

The Whoool

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Volume 27; Issue 39

The Newsletter of Reston Bicycle Club

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

By Dan Scrafford

The club continues to grow in this new year and with that growth comes the challenge of accommodating the increasing number of cyclists. We have formed three new committees to help with that task: *Communications*, *Rides* and *Century*.

Ed Robichaud and Jeff Major will guide the Communications Committee's efforts to improve the way the club communicates to our members regarding ride scheduling and registration, among other things, through combined utilization of the club's website, newsletter and social media.

The Rides Committee, co-chaired by Dave Shomette and Charlie Bobbish, will review all of the club-sponsored rides and make safety recommendations as well as suggestions for adding variety and interest. We would like to offer more social and beginning level rides in the future. The speed of our rides and group riding etiquette can be intimidating to newer riders.

I will chair the Century Committee with constant help from Ken Thompson and Ed Robichaud, who have guided us through more than a decade of centuries. The club wants to increase the number of century participants from our average of 1,100 to 1,500. A significant step toward that objective is to have more people familiar with the project management aspect of this event. I wanted to learn the overall process and be able to mentor others when appropriate.

I invite you to volunteer to be on one of these committees. Our membership comprises people with many talents and the more we can tap into those talents the better the club will be. Most active members ride at least 5 hours per week. Your participation on these committees will likely be 1 hour per month. I hear amazing ideas on our Saturday rides about what the club can do, but the follow up is lacking. These committees will offer a format for follow up. The website and newsletter contain contact information for you to connect with us if you're interested in learning more about how you can contribute. Don't be shy!

As a result of the November elections, for the first time in the Club's history, we have a 3-headed Chairperson. I may be writing this Chairman's message, but Randy Karn and John Hamilton, will work with me to "share the Chair" this year. We are working sans job description so, more details as they become available. Dave Shomette is the new Vice Chair; Lisa Mackem is the new Secretary and Ken Thompson remains Treasurer. Members at large are: Jeff Major, Jill Spaeth, Bobby Anderson, and Charlie Bobbish. Ed Robichaud is our Member Secretary.

We've had 2 meetings with our new Board and the positive impact of having several new faces is evident in some of the fresh ideas we've been hearing. I am extremely excited to have such a talented board. Please consider attending a board meeting at the Reston Library on the first Wednesday of every month.

Ride safely**Dan**

Encouraging Women to Get UpOn A Bike!

By Kathy Rosen, MD, LCI

Two years ago, out of shape and overweight, I pulled my bike out of the garage and swore to a more committed relationship with my 12 year old Lemond Buenos Aires. I'd always been an avid cyclist, both on the mountain and the road, but kids, sporting events, and many other enabling excuses had allowed my devotion to wane and my weight to, well, do the exact opposite.

Having fought with the same thirty or so pounds many times over the last two decades, something clicked this time. Maybe it was desperation I felt as I approached mid-middle age, maybe it was my kids were capable (although not always willing) to fend for themselves so I could limit my exposure to refrigerator grazing. Whatever the reason, I lost 45 pounds and, more importantly, changed the way I eat in order to *keep* the weight off.

Although changing my diet was crucial, cycling played the biggest role in my success. I went from, on my first ride back, a trying hilly five miles to, within just over a year, completing two centuries and doing a fully loaded round trip on the C&O Canal from my house in McLean to Harper's Ferry--all within three weeks this past fall.

My bucket list has always been missing the check mark next to 'mountain bike in Moab, UT.' Last spring I took up mountain biking again after an eight year hiatus. This past spring I finally checked off Moab...and then Fruita, Colorado, and then the off road trails of Summit County, Colorado.

I simply fell in love with cycling all over again--and not just the physical act of being on my bike. I rekindled my addiction to bikes and bike gear, spending too much time on 'bike porn' online and, even despite the recent Lance debacle, continuing as an avid and devoted fan of professional cycling.

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Ride Level Descriptions

A - Aggressive riders. Grueling pace with sprints, 40 - 100 mi, 18 - 20+ mph avg.

