



EBC Bikewriter

November 2006

The Evansville Bicycle Club Newsletter

The President's Pacelines

by Mark Oliver

The 25th Great Pumpkin Metric was held on a day when the weather and the anticipation of a great day for riding was as good as one could have hoped for. And while the event was enjoyed by most, it was a tragic day for the Wolf family and for all who knew him. It was a day that started with the promise of being the best GPM ever. For many who did not know of the accident involving cyclist Sam Wolf it was indeed a beautiful day spent with friends and family riding bikes. But for those who knew Sam and knew of his accident, the day turned into one of deep grief. If you have not heard, Sam was involved in an accident while riding the long route. He was descending a hill into the town of St. Philip when a vehicle turned into his path. He was transported to Deaconess Hospital but did not survive the accident. The news hit all of us hard. We mourn the loss of Sam. I did not know Sam personally but I know many of you that did. I have heard nothing but wonderful things about him. He will be missed. To Sam's family and to his friends, you have our sympathy and our prayers as you suffer your loss. We will always remember Sam as a good husband, father, friend and fellow cyclist. Let us honor the memory of Sam as we follow his commitment to safety and his love of cycling.

25 Years for the Evansville Bicycle Club's Great Pumpkin Metric

by Darlene Wefel, GPM Coordinator

This year marked the 25th year for the "Great Pumpkin Metric." It was a glorious day with lots of sunshine and warm temperatures, approximately 850 riders, 21 cases of cookies, 5 cases of apples, 7 cases of bananas, 2 cases of oranges, 4 cases of peanut butter, 4 cases of jelly, 40 loaves of bread, 4 cases of Gatorade, 20 gallons of lemonade, 10 gallons of grape drink, 8 cases of snack crackers, 5 cases of candy, 3 cases of peanuts, 3 cases of raisins, 3 cases of M&M's, 15 cases of spaghetti sauce, 120 pound of spaghetti (equals 360 pounds of cooked spaghetti), 2 gallons of chopped garlic, 2 cases of Parmesan cheese, 1 case of crushed peppers, 2 gallons of olive oil, 1,200 paper plates, 1,200 napkins, 1,000 assorted ice cream treats, thousands of paper cups, 20 gallons of coffee, 6 dozen donuts, 20 gallons of chili, 40 loaves of French bread, and hundreds of hours of work went into making this years GPM a Silver Anniversary Event.

So much effort goes into making the GPM a enjoyable, safe event for every participant, and many club members put in long hours, which started back in February. Sponsors give products, giveaway items, and donate money and time to make this event a great event that the local community can be proud of. We mark routes, paint danger messages on the roads, and members of the club ride the routes the week before the event checking markings and hazards. We have SAG vehicles with warning signs patrolling the routes, every GPM Rider packet contains an information sheet with safety information. Even with all this effort, accidents do happen and this year's silver anniversary was no exception to accidents. Mr. Sam Wolf, per the Courier, had ridden every year in the Great Pumpkin Metric. This year, he was involved in a terrible accident with an automobile that claimed his life. He died from injuries sustained in the accident. All the members of the bicycle club extend our deepest sympathy to Sam's family and friends. This tragic accident and loss of life will have a lasting effect on everyone.

The committee who organizes the GPM will be reviewing the routes, exploring ideas of things we can do to improve the safety of all participants for the future GPM events. Everyone who rides a road bike knows how dangerous it is out on the roads, and it is a choice we all make every time we hop on our bikes and go for a ride. The Indiana Bicycle Coalition, and Connie Szabo Schmucker, Director of IBC, have been working hard to make Indiana a bicycle friendly state. They have supplied us with educational material for children and adults, and last week she mailed me Public Service Announcements on Share the Road safety announcements for all the local TV stations. We can all help support our rights to ride on the road, set good examples by obeying the laws as they pertain to cycling, and become members of the IBC. For more information go to www.bicycleindiana.org. If any group, or organization would like to learn more about bicycle safety, they may contact me through email on the club's web site or call 812-490-0686.

