

The 2018 Blackberry bRamble was overall a positive experience for both the participants and GEARS.

From the beginning, the bRamble committee established the intention for this year's event:

- Show off Eugene/Lane County area
- Build Community
- Increases [GEARs] name recognition & goodwill
- It's a fun destination
- Encourages volunteers from membership
- Fundraiser for GEARs

**What happened:**

- bRamble committee met regularly starting 12/3/17
- Developed a Marketing and business plan with a budget
- Added new features to enhance the ride (Dinner, more music, signage)
- Developed new artwork and merchandise
- Successfully retained past and recruited new volunteers
- Cultivated new relationships (Travel Lane County, radio stations, Mike Reeder)
- Did not lose money

While the participant numbers were fairly level from 2017 (374 total riders) and expenditures were higher (marketing, Coordinator expense, dinner, additional operational costs), the registration fees were also increased. Exact financial data was not shared by the Treasurer prior to this report.

The evaluation from the Survey Monkey totaled 30, with overall enjoyment rated:

poor=1  
neutral=2  
good=9  
great=18

There were criticisms of road markings and signage, slow food at dinner and route issues such as 36 dangerous and the 20 mile route not being kid friendly. The rider who had a heart attack said the ride was "great" but we should have a certified medical tent at the finish. Entertainment scored the lowest enthusiasm. Several people said they would do the event again.

Comments from the paper surveys included:

Great food and routes and marking, others got lost, overall experience was great, more shade structures needed, especially at beer garden, entertainment not so good, but some wanted music at rest stops (which we had at two), "it was fun", "volunteers were great", long burrito wait, and "nice vibe."

**Dinner:**

One week before the event, the contracted caterer lost his lease and cancelled, so Quiroz's Taqueria was called in at the last minute. 385 burritos were served for \$2527.50 to participants and volunteers. (25 burritos were purchased at \$6.50 each to help relieve the wait in line.) The original contract was for \$2365 for 365 burritos:

[Jose and Erica Quiroz had never done an event this large and afterwards discussed with me plans to alleviate the line if they were to be hired next year.]

**Merchandise gross income \$2745**

**T shirts** 206 were ordered = \$1605

-85 to 90 given out to Volunteers and Sponsors (46 remaining shirts)

-approx 73 sold\* @ \$15= \$1095

note: we had budgeted \$500 for volunteer t shirts. Actual expenditure for t shirts was \$510 (\$1605-\$1095)

**Jerseys**

30 were ordered @ \$55=\$1650 initially; 11 on reorder

-5 remain (2 sm Women; 1 lg Women; 1 med Men; 1 lg Men)

24 sold @ \$65=\$1560 Preliminary loss is \$90. The inventory is still salable and once sold, would more than cover for this loss, with a potential to earn \$390.

5 more jerseys (of sizes we didn't have) were ordered by participants since the first order was placed (June 15), so another order was placed to fulfill those orders. All the jerseys ordered on August 20 are either sold or were intended as a gift from the club (Mel Huey's and Michael Reeder). 11 jerseys on reorder.

I made a mistake submitting the copy to Mike Cantrell for the newsletter and many of this second order sold for \$55 rather than \$65. With a \$20 shipping charge, we stand to lose \$20 on this second order.

It was very confusing using three different avenues for ordering and paying for Jerseys and t shirts: Google forms, Eventbrite and PayPal. On the website we used Google forms for people to order, but this did not link them to anyway to pay at first. Therefore, at the event, there was no clear record of who had ordered and paid. And then some people bought jerseys/tshirts at the event, but this doesn't seem to be listed as merchandise in PayPal. Certainly this points to a need for a better system in place.

**Marketing**

The committee tried to reach out to new platforms to attract more participants and spent \$990 on ORBike. It is difficult to access the success or failure of this venue but something for the future committee to decide.

