



The Alabama Bicycle Coalition
P.O. Box 240924, Montgomery, AL 36124

The Messenger

Newsletter for the Alabama Bicycle Coalition
Fighting for Cyclists Rights on the Roads and in Public Policy

Volume 1, Issue 1 – February 29, 2004

AlaBike in the News

Alabike Speaks at Legislative Forum

AlaBike president, Jamie Miernik, spoke January 27 at the North Alabama Legislative Forum in Huntsville. Her message, no doubt, bolstered by the “prop” which put this picture on the front page of the Huntsville Times. AlaBike has a couple of Bike Route signs available to members who wish to speak at similar forums. Last year, two cyclists from Huntsville spoke at the forum. The complete text of her message to legislators is at www.alabike.org.

The same text was sent in a letter to ALDOT director, Mr. Joe McInnes, as an introduction and to request a review of the draft State Bike Plan. The Plan will outline statewide bike routes. (See ALDOT article page 6) We hope to be seeing more of these signs in the near future.



Courtesy of: Dave Dieter, Huntsville Times

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“Never Doubt that a small group of thoughtful and committed individuals can change the world. It is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

Welcome to AlaBike – Our Vision

Bikes are not toys. Cyclists are not pedestrians.

The Alabama Bicycle Coalition, AlaBike, was formed in September of 2003, to be a statewide voice to encourage the acceptance and adoption of bicycling and independent transportation choices in public opinion, facilities, policy and healthy lifestyles.

AlaBike’s Mission is to promote cycling safety, education and access. To this end, we are starting relationships with the Alabama Department of Transportation and state and federal legislators to create and adopt policies for safer road design for all users, motorized or not.

The belief that a community or environment that is friendly to bicycle use encourages the growth, adoption and acceptance of cycling as transportation, sport, and lifestyle, is AlaBike’s vision. Increasing accessibility of cycling in communities improves its health, quality of life, and image to the world at large. With this

core belief that Alabama, too, can benefit from becoming a cycling friendly state, Alabike has been formed to work towards the following Vision:

- Safe, confident, and knowledgeable cyclists.
- Competent and considerate motor vehicle drivers.
- Restoration of the art and science of cycling as a recognized transportation choice.
- Routine inclusion in transportation planning and engineering to allow safe bicycling for transportation to foster healthy lifestyles and communities.
- Access to transportation is maintained for those who cannot or choose not to drive motor vehicles.

Join AlaBike as we work to make Alabama roads safer and friendlier for all of its citizens.

Jamie Miernik
AlaBike President

2004 Membership Drive

Become a Founding AlaBike member!

**Catch the Next
Alabike General
Meeting! =>>**

Email submissions for
The Messenger to
Newsletter editor,
Morgan Andriulli:
morganandriulli@com
cast.net

Why Join AlaBike? We Need Each Other

In 2004, AlaBike is concentrating on building membership across the state, and gearing up for a big drive. Of course, when recruiting membership, it is important to offer benefits for being a member. AlaBike offers a regular newsletter, a discounted registration for League of American Bicyclists (LAB) Bike Ed or Road I class. The intangibles, however, are considerable: **Influence, advocacy, communication and information.**

With a strong, statewide membership base AlaBike can:

- Carry more weight with its requests when it speaks with Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) and legislators.
- Have more success gaining access to local legislators and regional ALDOT personnel. District ALDOT personnel and Legislators like to hear

from their own districts.

- **Gain Knowledge:** The better we know Alabama's cycling community, the more favorable statistics we can present to policy makers.
- **Inform the membership:** The better informed the membership, the more they will be able to participate in changing Alabama.
- **Motivate the membership:** The better AlaBike stays connected with its members, the more capable it is to take action on immediate issues. Through e-mail alerts to a large and connected membership base, the more calls and letters that will be generated when issues arise that require public input.

Joining AlaBike will connect you with other concerned cyclists in the state and provide voice to issues of importance to cyclists: transportation policy, law making, road design, public perception and attitudes towards cyclists. What better reasons do you need to join?