A Ride That Changed My Life

by Elaine Tietz

I rode my bike with Sam Wolf for 45 minutes, and it changed my life. What kind of impression will I leave on the people that I meet today? During the 45 minutes that I rode with him, I learned that he loved to ride, that he loved life, and that his friends loved and respected him.

On Sunday, October 1, 2006, I attended the Great Pumpkin Metric. I was planning to ride the 100k course as a tune-up for the Hilly Hundred Weekend in Bloomington, IN the following weekend. I arrived and headed out on my own a bit early. I was trying to get back home as early as possible since I was feeling a bit of guilt for participating in such a long ride that was taking away from family time on the weekend.

I had ridden the first about 27 miles on my own. I'm a decent rider but no match for the more experienced riders. Several groups of fast riders had zoomed past me and I had no hopes of keeping up. Sam was riding with two friends, Randy and Bob, and his group passed me shortly before the hill at Burdette Park. I had never met any of them before. They greeted me with, "It's a beautiful morning for a ride!" As we began up the hill, I caught up with them. They were making their way up the hill slowly. Randy had encouraged them and easily zoomed his way to the top. Bob led with Sam on his wheel. I didn't have the speed to pass them so I sat on Sam's wheel and huffed and puffed up the hill. Sam joked with me saying that they were so old that they wouldn't mind if I passed them, implying that younger guys might get a chip on their shoulder if a "chick" passed them on a hill, but that they wouldn't. I replied that there was no way that I could pass them, that my lungs were burning and the only way that I was going to make it up the hill was if they continued to pull me up. As we continued to chug up the hill, I kept my eyes on Sam's bright yellow jersey and my wheel on his wheel.

We made it up the hill and turned into the rest stop. We exchanged pleasantries and got nourishment. I got back on my bike and started to head out. The three of them were on their bikes but not quite ready to head out and said to me....."aren't you going to wait for us?" I told that I wasn't worried...that they would be catching back up to me in about a mile.

Sure enough, within a mile, they were back with me, but they didn't pass me up this time. They encouraged me to stay with them. I had to pick up my pace a bit and did. I told them I wouldn't be able to keep up the pace for long. The three of them were clearly good friends and rode together with ease. I felt a bit like an intruder into their riding group. But, when I started to drop off the back they encircled me and provided me with the benefit of a draft. We chatted. They teased me about my Alabama jersey and said that I didn't sound like I was from Alabama, to which I hammed up a lovely Southern accent to prove myself. I thought that maybe I'd seen Sam out riding before because his full grayish moustache looked familiar, but we determined that we hadn't ridden in the same areas.

For a time, I rode with Bob and for a time I rode with Sam. I eventually got used to their pace and pulled off the front with Randy. Randy is younger than the other two and an accomplished triathlete and clearly capable of riding with the "Big Dogs." We discussed triathlons and types of riding. When I asked Randy where he usually rode, he replied, "I ride with Sam." I took this to mean that wherever Sam rode is where he rode too. He explained that he enjoyed the friendship with Sam and Bob and even though they were older than him that they had a great time together. He told me how they were part of a great group of friends who worked out at the Tri-State Athletic club. I was touched by the camaraderie that they had.

Soon, there was a turn off to the right for the rest stop at Creamery Road. I followed Randy into the turn, but Bob and Sam did not turn in after us. Randy saw that they had passed up the stop and suggested that we skip the rest stop and catch up with them. We turned around and headed off to catch them. We went up the hill and past a church and as we came down we saw the scene of the accident. Very quickly, Randy realized that it was Sam on the ground.

At this point we had been riding together for about 15 miles. It is 15 miles of riding that I will never forget. I wouldn't have recognized any of them in regular clothes; I only knew them by their bikes, bike jerseys, and voices....but Sam stood out because of his moustache. The accident had probably occurred about a minute before we arrived (news accounts say it happened at 10:54 am).

