
2015-06 Focus On Members



Our Focus this month is on Kiyomi Camp – retired board member and still a bike mechanic.

Like so many other PFW members, I cycled a lot in my youth. From elementary school on, my friends and I rode for transportation and for fun. A favorite route took us to Southaven Park to rent a rowboat. One 30 mile ride on our Sturmey Archer 3-speeds stands out in memory for the painfulness of the seams in my blue jeans.

Arriving in Portland for college, I bought a Peugeot UJ10 10-speed whose gears were sorely needed by this flatlander from Lawn Guyland. It took a couple of months before I could ride up Woodstock Boulevard to the supermarket without having to stop. I became a fan of low gears. Friends introduced me to the pleasures of wool cycling

shorts with a leather chamois and taught me how to completely strip my bike and put it back together. In addition to riding around the Portland hills, we biked to the Oregon Coast to go camping. One friend upgraded to Suntour Cyclone and gave me his Shimano Crane derailleur and bar-end shifters that worked so much better than the plastic Simplex on my Peugeot. I became a fan of good bike parts.

Grad school then work then children kept me off the bike until 2008. After a summer spent riding to work on my riding-with-kids '90s mountain bike, I contacted Infoguy John Powers to find out about the Free Wheelers. He invited me to the Labor Day All-Paces ride and made a point of welcoming me when I got there and riding part of it with me. I had a good time, so I looked for more flat rides to go on and found the Sunday ride out of Etra (nominally Norm Batho's, but led by Don Sprague and Dennis Whitney) and Pat Van Hise's Tri-County Cruise.

The following year, I bought a real road bike and became a mechanic at the newly-formed Boys and Girls Club Bike Exchange. Among its volunteers were many previously-unknown-to-me PFW members, including Brad White and Metta Cahill. They encouraged me to try Andy Chen's Friday ride and Mike Heffler's Wednesday ride, which re-introduced me to hills and renewed my fondness for low gears. Jane and John Danek cajoled me into riding with the Rocky Hill Raiders, where I accidentally acquired my beautiful carbon road bike. The Raiders were too fast for me, but Diane Hess' Griggstown Grinder was perfect. Thanks to John Danek, I tried mountain biking in the Pine Barrens and learned about the Lawrenceville-Hopewell Trail. During this time, I managed to bestow my love of bicycles (and also my first "good" road bike!) on my eldest daughter.

When Agnes Van Buren decided to resign her position as PFW Board Secretary, she urged me to take the job. After five enjoyable years on the Board, I resigned this year in order to give someone else a chance to have their voice heard.

Now I seem to be returning to my roots. Last year, Brad and I went bike camping on the C&O towpath and we plan to ride the Erie Canal towpath this year. We also go on bike/canoe outings on the Delaware and I sometimes ride for transportation. But you can still find me at the back of Mike Heffler's and Bob Parsons' hilly rides.