

History of the North Country Bicycle Club

Back in the 1990's Boyne City had no bike shops and very few riders. A few of us began riding on a regular bases and three of us one snowy mid-winter night while having a pint or two in the old Dilworth Pub decided what Boyne City need was a major bicycle event. So Paul Servais, Ward Collins and Michael Sheean developed a plan in 1999 for what became "Ride the Charx", a fun ride around Lake Charlevoix. To promote this event we formed a club in name only to help promote the event and obtain insurance but had no members for a few years.

Our Ride Director, Paul decided we needed members to help with the "Charx" so we offered member ships for the awesome price of \$15 per year and immediately acquired 60 members. We selected officers to manage the affairs of the new cub with Paul as Vice-president and Tour Director, Mary Servais as Secretary and Web Master, Lisa Kruzel as Treasurer and Mike as President. The North Country Bicycle Club has flourished for fourteen years and membership has grown to over 160 members and we have created the "Cycling Capital of Northern Michigan".

"Ride the Charx" began as a non-profit event to bring cycling folks to Boyne City and it accomplished that very well with up to 400 participants and lots of fun for everyone. All of the volunteers who helped Paul were from the Club membership. After eight years we decide to turn over the sponsorship to the Lyons Club as a fund raiser for their programs to keep it a viable event here in BC.

We have supported the creation of several more major cycling events with the Pink Ribbon Ride developed by Sue Morris beginning in 2002, Michigan Mountain Mayhem directed by Paul Nichols begun in 2010, the Beaver Island Bicycle Festival developed by John Sohacki began in 2010. We are entering a new era for cycling events here in BC leveraging off of the very successful first three years of MMM with participation now limited 1,500, the max capacity of our facilities, Paul is expanding the MMM brand to continue the June event, the "MMM Classic", taking over the organization of the August "Charx", now renamed "Beat the Heat" and planning a fall mountain bike event, the "Gravel Crusher". The Lyons Club will remain as a major sponsor of the MMM events and obtain profits for their organization.

The NCBC has continued to advocate for safer cycling both here and in Lansing through the League of Michigan Bicyclists, encourage a healthy life style through offering a variety of ride options each week for all levels of road and mountain cyclists, educate cyclists on the rules of the road, safe cycling practice, bike mechanics and equipment maintenance, as well as help plan and build a trail network in the Boyne Area and provide an opportunity for social and recreational activity for residents and vacationers in the Boyne Area.

We have supported the development of trails in the in the Boyne Area and have active committees working on the Boyne City- Charlevoix Trail and the Boyne Valley Trailway. See the Trail Report for more details about the trails and fundraising.