



# Spokin' Times News

SLOW SPOKES BICYCLE CLUB  
P.O. BOX 792  
STERLING HEIGHTS, MI 48311-0792

February 2014  
March 2014

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P.O. Box 792

Sterling Hts, MI 48311

## 2013 Mileage Report

It seems that the magic number for 2013 was 5000. Five Slow Spokes cleared the 5000 mile mark, and none of them got to 5100. I don't know whether anyone was trying to be the top mileage rider or not. It would have taken just another 50 miles or so for four people to pass the top person. Congratulations to Clara Herndon who was the top rider at 5074 miles.

The list of those who sent me their miles is as follows:

Clara Herndon	5074
Tom Graham	5046
Rita Zupan-Wilhelm	5036
Tom Miller	5033
Ed Schultz	5021
Bill Appleberry	4308
Paul Wilhelm	4218
Bernie Sustrich	4110
Carol Sustrich	3388
Bob George	2816
Betty Dilbeck	2143
Jim Walter	1189
Mary Stoolmiller	331 (at 83 years of age)



Here's one Slow Spoke trying to get some miles in at the Thanksgiving Parade.

Picture submitted by Bill Appleberry.

**Meetings**—Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the first Friday of every month at the Warren Woods Baptist Church at 14251 E. 12 Mile Road between Hayes and Schoenherr in Warren. Refreshments are served.

**Ride Information**—Send information for rides and walks to Rose Marie Jacobs via email: [rmj211@comcast.net](mailto:rmj211@comcast.net) by the (10th) of the month.

**Newsletter Information**—Send articles you'd like published to Jim Walter. Email the information to him at [jim.walter@comcast.net](mailto:jim.walter@comcast.net). Articles must be received by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the newsletter. Feel free to call Jim at 248-879-2405.

<b>February Meeting</b>
If you're in town, don't miss the February meeting. Our new Vice-President will be conducting it for the first time. I'm sure it will be interesting.
<b>April Newsletter</b>
The April Newsletter will have a special guest editor. Please send all of your submissions for April to Chuck Pottenger at <a href="mailto:pottengerc60@gmail.com">pottengerc60@gmail.com</a> .

Did you ever wonder who invented the bicycle? Well, it wasn't the Wright brothers, you know. One of our members submitted the following article. I don't know if he wanted it published or not, and I didn't do any fact checking on it, but here it is. The story of the invention of the bicycle?

#### VOLCANISM

Tambora exploded on April 5, 1815 — Ash fell on eastern Java. More than 800 miles away, people heard a roar that sounded like thunder.

The big show began April 10. Three columns of fire were seen towering into the sky. By the next day Tambora had ejected about 12 cubic miles of magma into the air.

But the mountain's solid towering peak was also gone. The eruption left a deep summit crater, with a rim 4,100 feet lower than the peak had once been. People in Surabaya, 300 miles away on Java, felt the earth move — possibly the result of the caldera collapse.

Between the magma ejected from below and the pulverized mountaintop above, Tambora sent more than 36 cubic miles of pulverized rock into the atmosphere. The ash falling on islands nearby immediately suffocated crops. That alone probably killed 92,000 people.

The cloud of ash that was fine and light enough to stay in the atmosphere circled the globe. Average temperatures dropped as much as 5 degrees Fahrenheit over the next year ... and beyond. Many Europeans and North Americans called 1816 the "year without a summer."

Snow fell in New England and Eastern Canada in June. (Quebec City got a foot of the stuff.) Frost was recorded in each of the summer months. Drought struck in July and August, and the sunlight was weak. Crops were stunted or failed entirely. Much of what survived and looked near to harvest was killed off by a September frost.

Europe was very cold and very rainy. Ash fell with snow. Rivers flooded. Britain, France, Switzerland and Germany lost harvests and suffered famine. The Napoleonic Wars had caused food shortages, and now there were riots and looting, then an epidemic. Some 200,000 people died in Eastern and Southern Europe from a combination of typhus and hunger.

Asia and India experienced heavy monsoons, cold temperatures and frost. Rice production fell. China suffered famine, and India was hit with a cholera epidemic.

The only silver lining to this dark and lethal cloud: The failure of the oat crop in Germany made maintaining horses expensive ... and led to invention of the bicycle.

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Continued on the next page.

Feb. 17, 1818: Proto-Bicycle Gets Things Rolling

1818: A minor German nobleman patents a two-wheeled, foot-powered vehicle. It looks almost like a modern bicycle, but it's missing some key components.

