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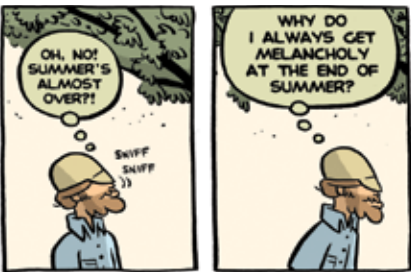


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Case Cycling takes 15th at USAC Collegiate Track Nationals

by Matthew Swartwout

Case Cycling finished the collegiate track season on September 22nd by achieving its second-ever national ranking.

Only in its second year, Case Cycling's track program sent two riders to the USA Cycling (USAC) Collegiate Track Nationals in Colorado Springs, CO. Graduate student Jenna Tomasevich and senior David Takahashi competed over three days of intense racing against the best in the country. Tomasevich placed 48th in the Individual Women's Omnium and scored enough points to place Case Western Reserve University in 15th place overall for Division II.

Tomasevich had this to say about her experience at Track Nationals:

"Never in my wildest dreams did I expect to be racing at nationals when I started as an undergrad at Case five years ago ... [and] I couldn't be prouder to have represented my wonderful team and my university at the national level.



Case Cycling's track team, the reigning MWCCC champs. From left to right: (back): Avery Cross, Matthew Swartwout, Dan Segal, Sam Sprawls, Dan Muskin-Pierret, Evan Guarr (front): Anneke Frankemolle, Daniela Mehech, Jenna Tomasevich, Mallory Busso, Eric Silverman, David Takahashi. Photo credit: Gary Burkholder.

The level of competition at nationals was something I had never experienced before... I had the opportunity to race against current and future Olympians, National and World champions, as well as the

chance to make friends with some of the country's best amateur and professional cyclists. While the competition was certainly intimidating on the

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WILL THE CHALICE RETURN TO CLEVELAND? #RustCrown

by Shelli Snyder,

You're Invited!

You have been riding your bicycle in the name of the Rust Crown for months. 5 months to be exact. You have dutifully logged your miles in Endomondo. You have encouraged your friends and family to join in the challenge. You have participated in forums. You have discussed the miles.

The points. The fact that you would do anything short of implanting a cyclo chip in your dog's skull to beat to beat Pittsburgh at something Cleveland definitely knows better: BIKES.

But have your efforts paid off? Did Cleveland win?

The Rust Belt Battle of the Bikes has come to a close (as of October 1st, that is). Over the past month we have seen a neck and neck race, which

for many, was a happy surprise. (unless you are Pittsburgh... Read a little more about it from the League: <http://bikeleague.org/content/cle-vs-pgh-neck-and-neck-final-nbc-stretch>)

According the article above and as seen on www.rustcrown.org, Cleveland had pushed its way past the City of Bridges in miles and started the many droplets of sweat that ran down the foreheads of cyclists all over the Burgh. But did we do enough?

Well, it's time to find out.

The scores are calculated behind the scenes (by those dedicated and awesome people at Bike Cleveland and by those almost as awesome, yet just as dedicated people at Bike Pittsburgh) by extracting the points from all cyclists in each region then adding them together to create the overall total for each "city". Yup...that's right. It's regional. (you knew this)

So don't take the points reported via Endomondo at face value, got it? You might be surprised.

So. Wait. Who won? At the time this article is being written (which, btw, is before Oct 1), that is still an unknown. BUT...what is known? Is how we are gonna CELEBRATE! Yup. You heard that correctly. Celebrate!

RECIPE FOR CELEBRATION:

Ingredients:

- 2 Cities (broken down into regions)
- 2 Cycling Advocacy Organizations
- 1 League of American Bicyclists
- 1 Kickin' Challenge (which led to 1 kickin' BATTLE)

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It is time. TO CELEBRATE.



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After All, It Takes One To Know One

The *Great Lakes Courier* Advisory Board is a group of cyclists, advocates, and business people who represent a broad range of interests within the cycling community, and decades (and decades) of experience. It is a goal of the *Great Lakes Courier* to gather input from all realms of the cycling community. If your area of interest is not represented, we invite you to get in touch.

Lois Moss – founder of Walk and Roll, former co-owner of Century Cycles.

Diane Lees – radio host of “The Outspoken Cyclist” on WJCU, 88.7 FM

Marty Cader – bicycle and pedestrian planner, City of Cleveland.

Marty Cooperman – lifelong cyclist, former editor of the Cleveland cycling publication *Crank Mail* (1975 to 2008).

Jacob VanSickle – Executive Director, Bike Cleveland.

Join the GLC!

As a product of citizen journalism, *The Great Lakes Courier* is looking for people, ages 3-100, to get involved in the paper and cycling. We are looking for volunteer writers, photographers, designers, and illustrators to help with the production of the paper. It does not matter if you are a professional or amateur, our editorial staff will be glad to help you through the process. Register to our website Member Center where you can submit stories, press releases, letters to the editor, photos.

No need to register to post online calendar items or classified ads.

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Guerillas In Our Midst



Railroad crossing at East 4th, south of Payne Avenue

by Michael Gill

Last month, we showed you DIY or guerilla bike lanes on a short stretch of Detroit Avenue in Ohio City--white duct tape stripes, and sharrow stenciling, which the city promptly scrubbed from the pavement.

The City of Cleveland has yet to make good on its promise of Detroit

Avenue bike lanes.

In the mean time, and in another neighborhood, slightly more traditional graffiti vandals with an equally positive message have posted the reminder to "watch for bikes" on at least one railroad overpass.

The *Great Lakes Courier* does not condone vandalism in any form.

Case Cycling takes 15th at Nationals

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track and the stage couldn't have been more dramatic, racing at nationals and representing Case Cycling is an experience I won't soon forget."

Prior to competing at Nationals, Case Cycling enjoyed a hard-fought, record-setting track season in the regional Midwest Collegiate Cycling Conference (MWCCC). The season consisted of two races: one at the Indy Cycloplex at Marian University and one at our very own Cleveland Velodrome. Case sent seven riders to Marian and saw multiple top-10 finishes. The Cleveland Velodrome race, which doubled as the MWCCC Time Trial Regional Championships, saw Case Cycling emerge on top. In the Individual Men's Omnium Senior David Takahashi took first, with sophomore Sam Sprawls in second. Sophomores Avery Cross and Matthew Swartwout tied for eighth, with freshman Evan Guarr in tenth. Graduate student Anneke Frankemolle took first place in the Individual Women's Omnium, with medical student Daniela Mehech in 2nd place. Graduate student Jenna Tomasevich took 7th place, and junior Mallory Busso placed 6th.

