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# CBTC NEWSLETTER

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Official Publication of the Coastal Bicycle Touring Club, Savannah GA

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[www.cbtc.org](http://www.cbtc.org)

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President: Kathy Schaefer,  
[kwilyschaefer@gmail.com](mailto:kwilyschaefer@gmail.com)

Vice President: Jackie Black,  
[jackie@jackieblack.com](mailto:jackie@jackieblack.com)

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[amoosegallagher@gmail.com](mailto:amoosegallagher@gmail.com)

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[johnaarney@gmail.com](mailto:johnaarney@gmail.com)

Member at Large: Roy Reynolds  
[royreynolds59@hotmail.com](mailto:royreynolds59@hotmail.com)

Member at Large: Eric Holmes  
[eric@howardsheppard.com](mailto:eric@howardsheppard.com)



## Secure your bikes!

So, there's a story to read on the following pages about bike security and tracking. You might want to read what went down, and how it turned out. The only way a bike worth over \$14,000 was recovered after it was stolen was because there was a tracking device on it.. It's a pretty compelling story. I know, because it was me and my bike.

## July Ride Schedule

Club rides begin at 9am during the cool months, and once we "spring ahead" start times move up to 8:30am

Helmets are required on all rides. Rear view mirrors are highly encouraged. Please arrive at least fifteen minutes before scheduled roll-out. Guest riders must sign the club waiver prior to roll-out. Club members acknowledged the waiver when they joined or renewed membership in the club. Enjoy the rides and the company. And if you have an idea about a new ride, contact any board member and we'll try to make it happen. Oh, yes, all Saturday rides roll out at 8:30am.

Date/Ride	Mileage	Directions	Ride Leader/Other info
Saturday, 6 July, 8:30 am, Skidaway Island Ride	21/34	Meet in the parking lot behind Skidaway Island Methodist Church, 54 Diamond Causeway. Post ride eats and treats at Your Pie, in Sandfly.	Deborah Wharff, <a href="mailto:deborahwharff@icloud.com">deborahwharff@icloud.com</a> , 410-905-1690
Saturday, July 13, Riceboro Ride.	32/35	Meet in parking lot of Midway-Riceboro Library, 9397 E. Oglethorpe Hwy. Post-ride meal at Smokin' Pig, 13711 E. Oglethorpe Highway.	Marc Lobit, <a href="mailto:mlobit@msn.com">mlobit@msn.com</a> , 847-682-2168
Saturday, 20 July, 8:30am, Right Turn Clyde	28/39	Meet in Berwick Kroger parking lot, 5720 Ogeechee Road. Post-ride meal at El Mariachi in Kroger shopping center.	Geoff Carson, <a href="mailto:gvcarson@protonmail.com">gvcarson@protonmail.com</a> 912-257-9520
Saturday, 27 July, 8:30am, Islands ride	25/38	Meet at intersection of Gaston and Bull Streets, top end of Forsyth Park. Ride maps for both may be downloaded from Ride with GPS, "Islands Ride" and "Islands 32.1 Miles". Post-ride meal will be chosen on ride date. Mostly likely Sly's Sliders & Fried, 1705 Abercorn Street.	Cathy Reiman, <a href="mailto:creiman16@icloud.com">creiman16@icloud.com</a> , 239-293-7118

# Bike Security - Pay Attention Please

OK, I know a lot of you have heard the story - but perhaps some have not, and in any case, it's worth repeating.

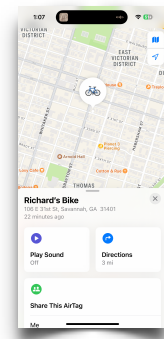
On 6 June, shortly after the informal Thursday Hunter Army Air Base group ride, we - as usual - gathered together at Sly's Slider's and Fries, on the corner of Abercorn and 34th Street. As always, we parked our bikes together outside, went inside to order, came back out to enjoy the food and the company. When we were done I went back to get on my bike to ride back to HAAF where we started and where I was parked, and lo and behold it was gone.

