

momentum

THE MAGAZINE FOR
SELF-PROPELLED
PEOPLE

mellow JOHNNY'S

LANCE ARMSTRONG
OPENS A COMMUTER
BIKE SHOP IN AUSTIN



CHICAGO/TORONTO
KIDS BIKE EDUCATION
WORK BIKES & BIKING TO WORK

#33

MAY/JUNE 08

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PHOTO BY BEN JOHANSON



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**7 things
for spring**

momentum

ON THE COVER:

Lance Armstrong in Austin Texas. Photo by Elizabeth Kreutz kreutzphotography.com

MOMENTUM MAGAZINE reflects the lives of people who ride bikes and provides urban cyclists with the inspiration, information, and resources to fully enjoy their riding experience and connect with local and global cycling communities.

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toronto



PHOTO BY GABI SARLAY



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THE BEST PART of the day

Stand on an urban street corner early in the morning and ask the passing cycle commuters what they love about riding to work. One or more will likely declare, “It’s the best part of my day!” I wonder if, on particularly gorgeous mornings, some people get to work and just keep on riding.

Though I still thoroughly enjoy my ride to work, it’s no longer the best part of my day. With a recent surge of interest in mobility biking, there’s an exciting feeling of discovery as we investigate and connect with other parts of the self-propelled world. There’s significant movement to change the landscape for cycling in North America – and it’s clear in talking to self-propelled people. That’s my favourite part of the day – connecting with other riders and learning about their view of the Bikeosphere.

It is a gift to meet such lively, wise, fun, critical, and creative people – and to feel more connected and hopeful about the cycling community as the year progresses. MOMENTUM is a co-creative endeavour which involves readers (you!); those of us who contribute to, produce, and keep the magazine running; the people about whom we write; and our subscribers and advertisers.

MOMENTUM is an independent publication funded by subscriptions and advertising and fuelled by love, commitment and creativity. Sometimes the possibilities are overwhelming. We see great people making change and we want to do them justice. Help us create a truly great publication by subscribing, advertising and getting involved. Work with us and tell us your stories.

We’re proud to be involved with the following events this spring and summer. At some we will be supplying magazines and sponsorship, at others we will be attending. If you’re planning to be at these events, look for MOMENTUM. Connecting with you is our reason for being there – and the best part of our day.

LOOK FOR momentum

DOXA FILM FESTIVAL

Vancouver, BC May 27-June 1
doxafestival.ca

MAKER FAIRE

San Mateo, CA May 3 – 4
makerfaire.com

URBAN ASSAULT RIDE

Seattle, WA May 18
Portland, OR May 25
Austin TX June 22
urbanassaultride.com

**BIKE TO WORK WEEK
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Vancouver, BC May 26 – June 1
vacc.bc.ca/biketowork

BICYCLE FILM FESTIVAL

New York, NY May 28-June 1
Toronto, ON June 18-21
bicyclefilmfestival.com

**CYCLE MESSENGER
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Toronto, ON June 13 -16, Toronto
cmwc2008.com

CARFREE CITIES CONFERENCE

Portland, OR June 16-20
carfreeportland.org



Kevin Dishmon | 25

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THAT COVER...

I HAVE BEEN reading your magazine for the last few issues from Ottawa, Ontario. First, I must say that I have enjoyed every page. I read them several times over, even



the advertising. I even went back to the guy that shared them with me and grabbed about a dozen more copies to hand out to my friends at work who cycle regularly on our Wednesday after work rides (weather permitting) and I put a couple of issues in a mailer and sent them to my parents who are avid cyclists in Guelph, ON.

When I reached into the box to grab a stack of Issue #32, I almost put them back for fear that I had the wrong box. My first impression was that I had a handful of religious magazines from the Mormons, or that I had a mitt full of pro-life literature. While I am not trying to bad-mouth any of those publications, I respectfully submit that your publication should display bicycles as the prominent figure on your cover. It would have been so much easier to take if each member of your cover family was proudly displaying their own wheels. The single bike, added almost like an afterthought, does little to introduce the great content to the prospective reader. I have a family very similar to the one on your cover but my girls are a little older, and I understand the importance of family in the cycling community.

Peter Chaloner
Ottawa, ON

A HOMEMADE BIKE TUNE

ENJOYED READING YOUR last issue; especially the article and letters on Bike Tunes. It may be late to add our suggestion, but here it is: This Chain is Wound for Glory. This take-off on the folk song *This Train is Bound...* evolved during Dad and Daughter cycling trips, and can easily have many different verses (e.g. see Pete Seeger's version). This song has great cadence, is easy to learn, easy to improvise on, great to sing in the rain, or when toiling up North Shore hills. Doesn't need an iPod, or any electronic machinery - just human energy.

S.M. Knowles
Capilano Highlands

AS A COMMUTER cycling parent, I was pleased to see "The Family That Cycles Together" feature in the March/April 2008 issue of MOMENTUM. I tow my 18-month old son everywhere – including to and from daycare each day – and have the utmost respect for those families who try to be car free.

Often I hear that time is the reason why so many parents drive their kids everywhere. The reality is, our commute on two wheels is 1/3 of the time than if we were to travel by bus or vehicle. Plus by cycling, I get a great workout each day and feel good about our low-carbon lifestyle.

Our son, Quinn, is keen to point out all the other bikes on the road and sits cozily in his chariot with a book and blanket. No complaints, just a great view and a smooth ride – a far cry from gridlock on the streets or waiting for the bus.

Sarah Webb
Victoria, BC



PERVASIVE PARTICULATES

I WANT TO point out what might be dated information in Dave Olsen's article on Art Gaudry in MOMENTUM #32.

The lead used as a gasoline additive from the 1920s to the 1980s in North America may not have been the only culprit when it comes to the plaques or lesions on the inside of Art's arteries. It looks increasingly as though the very fine soot particles from automobile exhaust are what is ripping up his circulatory system.

It appears that this soot, coated with the products of fuel combustion, cause oxidative damage in the body when inhaled and enter the

bloodstream through the lungs.

While getting the lead out may have lessened the damage to the nervous system, it does not seem to have done much to address the atherosclerosis issue which is caused by any fine particles, not just lead ones.

The question might arise why we have so many fine class action lawsuits against the tobacco and asbestos industries, while the internal combustion engine industries seem to cruise along untrammelled – blowing sootcreens?

W.J. Spat, PhD
North Vancouver

EVERY KID WANTS A BIKE

WHAT A RICH feast of bicycles are covered in your magazine, particularly the latest issue (#32).

My request is for an article on introductory bikes for kids (age 4 and up). This past year I have been buying bikes for grandchildren. To my surprise I found the selection very limited. The models are Hummer-like versions of mountain bikes only heavier. Their weight and cumbersome handling are no incentive for the prospective young rider. Most of us (my daughters included) began riding on small versions of the Raleigh roadster or the Triumph Rodeo such as are in the current issue. How about a campaign to bring back the kids' starter bike of yore – or a contemporary version?

Michael Clague
Vancouver, BC



Please send us your feedback. We seek to continually improve our coverage of self-propelled culture, and we need your help. Tell us about your local cycling scene. Send us your photos too. Letters may be edited for length.

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children's bicycle education In the united states

BY RICHARD MASONER

THE U.S. FEDERAL Safe Routes to School program was established and funded in 2005. Of the \$147 million made available to states for Safe Routes in fiscal 2008, 10 to 30 per cent must be used for "non-infrastructure" projects, which includes bike safety education for school children. Bike advocacy organizations throughout the United States are partnering with local school districts to teach bicycle safety.

The Cascade Bicycle Club (CBC) in Seattle, Washington trains school teachers to teach elementary school children about helmet use, nutrition, traffic signs, hand signals, and the ABC Quick Check (air, brakes, chain). About 90 teachers in the Seattle, Highline, and Lake Washington school districts are expected to teach bike safety to 12,000 students this year.

The Bicycle Transportation Alliance (BTA) in Portland, Oregon developed the state-wide Bicycle Safety Education program for fourth through seventh graders. Schools that implement BTA's program see a 24 per cent increase in walking and biking to school over the previous year.

But it is Longmont, Colorado that has perhaps the most effective Safe Routes education program in the nation; it boasts participation rates of 80 to 90 per cent on the designated walk/bike to school day at the five elementary schools in the program. PE instructors teach the rules of the road, sidewalks, driveways, and how to get across intersections. They also talk about where to go for rides besides just to school, such as to the ice cream store, to a friend's house, or to a park.

While Safe Routes is an easy sell to administrators and teachers, parents sometimes need more convincing. "Parents don't understand at first how it's safer until they see it," says Buzz Feldman, the Safe Routes coordinator in Longmont. "Then they see traffic isn't a danger because there are no cars out there. Because there are 200 other kids out there with their parents, scary people are not an issue."

"At Columbine Elementary School in Longmont we went from 189 cars before the program to 30 cars. It's an amazing success," says Feldman. "At Fall River Elementary School there's a phenomenal 80 per cent participation and the parents really push it there. The bumper to bumper long line of cars that used to be there is gone!"

Richard bikes in Santa Cruz County, California with his wife and two school-age children.

ILLUSTRATION BY SUZANNE SUMMERSGILL
pinnstudio.com



Apple green vinyl, leather padded saddle, adjustable nic adjustable bars, rubber grips, bright tin spokes and ribbed plated handle bars, rubber grips, bright tin spokes and ribbed 11 in. front wheel, 8 in. rear wheels, 24 in. aluminum frame, 24 in. padded rubber seat, and bell.

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TORONTO KIDS ▼ CAN-BIKE CAMPS

THE ORGANIZERS OF Toronto's "Kids CAN-BIKE Camps" hope to be able to triple the numbers at their day camps this year to 240 kids. First launched in the summer of 2006, the Kids CAN-BIKE Camps teach kids to cycle safely and responsibly, and provide each participant with a bicycle and safety accessories that they keep after the camps. The fully subsidized week-long camps for children at risk are organized by the City of Toronto Bicycle Safety Partnership, a group of community agencies and sponsors that includes the Ontario Cycling Association, the Canadian Tire Foundation for Families, the Children's Aid Foundation, and Mountain Equipment Co-op.

The cycling instruction at the camps is based on the Canadian Cycling Association's Kids CAN-BIKE course curriculum, which certified instructors across the country use to introduce children to the key skills necessary for safe riding. Usually delivered in a twelve-hour course, the camp organizers saw a need to expand the curriculum and developed it into a week-long camp program.

Barb Wentworth, the City of Toronto's Bicycle Safety Planner, explained how the camp evolved. "We were looking at that [CAN-BIKE course] model and thinking that we really need more time with the kids so that they can perfect the skills of riding on the road, and have enough experience within the course to lock that knowledge in. And also we knew that we wanted to do some work with low-income families who don't have bikes. We looked around at expanding the CAN-BIKE program into a one-week camp. The model has worked very well.

"We go into a one-week very intensive program of riding with the kids and teaching them all the basic skills and at the end of the week we send them home with a new bike, lock, helmet, backpack, and safety sash as well all the stuff that goes along with riding, and we've had really good success with the program. The kids love it, the agencies love it, the parents love it, so it works really well."

The organizers believe that the camps would be welcomed in other cities, and plan to create manuals so that groups in different parts of the country can use them to start their own camps.

Talking about the future of the camps, Barb Wentworth is optimistic but admits there are obstacles to overcome. "We're trying to open three camps this year, but I'm still trying to find the resources so I'm not sure what is going to happen there yet."