How to Join Alabike

Fill out the form in this newsletter or go to the AlaBike.org web site and download a form. The basic rate is \$25 for individuals, \$40 for families and \$10 for students.

Special Offer to Current Bike Club Members!!!

As an incentive to current members of AlaBike coalition bike clubs, AlaBike is offering a special \$10 rate through June 15. This is to help build a foundation from the best source of potential members, active participants in bike clubs across the state. This offer extends to all bike clubs that helped

AlaBike with seed money. Alabike thanks these coalition member clubs for getting Alabama's first cycling advocacy organization on the road. If you are a member of one of these clubs, you may choose to receive this special discounted membership:

- Montgomery Bicycle Club
- Birmingham Bicycle Club
- GCC (Birmingham)
- BUMP (Birmingham)
- Northeast Alabama Bicycle Club
- Spring City Cycling Club

Join Now!!!

When: Saturday, March 20, 2004, 3 PM

Where: Auburn, Alabama. Jan Dempsey Art Center, Highway 29.

Featured speaker: Jack Plunk, Principal Planner, Calhoun County MPO.

Also, attend to Auburn's "Bike Bash", at 9 am, March 20th

For more information visit: www.AlaBike.org or contact Jamie Miernik at 256 536-7190, jamorgan10@comcast.net

AlaBike Board Meeting immediately following General Meeting.

AlaBike's Plans and Projects

What will AlaBike be up to in the immediate and middle-term future? Our immediate priority is to build membership. Beyond that, we have projects in keeping with our vision:

- Working with ALDOT on road projects to include bicycles in transportation design. The immediate goal is to form a citizen's review board of the upcoming State Bicycle Plan
- Securing government funds for better bicycle facilities.
- Spreading Safe Routes to Schools statewide.
- Educating cyclists and motorists on sharing the road through classes, lessons clinics and publications
- Influencing transportation policy and legislation through contact with State and National government representatives. First contact will be at the National Bike Summit in Washington, DC in March
- Promoting cycling and the rights of cyclists
- Working for cleaner air and water, less traffic and healthier communities

Your Alabama National and State Senators and Representatives

U.S Representatives

Rep Bud Cramer (D – 5th District)

626 Clinton Ave West
Huntsville, AL 35801
202 225-4801
Huntsville: 256 551-0190
Tuscumbia: 256 381-3450
Decatur: 256 355-9400
budmail@mail.house.gov

Robert Aderholt (R - 4th District)

202 225-4876
Gadsden: 256 546-0201
Jasper: 205 221-2310
Cullman: 256 734-6043
Local email: aderholt@aol.com
robert@mail.house.gov

Spencer Bachus (R – 6th District)

202 225-4921
Birmingham: 205 969-2296
Northport: 205 333-9894

Artur Davis (D – 7th District)

202 225-2665
Birmingham: 205 254-1960
Tuscaloosa: 205 752-5380
Selma: 334 877-4414
Livingstone: 205 652-5834

Joe Bonner (R – 1st District)

202 225-4931
fax: 202 225-0562
Mobile: 251 690-2811

Terry Evertt (R – 2nd District)

202 225-2901
Montgomery: 334 277-9113
Dothan: 334 794-9680
Opp: 334 493-9253

Michael Rogers (R – 3rd District)

202 225-3261
Anniston: 256 236-5655
Opelika: 334 745-6221
mike.rogersa103@mail.house.gov

U.S Senators

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202 224-5744
fax: 202 224-3416
Tuscaloosa: 205 759-5047
Mobile: 251 694-4164
Montgomery: 334 223-7303
Birmingham: 205 731-1384
Huntsville: 256 772-0460
senator@shelby.senate.gov

Senator Jeff Sessions:

202 224-4124

Fax: 202 224-3149

Montgomery: 334 265-9507

Birmingham: 205 731-1500

Mobile: 251 414-3083

Huntsville: 256 533-0979

senator@sessions.senate.gov

How to find your Local State Legislator

Since there are too many State Representatives (105) and Senators to list in this newsletter, here is the web site where you can look up the local Legislators for your county or district.