B—Strong riders. Demanding pace, 25 - 75 mi, 14 - 18 mph avg.

C—Average riders. Moderate pace, 15 - 50 miles, 10 - 14 mph avg.

S—Social riders. Relaxed, casual tempo per group consensus

Welcome New And Returning Members

New

T Tran, Selma Tran, Jesse Wiegand

Returning

Emmett Delaney, Brent DeRobertis, Jeff Erler, Melanie Erler, Greg Gibson, Robert Harford, Vincent Kelly, Neil Knolle, Lois Olson, Mike Olson, Alan Rickard, Kevin Rickard, Karen Rompa-lo, Gerald Warren

WORKOUT OF THE MONTH

More on your Core - Good for You and Your Performance

By Jeff Major

True, it wasn't that long ago that I wrote a workout or two in this newsletter designed to help strengthen the core muscle group. I guess it's just a good time of year to work on those muscles, which are often neglected, even by dedicated athletes, who tend to concentrate so much on the specifics of their events that these important muscles get overlooked. There's that rational reason and then there's the other reason: I saw my 55 year old [brother](#) last week. The one who owns a Crossfit Gym or "box" as they call them in Crossfit vernacular, and I heard a lot (a whole lot) about how he preaches core strength and flexibility to his staff and members to improve athletic performance and prevent injuries. So, I returned from the Midwest with that record playing in my head and this is the result.

Instead of giving you a specific workout, I want to talk a little about what good core health really involves (evidently, it includes doing a side plank on your mother's carpeting while holding a glass of red wine). It also involves many muscle groups beyond the abs, to the surprise of a lot of folks. Good idea to work on the "six pack", but that's a small part of the picture.

The core muscles include: Rectus Abdominis, Erector Spinae, Multifidus, External Obliques, Internal Obliques, Transverse Abdominis (TVA), Hip Flexors (psoas major, iliacus, rectus femoris, pectineus, sartorius), Gluteus medius and minimus, Gluteus maximus, hamstring group, piriformis, Hip adductors. If you know the functions of all those muscles, bravo! The point is, the core comprises many muscles that fall into 3 primary categories: *Extensors*: Back and gluteal muscles, which straighten the back and extend the thigh away from the body as in getting up from a chair. *Flexors*: Abdominal and iliopsoas muscles, they bring the hips back in toward the body. You engage those muscles when pushing your lumbar against the floor while on your back. *Rotators*: paraspinal or side muscles, which are used to stabilize the spine when upright. These muscles also help rotate the spine.

I do not plan to memorize all of these; however, after reading about so many muscles performing opposing tasks, I think I can understand how an imbalance among them can lead to problems. And I'm living proof. A balanced core then, requires doing regular exercises, 2 - 3 times a week, to keep those muscle groups strong. And the good news is just about all these exercises can be done

(cont. on Page 3)

Core (from Page 2)

with light weights or using your own body weight.

What I have learned from my own back problems, which have included lumbar surgery recovery, physical therapy and on-going (more or less) core conditioning exercises is that flexibility is often the missing ingredient in discussions about core conditioning.

Take, for example, a well conditioned cyclist, who regularly takes time to strengthen those three major muscle groups: the extensors, flexors and rotators. Like most Americans, according to [The New York Times](#), he has some degree of back problem already. If it's a lumbar disk problem and he doesn't have good flexibility in his hamstring muscles, not uncommon in cyclists, he could strain his lower back when bending to simply adjust his shoe after a long ride. That could easily happen because even with those extra supportive core muscles the cyclist's tight, shortened hamstrings are putting pressure on his problem lumbar disk.

You can feel this yourself early in the morning. If you try to slowly touch your toes without warming up. Unless you have naturally very flexible hamstrings, you will feel your hamstrings tighten as you continue to reach toward your toes. Continue further and you will start to feel it in your lumbar. You youngsters can get away with it for a while, but eventually, your back will decide it's had enough. That's when the trouble really begins. And you don't want to go there.

So, rather than focus on one exercise, I'm going to list several that are great for strengthening the core muscles as well as improving flexibility in the upper leg muscles because this stuff really is good for you.

