



The Freewheel

The New Mexico Touring Society (NMTS), founded in January 1980.

A recreational bicycling club promoting safe enjoyable road and off-road cycling via organized day and overnight rides for all ages and abilities

May 2025

Website: <https://www.nmts.org>

Vol 46-04

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Welcome to May! It is National Bike Month in the U.S., promoted by the League of American Bicyclists since 1956. It is a celebration of biking as transportation, recreation, and well-being, encouraging more people to try cycling and replace car trips with bikes. Albuquerque is participating in National Bike Month in a big way. There is a bike to Work Week and Bike to Work Day (May 16th), safety classes by Esperanza and even kid events. Please check out all opportunities available all month at the [City of Albuquerque](#) website.

In addition to those listed on the City website there are some additional activities in the region you may be interested in attending:

Saturday May 10th - [Law Enforcement Memorial Ride](#)

Saturday/Sunday May 17th/18th - [Santa Fe Century](#), half and gravelito

Saturday/Sunday May 24th/25th - [Iron horse Classic](#), Durango

Santa Fe also offers lots of cool cycling events, check their [calendar](#) for more information.

I also want to draw your attention to a touring event this fall, France and/or Spain, being organized by John Gillett. Please check the [NMTS website](#), one time rides for more information.

See you on the roads and trails!

- Darcy -

Bike Month

May is Bike Month. Here are some of the bike events happening around town:

May 4: [National Ride a Bike Day](#)

May 7: [Ride Your Bike to School Day](#)

May 10: Bike & Babble (see below)

May 10: [New Mexico Law Enforcement Memorial Ride](#)

May 12-18: [Bike to Work Week](#)
May 16: [Bike to Work Day](#)
May 18: [Santa Fe Century](#)
May 21: [National Ride of Silence](#)

May 10th 2025

Tiguex Park 10a-12p

Community Bike ride 12:30p-2p

BIKE & BABBLE

DoomBars • NMTS • CyclingPeeps • AMBA • ABQCyclingClub • GitSumAdventures
BikeBurque • Gatos • Cyclistxs • HighDesert • AllBodiesOnBikes • Penultimates
TheGearitos • NMEB • WestsideWanderers • KidicalMass • DukeCityBikePolo



Learn about the biking community in Albuquerque!

Safety

Pacelines are a great way for a group of cyclists to conserve energy. Unlike riding in single file with a few bike lengths between bicycles, the cyclists will close to within one to two feet of the bicycle in front. Doing so allows the trailing cyclist to draft. Without delving into the physics suffice to say cycling effort decreases exponentially with the reduced headwind created by drafting. Pacelines also increase risk. Hence etiquette is essential for safety.

In a recent club incident, the lead cyclist hit on an obstacle and went down. The trailing cyclist could not avoid the lead and also went down resulting in injuries including conclusion. A few years ago, another cyclist learned the hard lesson of wheel overlap when the front tire rubbed against the lead's rear tire resulting in a crash. Avoidable,

perhaps not. But, we can take steps to reduce risk.

It is tempting to create rules. The better approach is to discuss etiquette. Pacelines require attention and can be very unforgiving of the unwary. Our most common paceline is the single paceline. Two others, not discussed, are double pacelines and rotating pacelines (separate pacelines rotate the lead).

Let me preface my comments with this important observation. The bike paths and lanes are shared and not exclusively for bikes. Hazards exist not found in a Tour de X bike race. Speeds on bike paths must accommodate other traffic such as children and dogs common on the Bosque path (the City now has a 20 mph speed limit). Heightened awareness is essential.

Etiquette begins with “be in the moment.” Stay focused on the ride environment. Some points to keep in mind:

- Hold a steady line. Be predictable, avoid sudden swerves.
- Maintain constant speed. Keep a steady pace and don't surge when assuming the lead. Avoid hard braking.
- Never overlap wheels! This poses a major crash risk.
- Eyes up. Don't fixate on the wheel in front, scan the road ahead.
- Pacelines are a team effort.

As the lead, one must consider the full paceline. The decision to pass a pedestrian or slower cyclists must consider the available distance and needed distance for the last cyclist in the paceline. If approaching traffic or a blind turn is before the paceline, the lead might be better advised to slow and pass when circumstances improve.