State House of Representatives:

Go to:

http://www.legislature.state.al.us/house/representatives/houseroster_district.html

State Senate:

Go to:

<http://www.legislature.state.al.us/senate/senate.html>

You can find your state representative or senator by name, zip code, district or by map.

Alabike in Action:

AlaBike President Jamie Miernik accepted an invitation by Huntsville Mayor Loretta Spencer to Huntsville Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Citizen's Advisory Committee. She joins AlaBike Board Member Mike Holderer on this committee.

The North East Alabama Bicycle Club and the Birmingham Bicycle Club have agreed to support AlaBike as partial beneficiaries of their annual centuries. We are looking for AlaBike supporters to man information tables or rest stops.

AlaBike board member, Charlton Jones, contacted pro-bike director of the Alabama Center for Traffic Safety-Montevallo, Marty Spellicy. We are hoping for some successful educational collaboration there.

AlaBike will be asking members to occasionally contact local legislators and bureaucrats on issues of immediate concern as they arise. Can we count on your help?

Meet Your Alabike Board of Directors

See the Biographies of all Board members at AlaBike.org.

Janie Miernik, President/Chairman

Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Janie Miernik moved to Huntsville 15 years ago after six years in Seattle. Janie has ridden bikes all of her life, primarily as a means of alternative transportation in college and in between stints as a cab driver. She first discovered bike clubs after moving to Huntsville and briefly tried racing. Year-round bike commuting and long, challenging weekend rides now support her fitness for centuries, cycling vacations and occasional touring. Until her ankles recently gave out, cycling was merely a sideline to more serious athletic pursuits in basketball, softball, and avid snow skiing. Cycling and golf are her new lower-impact passions. She served as an officer in the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, the Boeing Employee Recreation Committee and the Spring City Cycling Club. Since 1999, she has been involved in bicycle advocacy in Huntsville. She has been chair of the bicycle segment of the SAFE Kids in Huntsville and continues to direct bike rodeos and kids bike races. In 2003, she attended the LAB National Bike Summit and the Thunderhead Southeast training to prepare for the launching of the Alabama Bicycle Coalition.

Charlton Jones

Born and raised in a south Chicago 'burb, his first bike was a hand-me-down Schwinn from his brother. After using a Phillips Indian 3-speed as transportation as he attended the University of Illinois to get his (1st) degree in Mechanical Engineering, Charlton hired in at Ford. Charlton found time to build and race formula cars around night classes for an MBA in marketing and statistics. In his spare time, Charlton worked weekends as a paid inspector for the Sports Car Club of America and still managed to squeeze in a Ph.D. in Statistics.

Upon graduation Charlton began selling Porsches in FL. In two months he became General Manager of a FL import dealership, moving on within a year to become General Manager of Baker Motors in Atlanta. Then, he flew to Germany and established a "gray market" Mercedes importation business.

Returning to academia, Charlton became a professor of Business Administration at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta. He bought a new Raleigh Gran Sport (which he still rides regularly today) for bicycle commuting most days. While teaching, he started a race car accessory business on the side, taught road racing for the SCCA, and learned to fly aerobatics.

2004 AlaBike Board

Officers

President

Jamie Miernik
(Huntsville)

jamorgan10@comcast.net

Vice President

Marjorie Holderer

mjholderer@knology.net

Treasurer

Michael Fritze

michael.fritze@mrfritze@hotmail.com

Secretary

Gary Smith
(Montgomery)

alabike@knology.net

Board Members

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Morton Archibald
morton@bikebama.com

Matthew Darring
iama@backpacker.com

Brandy Ezelle
bezelle@auburnalabama.org

Dan Watson
Dirtdog1@bellsouth.net

Charlton Jones
Cj.trainer@juno.com

Michael Holderer
moh@knology.net

Factoid: Two Members of the AlaBike Board are League of American Bicyclist-Certified Cycling Instructors:

Brandy Ezelle & Charlton Jones

VISIT US
www.alabike.org

Statewide Events this Spring

Walkable Communities Workshop

Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization Walkable Community Workshop Series

When: March 1-5

What: Workshop for training planners and concerned citizens on how to remove the barriers to cycling and walking in current and future community developments.