Sam was laying face down in the center of the side street and just a few feet into the main road. The vehicle that hit him was a yellow Jeep Wrangler. The passenger side of the windshield was smashed inward. It had been traveling South on St. Philip Road. Sam had been traveling north. There was plenty of visibility in both directions.

(Continued on Page 3)

(Continued from Page 2) A Ride That Changed My Life

At the time of the accident, Bob was leading maybe 50 to 100 feet ahead of Sam. Randy and I were about a minute or two behind. Bob said that he did not see the accident, but heard it. He said that by the time he got his head turned around that Sam was on the ground.

The driver was a young man dressed in sweatpants. He was very upset and said that he never saw Sam. Randy and Bob were trying to contact Sam's wife. However they only had his home phone number and there was no answer at the house. They did not have his wife's cell phone number. I went to his bike which had been moved off the road and looked through his bike pack hoping to find some info.

A few minutes passed and the rescue truck came down to the scene. At this point a few more emergency personnel began to work with Sam. I must have been in a state of shock. Because although Sam seemed very gravely hurt, it seemed clear to me that he had been spared any head trauma.

Eventually, an ambulance arrived. The two EMS personnel from the ambulance also began to work with Sam. The Air Evac helicopter arrived and set down on the slope near the fire station to the South east of the scene of the accident. The Air Evac Ems personnel began to assist the others there.

One of the Bicycle club members came over to us and was getting info and trying to arrange a ride for us back to the 4H grounds. He wanted Bob and Randy to think of any way that they could get hold of Sam's Wife. Bob knew where her parents lived. It was near the 4-H grounds. But he didn't know their name or the exact address. It was decided that the sag wagon would drive us directly to the in-laws house to try to make contact with Sam's wife and then to the 4-H grounds.

We loaded the bikes and got into the truck. We drove for what seemed like forever. I leaned my head against the window and stared at the passing landscape not believing what had just transpired. We finally reached the in-laws house. They were then able to contact Sam's wife on the phone.

I feel that some of the public believes that bicyclists are just a hazard and somehow responsible for what happened. I don't feel that that is a correct assumption. I feel that motorists have to take responsibility when they get in their car to put distractions aside and constantly be aware of their surroundings. Everyone needs to be reminded of the responsibilities that we have when we get behind the wheel of the car.

On Wednesday evening I felt that I had to drive out to the scene of the accident. As I drove down the road toward the accident, I recognized the road. I remembered how we had all ridden together, chatting and laughing; not even considering what danger may lay ahead. We were all doing what we loved. Riding our bikes and enjoying one another's company. I was a random interloper into this group of friends. It was an odd situation to be in...I was too involved to leave, but not at all a part of the close friendship. I got a rare glimpse of what friendship is all about.