StrengtheningPlank

The basic plank exercise, is a great starting point. Here's how to do it right:

- Begin in the plank position with your forearms and toes on the floor.
- Keep your torso straight and rigid and your body in a straight line from ears to toes with no sagging or bending.
- Your head is relaxed and you should be looking at the floor.
- Hold this position for 10 seconds to start.
- Over time work up to 30, 45 or 60 seconds.
- A challenging variation of this can be done on a bosu or exercise ball.
- V-sits
- Begin in a seated position, contract your abdominal muscles and core, and lift your legs up to a 45-degree angle.
- Reach your arms straight forward or reach up toward your shins as you are able.
- Maintain good core posture and a strong spine. Don't worry if it's not an actual "V"; it's the muscles you engage that matter.
- Hold this position for several seconds to begin. As you get stronger, hold the position longer.
- Return to your starting position slowly.
- Just before you reach the floor, stop and hold the position for a few seconds.

(cont. Page 4)

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Core (from Page 3)Push Ups

- Get on the floor and position your hands slightly wider than your shoulders.
- Raise up onto your toes so you are balanced on your hands and toes.
- Keep your body in a straight line from head to toe without sagging in the middle or arching your back.
- Your feet can be close together or a bit wider depending upon what is most comfortable for you.
- Before you begin any movement, contract your abs and tighten your core by pulling your belly button toward your spine.
- Keep a tight core throughout the entire push up.
- Inhale as you slowly bend your elbows and lower yourself until your elbows are at a 90 degree angle.
- Exhale as you begin pushing back up to the start position
- Don't lock out the elbows; keep them slightly bent.
- If you lack the arm strength to do regular push ups, you can do these on your knees and challenge yourself by increasing the distance between your knees and your hands.

Back Bridge

- Lie on your back with your hands by your sides, your knees bent and feet flat on the floor.
- Make sure your feet are under your knees.
- Tighten your abdominal and buttock muscles.
- Raise your hips up to create a straight line from your knees to shoulders.
- Squeeze your core and try to pull your belly button back toward your spine.
- If your hips sag or drop, lower yourself back on the floor.

The goal is to maintain a straight line from your shoulders to your knees and hold for 20 to 30 seconds. You may need to begin by holding the bridge position for a few seconds as you build your strength. It's better to hold the correct position for a shorter time than to go longer in the incorrect position. You can make this exercise more challenging by lifting one leg and holding it straight out.

Hip Lift

Begin by lying on your back with your arms by your sides, palms facing up. Raise your legs so they are straight up toward the ceiling and perpendicular to your torso.

Pull your navel toward your spine and lift your hips a few inches off the floor, keeping your legs pointed straight up. Then slowly lower your hips back to the floor.

Oblique Twist

- Sit on the floor with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor.
- Contract your abs and sit at about a 45 degrees angle.
- Hold a medicine ball with both hands directly in front of you

- Contracting your abs, twist slowly from your torso to your right and touch the medicine ball to the floor beside you.
- Quickly, but smoothly, contract your abs and twist your torso and touch the medicine ball to the other side.

- This can be done effectively with no ball as well.

Lunge with Twist

- Stand with feet about shoulder width apart.
- Hold a medicine ball (optional) in front of you with elbows bent about 90 degrees. You may want to begin this exercise with no weight and build up strength over time.
- Step forward with your left foot into a lunge position.
- Be sure to keep your knee over your left foot; don't twist at the knee.
- From your torso, twist your upper body to the left. Then, reach across your left side with your arms outstretched. (Think of pointing to the left from your belly button).
- Slowly move your arms to center and step forward with the opposite foot and twist to the other side. Continue the movement for about ten steps.

Supermans

- Lie face down on a mat with your arms stretched above your head (like superman)
- Raise your right arm and left leg about 5-6 inches off the ground (or as far as you comfortably can).
- Hold for 3 seconds and relax.
- Repeat with the opposite arm and leg.
- As with most of these exercises, there are numerous variations that can be done to make this one more challenging.