Who: Charles Gandy, a nationally recognized expert in community design, trail/planning design, and bicycle and pedestrian advocacy.

Who Else: The National Center for Bicycling and Walking

Information: Tom Maxwell, Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham. 205 264-8445.

Website: www.bhammpo.org

E-mail: tmaxwell@rpcgb.org

Auburn: Fifth Annual Bike Bash to be held March 20!

Who: Hosted by the City of Auburn in conjunction with the Auburn Bicycle Committee

What: Bike Bash is an event to encourage biking activities, endorse cycling safety, promote the health benefits of biking, and emphasize local bike-friendly trails and areas. **Details:** Event information and printable registration form can be found at www.auburnalabama.org/cycle.

When: Saturday, March 20, 2004 · 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. (Registration 8 - 8:45 a.m.)

Location: Auburn Junior High School

Fee: Adults - \$10.00; Children - \$7.50; Family rate - \$20.00

Information: Dee Watson at the Auburn Parks and Recreation Department, 887-4931.

Anniston: 11th Annual Woodland-Calhoun Century Challenge Bike Ride

What: 25, 50 and 100-mile bike rides

When: Saturday, March 20, 2004 - 7:30 a.m.

Location: Woodland Park Athletic Facility, 901 East Glade Road - Anniston AL.

Fee: \$25.00 if received by March 17, 2003. \$30.00 thereafter and day of Ride.

Information available at:

<http://www.1rg.com/woodland/index.htm>

Contact: City of Anniston Parks and Recreation Department

256-236-8221, 256-820-3790 Ride Day

E-mail: tchapman@ci.anniston.al.us

Piedmont: 12th Annual Cheaha Challenge Century

When: Sunday May 2, 2004

Where: Piedmont, AL

Information: Email: cheaha@neabc.org

Phone: 256-238-0308

Home Page: www.neabc.org

BICYCLE ACROSS MAGNIFICENT ALABAMA (BAMA)

When: June 5-12, 2004. Eight days

What: 400-Mile Trans-State Tour, 100 riders max, \$225.

The BAMA 2004 route is in the final stages of development.

Start: Meridian, Mississippi

Finish: Anniston, AL

Details: Overnight stops (subject to final planning) are Meridian, Demopolis, Marion, Clayton, Childersburg (oldest city in the United States), Cheaha State Park and Anniston.

Information: Sam Denham 539-1033(h), 961-0436(w)

Home Page: www.bikebama.com

Birmingham: Bump and Grind

When: Saturday, June 6, 2004, Oak Mtn

What: NORBA Mountain Bike Race

Information: www.bump.org/bng.html

National Events

League of American Bicyclists National Bike Summit

Where: Washington, DC

When: March 3-5, 2004

Three AlaBike board members are going to represent Alabama cyclists and take the opportunity to speak with all Alabama Congressional Legislators.

Baldwin County Trailblazers: Advocacy for the Mobile Area

The very busy Baldwin County Trailblazers have set the standard for bicycle and pedestrian advocacy in south Alabama for nine years. Over time, they have administered millions of dollars in projects and affected road, path and trail design in the Baldwin County and Mobile area. According to Executive Director Teko Wiseman, the Trailblazers have \$4 million worth of projects in progress. If you are in the Baldwin County area in the near future, take time to check out Baldwin County's paved trail system.

- **March 5 –** Groundbreaking for 4-mile addition to a trail in Point Clear
- **March 25 –**Daylong "Smart Growth Conference" at the Mobile Convention Center. 9 AM. \$25 registration. Information: Charlene Lee, (251) 928-0366.
- **April 2 –** Ribbon cutting for I-10 underpass boardwalk (Gator Gateway) between Daphne and Spanish Fort. The mayors will meet half way in a special ceremony.