Lead changes are part of the fun. A key point in pacelines is energy conservation. While no set rule applies, factors such as a strong headwind would argue for more frequent changes. A fast pace would also suggest more frequent changes. When changing, like passing, assure there is clear path ahead. I'm sure more than one of us has started a lead change only to see a bike approaching rapidly in the opposite direction. Initiate the lead change with a clear signal, move to the side, and finally rejoin the paceline.

It happens. Those in the paceline should recognize the former lead needs to come in. Make a hole: let the riders behind know by calling “slowing,” then let the cyclist into the paceline.

Communications are essential. Both hand signals and verbal cues should be used. A good example, is a hand signal indicating slowing in conjunction with “SLOWING.” The cyclist in the paceline will pass repeat the hand signal, if possible, and repeat “SLOWING.”

Paces vary. A good paceline accommodates all. However, instances may exist when very strong cyclists over pace some of the other cyclists. I offer, if one is a bit over paced they might hang on the end and not rotate. Alternatively, it might be better to set up a second, less aggressive paceline. All judgment, of course, the goal remains to enjoy the ride. A good paceline leader will establish a pace commensurate for the group and allow the paceline to reform if it separates momentarily.

There really is no set guideline on paceline length. More bikes makes leading a paceline more complex especially on shared bike lanes and paths. For the big ride attendance

days, it would be prudent to set up different groups. Especially if there are varied levels of cyclists.

One caution is e-bikes in pace lines. The issue is momentum, the bikes weigh more. Hence the rider must allow for increased slowing and stopping distance. For my money, I think e-bikes should stay out of pacelines.

In my experience, there are times when the paceline should spread out into single file (greater separation). For example, entering a dark underpass. More than once I have encountered pedestrians and opposing traffic. The sudden change from bright to dim light can mask their presence. Often when passing people (especially children!) I will open the distance allowing the bike in front room to swerve or brake and give me added space to avoid collision.

Higher speeds may argue for increased distance between cyclists. By example, the 30 mph or more speed descending Tramway leaves little time to observe and swerve. A bike on the wheel of the lead, even less time. Opening the interval is prudent.

As most know, New Mexico has adopted the "Idaho No Stop" law. When traffic permits, cyclists may treat a STOP sign as a YIELD. A side note: Stop lights may also be treated as a YIELD (extra caution for fast moving traffic). However, in pacelines we should exercise both added caution and courtesy. By example, the lead and the first bikes may cross the intersection. As a left turn car or car at stop sign waits, the remaining cyclists follow into the intersection. At best, the awaiting drivers allow the discourtesy. At worst, the driver may not be aware of the full paceline and enter the intersection. Judgment to enter an intersection rests with ALL cyclists, not just the lead. In a similar fashion, pulling alongside a stopped vehicle should allow for a potential not signalled right turn.

I'll conclude with etiquette and staying in the moment are essential to reduce risk.

- Dave Olson -

NMTS Rest Stop at Santa Fe Century

Once again members of the New Mexico Touring Society have volunteered to mix gatorade and supply refreshments at the Cedar Grove rest stop for the Santa Fe Century. This year it will take place on Sunday, May, 18. John Ballenthin, Linda Ballenthin, David Atkins, Russ Stolk, Jeannie, Thomas Squier, Dianne Cress, Hal Stevens and Brad Peterson will be out there cheering on riders from all over the nation. In the past the organizers of the ride have given the club a gratuity in appreciation. Thank you volunteers.

- Hal Stevens -

Useful Web Links

[NMTS One-Time Rides](#)
[NMTS Weekly Rides](#)
[NMTS Monthly Calendar](#)
[NMTS Route Library](#)

[NMTS Strava Club](#)
[Club Milage \(members only area\)](#)
[Join/Renew your NMTS Membership](#)

[Bicycling in Albuquerque \(new city website\)](#)

Treasurer's Report

Membership

Renewing Members: 4
New Members in March: 0
Total Members: 151

Financial

Beginning Balance 03/01/25: \$8635.53

Total Income: \$94.56

Total Expenses **\$100.00**

New Balance 03/31/2025: \$8630.09

NMTS Annual Awards Banquet

April 27, 2025, at the Tomasita's New Mexican Restaurant

This year's Awards Banquet was attended by 34 club members and guests at the Tomasita's New Mexican Restaurant in Albuquerque. The highlight of the banquet was the recognition of the individual accomplishments of NMTS members in 2024. Awards presented were as follows:

