

Hello GCBC Club Members!

Welcome to the first club newsletter of 2025. I'd like to call the newsletters I send out monthly Ride & Repeat, because that's really what we do!

As I assume the club's helm after Eddie Holmes' departure, I feel it's appropriate to recognize him for his amazingly impactful tenure as president. He's put his heart and soul into everything related to the club activities and greatly influenced our local cycling scene. He's truly irreplaceable. That said, I am committed to moving the club forward by organizing safe, enjoyable, and challenging events in 2025!

As a general FYI for something new, we've created a club account with **Ride With GPS**. For GCBC club members who already have an account, you can simply click the club account "join" line, and you're in. For club members who aren't already a RWGPS member, the join link will prompt you to create an account. Once you've established a presence there, you can download route navigation files and load them onto your Garmin or Wahoo head unit **or** use the RWGPS phone app to navigate routes. Be aware that when you create an account with RWGPS, there's a basic "free" version and a premium one. As a GCBC club member, you'll have access to the premium features, so the basic "free" account is all you'll need. We've just started building the route library, so it's a work in progress. Ideally, in the future, when planning and communicating rides and events, ride leaders and club members can choose an existing route or build a route and send a route link, so ride participants can preview the route and have the nav file on their head unit. We are soliciting feedback on existing routes and are open to new route suggestions! One last item related to RWGPS is that there's a club ride/event calendar there. It's very user-friendly, and I intend to keep it current and up to date. Here's the link to join-

<https://ridewithgps.com/organizations/14742-gulf-coast-bicycle-club/join>

Here's a summary of events we're planning for this year:

Although we are still working through confirming the routes and Race Roster registration is not open yet, I would go ahead and mark these dates on your calendar and plan on participating and/or volunteering in some way. You are welcome to get the word out on these events for us too.

- Big Level Ride on Saturday, March 22~ <https://ridewithgps.com/events/343882-big-level-ride-three-route-distance-opti>
- Mid-Year Party Ride at Buccaneer State Park on Sunday, June 22~ <https://ridewithgps.com/events/344065-mid-year-party-road-ride-31-mi-50k-62-mi>
- Bikes and Beaches Time Trial on Saturday, July 26~ <https://ridewithgps.com/events/344070-bikes-and-beaches-10-mi-time-trial-from->
- Tour de Burger Ride on Saturday, October 4~ <https://ridewithgps.com/events/344067-tour-de-burger-road-ride-from-ramsey-spr>

Here are the three events that I am still working towards fully confirming for us:

~ Ride from Flint Creek on Saturday, July 12

~ Criterium in Downtown Biloxi on Sunday, July 13

~ Southern Magnolia from MGCCC's Perkinston Campus on Saturday, October 18

Regarding "regular" club rides:

Considering that Bart Luther with Biloxi Bicycle Works leads the Circle The Bay Ride and Duncan Perkins with Tri Hard in Ocean Springs leads the Tato-Nut ride on first Saturdays- and that club members generally participate in and enjoy these rides- it's my intent to schedule club rides on the remaining Saturdays of the month. I'd like to rotate between the popular meetup locations (Latimer/Woolmarket/Success/Pass Christian/Bay St. Louis). I would appreciate feedback on this idea, and I hope to firm up this plan and get the rides and routes on the calendar very soon!

Also, Dave & Susan Ricker have graciously volunteered to lead and organize the Work-skipper/Retiree rides. In our discussion, given the popularity of these rides, we intend to do these monthly on the first Wednesday of the month, starting in February-

<https://ridewithgps.com/events/344006-work-skipper-retiree-ride-1>

Historically, the group has traveled to either The Tammany Trace in Louisiana or the Longleaf Trace in Hattiesburg. We love riding these locations, but it's sometimes difficult for people to commit to these rides' travel time and general logistics. So, our idea is to do some of these rides at locations closer to home while occasionally traveling to Tammany and Longleaf (quarterly, perhaps?). Please provide feedback on this idea!

Speaking of ride leaders, we will be seeking club members to lead our local rides. If you're interested, please get in touch. Ideally, we'll have a couple of volunteers to lead rides. So, if a ride "splinters" into a fast group and a follow group, we'll have a volunteer in each group. This may be unnecessary for rides where there's an agreement to regroup occasionally, which can be part of the pre-ride discussion.

Recent club news!

Race #1 of the MS Gravel Cup occurred on Saturday, January 18. Multiple club members participated and seemed to have a great time! Enjoy a handful of their pictures attached, and please congratulate them the next time you see them. What an excellent job they did.

Coming soon!

While this is not a GCBC-organized event, we've always supported it-

<https://raceroster.com/events/2025/98531/hero-bike-ride>

Here's the organization's information - <https://msora.org/>

I hope to have several of us available to help on March 8 with the MORA Ride. Please contact me if you're interested!

I'll close with a friendly reminder that we are only as great as our club members who get involved and help to make things happen. Here's a list of items we still need help with:

<https://www.thegulfcoastbicycleclub.com/volunteers.html>

Also, if you haven't already, please renew your membership or join here! We now have Venmo and PayPal as payment options. You don't have to live in MS or just be a cyclist to be a club member! You're all welcome to be a part of our community!

<https://www.thegulfcoastbicycleclub.com/member.html>

We would love to know if you own a business and would be interested in sponsoring one or more of our club events. You also may know someone who owns a business in town who may be interested in supporting what we are trying to do this year. GCBC is a 501(c)3 incorporation in good standing with the Secretary of State and, as such, would be an excellent tax write-off source. As a sponsor, you would be financially contributing to the logistics of making our events possible. Depending on the size of the donation, they could receive advertisement on the bottom of every page of our website, they could be possibly the exclusive sponsor shown wherever the event is promoted (the website, RWGPS club event calendar, social media, Race Roster, etc), on event T-shirts such as the Southern Magnolia and all swag (towels, bags, water bottles, socks, scarves, etc, we'd like to get creative this year) associated with that particular event, they could be on the 2025 club kit, and their branded tents could be used as rest stops throughout our road rides as well as at the start/finish. Please reach out to me directly if you'll consider us~

228.234.4491/apryl.handy@goosehead.com

If you have a story or victory you'd love to share with the group in our next newsletter, please submit your story via the link below. We'd really love to hear from you! Or you are welcome to reply to this email. Please remember to include at least one picture!

<https://www.thegulfcoastbicycleclub.com/newsletter.html>

I hope you all have a wonderful day! Till the next Ride & Repeat - Ride and repeat!!

Best Regards,



Apryl E. Handy

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