

Editorial

Give to Nonprofits with Confidence that Money Is Well-Spent

With corporate malfeasance running rampant and stock portfolios that have vanished into thin air, reviewing all investments seems especially prudent nowadays.

Indeed, most of us are closely scrutinizing our individual investments and our business expenditures. As we analyze our purchasing decisions more thoroughly, it only stands to reason that we would more carefully consider donations to nonprofit associations.

We can trust that nonprofits are operating with the best intentions; after all, they exist to improve economic conditions for our businesses and cycling conditions for ourselves.

But in this economic climate, it's reassuring to know that they are delivering on their promises to their members and benefactors.

Bicycle Retailer & Industry News analyzed tax returns of the leading industry nonprofit organizations to determine

their overall health. We concluded that nonprofits generally appear to be in good stead both fiscally and organizationally. Based on nonprofit standards, they are run professionally and responsibly.

While the information we have provided is by no means exhaustive, it should help you make more informed decisions about which organizations to support.

By doing additional research (go to

charitynavigator.org or guidestar.org for more information) you can determine exactly how your donations are being used.

Feeling confident that your dollars are being put to good use has never been more important. As you look to renew company memberships and donate to charities this year, either personally or on behalf of your company, rest easy knowing that the nonprofits you support are using your gifts wisely.

Guest Editorial

Industry Folks: Put Your Foot Down at Stops to Set a Good Example

BY RAY KEENER

No, it's not racers doping. All sports seem to share that problem, and competitive cycling doesn't blip the radar of most Americans. Unless it involves a Tweet from Lance.

It's bicyclists behaving badly, on both roads and trails. This is a controversial topic around the world of cycling, which prevents calm and forward-going discussion. We need to have it. Our behavior is holding us back.

For the sake of discussion, I am going to agree with the shock jocks and the Sierra Club and other enemies of cycling: bikers obey traffic laws and trail rules less often than other user groups.

Let's divide our red-light-running, trail-abusing brethren into three groups:

The Clueless: In Boulder, it's the college students riding on the sidewalk (with a three-foot-tall pedestrian icon) when there's a bike path (with a similarly sized bike icon) right next to it. They're just not paying attention.

The Entitled: A good example: I rode the Skinny Tire Festival in Moab in March, and a couple of race teams were riding double pacelines out near the centerline while they passed ride single file signs. "That must not apply to me!"

The Resistant: They're angry that cyclists are second-class citizens. They want to point to the bad behavior of car drivers to justify their own. They look for excuses to vent their frustrations on clueless drivers.

Looking at these three groups, the question becomes, what can we do to

help them understand how their lawless behavior hurts everyone who rides?

After many hours of discussion with bike advocates on this topic, I have to say: probably not much. We have a chance with the Clueless. The Entitled and Resistant are a bigger challenge.

But we have to try. Not because an industry effort to say to cyclists, "behave yourself" is going to change things much in the short-term. But because we need to be able to say to the enemies of cycling, "we know we have a problem and we're trying to solve it."

And we need to keep the friends of cycling on our side, too. As Leslie Bohm points out, thanks to Bikes Belong, we've gone from \$1 billion to \$10 billion in facilities funding in a decade. Goodwill keeps the money flowing.

Here in Colorado our cycling Governor Bill Ritter is about to sign a Bicycle Safety bill. Our enemies are complaining that with all the money spent on bike lanes, cyclists should be required by law to ride in them!

We have so many positives going for us, we need to eliminate any negatives. With industry resources limited what can we do? At the very minimum, set a good example.

Going on group rides? Put your foot down at that next stop sign. You're a leader, you don't need to lecture anyone, they'll notice. Let's all do what we can to change bicyclists behaving badly to roadies riding responsibly!

Ray Keener of Growth Cycle has been bike commuting for four decades.