

2014-11 Focus on Members

Our Focus this month is on Brandon Franks, Musician and Motion Advocate.

MOTION AND MUSIC – The two constants throughout my life (aside from eating, sleeping, and all those other pesky needs for existence). Whether for fitness, health, fun, or soul soothing, motion and music have been there for me time and time again.

Similar to most of our members, cycling was a means of independence during my younger years. Despite being limited to riding up and down a suburban street or making the occasional errand trip to the corner store, cycling offered freedom, transportation, independence, and even acceptance as my small circle of friends would gather to marvel at someone's latest receipt of a Mongoose or Diamondback. 'The Bicycle Trail' in Bordentown was a summer hangout where we'd 'ooo' and 'ahh' over treasures our parents could not afford, and where we would set up a ramp in the parking lot after shop hours and perform daredevil jumps that scaled the unthinkable height of... one foot.

Years, cars, and addresses came and went, but the steadiness of motion and music remained. Music in the form of bands and songwriting; motion more in the form of walking and running until...

I forget what birthday it was, but I received a ten-speed from K-Mart. "Now I can 'go green' while running errands," I thought. "How cool, what bliss." A few years later, I received a gym membership gift. "I think I'll try spinning." And so the cycling journey truly began, with Cheryl M leading the way on a stationary bike.

After an exhausting, outdoor, personal-best, 14-mile ride (yeah, I know), I decided it was time for new wheels. I opted for a Giant hybrid (whoa, I never thought I'd spend THAT much for a BICYCLE). Then onward I went to PFW in 2012, thanks to Cheryl's recommendation. My first group ride ever was with Josiah W. and Jen S. on a C+. Both were impressed that I was easily keeping pace on the hybrid. Then came rides from the Sawmill Y with Sue M. "Where's that mountain biker?" she would ask on B rides, making sure I hadn't been dropped. "I'm right here behind you," was my frequent reply. No computer, no speedometer, I'm just ridin', man.

Co-rider debates would wage as to whether I should get a road bike, and I ultimately decided to take the plunge (yikes, now I'm spending TWICE MORE than what I thought I'd never spend on a BICYCLE). Since then, I've enjoyed the company of many co-riding friends over countless miles, led a few B and B + rides, and completed three centuries (the fastest average being 17.4 mph and the most recent dedicated to the memory of Erich, who rode with me during my first). I look forward to making many more memories over many more miles.



As for my other muse, I've performed at a couple of Bruno's Artist on the Avenue events, and some of you caught a performance at our 2014 picnic. I've also written a song called "Ride," which recounts positive experiences I've had as a PFW member. "Ride" can be heard on my latest, 50-minute CD titled "Singularity," which is available for \$12 at Bruno's Bicycles in Allentown or through contacting me via Facebook or [epicsongs @ yahoo.com](mailto:epicsongs@yahoo.com). Sing with me now:

"KEEP THE PACE. KEEP THE FAITH. ON WE RIDE."