Barb explains that cycling needs to be seen as a higher priority. She is keen to point out that cycling is about much more than just recreation, or even about transportation. "In my way of thinking, it's important that we move cycling up to reflect that it's more than a recreational program and it's more than just sustainable transportation. It hits so many of our key quality of life issues. It's a life skill that we really need to have ... because it gives the children the confidence and competence to continue riding into their future."

For information on Kids CAN-BIKE Camps: www.toronto.ca/cycling/canbike/camp.htm

UP TO SPEED CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE



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LONDON AND PARIS INVEST IN CYCLING AND WALKING ▼

THE MAYOR OF London, Ken Livingstone, has announced a radical program to change transportation in the UK capital. The plan includes twelve dedicated cycling corridors radiating from the centre to the suburbs, a bike sharing program with 6,000 bikes that will be free to use for short trips, on-street “bike zones” in shopping and school areas where cyclists have priority, 30 kilometre per hour speed limits, and improved pedestrian routes and crossings to encourage more people to walk.

The program will cost an estimated £500 million (\$1 billion), and the first six cycling corridors are scheduled to be completed by 2012. There has already been an 83 per cent increase in the number of cycling trips in the city since 2000, and the city’s goal is a 400 per cent increase over the current number of trips by the year 2025. According to a press release from the Mayor, that would be equivalent to ten percent of London residents making a round trip by bike each day.

The London announcement comes on the heels of a similar one in Paris that unveiled their own

significant transportation developments, which include: 200 kilometres of new bike paths, doubling bike parking in the city from the current 23,000 spots, doubling the number of bikes in the city’s bike sharing program, creating an integrated pedestrian plan for the whole city with the goal of improving safety and quality of life (wider sidewalks, new pedestrian streets, better bike path/pedestrian separation and street crossings), and the launch of a car sharing network with 2,000 electric cars.

TOWARDS CARFREE ▼ CITIES CONFERENCE

THE 2008 ANNUAL international Towards Carfree Cities conference will be held in Portland, Oregon, on June 16-20. The conference brings together people who are working to promote alternatives to car dependence, and the theme of this year’s conference is “Rethinking Mobility, Rediscovering Proximity.” The program will focus on urban livability, mixed-use development, local agriculture, pedestrianization, strong neighbourhoods, accessible public space, and sustainable transportation.

Meaghan Sinnott, one of the organizers of the conference, described the people who are expected to attend. “It’s quite surprising the range of people we draw to the carfree movement. Parents

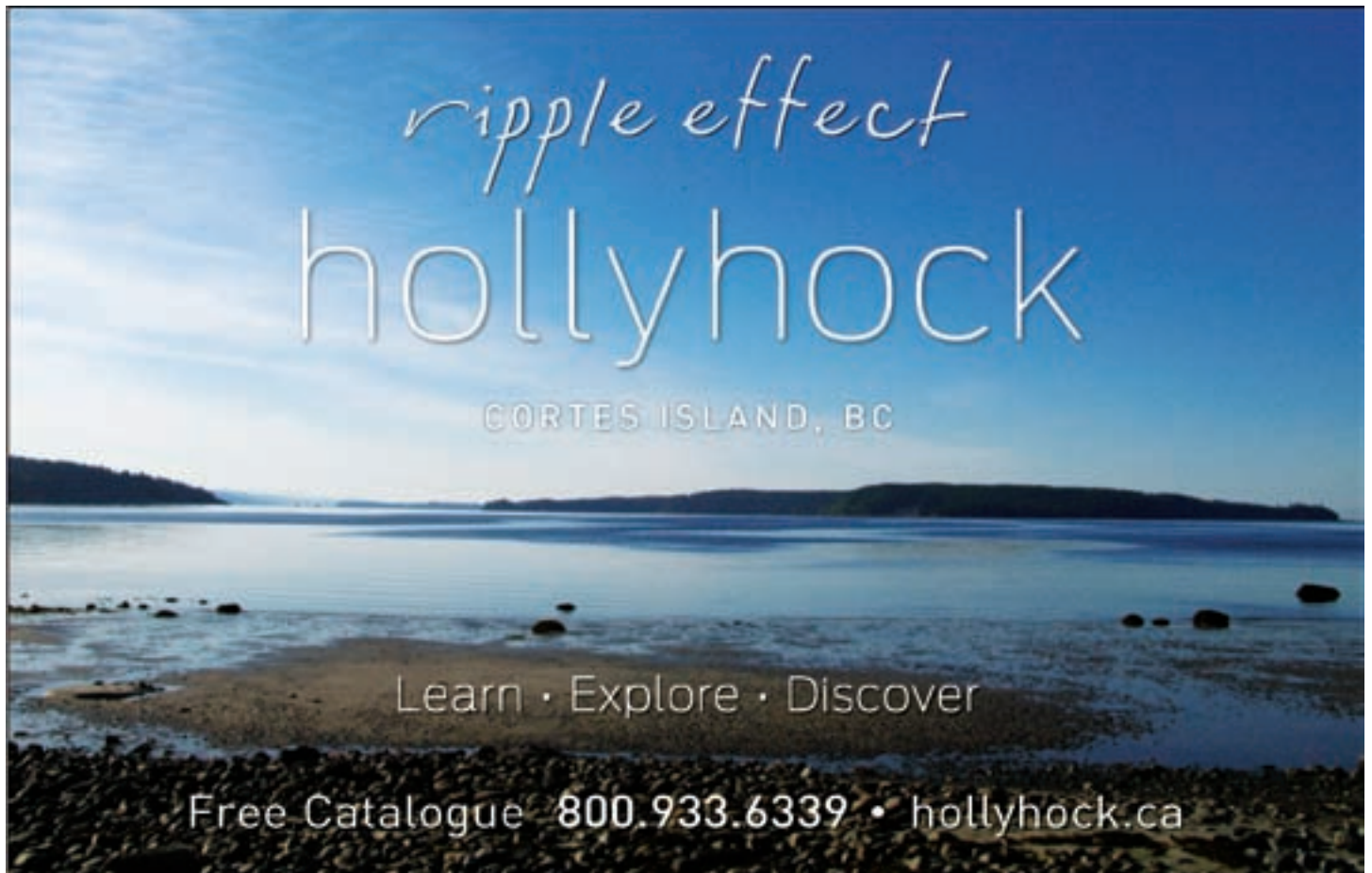


concerned about their child’s future, architects, city planners, engineers, activists, transportation wonks, hardcore bikers, you name it. That’s one of the best things about this conference. You can have a well-

respected, well-paid, and influential city planner hanging out, drinking a beer with a bike activist!”

The conference will not be all serious discussion. There will be fun events open to the public, such as an art show at city hall, a movie night, square dancing in the street, and a depaving project where volunteers will tear up part of a parking lot and convert it to a more people-friendly use. The conference is also timed to coincide with Pedalpalooza, the annual three-week festival celebrating cycling in Portland.

A complete program can be found at the conference web site: www.carfreeportland.org.



IT ISN'T JUST ▶ A TRASH CAN

THIS IS A concrete (well, steel) example of how the Dutch constantly think about cycling and cyclists.

Of course, it would have been easier to use a standard garbage can. But that would not have served cyclists on the move nearly as well. And, with a school nearby, would probably have meant more litter.

Though it looks like a humble, if unusual, trash can, it didn't get there by accident. Rather, it is an example of the constant thought and care that goes into supporting cyclists.

Note also in the background that the bike path goes gently under the cross road, rather than having the cyclists stop at an intersection.



PHOTO BY DAVID HEMBROW OF HEMBROW CYCLING HOLIDAYS



◀ KEEPING DRY WITH STYLE

FEW CYCLISTS REALLY like rain. In fact we go to great lengths to keep it away from us.

Gore-Tex jackets and pants, capes, fairings, fancy hats and helmet covers, or sometimes just not riding at all are among the ways we try to defeat it. With many of these you get wet anyhow, even if it is from your own moisture rather than the rain. Plus 'gearing up' can be a lengthy process akin to preparing for a spacewalk.

But what if there was a simpler way – inexpensive, stylish and using something most of us already have?

Behold the DRYBIKE, an adapter that uses your umbrella to keep you dry. Holds the broly when needed, folds inconspicuously away when the sun shines. Since the umbrella is held edge-on to the wind there is little wind resistance at city cycling speeds. www.drybike.nl



PHOTOS BY MARCEL HEMELRIJK

KINDERBAKFIETSEN ▶ CARGO BIKES FOR KIDS

WHILE BAKFIETSEN (CARGO BIKES) for adults are relatively new here, they have been commonplace in Europe for many years. That has spawned a variety of kids' versions.

One can't help wondering if kids socialized with these might grow up to have a different view of the transportation world than the kids with Barbie Hummers and motor homes?

If you want to see one in action (in Portland, Oregon), then watch the video at: www.archive.org/details/jasonwilsonSnellerNaarTuismetBakfiets

TYRE ▶ BELTS

VELO-RE, of Brixton, UK makes belts from recycled bicycle tyres (British spelling in deference to their nationality).

Each one is individual and handmade. They come in two stock styles: slick and semi-slick. For the more adventurous they are also available in coloured and "chunky" versions. All of this for about \$50. For more info, ordering, and photos of these and other Velo-re products, see www.velo-re.com/index.html

And if you prefer to make your own, go to www.instructables.com/id/TREAD-BELT/ for complete, easy to follow, illustrated instructions.



Warning: Scenes of excess cuteness may make you want to procreate. Take a cold shower. Buy a puppy instead and think about it some more.

If you want to build a version for a very young child, you can download complete plans for a wooden one at: www.woonenklusmagazine.nl/include/bouwtekeningen/pdf/kinderbakfiets.pdf

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A Cascade Bicycle Club Education Foundation Event

PRO WALK/PRO BIKE BACK AT IT *in the northwest*

BY LISA QUINN

THE 15TH INTERNATIONAL Pro Walk/Pro Bike Conference takes place on September 3-5, 2008. This year, the biennial conference on bicycling and walking converges in Seattle, Washington. For three days, the conference will host a brain exchange for over 600 pedestrian and bicycle advocates, planning, public health and transportation professionals, and government leaders. The conference is guaranteed to inspire attendees to undertake projects to improve the quality of life in their own communities.

Seattle is hosting the conference for the second time, the first repeat of a city venue in its 30-year history. Why Seattle? Mainly because the city and the communities of Puget Sound have introduced and actively implemented a variety of policies, plans, and programs featuring new and improved cycling and pedestrian facilities. Supported by other efforts to develop climate change plans, these communities are successfully creating sustainable community systems featuring bicycling and walking.

The varied sessions explore how programs were developed, and share lessons learned. In addition to the over 50 regular sessions, a poster session gives program managers an opportunity to exchange information in a unique way. By attending a conference, people do expect to learn about other cycling and walking programs and accomplishments throughout the country. In this case though, imagine people passionately talking about their latest bike-friendly project or comparing pedestrian master plans, innovative cart projects, or spitfire social marketing campaigns.

And if the action inside doesn't do it for you, the weather outside in early September in Seattle is sure to be inviting for one of the many walk and bike tours.

For more information or to register for the 15th ProWalk/Pro Bike Conference visit www.bikewalk.org/2008conference/index.html

Lisa Quinn has been a commute excuse coordinator for over 13 years. Her passion is building healthier communities through active transportation. Lisa is the Executive Director of Feet First, Washington State's pedestrian advocacy organization.

