed at Squaw Valley the weekend before the race.) I packed lots of extra layers, including a helmet liner and fingered gloves, plus rain gear. At altitude, you'll also want polarized lenses for your sunglasses, the heaviest of sunscreens and lip balm that provides SPF protection.
- I had my bike tuned on arrival in Tahoe City and also stocked up there on CO2 cartridges, an extra tube and other last-minute needs.
- Easy, 20-mile warm-up spins on the Friday and Saturday before the event helped me shake off travel stiffness.

The take-away: Our event-day weather was perfect with excellent road conditions. Although the rest stops on this well-organized ride offered the usual carbo spread, we feasted mostly on the Lake Tahoe scenery. Favorites: The view from Inspiration Point down to tiny Fannette Island in Emerald Bay and the vistas from atop Spooner Summit. Even the out-and-back, with its bike path option along the burbling Truckee River was special.

While my training program yielded a good base for climbing, I was not as well prepared -- mostly because of lack of practice -- for the event's two fast, steep down-hills, particularly the 6-mile descent from Spooner Junction. Feathering the rear brake *lightly*, as well as adopting an upright, un-aerodynamic posture helped make going downhill less scary. One surprise: even with the big hills behind me, the last 5 miles, and particularly the small Round Hill ascent at Mile 98, which a friend who has done this ride many times calls "the final insult," were surprisingly challenging. I would recommend using the last rest stop, which I passed up, to re-focus for the final push to the finish line.

Finally, a word about preserving your memories of this thrilling ride: With so many beautiful vistas calling out to you, don't surrender to the "we'll take a photo at the next rest stop" line from your friends. If you see a shot you want and can pull over safely, do it or regret it when your Lake Tahoe Flickr file looks a little skimpy.

About the Author: Susi Wunsch is the author of the new blog

[velojoy](#), fun stuff about bicycling. Read additional posts about AMBBR – including the [saga of the cracked carbon-fiber top tube](#) – as well as articles about cycling news and culture.

Favorite Stops In and Around Tahoe City:

Dave's Olympic Bike Shop, Tahoe City – wide selection of cycling apparel and gear, and friendly service

Paco's Bike and Ski, Truckee – the area's most experienced mechanics

Christy Hill Restaurant, Tahoe City – sunset views from every table on the elevated outdoor deck overlooking Lake Tahoe

Farmers Market, Tahoe City – every Thursday, May 23 – September 30 at Commons Beach. Browse buckets of flowers, baskets of strawberries and bins of red beets on the lakefront.

Hike to Vikingsholm Castle, Vikingsholm State Park – Scandinavian-style mansion built in 1928-29 on the south shore of Lake Tahoe overlooking the lake's only island, the tiny Fannette Island. Hike from there to scenic Lower Eagle Falls.

[HOME](#)

[RIDES](#)

[RESOURCES](#)

[MESSAGE BOARD](#)

Copyright © 2008 New York Cycle Club. No images, text, graphics or design may be reproduced without permission. All rights reserved.

