

More Bicycling = Better Community!

Mount Baker Bicycle Club Newsletter, Volume 18 Number 8, Sept 2009

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This month's contributors: Sheila Carson Photography, Beth Hartsoch, Karl King, Robin Robertson, Doug Schoonover, Jim Straatman, Harvey Varga. Thanks to all!



MBBC listserv-sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/ MtBakerBicycleClub/

Club Website: www.mtbakerbikeclub.org

Newsletter archive online: www.mtbakerbikeclub.org/news

Follow the club on Twitter: twitter.com/mtbakerbike

Chuckanut Century

The 2009 **Chuckanut Century** is Sunday,

September 20, Sign up before September 5th for only \$35.00. Tandems: \$10 for the stoker. \$5 discount for MBBC members. The southern route is a loop down Chuckanut and returning by Lake Samish. The northern route goes to Birch Bay and Semiahmoo. All routes start and finish downtown at Boundary Bay Brewery on Railroad Ave. *Day-of* Registration starts at 7am at Boundary Bay.

Volunteers are needed to help promote and put on this event. Posters and brochures are available to be distributed. If you are going to Seattle or Vancouver, B.C. and would like to take some to the bike shops there it would help. In mid-September, we will need help marking roads. During the event, we will need volunteers for registration, to staff the food stations and to drive a sag vehicle. Please contact Doug Schoonover, chuckanutcentury@ mtbakerbikeclub.org to help. mtbakerbikeclub.org/chuckanut.html

Thanks to our event sponsors:

- SSC
- GroupHealth
- WECU
- Boundary Bay Brewery and Bistro
- Erin Baker's Wholesome Baked Goods
- Adventures NW
- RoadID
- · Theron Eirish, Massage Therapist







Festival 542, a weekend of activities, is planned on Mount Baker, September 12-13.

The hallmark event is *RIDE 542* - The Mt. Baker Hill Climb, on Sunday September 13. This is a 24.5 mile cycling challenge for recreation, competitive and first time cyclists of all ages. RIDE 542 follows the Mt. Baker Highway (SR542) from the town of Glacier (e. 955ft) 24.5 miles to its terminus at Artist Point (e. 5140 ft), on the border of North Cascades National Park. This is a state highway and will be closed to cars for the ride! RIDE 542 has several categories to fit your ability and desire for competitiveness...or lack thereof.

In addition to the Hill Climb, these activities are planned for Saturday September 12: *Cross 542*: kickoff to the Cyclocross season *Run 542*: 8.5 mile Trail Run *Eat 542*: Riders and runners invited to chow down in Glacier.

For details of all these events, see www.norkarecreation.com/hcindex.html

Why does Harvey Varga have black eyes in his wedding photos? Because he was hit by a car four days earlier, while riding his bike... and he's still on a long road to recovery.

Read his story on p. 4-5

WEEKLY AND GROUP RIDES



- **Tuesday Social Ride**: starts from Pioneer Park in Ferndale, 30-40 miles, 13-16 mph route varies. 10am start time in winter, 9am in better weather. To check start time and for other info:Robert Parker at rmp-4724@hotmail.com or 360-671-6910
- Wednesday Logos Early Morning Ride: 16-18 mph pace, 30 miles, meet at 5:50 am for 6:00 am departure. Yes you read that right. Meet at Logos, 1331 Commercial St. contact: LogosCyclists@logos.com
- Wednesday Group Workout Ride: Race/Training Pace, 30 mile distance, meet at 5:45 pm, leave at 6pm from Boundary Bay Brewery at Railroad Avenue. Ride separates into fast and very fast groups. From Oct-Mar this is a night trail ride with lights. Re-group at brewery afterward (7:30 pm). Contact: ridecoordinator@mtbakerbikeclub.org, 410-6431
- Saturday Donut Ride: 24 45 miles, race pace, departs from Kulshan Cycles, 7:30 am Oct thru Feb and 7 am March thru Sept. Goes to Ferndale and return, or if you wish continue to Birch Bay and return. Every week of the year!!
- Saturday Recumbent Ride: Second Saturday of the month at 10 am. 14 mile intown course begins at Kulshan Cycles. Sporadic depending on weather. Info: Robert Parker at rmp-4724@hotmail.com or 360-671-6910
- **Fairhaven Rides**: Sunday mornings at 8am and Thursday evenings at 6pm. Meet at Fairhaven Village Green. Contact Fairhaven Bike & Ski for details: 733-4433
- everybodyBikeCommunity Rides: Check www.everybodyBike.com/calendar.aspx for listings

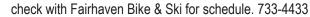
Rides Ending for Season:

Days are getting shorter quickly and many rides are ending for the season due to darkness. Check with your group to make sure you know its upcoming ride schedules, including winter start times. Watch for rides to start again in April 2010.