I called 911 - resulting in a 20 minute wait for an "emergency call". Finally a SPD officer arrived. Not very interested, mostly going through the motions. Because the bike was equipped with an Apple Air Tag tracker, I show him where the bike is located (118 E. 31st Street, a period home that was converted into apartments). We go there, look in the yard - nothing. He rings the bells, no response. He says, "I don't see your bike, I don't have probable cause, I can't break down the door." This despite the fact that there are several bikes in the foyer - obviously an apartment with people who use bikes to get around. This location is a short three blocks away from Sly's.

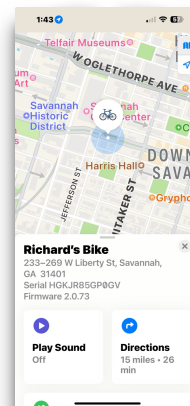
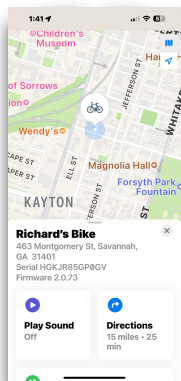
We regroup at Sly's, to obtain video of the theft from a business adjacent to Sly's. During that approximate 30 minute interlude, I note my bike is moved to 106 E. 31th Street. The SPD officer and we hurry over there. It's also an old period house under renovation - with no occupants. I show him where my bike is - inside the door, less than 20 feet away. Same response. "I can't break down the door if I can't see your bike." Exhaling deeply, I ask him to write up the incident, which he does, I receive the police incident report, and opine that if we can't locate the bike today, we'll never see it again.

My wife returns me to HAAF, where I had parked before the Hunter ride. Head down, dejected and beat down, I happen to look at my phone, and was surprised to see the Air Tag moving. I immediately get in my truck and drive as fast as possible downtown. In the interim, I share the Air Tag location with my friend Mark Lebos, who's much closer to the activity (owner and operator of Strong Gym, 244 Bull Street, two blocks from Forsyth Park). As soon as he receives the Air Tag location, the bike is moving through Forsyth Park. He runs after it, yelling and screaming. The thief realizes he's being followed and takes off.

Mark goes back to his boutique gym, gets two beefy, strong young friends, and takes off towards the moving bike in his full size Tundra pickup. Careening through the always busy Historic District traffic, he tears after the Air Tag location. He elicits multiple 911 calls about his erratic driving, to include speeding on Whittaker the wrong way - at 60 mph. But, alas, nobody was struck, nobody was injured, there were no incidents, Luckily, and fortunately. Fortunately. And most fortunate for me, Mark was



106 E. 31st Street location

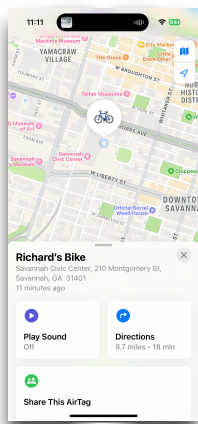


hell-bound to get my bike back.

Then things get interesting. We see movement all over the downtown historic district. Montgomery Street, Liberty Street, Civic Center, et al. Mark and his two friends race after the the jerk, who obviously knew he was spotted and is riding erratically to avoid being discovered. Finally they overtake him in an alley off Whittaker Street, get him off the bike, place the bike in the truck, and advise the thief to "Don't mess with other people's stuff" or words to that effect - expletive laced no doubt. Somehow or another the thief must have suffered an injury to his face - most probably the result of an accidental brush with the asphalt, or perhaps something else. Who knows?