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FUNCTION VICTIM FIELD TESTING THE KONA UTE



www.konaworld.com/o8_ute.htm

Women's anatomy generally requires a larger bike seat, so I replaced the standard seat with a Selle Royal Erogel women's saddle. My pelvis, now happy, had a stable foundation and my shoulder pain disappeared.

Economists suggest that we purchase in order to disclose our prosperity to others through wealth signals. Teenage boys use sneakers. Our neighbours use BMWs. The UTE is also part of the signalling game, but instead of divulging wealth (it retails for \$899), the UTE signals a new bike fashion that can change our lives. For those who have sworn to automotive abstinence, this cargo bike will help you with your vows of chastity.

"Marshall McLuhan: "We look at the present through a rear-view mirror. We march backwards into the future."

HOMEMADE PANNIER MOUNTING SOLUTION FOR THE UTE

BIG GROAN FOR the UTE's panniers, or carry bags. They fell off while I was pushing the bike through doors and while I was riding. The bags hang on with wide hooks, not clips, and are not designed to be removed from the bike and carried into a store. I wanted to attach my own panniers but couldn't; most panniers fit onto 10 mm gauge tubing and the UTE's carrier is made of 19 mm tubing.

I contacted Robin Sansom, the UTE's designer, about this problem. He emailed me instructions to search local shops, and mentioned compatibility with Jandd panniers. He also outlined Kona's plan to offer more pannier options in the near future. I went to bike shops, looked at Jandd and other brands, and found nothing compatible. I asked many venerable bike geeks and even they couldn't find a pannier or clip that worked. So I went to Home Depot and invented a solution.

I'm in love with my red waterproof Ortlieb panniers. I wanted to use them with the UTE so I found a way to attach them to the bike. I used the following supplies to attach a narrower gauge rod to the UTE's carrier and was able to ride contentedly.

$\frac{3}{8}$ Anchor Shackle 2 X \$2.79 = \$5.58
 $\frac{5}{8}$ inch Aluminum Rod 3 feet = \$19.89
 $\frac{3}{8}$ ISS Clamp 2 X \$0.87 = \$1.74
 Total \$27.21



BY PENDRA WILSON

WE ARE NOW seeing the future through the rear-view mirror of the SUV. While poorer nations increase their population of tiny cars (like India's Nano), we in North America are "marching backwards into the future" by trying to reduce our driving, and emulating bike designs popularized in developing countries.

I had personal reasons for wanting to test this bike. A friend of mine had a life-threatening spinal cord injury falling off her bike while carrying groceries on her handlebars. I'm not a bike geek – I'm a regular person who rides her bike to get around town. But after my friend's accident, I wanted to investigate any bike that could carry the products of our daily lives safely.

Pushing this eight-foot-long bike feels like pushing a station wagon. Happily, this changes when you get on and start to ride. The UTE weighs 40 pounds (just ten pounds more than a regular bike), and its lightness never fails to shock people when they lift it. It's made of aluminum and can carry 110 pounds. I appreciated being able to haul 50 pounds of cargo up hills. Though Kona's website claims the UTE is "better than any car, yak, buffalo, or sherpa," it's not made for backcountry. The UTE is well-designed for city transportation and manoeuvrability in urban traffic.

I also found the UTE to be a man magnet. But instead of salacious enchantment, this bike seduced me with its practicality. Most of us can only carry two or three bags of groceries on our regular bikes. The UTE can carry about eight bags' worth. Using the UTE, I coasted with six loads of spring-cleaning laundry to the laundromat without sacrificing stability.

It has an all-in-one frame and carrier design with a long wheelbase. Loaded up, it feels safe and stable. When I showed this bike to Tyler Dumont, a physiotherapist and expert bike-fitter, he commended Kona's choice of a wide, sweeping handlebar which aids in steering stability. He also thought the upright position was an asset for commuting in traffic.

The front disk brake is a thoughtful feature and made me comfortable stopping on downhills. This is pretty important when carrying heavy cargo as 70 per cent of braking is done with the front brakes. All you really need is front disk brakes; I know this because the bike geeks told me so!

On the down side, the quick-release 700c wheels will make any bike thief's heart go pitter-patter. I always locked both wheels but if I were to replace the quick release, I would still always lock both wheels. They have heavy-duty rims and extra spokes to add strength when carrying loads.

PHOTO BY DAVID NIDDRIE

REVIEW:
KLUNKERZ

BY ULRIKE RODRIGUES

IT'S NOT SOMETHING you should watch by yourself. *Klunkerz*, the independently written and produced DVD by fat-tire aficionado Billy Savage, recounts mountain biking's California days in the 1970s and takes you there so vividly – with tons of footage, still photos, and interviews with a bunch of guys (and a couple of girls) who drank beer,



smoked pot and then got on their damned bikes – that you and your friends will want to join in.

A few of us gathered to watch Savage's flick one Friday night and while we didn't light up, we did crack a few beers for the occasion. Finally on disk, *Klunkerz* has sold out theatres,

won awards, and no doubt brought tears to a few MTBers' eyes as it screened in the film, bike, and sport circuits.

Filmmaker Savage demonstrates a genuine knowledge of the bikes, and rapport with the people who first dragged their heavy 1940s and 50s-era Schwinn's up a San Francisco-area mountain for kicks. Not only do many of the Mount Tamalpais riders – Joe Breeze, Gary Fisher, Tom Ritchey et al. – do plenty of screen time, but they share their stories and video footage with him in a way that feels trusted and intimate.

The film lingers on the stuff we riders love: the bikes, the parties and the trails that made Marin County famous. You see the 1.8 miles of fire road that the riders ate up (or that ate them up, as injuries were frequent), the grease smoke coming off the hubs, and the keg parties that fuelled the whole thing.

The editing is so sharp that the riders practically finish each others' sentences. You get a real sense of their excitement and it's hard not to catch a contact high. Our gang was stoked, and we were reminded that at mountain biking's roots, it's not suspension and hydraulics but fun and friends.

Visit the *Klunkerz* web site at www.klunkerz.com to chat with Savage and order your own copy. For more information on the early days of mountain biking, I recommend www.mtnbikehalloffame.com.

REVIEW:
**RICHARD SACHS
IMPERFECTION IS**

A film by Desmond Horsfield; 28 minutes

BY AMY WALKER

RICHARD SACHS IS revered among bicycle builders for his studious craftsmanship, precision, and attention to detail. He builds road racing bikes meant for riding, not to be kept on display. His reputation for making immaculate machines sets bikeophiles to drooling as they describe his craftsmanship and the experience of riding one of his frames.

The title of Desmond Horsfield's film refers to Sachs' acceptance that, though he has perfection in mind when building each frame, he almost always faces "something going awry" in the process. Sachs describes it thus: "Sooner or later the material tells you what it wants to be and you have to kind of reconcile with that."

Here is an invitation into the home studio of Richard Sachs. As he brazes lugged joints and files fork set detailing, he also shares stories and insights from his career. There is something universally inviting about watching Sachs at work. His hand tools and torches speak of a different era and approach to the material world.

Sachs offers his wisdom and experience simply



PERFECTION

and with grace. I loved learning about the early decisions that led Sachs to his craft. He describes his youthful naiveté with the same humility as he explains his success: "You have this notoriety that comes simply from lasting." This attitude is a testament to the dignity and joy to be found in doing something that you love, and doing it well, every day.

Still, it seems intended for those with some previous knowledge of Sachs and his work. It does not include much biographical or career detail, nor does it provide a description of the steps involved in frame building. There is no discussion of the great influence Sachs has had on the craft of bicycle building in North America. Were it more inclusive of the uninitiated, *Imperfection is Perfection* may have been a more far-reaching film.

Luckily there are many articles on Sach's website that can bring the newcomer up to speed. To learn more about Richard Sachs and the craft of frame building or to purchase the DVD, visit www.richardsachs.com



SAN FRANCISCO
BICYCLE MUSIC FESTIVAL

BY KRISZTINA KUN

THE SAN FRANCISCO BICYCLE MUSIC FESTIVAL combines two of the best parts of summer: open air concerts and riding around town with friends, creating a roving, interactive community celebration. On June 21, the longest day of the year, the festival starts at a Farmers' Market and winds through the streets of San Francisco pumping music with a pedal-powered sound system. Stopping at parks throughout the afternoon, the ride becomes a sunset street party with stilt walkers and fire spinners, and ends at a converted auto body shop turned artists' studio where the party continues until midnight.

Performers include: the Ginger Ninjas, who recently completed the "Pleasant Revolution," a bike-based musical tour in the USA and Mexico; didgeridoo-er Hernan Battiato; Justin Anchetta; folksy crooner Sonya Cotton; wordsmith Reztef Ttocs; Shake Your Peace; The Blank Tapes; Honey.Moon.Tree; Thao Nguyen, and Fossil Fool aka Paul Freedman. The festival provides loaner bicycles to musicians who don't have their own and recruits a team of volunteers with cargo bikes to participate as haulers.

Last year's festival saw about 2,000 people over the course of its 15-mile ride, with several hundred at each stop. This year, festival organizers are excited to welcome even more participants with music, performances, bike advocacy groups, and food at every stop.

www.bicyclemusicfestival.com
www.pleasantrevolution.net
www.rockthebike.com

THE JOURNEY IS *the destination*

BY DOROTHY WOODEND

LONG ROAD NORTH

A feature documentary by
Gwendal Castellán and Ian Hinkle
2008 USA & Canada, 90 mins
www.longroadnorth.com

IN A WORLD that shrinks a little more every day, adventure is increasingly difficult to come by, but for Gwendal Castellán, it's as necessary as life's blood. Gwendal's peregrinations, both physical and spiritual, are well captured in the feature documentary *Long Road North*.

Gwendal's initial plan was to ride his custom-built tandem bicycle from the southernmost tip of South America to the Canadian Arctic. Like most adventures, things didn't go exactly as planned. Problems with his bike were only the beginning: threats of Colombian guerillas, oblivious motorists, and the occasional alligator further complicated matters. But it was the blank incessant glare of the sun that turned out to be his worst enemy, shown by the pebbly red rash that broke out on his neck and arms. Despite the obstacles, Gwendal and crew kept on, mile after mile, documenting the slow transition of the land and the people they encountered.

From the windswept austerity of Patagonia to the lush jungles of Colombia, through Mexico and into the badlands of Texas, smaller moments in the film jump out at you. One of the most noticeable is the enormous difference between North and South American grocery stores. American mega-marts, lush with choice but entirely without soul, are worlds away from the mobile riverboats that plow the waterways of Central Brazil, bringing groceries and gossip from the outside world to the locals. Even more notable is the sudden change in attitude when the riders cross the US border, and are treated more like vagrants than adventurers.

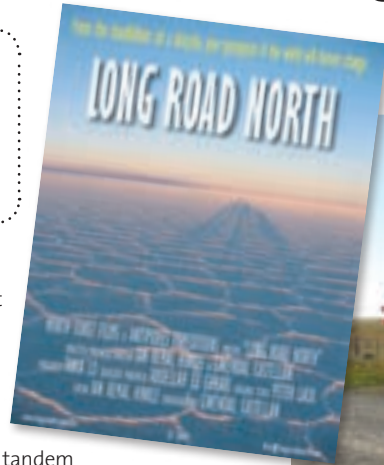
Co-directed by cinematographer Ian Hinkle and Castellán, *Long Road North* does meander a bit. Another editor might have trimmed the endless shots of bicycles on lonely stretches of road. An over-reliance on narration is also a bit of problem.