Email submissions for *The Messenger* to Newsletter editor, Morgan Andriulli: morganandriulli@comcast.net

State Bicycle Plan Update from ALDOT

Mary Lou Crenshaw
ALDOT Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) is developing a Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The plan is the result of over 2 years of work assessing current bicycle and pedestrian activities across the state and developing strategies that will aid in the future development of bicycle-pedestrian facilities. ALDOT has a contract with a consultant for development of the plan.

When the project began early in 2002 a statement of the vision for the plan was the first item addressed. It states:

To provide the choice to Alabama's residents and visitors of traveling to their destinations through alternative transportation modes, such as by bicycle or on foot, by making available new and improved facilities that will conveniently and efficiently accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians in a suitable environment, strengthened by safety, education and advocacy.

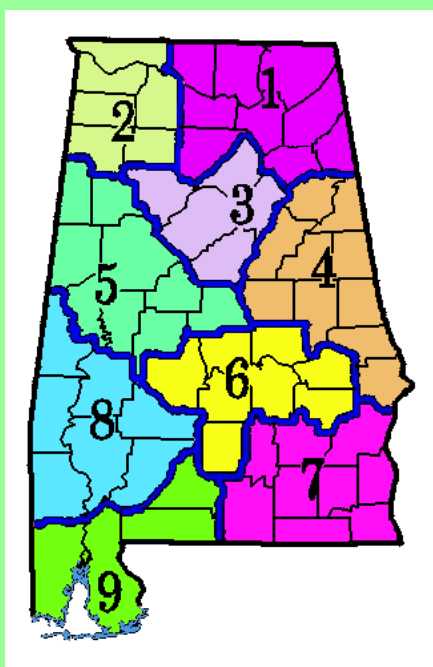
To keep on course with the mission and intent of this project, the next task was developing a series of goals and objectives. These goals and objectives covered the three key areas of planning and engineering, education, and advocacy. The remainder of the first year of the project was spent developing an inventory of existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities within Alabama, developing a preliminary network of cross state routes,

and familiarizing people within ALDOT of the development of the plan and its aim.

During February and March 2003, a series of nine public involvement meetings were held, one in each ALDOT Division, to gain public comment and response. Maps showing the potential routes were available for review and attendees were encouraged to recommend additional or alternate routes. Attendees were also encouraged to voice their opinions and questions concerning other portions of the plan. These comments were taken into consideration in revising the preliminary routes as well as in addressing other portions of the plan, especially in the fuller development of goals and objectives for the bicycle and pedestrian program.

The consultant is actively preparing the draft plan. In November, the Bureau of Multimodal Transportation reviewed a preliminary draft and returned it to the consultant for corrections. ALDOT anticipates receiving the revised draft which will be reviewed by its personnel in the Bureaus of County Transportation, Design, State Planning, Maintenance and Multimodal Transportation. With their comments, the draft will again be revised. Then copies of the draft plan will be sent to each Division office where they will be available for public review and comment. ALDOT now anticipates this stage to be in the spring of 2004. Public notice of the availability of the draft plan for comment will be published in papers throughout the state.

ALDOT Divisions – Find Your District Representative



Division 1
 Johnny L. Harris
 (256)582-2254
Harrisj@dot.state.al.us

Division 2
 James D. Brown
 (256)389-1400
brownjd@dot.state.al.us

Division 3
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 (800)342-3815
horsleyj@dot.state.al.us

Division 4
 DeJarvis Leonard
 (800)952-5631
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Division 5
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Division 6
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**Email submissions for
 The Messenger to
 Newsletter editor,
 Morgan Andriulli:
morganandriulli@comcast.net**

Effective Cycling— The Need for Education and Challenges

**By Charlton Jones,
League of American
Bicyclists (LAB)
Certified Instructor
#799KC**

The art of bicycle riding has been lost in this country. There is even confusion as to whether bicycles are allowed on the roads.