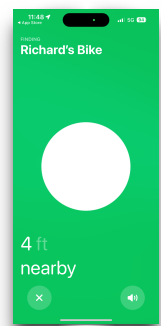
As I was driving on Liberty Street towards the Civic Center, Mark turns onto Liberty from Whittaker in front of me, gives me a thumbs up and yells out "We have your bike!" We then drive to Strong Gym, and shortly thereafter SPD rolls in, obviously "hot", since they were responding to multiple 911 calls about a full size pickup driving erratically (and several times, illegally) in the Historic District. After lengthy discussions between all parties, no citations were issued. One - Officer Tyler St. Jaques, whispers to me something on the order of "you all did a civic duty out there today". Of course, that's not in the formal police report. Oh - and after he told me every unit in the Historic District was looking for the thief, I haven't been able to find out if they actually apprehended the jerk. The original police report described the incident as "Felony theft". Under Georgia law, "if the property which was the subject of the theft was at least \$5,000.00 in value but was less than \$25,000.00 in value, by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than ten years."

The police report characterized the thief as a white male, wearing flip-flops, shorts, no shirt, with tats everywhere, salt and pepper hair, estimated to be in his mid 40's. It was the flip-flops that caused him to wobble and get off the bike - and be confronted by the three people pursuing him. Seems that most flip-flops are not compatible with SPD-SL pedals. Since SPD hasn't responded about any apprehension or arrest, I've cruised around 118 E. 31st Street every day. Should I see the jerk, well, you can figure out what might ensue.



Civic Center Air Tag

As soon as possible, I take the recovered bike to Perry Rubber Bike Shop to have it checked out. Missing from the bike was my helmet (\$250), my Wahoo Element Roam GPS (\$400), and my Garmin Varia radar/video device (\$400). Luckily and amazingly, the bike was not damaged. The bike gear bag was still on the bike when recovered, given that it's a Specialized unique bag that clips into the seat rail instead of the more traditional velcro strap method of securing a gear bag to the seat.



Civic Center Air Tag

But there is a postscript to this story. On Friday morning, I rode the bike to see if there was any post-incident issues. I did not look inside the gear bag. Later on Friday I checked Find My on my iPhone, and was surprised to see that the bike's Air Tag was located in the parking lot of Savannah Civic Center. I drove there, used Find My and located the bike's Air Tag. We surmise that by the time



Recovered Air Tag

the thief was crossing through the Civic Center parking lot from Liberty to Whittaker, he realized that there was something in or on the bike that allowed him to be tracked. Not being able to remove the gear bag, he simply opened it and threw the contents in the parking lot. Fortunately, by that time he was under visual observation, eventually being apprehended. Oh, yeah, when confronted, he told the three people that "I just bought this bike for \$50", and that he was simply taking it for a spin. Yeah, sure. Right.

The takeaway from this story is simple. If you value your bike, or anything else that moves (vehicle, keys, luggage, etc), put a tracking device on it. Apple's Air Tag is small, easy to hide, and is extremely accurate. Moreover, Air Tag locations can be shared with other Apple iPhone users, which in this case, was key to recovering the bike.



Knog Scout

But, there are other options. The Kong Scout is a small black plastic tracker/siren device that's designed to fit underneath your water bottle cage, making it difficult to spot and remove. Knog says the rechargeable battery life is 6 months, meaning it can be left on the bike for that long before it requires recharging. It functions with Apple's Find My, so like the Air Tag, it can be tracked through the mobile app. In addition, it can be programmed through the app to set off an 85 db siren if the bike is moved. That feature would have been handy in the situation described above, such that the siren would have gone off the moment the bike was moved from it's spot in front of Sly's.



A mounted Kong Scout

If you're an Android user, the Tile "Sticker" is a good option. Small, light weight, the Sticker uses the Tile network to detect, locate and find an attached device. One small downside is that if you want to get smart alerts and location history, you must subscribe to their monthly Premium plan (\$2.99 per month or \$29 per year).