Tuesday Evening Ride -- the ride will be ending sometime in September. Starts Whidbey Island Bank, 920 W. Bakerview Road. Meet at 5:45, depart 6:00 pm. 16 mph group and 20+ mph group. ridecoordinator@mtbakerbikeclub.org or 410-6431.

Saturday Kulshan Ladies Ride: the last ride of the season was on August 29th., 8am at Kulshan and ride around Lake Samish. Watch for it again next summer.

Tuesday Hot Laps Ride: 30-40 miles, race pace. Training ride from Kulshan Cycles at 6pm Check for last ride date. Fairhaven Thursday Ride: Thursday evenings at 6pm,





A NEW WEEKLY RIDE TO JOIN:

Announcing:

the Wednesday Logos Early Morning Ride.

The bicycle-riding software engineers down at Logos Bible Software, led by IT Manager Jim Straatman, have been dragging themselves out on the road at the crack of dawn: 6:00 am on Wednesday mornings. They get in a good training ride (about 30 miles at a 16-18 mph morning workout pace) before the workday.

They sometimes meet up with riders from nearby CH2M Hill at this insane hour of the day, and now they're opening up their ride to everyone in the community. They hope to keep up this early-morning ride in some fashion during the winter. For now, join them while we still have some early-early daylight.

Meet at Logos: 1331 Commercial Street, at 5:50 am for a 6:00 am departure on Wednesdays. Contact email is: LogosCyclists@logos.com



2009 EVENTS LIST

Calendar is updated as new events come in - check back each month!

Family Events/Rides

Slow Food Eat-In Ride: Sept 7, 11:30am; Bellingham Slow Food Convivium hosts picnic at Birchwood Elementary, register for prelunch bike ride by 9/3 www.everybodyBIKE.com information and register: 671-BIKE or info@everybodyBIKE.com

Sunnyland Neighborhood Bike Rodeo & Picnic: Sept 27, 1pm Memorial Park near Sunnyland Elementary. rodeo appropriate for kids 6-12 www.everybodyBIKE.com information and RSVP: 671-BIKE or info@everybodyBIKE.com

Bike Parade for Breast Cancer Awareness: October 10 10 am Wear pink, 10 mile ride/parade Interurban trail. Begin/end at Boundary Bay Brewery 733-6440, kulshancycles@comcast.net full story, details and registration at: trekbikes.com/women

Fun Rides

Fanatik Meet the Women's Team Ride: Oct 3: 9am No-drop ride with bakery stop, if you're thinking of joining the women's team, come for a ride and get to know the group. MaryMargaret Bowmer mmflowernut@gmail.com, shuksanvelo.com

Moonlight Ramble: Oct 3: 9pm-1am, Festival followed by ride in the full moon (bring lights and reflectors). Start/end at WWU. Supporting the Pickford Cinema. bellinghammoonlightramble.com

Races (to watch or to enter)

Bellingham Traverse: September 19 bellinghamtraverse.com

Bellingham Parks & Rec Race Series

October 11: Runningshoes.com Duathlon and YMCA Youth Du full schedule, details at: www.trithecookie.com Wood Stone

Cyclocross: preliminary schedule

Sept 12: Cross 542 (Maple Falls) Sept 19: Starcrossed (Redmond-Marymoor) Oct 31: Cyclocrazed (Bellingham) Nov 22: SCX (Sedro Wooley) also see list of Cyclocross club websites, p.7

Classes

everybodyBIKE confidence classes: www.everybodyBIKE.com Sept 22 - First Gear

information and sign ups: 671-BIKE or info@everybodyBIKE.com

REI Bike Maintenance Classes (Bellingham REI): Sept 9 & 28: Bike Maintenance 101 Sept 12 & 27: Bike Maint 201 details: www.rei.com/stores/events/65

