



Winter Cycling Adventure in the Berkshires (Malcolm in foreground on right, with son Tim in Mt Washington State Forest. It was 5°F that day...)

Malcolm Stitt

I'm a resident of Dutchess County, NY, which is in the Hudson Valley near the Connecticut border. I stay in the Princeton area for work Tuesdays through Fridays. I've been cycling since I was 4, with a few gaps over the years. I've done the RAGBRAI ride across Iowa twice, rode a fat bike on Fire Island, Long Island for years, and many other rides through mixed terrain. I sail a catamaran, sail an iceboat, XC ski, alpine ski, snowshoe, and hike when I'm not cycling. Our current residence is on a small lake in the middle of a state forest.

PFW is my first bike club. Most clubs that I previously checked out seemed way too serious. I love to ride, but don't care for rides that just do miles without stopping to look at anything. PFW has so much variety that there are good choices for everyone.

I first found out about the Princeton Freewheelers on a cold winter's night, when I ran into PFW Randy Bannerman, somewhere in the middle of nowhere on the Delaware Towpath. It was dark and cold, and we ended up riding back towards Titusville together. Chatting helped take the focus off of our cold hands and feet. He hooked me up with the intrepid Jackie's Glow Ride crew, which brought on more rides in all sorts of good and bad conditions. The worse the conditions, the more flats you get, the better the stories, and the better the food tastes at the end of the ride.

On another cold winter's night I met a guy walking his dogs on Bulls Bridge. He told me I should check out the mostly car-free hills on the NJ side of the bridge, particularly Federal Twist. So, the next week I convinced PFW Glen Fitzgerald to try it out with me. Didn't matter that it was January, and that it was around 20 degrees, and that Federal Twist had a bad reputation as a hard climb. So began the ride that I now lead on Thursday nights, named The Federal Twist Adventure Ride. We've been doing this ride for a year now and averaging between 30 and 40 miles, with 1,000 to 2,000 feet of climb. The ride explores the many quiet places above Stockton, including lots of gravel roads. Other than rider safety, everything is decided on the fly. The goal is to ride the backroads where cars are few and far between and to finish in time for some place to still be open for dinner. We usually make our 9:45 PM dinner goal!

Some other highlights of the year include Jeff's Ontario Trip, and the many other conjured-up rides looking for lost souls in Devils Triangle, PA, Jackie's Canaloween ride, etc. I also led a Hudson Valley ride for the PFW, and took some riders out on my catamaran on the Ontario Trip.

I've had lots of fun with the Freewheelers, over lots of miles, producing lots of stories that most people would never understand. Never! All the reason to do it some more. Thanks for allowing me to join this great club!

More pictures below:



PFW's taking a sail up on Lake Ontario (with Jeff Lippincott and Glen Fitzgerald)



Federal Twist Riders