Tile - best for OS users

Another good option is the Sherlock bike tracker. Sherlock fits inside the handlebars, thus is invisible to any bike thief. Made of a pliable material, the Sherlock can bend inside the handlebars, making it ideal for drop bars



Sherlock handlebar tracker

on road bikes. Like most trackers, Sherlock can be activated via the Sherlock app, and the user will be notified immediately when there is any bike movement. The only downside of the Sherlock is that battery life is estimated to be 7 days, which means fairly constant charging is required for it to function properly.

These are just a few of the tracking and/or alarm options that are compatible with bikes. There is a lot of useful

information about bike security on Cycling News. If you're interested in this subject, a good starting point would be to cruise through:

<https://www.cyclingnews.com/features/best-bike-gps-trackers/>

## Cyclist visits all Lower 48 National Parks

Spencer McCullough recently completed an epic cycling journey, riding to all 51 National Parks in the Lower 48 states, sometimes referred to as CONUS (Continental United States).

Starting in the Florida Keys and ending at Acadia National Park in Maine, McCullough logged 412 days, 18,245.52 miles, 28 flat tires, several mechanical issues, as well as some curious moose checking out his encampment in Montana.

In his own words, McCullough explained why an otherwise normal 28 year old would undertake such an epic cycling event. "So, I rode my bike to all the national parks in the lower 48. I was the first person to do this link up. I did this ride to promote cycling infrastructure on public lands, advocate for hike/biker spots, cheaper fees, and better incentives for people to leave their cars at home when they're exploring and recreating on our public lands," said McCullough, the first to complete the feat. By the way, he was 29 years old when he finished his journey. McCulloch was also driven by his passion and advocacy to bring awareness to a wider audience about the effects of climate change, particularly as it relates to our National Parks.



Spencer McCullough

"I have already missed my shot to see the Great Barrier Reef in its full glory - that opportunity passed me by in high school, nothing I can do about that now. But Glacier National Park still capped by snow, Joshua Tree National Park with those soon-to-be-gone Joshua trees, Rocky Mountain National Park without any trees at all... These are things I still have the chance to experience. The article says that it may take 50 to 80 years for changes like these to really become noticeable. But one of the rangers they interviewed said that usually these changes happen in a couple of years - a drought one year, then a disease the next, perhaps a wildfire after that, and then all of these things could be gone."



National Parks

For the adventure, Spencer was, in a word - self-contained. Everything he needed was on the bike, to include extra clothing, bike parts and tools, and camping and cooking equipment. You can find a complete list of his gear, as well as read more in-depth information about what motivated Spencer to undertake such a demanding adventure. His website is aptly named OneLongTrip.Bike, and can be found at:

<https://onelongtrip.bike/#>



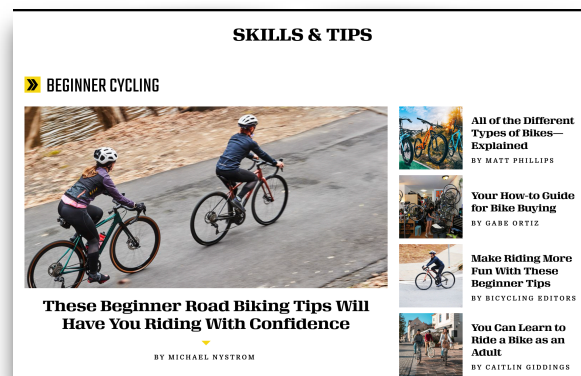
Spencer's Surley Stragler

## How to clean your bike

Bicycling Magazine has a wealth of information on a wide range of bike related topics. Although the on-line resource is subscription based, it's a worthwhile expense. In the current edition, there are articles about proper bike cleaning, tips and techniques for flat tire repair, and even an article about proper shifting techniques.

The "Skills and Tips" section of Bicycling Magazine is where all of this information is contained. While most cyclists have a bike cleaning routine, not all of us do it properly. Following is how Bicycling Magazine contends is the best method of cleaning your bike.

Rather than go through all the individual steps, you can simply click on the link below and watch a YouTube video that demonstrates how a bike should be properly cleaned.





