

Pedal Power

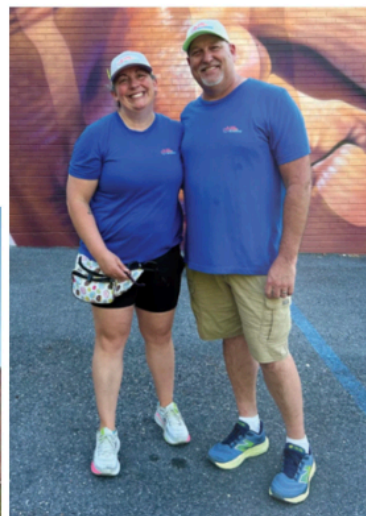
written & photographed by **CHRISTINA NIFONG**

New business strives to bring the joy of biking to young riders.



Winston Burks learned to ride his bike after just one WeeWheel class. "He's had so much fun with it," said mom Liza Burks.

WeeWheel Roanoke owner Allison Duvall (left) is coach, cheerleader, and Band-Aid queen. Husband Jeremy transports, repairs, and rides bikes for WeeWheel Roanoke, a business catering to kids 2-12 years old.



WeeWheel Roanoke began offering Learn to Ride classes last fall. Here, kids circle up at the end of a recent class in the parking lot behind Cardinal Bicycle in Grandin Village.

Winston Burks was a typical five-year-old. He had a bike but struggled to ride it. His parents tried to teach him.

Zippering around on his scooter was more fun.

Then last spring his mom signed him up for a new kind of class, WeeWheel's Learn to Ride. On the first Wednesday, he and five other not-quite bikers met in the parking lot behind Grandin Village's Cardinal Bicycle. WeeWheel Roanoke owner Allison Duvall removed the pedals from their bikes. They spent 45 minutes practicing balance and gaining confidence.

By Week 2, Duvall thought Burks looked ready. He could glide easily and was in control of his bike. She directed him to the top of a small incline and coaxed him to catch the momentum.

"A big push. There you go! See how easy it is?!" she shouted.

For Winston, that was all it took. "We came back and he was riding his bike," said his mom, Liza Burks. "We couldn't believe it!"

WeeWheel is the inspiration of triathlete and mother Whitney Mulder, who founded the business in Richmond in 2023 as a way to make bike riding more fun. She has since licensed the brand to three other locations, in Austin, Florida, and Roanoke.

Duvall (and husband Jeremy) discovered Roanoke's biking community as adults. They were drawn to WeeWheel's mission of getting kids outside and unlocking their independence.

"This is something I wish I'd had as a kid," Duvall said. "I might have found cycling sooner."

The Duvalls attended three days of training in Richmond that included business plans, marketing resources, hands-on experience leading classes, and tours of WeeWheel Richmond's indoor biking facility.

In 2026, WeeWheel Roanoke is offering Learn to Ride and Beginner Pedal classes on evenings and Saturdays. They offer after-school programs at Community School and Cave Spring Baptist Preschool. And they've started participating in community events, bringing their fleet of high-quality kids bikes to various locations.

"Part of our passion is not only teaching kids to bike but growing the biking community in Roanoke," Duvall said. "More people on bikes. That's what we want."

Find out more about WeeWheel Roanoke at: weewheelroanoke.com ☆