

# 2010-02 Focus on Members

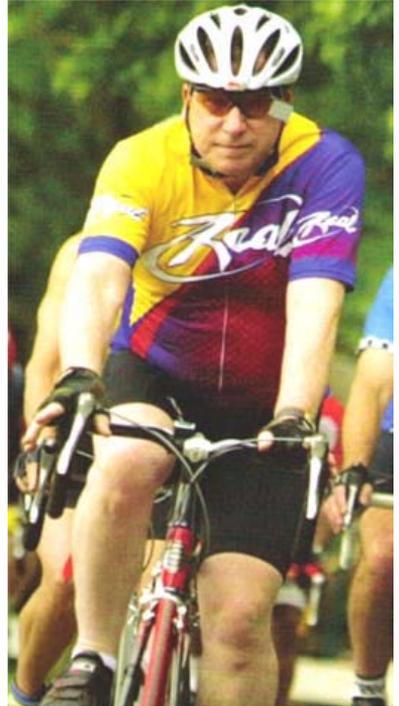
## Our Focus this month is on Ira Saltiel.

My renewed love affair with cycling started in 1976, after watching the movie, *Breaking Away*. It reminded me of riding in my youth, without a care in the world – wind blowing through my helmet-less head pedaling a 40 pound single speed Huffy around the considerable hills of Highland Park, New Jersey.

I bought a JC Penney road bike, Bell helmet that looked like a huge white turtle shell, wool tights and shirt and off I went around the neighborhood. When our kids got older and did not require constant attention, I was able to get out for longer rides and joined the Princeton Freewheelers in the mid 80's. I did about 2,000 miles per year and did several centuries at the Princeton cycling events. Several of us who rode together in those days formed the "Plainsboro Bike Squad" - we made up special shirts and rode with club rides and on our own. Peter Harnett, a current club member who leads rides out of the Sourlands, was in that group. It was a great time.

In the late 80's, a heavy travel schedule kept me away from cycling for 12 years. The company I worked with made some changes and I was out of work for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in my life.

After the initial shock wore off, I decided to make the most of this opportunity and returned to cycling and the Freewheelers. I started with short C rides out of the Griggstown area and moved up to Norman Batho's C+ & B level weekday morning rides where I rode with a wonderful bunch of people - George Foradori, Herb Cohen, Dennis Whitney, Hymie Schriber among others. I returned to work after a year and a half and 7,000 miles; I lost 40 pounds and felt great. When Norman was unable to ride for a while, I started leading his rides. Since that time, I've led about 40 rides each year - evenings after work and on the weekends – all out of Cranbury where the hills aren't as challenging as those on the west side of Route 1.



The club has been so good for me, I decided to give back. I became a board member, worked the Princeton Event the last 5 years, (chaired it in 2006) and handled the B ride coordinator position for a while. Running the Freewheelers is a daunting task; I have a lot of respect for the people who volunteer so much time to insure that the Princeton Freewheelers continues to be one of the most successful bike clubs in the country.

My biggest challenge for the future will be to keep my routes and jokes fresh, another daunting task I'm looking forward to. If only my GPS made new jokes...

Ira