**Coordinator**

Our initial work with Devin started us on a marketing plan and we spent \$1000 for his work. Michael Reeder was recruited thru Craigslist, came in late and worked hard for his contracted \$2000—\$500 of which he has still not been paid due to the Treasurer's personal decision—five weeks after the event. While Michael may not have been a true coordinator by orchestrating the entire event, he brought to the table many connections and volunteers. He was positive, attentive showed expertise in social marketing for this event and organization. He is willing to continue in this role—a decision which will be up to the bRamble committee— and that speaks to much needed continuity for this event. It reflects very badly on GEARs that we have failed to fulfill this below-minimum-wage-contract with someone who clearly is in no position to afford the lag time and did his best in a very controversial role.

**Eventbrite charges**

No other bike organization that I know of pays for the processing fees for an event. During the initial planning, I missed the fact that GEARs had a history of paying for each participant's fee. I strongly advocated to switch to a less expensive platform and when that was vetoed for

Date	Full 100	Metric 62	40	Total long riders	20 mile CR	10 mile CR	Family Led 5 mi	Total Riders
8/3/18	66	103	81			not categorized		
				281	79	not categorized	14	374
2017	68	122	87	276	87			363
2016	59	136	69	264	71			335
2015	did not collect data this year			361	52			413
2014	99	147	88	334	61			395
2013	138	162	88	393	85			478
2012	142	149	73	364	121			485
2011	201	182	74	457	128			585
2010	139	129	68	336	N/A			
2009	112	150	50	312	N/A			
2008	did not collect data this year			348	N/A			

understandable reasons, I urged, unsuccessfully, that we switch to adding the fee to the participants rather than GEARS paying. This would have saved \$1619. We must evaluate this policy for next year.

## Registration

These numbers for 2018 do not include day of registrations or anyone outside of Eventbrite so they should be upwardly revised. Also, again, we did not track children riding, so actual participation is higher (for all years). The committee should address this for next year.

Typically, the registrations were late, which added to our income because the majority of our participants paid the higher fee per ride.

For the 100-62-40 miles, 124 signed up at \$50; 142 signed up at \$60 and 10+ paid \$70.

For the Community Rides, 24 paid \$15; 55 paid \$20 (on Eventbrite).

For the Family Ride, only one registered at \$10 and the 13 others on EB paid \$15.

Only one comment mentioned the price for the Family ride as being high, particularly if there were several in the family to do it, but the writer also said they would do it again next year.

Turnout was level despite intense efforts to attract riders. And it has gone down from past years. As many people have asked, "Is it worth the effort?" As a fundraiser, the answer could be no. Looking at our other goals for the event, it certainly did accomplish all the other aspirations: good will and recognition for GEARS, showcasing Lane County, it drew a volunteer base that we intend to cultivate and it was fun. Did it build community? Not sure, especially considering some of the discord among the board. The committee went into this year knowing that things were going to be altered and unsure of what this plan could bring. A lot of people worked very hard with few words of support—an ongoing tradition in GEARS I've heard. Our Volunteer Party on Sept 27 will hopefully bring us together and start to change that culture.

## Volunteer Coordination for bRamble from Valerie

We recruited around 90 volunteers for the 2018 bRamble. Many of the volunteers took on more than one duty and several volunteered to do double shifts so that we could fill all the volunteer needs. Overall, the coordination of volunteers went really well and I heard from several people that the volunteers were very friendly and did a good job cheering people on as they rode past.

I also heard from the volunteers themselves that they enjoyed the event and I am hoping that will help with recruitment in the future. Everyone involved in planning the event this year made it a goal to let volunteers know how much they were appreciated.

Here are some of my thoughts on what we could do next year to help with volunteer recruitment:

Prepare a half-page "job description" for each of the volunteer positions. In some cases, we had no information or we had an overwhelming amount of information that made it difficult to easily explain to recruits what the job entailed.

Recruit volunteers to work on pre-event committees. Many GEARs members said that they would have been willing to volunteer but they were going to be out of town on the date of the event, or had to work that day. There was a lot of advance planning and work that volunteers could have assisted with and would have made the advance work not so taxing on just a few individuals.