Far more interesting than the scenery are the little glimpses into the interpersonal dynamics of the people involved. As Gwendal is joined by different riders along the way, navigating the tricky territory between family and friends becomes more complex. Nowhere is this more evident than when his girlfriend Tania Lo joins him and the trip becomes an acid test for their new relationship. Or as Tania says, "Staring into my boyfriend's back, and breathing in his farts all day long just isn't that romantic."

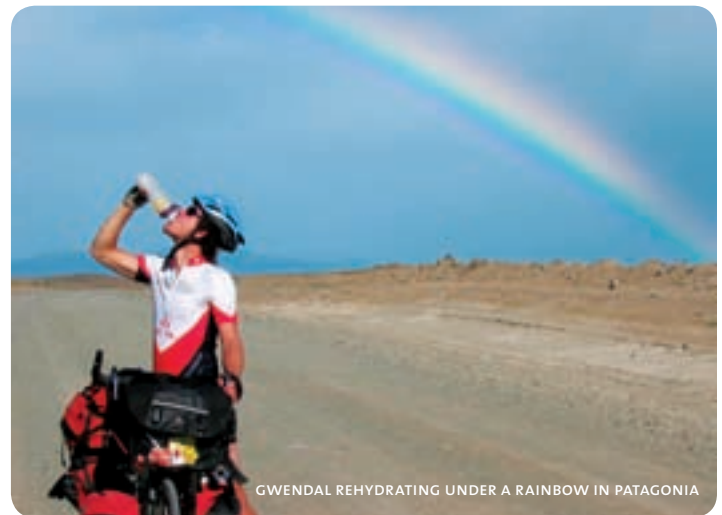
As long as you don't have to smell him, Gwendal makes a charming road companion. He does foolish things, tries to cope, fails, and ultimately perseveres. It's this fundamental honesty that gives *Long Road North* its unexpected amount of heart. By the time the travellers roll into Canada's enormous northern wilderness, the expedition has become much more than a bike trip. It is truly a journey in the best sense of the word.

Long Road North screens at the documentary DOXA Film Festival in Vancouver (May 27 to June 1, 2008).

Dorothy Woodend is the film critic for the *Tyee* and for *This Magazine*. Her work has been featured in magazines and newspapers across Canada. After watching *Long Road North*, she was sufficiently inspired to haul out her bike and ride around.



DAMIAN AND GWENDAL RIDING INTO THE WIND IN PATAGONIA



GWENDAL REHYDRATING UNDER A RAINBOW IN PATAGONIA



TANIA AND GWENDAL ON THE SALT FLATS IN BOLIVIA

**PEDAL POWER
THE QUIET RISE OF THE BICYCLE
IN AMERICAN PUBLIC LIFE**

by J. Harry Wray

Paradigm Publishers, 2008, 236 pages, \$19.95

REVIEWED BY TERRY LOWE

J. HARRY WRAY is a professor of political science at DePaul University in Chicago. He defines politics as “the allocation of values,” or, “who gets what, when, how.” He teaches a course called “Biking and Politics” and takes his students for long rides around the city to learn how “politics, economics, and the environment combine to affect culture and be affected by it.”

One of the more interesting ideas found in this book is his comparison of the American culture to the more cycling-friendly countries in Northern Europe. Individualism and materialism have defined the overall culture of the USA; Wray briefly examines that phenomenon through history and the seemingly inevitable results of cities and suburbs designed for cars. However, he adds,



“Cultures may be durable, but they are not static.” The rest of the book is devoted to telling us about the changes he sees happening.

By way of background, he recounts a cross-country bike trip he did in 1975, and how that experience continues to

influence his perceptions. He profiles the pioneers of the modern bike advocacy movement, and discusses some of the advocacy groups – both regional and national. He also explains grass-roots movements such as Critical Mass, Portland’s SHIFT and Pedalpalooza, and eventually arrives (in Chapter 7) at what appears to be his favourite topic: “Politicians Who Matter.”

In this chapter, we learn about James Oberstar from Minnesota – one politician among others

– whose ISTEA legislation in 1991 made a small amount of federal highway funding available to individual states to hire cycling coordinators and allowed the states to spend money on a wide variety of cycling projects. Simultaneously, he was advising advocacy groups to create Political Action Committees, and encouraging the bike industry to organize itself and do the same. They did.

That legislation has been succeeded by other developments – some good, some bad – but it served to establish cycling on the national agenda and to secure some funding for it. Where funding goes, lobbyists follow, and American cyclists now benefit from some very well-organized national advocacy groups chasing that money.

This book is not all history. One of its possible faults could be that its examples are too current, and thus it might age quickly. And there is probably little in here that a seasoned advocate does not already know. For others, though, who may be wondering how best to introduce more cycling in their own communities, Wray has produced an optimistic review of success stories, and provided some pointers on how to replicate those successes elsewhere.

AFLOAT

by Jennifer McCartney

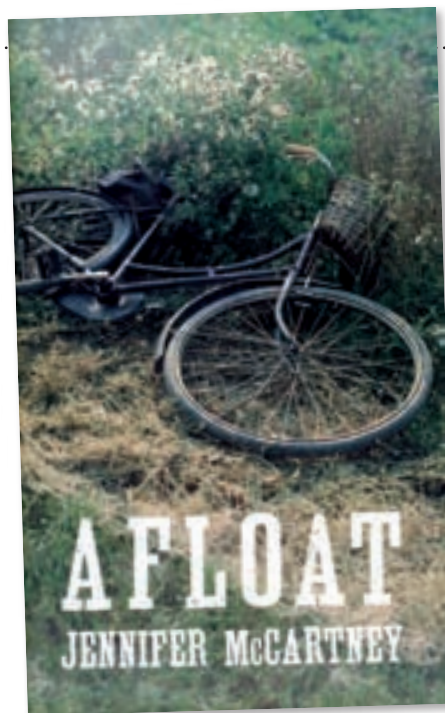
Hamish Hamilton Publishers, 2007, 244 pages, \$29

REVIEWED BY BONNIE FENTON

I PICKED UP Afloat because it had a bicycle on the front cover (an old-fashioned woman’s model with a wicker handlebar basket), and was drawn in by the fact that the story centres around a summer spent on Mackinac Island, Michigan. Located in Lake Huron, Mackinac Island is one of the very few places in North America that doesn’t allow cars.

In alternating chapters, the story takes the reader back and forth between the summer of a young university student named Bell working as a waitress at an exclusive Mackinac restaurant – a summer that we soon learn has shaped Bell’s entire existence – and a minute-by-minute unfolding of a single day in the life of a widowed Bell 50 years later as she awaits a visitor from her Mackinac summer.

Part coming-of-age story and part dark science fiction, McCartney situates Bell’s Mackinac self in the early 21st century, while her older self lives in an apocalyptic future.



On Mackinac Island “everything is calm, green, the water is everywhere. There are no traffic lights and no exhaust fumes and no daily headlines save the weekly Town Crier and nothing is fast enough to be a problem.”

Described in sparse but evocative language, this idyllic location is the backdrop to Bell’s intense romance with an excommunicated Mormon with a dark secret, and to the loss of innocence through a tragic death.

Looking back, the older Bell describes in a few words the changes that half a century have brought: “It was the beginning of a new century then, before the weather had taken over, the skies yellowed, before New York and everything after. Before the clashes of fundamentalists within our own borders, before my sickness and Alan’s death.”

In this bleak future, deadly storms known as Rapid Weather Patterns (known simply as RWPs) that leave “holes punched through cars and roofs by hailstones” have become a part of life.

The story of the Mackinac summer builds to a climax that parallels the development of the RWP that is brewing as Bell recounts her Mackinac summer. Finally, through her reunion with an old friend, we come to understand the heartbreak that Bell has carried for so many years from the summer that was “built out of bicycle grease and pine gum and horseshit and the paper frail dreams of youth.”

THE WHEELS OF CHANCE: A BICYCLING IDYLL

By H.G. Wells
Breakaway Books, 1997 (orig. 1896)
283 pages, \$12.95

REVIEWED BY FLICK HARRISON

H.G. WELLS IS best known as the granddaddy of science fiction. But besides *War of the Worlds*, *The Time Machine*, and *The Invisible Man*, Wells also wrote this extremely witty, fun, and surprising romantic novel about leisure cycling in the days before cars. This new edition reproduces the exact layout and all the illustrations of the original 1896 printing.

In *The Wheels of Chance*, a draper's assistant named Hoopdriver takes a two-week holiday for a bicycle tour of the English coast. He doesn't get far before he spots a Lady in Grey, an intriguing figure in distress at the hands of a Cad.

Jessie, the Lady, is on the run from her stepmother, a much-discussed authoress devoted to Proper Appearances, but the distinguished critic with whom



Jessie has escaped has his own greedy designs on her. The self-conscious but bold and imaginative Hoopdriver must rescue Jessie, while Jessie struggles to Live Her Own Life in the repressive patriarchy of Victorian England.

Wells' writing is sharp, funny and flowing. It might be best enjoyed by reading aloud in a hoity accent, such as: "I must scorch 'til I overtake them!" or "What the juice is that?"

It's great fun to see bicycles repeatedly described as "machines," as in: "They resumed their machines

and carried on." To read this book is to discover just how magical and liberating two-wheelers must have been, back in those days: the fastest things on the road, even if they were a pain to drive uphill, and, in fact, Wells spends a good page describing the many bumps and bruises on Hoopdriver's body as evidence of his taking up cycling.

The Wheels of Chance would fall flat if the bikes were replaced by horses, motorcycles, or cars. There's something exciting about self-propelled independence in an age where a travelling couple had always to disguise their relationship – however innocent – as marriage or siblinghood. Nor does Wells neglect to remind readers of the danger of a horse-cart overturning or the nuisance of rigid train schedules – both of which help our cycling heroes escape their various pursuers.

Bring this book along on your next cycling trip and feel a century's gap slip away. The drawings are quaint but the cycles in them look surprisingly familiar, and the surreal counterpoint of stovepipe hats and our trusty modern friend, the bike, is one of the book's most enjoyable features.

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Shifting Priorities

BY RHIANNON COPPIN

PHOTO BY ELIZABETH KREUTZ | www.kreutzphotography.com

THE 36-YEAR-OLD cycling star who brought back road racing in America is now building a cultural mecca for bike lovers. He's calling it Mellow Johnny's, named for the English mispronunciation of the French term maillot jaune, or "yellow jersey," which stage winners wear in major races. Over his string of seven Tour de France wins, Lance Armstrong wore the mellow johnny 83 times – second only to Eddy Merckx's record of 96 – and the nickname stuck.

Lance is adamant that the Trek-heavy bicycle shop he's opening in his hometown on May 10 will not turn into another gear shop pushing carbon fibre, cleats, and lycra. "I always wanted to do a cool bike shop in Austin that's not only focused on the racing side of things, but also the community side as well," he says.

Lance hasn't turned his back on the racing world. "If you do it on a percentage basis, I would say the majority of the store is high-end racing stuff but we didn't want to neglect the commuting side, the side that we feel the city needs."

Though he owns a second place in New York, Lance still calls Austin, where his kids Luke, 8, and twins Bella and Grace, 6, are based, home. The college town suffered for years under a low taxation base, as most of the downtown core consisted of government buildings, which meant little public money was available for road infrastructure or other amenities such as light rail. Urban redevelopment and infill projects now promise to bring 25,000 new residents downtown within ten years, making 2008 a ripe time to push for a car-light way of living.

