

Freewheel News

From Long Island's only community bike shop: The Freewheel Collective
Stony Brook, NY 11794

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Welcome to Our Newsletter

Hello all, this is a very exciting time for us. This is the first of two newsletters we will be publishing by the end of the school year. Layout is still a concern so if you have any experience and time, please let us know.

For those who don't know, The Freewheel Collective was established around 2003. Since this time, the collective has been involved in many projects, housed in several locations, and composed of numerous volunteers. For such a dynamic organization, one obstacle for Freewheel has been consistency. For the past year, Freewheel has only been able to be open once a week for three hours at a time. The reasons for this are simple: we have a small volunteer staff and they are very busy. We all love bikes and bike culture and we want to put a little momentum back into Freewheel. Part of our answer is this newsletter. This newsletter has three primary goals: 1) Make the Stony Brook bicycling community aware of what we are doing. 2) Educate and inform the bicycling community (without face-to-face contact in the shop). 3) Attract more volunteers and participants to our collective.

This newsletter will have bike related topics such as maintenance tips, upcoming events, pictures, bike rides, safe routes to the university, bike art, bike stories, programs, info on other programs, etc. The bicycle is a unique machine and as such, we have an opportunity for unique content. Bicycle culture intersects with other topics of interest including: recycling, ecology, exercise, transportation, fun, travel, politics, etc. Because of this, our newsletter will not be strictly about this bike part and how to fix it, but rather it should have other elements defined by a culture of sustainability. My hope is that this newsletter will make use of our talents and interests surrounding the bicycle and will help this organization grow. We hope as many people will see our newsletter in the area as is possible. Please forward this to others or print one out (double-sided, please) and give it to a friend. Love your bicycle. -CB



No, this is not a picture from a local resort's brochure. These two bikes are at Little Africa Park. See the details of this ride on page 3.

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Trips to the Dump: Adventure, Terror, and Success!

By J. Matt Hoch

Going to visit the dump has always been a fun time for me. For this reason I have jumped at the chances to visit the dump that have arisen during operations of the Freewheel Collective.

I began visiting scrap yards in high school. My initial visits were to collect spare parts for cars, but soon grew into adventures seeking components for the sculptural installations of my friends. By far, my favorite metal yard at this time was called “Hobbs’ Metal”. It was a scrap metal yard owned by Mr. Hobbs, but it had an amazing collection of other things, including old cars and trucks, a mountain of televisions, barrels full of tools and random things that had washed up on the beach. It was located on the edge of a state forest, and it was unclear where the borders of the forest were located; either the junkyard was encroaching on the woods, or the woods were invading the junkyard. The general attitude of the place was epitomized by the sign just beyond the front fence: “Anybody found here at night will be *found* here in the morning”. It seemed like a joke until we got to know Mr. Hobbs. He was a bearded, one-eyed, one-legged, seven-fingered, four-toothed, one-and-a-half eared redneck from central Florida. He had such a heavy twang that you could only understand him if he was yelling from across a field. We eventually stopped visiting Hobbs’ Metal when he pulled a gun on us one day, accusing us of stealing from him.

During the course of Freewheel’s several location changes, we have been obliged to haul loads of bike parts for discard on several occasions. When we moved from Huntington (and again from Ronkonkoma),



A dump truck at a metal scrap yard. The author only dreams he owned it.. (Photo courtesy of the Internet)

we loaded my truck with as many un-fixable bikes and components as possible, and drove them to the county landfill in Medford (380 Horseblock Rd). These trips were successful in that we were able to drop off a bunch of old crap for no cost, as it is free to drop off metal. These trips were less than exciting however, as there is just a giant dumpster to throw the metal into, and no real access to the kind of treasure hunt available at a place like Hobbs’ Metal.

