

# 2012-10 Focus on Members

This month's Focus is Jeff Reed, our 32<sup>nd</sup> Event Chair and his lovely wife, not to mention more than able stoker, assistant & ghost writer, Tricia Metzger.



I've been cycling on and off my entire life

but never had enough time to dedicate to riding regularly or with a group. I didn't even know club rides existed but somehow I found the PFW and joined somewhere around

2000. Feeling a bit intimidated &, not knowing what to expect, the first couple of rides I

went on were C & C+ rides. Having completed them successfully, I knew I wanted to

go faster so I took the risk of joining Ed Post's Sunday afternoon ride out of Mercer County Park. I showed up with the \$20 bike I bought off someone's lawn, wearing sneakers & a T-shirt. Ed kept making the point that "we're going slow today because another rider just did the longest day & was recovering." I think he was worried that

even at this slower pace I might not be able to keep up... but I did. On my next ride, however, I did show up in clip-less shoes plus a biking jersey. It took me longer, however, to replace the bike.

After that, I started doing B+ rides out of Cranbury & if time permitted, I could be found on Ed's Sunday rides. I knew my bike was a bit of a joke but managed to keep up with the group. I never thought I needed any other bike than the one I had until, one day,

Ed pointed out that the top tube was bent as it had probably been in a crash. Well that did it so I purchased my first 'real' bike. It arrived by mail & assembled it myself. When I thought it was all together, I noticed the back wheel was wobbling. Well Ed was more

than glad to correct that. I went over to his workshop that night. Once the wheel was on properly, he removed the valve cap, saying, "You don't need that." He weighed it and said, "saved you 5 grams." Then he removed the nut that holds the valve stem on

and the really cool reflectors that were on each wheel. He weighed each in turn and let

me know how much unnecessary weight was on the bike. I thought, really? This guy knows what he's doing. Interestingly, this visit to Ed's place was Tricia's first introduction to biking and the club... she was amused by the seriousness with which this was taken but loved the comradery.

Tricia and I met in 2002. She'd last been cycling in elementary school but had been an avid supporter of her Dad's annual participation in the Anchor House Ride. Interested in my newly found passion (& told me I looked really good in those bike shorts),

she decided she'd like to try riding with me but was reluctant to do group rides. She rode her Dad's Schwinn on a few shorter rides between Pennington & Lawrenceville & turned out to be a very cautious rider, taking great care that no car could be seen before crossing an intersection. Needless to say, she was not a B+ rider. These intersections prompted a few not so loving exchanges as I waited for her to cross.

To save our budding relationship, it was agreed she would try riding on her own. She did a few of Norman's C rides but people kept riding behind her which she didn't like. I told her they were making sure she didn't get lost, but she felt like she was just holding them up. She practiced with a 10 mile loop from her house in Plainsboro that had all right hand turns. I asked why & she said it was easier...no intersections to cross. Our first "long" bike ride together was the Pinelands Triple Loop. We rode our separate bikes. It took us 3 hours to finish a 31 mile ride. That was the longest I had ever spent sitting on a bike and I felt it for a week. So we agreed to try the Tandem thing.

We went to the Tandem Expo in March the following year. Mel showed us a tandem and even how to ride it. There were lots of couples there that were in the same boat. They were encouraging & shared their stories with us. With lots of pointers & a couple loops in the parking lot, we purchased the tandem we have now. We rode on vacation in New Hampshire (if a local tells you a hill isn't that bad, look for a different route) &

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with the Eastern Tandem Rally in Virginia a few years back. We are frequently on

PFW B rides - You may have even heard us. The bike squeaks, haven't figured it out

yet, & I occasionally get yelled at! "Slow down!" Watch out for...!" Sometimes I yell

back. Most times I keep quiet, keep peddling, and think, "I'm gonna do whatever I want

& there isn't a thing you can do about it except follow me! " We're still riding the

tandem & it has been a wonderful way to be together on rides we would never be able

to share as single cyclists.

In addition to riding with the club, I have been on the board as a Secretary and

Program Chair. This year, I was The Event Chair. Tricia also volunteers for The Event

& has for several years. I think it's important that members volunteer when they can.

Without volunteers, the club will have a hard time staying vibrant. There are plenty of

opportunities to help 'your' club. You can also consider attending a board meeting to discuss any ideas you may have to improve the club and perhaps the board will be

glad to enlist your assistance. With the riding season winding down for many who can't stand the cold, you may want to start making plans for next year. The Event, 2013 is

right around the corner. There are lots of preparations that have to be made. If you didn't get a chance to volunteer last year and would like to do so for next year, please contact the Board. Preparations will be under way next January.