"We have a growth of people in the downtown area that probably doesn't have an infrastructure to accommodate thousands of new cars," Armstrong explains. "So the bike will be important for those people to get to work, to eat, go to the store, or whatever it is they want to do. It will certainly be the most convenient thing for them and also the healthiest thing."

But it's not as if Lance thinks cycling is some uncool burden that needs to be shouldered by livability-converts or bolstered by an icon. Utility cycling, which has suffered from a lack of strong cultural history in North America, is growing organically through fashion and the rise of the culture of self-expression.

"Urban cycling and commuting, the whole fixed gear scene, is starting to see a real resurgence," Armstrong tells Momentum, between meetings for a third book deal and a biographical film project. "I'm in a cab in New York City right now and you see so many people on fixed gear bikes just cruising around town and they have with that a bike that's unique in style ... and that's going to make its way into mainstream culture," he says.

With the opening of Mellow Johnny's the man behind the "LiveStrong" anti-cancer rubber wristband campaign is telling the world that cycling is not just for the Tour anymore. The red brick 18,000 square foot industrial block is being transformed into a training centre, a learning centre, and a secure parking and shower-equipped commuter hub.

"It is pretty easy to come up with excuses on why people do not

Cancer survivor & Tour de France record-holder Lance Armstrong is turning his attention to the plight of cycle commuters in – of all places – Texas.

ride. And some like safety are valid ones for sure, but if specialty dealers can entice people to ride with things like storage and showers it could eliminate one or two of the excuses," Lance explains.

Mellow Johnny's is also boasting a café, not only to keep the mechanics humming but also to placate the owners: "I have to have my coffee in the morning. I am usually good for a couple of cups and cannot get going until I have it," he confesses.

Lance has made room to accommodate a significant art presence, including Sam Whittingham's award-winning bike, which Lance picked up for an undisclosed sum in February at the North American Handmade Bicycle Show in Portland. "There will be some memorabilia to salute the champions of the past. Also a big art component." Later this year, Pressure, a street-inspired mashup between 13 contemporary American artists, skate-culture clothing company RVCA, and Cinelli frames will visit the store.

To design this holistic dream venture, Lance and his business team visited and compared bike shops across the country – especially those in New York City, San Francisco, Madison, WI, and Portland. "The shops we really got excited about were these small, really urban shops that were addressing commuting and fixed gear and were on the edge of cycling," says Mellow Johnny's general manager, Craig Staley.

Staley's recent four years of experience co-owning and managing a women's running gear store in Austin makes him an apparently odd choice for a bike shop manager. But when Armstrong and right-hand-man Bart Knaggs went looking for a general manager, they weren't simply looking for someone with experience in bicycle retail. They wanted a good manager who 'got it,' and it didn't hurt that Staley is their old biking buddy.

Staley's retail experience gave him a glimpse into the fitness trend that saw women's adoption of running and jogging outstepping men's.

"Any running store in the country is now going to be 55 to 60 per cent women's business," Staley says, "and even that's starting to happen now in cycling."

In the late 2000s cycling has started to go beyond 'just sport,' the way that coffee went beyond 'a drink' when Starbucks popularized their take on café culture. To rival Starbucks' idea of a "third place" beyond home and work, Mellow Johnny's presents the concept of the "third bike." "Most of us who have been cyclists for a long time have our road bike and our mountain bike, but what's our third bike? Is that a fixed gear, a cruiser, or a commute bike?" asks Staley.

Mellow Johnny's is looking to recruit new cyclists who might not have thought of moving bicycles off the toy shelf and into the modal mix. Austin is very similar in mindset to Portland (popularly regarded as America's most cycling-friendly city) and has better weather, which makes it ripe for bike-friendly development, says Staley. The reason it has stalled until now, he says, is because "Texas is Texas."

In 2001 a bill introduced in the state's legislature sought to restrict cyclists' use of country roads and to require them to wear "slow moving"



"It's the bridge downtown where all the bats come out from at night," says Lance, riding a Soho S from Trek's urban line on Austin's Ann W. Richards Congress Avenue Bridge. The bridge was named to honour the late governor who succumbed to cancer. "She was a great lady."

triangle emblems on their backs. That bill was defeated, and the senator who introduced it eventually became a strong proponent of Lance's "Share the road y'all" collector license plates. However another bill, requiring motorists to give a three-foot berth when overtaking a bicycle, has since failed in the legislature three times in six years.

Metropolitan Austin doubled in size in the past decade, and those who loved it before it grew to encompass 1.6 million people fear it will become as off-ramp-encrusted as Dallas or, like Houston, dominated by parking lots. "Cycling is huge to the future of our city. We're not going to have a vibrant downtown, and we're not going to have a real livable city if cycling does not get included in there somehow," says Staley. "We're going to be choked by traffic."

When infrastructure is poor, people don't feel safe cycling. Because they're not cycling, no one is lobbying for cycling improvements. Mellow Johnny's is reaching out to break this negative cycle. Eileen Schaubert, a native of Minneapolis and certified instructor with the League of American Bicyclists, has recently been contracted to step up Mellow Johnny's role in lobbying the city and major employers to create incentives for cyclists, and to direct street-level education to help beginner commuters.

"A lot of the curriculum has to do with teaching people how to ride safely and legally in traffic," says Schaubert.

It's important for cyclists to learn the basics of bike handling, she says, but they also have to learn how to re-train cars not to crowd them into the gutter.

"I'm sitting at a shop and right in front of me I have a four lane road, and many of the bikes are riding on the sidewalk because they perceive the road as being very dangerous. But it's a 35 mph (56 km/h) road and there's not a lot of traffic," she sighs.

But even with gear, skills, showers at hand, and safe bicycle parking, it can sometimes feel like too much to get on a bike every day. And Lance gets that. This ardent promoter of healthy living has a shocking confession to make: "I'm not allowing myself to ride right now," he told Momentum. Because we spoke with him just two-and-a-half weeks before his third marathon (Boston's 112th), Lance was putting all his training into running.

Lance Armstrong described his ethos to Forbes magazine in 2001 as "purposeful living," and these days that means prioritizing time with his kids, fundraising, bike touring, marathoning, and lobbying for the goals of the cancer-fighting Lance Armstrong "LiveStrong" Foundation.

In a recent speech he gave in Washington, D.C. to the Intercultural Cancer Council, Lance described how in 1996, after his cancer was quelled, his oncologist inducted him into the "obligation of the cure" – the obligation to go out and speak of his battle with cancer, to use it for a greater purpose. It's an obligation that has seemingly and understandably morphed into Lance's philosophies on cycling: "Every time you take a car off the road I don't need to tell you what that does for somebody's health, but also for the environment."

Share the road, y'all.

Rhiannon Coppin is attending Columbia University's graduate journalism school in 2008-09. She keeps four bikes, including her very first: a flamingo-pink faux-BMX.



TORONTO

BY TODD AALGAARD

PHOTOS BY GABI SARLAY
www.flickr.com/photos/gabifoto

AS I WRITE THIS, wary Torontonians are in alert mode, fearing a walkout by Toronto Transit Commission employees that could grind the city's commuters to a halt. City council, ever-savvy to its citizens, has proposed a number of measures to keep traffic moving in the event of TTC labour action. Much to the delight of Toronto's swelling ranks of cyclists, one such idea will open up curb lanes on downtown streets to cyclists as provisional bike lanes.

Just imagine: a city under transit lockdown, overrun with pedestrians. If the strike goes ahead, residents of Canada's largest city will undoubtedly hear a lot of grumbling. Still, they'll see and hear a jingling, gear-shifting parade, celebrating the town's last-ditch recognition of its bike culture as a vital, indispensable presence – not to mention a saving grace.


That's the thing about Toronto. There is a preconception everywhere north, east, or west of the city that Toronto is an innavigable concrete

jungle, chock-a-block with belching tailpipes and raging motorists. How, one may ask, could cycling have become the vibrant movement that the cyclists of Toronto have created?

Toronto, for all its modest greys and blinding winter whites, has never been greener. After the misadventure of former mayor Mel Lastman's reign, during which car-happy infrastructure was funded with fanboy enthusiasm, there is a new progressive mindset prevalent among cyclists and pedestrians. With ecological concerns at the forefront of popular concern, as the city's widespread observance of Earth Hour in March can attest, a shift in thinking has led to a pedal-powered renaissance.

It also doesn't hurt that biking around Toronto is really, really fun.

"Cycling is super fast," says Janet Attard, a local artist and champion of Toronto bike culture. "Bicycles open the whole city up. Uptown, downtown,



“The joke that a Toronto year consists of eight months of winter and four months of construction resonates among cyclists.”

east, west; you can get anywhere by bicycle!” With the exception of a few thigh-grinders, the low, arcing grades of the city’s streets mean that cyclists – not motorists – tend to be the speedy ones. “I’m faster than the TTC even on my Canadian Tire CCM bike,” says Bertie Low-Ring, a Toronto-area teacher. “And not because I’m an awesome rider.” It’s not uncommon to see cruisers and ten-speeds weaving through gridlocked traffic on a Monday morning, sailing to work in the time it takes to pay the fare at the Bloor Street subway station.

Toronto bikers are an intrepid, resolute lot. The joke that a Toronto year consists of eight months of winter and four months of construction resonates among cyclists, who are most affected by the driving sleet and arctic vortices of the darker months. During the summer, when many of the city’s arteries are mazes of roadwork in response to the snow’s erosive run-off, cyclists take to the back paths, trails, and laneways, resulting in two Torontos – one for bikers, another for everyone else. “I love riding Spadina Avenue and Spadina Road,” says Attard. “I love the sights that I see, like the beautiful old buildings of the University of Toronto, the old Victorian houses, the traffic jams of Chinatown, or the fringe of Kensington Market.” A city of neighbourhoods first and a metropolis second, the impact of getting around free of the grid can’t possibly be overstated, and it often shows in the rider.

There’s a plucky, do-it-yourself independence that characterizes Toronto bike culture, largely populated by the city’s thriving arts community.

Referring to 401 Richmond Street West, showcasing some of Toronto’s best artists, Attard says, “The building is overflowing with bicycle people, who, for some reason, are also the creative people of Toronto. Musicians, filmmakers, artists, and even fashion designers all travel by bicycle.” Like the chicken-or-the-egg question, it’s hard to tell if the DIY spirit typical of Toronto cyclists is a result of a built-in predisposition to stunning creativity, but its expression is seen as much in wicker-built frames or floral handlebars as on a canvas or stage. “Bicycles and creativity,” Attard continues, “seem to go hand-in-hand.”

You’ll see this signature independence expressed during Pedestrian Sundays, Kensington Market’s summer-long festival during which the bustling haven for artisans is closed to all but foot traffic and bikes. Free bike repairs for the cycling public are included among P.S. Kensington’s myriad performers and musicians. A little further west, Bike Pirates, an autonomous collective on Bathurst, encourages the community to recycle unused junkers.

Recently, that community came together in an overwhelming display of support for Duke’s Cycle, one of the city’s most venerable independent bike shops, lost to a fire on February 20. Describing the management of 401 Richmond, Attard could have easily been talking about the greater “Cycling Family” of Toronto as a whole. “They actually do the good deeds,” she says, “not like other groups that just seem to talk about change. What more can I say? I have found my paradise!”



RIDE WITH US

BY GEOFFREY BERCARICH
PHOTO BY MARTIN REIS

I LIVE WITH BIKES. For the first few years of riding, I never owned my own bicycle – I volunteered for it. All the bikes I rode were shared within the Community Bicycle Network. The non-profit collective owned and maintained one cargo bike, a bunch of trailers, and a fleet of 200 yellow single-speed shared bikes. I volunteered full-time so I could be rewarded with continued free sharing of these bikes. Sweet deal.