Plaque Awards

2024 Most Club Miles – Male: Chris Marsh, 6,921 miles

2024 Most Club Miles – Female: Mary McCulloch, 2,672 miles

2024 Most Club Rides: Chris Marsh, 167 rides.

2024 Most Total Miles – Male: Eric Foltz, 12,427 miles

2024 Ride Leader of the Year: Chris Marsh. In recognition of Chris's initiative in planning and leading multiple club rides in 2024, including three regular weekly rides throughout the year and a number of one-time rides as well. A stalwart ride leader for the club.

2024 Tour of the Year: Chickasaw Homeland Removal Ride, David Atkins. Recognizing David's initiative in organizing and participating in a multi-day bike tour that spanned over 600 miles in 11 days to commemorate the difficult journey the Chickasaw people endured

when they were forcibly removed from Mississippi to Indian Territory in Oklahoma. This solemn event honored the strength and spirit of the brave and determined Chickasaw ancestors.

2024 Volunteer of the Year: Dianne Cress. In appreciation of Dianne's unwavering commitment to NMTS as club Treasurer, as well as her exceptional organization and execution of several of its special events, including the NMTS picnic ride. She is a valued member who can always be counted on whenever help is needed!

Special Achievement Certificates

Most Miles by a New Member – Lisa Olewine. In recognition for her achievement of riding 2,205 club miles, the highest number of any new club member in 2024.

Working Stiff Award – Steve McKenzie. In recognition for Steve's achievement of riding 2,773 club miles while working full time.

Median Rider Award – Rosella Clifford. With 99 club members having recorded club miles in 2024, Rosella rode 582 miles and becomes the median rider – half of the riders recorded more club miles and half recorded fewer miles.

Free at Last Award – David Olson. Recognizing David's personal persistence in sticking with club officer duties when no other volunteer could be found, until finally being paroled in January 2025.

Selfless Dedication Award – Frank Bouchier. Recognizing Frank's tireless efforts and selfless dedication in supporting, organizing, and directing the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta's Bike Valet, made possible by the volunteer efforts of NMTS and BikeABQ members. Frank was the volunteer lead manager for the Bike Valet for the years 2021-2023, but also contributed his time and expertise in several additional years. His contributions reflect great credit upon himself and NMTS and are worthy of the highest level of praise and recognition.

Rob Oakes Gentleman's Award – Greg Titus. This annual award is named in memory of Rob Oakes, a consummate gentleman who treated everybody with respect and courtesy. This year's recipient is Greg Titus, who embodies these characteristics and is a pleasant and friendly riding companion. Greg goes out of his way to bridge differences and promote community amongst his fellow cyclists.

Sweetest Member Award – Roy Okamoto. Recognizing Roy's sweet tooth sharing – providing wonderful desserts at his own expense to club ride participants on two different occasions.

Branch Manager Award – Greg Titus. In recognition of Greg's initiative in clearing downed branches as well as many other obstructions and debris from bike paths and roads.

Most Entertaining Award – David Olson. Recognizing Dave's gregarious nature and sense of humor – he makes us laugh more than any other club member.

NMTS Curmudgeon Award – Don Simonson. Recognizing Don's irascibility and stubbornness, continuing to participate regularly in club rides and Thursday riders' lunches, despite passing 90 years of age. No retirement for me!

Can't Keep an Old Man Down Award – Bill Thompson. After over a year of being off the bike, Bill returned to his favorite pastime of riding to be with his long-time friends.

Mileage Patches

- 1,000 - 1,500 miles: Dorothy Brethauer, Will Ferrell, Charlie Randour, Darlyne Garner, Will DeMay, Albert Martinez, Russ McCoy, Crystal Wagner-McCombs, Dean Denning
- 1,500 - 2,000 miles: Mark Fodness, Darrell McCombs, Jon Ballenthin, Kevin Golden, Roy Okamoto
- 2,000 - 2,500 miles: Ralph Butler, Yvonne Sanchez, Lia Olewine, Jim Fordice, Barbara Titus,
- 2,500 - 3,000 miles: John Sturtevant, Steve McKenzie, Dave Higginbotham, Mary McCulloch
- 3,000 - 3,500 miles: John Gillett, Gary Shaw, Wesley Young, Greg Titus
- 4,000 - 4,500 miles: Frank Bouchier, Jeff Hagemann,
- 4,500 - 5,000 miles: Robert Brueckner
- 6,000 – 6,500 miles: David Atkins
- 6,500 - 7,000 miles: Chris Marsh