When we were recently asked to move some trashed bikes from the Student Union space, we decided to try to take the bikes to a metal recycler. We located a metal yard in Coram (PK Metal, 3542 Route 112), and loaded my truck, *Lisa Marie*, with bike frames, wheels and other parts. Adam and I arrived there at about 8:30 am on a cold January morning. We were immediately intimidated, owing to my small truck participating in the same arena as massive dump-trucks, tractors and semis. I quickly realized that this place was a serious recycling yard,

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A Call to Artists:

Don’t forget the recycling mantra is “reduce, reuse, recycle.” Obviously, when things are not functional for a bicycle, we need to get rid of them. But, this doesn’t mean they necessarily need go in the garbage or to the metal recycler. They could be included in your art. My old co-worker makes nice looking candle holders out of old hubs, spokes, and sprockets. Also, I’ve seen chains used as bracelets, picture frames and key chains..... At the shop we (will soon) have buckets labeled “Bike Scraps.” If you would like to look through them to find the keystone to your latest artistic creation, feel free. Just make sure to clean up your mess before you leave. Please do not take other “junk”



These tubes need a new home. Can you help us?

without express consent of one of the volunteer mechanics. Our replacement parts are limited, so we can only let you take the broken things. Thanks.-CB

Ride to Long Beach from Stony Brook

By Adam Ehmer

Stats

Distance: 23 miles directly, more if you explore.

Time elapsed: 4 hours (including a stop in St. James for lunch)

Difficulty: A few miles with rolling hills, a few very steep hills, and some flat terrain.

Watch out for: Narrow shoulders and traffic (see details below).

Link: <http://www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=764800>
(cut and paste the URL to see the approximate route)

Story

In the first week of February, Chris Brunson and I took a Friday afternoon bike ride out to Long Beach from the Stony Brook train station. This ride takes you over rolling hills amidst the wooded manors of Head of the Harbor and Nissequogue and then out onto the narrow strip of land called Long Beach. This route is nice because it provides some hills to climb and coast down, but this in fact also demands that your bike is in good working order (shifting and braking are important here!). The relative seclusion of the area enabled some wildlife viewing opportunities (hawks, ducks, egrets, and woodpeckers) and long stretches with little traffic. However, the narrow shoulders and tight curves demand the rider's attention to sudden traffic from ahead and behind. Although the route can be made considerably shorter or longer, I describe here a ride that is 23 miles long and that we took about 4 hours to complete (No making fun of us! We stopped to warm up with coffee and food in St. James).

Starting at the SB train station, we headed down to the traffic light at the intersection with Cedar St. Past the Stony Brook Prep School (on the right) turn left at Hollow Road. Hollow Road has a gentle downhill slope that brings you to Christian Ave at a three-way stop (mile 1), just above the Stony Brook Village. We turned left on Christian, which essentially becomes Main Street as you pass the shops in the Stony Brook Village. Following Main Street around the Village, we reached the Mill Pond and then took a right onto Harbor Rd, quacking at the duckies as we passed. This is essentially where the hills begin, although the first few are relatively tame. The road here took us along the edge of woods in the Avalon Preserve and manors (mile 2), until we dropped down to the very back of the harbor (mile 3). This is the area called Head of the Harbor.

The next stretch kept us skirting around the

contour of the harbor with good ups and downs on the road. Harbor Road terminates at Harbor Hill Rd (about 3.5 miles); we took this new road to the right. The hills on this side of the harbor become remarkably steep, with the steepest uphill as we turned away from the harbor onto Cordwood Path (mile 4). Cordwood path was up all the way to its end at Moriches Road, where we turned right. Moriches Road is flatter, but was busier with traffic. After mile 5, Moriches bends widely to the west towards the Nissequogue Village and River. However, before we descended all the way down to the Nissequogue drainage we turned right onto Long Beach Road. This turn took us close to a horse barn of a private school; we neighed at the horses.

The road to the beach (miles 6 – 7) brought us downhill and back towards the Harbor, this time at its northwestern edge. There are several opportunities beginning here to pull off the road to look for wildlife; various waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading bird species hang out in the marshes of the Harbor. In addition to the birds, we were able to see the towers of the Stony Brook Hospital



Here the author is chasing water fowl into the Sound.

looming in the fog on the distant horizon. We didn't explore the opposite side of the road, where the streets lead to the top of bluffs, because access seems limited by private landowners. However, further down the road (mile 8) we stopped at a park that provided access to the shore of the Long Island Sound. The Little Africa Park has a couple of picnic shelters, one of them overlooking the sound. (see photo page 1). There's a steep little drop-off leading down to the beach from the shelter; we left our bikes there and hopped down to the shore. There was a

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Maintenance Tip of the Month: Learning How to Store and Park Your Bike

By Chris Brunson

In the next month, The Freewheel Collective will be releasing its first informational pamphlet entitled, *Ten Things to Keep Your Bike Healthy*. This month's maintenance tip is a sneak peak at this pamphlet's first tip, "Store and Park your Bike Properly."