These top finishes gave Case Cycling a commanding lead in the MWCCC Track Team Omnium. Last year, Case finished first in Division II. This year, Case finished first overall, beating every Division I and II school in the Midwest.

For the 2011-2012 season, Case Western Reserve University Cycling was ranked 36th in the Division II Overall (Track, Cyclocross, Mountain, and Road) Omnium after getting 22 points at the USAC Collegiate Cyclocross Nationals. Currently, Case stands at 19 points, with Mountain, Cyclocross, and Road Nationals still to come.

Case Cycling's coach and staff advisor, Ryan Pierce, was elated with the team's performance and involvement this season. "More than the results, which were fantastic, I'm excited to see so many new riders really get involved in this discipline. Both of our nats riders were new to the track this year. Out of the seven riders at Marian, six had never raced before. The number of women racing on the team tripled since last year. This means a real pipeline of new talent and room for growth in future seasons."

Pierce was also quick to point

WILL THE CHALICE RETURN TO CLEVELAND?

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- 1 Chalice (Yay Rustbelt Welding!)
- 1 Crown
- 1 Bar (Boxcar Lounge – 534 Mahoning Ave, Youngstown)
- 1 Food Truck (The Rolling Pig, YES!)

LOTS OF LIQUID CARB REPLENISHMENT (does anyone else feel that toasting with beer from Rust Belt Brewery is more than appropriate?)

MANY CYCLISTS.

Instructions:

Sign up for the challenge, allow to mature into battle. Log miles. Mark calendar for October 18th. Head to Youngstown. (it is neutral ground, after all). Meet many cyclists at the Boxcar Lounge at 3pm. Fill tummy with BBQ. Fill glass with Rust Belt Brew. Discover winner. TOAST and be crowned!

Then: continue to celebrate.

Result: A RUST CROWN PARTY OF AWESOMENESS.

Invite your pals. Your family. Your neighbor's pet parakeet. It's all good. Just call in sick on the 18th, and head on down to Youngstown and show some love for something you had a huge part in! The very first year of

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out the importance of having a velodrome so close to campus. "We knew from the start that track competition, through fierce, is often limited to schools with a velodrome nearby – that meant Case's athletes already had a leg up and a chance to shine. Races can be won or lost by tenths of a second, and getting a chance to practice taking the perfect line around the track can mean all the difference. The engagement and support from the Cleveland Velodrome has been absolutely invaluable."

Now that the track season has concluded, the team will refocus its efforts onto cyclocross, participating in both collegiate competitions and the Northeast Ohio Cyclocross (NEOCX) Series, and will be co-hosting the NEOCX Season Finale with the Cleveland Velodrome on December 14th.

Interested in learning more about the team, lending your support, or purchasing a team kit? Go to www.casecycling.com and fill out the contact form, or visit us on Facebook www.facebook.com/CaseCycling and Twitter @CaseCycling.



Taking a century to turn 40

by Jarrod Zickefoose,

"How do you want to celebrate your birthday?" my friend Katie asked.

"Let's take a bike ride, a long one," I answered.

And just like that, we were planning my first century ride.

We settled on Sunday, Aug. 18, two days after my 40th birthday. I created a Facebook event page. The invitation read, "This is a joy ride to celebrate friendship, bikes and aging with grace and purpose."

In addition to Katie, two other riders, Austin and Frank, decided to come along. We planned to leave from Lakewood Park. We would head southwest to Oberlin, northwest to Huron, and east from there to Cleveland.

That morning, we arrived a rag-tag bunch. Austin was riding a bike whose make I could not identify. He wore a striped, wool jersey with the sleeves cut off. Frank, a fixed-gear rider, was riding one of my geared bikes, wearing swim trunks and a fan-



From left, Frank, Jarrod and Austin lost in Lorain County. Photo by Katie O'Keefe.

ny pack. Katie, probably the strongest rider in the group, rode a steel Mercier with a bent frame and sketchy rear derailleur.

We set off from Lakewood Park toward Lorain Avenue. The streets were still quiet, and the neighborhood

was waking up. There was no direct sun, just warm beams of light falling through the old trees. Our pace was inconsistent. Conversation was of the still-need-coffee variety.

Once on Lorain, we had a whole lane, and traffic left us alone. We talked about jobs and furniture and cars and bikes and food. Eventually, we found our pace and the city began to fall behind us.

We arrived in Oberlin at about noon and in good spirits. Our friends Sam and Nate meet us for burritos. Lunch seemed to take forever.

"Ride fast; take risks," Nate hollered as we got back on our bikes.

The weather was perfect as we pulled out of Oberlin, ever-so-slightly overcast, 68-ish. Road conditions were as follows: smooth, windless, flat, country, and almost completely without cars.

We had about 65 miles to go, and riding was about to begin in earnest.

For the most part, Katie set the pace, and it was not one for weak legs. Every time she shifted, I thought her bike was going to fall apart, but we were burying what felt like endless miles.

The route was ideal. There were no climbs to speak of. We passed farms and small towns. For long stretches, we felt like we were in the middle of nowhere. We stopped for salty snacks and drinks now and then. Katie preferred diet cola; Frank took an offer of



water from a hose along the way. We got lost twice.

When I first started riding a bike, about a year ago, I would wax poetic about its effects.

I have since come to learn that turning the cranks over and over and over and over is cycling's truest reward. In that repetitive act of muscle memory, the mind stops talking, time stops passing and you are, in a sense, an empty vessel. Things get quiet and still.

I had imagined that our century ride would engender bonding of the type movies are made about. It wasn't like that, though.

There were plenty of jokes. There were, indeed, beautiful landscapes. But the most satisfying element of riding that day turned out to be the most mundane: We were just friends on bikes. My birthday century was a joy ride in the most literal sense.

When we turned east in Huron, the first and only headwind of the day greeted us. Fatigue was starting to set in, and we had about 40 miles to go, so it was not welcomed, particularly since we had planned on a homecoming tailwind.

However, as we entered Avon Lake, the road became familiar. We ignored the wind and got on our pedals. We could smell home.