The key with all of these is to stay in control at all times and to make sure you are engaging as many of your core muscles at the same time as possible. This runs counter to what many of us have been told in the gym about isolating certain muscles for development, as in body building. That is not the goal here.

Stretching

It's safer to stretch muscles AFTER they have been warmed up. Attempting to stretch prior to warming up can cause injury.

Lying Piriformis / Glute Stretch

Lie on back with knees bent. Lift left leg towards chest, keeping knee bent. Grasp lower left leg with both hands and pull leg toward the opposite shoulder. Hold for 30 seconds. Switch sides and repeat.



Core (from Page 4)**Kneeling Hip Flexor Stretch**

Kneel on mat. Bend right leg and place right foot ahead of you on floor, knee lined up over ankle. Left leg (knee to toes) remains on floor behind you (place a cushion under the knee if mat does not provide enough cushioning). Keeping back upright, press pelvis forward slightly - until you feel a stretch in the front of the left hip. Do not extend knee beyond toes. Tighten left buttock and tuck the tailbone under to increase the stretch and or move your left knee further back. Remember to keep back upright. Hold stretch for 30 seconds. Switch sides and repeat.

**Quadriceps Stretch**

The quadriceps muscles connect to your hip and knee joints, and run along the front of your thigh. To stretch the quads, the Arthritis Foundation says to sit on a stable armless chair. Gently move one leg behind you, while tucking your buttocks under your hips. You should feel a stretch along the front of your hip and thigh on that side. Repeat on the opposite side. Columbia Health says for a standing quad stretch, put one hand on a wall for support. Bend one leg, keeping your knees together. Use your free hand to hold the lower part of that leg off the floor. Your foot should not touch your buttocks, so don't pull up on it. Push your hips forward slightly. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat with the other leg.

**Standing Hamstring Stretch**

Place your foot on a step or chair. Keeping your knee and back straight, lean forward at your hips until you feel a stretch in the back of your thigh / knee. Hold for 15 seconds and repeat 4 times at a mild to moderate stretch pain free.



There are many more core strengthening exercises and stretches. These don't even scratch the surface, but they are excellent basic moves that address virtually all the important core muscles. I like to think of core conditioning as building a flexible protective support mechanism for the spine that can be tightened and eased as needed. We should all be keeping our core muscles toned and flexible throughout our lives, let alone in support of our cycling habits. I can't speak for anyone else, but when I am doing these exercises 2 - 3 times weekly, I rarely have a flare-up with my lower back. And that, along with the vision of my brother, explaining with food in mouth, the correct way to perform a squat, has me inspired to the core. I hope I've provided some stability in your life!

Jeff

Disclaimer: While I have experience as an amateur competitive athlete in numerous sports and have coached athletes, I am not a fitness expert nor am I currently involved in fitness coaching. The articles and information I provide on behalf of The Reston Bike Club are part of my voluntary role as Editor of this newsletter. I use a combination of knowledge gained from experience and from numerous sources of publicly available information. We recommend that you consult with a fitness expert and/or medical professional if you have any question about your ability to safely perform any workouts included in this or any edition of The Wheel.

UpOn A Bike (from page 1)

My bucket list has always been missing the check mark next to 'mountain bike in Moab, UT.' Last spring I took up mountain biking again after an eight year hiatus. This past spring I finally checked off Moab...and then Fruita, Colorado, and then the off road trails of Summit County, Colorado.

I simply fell in love with cycling all over again--and not just the physical act of being on my bike. I rekindled my addiction to bikes and bike gear, spending too much time on 'bike porn' online and, even despite the recent Lance debacle, continuing as an avid and devoted fan of professional cycling.

Cycling became a big part of my life and I found it naturally and often came up in conversations with both old friends and new acquaintances. Over time, I kept having the same conversation. Here's a synopsis:

Me: I ride my bike a lot.

Them: Oh, really?

Me: Yes, in fact, I just rode (fill in blank.)

Them: Really. And you did that alone?

Me: Yes, I did.