Storage

A lot of problems can be avoided if you park and store your bike properly. First, don't store your bike in the rain (or snow). Keep it under cover, in the garage, or even inside your home if that's the only place. Water and salts tend to whisk away oil and grease (things that protect your bike's moving parts). When you store it at home, pay attention to the spokes and rear derailleur. Don't lean your bike against anything on the derailleur side of the bike. Damage to your rear derailleur hanger can cause major problems with shifting and might also cause your derailleur to shift into the spokes. Also, make sure nothing is getting stuck in your spokes. If you are parking it with other bikes, watch out for the surrounding bikes' pedals getting into your spokes. Damage to spokes will cause your wheel to be crooked (out of true) which will diminish braking power.

Locking Up Your Bike

When parking it in public, make sure to lock your frame *and* at least one of your wheels to a strong object. Do not leave the bike there for extended periods of time. Bikes that look abandoned will be removed by thieves or groundskeepers.



Can you spot the improperly parked bicycles?

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Oldsquaw in the water and some gulls at the water's edge.

Seeing the Oldsquaw from the beach was the highlight of the ride for me. This sea duck breeds in the Arctic tundra and spends its winters in the Great Lakes and along the Atlantic coast. It was a cold and windy day, but the Oldsquaw was busy diving for food in the benthos as I watched shivering at the shore.

On our return we retraced our route back as far as the intersection with Moriches Road (miles 9-11), turned right onto it, and then quickly left onto Nissequogue River Road. This road combines the hills of Harbor Hill Road with the traffic of Moriches Road, so I advise riders to be particularly cautious here (Wear your helmets and reflective/bright clothing, folks!). Despite these challenges, the road is a fun part of the ride, and it offered us with views along the river (miles 12-13). The final climb of the road brings you to Edgewood Avenue (mile 14), where we turned left to head back towards St. James. Because this road is pretty busy and the scenery isn't all that spectacular, I would recommend that riders take Old Mill Road back at mile 13. By this time a rider would've had most of the views of the river and rode most of the hills. Turning at Old Mill would allow one to avoid traffic, and it doesn't seem to affect the length of the route. Instead, we took Edgewood to 25A (mile 15), which we rode for one mile into St. James where it intersects with Moriches Road (mile 16, and where you would end up if you took the alternate route mentioned above). We were cold and hungry, so we rode a half mile down Main Street in St. James to get warmed up and fed (I recommend Tic Toc Café, friendly people and good food, and I'm not getting paid to say that!). After the late lunch, we backtracked towards 25A (mile 17), and then turned right onto Moriches Road (mile 18). Right before reaching Route 347, we turned right and sneaked through the parking lots (mile 19) of the Lake Grove strip malls, past the Stony Brook Cinemas and turned left onto Hallock Road (mile 20). From Hallock Landing, we turned left on Stony Brook Road and made our way back to the University via its southwest entrance (South Drive (mile 21); the two miles back to the train station completed the 23 mile loop and an afternoon of enjoyable bike riding! Have fun out there kids and be safe! Always ride with a partner!

Necessary Content

The Freewheel Collective

Mission Statement:

The Freewheel Collective is a non-profit, non-hierarchical group of individuals who are dedicated to aiding the local community with issues pertaining to bicycles and cyclists. Freewheel hopes to establish a working community bicycle shop which will repair donated and found bicycles, offer free and/or low-cost repairs and bicycle education programs.

Website:

<http://life.bio.sunysb.edu/~crnoto/Freewheel/archive/index.htm>

Email:

fwcoord@gmail.com

Open Hours:

Tuesday nights 6pm-9pm (more days and times soon hopefully).