We finished at Katie's, where Sam and Nate were waiting with a celebratory cheesecake and beer.

At the end of the day, we had spent six and a half hours riding. We were endorphined up and worn down. We were gross with road grime and sweat. Two missed turns included, we rode exactly 108 miles.

Fortieth birthdays can give some people grief, but not me. Mine affirmed that I am doing something right. Friends and bike rides will do that.

VELOSANO ANNOUNCES INAUGURAL PARTNERS

by Stephanie Jansky

VeloSano, an annual cycling event to raise money for cancer research, has joined with two inaugural funding partners, ensuring that 100 percent of all proceeds will benefit life-saving cancer research at Cleveland Clinic. Inaugural founding partners include the Cleveland Indians and The Donna M. and Stewart A. Kohl Fund at the Cleveland Foundation. Supporting partners are MCPc and KeyBank.

"The Indians organization is proud to collaborate with Cleveland Clinic, one of Cleveland's most well respected institutions, to deepen our commitment to making a lasting impact on the Northeast Ohio community," said Cleveland Indians Chairman and CEO Paul Dolan. "We all know someone who has been touched by cancer and we're honored to support the VeloSano cycling event that empowers Clevelanders to take action together to fight this disease."

VeloSano is a one- or two-day cycling experience scheduled for July 19 and 20, 2014. Opening ceremonies will be held July 18 featuring a "Celebration of Cleveland" in downtown Cleveland. July 19 and 20 will focus on the different ride options, which will include finish line celebrations for all riders

and volunteers. Riders can choose from one-day rides ranging from 25-miles to 100-miles, or two-day ride options totaling 150-miles or more, including overnight accommodations. There will also be routes for kids ages 5 to 17. VeloSano routes are currently being finalized and will be announced in 2014.

"Donna and I are thrilled to welcome these three great partners as leaders in the swelling VeloSano peloton," said Stewart A. Kohl, Co-Chief Executive Officer of The Riverside Company and Event Chairman of VeloSano. "We are pedaling hard and on track for a great inaugural event in terms of ridership, volunteers, community engagement and most importantly, money raised for cutting edge cancer research."

VeloSano, Latin for "swift cure," is more than another fundraising event. It's more than a bike ride. VeloSano is a movement with the goal of bringing an entire community together to help one another. Dollars raised by VeloSano participants will provide sustainable funding to support cancer research. It will depend on the passion and energy of thousands of people who wish to advance our knowledge around cancer and ultimately, help caregivers provide the most personalized care to cancer patients and families. Whether you are an avid cyclist, a compassionate crusader, or a spirited fan, you can be a part of the VeloSano family. Thanks to the dedication of our sponsors, 100 percent of the proceeds raised through VeloSano will be carefully applied to cancer research at Cleveland Clinic.

Official registration for riders and volunteers will open in January 2014. For more information, visit velosano.org

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The Dead Ride: A Crank-Set Rides Tradition

by Dan Krivenki

Every year, Crank-Set Rides hosts a ridiculous Zombie-themed event called The Dead Ride. Picture it: hundreds of cyclists on bikes... dressed as

the undead. Drooling, moaning, peeling skin off their arms and picking bones out of their teeth.

This is the season to get in the spirit of zombies and mix it up with

riding in Cleveland's amazing fall weather. The ride started in 2010, at Cranky's Pub on W25, where Crank-Set also hosted an Alley-Cat race to accompany it. The riders get their makeup done, ride around town, stop at various localities to terrorize the city a bit, and then end with a great after party. It truly is a unique event.

In recent years, The Dead Ride has been hosted at Lincoln Park Pub, to help accommodate the hundreds of participants on their large back patio. The site of this is most definitely a memory to keep. Usually a dozen makeup artists will dress your wounds (with more blood) and send you off on your most interesting evening.

Raffle tickets will be handed out upon registration, and additional tickets can be purchased to up your chances of winning a helmet, lock, light or even a bike. I think that some of the riders favorite parts of the rides is when we ride through a cemetery, such as the Erie Cemetery downtown near Progressive Field, or when we get caught up in the W25 traffic and the bar-goers can witness the monstrosity that has taken to the streets.

This year we aim to shake up any guests as we arrive at Happy Dog to refuel. Each year the number of zombies has risen and we hope to reach



An undead cat, an icon of The Dead Ride



Jerry Layne, a yearly participant of The Dead Ride

quite a larger hoard year by year. The zombies of the fourth Dead Ride will end at Rustbelt Welding. Rustbelt has been a great friend of Crank-Set Rides from the beginning, donating their labor to build bike racks from the money raised through various rides. This year they will host the after-party with bands and a beer tent.

Cleveland cyclists repeatedly say that The Dead Ride is their favorite ride of the year. As a host, along with my mastermind/zombie enthusiast wife Lindsey Krivenki, we can honestly say that this is our favorite ride too. We welcome you to all join us on October 19th for The Dead Ride IV and experience what Crank-Set Rides and amazing friends have helped put together as one of your favorite nights of the year.

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#ArgoVelo PART 2...That Snickers Bar Wanted a Home

by Shelli Snyder

Wednesday...SKYLINE DRIVE, HERE WE COME!

In the rain. We packed up camp and headed to breakfast at a quaint little coffee shop before ascending straight up a mountain for 4 continuous miles. Or was it 5? It all blends together.

As I was checking the 'Book, I made a nice little discovery that brightened my overcast morning. Seems the Fri-enemies were quoted \$20 at the bunk house when they arrived. "I thought it was \$10" says Frienemy #3. "It is" says Dennis, "But for PGH, its \$20. 10 for the bunk. The other 10 goes to Bike

Cleveland." BOOM.

Anyhow, we were off: Skyline-DriveSkylineDriveSkylineDrive!

Just to help you put this into perspective, this is the elevation profile of the next 105 miles we were riding with fully loaded bikes of pannier gear goodness and IPAs: <http://goo.gl/FPT8gn>.