Baron Karl Christian Ludwig von Drais de Sauerbrunn (or Drais von Sauerbrohn, or Sauerbron) was born in Karlsruhe in 1785. He studied at Heidelberg and broke with his guardian's pre-selected career choice of forestry to take up inventing.

Bad weather in 1812 caused oat crops to fail, and horses starved as a result. That got von Drais thinking about how you could get around quickly without a horse. His first attempt was a four-wheeled vehicle with a treadmill crankshaft between the rear wheels. He demonstrated it to the Congress of Vienna (the peace confab that ended the Napoleonic wars).

That invention went nowhere, but the eruption of Indonesia's Tambora volcano in 1815 gave Europe a snowy summer in 1816. Oats were scarce and expensive again, horses died, and von Drais got back to work.

This time, he invented a two-wheeler on a frame that looks much like a modern bicycle frame with a seat and front-wheel steering. It didn't have a chain drive, and it didn't even have pedals. You drove the thing with your feet, much like a scooter. You stopped it with your feet, too: no brakes.

Von Drais' Laufmaschine, or running machine, bested 9 mph on its first trip, June 12, 1817, near Mannheim. He patented the invention the next year, but better weather and falling oat prices dimmed its future as a practical replacement for the horse. (Sounds sort of like gasoline prices and public attention to electric vehicles and alt-fuels, doesn't it?) In some localities, riders faced fines for riding on public roadways.

The two-wheelers really needed paved or at least smooth surfaces, of which there weren't many. It was also way too easy to fall off the contraption, and people's leather shoes were nowhere near as durable as a horse's iron shoes. What's more, the Laufmaschine also faced competition from another new invention: the railroads.

So, the utilitarian-inspired mechanical horse instead became a fancy toy for aristocrats and the rising bourgeoisie. The French called it a draisine, the English a hobby horse. The devices were often graced with equine figureheads, or even carved dragons and ele-

phants.

In the first-known draisine race in 1819, a German cyclist named Semmler covered the 10-kilometer (6.2 mile) course in 31½ minutes — an average speed under 12 mph. (The word draisine is still used to describe a variety of hand- or foot-propelled rail cars, used for track inspection and repair.)

When revolution broke out in Germany in 1848, Baron von Drais renounced his title, proclaimed himself a democrat and styled himself simply as citizen Karl Drais. When the revolution failed, the triumphant aristocrats ridiculed Drais, and banned him from the fashionable spas. The government also revoked his inventor's pension.

Drais died in 1851, but his concept of the rider straddling a two-wheeled vehicle with the rear wheel following a steerable front wheel lives on in both the bicycle and motorcycle. In the decades after his death, many hands improved the two-wheeler:

- French draisine maker Ernest Michaux put pedals on the front wheel in 1861, then added brakes a few years later.
- In 1869, Englishmen James Starley and William Hillman started making penny-farthing bicycles with a small back wheel and huge front wheel. The design maximized pedal power, but keeping balance was pretty tricky.
- Harry John Lawson, another Englishman, returned to smaller wheels and notably added the chain transmission in 1879.
- Gottlieb Daimler added an engine to the design to create the first internal-combustion motorcycle in 1885.
- Starting in the late 1880s, John Dunlop, Édouard Michelin and Giovanni Battista Pirelli made successive improvements on Robert W. Thompson's pneumatic tire, which rolled out a little ahead of its time in 1845.

But the baron who didn't want to be a forester — or even a baron — was the father of it all.

Now aren't you glad you asked?

Above article sent to me by Bill Appleberry who got it from Bernie Sustrich.

...From the Vice President...