## 2024 State Speed Legislation Passed

Another great source of cycling related information is the League of American Bicyclists. Originally formed in 1880, cyclists signed a massive wheel and presented it to Congress, as part of their demands that Congress enact legislation to benefit cyclists. While methods have evolved over time, the League of American Bicyclists continues to advocate for bike safety across the United States. Membership to the League is reasonable (starting at \$50 annually), and that enables you to a wealth of information about efforts to make cycling safer across the country.

The following article appeared in the May 30 2024 Edition. It details various State legislation passed in 2024 to date that allows local governments to lower speed limits without the need for a traffic or engineering study. This becomes important - particularly for cyclists - considering that at speeds of 20 mph or lower, 90% of individuals hit by vehicles are likely to survive. At 30 mph, this drops to 75%. Of course at higher speeds, the fatality percentage increases dramatically. In my personal case, I was hit by a vehicle traveling over 40 mph - badly injured but survived due to the Grace of God, impact angles, and just plain old fashioned luck.

Following is a short extract from the 30 May League edition, highlighting individual state legislation enacted to lower speeds on roads. Red text indicates a hyperlink that takes the reader to a more detailed description of the highlighted topic.



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“Maryland, [HB 0612](#) would give local authorities in Montgomery County the ability to decrease the speed limit on a [highway](#)—defined in Maryland as any road open to vehicular travel—without needing to perform traffic and engineering studies. This piece of legislation would also authorize county entities to implement new speed monitoring systems on a highway for which the speed limit has been decreased. This bill has passed the Maryland State House and awaits its fate in the Senate.

Maryland, [HB 0193](#) has been signed into law. This legislation authorizes Anne Arundel County and municipalities in the county to decrease the speed limit to 15 miles per hour on highways after performing an engineering and traffic investigation. This law also prohibits county entities from implementing new speed monitoring systems on highways where the speed limit has been decreased.

New Hampshire, [HB 1550](#) would authorize municipalities to reduce speed limits seasonally to provide safe conditions upon any part of the municipal highway system that is seasonally congested by pedestrian or bicycle traffic after conducting the proper studies. This piece of legislation has passed both chambers in the state legislature and awaits approval from the governor.

New York, [SB 2422](#), or “Sammy’s Law,” was back in the NY legislature this year after not passing in 2023. The legislation was [incorporated](#) into New York’s budget and will become law in the Empire State. The bill would allow for cities with a population of one million or more (including NYC at 8.3 million people) to lower speed limits to 20 mph by easing restrictions that currently prevent New York City from doing so.

Virginia, [HB 1071](#) passed both chambers and awaits the governor’s approval. This legislation would provide authority for any locality to reduce the speed limit as low as 15 miles per hour on highways within its boundaries that are located in a business district or residence district – including highways within the state highway system. The bill also authorizes a locality to restore a speed limit.”

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## Tour de Melon

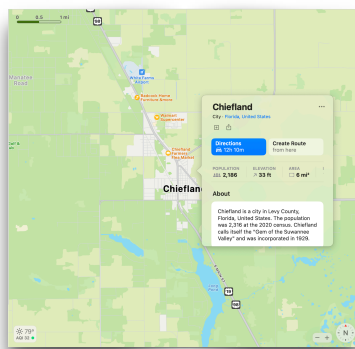
Rich & Deborah Wharff journeyed to Chiefland, Florida on 1 June to participate in the Tour de Melon bike event. This year’s Tour de Melon was a designated USAF Cycling Team event, and since both are team members, decided to make a long weekend in and around Chiefland. By the way, Chiefland is a VERY rural town south and west of Orlando, near the Gulf coast of Florida. True to the name of the event, the ride was through excellent country roads traversing miles and miles of melon

farms. There was cold watermelon at all rest stops, and each participant was encouraged to take as many watermelons they wanted following the event. So, again, an aptly named cycling event. This year's Tour de Melon offered a half-century and full century route. When the gun went off, there were 177 riders. There was police escort out of the start line, well stocked rest stops, and a festival-like atmosphere at the ride's conclusion.