And THIS is a detailed look at our first 35 miles... (pay special attention to those first 5 miles, will ya?): <http://goo.gl/1ItKV6>

CLIMBING LOVE. And actually, it was. Although I was very jealous of the roadies I passed with their fast, light, gearless rigs (and vow to go back

on the road bike to knock that century out in a day), the ride was phenomenal. Skyline's grade is a nice one, and the entire route is pretty freakin epic. There are overlooks everywhere. The Appalachian Trail crosses it 28 times (someone had to see Argo, right?), and we made the discovery that you do not need to schlep 3 days of food with you. Or beer for that matter. Did you know at all of the waysides you can get bottles and cans of killer VA craft IPAs for under a buck fifty each? Blackberry milkshakes are a staple, and even the food stuffs were affordable. We mostly made use of the IPA supply however ;)

Along our way, we ran into many hikers (not literally like Barbie however) and asked them if they had seen Argo...and we had many a "Where's Argo" photo sessions with hikers, rangers, trail markers and random wildlife. No one had seen her. And then? It started to rain. It was a nice rain though. So no complaints. But when we decided to stop for a photo op at the highest point on the drive and discovered that Skyland resort had the original historic cottages for rent and a tap room, we decided to forego the A-T shelter we had planned on for a chance to let gear hang and dry under a roof. And, well, enjoy some local IPA goodness while listening to live music.

You know who was not listening to live music with us? Argo. Still no sight of her.



And then? WE FOUND HER!

THURSDAY! HAPPY JULY 4TH! So, along our route, we had been communicating with Rock on the whereabouts of Argo. Although it would be most epic to just run into her as she was crossing the drive on the A-T, it was more realistic to meet up with them in Waynesboro, where we were ending up on Friday, and where Rock's Slack-Packing Service was headquartered for the weekend. She was hiking with some pals but decided to break away when they took a zero day, and had made a significant stride since then, so she was ahead on the trail. Because of this, we informed the duo that we were heading to the Pinefield A-T hut for the night, and hey, since you are now in the area, let's meet there for the great Snickers Exchange around dinner time, ya? Rock was doing his own thing and occasionally meeting up with Argo for a slack or a snack while she ultra-hiked a 40 miler that day, so dinner was a

continued on next page.



Have you seen this hiker? Nope was usually the answer by other thru-hikers.

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#ArgoVelo PART 2...That Snickers Bar Wanted a Home

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good bet for all of us later.

So, that was that. And McParty & I got on with our day.

I decided to have a leisurely breakfast at the resort, while McParty headed out ahead of me. We met up at a wayside later, shared lunch & brew and then continued on. We each did our own thing really, enjoying overlooks, the ride & the scenery. And of course at one point, it began to rain again. Pretty fast and pretty hard... and I found Marty at the bottom of a soon to be big climb enjoying a schlepped beer before the ascent. I continued up ahead to keep the momentum and take in the mid-day scenery. The rain let up as quickly as it came, and I peered into each overlook as I went by, thinking..wouldn't it be cool if...

Then? There it was. A mini-cooper. With a bike rack. It was how it was supposed to be... (sorta)

I pedaled into the overlook and saw Rock & Argo enjoying the view before she departed on her next leg of the days hike.

I called out "ARGO" as I made my way in what seemed like slow motion (or was it the huge hill?) into the overlook lot...Argo went from hugging Rock to running full on to hug me! And Rock did the same! I *almost* did not unclip fast enough but I was spared the falling over by two embraces that felt like all the stars were aligned. It worked! I found Argo! And not in Waynesboro. And not at a shelter for a planned dinner...but on the side of the road, near where the A-T crosses Skyline drive. We Found Each Other!

Cheers, kisses, hugs happened... and so did: Wait. Where's Marty?!

We sat on the stone wall. Catching up. Staring at the IPAs Rock had ready for the moment and wondered when he would arrive.

And after 10 minutes...he did. You should have seen the grin on his face when the three of us, dressed in identical Where's Argo shirts stood up and offered him a beer. BOOM. Here we were! We had found Argo.

And of course we made sure to give her that Snickers, even though she had candy, cookies, donuts, and sandwiches in the car.

The other best part, besides the whole meeting her on the side of the road thing, was that Marty had never met Argo (or Rock) in his life. He was just along for the ride, so to say. Ha!

After several more hugs, photos and stories, we decided it was time to let the girl finish her 40 (miles) and meet up at the shelter for dinner after our ride and her hike ended for the day. So...onward!



Beers. They happened. (often)

Here's a fun lil twist: Shelli turns the wrong way on the A-T and ends up hiking a mile out of her way. And imagine the surprise of Thru-Hiker DQ when he stumbles upon a chic pushing a bike on the trail Shhh... don't tell. It's not allowed, but the heck if I was gonna carry it down the trail! We stopped and chatted. I gave him a beer. And we both headed back to the shelter where we found Argo, Rock, Marty and...hey! Another Bike-Packer. On the A-T...go figure!

Argo & Rock parted ways with us for the evening and plans were made to meet up in Waynesboro after our bike and her hike on Friday...and Marty & I settled into our camp-making routine with our new pals.

A few minutes later, a gaggle of scouts invaded, but seeing our gear, decided it was best to head to the tent area beyond and up the hill.

A few minutes after that, two section hikers (and pals with DQ for the last couple of weeks) appeared. We all had dinner, decorated the shelter with Argo stuffs, and then, to honor Independence Day, celebrated the hiker shelter way: lighting sparklers on fire, waving mini flags, singing the National Anthem at 9pm (we even earned a round of applause from the scouts!) and passing out at a rather late Hiker-Midnight of 9:30.

Argo: Found.

Friday: An Argo Reunion

She hiked. We biked. We also found our very first expensive wayside. And although I enjoyed the infamous Blackberry shake, Marty & I were both shocked by the prices of our beloved mountain IPA. So we bought a box of wine to schlep...and then? The girl in the kitchen says: "if you ride a mile up the hill, the camp wayside has much cheaper beer and a full shop!"

Well...ok then. We headed up. But? Not before we gifted the box wine to some thru-hikers. :) Trail magic I tell ya.

What was not magical? Was the climb up the "hill" to the camp. Yah, uh. I didn't need beer that bad. But Marty was determined. So...there we go. And there we went. And there we found affordable liquid carb replenishment. I have to say, the ride back down the "hill" was EPIC.

Onward.

Beauty was everywhere! The trees.

The overlooks. The mountains. The road...everywhere! I HIGHLY recommend cycling Skyline Drive...and before you know it? You will complete it.

Just like we did. As we approached the ranger station, it was bitter sweet. We finished one of the most epic routes in the US. We enjoyed the beauty of this journey from the bustle of Pittsburgh, PA, through the quaint cuteness of the GAP, through the bottom pounding C&O, through the hell of rte. 522, and through the epicness of Skyline Drive...and the awesomeness of delivering a Snickers bar to a hungry hiker! And then, we found ourselves going through the gates and coming to the end of this journey.