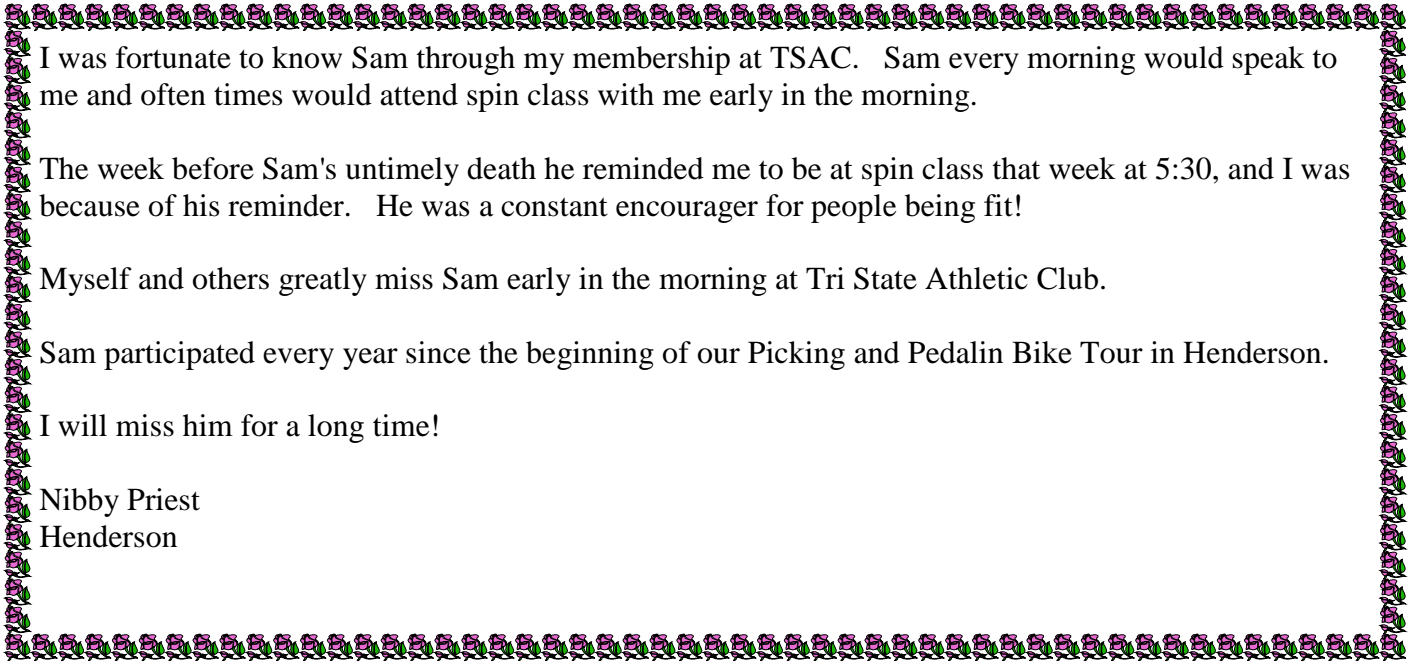
When I got to the intersection, I was overwhelmed. Someone had placed red roses in the grass next to the stop sign. I walked around the intersection trying to remember the scene as it was.

I rode my bike again on Tuesday. At first, I was apprehensive. I was afraid of the sound of cars. I eventually found that this would not overcome me and that I could still feel the joy and peace that I get when I cycle. I only knew Sam and rode with him for 45 minutes, but I know in my heart that's what Sam would want. I firmly believe that Sam died doing what he loved and even in the short time that I knew him I saw what a wonderful person he was.

There are a couple of things that I feel are important to learn from this tragedy. As cyclist, we must never assume what the motorists will do. And we must always have a phone number of a family contact with us.

"When man invented the bicycle he reached the peak of his attainments. Here was a machine of precision and balance for the convenience of man. And (unlike subsequent inventions for man's convenience) the more he used it, the fitter his body became. Here, for once, was a product of man's brain that was entirely beneficial to those who used it, and of no harm or irritation to others. Progress should have stopped when man invented the bicycle."

—Elizabeth West, *Hovel in the Hills*



I was fortunate to know Sam through my membership at TSAC. Sam every morning would speak to me and often times would attend spin class with me early in the morning.

The week before Sam's untimely death he reminded me to be at spin class that week at 5:30, and I was because of his reminder. He was a constant encourager for people being fit!

Myself and others greatly miss Sam early in the morning at Tri State Athletic Club.

Sam participated every year since the beginning of our Picking and Pedalin Bike Tour in Henderson.

I will miss him for a long time!

Nibby Priest
Henderson



SOUTHERN INDIANA TRIATHLON TEAM

After the YMCA Triathlon, we had so much interest that I started an area tri team. We currently have 45 members- it's only \$10 to join and we have weekly training sessions just like our bike club. Members receive a newsletter and training calendar each month via email. The newsletter highlights triathlon articles and provides a list of local races.