- Bill Thompson -



Board meeting Notes, 3/10/2025

NMTS Board Meeting, virtual format, March 2025, 3/10/2025 7:01 PM

ATTENDEES

Darcy Lewis, Frank Bouchier, Chris Marsh, Bill Thompson, Barbara Titus, Rob Brueckner, Dianne Cress, Dave Atkins

AGENDA

Old Business

1. Safety Survey: Tabled until next month as Dave Olson, safety chair, is out of town. Brief discussion about the Idaho Stop proposal, Darcy has forwarded information to Dave Olson. NMTS will take a neutral position at this time.

2. Response to Bike ABQ regarding bike valet at the balloon fiesta: A response composed by Frank and Darcy was sent to Therese Dunn at Bike ABQ, no response or feedback has been made.

3. Awards Committee and party - Bill Thompson: The committee is looking at using a new venue for the party, possibly Thomasita's.

- Date of party tentatively 4/27/25.
- Survey has been sent to all club members asking for input for awards, 22 have been returned.
- Plaques will be given out this year for certain awards, recipients can keep the plaque. In the future plaques will be virtual and displayed on the website.

4. Volunteer Appreciation Party - Chris Marsh

- Chris is planning to have the party at his house in May or June, with food provided by the club.
- Awards for volunteers will be coffee mugs for this year, ideas for other sorts of small tokens were discussed and will be looked at for next year- club beer glasses will be brought to the party and given to anyone who would like a glass; they are left over from previous years.

5. Club insurance - Darcy

- Darcy checked with ABQ Mountain Club, they carry 1 million dollars
- liability, no medical coverage, and only cover hikers, not climbers.
- adding more than 1 million in liability will be much more expensive.
- table for future discussion for next year.

6. Family membership price increase: No response from membership has been expressed to the board.

7. Newsletter: concerns about getting newsletter out in a more timely manner were discussed by the board

8. New Jerseys: Suggestion to consider setting up a committee to design a new jersey or use the current design with new colors, tabled until next month.

9. Membership Trends: Tabled due to lack of time this month.

10. Notes from February 2025 meeting approved and will be submitted to the web editor and newsletter.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM

- Submitted by Barbara Titus, Secretary

Welcome New Members

Allen Blowers
Blake Learmonth

Notes

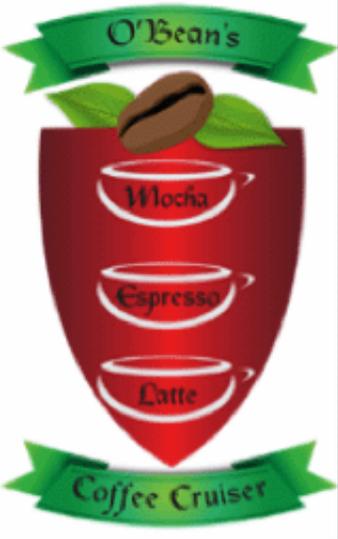
- The Freewheel deadline is 6pm on the last day of the month. Please forward articles to the Freewheel Editor, email: nmtsfreewheel@gmail.com
 - Please forward mileage information to Frank Bouchier, email: [mileage chair](mailto:mileage_chair) or call 505-266-0323.
 - Please send mileage ride sheets, change of address information and newsletter distribution to NMTS Treasurer, P.O. Box 1261, Albuquerque, NM 87103-1261 or email: treasurer.
 - Send web information to Rob Brueckner, email: webmaster.
 - Paid advertisements are accepted on a space available basis.
 - Members may post free ads in The Freewheel and on the NMTS web site; see Members-only section on [web site](#).
 - To submit a new ride, navigate to members only section on NMTS [web site](#).
 - Send all other club inquires to email: info@nmts.org.
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O'Bean's Coffee House
12760 San Rafael NE, Ste C-2

*Just east of Tramway, next
to SHHA*

Call or Text: 505-508-0758

 *OBeansCoffeeCruiser*



Email club inquires to info@nmts.org

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