BUT. It was not the end. We had a day to go! High fives followed hugs, and pictures were taken...but we still had a full 24 hours of adventure ahead! We rolled on down to Waynesboro, visited an outfitter (I bought a dress, yay!) and headed to the YMCA to get a shower and set up our tents for a night in hiker-bunk yards and

continued on page 9

BIKE TO WORK DAY
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Posts from the Road: The conclusion of A Lake Erie Odyssey

by Michael Mullins

The following is the story of the last six days of my 11 day self-supported bicycle trip around Lake Erie told through my posts to social media during the journey.

Wednesday, May 29

dispatch from Turkey Point, Ontario: Had a great day staying with Jessica and family as she recovered from her crash. I charged the zipline course through the forest canopy at Eco-Point. Nice to have a day off the saddle to prepare for the 100km+ to Long Beach tomorrow...

After unexpectedly losing a day, I surmised my journey would best be served by sticking to my original route to explore lower Ontario, but return by train from Buffalo in time for work Monday morning. My plan was to take the most direct route to the next evening's destination: Long Beach in Wainfleet, Ontario. After getting into a good groove for the first 40km (25 miles), a sign marking the "Waterfront Trail" coerced me from the main thoroughfare and back to the lakefront. Meandering along the lakeshore, passing through picturesque farmland and stretches lined by



The "Maid of the Mist" about to get enveloped by Horseshoe Falls

cottages was so enjoyable that I gave up on making good time. After eating lunch at another empty provincial park, I continued following the shore with a detour to the tiny hamlet of Port Maitland, and finally arrived by nightfall at Tim and Jackie's summer cottage on Long Beach.

Thursday, May 30

dispatch from Wainfleet, Ontario:

took the scenic route hugging the coast along the "Waterfront Trail" for 132km starting from Turkey Point. Beautiful lakeshore on the right, classic barns, farmland or beach houses on the left the entire way... great country.

After being treated to warm hospitality and plenty of food, I was ready to embark on the next day's journey. Before leaving, I dis-

cussed with Tim my plans to cut short the return trip by taking the train from Buffalo. Being a Buffalo native, he helped me map out the best route to the train station. As I was preparing to leave, Tim asked if I would like a ride to the next town. I politely declined, as I didn't want to cheat my bicycling journey. To this he replied, he didn't see how it mattered, as I was going back home by train anyway. This subtle nudge got me contemplating the possibility of finishing my trip properly by the power of my own legs. Upon reaching Port Colborne, I pondered continuing eastward to begin my return trip by bicycle, but couldn't bring myself to bypass visiting Niagara Falls. Instead, I pushed north along the Welland Canal.

By this point my bicycle and I had seemingly merged into a singular machine as I churned through the distances. At the mouth of the canal, I stopped for lunch on a beach on Lake Ontario; while my hopes of swimming were dashed by large signs declaring the water unfit. However, reaching another Great Lake felt like a milestone. With no time to lose, I jumped back aboard my steed and headed east towards Niagara-on-the-Lake. As I was entering wine country, that night's host called to inform me that he now had plans to leave for the weekend. After another declined offer of a ride, I promised to meet him at his house in Niagara Falls before he left around 5pm. I was now a man on a mission, with the next 40km in the hot afternoon sun more a race against time rather than a leisurely tour. I rode through the vineyard, around the old British forts, and labored up the escarpment with just enough time to navigate the streets of Niagara Falls and reach his home. After a brief chat before his ride arrived, I was offered the backyard to pitch my tent and the garage to store my bike as well as some much appreciated beers from the fridge. After setting up my tent, I ventured into town in search of a meal.

Friday, May 31

dispatch from Niagara Falls, Ontario: rode from Long Beach east

through Port Colborne then north along the Welland Canal for lunch along Lake Ontario at Port Weller (no swimming allowed!). Then I pushed onward through Niagara-on-the-Lake and south along the Niagara Parkway. 111km (69mi) total followed by the most satisfying pizza and beers ever. Cheers!

That night, possibly emboldened by a stomach full of pizza and several beers, I resolved to continue my journey and pedal home to Cleveland. I arranged for another host for the next evening, informed my boss about my delay, and slept soundly given my new plans.

In the morning I returned to the Niagara Parkway and upon reaching the falls slowly made my way through throngs of tourists. Being my first viewing from the Canadian side, it struck me how breathtaking the Horseshoe Falls were from this vantage point. I took plenty of pictures, then returned to the bike path following the Niagara River south towards Fort Erie. After crossing the border on the Peace Bridge, I enjoyed my first lunch in Buffalo back in the good ole USA. With my earbuds in and the music cranked up, I pedaled steadily through New York on a bike path along the south shore. Having entered a pedaling-induced trance, my mind became engrossed in the moment only turning away when interrupted by my insatiable hunger and the need to calculate the distance to my next stop. I was caught in several rainstorms, the deluge so strong it drowned my supposedly waterproof headlamp. The greater the struggle, the clearer my mind became focused on my goal. After a tough 75 mile day, I arrived in Dunkirk at the home of my next hosts, Tim and KimMarie. I was more than grateful for shelter from the storms, a warm shower, bed and some delicious, wholesome meals. The generosity of the people I met along my journey never ceased to amaze.

Saturday, June 1

dispatch from Dunkirk, NY: a wet day after leaving Buffalo and hugged the shore on a bike route mostly along SR-5. A storm came up so fast off Lake Erie while I was stopped for my second lunch at Evangola State Park that I didn't have time to grab a jacket let alone put my things away. Drenched in brief warm showers four times before arriving in Dunkirk for a man-made warm shower and place to stay courtesy of KimMarie and Tim.

No longer possessing the mental energy, motivation, or time to journal or email, details about the ride became scanty as I pushed to reach Ohio. My first clear memory is stopping to briefly refuel at a small New York town park, which had a vividly painted replica of an old British sailing ship displayed on the shore. Fighting a near constant headwind, I pushed onward along Lake Road crossing into Pennsylvania eventually detouring off the route to eat another meal on the sandy shoreline of Pr-

continued on next page



One of many classic barns along the route.

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A Lake Erie Odyssey

continued from previous page

esque Isle Park in Erie, PA.

