



## **Interview with Bicycle Commuter and Big Brother Mitch Simril**

LS: Congratulations on working out a way to include a bicycle ride in your commute from Greensboro, NC to your job in Winston Salem, NC. Will you explain how you do this?

MS: It is actually pretty simple: I drive 11 miles to the "PART Hub" - Piedmont Authority for regional transportation - and take a 30 min bus ride into downtown WS, then bike 3 miles to work; then I reverse the process in the afternoon. PART is a transportation network that connects the Piedmont Triad. I decided to give it a try after reading the suggestion on commuting in the November 2007 issue of this newsletter.

LS: What do you enjoy most about your "new" Commute?

MS: It varies throughout out the year - right now it's having coffee and reading the paper in the morning and power naps in the afternoon (on the bus). Just being able to drive less and bike more was reason enough to get started. I am also saving a ton of money.

LS: How do you work out changing into your work clothing and getting ready for the work day?

MS: This is actually a non issue, since we have a locker room and showers at work. We have a number of guys that workout at lunch using these facilities. I pack some things the night before and just leave plenty of extras of everything at work.

LS: Please tell me a little about the bicycle you use for commuting.

MS: I use my 1983 GT Timberland, to which I have just added a rear bike rack. I change out brakes and tires from time to time; it will be going long after I am done. I have seen just about anything used for commuting - as long as it is safe and gets you where you want to go.

LS: Do you consider your bicycle commute as a workout or a way to get to work?

MS: I just look at it as a way to get to work and loosen up at the same time. I could transform it into a workout if I wanted to. I have time at lunch and after work for exercise. Rather than just driving by everything, I look for new places on my way to visit - Farmers Market, coffee shops, library, and tennis courts, you get the idea. Nothing compares to the simple pleasure of a bike ride.

LS: How do you handle rain and cold weather during your commute?

MS: Someone told me when I started that I would be surprised how little it would affect me. I have found that people thinking about trying this spend far too much time worrying about "what if?" In extreme cases of heavy rain and ice I have taken the city bus from downtown; it drops me off at my building.

LS: How happy are you to spend less time in your car?

MS So happy that now I look for any chance to not drive. I bike more on weekends when possible rather than driving. I am done with traffic jams, dealing with road rage and now try to promote alternative energy. Plus, I get to wear shorts to work every day!