

SPOKE

Notes

Newsletter of the Cyclonauts Bicycling Club, Springfield Massachusetts

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



**MORE
GREAT
NEWS !**

Breakfast rides are back! A brief survey showed that most of our frequent ride leaders would like the option of stopping for breakfast. The board has approved breakfast stops as long as **outside seating** is available. Keep in mind that all breakfasts either pre-ride or during the ride are **optional for leaders** as many restaurants have closed or have limited hours. We have also decided to give leaders the choice of ride start times on Saturday and Wednesday rides. Starting times on Sunday rides has always been up to the leader. Starting a bit earlier is still a good idea during July and August when it is hotter.

As T. S. Elliot said, April is the cruelest month, but fortunately we had only a

few rain outs. Despite the cold April, we have been seeing more and more members on rides and have gained a few new members. This could not be true if not for our members who have stepped up to lead rides. **Thank you** all for volunteering. **Thanks** as well to our ride coordinators, Janet Parslow and Ted Jeremicz, for their efforts. Please respond positively when they reach out to you to fill our summer schedule.

Our **Thursday Rail Trail Group** started up again in May. The group is visiting all of our local rail trails. These laid back rides allow participants to relax and truly enjoy nature along our scenic local trails. All are welcome to join and ride at your own pace.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER continued

Our summer picnics are back!

After missing banquets and our usual annual business meetings for three years, we will be having a meeting at the picnic this year. This is an opportunity for all of our members to express their ideas and opinions for growing and making our club stronger and for our board to report to all of you. Of course it is a great opportunity to see all of our old friends as well.

See you on the road

Betty Siwinski

Summer Picnic

Cindy and James DeSellier have graciously offered their backyard for our annual summer picnic. The summer picnic will be held on **Saturday, August 13, at 4:00 PM at 39 Kurtz St., Chicopee, MA.**

As always, please bring:

- lawn chairs
- a dish to share
- eating utensils (plate and silverware)
- your favorite beverage

The club will provide hamburgers, veggie burgers, hot dogs, buns, and condiments.



MEMBERSHIP



To date our membership consists of 23 family units (up from 18 compared to the previous SpokesNotes) and 59 individuals (up from 52).

Updated for this issue of SpokesNotes, we welcome **new members:**

- Frank Sikora from Amherst
- Ellie Gellman & Peter May from Leverette
- Merlan Bassett from West Brookfield
- Michael Sherman & Laurie Enderle from Palmer

And, we also welcome returning **new-ish members:**

- Susan and Taylor Seybolt from Southampton
- Marilyn Murray from Wilbraham
- Denise Vincent from Belchertown

Thanks for joining!!
We look forward to riding with you.

EDITOR'S REST STOP



Hi everyone,

Just a reminder: If you wish to contribute, please don't hesitate to submit information you think will be helpful or of interest to the other club members. Send letters to the Editor, or feedback to me at donna.katz56@gmail.com regarding how SpokeNotes can be more interesting or useful to our members.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

This is a place for club members to share their ideas and opinions with respect to all aspects of cycling and our club. Please limit letters to less than 200 words.

No letters this issue.

Dear Members,

In the last few issues of SpokeNotes, I suggested that the club may want to consider standardizing our use of hand signals while riding to communicate a few key actions such as, stopping, slowing, and turning. I received feedback from a few members. One suggestion was to review the hand signals promoted by the [League of American Bicyclists, LAB](#). In addition, I also consulted [MA](#) and CT state law regarding bicyclists, and bikelaw.com. My research and knowledge regarding MA and CT state laws for cyclists is not extensive. But what I have learned is the following:

MASSACHUSETTS: According to a document titled [Rules of the Road](#), under the section ***Laws for Bicyclists and Motorists in the Presence of Bicyclists (as amended by Chapter 525 of the Acts of 2008)*** the following is stated. "When riding on public ways, bicyclists must obey the same basic traffic laws and regulations that apply to motor vehicle operators.

As a bicyclist:

- You can use the full lane anywhere, anytime, and on any street (except limited access or express state highways where signs specifically prohibiting bicycles have been posted), even if there is a bike lane.
- You must bike in the same direction as traffic unless otherwise indicated by signs or markings.