After lunch my route took me away from the shoreline and into the flat farmland of western Pennsylvania. As evening approached I finally crossed into Ohio. Entering the state a slow leak from my rear tire began slowing my progress. Resigning myself to calling it a day, I stopped to change the flat 25 miles from Geneva and ended up resting my weary body next to the interstate at the Evergreen Campground.

Sunday, June 2

dispatch from Conneaut, OH: Enjoyed my second lunch of the day with the sands of Presque Isle between my toes. A flat tire just past the Ohio border at dusk prevented me from accomplishing my ambitious goal of reaching Geneva. I'm calling it a night at a campground next to I-90. 89 miles (143km) into Lake Erie headwinds isn't a bad day...

I awakened rejuvenated from a good night's rest and got on the open road with hopes of reaching Cleveland in time to reunite with my dog, Bella, who was staying at doggy camp. I churned through mindless miles and came upon the old harbor of Ashtabula, taking a few pictures of the once bustling port and rail yard until my phone battery went dead. I pushed on through Geneva and eventually made it to Painesville Square for a rest stop and lunch. Undeterred from fatigue, I decided to take an alternate route through the hills along Johnnycake Ridge Road, finally linking up with familiar terrain along the Chagrin River. Despite my heavy load

and weary body, adrenaline pushed me over the steepest stretch of Old Mill Road out of Gates Mills and back home in the Heights. I was in time to find a ride and pick up Bella before doggy camp closed for the night... the appropriate completion to a wonderful adventure.

Monday, June 3

Back home! The push up Old Mill Road out of Gates Mills had never hurt so good...the 22T granny gear and my perpetual (slow)motion machine got the job done. A strong 86.5mi (139km) finish for the last day from Conneaut, OH. Awesome trip. Bike adventurer for life...

Conclusion

More than 700 miles (1125km) later, I can definitely say that my journey around Lake Erie was the trip of a lifetime. Perhaps not the most relaxing or hedonistic vacation, but certainly the most gratifying. Besides slowing the pace to provide a better sense for the environment and people, traveling by bicycle provided a great feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction with each push of the pedals. It was the culmination of my bicycling lifestyle. Hopefully, there are many more adventures by bike ahead...Keep riding and smiling...



"The Sea Lion" a replica of a British vessel from centuries back, now marooned on the Lake Erie shore.

#ArgoVelo PART 2...That Snickers Bar Wanted a Home

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visiting breweries.

Funny little thing here...so when asked about where to put our bikes while we showered, the YMCA said: "We never see bikepackers...just backpackers. Hmm. Not sure." I guess people just drive to the YMCA to ride stationary bikes? I dunno. They lacked racks. yo.

So anyhow, we shower, we set up camp...and we head off to the hotel to meet Captain Rock & Argo. Along the way, I noticed 2 bikepackers pluggin' along going north. Coolio! There are more of us in Waynesboro! And Waynesboro was also close to some great local breweries...So - We smooshed into the Mini, and headed off to enjoy one.

And that we most certainly did. Hikers and bikers eat a lot. And buy a lot of beer to take back with them. And wonder why the hell a brewery would charge \$60 for an insulated cooler like growler (plus the cost of the beer to fill said insulated cooler

like growler on top of that)... Enough said. Time to go.

We were dropped off at our site by Captain and noticed something funny: The bikepackers we saw were all set up here at the hiker yard too. And not a hiker in site. Guess the YMCA can't say they never see us now, can they? Anyhow. Sleep.

Tomorrow, instead of a 2 wheeled ride, we had a 4 hour 4 wheeled journey.

Sadness :(

Saturday - Which way to the Appalachian Trail? Martimer & I needed our required mile to log for the #RustCrown, so we rode to breakfast at a great little diner. Then rode back. Packed up. Got picked up. And were whisked back up Skyline Drive. We had to drop our hiker off, ya know?

And we did. And at the camp area where the trailhead was located, all of us could not find the Appalachian Trail (why are white blazes so difficult to find in a parking lot?!) But we assumed she was walking towards it as we left. We think. Well. Maybe. Any-

"All Hail the Ale!" with a Night Ride on the Towpath Trail



Beer armor, PBR, and Moosehead - beer costumes spanning the globe!

by Kevin Madzia

Beer Lovers and Bike Lovers Unite! Cleveland Beer Week is October 18 through 26, and you can help kick it off with Cleveland Beer Week's only bicycle-themed event!

Join Century Cycles as they close out their 19th season of Night Rides on the Towpath Trail with their 4th Annual "All Hail the Ale!" Night Ride on the Towpath Trail. The fun begins at 7:00pm in the parking lot of the Century Cycles store in Peninsula, Ohio (1621 Main Street), where you can cycle-your-own smoothies using the blender bike! Arrive a little early to allow time for parking and getting your bike and gear ready. You'll need your own bicycle, helmet, and a headlight. The store will be open before the ride starts in case you need to purchase any gear or need help with your bike.

The ride begins at 8:00pm, when we'll ride about 7 miles on the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. At the ride's turn-around point, you'll enjoy Oktoberfest-style snacks to make you REALLY thirsty for some good beer, and to fuel your 7-mile ride back to the post-ride party at The Winking Lizard Tavern!

Decorate yourself or your bike in tribute to the event theme "All Hail the Ale!" While beer costumes are not required, they are highly encouraged. Those in costume will have a chance to win prizes, plus they won't have their beer loyalty questioned.

As an official Cleveland Beer Week event, participants in the "All Hail the Ale!" Night Ride will be able to partake of the exclusive tapping of a beer from Sierra Nevada Brewing Company at The Winking Lizard in Peninsula.

The affinity for beer and bicycles runs so deep that before last year's "All Hail the Ale!" Night Ride, Century Cycles polled their customers to find out what type of post-ride beer is their favorite. The winner by a large margin was "Ale/Pale Ale/IPA." You can see the full results of the poll here: <http://conta.cc/19aTd83>

If you've never ridden on a Night Ride on the Towpath Trail before, you can find general information at centurycycles.com. Included there are directions to the store, links to preparation and safety tips, and photos and videos from past rides.

