

# 2013-04 Focus on Members

**Our Focus this month is on Chris Scherer – accomplished all around rider & local cycling advocate.**

Cycling has transformed my life. John Burke, president of Trek Bicycle Corp., was right when he said the bicycle can be a simple solution to many of the world's most complex problems.

It has changed the way I think about my body, health and fitness. When I first started 'really' cycling, I took my health for granted. After enjoying several longer solo rides (10-20 mi) as a freshman in high school, I

gradually started riding with larger groups and have not stopped since. It felt good and literally molded a new me. I've since done countless centuries, competed

(barely) in races, endured brevets, commuted to/from school and work, braved the trails, and simply enjoyed the not-so local scenery with friends. Although much of this taught me new limits and tested my fortitude, I loved and still love every

minute of it, even after bonking, near complete dehydration, freezing every possible body part, hospital visits, pain that prevented both sitting and standing, enduring sleep deprivation, and numerous close calls and spills.

Why? It has introduced me to countless remarkable people. My riding companions include nearly every ability, age, interest and occupation, and, of course, Pinkie (my dog). I have suffered behind an 81-year-old, been punished by girls, shared water bottles (and lots more) with strangers, met a rocket scientist, started friendships, sought and offered counseling, networked with people from every walk of life, found encouragement from the least likely suspects, explored ideas with unfettered minds, and developed friendships. While I don't think I've ever cried on a bike, I know I've smiled a lot. For me, cycling is the dinner table of life and the guests are endless.

It has given me a new perspective on previously unknown people and places. Riding under the moonlight with no cars on the road, the critters abound and their world becomes yours. Following the curve of the coast from high above the water, every sound, smell and shape transforms an otherwise one-way motorist experience to a moment of freedom and singularity with all that surrounds you. Coasting at 50 mph at the mercy of rubber and gravity gives new meaning to what was likely a slow, painful climb not minutes before, and the thought of telling the wife of the ridiculous-descending-buddy in front of you that he veered off the road and was impaled on a pine. Think: arms and legs out, parallel to the ground, and torso one with the tree (fortunately, the call was only



imagined). Tracing a cue sheet, whose story is shaped by: every stop for water, food or relief; the choice in gearing for that one vista; uninterrupted silence when alone, conversation when not; yearning for a drop of water when bottles run dry; mis-cues to who-knows- where; passersby who lend a hand, offer directions and cheer, and, if you're

lucky, end up spending the night and becoming friends.

It has shaped how I interact with the world. Motorists become a puzzle with infinite changes and real consequences. Pedestrians and potholes have new meaning. Sharrows, shoulders and share the road signs are treasured. Dogs really are fast! Destinations take a back seat to journeys. Stories grab hold and personalities emerge, while character builds. A book truly cannot be judged by its cover or the bike it rode in on. Preconceived notions and prejudices disappear as the hierarchy of needs surfaces and punctuates our similarities. People become neighbors, neighbors become friends - friends become confidants. Home never felt so good.

All because of the bike.

Chris