My volunteer service was helping to organize and operate the shared yellow bikes program throughout downtown Toronto. I would ride with ten bikes piled in the front of one cargo bike. Sounds like fun but I wondered how sane it was when I saw the fear in the eyes of auto-motorized drivers as I took an entire lane in downtown rush hour traffic.

The volunteer duty was simple: I made yellow bikes accessible to people by evenly dispersing 200 bikes among 16 community hubs by cargo bike and trailer. I visited bike-share hubs in community centres, department stores,

and bike shops. It was a sweet couple of years that taught me how to love and care for bicycles, and for the community that lives around bikes.

One of my current bikes is a Bilenky work bike I have named Goldie Lock. It was originally intended as a tandem recumbent, but the design was converted by Stephen Bilenky to hold weight in the front.

Goldie Lock follows the tradition of the Community Bicycle Network by lending its unique service to the community of Toronto cyclists. I pick up unwanted bikes and parts in need of recycling and I drop my heavy load of bike stuff (weighing up to 100 kilograms) at a number of non-profit bike shops.

Future prospects for my beloved work bike and I are unlimited. This summer I am hoping to ride out to a rural farm and test my ability to ride the muddy roads and tend the fields. I also hope to make a bike shop on wheels, arriving at farmers markets and street festivals, offering my mechanical services for free.

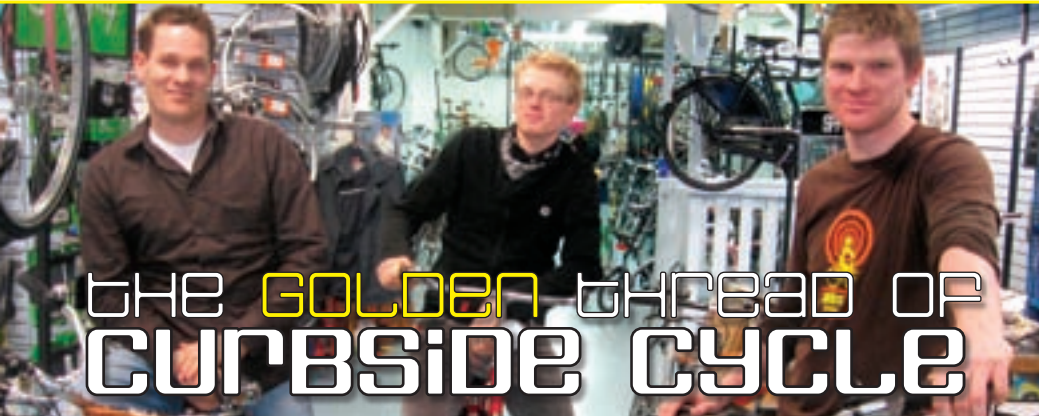
BY ANNA BOWEN

CURBSIDE CYCLE IS Toronto's answer to urban cycling, and they must be doing something different because their manager, Eric Kamphof, has been getting calls to give interviews all week.

I step from a wet-grey Toronto spring day into the warmth of the shop, and Eric invites me to sit down

of the first hybrid bikes – road bikes fixed with flat-bar handlebars and slightly thicker tires to prevent snagging in streetcar tracks and sewer grates. Since then, the store has grown to become the first North American retailer to import Dutch Batavus city bikes.

The success of Curbside has been in its responsiveness to the needs of the everyday,



THE GOLDEN THREAD OF CURBSIDE CYCLE

on a Brooks classic leather saddle. It's one of a row that flanks the front counter, giving it an urban-cycling coffee-bar feel while also inviting customers to try out the different models. "We're still dreaming of having a café here one day," Eric says, and he shows me the spot on the countertop reserved for the future espresso machine.

Eric explains that the store makes an effort to have a welcoming front display – one that won't intimidate regular folks who are walking by on Bloor Street. "We always asked the question, 'How can we get more people on bikes?'" explains Eric. Although Curbside does sell performance bikes, its niche market is really the city bike.

Curbside caters to the urban, everyday cyclists, and aims at offering them a safe, comfortable, and stylish ride through the backstreets and the few bike lanes of Toronto. It is best known for its commuter-friendly, city-savvy bicycles that allow city riders to wear their fancy duds to work without risking catching their pants in the chain or getting mud splashed up their backs. "The golden thread is probably that commuter bike," says Eric. "We really rock the commuter bike market!"

The highlights of the store include Brompton, Birdy, and Strida folding bikes that pack up so easily they put origami to shame, as well as a hoard of "euro" bikes, including imports from Batavus, Pashley, and Biomega. Following the European enthusiasm for civilized cycling, which allows for a straight-backed "high above the traffic" ride, Curbside has the edge on inner-city cycling.

Curbside's owner, Don, began the shop about 15 years ago in a humble sidewalk tent where he offered repairs while tinkering with road and cruiser designs to develop a more urban-friendly ride. What emerged were some

urban individual who needs to get from point A to point B. To do this, they have focused on bikes that require little to no maintenance, don't have little easily-thieved bits, and can be left out all winter. Eric explains that Don "has always been really good at finding holes in the market and just sort of jumping in there. And the one hole in the North American market has consistently been city bikes for cycling commuters." But most of all, Curbside has capitalized on delivering bikes that allow you to cruise away from work in style without needing to change out of those designer duds and into GoreTex and polypropylene. Low maintenance, weatherproof, and clothing-friendly, these bikes are just waiting to be snatched up.

The store is also branching out. Curbside, explains Eric, "was one of the founders of Bells on Bloor, a bi-annual ride that is a show of force for bike lanes on Bloor Street." The up-and-coming Toronto Bicycle Union will also be given free office space above Curbside's retail store. This past year, Eric's passion for city bikes has even led to the opening of a wholesale bike project called Fourth Floor Distribution which sells bikes and accessories from Europe.

"My passion has always been city bikes, largely because they don't actually exist in North America, and because I like big daunting projects like selling bikes that don't exist for cyclists who ride on streets that were never made for cycling," says Eric. "I started importing Dutch, British, and Danish bikes for Curbside and saw that even if the streets weren't great for cycling, riding a real city bike made things a whole lot better."

.....
IN THE PHOTO: THE MEN OF CURBSIDE (LEFT TO RIGHT):
DONNY SAIRBORN, EVERT LAMB, ERIC KAMPHOF.
PHOTO BY DAVID BUWALDA.



TORONTO MESSENGER TOFU GOGOGO AND BROOKS RAPLEY (IN CASE YOU NEED HIS NAME – FORMER COURIER, CURRENT VELODROME RACER, AND SCHOOL TEACHER) WAS TAKEN AT CMWC IN NEW YORK CITY. PHOTO BY FRANK THERIAULT.

CYCLE MESSENGER WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

THE UNIQUE CELEBRATION of pedal-powered culture that is the Cycle Messenger World Championships touches down in Toronto for the weekend of June 13 to June 16, 2008.

Located on the Toronto Islands, this year's event is the 16th annual CMWC gathering. The feature event is the World Championship Main Race, a 3-hour endurance marathon that duplicates the work a messenger must do daily: figure out the fastest route to collect and drop packages between checkpoints.

Other events include: 300-metre sprints; a cargo race carrying heavy objects; bunny hops over a bar that is progressively raised; no-hands track stands (to the last bike standing); distance fixie skidding; bike polo championships; a slow race, where the last person across the finish line wins; goldsprints, where bikes are mounted on rollers to measure their speed; and a pedal boat race.

Between 700 and 1,000 competitors from around the world are expected to attend.

A range of ongoing diversions will also be happening: Alleycat racing, parties, films, an art gallery, DJs, and a vendor's market. A participatory visit to the Forest City Velodrome is also planned. If you figure on taking your own bike to the velodrome, please read their FAQ first (link below); the rules about the kinds of bikes allowed are stringent.

And, if that's not enough, the NXNE Music Festival is being held in Toronto on the same weekend. There will be some crossover to the CMWC's music stages.

Admission is free (bring \$6 for the ferry) and registration to compete costs \$100, and must be done through the link below. Anyone can register; non-messengers often enjoy the competition. Non-competitors are sure to enjoy this festival of "the world's hardest working professional athletes."

www.cmwc2008.com
www.forestcityvelodrome.ca

TORONTO Bike Month



Monday May 26 - Saturday June 21

Join in. Get involved.

Tours by bike, trail clean ups, movie screenings, seminars, art shows and exhibits, clinics, races and more!
 With over 100 Events City-wide Bike Month has something for everyone.

May 26th - 19th Annual Group Commute and Breakfast



May 30th - The Toronto Criterium @St. Lawrence Market

First race 6pm
 Second race 7:30 pm

Cash prizes of \$5,000

A high speed bike race on closed City streets. 416-652-0080 to register in advance. check online for general info + updates

For complete info visit www.toronto.ca/cycling/events

DEVELOPMENTS ON THE toronto cycling scene...

TWO EXCITING NEW projects are about to see the light of day in the vibrant cycling movement in Toronto: the Toronto Cyclists Union (the bike union) and Toronto's new cycling magazine, to be launched this June 2008 – *Dandyhorse: Toronto on Two Wheels*.

TORONTO CYCLISTS UNION

The Toronto Cyclists Union is just emerging out of the womb. "On a beautiful evening in late September," reads their webpage, "under a full moon, the Toronto Cyclists Union was fertilized." Now, eight months later, the bike union is looking forward to a June launch. The member-driven bicycle advocacy group will join organizations such as the Toronto Bike Network and the Toronto Coalition for Active Transportation, among others, in continuing to represent cyclists and strive for a more bike-friendly city, "providing a loud voice for all bicycle riders." The bike union describes itself as an organization that will "build our community into a strong, diverse, fun, and effective network of thousands of bike riders fighting for change."

Modelled after the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA), the union will represent self-propelled people and will improve riding conditions while "countering the message of automobile lobby groups." Its goal is to have bicycles taken seriously, and it hopes to include outlying portions of the city like Scarborough and North York in its program, promoting Greater Toronto as a "bicycle city." Members of the bike union will have access to a "fleet of human-powered, cargo-moving machines" for everything from moving houses to moving kids. The bike union is also "putting together a squad of all-star mechanics to fix flat tires across the city like superheroes." What could be better? Watch out for their May 20 media launch and for their public launch and movie night on May 29. For more info, check out www.bikeunion.to

BY ANNA BOWEN



DANDYHORSE: TORONTO ON TWO WHEELS IS GETTING TUNED UP FOR SPRING

Dandyhorse: Toronto on Two Wheels, so named after the 1818 bicycle that preceded the bone shaker, is set to launch in June 2008 and will be a "48-page celebration of cycling in Toronto." Catering to a "renaissance of two-wheeled travel" in the city, the magazine will cater to all types of urban riders, from commuters to racers and couriers, and will cover topics such as biking news, style, innovation, history, and advocacy. With Dave Meslin at the helm as Publisher, Tammy Thorne as Managing Editor, Claudia Calabro as Contributor's Coordinator and Warren Wheeler as Art Director, the upcoming magazine is in good hands and promises to be distributed in every neighbourhood in the city. To see a sneak preview, visit www.dandyhorse.ca

EVENTS IN TORONTO

Sunday May 25, 12pm
BELLS ON BLOOR
 Toronto, ON
 Meet at High Park on Bloor
 Join 1,000 cyclists of all ages in a pedal-powered parade from High Park to City Hall. Get a free bell and ring out for bike lanes on Bloor. www.bellsonbloor.ca



Friday May 30, 6pm
TAKE THE TOOKER
 Toronto, ON, Bloor and Spadina
 Take the Tooker will unfurl 44 metres of a prefabricated bike lane along Bloor to give cyclists a real sense of what bike lanes on the route would look and feel like. Ride the lane with us and then join in on the monthly Critical Mass ride. www.takethetooker.ca



THE ADVENTURES OF
MITEY MISS
ULRIKE RODRIGUES

SOMETIMES, I HATE riding a bike. I do it every day, most days of the year, and I hate the cold, I hate the routine, I hate how I look when I get off the bike. It's my dirty little secret.