While the Night Ride is FREE and requires no advance registration, Night Riders must sign a waiver before participating and are responsible for the purchase of their own beer and food at the Winking Lizard. This ride is at night, in the dark woods on an un-lit trail. That is why bicycle lights and helmets are REQUIRED. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult; young adults under 21 should ignore all the excitement about the beer-tapping. Finally, make sure those beer costumes don't hang or catch in a bicycle's spokes or chain (falling off your bike tends to ruin the fun) and that you can still wear your bike helmet in costume.

how...there were reports later that she was on the trail. And even headed in the right direction. So all was good.

And so was our ride back to Pittsburgh. Sad...but good. Our journey was almost over. Miles and miles of pedaling. Free beers. White water goodness. New Frienemies. Morgues and fireworks. Bunk houses. Horrid roads. Bike shops of awesomeness. Ryder trucks. Epic Skyline Drive. Snickers. Salt. V-8. Fritos. AND IPA.

And? Aargo. BOOM.

Our adventure had come to an end. And our host in Pittsburgh knew we were sad it was over. So? He greeted us with some of the best homemade pizza and cold beers a crew could ask for. Very cool.

The perfect way to round out the perfect 420 mile food delivery expedition.

Need a Snickers delivered to your doorstep? Let Marty & I know.

#ArgoVelo

Hancock Report: A Hundred Miles of Asphalt and Corn

by Michael Gill

I rolled into Hancock County with a trunk full of bicycle parts and about 1000 copies of the *Great Lakes Courier*. I was there for the Hancock Horizontal Hundred, the long running classic century tour, organized by the Hancock Handlebars club, through the flat cornfields of Western Ohio. The newspapers were for the nearly 1000 people who signed up for the tour. The bicycle parts were pieces of the bike I planned to ride. You read that correctly: I planned to assemble my bike in a hotel room and take it on its maiden voyage, a century ride, the next day. What could possibly go wrong?

Thanks to Hancock County's noteworthily flat geography, HHH is a great century for first timers. I had ridden a couple dozen centuries back in the day, including a double and several back-to-back centuries. But the last one was well over 15 years ago. So I might as well have been a first timer. Again: what could possibly go wrong?

I found the Red Roof Inn pretty quickly and checked in. Then it was on to the YMCA to find Cory Foust, the ride organizer. With the help of some volunteers, we stuffed newspapers in bags with route maps, ride patches, rider numbers, meal tickets, and the rest of the details that commonly go with century tours. We sat in a circle, telling tales of past rides, and talking a bit about the city of Findlay. Foust recommended a new pub on the main drag for dinner. They served the very local Findlay Brewing Company's IPA. I filed the information away for later, and went back to the hotel to put together my bike.

It wasn't a new bike, with all parts included in the box. It was a 25 year-old steel frame, with parts I gathered after patrolling Craigslist for months. The headset, bottom bracket, and crankset were installed, but that was about it. So I began the assembly. Allen keys. Check. Rear derailleur. Check. Front derailleur. Check. Brake calipers.

Shifters. Bars. Stem. Brake levers. Seatpost and seat. Check. Newspaper on the carpet to catch any grease. Chain installation. Tinker, tinker, tinker. Check. Finally it was time to put on the brake cables--and to discover the parts I didn't have. I knew I'd need handlebar tape, but those little ferrules that slip over the cable--where the cable housing meets the brake lever--that was a detail I had forgotten. And the brakes were worthless without it. So I was off to Muddy River Cycles for a bit of shopping. Then back to the Y for registration.

Rider Registration made for a happy scene, with cyclists from several states checking in and seeing old friends. Half a dozen bike shops, including Century Cycles, greeted riders and sold some last minute supplies. I chatted with Century proprietor Scott Cowan. I saw Kathy Armada, Laura Losey Faulkner, and Kristine Lemasters sporting Bike Cleveland T-shirts. I also picked up some kind of energy goo, one of those concentrated nutrition and calorie products that are supposed to help your ride or marathon go better. Listen, I'm closing in on fifty. I need all the energy I can get.

Back at the hotel I installed brake cables and took the bike on a test ride around a few blocks. All the gears were functioning properly. Brakes were tight. The only thing was the position of the brake levers on the bars. An easy fix. Then bedtime.

The hotel phone rang its wakeup call promptly at 6:30 a.m., which was important, because the Hancock Horizontal Hundred comes with a pancake breakfast. And that's important, because nobody wants to run out of fuel on a hundred mile ride in rural Ohio, SAG wagon or no.

There's no mass start for this ride. You just set off when you're ready. So the riders trickle out steadily in their own time, until all of them get on the road. As soon as they get beyond the city limits, they're in corn fields. The map shows HHH to be a jigsaw puzzle piece of zig zag turns on tiny little county and township roads, and hardly any of them have names.

Many of the roads are just a single lane wide, and for miles on end we'd hardly see a single car. Still, riders had



A pace line through cornfields.

to be careful approaching intersections. The corn fields run right to the corners of the roads, even closer than buildings in the city, and the stalks are uniformly about eight feet tall, so there's no way to see if a car, truck, or tractor might be speeding along the crossroads, hidden behind all that produce. "Clear," the riders would call out as soon as they could see well enough to report.

With expectations based on my solo rides, I figured I'd be happy to finish 100 miles in 6 hours. For the first part of the ride I fell in with a couple of guys whose pace felt right to me. We took turns at the front. Stopped at a rest stop. Picked up another guy from the Orville club. Then Orville and I looked around and found that those other guys had dropped back. We rode on.

After a half hour stop for lunch at Arlington High School, we got back out on the road. We had just fallen back into a groove when a ten-man pace line blew by Orville and me like a locomotive. Another rider nearby responded to their speed like this: "Don't you just want to kick them?" Spoken with awe and admiration.

But after a few hundred yards, I was tantalized by the echelon out front of us. They were getting farther ahead, sure. But if we got on behind them, it'd be like riding behind a truck. "Let's go," I said. And Orville and I put our heads down and began to push harder. It took

a couple miles of hard work, but there's just about nothing as satisfying as bridging that kind of gap and ducking into the paceline's slipstream as a reward. This crew was working together, pushing hard, and with a dozen of us now in the mix, we were moving significantly faster than any of us as individuals would. My goal of a six-hour finish suddenly looked well within reach.