EDITOR'S REST STOP continued

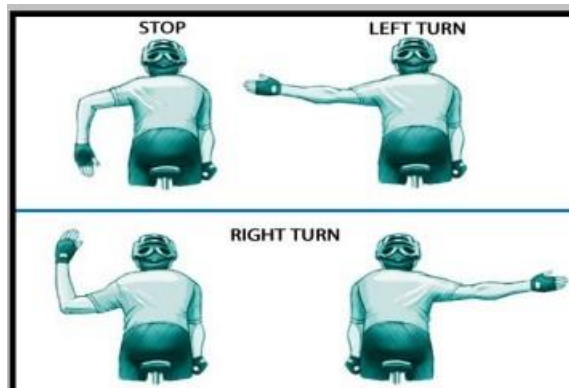
- You must stop at red lights and stop signs.
- You can keep to the right when passing a motor vehicle moving in the travel lane and you can move to the front of an intersection at stop lights.
- You must signal your intent by either hand to stop or turn. However, the signal does not have to be continuous or be made at all if both hands are needed for the bicycle's safe operation."

Similarly, the state of **CONNECTICUT** also published a [pamphlet for bicyclists](#) which describes the required use of hand signals. According to CT General Statutes § 14-286c (as pictured below):

(a) **Left Turn:** Each person riding a bike intending to make a left turn must approach as far right of that travel lane as he or she judges to be safest, proceed across the intersecting roadway, and make such a turn as close as possible to the curb on the far side of the intersection.

(b) **Signaling:** Each person riding on the road must motion before turning, by extending the corresponding arm straight out in the direction he or she is turning. **For right turns**, one can hold up his or her left hand with the elbow at a 90 degree angle, as seen in the image below.

(c) **Signaling Requirements:** No person riding a bike who is intending to make a right or left turn shall be required to make such signal continuously."

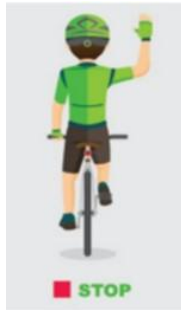


Full stops at stop signs and red lights are also required in CT.

EDITOR'S REST STOP continued

Both MA and CT laws require cyclists to use hand signals for stopping and turning. The main purpose of the state laws for using hand signals is to communicate our intentions with motorists. As a club, we have a secondary responsibility to also communicate our movements to the other riders in our group.

Both states accept the 2 variations of the right turn signal. The signal for stop also has 2 variations. The one shown on the previous page with the forearm positioned down below the elbow; and the other option is with the forearm raised above the elbow (as shown in the picture below) so it is easily seen by the other riders within the group; and I would suggest motorists as well.



My closing thoughts - there are only two widely used variations of the stop and right turn hand signal. In the interest of clear communication among riders within a group which contributes to a safe riding environment, I suggest that we each familiarize ourselves (if we are not already) with the various signals for stopping and turning. Furthermore, when we gather before we start out on a ride, if leaders are so inclined, they could review which signals they will be using during the ride. Perhaps this topic can be discussed at our picnic this summer.

I welcome everyone's thoughts on this matter.

Donna Katz, SpokesNotes Editor

THE WEBMASTER'S CORNER

Attention Tech Savvy Members

*A Great opportunity to contribute your
Tech Skills to the Cyclonauts awaits*

Eleven years ago I took over the Cyclonauts Bicycle Club Webmaster's job from Ken Paquette. Ken did a great job setting up the club website, with help from his Son-in-Law who, fortunately, worked for Microsoft at the time. It was Ken's website that let me learn about the club, join rides, make many new friends and meet my wife Betty (OK, Ken's website didn't let me meet Betty, but one thing led to another).

Well, eleven years is a long time and I'm ready to move on to a new career as Senior Webmaster at Google (or not). So now is a great opportunity for a computer nerd in the club to take over the website duties and either simply maintain the website as-is, or create a new website to your liking. The compensation and benefits package is second to none (actually, it is none). And just like Ken did for me when I took over the website, on-the-job training is included.

Duties of the webmaster include website design and maintenance, vendor selection and purchasing, photo site updating, club contact list maintenance, Cyclonaut Notice e-mailing of cancellations, schedule changes, etc., and Executive Board membership. This is a great opportunity to use your skills to improve the club. So think about it and, if interested, contact me to discuss. But don't take three years like it took me to say yes to Ken.

Ray Siwinski
Webmaster
Cyclonauts Bicycle Club