

Austin? Texas? Really?



The National Bicycle Dealer Association Board of Directors meeting in Austin, Texas. Long time spent in the saddle. Too bad we can't get the work done on a bike ride!

33 years of Chain Reaction, 4 years in shops before that, pretty much a lifetime of memories centered on cycling, working on and selling bikes... and more recently, involved with working on behalf of cycling with our representatives in DC... it was only a matter of time before I was asked to serve on the National Bicycle Dealer Association's board of directors. That's right, I'm representing the interest of 1,000 NBDA members plus another couple thousand who aren't. Shops of all sizes, from mower/bike shops in small towns in Kentucky to large multi-store chains like Performance. Their employees, their owners, their customers. What we all have in common is a desire for better cycling opportunities (making "Complete Streets" the law of the land would be a great start; "Complete Streets" basically says that all new roads, and rebuilt older roads, will be constructed with the needs of all users in mind, not just cars). On the local bike shop/industry side, we would like to see a level playing field with the on-line merchants, such that your local store doesn't have a sales tax disadvantage or have duties & other taxes assessed on the goods we sell but not on those that come into the country from overseas merchants. And in general, a more-efficient industry that would allow better living standards for our hard-working employees. Hard-working dedicated employees without whom the industry wouldn't survive, in our store and elsewhere.

It's not just me doing the work; we have a great team on the NBDA board, including Jeff Selzer from Palo Alto Bicycles. And beyond that, a number of local dealers who have been active at the DC Bike Summit each year, including James at Calmar Cycles (and also an NBDA member).

Tomorrow another long day of meetings, and hopefully a field trip to see Mellow Johnny's, Lance's shop here in Austin. I've heard so many interesting things about it, and see so many wearing their jerseys and t-shirts, about time I see what it's all about! Of course, the timing is interesting. :-)