Slow Spokes member Ray Carpenter led the infamous "Black Friday Ride" on 22 November. 4 intrepid riders set out from the parking lot of the McDonald's on Crocker & 16 at 9AM. Estimates placed the outside temperature at around 20 degrees. A light, dry snow had fallen the day before, totally iced over in some neighborhoods, and in other places drifting and loose with plenty of other bike tracks and footprints. There was no great breeze, other than the speed of the rider. One 'bike' dropped back and then turned around completely and went home after only a few minutes; not even a mile. The three stalwarts rode on. Mindful and with extreme caution, they pedaled along the prescribed route. Due to the particular conditions, they were quickly behind the schedule set by the ride leader. 67 percent of the riders declined the dubious thrills of the Bridge over Groesbeck. No club members joined them at Moravian road. As the miles flew, the sun did its wonderful magic and warmed them and melted the snow on the roads and trails down to the pavement. No club members joined them at Dodge Park, nor at the 25&Shelby Trailhead. John S. Williams broke out his home made cookies at a rest stop. No cows were seen anywhere along the trail. There was a visitor, up in the sky! Flying out of a small airstrip in Ray Township, Ron Lendon waggled his wings at the party. Lunch was at the usual place out in Armada, Papa's. (And no Slow Spokes joined them there, either.) The ride back was swift, yet ruminative. The road conditions had changed from snow to melt water to dry; or in the shade, to ice. In the interest of safety, the route was altered to come back through Dodge Park, rather than along the (increasingly) busy roadway. Apart from some minor icing issues, all machines functioned properly. A variety of clothing styles were deployed, from helmet cover hats to fleece vests to wool plaid shirts and many, many different styles of glove. The riders described themselves as 'warm' or 'comfortable' several times. A couple of runners, people walking wearing headphones, the odd dog-walker, always the bike tracks (and Quads? and trucks?), but only half a dozen bicyclists out in the fresh, lovely, germ-free air, including us three. The last few miles proved the mettle of these cyclists, but final mileages on the day ranged from 69 to over 75, including the distances to and from home for those who rode only their bikes.

Below is a picture of my back yard that I took on Sunday, January 5th.



Time to pay your membership dues for 2014. They are due by April 1st.

Dues are still \$15.00 for an individual or family.

Please fill out the membership application on the next page.

All members who will be riding should sign the waiver form.

(Note: Your birthday is not a required field. I know some of you like to keep that secret.)



# Slow Spokes Bicycle Club

Where Friends meet Friends...



P.O. Box 792 Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0792

www.SlowSpokes.org

## Membership Application Form

### 2014 Membership

New Member       Renewal

\$15.00 Individual ( over 18 )

\$15.00 Family

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 E Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Birthday \_\_\_\_\_

### Additional Family Members

Name	Birthday
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Do you wish to receive newsletters by e-mail?

Yes, please add me to your list of active volunteers who help promote bicycling at the local, state and Federal level. I may be called upon to write a letter or attend a meeting.

Please make check payable and mail to:  
**Slow Spokes Bicycle Club**  
**P.O. Box 792**  
**Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0792**

**RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK, AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT ("AGREEMENT")**

IN CONSIDERATION of being permitted to participate in any way in the Slow Spokes Bicycle Club ("Club") sponsored Bicycling Activities ("Activity") . I for myself, my personal representatives, assigns, heirs and next of kin:

1. ACKNOWLEDGE, agree, and represent that I understand the nature of Bicycling Activities and that I am qualified to participate in such Activity. I further acknowledge that the Activity will be conducted over public roads and facilities open to the public during the Activity and upon which the hazards of traveling are to be expected. I further agree and warrant that if at any time I believe conditions to be unsafe. I will immediately discontinue further participation in the Activity

2. FULLY UNDERTAND that: (a) BICYCLING ACTIVITIES INVOLVE RISKS AND DANGERS OF SERIOUS BODILY INJURY, INCLUDING PERMANENT DISABILITY, PARALYSIS AND DEATH ("RISK"). (b) these risks and dangers may be caused by my own actions or inactions, the actions or inactions of others participating in the Activity, the condition in which the Activity takes place, or THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE "RELEASEES" NAMED BELOW: (c) there may be OTHER RISK AND SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LOSSES either not known to me or not readily foreseeable at the time; and I FULLY ACCEPT AND ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS AND ALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOSSES, COSTS AND DAMAGES I incur as a result of my participation in the Activity.

3. HEARBY RELEASE , DISCHARGE, COVENANT NOT TO SUE AND AGREE TO INDEMNIFY AND SAVE AND HOLD HARMLESS the Club, the LAB, their respective administrators, directors, agents, and employees, other participants any sponsors, advertisers, and if applicable, owner and lessors of premises on which the Activity takes place, (each considered on the "RELEASEES" herein) FROM ALL LIABILITY CLAIMS, DEMANDS, LOSSES, OR DAMAGES ON MY ACCOUNT CAUSED OR ALLEGED TO BE CAUSED IN WHOLE OR INPART BY THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE "RELEASEES" OR OTHERWISE, INCLUDING NEGLIGENT RESCUE OPERATION.