2009 RIDES EVENTS

September

- 12: Pedaling the Muse (Olympic Peninsula) www.pafac.org/events/special-events.html
- 12-13 MS 150 Bike Ride (Mt. Vernon)
- 13 Ride 542: Mt. Baker Hill Climb (Glacier) www.norkarecreation.com
- 18-21 Trek Tri-Island (San Juan, Lopez, Orcas Islands) cleanairadventures.org/trek_tri_island
- 20 Chuckanut Century (Bellingham) www.mtbakerbikeclub.org/chuckanut.html
- 20 Cycle the Wave (Issaquah) www.cyclethewave.com
- 26 Tour de Whidbey (Oak Harbor) tinyurl.com/5zw9zv
- **26** DAM2DAM (Wenatchee) www.mikeutley.org
- **27** Headwaters Century (Enumclaw) www.twbc.org/events/headwaters
- 27 Olympic Bike Adventure (Port Angeles)

www.olympicdiscoverybike.com

October

4 Kitsap Color Classic www.cascade.org/EandR/kitsap

November

21 El Tour de Tucson, AZ pbaa.com/!ETT/ETThome.html

GroupHealth



Convalescence Slow, Painful for Bellingham Cyclist Hit by Car

arvey Varga, like most active Pacific Northwesterners, was gearing up for the best summer in years. Having spent the rainy winter months training, the Ironman triathlete, marathon runner, and Bellingham Triathlon Club member was looking forward to the summer's outdoor activities. In addition, Varga was especially excited about this summer because included in the plans was his wedding to All-American USAT triathlete Marti Riemer-Reiss. As July began, Varga was busy with his job as the Haggen account manager for United Natural Foods Inc, and he



Harvey Varga racing cyclocross in 2008. The 2009 'cross season extends through winter, and Varga will miss it due to injuries sustained in July when he was hit by a car while cycling. Photo by Beth Hartsoch.

After initially feeling optimistic about a speedy recovery, Varga has come to realize the road will be longer and more painful than he anticipated. His doctors tell him to sleep as much as possible, yet he is in so much pain that he can't get uninterrupted sleep. "I have a high pain tolerance," says Varga, "yet, at least once or twice a day I am in tears and even moving is so painful it makes me nauseous."

Varga can't yet stand or sit for longer than 30-60 minutes per day, and due to brain injury he's having memory and balance issues. Since his brain is occupied with healing

itself, he can't focus his eyes for long periods, thus

was also selecting music for his upcoming wedding reception. Preparing for a new life as a new family with Marti and stepdaughter Annika, the future was full of promise.

However, four days before his wedding, Varga's plans and optimism were taken from him by a 17-year-old driver. The teen, driving his parents' car with a friend aboard, was reaching through the driver's window around to clear something off the windshield wiper. While pulling at the wiper, he veered the car toward the shoulder where Varga was out on a bicycle training ride. Varga was struck from behind by the car estimated traveling at 45 mph.

"He ran straight into the back of me and didn't slow down until I smashed his hood and went through his windshield," says Varga. The force of the blow launched Varga out of his shoes and demolished his bicycle. As the driver hit the brakes, Varga was hurled over the car and cartwheeled several times before landing headfirst onto the ground. "My helmet saved my life" he says.

Varga sustained multiple injuries, including: six fractured and compressed vertebrae, several fractured ribs, severe brain trauma, road-rash over half his upper body, and damage to ankles and elbows. He was in the ER for nine hours while medical teams assessed the damage. reading is difficult. He has been relying on music and audiobooks to distract himself from the pain.

He worries about losing the hard work put into his fitness training. "The athlete in me is bored of sleeping and thinks I don't notice him slipping away," he says. Yet, Varga credits his physical condition for some of his triumphs since the accident. "The doctors are amazed that I am not still in the hospital, but my motivation to stand on my own power at our wedding was stronger than anything."