Tina Powers



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Matt Gard

Mike, Gretchen, Megan, Eric and Maria Miller

Danny and Angela Wooten

Paul Marvel

Darus Neighbors

Chris Barthel



Update on bike trails from Greg Meyer

Vanderburgh County Commissioner Cheryl Musgrave proposed, and the other two commissioners approved, the creation of four marked bike routes a couple of months ago. Steve Craig, Burdette Park Manager, arranged for route markers and warning signs along the routes, as well as large billboard maps at the two "trailheads" which are at Burdette Park and Dogtown Tavern.

The routes are on roads that EBC members are very familiar with: two shorter loops in the river bottoms, one out-and-back route along Old Henderson Road, and one route into the hills along Schmuck Road. Apart from the Greenway, this is the first major effort by any local government to create a bicycle-friendly area to ride. The more its used, the greater our chances for more projects like this.

Steve would like to do a ride sometime to promote the routes. It would have been great to do that this fall, but we ran out of time. I think it would work best if the ride is coordinated with an EBC Saturday ride or a Sunday afternoon ride so that we can maximize participation and also get some exposure for the Club. Steve will provide refreshments, and I'll arrange for press coverage. Please forward this idea to whoever schedules rides for the Club. They are welcome to contact me directly if they are interested in working something out.

Greg Meyer Meyer@msslegal.com
Steve Craig scraig@vanderburghgov.org

New Bike Trails Open, More Being Planned

October 18, 2006

On Feb. 21, 2006 Vanderburgh County Commissioners signed a design contract with Bernardin Lochmueler and Associates in the amount of \$150,600.00. This was for the design of a 2.5 mile long bicycle/pedestrian/nature trail between Burdette Park and the University of Southern Indiana. This contract will also include the preparation of legal descriptions for easements needed for the bike path construction.

The Burdette Park/University of Southern Indiana Pedestrian, Bike and Nature Trail will provide the 10,000 plus students and the community an environmentally friendly access between Vanderburgh County's largest park and a rapidly expanding University. The trail offers travelers an opportunity to experience the rare natural beauty of hidden lakes, an old stone quarry, a native forest and wild life. While providing a vital link between two of Vanderburgh County's unique treasures, it will also continue the American Discovery Trail. The development of this trail will offer a wide variety of teaching and learning opportunities for thousands of students and promotes healthy living for residents of Southwest Indiana of all ages.

On August 30, 2006 the Vanderburgh County Commissioners dedicated 32.5 miles of bike trails along the River Bottoms. Four routes defined with signage and maps that distinguish the difficulty and length of each different route were identified by large trail head maps. These 32.5 miles will connect to the Burdette Park/USI Bike, Pedestrian, Nature Trail and the American Discovery Trail to enhance this already much needed asset for our growing community. When complete, this trail will be a unique treasure for the benefit of the students and teachers of USI as well as our community and envy of other communities.

EBC Bikewriter

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EBC Web Page: <http://www.bicycle.evansville.net> "Provided by Evansville Online"
Submit articles: bicycling_chick@bellsouth.net

The Evansville Bicycle Club, Inc.

New Membership and Renewal Application 2006

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zip _____ Phone _____
E-mail Address _____
Signature _____

Individual \$12

Family \$20 +

\$1/child

Release of Liability

Evansville Bicycle Club, Inc. is organized for sole purpose of providing it's members with notification of central meeting points and times. Members freely elect to ride together as a group, following a route of choice. In signing this form for myself and/or my family members I understand and agree to absolve EBC, Inc. and it's organizers or sponsors for all blame for any injury misadventure, harm loss or inconvenience suffered as a result of participation in any ride or activity associated with or sponsored by the EBC, Inc. I further understand that I, as an individual am responsible to abide by all traffic laws and regulations governing bicycling and take full responsibility for my actions.

Make Checks payable to: Evansville Bicycle Club, Inc.

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