The law in Alabama (and practically every other state) recognizes that bicycles are vehicles and riders are vehicle operators. Bicycles have the same rights to the roads for their transportation needs as anyone else.

Along with those rights, come responsibilities. Bicyclists need to follow the same rules of the road as other vehicle operators. This includes traveling

with the flow of traffic (never ride against traffic, even if on the sidewalk), obeying stop signs and traffic lights, and yielding the right of way. When cyclists follow the same rules as other vehicle operators, they make it easier for other operators to see and anticipate their moves.

By operating their bike as a vehicle within the flow of traffic, cyclists integrate into the transportation tapestry. Effective and assertive bicycle operation increases the visibility, and, by extension, the acceptance of bicycles as legitimate users of the transportation infrastructure.

It takes not only experienced cyclists, but educated cyclists to advance what is called by the League of American Cyclists as Effective Cycling. The LAB

offers courses in BikeEd (Effective Cycling) that increase cyclist's understanding of their place on the road and to dispel the myths and misinformation surrounding the true safety of riding in traffic. To date, the classes offered by LAB are prohibitively expensive and intensive for mass acceptance.

It is a goal of AlaBike to make a four-hour version of the LAB's BikeEd and the book *Street Smarts*, by John Allen widely available and affordable for AlaBike members and cyclists across the state. Education focuses all of the points of AlaBike's vision.

Read more on the Web at www.alabike.org.

Auburn's New Bike Trailer Helps Elementary Kids

**By Brandy Ezelle,
Auburn City Traffic
Engineer**

As of December 2003, the Auburn City Bicycle Safety Program has a new trailer. In a brief ceremony at Wrights Mill Elementary School, representatives of the Civitan Club of Auburn, Auburn City Schools, and the Auburn Bicycle Committee dedicated the new 24 by 8 foot enclosed trailer that will house and transport 18 bicycles and other training props used in each of the five Auburn elementary schools for the Civitan Bicycle Safety Program.

The safety program has been operating in Auburn

since 1999, and has provided training to over 1700 fourth grade students during that period. Each school keeps the bicycles for about five weeks as the physical education teachers present the curriculum, which was developed by the Bicycle Federation of America to ensure that young riders learn the rules of the road as they apply to all bicyclists. Until the trailer could be purchased with funds from the Alabaman Department of Transportation TEA-21 Grant, the bicycles have been transported using a pickup truck, and stored in classrooms and lounges at each school. The new

trailer will provide better storage and transportation for this popular program. It is large enough to accommodate the seven additional Raleigh MXR bicycles being purchased by Auburn City Schools. The Bike Shop, 147 North College Street, provides set-up and bi-annual maintenance for the bikes.

Attending the dedication were Auburn Mayor Bill Ham, City Councilwoman Roberta Jackel, Bike Committee member Kirk Iversen, Civitan Club President Lisa Abercrombie, Auburn City Schools Bike Safety Program Coordinator Kristen Herring, along with the principals and physical education teachers from each participating school physical education teacher.

Useful Web Sites

Alabama Bicycle Clubs

Birmingham Bicycle Club
www.bhambikeclub.org

GC Cycling (Birmingham)
www.gccycling.org

**Birmingham Urban
Mountain Pedalers**
www.bump.org

**Northeast Alabama Bicycle
Club**
www.neabc.org

**Spring City Cycling Club
(Huntsville)**
www.springcity.org

Montgomery Bicycle Club
www.mgmbikeclub.org

Selected Shops

Cadence 120 (Mobile)
www.cadence120.com

**Cahaba Cycles
(Birmingham)**
www.cahabacycles.com

Bike Touring

**Bicycle Ride Across
Magnificent Alabama**
www.bikebama.com

Advocacy

**League of American
Bicyclists**
www.bikeleague.org/

America Bikes
www.americabikes.org/

Auburn Bicycle Committee
www.auburnalabama.org/