I hate that my shoulders are rounded from years of hanging over a handlebar and I hate that my nose is always runny. I hate drivers who don't see me, I hate dogs off leash, and I hate parents who jaywalk with their school kids without looking both ways.

Most of all I hate the smokers. Not the sociable ones puffing on cigarettes in building doorways, but the car-driving ones who idle at red lights. While they sip on fair-trade coffee and listen to public radio, their tail pipes blow carbon monoxide into my face – every single car, every red light.

By the time I get to work, I feel grumpy, smelly and unfeminine. My bike's heavy with rain gear, water, clothes, and a U-lock and I have to haul it all up slippery stairs to the back room of my workplace.

Every day, I peel off a micro-fibre shirt, spandex tights, thick socks, and heavy shoes

my bike down the stairs. I look both ways, throw my leg over the saddle and glide down the back alley, no brakes.

I squeeze the levers when the main road approaches and nod hello to the Italian gardener on the corner. He's been digging at the black earth of his yard for weeks already. Ravens follow his movements from a nearby fig tree, then flap up to a phone pole.

I ride in the same direction and it gets quiet again. A helmeted mum chats with her daughter riding in a trailer behind her. Speed bumps near the school force a car's brake lights, while cyclists behind it continue rolling without a pause.

I scan the next block for a yellow jacket, then see him: the happy mailman. Months ago he caught my eye because – well, he has fabulous legs – but also because he always looks happy. We started off just nodding to each other. I guess he recognized me by my equally bright orange jacket. His happy look made me smile, and he saw my goofy grin and returned it with a wave. A few more weeks, and I waved back, also smiling. Lately, he looks delighted when we pass. I laugh and wave, and he bellows "Have a great weekend!"

Sometimes, I grin for kilometres after that and shake my head at the thrill of it. Sometimes, I feel like I'm in love – not with him, but with the part of the day that



and hang it on hooks behind the door. And every day I must style my hair around helmet cowlicks, glide on lip gloss to hide dry lips, and pull on wrinkled clothes.

Sometimes, I wish I could be like the "normal" women – the ones who wear shoes that won't rest on pedals, skirts that won't stretch over a top tube, and mascara that won't run when they're coasting downhill at 8am. They wear outfits that coordinate with car seats and office chairs. They look groomed. They look grown-up.

They look their age, come to think of it. When I walk pass them on my lunch hour I look into their faces and see cheeks blushed by make-up. Some of them carry duffle bags because they need to get exercise, lose weight, strengthen muscles. Some of them look hungry.

Come afternoon, my office warms with sun and my lungs crave fresh air. I stuff my work clothes into a pannier, pull on stretchy bike clothes and guide

he's a part of. I love that the trees on that block are white with blossoms and I love that I can smell them. I love that I can feel air in my throat and I love that my legs are strong with blood and oxygen.

I love that I can pass long lines of cars stopped for a red light that I can ride right up to. I love nodding hi to the squeegee kids who grin and shrug at my bike.

I love that when I get home there's a room especially for the household's bikes, and I love that I can eat cheesecake. I love that my home, my body, and my life are all about riding a bike, and I love that I do it every day, most days of the year.

Ulrike Rodrigues is a Vancouver-based writer who's been riding a bike to work for a very long time. www.miteymiss.com

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THAT FIRST PUSH

NORTH AMERICA'S BIKE TO WORK PROGRAMS

BY TALIA FANNING

ILLUSTRATIONS BY LINDSAY CHETEK

“BIKING TO WORK totally improved my life,” says Kate McCarthy of the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition. “I’m healthier, happier, and more upbeat.”

McCarthy started commuting by bike after her car broke down for the last time. “I refused to fix it,” she explains. “I’d been so burnt by cars, spent so much money on gas and parking tickets, I vowed to make biking work.” Now she helps organize the annual Bike to Work Day campaign, inviting other new cyclists to discover the benefits of commuting by bike.

This year there are over 40 Bike to Work events taking place in cities from Alaska to Florida and Hawaii to New York, some of which, like Cascade Bicycle Club’s event in Seattle, anticipate more than 11,000 participants.

McCarthy says the biggest effort required is the mental leap. “People think it’s too far, or that it’s dangerous, or that they’ll get to work all sweaty. We give them the incentive to try it. The best pitch to get people to ride is to get them to try it just once.”

But if saving money on gas, insurance, and repairs isn’t enough to make you leave the car keys at home, what other incentives are there? Organizers do everything they can to make biking accessible. Wondering where to meet up with other cyclists? Stop by one of dozens of commuter stations. Wary of busy streets? Pick up maps and information about bike lanes. Got a flat? Out of tune? Visit an on-site bike mechanic or attend a tune-up workshop. Uncomfortable in traffic? Part of making cycling accessible is making it safe, so many advocacy groups offer commuter skills training programs to do just that. SFBC hosts an annual Bike to Work Day, this year on May 15, which McCarthy says is the highlight of the biking year.

“The main thrust and energy is to get people out on Bike to Work Day. Last year it was so rewarding.

Bikes outnumbered cars on Market Street, it was so quiet, like a Sunday morning. And there were so many people, and so many bikes.”

That community spirit is what makes it worthwhile for Lori Garcia-Meredith, the VP of the Board of Directors at Bike to Work Week Victoria in British Columbia. The program is running from June 2 to 8, and ends with a party and prizes. “A lot of people are riding to work all the time. This celebrates those people and invites new people to join. It makes it easier; there’s peer pressure to ride.”

For Garcia-Meredith, riding to work reduces her daily stress: “I’m actually a nicer person when I ride my bike. You see people on the trail that you wave to and say hello. I start feeling a bit deprived if I don’t get my ride.”

The commuter community built on the roads and at bike racks can then be taken into the office. Participating workplaces compete against other teams in their cities to see who can most reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, log the most kilometres, and register the highest percentage of employee participation.

The Chicagoland Bicycle Federation (CBF) hosts their week-long Bicycle Commuter Challenge, this year from June 7 to 13. Registered workplaces will compete for the highest participation percentage in the city. The higher the level, the better it will be for new cyclists to join in.

“It makes it accessible, easy, and comfortable,” says Margo O’Hara, the communications director at CBF. “Even if you have power meetings, you can still show up by bike. It makes cycling very mainstream, and it helps people realize that the bike is a viable option for their commute.”

Mainstream is the key. The perception among non-riders, that commuter cyclists are a breed apart, is something that Eric Gilliland at the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) works hard to combat. He says new riders may be surprised by how all-inclusive the group can be.

“You’re not alone,” he tells them. “They’re not all crazy, spandex-clad, \$3,000 bike people. They’re normal people like you and me. Everyone can do this.” And in Washington, almost everyone does. WABA’s event, which takes place May 16, is a one-day bonanza and is one of the most highly

attended Bike to Work Days in North America. This year, Gilliland hopes to have 7,000 participants in one city in one day.

The thing to remember, according to Peter Verbrugge, the Event Producer at Seattle’s Cascade Bike Club, is that it doesn’t have to be all or nothing. Cascade has one of the ambitious programs, a Bike to Work Month, with the main event taking place May 16.

“It’s not like you have to bike everyday. It’s a personal choice,” he explains. “Our challenge was to make it for a whole month, because people can enjoy it and see the benefits.”

So, if you’ve been thinking about Biking to Work, contact your local bike advocacy group. They can teach you how. The League of American Bicyclists lists bike advocacy groups by state. Check for one near you at www.bikeleague.org/cogs/resources/findit/. For more information about the above Bike to Work events, visit:

San Francisco Bicycle Coalition www.sfbike.org
Bike to Work Victoria www.biketoworkvictoria.ca
Chicagoland Bicycle Federation www.biketraffic.org
Washington Area Bicyclist Association www.waba.org
Seattle’s Cascade Bicycle Club www.cascade.org

For a listing of Bike to Work programs in North America and beyond, visit www.biketoworkweek.org, a site created by James Ghofulpo in Erie, Pennsylvania. While there is no Bike to Work campaign in Erie, James makes his daily 12-mile commute by bike.



SEE THE SHIMMER of the Sun on newly unfurled leaves, hear the lilting melodies of birdsong and breathe in the rousing freshness of the air. Spring is beckoning you to revel in the lusciousness of the season. It's time to get outside to explore the parks and greenways around your city.

With a tasty picnic tucked away in your backpack, gather your friends and family and head out in search of adventure. You can create your own moveable feast using these simple and tasty food ideas.

ROASTED GREEN BEANS WITH WALNUTS AND MARINATED BUTTON MUSHROOMS

Savoury walnuts and zesty marinated mushrooms blend wonderfully with the tender richness of the caramelized green beans in this recipe. If you can find them, you can try substituting Chinese long beans in the recipe for a different flavour and texture.

- 2 10-oz cans button mushrooms, drained
- 1½ pounds green beans, washed and ends trimmed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ¾ cup small walnut pieces, lightly toasted
- Sea salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

MUSHROOM MARINADE

- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh chopped dill (or 1 tsp. dried)
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt

In a mixing bowl, combine the marinade ingredients and whisk to combine. If using dried dill, rub it between your fingers before adding to release the flavour. Add the button mushrooms and stir to thoroughly coat them. Marinate for at least 6 hours or overnight, remembering to stir the mixture several times to evenly soak the mushrooms.

Preheat your oven to 400°F. In a large baking pan, toss the green beans with the olive oil and spread out in a single layer. Roast in the oven for 45 minutes, turning them over twice during cooking with tongs or a spatula. When done, remove the green beans from the oven and pierce with the tip of a knife to test – they should be tender but not mushy.

Transfer the green beans to a medium mixing bowl. Drain the mushrooms in a colander and add them to the bowl along with the toasted walnut pieces. Toss the mixture to combine. Season to taste with sea salt and black pepper. Serve warm or cold.

Makes 4 to 5 servings.



A Moveable Feast

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY NICOLE VANDERWYST



ROASTED BUTTERNUT SQUASH WITH THYME “BUTTER”

The addition of thyme and lemon to the caramelized squash really makes this recipe sing. If you can get it, try to use fresh thyme. It makes a huge difference in the flavour.

- 3½ pounds butternut squash, de-seeded, peeled and the flesh cut into half-inch cubes
- 2 large heads of garlic, cloves separated and peeled
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh thyme
- 2 – 3 tablespoons melted non-hydrogenated margarine
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

Preheat oven to 400°F. In a large bowl, combine the squash and garlic. Sprinkle with the salt and drizzle with the olive oil. With your hands or a spoon stir the mixture until thoroughly coated. Next, spread it out in a single layer in a large baking dish or on a cookie sheet. Place in the oven and roast for 45 to 50 minutes, turning with a spatula two or three times during cooking. When done, remove from the oven and pierce the squash with a knife tip. The squash should be tender but not falling apart. Let cool for 10 minutes and then transfer to a large mixing bowl.