Location:

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Announcements

Group Rides

At the urging of longtime members, The Freewheel Collective will begin group rides again soon. These will by no means be training rides with a minimum MPH, but rather a chance for our membership to get together and go on an adventure. Rides will be 10-20 miles in total. Subscribe to our list-serve on the Freewheel website for updates.

Pamphlet

As mentioned in the Maintenance Tip of the Month, our first pamphlet *Ten Things to Keep Your Bike Healthy*, should be coming out in the next month or so. TJ Maher has generously volunteered his time to designing it. Thanks TJ! We are planning on having printed copies available at our Club Alley space. It will also be available in PDF form on our website.

Skill Share

We've been in the process of revising the Skill Share. Traditionally, our Skill Share's 8 session course would walk students through the process of overhauling a bicycle. However, we have found that there is too much information in too short of time. Instead, we are going to offer shorter three week sessions. These sessions will be focused on the beginner and will hopefully provide a foundation for interest in more advanced procedures. The three weeks will include: 1) How to tell if something is wrong and flat repair. 2) Brakes: setup and adjustment. 3) Derailleurs: setup and adjustment. Updates will be posted on the list-serve.

Can You Sew?

If you can, we'd like to know (hey, that rhymes). We're looking for a couple of people with sewing machines and some generosity to make us some funky aprons. We would encourage the use of salvaged fabric incorporated in the design. These would be used for visitors to Freewheel who don't show up in their "I'm ready to get greasy" clothes. Contact Adam at fwcoord@gmail.com if you are interested.

Freewheeler Hired at RAB

And in selfish news, I (Chris Brunson) was recently hired as the Head Mechanic at Recycle-a-Bicycle's DUMBO location. I will still be living in Stony Brook and be participating in Freewheel activities. Unfortunately, I will not be around for Tuesday night Open Hours starting April 1st. Please visit if you are in Brooklyn.-CB

Our Space

For those of you who have not visited us before or haven't visited us in awhile, below are some pictures of our space. Come by and visit.



A view of Freewheel's work space.



A nice painting by J. Matt Hoch.



We have about 90% of the tools you'll ever need for a bike.

Continued from page 2.

and no place for an adventure. Mountains of twisted scrap were pushed up conveyor belts into large crushers by tractors. Cranes with enormous claws lifted loose metal over the workers, who although helmeted (and in some cases under tin roofs) appeared to be vulnerable to the heavy falling bits and pieces. Furnaces burned as metal was rent asunder. Avalanches off of the crags of deformed metal fragments threatened to crush and maim all who approached.

Adam and I feebly explained to "Billy", the foreman on duty, that we had a truckload of steel bike parts. *Lisa Marie* was weighed on a full size truck scale before (3440 lbs) and after (3100 lbs) we dumped the parts. We had to drive out across the yard, dodging tractors, workers and full size trailers, and deposit the frames in a pile of mixed steel. For our 340 lbs of "light iron" we received \$6.80. That's right, a big 2 pennies per pound. This obviously does not cover the approximately 15 man-hours of breaking down, loading, transportation and fuel cost, but we feel it was worth it anyway.

Metal recycling has a lot of important, non-monetary benefits. For one, that is 300 lbs of steel that is not going into a landfill, does not have to be re-mined and re-processed. This results in substantial energy savings and a reduction in the output of pollutants. According to the Massachusetts Recycling Coalition, recycling one pound of steel saves 5450 BTU's. In total, our single trip to the recycling center, we saved 1853000 BTU's of energy. That's enough energy to power a 60 Watt light bulb for more than one year (368.33 days)! Not to mention our big cash loot (\$6.80). For more information on metal recycling:

http://www.massrecycle.org/recycling_benefits.html
<http://www.pk-metals.com/>

A Call for Submissions!

We're not desperate, but rather, eager to hear from other people in the local bicycle community. Whether it is a letter to the editor, an article, photograph, or picture, there is 90% chance it will be in the next issue (unless it is horribly inappropriate). The deadline is April 3rd. Send ideas to Chris Brunson at lancefavro@hotmail.com. Become a published author today!