Them: Oh I would really love to do that *but...*"

The sentences that followed the 'but' have amazing consistency. There are two categories. One set begins with "I'm afraid of", the second with "I don't like riding a bike because." More and more I thought about how these fears and concerns I heard expressed so repeatedly were so easily surmountable with just a little knowledge or encouragement. I felt sad that many women were missing the incredible benefits of riding a bike and the health and wellness it can bring because of poorly fitting bikes, concern about body image, fear of not only riding on the street, but even riding the bike paths because they couldn't change a flat or put their chain back on.

Last summer I taught a friend to ride and had found it incredibly fun and rewarding. She'd had many of the same concerns I had heard time and time again, but by gradually increasing where she felt comfortable and her self-confidence and technical skills she became a good and independent rider.

Teaching can bridge the gap in ability and confidence that often takes years of experience. Overcoming misconceptions about the dangers of riding on the roads and on the trails and educating all cyclists in how to be visible, predictable, aware, and assertive when they cycle on the roads is key to increasing safety.

I once read that only 5% of adults learn a new sport after the age of 38. Taking on the challenge of a new athletic pursuit can be intimidating, especially for many women. Being on the wrong bike or being thrust into a situation where they are neither comfortable nor prepared mars many women's first experience of getting back on a bike in adulthood. The result is they don't get back on a second time. I think many of us, as experienced cyclists, don't recognize or remember how difficult it can be to learn gears, understand breaking, be careful of cars but yield

to pedestrians, signal, safely descend, eat enough so you don't bonk but not too much that you get nauseous--all while moving at 10-15 miles per hour.

My goal in founding UpOn A Bike is to find a way to teach and support women who are new to the sport or want to take their riding to the next level, and to encourage wellness and weight management through cycling. It pains me to see runners, both men and women, accomplishing more of a limp than a jog as middle aged knees, hips, and feet are no longer as tolerant as when they were high school cross country stars. For many, cycling would be a healthier alternative.

As a retired Emergency Medicine physician I hope to help in more ways than simply teaching technique. In addition to my own medical knowledge and personal experience with weight loss, I am forming a wellness network comprising, thus far, a nutritionist, a personal trainer, and a coach to help lay out cycling training regimens for those who want to improve speed and conditioning.

The League of American Bicyclist's Smart Cycling curriculum addresses many of the fears and roadblocks less experienced cyclists encounter and it stresses safe cycling practices. In becoming a certified League Cycling Instructor (LCI) I found both a validation of many of the beliefs I had come to have through years of experience and a solid and time tested foundation of how to teach cycling and road safety to all level of cyclists. UpOn A Bike will be offering classes and group rides this spring. In the meantime, I've teamed up with Spokes, Etc in Vienna for a monthly series of lectures addressing topics in women's cycling.

Beginners often don't understand gearing or how to fix a flat. Cyclists who have been riding the W&OD for years fear riding in the streets. Intermediates want to learn about pace lines or cadence. Runners may be interested in doing triathlons and need guidance about buying a bike or climbing hills effectively. Even advanced cyclists can be hazy on traffic law as it applies to cyclists, emergency bike handling, and proper positioning on the roads. It seems there's always something to learn.

Regarding bike preference, I must admit to infidelity. After a few months of riding, I fell in love with a Trek Madone. The supple yet strong carbon frame was simply too much to resist. Call it a mid-life crisis. Although we split, my Leonard and I remain good friends (and still hook-up occasionally). Even worse, I've told neither road bike about my newest love, the baby blue dual suspension mountain bike I picked up this past summer. I'm hopelessly fickle when it comes to bikes. There are so many beauties out there. You'll see!

For more information go to: UpOnABike.com for classes. For lecture topics and dates go to Spokes.Etc. Or email me at kathy@uponabike.com.

Kathy Rosen, MD, LCI





The 26th Tour de Madison
**The Vineyards of
Madison County**

May 18, 2013

The 26th Tour de Madison bicycling event will tour the vineyards of Madison County.

The ride begins and ends at Graves Mountain Lodge in Syria. Riders and their families will have the opportunity to enjoy the complete Graves Mountain Lodge experience.

