

September 17, 2010

A quick update from the Sterling Spinners:

- We had a wonderful ride yesterday evening (September 16<sup>th</sup>) with 5 of our cyclists, plus 2 of us oldie riders. (We still have 10 who are involved, but weekday rides are tough for some with after-school activities). We had our first digital scavenger hunt. We gave them 5 places that they had to find and have their picture taken in front of. (see photos in photo gallery). They organized the itinerary and charted the course, and they loved every minute of it. They got off course a few times, but mostly self-corrected. The last destination came with a clue: “ the place does take-out, but it’s not food.” It took them a minute to figure out that it was the library. It is not accidental that we made this the final destination. From there we headed back to Sterling, so they now know how to safely find it on 2 wheels—knowledge is power!
- Antonio gets the yellow jersey. From what I can tell, he is the one in the group who has had the most hardship. He is also the one who is probably most susceptible to gang involvement, and he’s the one I have been most concerned about dropping out of our group. I called him to let him know we were missing him, and he was very non-committal. But he was back with us, and seemed to enjoy the ride. For making the effort to reconnect and re-engage, the yellow jersey goes to Antonio!
- We had a wonderful outing as a group to Clemson University’s Death Valley on September 11<sup>th</sup> where we were able to rub the rock and run down the hill, which has been described as the “most exciting 25 seconds in college football.” (see photo in photo gallery). We then had the privilege of hearing Stanley Hunter speak. Stanley is a member of the Clemson football team and has a mom who is incarcerated. He is the oldest of 13 children and inspired us all.
- This past Thursday, we welcomed “J.D.,” another Greenville Spinner who wants to ride with us. He and Tim, our stalwart partner, are helping us learn to navigate downtown Greenville and are having fun exploring bike lanes. The yellow jersey goes to LeLe, who isn’t the fastest rider, but she is tenacious. She announced to me that she was NOT going to ride all the way up Calhoun Street back to Sterling—she was way too tired. But J.D. came alongside her and shared his trick about hills. (He had just ridden from Pickens all the way to the Blue Ridge Parkway, so he knows hills). J.D. said that he gets a song in his head and gets the rhythm of the song to match his pedaling, and then he sings away in his head, and before he knows it, he’s conquered the hill. Lele wasn’t too sure about this, but she tried it, and sure enough, she conquered the hill without getting off her bike! Yea, Lele. She and I had been talking earlier on the ride and she was telling me of her dream to go to college. Maybe there is a connection between tackling the hill, and tackling her studies.
- We are planning a digital scavenger hunt this week. The kids will have a list of clues where they will have to navigate to various parts of town and have their picture taken (in front of the Greenville Zoo, at a downtown statue, at the Liberty Bridge, etc). Should be fun!
- Christian has created several options for a graphic logo for us. We’re hoping to have the group choose one soon and find funding for Sterling Spinners racing gear.
- Tim is working on getting us onto the course of the Pro Cycling race this Sunday morning. The course is open in the morning to donors who support the cancer fundraiser, but he is hopeful that he can get us on. We’re not ready yet to do the Paris Mountain section of the

course, but it would be really fun to do a section and ride down Main Street to the finish line. We're keeping our fingers crossed.

- We are planning a zero-carbon outing to a Furman football game. We are planning to ride up the Swamp Rabbit Trail to the Furman campus, tailgate in fine cyclist's style, enjoy the game, courtesy of the Furman Athletics Dept., and then return back to Sterling. Maybe we can inspire other fans to do the same.
- We are also in conversation with the Heller Service Corp at Furman about providing some student volunteers for our group. A couple of student cyclists/mentors would be a great addition to the Sterling Spinners. It is our goal to get them on the Furman campus and have them get acquainted with college life, and the students would be a great help with that.
- We continue to partner with St. Frances and Maxim Williams as he is working to create access to safe and healthy communities. We are exploring having our group speak before City and County Councils about the need for bike lanes.

Enough for now. Needless to say, the Sterling Spinners are going strong. I am loving the connection to these kids and the deep relationships that are forming.

Be well,

David

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