For CBTC grey beards (we have several) who remember the club's "away event" in Winter Garden, Florida, the Tour de Melon is under consideration as a future away event. As was the case in Winter Garden, the Tour de Melon has a historic and very comfortable lodging opportunity. For those old timers who remember Winter Garden's historic Edgewater Hotel, built in 1927, which offered rustic



Some USAF team members



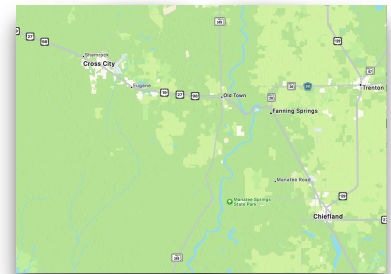
Chiefland, Florida

rooms, a large meeting room, restaurants and other venues. The Tour de Melon has the Historic Putnam Hotel, in Shamrock, Florida. The Putnam Hotel was built in 1926 by the Putnam Lumber Company. Now restored and renovated, the Putnam has 25 guest rooms/suites, two large meeting rooms, as well as a wonderful restaurant and bar, RV park, and a huge nature park that is patrolled by Wally and his brood of peacocks, along with several guinea fowl. Flora and fauna abound in the nature area.



Wally strutting his stuff

The Putnam is a short ride to Chiefland and the Tour de Melon. In and around the Putnam is the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge, with a number of gravel trails that could be incorporated into any future club ride along with the Tour de Melon road ride. Adjacent to the Putnam is a paved bike path that goes to Chiefland and beyond, similar to the East Orange and Lulu trails in Winter Garden, great for long, leisurely rides with no vehicle traffic.



Shamrock-Chiefland trail

Getting to Shamrock and Chiefland is substantially easier (as it relates to traffic) than was Winter Garden. Once past Jacksonville, there is a short jaunt on I-10 West, then mostly lightly traveled roads the rest of the way to Shamrock and Chiefland. The total drive times is slightly under four hours, and doesn't include the harrowing traffic through and past Orlando to get to Winter Garden.

Rich & Deborah met the owners of the Putnam Hotel - Ed and Beverly Pivacek - who purchased the property in 2014 and undertook a wholesale renovation and restoration, after the property was vacant for several years. For Ed and Beverly, the Putnam is their home, in a private area of the main building. They offered the event room for bike storage, as well as discounted room rates, should the

club consider this location for a future “away ride”. The restaurant and bar are indeed world class, offering a wide variety of dining options. In true Bed & Breakfast traditions, there’s a fully stocked guest kitchen area for breakfast.

The hotel’s “History” section of their website aptly describes the origins. Although there remain several lumber mills in the area, most of the old growth forests of early Florida are gone, so the “pecky cypress” that adorns the Putnam’s foyer, restaurant and meeting rooms is long gone. The hand stencil and hand-drawn artwork was meticulously restored and redone during the 2014 renovations and restorations.



Putnam Lobby



Restaurant &amp; bar

“Built in 1927-28 by the Putnam Lumber Company, the Putnam Hotel is part of a bygone era in Florida’s forestry history. The lobby and the dining room of the 36-room lodge were decorated exclusively with the still preserved, artfully stenciled “pecky cypress,” a now virtually extinct lumber product. In its day, the Putnam Lumber Company, founded by William O’Brien, a timber magnate of Irish descent, and associates including E. B. Putnam, employed hundreds at its two state-of-the-art sawmills in Shamrock. The mills annually produced and shipped worldwide millions of feet of “deep swamp tidewater cypress” and “dense Florida longleaf yellow pine” lumber, products that are now rare because the old growth trees are gone.”

<https://putnamlodge.com/>



If you're in need of bikes, bike equipment or repairs, visit any of these shops and receive 10% discount on parts and accessories, by mentioning you are a CBTC member.