Varga was determined to stand at his wedding under his own power, though only 4 days after being hit. Due to head trauma and pain medication, he can't remember much of the day, and is grateful to photographer Sheila Carson for capturing the day and for his wedding photos which help fill the gaps in his memory.

as told to the MBBC by Harvey Varga

continued from p.4

Varga is working with a team of doctors including a trauma doctor and a neurosurgeon. They have been adjusting his meds to see if they can reduce the pain and allow him to increase his activity. "I really want someone to assess my healing and put me on a program of physical therapy and maybe acupuncture

program of physical therapy or any other therapy that might help." He was to start pool therapy a month after the accident, but doctors thought he wasn't yet ready. He hopes to get into PT soon, and is desperate for any improvement.

66 I have a high pain tolerance... yet even moving is so painful it makes me nauseous."

- Harvey Varga on his convalescence after behing hit by a car while cycling Harvey Varga's story could apply to any of us. He was hit on a road that is on the route of the Donut Ride, the Tour de Whatcom, the Chuckanut Century and numerous regular group rides. Hundreds of cyclists ride

Still, "I remind myself that I am alive, I will recover, I have a family, I have so much on my horizon. So much good and so much to be blessed in every painful breath."

Varga's recovery time has allowed him to think about why he survived the accident, and he credits his bike helmet. "I have always been a helmet freak. I get mad when I see a family out for a bike ride and the mom and kids wear helmets but not the dad... or, kids have helmets but put them on their backpacks or

hang them from their handlebars. I hope to get involved with the hospital trauma care unit that gives community classes on helmets, including head trauma as a result of not wearing one. I shouldn't be here, but I am. I'm here for some reason and I will tell my story to as many kids and adults as will listen." He also wishes he could evangelize to motorists to be aware that cyclists share the roads: *See Bicycles*!

Doctors estimate it will be 8-12 weeks until he can return to work. His medical bills have already exceeded the teenage driver's PIP insurance, and have nearly topped out Varga's. He has secured an attorney who is working on sorting out a settlement with the family of the driver, as it will be needed to cover further medical costs. Varga says, "I do feel bad for the kid who hit me; he will have those memories that road every week, and on this particular day in July, Harvey Varga happened to be the one there when an inattentive teen swerved his car.

forever and I expect this trauma will affect the rest of his life. Yet, this is killing me and my new family.

I lie here and wonder if he is out enjoying the summer

while my family and myself were robbed of a happy

summer and fall, without our planned camping trips,

bicycle rides, outdoor concerts, triathlons, picnics,

cyclocross races, time with family and friends, and

building our new home and lives together."

Varga is appreciative of the support of the community, and of his family's athletic sponsors: Clif Bar and RunningShoes.com. He notes especially that his new family has been absolutely devoted to his recovery. His 8-year-old stepdaughter Annika is proud of her responsibility taking care of him. "She writes me getwell cards, tells me that it's time to rest, serves me



food, takes the dog for walks."

And wife Marti "has been my rock. I couldn't do this without her."

We at the MBBC wish Harvey an accelerated recovery as soon as he is cleared to start physical therapy, and will check in with him this winter in hopes of better news.

Due to broken ribs and vertebrae, Varga's long convalescence includes a body brace for support and poles to re-learn walking and balance.

MBBC: We're Much More Than a Club!

- Recreation –Mt. Baker Bicycle Club hosts weekly, monthly and a variety of annual recreation rides for members and guests throughout the year. Rides are oriented to all levels of ability including beginners, social riders, commuters, touring and high level race training. Check the newsletter for current rides and come along as our guest!
- Education Bicycling safely is a learned skill. The Club offers courses in partnership with the Bellingham Parks Department. We work with local groups to host bike skills rodeos at annual community fairs. Funds raised by club activities help support training of more teachers, training bicycle skills to kids means a lifetime of safer roads.

Encouraging bicycling is an important part of the Club's education work. Our annual Bike to Work and School Day promotion has helped hundreds of commuters "Be part of the solution" launching careers of folks bicycling to work or cycling their kids to school.

- Trails In partnership with Whatcom TrailNet and the Whatcom Independent Mountain Pedalers, the Club helps advocate for development of a complete trail and mountain bike network throughout Whatcom County. The Club works with Bellingham Walks to improve the system of walking paths connecting communities both in cities and rural areas so that our children have safe routes to get to school.
- Race Training Weekly club rides offer new and seasoned high-level riders the chance to improve team riding skills. In partnership with the Ken Meyer Memorial Foundation, the Club hosts annual Criterium Bike Race events. Whether training for professional-class races or for endurance events or tours, these weekly training rides give Club members the extra edge to compete and win.

