

November 22, 2006

## Giving Thanks

It's hard to believe that we're preparing to celebrate yet another Thanksgiving. This is always a time for reflection on exactly what it is that we are thankful for. And this year has been one of many blessings.

I'm thankful for this club, the Tarheel Trailblazers, and the individuals that continue to step up to the plate, tirelessly giving of their precious time to make the mountain bike community in the Metro Charlotte area stronger and offering riding options to all riding styles...

I'm thankful for our executive board, VP, Jerry Adams, the ying to my yang, to Frankie Pietras, who holds the purse strings and keeps us financially secure, and to outgoing secretary, Jennifer Dilworth, who I look upon as a sister. I appreciate all of her hard work and dedication. Now take some quality time Jen, plan that wedding (congrats Bryan!) and get back on that bike! I'm thankful that Leah Mitchim has offered her services as secretary for 2007...

I'm thankful for all the individuals that gave of their time to attend the Sherman Branch neighborhood meetings, to show their support and to make the approval of a trail system at the "Branch", a reality. Thanks to Jerry Adams and unsung hero, Steve Kiker, as they built a solid 7.5 miles of trail in under 6 months. And there's more to come. I'm thankful for the volunteers and Boy Scouts (thanks Wes) that have provided the much needed bridges on the property.

I'm thankful for the individuals that stood strong during the closing of Catawba, those that have worked behind the scenes to keep the trail cleared during the closing. Frankie P. for his vision and trail design skills in getting the trails back in order (with more to come).

I'm thankful for former club president, Jeff Smith, grant writer/trail builder Bryan Hines for their efforts to make the Mt. Holly trails a reality. If you only knew the bumps in the road that these folks have been able to overcome, and there are more hurdles on the horizon. Rest assured that along with Ray Broome and club attorney Jim Grover, we have the right folks on the job.

I'm thankful for our local cycling promoter, Neal Boyd, who selflessly gives of himself to provide the entire cycling community top quality events that many of us take for granted. Neal has his finger on the pulse of the cycling community and is a friend and confidant to the president. Thanks Neal...

I'm thankful for our sister club, the Dirt Divas, to Cynthia Lipski, a good friend and wonderful person that has never failed to give her time, whenever I asked. I'll miss her as my counterpart but we'll remain close

friends and associates. Thanks to Anna Hernstein who worked with me to put on the Bike! Summit presentations. I look forward to working with Patty Smith and Tracey Jones as they take the reins of Divas. I'm thankful for Cathie Docherty as she continues to snap high quality images for our website, upcoming brochure and maps. Thanks for keeping things fresh, Cathie...

I'm thankful for Dan Burns and Ivan Konerman, two individuals that have stepped up to provide us with incredible maps of our parks. Look for them (maps) in the first quarter of 2007.

I'm thankful for the relationship that Jacob Burns and I have fostered, as we work together to provide advanced skill opportunities to the cycling community. The PASA constructed pump track at North Meck is just the first step in what we hope to be a new awareness of style and direction for cycling in the community. Thanks Vinnie...

I'm thankful for Pel Deal, who has wrapped his arms around the club membership and organized it into a usable form, for working hard to welcome new members in a timely fashion and to provide the executive board with interesting demographics.

Thanks to all of you that purchased more than 300 Trailblazer emblazoned garments over the past year. The logo is out there, front and center and the community are now aware of us and we are considered to be THE volunteer organization in the Charlotte recreation community. And that's something that we should ALL be proud of!

I'm thankful for all of my brothers and sisters that continue to work toward expanding riding opportunities in the Metro-Charlotte region. To Doug Satterwhite, Paul Belin, Kim Rodden, Joe Recore, Scott Trotter, Mark Sullivan, Brian Malec, Chris Nixon, Edward Autry, Scott Hubbs, Eric Troutman, Cathi and Rod Mowery, David Rodden, Bart Stetler, Jack Crouch, Tom Waldron and the Ranks, Rick Hoffarth, bOb Karriker, Jeff Archer, all the supportive bike shops, Turner Bikes, Cathy Turpin, Travis and Lyndsay, my mom, my employer that gives me a little extra rope, and to all of you that continue to work behind the scenes to make the Trailblazer vision come true.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Tom Mathews  
President

Posted At : 5:43 AM. | Posted By : tom