



Babes on Bikes is a group of women who enjoy bicycling and meet regularly to bike the paved trails and quiet roads in northern Virginia, Washington D.C., and Maryland. Founded in 1998, we are based in Arlington but our almost 500 members live all around the Washington, D.C. area.

We range in age from mid-20's to mid-70's or possibly 80s now. Many of us are stay-at-home moms, have flexible work schedules, or are retired, so we can ride during the weekdays when trails and roads are less crowded. Others can ride only on weekends and have found ride partners in the group or join us when they can take a weekday off.

Some of our most popular rides begin on the Custis trail (at Dawson Terrace or Bluemont Park) and cross the hazardous Lynn Street intersection before

- heading over Key Bridge to the Capital Crescent trail;
- taking the Mt. Vernon trail to Old Town Alexandria, Fort Hunt, National Harbor, or Mount Vernon; or
- finishing the Arlington Loop, connecting the Custis, Mount Vernon, and W&OD trails.

We always compete with cars trying to turn right toward Key Bridge. Our rides begin after rush hour is over, so our experiences are probably not as severe as many cyclists find during the morning and evening commutes.

One member stated:

There is hardly a time when I cross there that I am not staring down some driver who tries to cut me off. Sometimes the driver yields and other times I am left in the middle of the intersection waiting for a break in the car traffic. ... there needs to be county involvement to mediate between human-powered and engine-powered people all trying to be in the same place at the same time. Some intersections in DC give pedestrians a head start before allowing cars to turn right. Something like that might work in the Lynn St situation.

Another member reported, "A car hit my front wheel in that crosswalk two years ago. I had the audacity to continue to ride with the Walk light on as he turned in front of me. Luckily, the only thing I got out of it was a flat tire."

A third member wrote:

I witnessed a cyclist tapped by a car and going over in the middle of the intersection. ... One time a minivan came so close in front of me that after turning my front wheel to the sharp right (and somewhat losing my balance), I had to stop myself by pushing on the vehicle. At the time I had the walk sign and was following all the rules of the road. The driver gave me the so-called middle finger as though I had done something wrong.

A fourth member (a retired APS school teacher) stated:

A couple years ago, I saw an elderly woman turn when [another rider] was already crossing there, and there was contact. There are too many things for a senior citizen to be looking at at this very busy intersection. ... there are limits to the number of things one driver can take in: signs requiring drivers to decide whether bikers are persons; pedestrian signals; stoplights; walkers; bikers; cars going in 8 or 10 directions; roller bladers; and many more things in motion! Other drivers are impatient and unwilling to yield to bikes or walkers when they want to turn and may have other drivers tooting at them. ... I think there needs to be a bridge like at West Street in Falls Church going over Rt. 7.

Lynn Kristianson, an Arlington County librarian, is an important member of our group. Every April she begins her season by riding a flèche, which involves biking over 240 miles in 24 hours. This is the first year she will be unable to complete a flèche. She is now fighting for her life after being struck by a hit and run driver while cycling in Anne Arundel County three weeks ago. Her accident has made all of us even more aware of the importance of safety.

We are encouraged to see that Arlington is planning to revitalize Rosslyn, but ask you to include this intersection in your plans to improve the pedestrian and bicycle safety of Rosslyn.

Please visit our web page (<http://www.babesonbikes.org>) for more information about our organization.