

The cyclist must see what's behind him. With my rear-view mirror I can notice a car that's pulling to the right, closer to me, and likely to cut me off at the upcoming intersection: I take a timely defensive action.

Riding in the busy streets of NJ's Union County, I've come across countless situations in which my being aware of the traffic behind has allowed me to take preventive or evasive measures and avoid a likely accident. Turning your head is no substitute since it can only be spotty and is intrinsically unsafe.
*Jose Sanchez-Bernat
Linden, NJ*

DEAR EDITOR:

I read the letter from Steve Weeks (Objects in Mirror, Fall 2006) encouraging the use of a rear-view mirror on bicycles. I wholeheartedly agree on that issue. I have used a mirror on my bike ever since I've been riding on the roads. I would feel naked without it. Constantly keeping in touch with traffic is a must no matter what type of road you travel.

For years as a teacher and fund raiser for the MS Society, I would give bike demos to elementary school age children. I talked about safety and wearing helmets, but I always extolled the use of a mirror and hand signals on road travel. My advice to them was the two next purchases after getting a bicycle was a helmet and a rear view mirror. If your readers would pass this on to all their riding buddies and anyone else they come across on their travels, I'm sure the injuries and fatalities would drop even further.
*Ted Kovall, retired teacher
Connellsville, PA*

STANDING UP FOR THE RIDE OF SILENCE

DEAR EDITOR:

I felt a need to comment on two letters in the Fall issue. On the Ride of Silence issue, we conducted our first ROS in Green Valley, Ariz. this past May and it was a success. I wonder if the originator of this letter, who seems to be opposed to such celebrations, will next want to tear down war memorials because of the dangers of war and then to cancel all funerals because of the dangers of living.

I have become accustomed to (and now dependent on) a rear view mirror to enhance my awareness of the surroundings. In a recent issue of the Greater Arizona Bicycling Association newsletter, there was an excellent article regarding the advantages of using a rear view mirror. The author pointed to many advantages with the only significant disadvantage being the 'nerd effect.' Maybe some day all bicyclists will be so equipped, and perhaps some day all bicyclists will stop for stop signs. ●
*Chuck Hill
Green Valley, Ariz.*



YOUR FAVORITE BIKE SHOPS

During the summer, the League carried out a member survey with the help of the Gluskin Townley Group, LLC. In addition to asking questions about our member services and programs, and their bicycling habits, we also took the opportunity to ask them a few questions related to their bike store experiences. We learned, for example, that 100 percent of our members purchase cycling products through specialty bicycle retailers, and one-in-five plans to buy a new bicycle in the next six months!

Members were asked to write in the name of their one favorite bike shop and city where it is located. Among the many reasons given for votes for particular stores were:

- A commitment to customer service
- Support for local bicycling activities and programs
- The attitude of shop owners and staff

These are the top stores in each region. Congratulations, and thanks for providing great service.

- Region 1: Belmont Wheelworks, MA
- Region 2: High Gear Cyclery, NJ
- Region 3: Spokes Etc., VA
- Region 4: Hubbub Custom Bicycles, OH
- Region 5: Richardson Bike Mart, TX
- Region 6: The Bike Gallery, OR

In addition, there were several that scored well but weren't top in their region. We want to also recognize their good service to our members. They are:

- Cycles de Oro, NC
- City Bikes, DC/MD
- Bicycle Sport Shop, TX
- Harris Cyclery, MA
- High Gear Cyclery, CO
- Wooden Wheels, DE
- The Bike Doctor, MD ●

THANKS FOR YOUR LETTERS

We eagerly await all of your comments — good and bad — on cycling, the League, our publications, and just about anything else you want to tell us about. E-mail elizabeth@bikeleague.org, fax your letter to 202-822-1334 or mail it to us at 1612 K Street NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20006.

Letters may be edited for style and length.