I HAVE READ THIS AGREEMENT, FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS, UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING IT AND HAVE SIGNED IT FREELY AND WITHOUT AND INDUCEMENT OR ASSURANCE OF ANY NATURE AND INTEND IT TO BE A COMPLETE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF ALL LIABILITY TO THE GREATEST EXTENT ALLOWED BY LAW AND AGREE THAT IF ANY PORTION OF THIS AGREEMENT IS HELD TO BE INVALID, THE BALANCE NOT WITHSTANDING, SHALL CONTINUE IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**ALL RIDING MEMBERS MUST SIGN**

## YOUR FAVORITE BIKE SHOP!!!

The following bicycle stores offer a discount on equipment and accessories. Be prepared to show your Slow Spokes membership card when making a purchase to receive the discount.

Allied Cycle	23101 Gratiot	Eastpointe, MI 48021	586/772-3411
American Cycle & Fitness	29428 Woodward Ave	Royal Oak, MI 48072	248/542-7182
American Cycle & Fitness	39900 W. Fourteen Mile	Walled Lake, MI 48390	248/960-1371
American Cycle & Fitness	203 N. Perry Street	Pontiac, MI 48342	248/333-7843
American Cycle & Fitness	20343 Mack Avenue	Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236	313/886-1968
American Cycle & Fitness	18517 Hall Road	Macomb Twp. MI 48044	586/416-1000
Anchor Bay Bicycle & Fitness	35214 23 Mile Road	New Baltimore, MI 48047	586/725-2878
Bike Tech	18401 E. Warren	Detroit, MI 48236	313/884-2453
D & D Bicycles	8383 N. Middlebelt Rd	Westland, MI 48185	734/522-9410
D & D Bicycles	121 N. Center Rd.	Northville, MI 48167	248/347-1511
D & D Bicycles	9977 E. Grand River	Brighton, MI 48116	810/227-5070
D & D Bicycles	4141 W. 12 Mile Road	Berkley, MI 48072	248/547-0770
D & D Bicycles	7330 Highland Road	Waterford, MI 48327	248/461-6550
East Side Bike Shop	26210 Van Dyke Ave	Centerline, MI 48015	586/756-2001
Fraser Bicycle & Fitness	34501 Utica Road	Fraser, MI 48072	586/294-4070
Hamilton Bicycle	69329 Main Street	Richmond, MI 48062	586/727-5140
Macomb Bike & Fitness	28411 Schoenherr	Warren, MI 48088	586/756-5400
Main Street Bicycles	5987 26 Mile Road	Washington, MI 48094	586/677-7755
Main Street Bicycles	622 S Lapeer	Lake Orion, MI 48362	248/236-9100
Metro Bike-N-Sport	36649 S. Gratiot Ave	Clinton Twp., MI 48035	586/791-3488
Paul's Bike Depot	28057 Gratiot	Roseville, MI 48066	586/776-9165
Stoney Creek Bike	58235 Van Dyke	Washington, MI 48094	586/781-4451

### Club Information

For more information about our club, please see our website at [www.slowspokes.org](http://www.slowspokes.org)  
 Most of the information on the website is visible without signing in. If you are a member, you can use your email address as your login ID and create a password. This gives you access to some information that non-members cannot see.  
 If you wish to join the Slow Spokes, there is a membership application on the website that you can print out and fill out.  
 You are welcome to come for a meeting or try out a ride before joining the club.

### DO WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT EMAIL ADDRESS?

If you want to know of impromptu rides and other information of special interest not found on our website or in the newsletter, please make sure you forward your correct email address to Paul Wilhelm at [jpwilhelm@hotmail.com](mailto:jpwilhelm@hotmail.com)

#### Notes from the Newsletter Editor:

Every attempt will be made to include all articles as they are submitted, and in their entirety, in the newsletter. However, due to space constraints, this may not always be possible. If you do not want your article edited in any way, shape or form (even if typos and/or grammatical errors are apparent) please make a note of that when the article is sent.



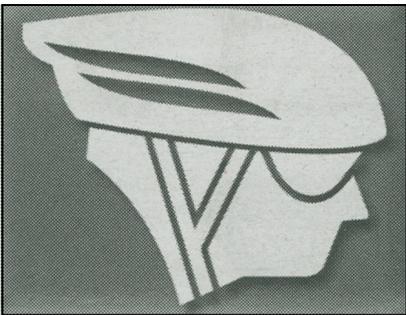
# Slow Spokes Spokin' Times News



Slow Spokes are members of the  
League of Michigan Bicyclists and  
the League of American Bicyclists.



Website: [www.SlowSpokes.org](http://www.SlowSpokes.org)



**BIKE SMART**  
*Always Wear Your Helmet!*

Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0792

P. O. Box 792

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