Mt. Baker Bicycle Club vision:

Residents and visitors of all ability levels enjoy frequent and safe cycling throughout the Whatcom County region.

Our Mission: Encouraging and assisting everyone to experience safe and healthy cycling for recreation, transportation, or racing on roadways and trails in and around Whatcom County.

Mt. Baker Bicycle Club goals:

- 1. Increase the number of people bicycling regularly
 - conducting and supporting recreational and educational bicycle events and rides
 - helping all types of people enjoy bicycling
- 2. Encourage safe and enjoyable bicycling
 - · educate the public on safe bicycling skills and sharing the road
 - · communicate issues of interest to bicyclists

MBBC Membership Form

	I New Member D Renewing Member D This is a change of address						
Last name:	First name:						
City:	State:	Postal Code:					
E-mail:							
	er:						
(An associate member can		e address as the individual member)					
Would you like to he	elp? Volunteers are our mo	ost valuable resource.					
Please check any of	f the boxes that appeal to y	ou and we will be in touch:					
Ride Leader	Newsletter	Board Member					
Bike to Work and School Day Chuckanut Century							
Special Events	Website Maintenanc	e 🗇 Education					

□ I can provide discounts on

- 3. Advise decision makers on facilities and policies that maintain or improve safe bicycling conditions on roadways and trails
- Promote bikes as environmentally friendly transportation
 partnering to reduce environmental damage of transportation

Mt. Baker Bicycle Club Board of Directors and Officers:

Ellen Barton - President; Marie Kimball - Vice President; Michael McAuley - Secretary; Cathie Gerlicher - Treasurer; Doug Schoonover - Ride Coordinator; Pamela Robertson, Marc Ambers, Chris Covert-Bowlds

Contacts: Ellen Barton--raleigh3speed@hotmail.com (734-8540) Marie Kimball--bikebham@yahoo.com (752-1236) Doug Schoonover--ridecoordinator@mtbakerbikeclub.org (410-6431) Jennifer Longstaff--mbbcnewsletter@mtbakerbikeclub.org -- jfel



Contribute to the newsletter: submission guidelines:

Contributions of articles, editorials, photographs, and artwork are welcome for inclusion in the newsletter. Anything related to bicycling will be considered; please discuss ideas with the editor in advance to reserve newsletter space or if you have questions. Final materials are due the last Friday before the last full week of every month, though earlier submissions are appreciated. Text can be submitted in any common format, for example: plain text, RTF, HTML, MS Word, etc. Please use JPG or TIFF format for photos, and ensure they are at least 250 ppi. Any articles may be edited for grammar, spelling, and space considerations.

Please notify the MBBC of upcoming cycling events for inclusion in the events list/calendar. Provide details plus contact information.

Email the newsletter editor:

mbbcnewsletter@mtbakerbikeclub.org, or drop a note to Editor, MBBC Newsletter; PO Box 2702; Bellingham WA 98227

Membership type:

Individual: \$15 _____ Family/Associate: \$25 _____ Additional Donation: _____ (donations support bike safety education) Total enclosed: \$_____

Please enclose a check payable to: Mt. Baker Bicycle Club (There will be a \$20 fee for all returned checks.)

Mail to: Mt. Baker Bicycle Club Post Office Box 2702 Bellingham, Washington 98227

SHORT SUBJECTS... a little of this and that...

City of Bellingham seeks members for new transportation commission

The city is accepting applications for people to serve on the newly formed Bellingham Transportation Commission. This advisory committee is expected to help shape the future of Bellingham by taking a long-range, strategic look at transportation issues and providing recommendations on policy choices and investment priorities.

The nine-member commission will absorb the advisory responsibilities of the City's Parking Commission and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, both to be disbanded effective at the end of 2009.

Members of the Transportation Commission are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. Mayor Dan Pike says he is looking for people with a range of perspectives and expertise who will represent the community's long-term vision for mobility options throughout the City. Applicants must be residents of the City of Bellingham for at least two years, and the State of Washington for three years, to be eligible for appointment.

The deadline to apply for a position on the commission is 5 p.m. Friday, Sept. 18. Pike said he expects to forward his selection of members to the City Council for confirmation in early October.