The wind in western Ohio typically comes out of the West, but on Sunday, September 6, 2013, it was going the other way. For about a ten mile stretch around mile 70 or so, we found ourselves with a tailwind, moving at about 23 miles per hour. We weren't that fast after the turn north, but still the pace line fell into an echelon, taking one mile turns at the front. I was working hard just to stay with this crew and not embarrass myself. It felt great. Then came the turn back east, straight into a headwind. Some miles went by. I took my shift at the front, pushing to keep the speed up. Then I took my break and suddenly found myself straining to stay on the back. And at about the 90th mile, I let the pace line go. I watched them, with the wind in my face, getting farther and farther ahead, knowing I'd never catch back on.

I finished the century by myself, still pushing for speed, but only a little bit. I rolled over the I-75 overpass, the highest hill in the Hancock Horizontal Hundred. A climb of maybe 18 feet.

Back at the YMCA finish line a small cheering section greeted all the riders as they rolled in, banging a cowbell, blowing party whizzers, and shaking pom-poms. I looked at my phone: riding time, five hours and thirty-one minutes. Half an hour faster than I'd hoped. My new bike, assembled the night before, had performed flawlessly. What were the odds?

At this point, the organizational strengths of the Hancock Horizontal Hundred are worth noting--and not because I was in a good mood. The course had been extremely well marked. The Y offered showers to all riders. Towels were available, if you hadn't brought your own. Every aspect of the ride ran as smooth as the asphalt roads. So will I come back for another century next year? What do you think?



Representing: Kathy Armada, Kristine Lemasters, and Laura Losey Faulkner, in Bike Cleveland T-shirts

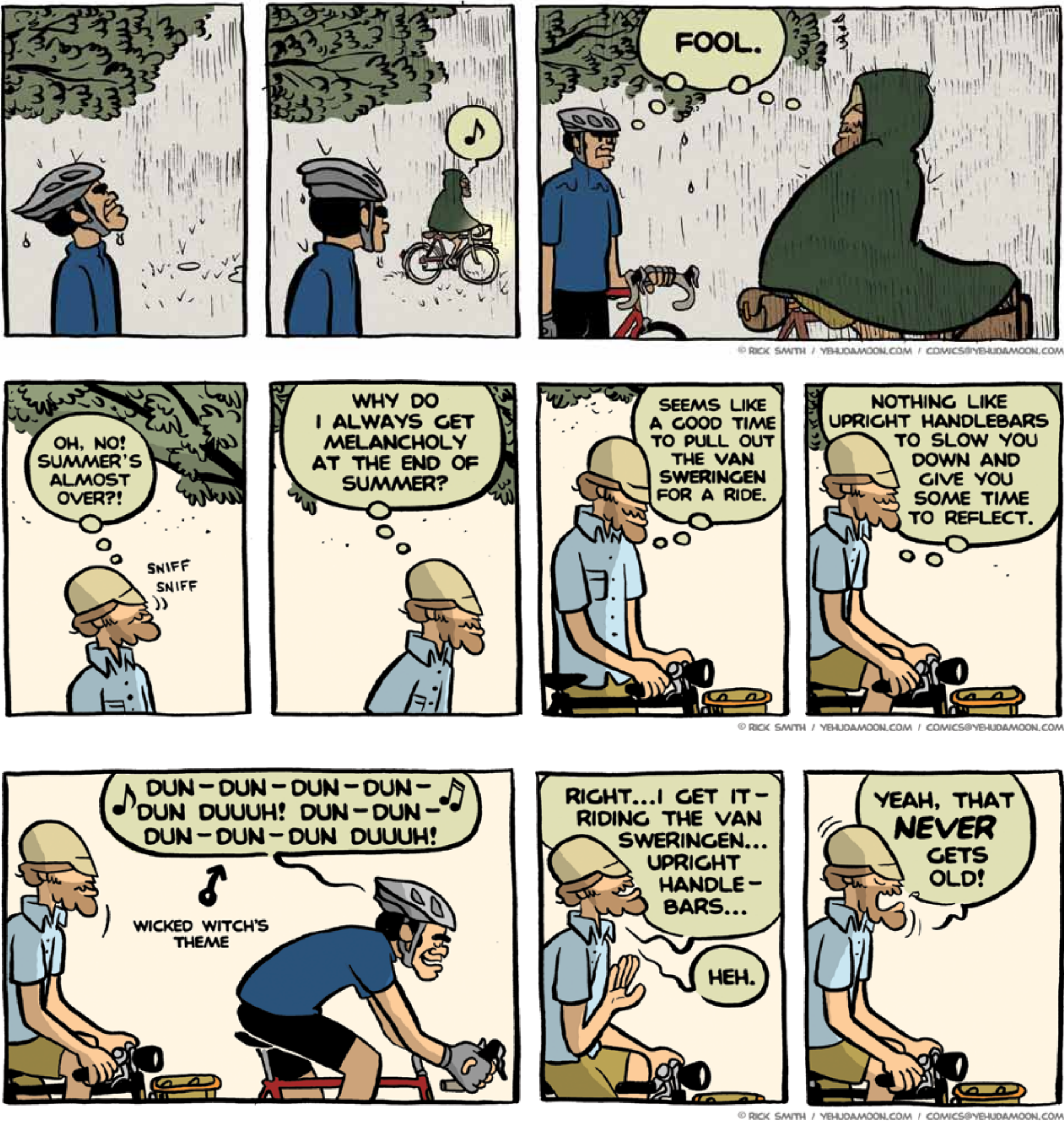


Waiting to pee after the first 25 miles at the Vanlue city park rest stop.



Yehuda Moon and the Kickstand Cyclery

The Great Lakes Courier is pleased to reprint some of our favorite Yehuda Moon strips . . . which happen to be the ones with references to Cleveland and Northeast Ohio, selected by creator / illustrator Rick Smith and writer Brian Griggs. Printed Yehuda Moon volumes are available at Yehudamoon.com.



WILL THE CHALICE RETURN TO CLEVELAND?

#RustCrown

continued from [page 2]
the Rust Belt Battle of the Bikes hap-
pened because you rocked it. Now?



The Chalice!

You deserve a little recognition, don-
cha think? Join our “pals” from PGH
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#RustCrown
Event Shizzie:
When: Friday October 18th, 3pm
the crowning gets started
Where: Boxcar Lounge, 534 Ma-
honing Ave, Youngstown, OH
Who: Bike Cleveland, Bike Pitts-
burgh, Rust Belt Riders, Biking Bad-
asses
What: Crowning. Toasting. Eating.
Beverage Consuming. Good times.

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