



Bicycle Access Council News & Digest

www.BicycleAccess-PA.org

August 2010

Hello Members and Supporters of the Bicycle Access Council.

It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania!

August 2010 marks the **NINTH** anniversary of the Bicycle Access Council, so it is fitting to remind members and the public how past support has helped the mission and activities of the Bicycle Access Council. The first official announcement and membership launch was 2001 at Altoona in conjunction with the League of American Bicyclists annual rally.

The Bicycle Access Council (BAC) is Pennsylvania's only statewide advocacy organization. BAC is dedicated to the one aspect of bicycling that was not being met by a non-government organization prior to being created in 2001—on-the-road bicycling. Its mission statement is simple and direct. See below.

BAC represents all Pennsylvania bicyclists, but not all Pennsylvania bicyclists know about BAC and the advocacy assistance available to them. Over the years, BAC has been a clearinghouse of information for individuals, other bicycling organizations and bike clubs. Sharing that information is accomplished in several ways:

- BAC maintains a website as a resource of information and links: www.BicycleAccess-PA.org
- BAC distributes a monthly newsletter (electronic and printed) to its members with current topics.
- BAC hosts an annual Bike Club Conference in the spring, which invites leaders of Pennsylvania bicycle clubs to attend for discussions and presentations of important issues. The eighth annual conference was held this year.
- BAC attends many of the important meetings and events around Pennsylvania to represent the interests of bicyclists. These include the quarterly Pennsylvania Pedalcycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PPAC) and Southwestern Planning Commission (Pittsburgh) as well as, many functions of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) related to transportation topics.
- BAC maintains a close working relationship with PennDOT and the PennDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator. BAC also works with elected officials, law enforcement organizations and members of the General Assembly as necessary to address specific issues and vigilantly keep the rights of bicyclists highlighted during discussions of transportation planning.

And, last, but not least, BAC responds to phone calls and e-mails about many bicycling issues—lots of phone calls and e-mails. These range from informing BAC about problems with roads to problems with motor vehicle drivers. Some questions are related to crashes and hazards. BAC does not offer legal advice, but the responses will generally sort through the legal issues of a situation to help define whether it is criminal or civil. Many citizens can't discern the difference without some explanation. From that it is possible to suggest what statutes may apply and the consequences.

It is in the best interests of Pennsylvania bicyclists to support BAC to be sure there is an advocate that can respond as needed in critical issues. Please help ensure BAC continues its mission with your individual memberships and donations. The Bicycle Access Council is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and is funded solely by memberships and donations. Memberships and donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

L.A.B. GRUMBLES OVER RUMBLES...

And asks bicyclists to "communicate" their displeasure to state departments of transportation (DOT). In a recent e-mail Alert to League members and bicycle clubs following a featured article in LAB's *American Bicyclist* magazine (July/August 2010, page 10), LAB generalizes the problems with "rumble strips"—those grooved patterns along roadways to alert motor vehicles when they leave the travel lane.

Pennsylvania has addressed this problem years ago after BAC raised the issue and PennDOT had committed to adhering to its own policy standards and re-issued a Strike-Off-Letter to all PennDOT Districts emphasizing the criteria for properly installing rumble strips. LAB failed to make the distinction between Shoulder Rumble Strips and Edge Line Rumble Strips. Both require a minimum shoulder width for placement; however, shoulder rumbles are not considered "bicycle tolerable" and are located mostly on roads not used by bicyclists. Where crash statistics show a need for any type of rumble strip, PennDOT will install them as part of their annual Safety Goal objectives.

Edge Line Rumble Strips (ERS) are considerably narrower and less deep in a design meant to be more bicycle tolerable (they are not, but it's nice to claim so). These were historically the most troublesome for Pennsylvania bicyclists—placed on narrow local roadways with substandard or no shoulders, bicyclists found it necessary to move further left into the travel lane or be confined to a hazardous travel area on the right. PennDOT claimed lack of funds to remove improperly installed ERS after BAC highlighted the problem, but agreed to not re-install them in future re-surfacing projects. Fortunately, most ERS wear down within a season and become more bicycle tolerable.

Bicyclists are encouraged to contact BAC if any ERS are found to be newly installed creating a conflict area on the roadway. Include the county and state road number (an SR number found on posts, 2,3, or 4 digits), direction of travel, as well as the beginning and end points. Road names help, but are not accurate enough to identify a roadway within the road inventory system.

Dates to remember:

Aug 15 Covered Bridge Metric Century, Lancaster. **Pre-Registration Only—No walk-in registrations**
Aug 29 Shoo Fly Classic, Registration Available On-line at www.BerksBicycle.com
Sept 5 DVBC Brandywine Tour see: <http://www.dvbc.org/brandywine.php>
Sept 23 PA PPAC, Harrisburg. Open to the public

Mission Statement...

The Bicycle Access Council is a non-profit advocacy organization that serves as a forum for Pennsylvania bicyclists and as an ombudsman for bicycling issues.

It is the objective of the Bicycle Access Council to make bicycling on roads throughout the Commonwealth safe, respectable and a transportation choice by educating its members and the motoring public.

All funding for the Bicycle Access Council comes from memberships and donations. Annual membership is \$20 per year. BAC does not share membership information.

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