For more information about applying for

appointment to City boards and commissions: City website at www.cob.org, or contact the Mayor's Office at 778-8100.

Cyclocross Websites

Cyclocross season is getting started, kicking off in Whatcom County with Cross 542 on September 12th. To occupy every spare weekend with Cyclocross between now and the end of the year, check the schedules and race series at any of these websites:

Cascade Cross: cascadecross.com (see also notes and discussion from Ryan Rickerts about the upcoming season and plans).

MFG:mfgcyclocross.com

Star Crossed: starcrossedcx.com (Sept 19: this is a really fun race both for riders and spectators... down at Marymoor in Redmond.)

Seattle: seattlecyclocross.com

Cross 542: norkarecreation.com (Sept 12: coming up right here in Whatcom County!)

Fairhaven Fitness and Personal Training announces "Big FIT Saturday" Open House

MBBC Member Robin Robertson, owner of Fairhaven Fitness at 800 McKenzie Ave. is announcing another winter schedule of fitness events guaranteed to keep you in shape and ready for spring cycling. Details on winter events will be included in next month's newsletter. Meanwhile, she would like to invite everyone to come to the club's Open House on **Saturday, September 12** from 10am to 5pm. Check the website for schedule of free classes and events

to be held during the day. You can also meet Cat 1 cycling guru Phil Elsasser, who is now a personal trainer at the club and is available starting in September.

> Information: www. bellinghamtennis.com

Contact Robin: robin@ bellinghamtennis.com or 360-733-5050

Newsletter schedule for remainder of 2009

This current September newsletter will be followed by two double-month issues: -- October/November 2009, to be mailed before October 1.

-- December 2009/January 2010, mailed before December 1.

If you wish to place any calendar items or announcements in upcoming newsletters, please get your items to the newsletter editor before September 18 for inclusion in the October/November issue and before November 20 for inclusion in the December/January issue.

Regular monthly newsletters will begin again in February 2010, featuring the "mark your calendar" list of dates for 2010 rides.

Send newsletter items to: mbbcnewsletter@mtbakerbikeclub.org

Bicycle Friendly Community

BELLINGHAM, WA



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Triday	Saturday
	5	September 1 Social Ride Tues Hot Laps Tues Evening Ride	2 Wed Group Ride Logos early-am Ride	3 F'haven evening ride	4	5 Donut Ride
6 F'haven morning ride	7 Labor Day SlowFood Eat-In Ride	8 Tues Social Ride Tues Hot Laps Tues Evening Ride	9 Wed Group Ride Logos early-am Ride REI - bike maint 101	10 F'haven evening ride	11	12 Donut Ride Recumbent Ride Cross 542 Pedaling the Muse MS 150 (day 1) Big FIT Day - FF&PT REI - bike maint 201
13 F'haven morning ride MS 150 (day 2) Ride 542 (Mt. Baker Hill Climb)	14	15 Tues Social Ride Tues Hot Laps Tues Evening Ride	16 Wed Group Ride Logos early-am Ride	17 F'haven evening ride	18 Applction deadline for transportation commission <i>Rosh Has</i>	19 Donut Ride StarCrossed B'ham Traverse hanah
20 F'haven morning ride Chuckanut Century Cycle the Wave	21 Autumn Bo	22 Social Ride rgins Tues Hot Laps? Tues Evening Ride? evrybdyBike:1st gear	23 Wed Group Ride Logos early-am Ride	24 F'haven evening ride	25	26 Donut Ride Tour de Whidbey DAM2DAM
27 <i>Yom Kippur</i>) F'haven morning ride Headwaters Century Olympic Bike Adventr REI - bike maint 201 Sunnyland BikeRodeo	28 REI - bike maint 101	29 Social Ride Tues Hot Laps?? Tues Evening Ride??	30 Wed Group Ride Logos early-am Ride	October 1	2	3 Donut Ride Fanatik Women's Team Meet Ride Moonlight Ramble



Mt. Baker Bicycle Club

Post Office Box 2702 Bellingham, Washington 98227



Bellingham, Washington 98227

If you are a club member and wish to receive a printed version of the newsletter rather than online, please inform mbbcnewsletter@mtbakerbikeclub.org. Club members are entitled to a printed/mailed version if they wish.