There will be 3 ride options:

Metric Century—A 61 mile ride with rest stops at Early Mountain and Prince Michel Vineyards. Those choosing the metric century will leave at 8:30 am.

41 Mile Ride—A beautiful and challenging ride featuring a rest stop at the Prince Michel Vineyard. The 41-mile cyclists will leave at 9:00 am.

Family Rides—Ride as long as you want on the flat or gently rising roads around Syria. These riders leave at 9:30 am.

Enjoy a post-ride meal featuring Pork BBQ, grilled boneless chicken breast, or pita bread and hummus. Also included will be slaw, baked beans, French fries, dessert and a drink. **THE MEAL IS INCLUDED WITH YOUR REGISTRATION.**

Bring along some extra cash to enjoy the local Madison County wines that will be available from the Early Mountain, Prince Michel, and Ducard Vineyards. There will also be something for the beer lovers featuring central Virginia breweries.

Pre-registration is strongly encouraged!

- Registration before May 1 for 41 and 61-mile rides is \$40. After May 1: \$55.
- Registration before May for Family Riders is \$20. After May 1: \$30.
- The first 350 pre-registrants are eligible to win prizes including an Early Mountain Vineyard Gift basket and 2 three-day passes to the 2013 Festival of Music at Graves Mountain Lodge.

Be sure to visit our website for updated information: <http://tourdemadison.com/>

To pre-register visit: <https://www.bikereg.com/Net/18066>

Or email pedal.va@gmail.com for registration paper registration.

RIDE SCHEDULE—JANUARY

NOTE: Due to club insurance policies all participants on RBC rides must be current club members.
Non-members June try a ride one time before joining.

Call Ride Leader to confirm information accuracy. Check the club website at RestonBikeClub for new rides and additional information.
If there is greater than a 50% chance of rain or if the forecast starting temperature is less than 40 degrees, the ride June be cancelled.

Saturday Rides begin at **10:00**. These rides are impromptu and start in the parking lot across from the Caboose in downtown Herndon. Rides include A & B level riders and typically cover distances of 50+ miles. They are “no-drop” rides. First time riders please call: A/B - John Hamilton, 703-593-9384 or Randy Karn, 703-402-0227; C - Gaston Prudencio 703 906-7524.

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Membership Application Form

Please complete form (circle information) & return with check payable to: Reston Bicycle Club

Mail to: Reston Bicycle Club • P.O. Box 3389 • Reston, VA 20195-1389

Annual dues for single membership : \$20.00 plus \$2.00 for each additional household member riding with the club.

Name _____ Age _____ Rider Level A . B . C . S
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Home Phone _____ Other Phone _____
 E-mail _____

Additional Household Members:

Name _____ Age _____ Rider Level A . B . C . S
 Name _____ Age _____ Rider Level A . B . C . S
 Name _____ Age _____ Rider Level A . B . C . S

Attention Parents: Parents must sign a parental consent form for riders under the age of 18. Please request a copy of this form so young riders can present it when signing up for each ride. An adult family member must accompany children under 15.

What is your preferred day/time to ride? Saturday—Sunday—Weekday (AM—PM)

Are you interested in mountain biking? Yes No

Indicate areas you might be willing to help with: Lead Rides; Tours & Weekends;
 Annual RBC Century; Newsletter; Club Social Events; Data Entry; Triathlon;
 Education/Safety; Legislative Action; Membership; Phone Calls;
 Other _____

Club Rider Levels

RBC tries to cater to every level of cyclist. Please use this guide when completing your application and planning your rides.

- S Social riders.** Relaxed, casual pace; Distance & speed per group consensus
- C Average riders.** Moderate pace; 20 - 50 miles; 10 - 15 mph average
- B Strong riders.** Demanding pace; 25 - 75 miles; 15 - 18 mph average
- A Aggressive riders.** Grueling pace with sprints; 40 - 85 miles; 18 - 20+ mph average



Helmets are required on all RBC rides.



RESTON BICYCLE CLUB

P.O. Box 3389
Reston, VA 20195

RestonBikeClub.org