In a small saucepan, melt the margarine. Remove it from the heat and whisk in the lemon juice and thyme. Drizzle the thyme “butter” over the squash and gently mix to evenly coat. Serve warm.

Makes 4 to 5 servings.



WARM QUINOA AND TOMATO-OLIVE PILAF

Quinoa is an ancient nutty-tasting seed that has been cultivated in the Andes for more than 5,000 years. Packed with complete amino acids, it is also high in protein, dietary fiber and minerals such as iron and calcium. Give it a try in any dish that calls for bulgur, rice, couscous or other grains.

1 cup quinoa, rinsed under cool water and drained
1 cube vegetable bullion
16 oz can borlotti or white kidney beans, drained and rinsed
1¹/₄ cup baby tomatoes, washed and quartered
1/2 cup pitted whole kalamata olives, drained/quartered
2 scallions, washed and thinly sliced
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Sea salt, to taste (optional if your vegetable bullion is not salt-free)

In a medium saucepan over high heat, combine 2 cups of cold water and the vegetable bullion cube. Add the quinoa and cover. Let come to a boil and reduce the heat to low. Do not remove the saucepan lid. Simmer for 15 minutes until all the liquid is absorbed.

While the quinoa is cooking, combine the beans, tomatoes, olives, and scallions in a large bowl.

In a measuring cup combine the garlic, olive oil, balsamic vinegar and pepper. Whisk to combine.

Once the quinoa has finished cooking, remove the saucepan from the heat and let sit for five minutes. Gently fluff the quinoa with a fork and add it to the bean mixture, tossing until just mixed. Drizzle the balsamic vinegar mixture over the pilaf and toss again until combined. Season the pilaf with sea salt to taste. Serve warm or cooled.

Makes 4 to 5 servings.



LEMON-MINT CANTALOUPE FRUIT SALAD

This mouth-watering dish is so good you may find yourself eating it for breakfast, dessert, or a mid-afternoon snack! You can try using lime juice instead of lemon juice for a different twist.

1 medium cantaloupe, rind removed and flesh cut into half-inch cubes
1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice (about 4 lemons)
1 tablespoon cane sugar
1 tablespoon finely chopped mint leaves

Place the cantaloupe in a medium-sized bowl. Using a measuring cup, combine the lemon juice and cane sugar. Whisk the lemon juice until the sugar is fully dissolved. Pour the mixture over the cantaloupe and add the chopped mint. Toss the cantaloupe until the fruit is evenly coated with the lemon juice and mint. Serve chilled or at room temperature. Note: You can prepare this dish in advance and let sit refrigerated overnight.

Makes 4 to 5 servings.

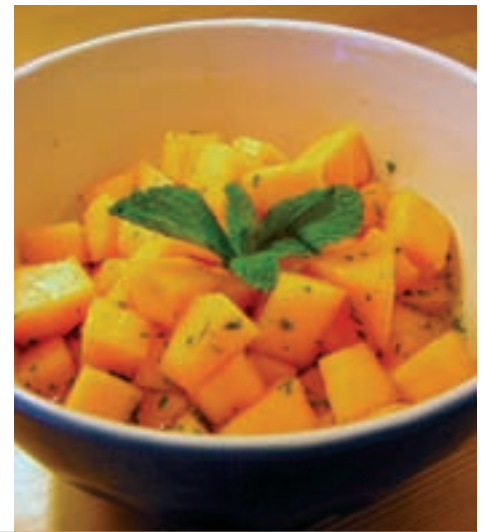
ROASTED RED PEPPER HUMMUS

Adding freshly toasted nuts to hummus adds a subtle depth of flavour. Give hazelnuts, macadamias and pine nuts a try to create new and interesting combinations of tastes.

1 cup prepared roasted red peppers
16 oz. can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
1/4 cup tahini
3 tablespoons cashew pieces, lightly toasted
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice (about 1/2 of a lemon)
1¹/₂ – 2 teaspoons mixed savory herbs
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

In a food processor or blender, combine all of the ingredients and blend on high until the hummus is smooth. Taste, adjust seasonings, and re-blend the hummus to thoroughly mix. Transfer to a serving dish, serve immediately or refrigerate overnight.

Makes 8 to 10 servings.



BITES OF ENERGY FOR BIKERS AND HIKERS

BY DAVE OLSEN

AFTER MAKING GRANOLA for her family for the past 25 years, Sally Virgin decided to share her talents with the rest of us by creating Simbree, a growing Seattle-based healthy energy foods company.

As a fellow single parent, I can speak to the challenge of starting a new project, but even with two teenaged children, Sally has not only begun this new business, she is keeping it real and connected to its roots.

Granola was the starting point, but now Simbree also makes energy bars and bites. All the yummy bites are hand rolled, hand cut and hand packed in South

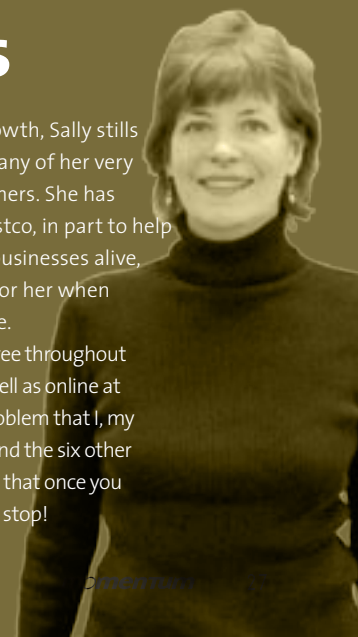
Seattle – we're talking serious human-power here!

She uses as much organic content as she can without letting the cost put Simbree "out of reach of the masses." In the maple walnut bites, five of eight ingredients are organically grown. For soy watchers, they currently use organic ground soybeans but will have all soy products phased out over the next two months.

The bites are Simbree's eco-packaging innovation; they are small squares that come in larger bags, which means less packaging. They've even gone so far as to produce bulk bags (5 and 10 pounds for both bites and granola) and a reusable tin.

Despite Simbree's growth, Sally stills personally delivers to many of her very first corner store customers. She has rejected offers from Costco, in part to help keep these local, small businesses alive, which is what they did for her when she first started Simbree.

You can bite into Simbree throughout Canada and the USA as well as online at simbree.com. The only problem that I, my three year old daughter, and the six other taste testers discovered is that once you start biting, it's so hard to stop!



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chicago

BY JOHN GREENFIELD

PHOTOS BY T.C. O'ROURKE

CHICAGO IS A chessboard, its vast flat grid a playing field for pedallers who plot their moves across the plane.

Though situated beside ocean-like Lake Michigan, the town's "Windy City" nickname refers to blustery politicians, not weather. Still, winters in this municipality of nearly 3 million (9.7 million metro) are often long and brutal. Despite this, or perhaps because of the camaraderie bred by the cold, a vibrant bike culture has emerged.

The Midwest metropolis has long been a cycling Mecca. By the late 1800s, it boasted 54 wheelman's clubs with over 10,000 members. In 1897, Carter H. Harrison II rode the bicycle craze to the mayor's office with the slogan "Not the Champion Cyclist; But the Cyclist's Champion."

By the following year, about 2/3 of US bikes were manufactured within a 150-mile radius of Chicago, making it the "bicycle-building capital of America." Schwinn, founded here in 1895 by a German immigrant, dominated the domestic market for most of the 20th century.

Mayor Richard J. Daley brought Chicago cycling into the modern era, designating 34 miles of routes and expanding the Lakefront Trail, which now stretches 18.5 miles along the shoreline. In 1972, the 70-year-old mayor inaugurated the city's first bike lane on Clark Street, riding a tandem with Schwinn's Keith Kingbay.

Advocates started the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation in 1985 and soon found a powerful ally in Daley's son Richard M. Daley, the current "mayor-for-life." In 1992 the Mayor's Bike Advisory

Council released the Bike 2000 Plan, a small document that has had a big impact.

The City's new Bicycle Program, staffed largely by consultants from the bike federation and bankrolled by federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality grants, pursued the goals mandated by the bike plan. Over the next 15 years they striped more than 100 miles of bike lanes, signed hundreds of miles of routes and installed over 10,000 parking racks, more than any other US city [the author managed the parking program].

The bike program published the excellent Chicago Bicycle Map and Safe Cycling in Chicago booklet, distributed free at bike shops. Outreach specialists from Safe Routes to School, After School Matters, and Mayor Daley's Bicycling Ambassadors educated multitudes about how to get around on two wheels.

Bicycles gained access to Chicago Transit Authority elevated cars and Metra commuter trains, and carrying racks were added to all buses. In 2004 a \$3 million cycle center, with indoor parking for 300 bikes, showers, lockers, repair services and more, was built as part of Daley's new downtown showpiece, Millennium Park.

The Bike 2015 Plan, released in 2006, is a weightier tome than its predecessor with 150 strategies to improve cycling. Recently implemented ideas include the installation of 21 miles of "shared-lane markings" on streets too narrow for bike lanes; adding short stretches of solid-green lanes at problem intersections; and a program to train taxi drivers on sharing the road.

In March, as recommended by the new plan, City Council approved Mayor Daley's proposal to



TOUR DA CHICAGO RACE SERIES



LAKE SHORE DRIVE CAMPAIGN



fine drivers \$150 for fouls against bicyclists; \$500 if the driver's action results in a crash. The new ordinance covers four dangerous moves: opening a door on a cyclist; parking or driving in a bike lane; passing within three feet of a bike; and turning left or right into the path of a cyclist, a.k.a. the "left hook" and "right hook."

On a trip to Paris, Daley was impressed by the Velib automated bike rental service, credited with doubling ridership overnight. Chicago is currently negotiating with JCDecaux to bring the system to the city's central business district, the Loop. Although the contract would provide 1,000 bikes rather than Paris' 20,000, the rental service would be among the first in North America.

Daley is also considering Sunday Parkways, a Latin American-style *ciclovia* in which a network of streets would be closed to driving and opened to biking and other forms of non-motorized play. The bike federation has raised much of the \$400,000 needed to run three to five trials on a 7.5-mile route along the city's historic boulevard system, mostly through low-income areas. Churches and neighbourhood groups have embraced the proposal as a way to promote fitness in their communities. Pending final approval from the Mayor's Office, it's likely to kick off this summer.

Recently, the City agreed to convert the Bloomingdale Line, a 3-mile long abandoned elevated railway on the Northwest Side, into an above-ground "linear park." The project, championed by Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail (www.bloomingdaletrail.org) requires rebuilding several viaducts and will take years to complete, but the rugged rail bed is already a favourite with "urban assault" riders.

Out-of-towners will definitely want to take a spin on the Lakefront Trail for breathtaking views of the lake and skyline. In summer, the path gets congested and hectic on the North Side, so it's best to pedal south from the Loop for a serene or speedy ride.

Almost as scenic is the North Branch Trail, which traces the Chicago River for 18 miles from the Northwest Side through suburban forest preserve, and ends at the Chicago Botanic Garden. After completing the round trip, it is *de rigueur* to dine across the street from the trailhead at Superdawg, a 1948 drive-in topped by winking fibreglass wieners.

For large group rides, Chicago's huge, friendly Critical Mass is a must. The parade assembles on the last Friday of every month under the giant Picasso sculpture in (of course) Daley Plaza, drawing up to 4,000 participants in the summer.

Apparently the bike federation was inspired by Critical Mass' frequent forays onto Lake Shore Drive, the eight-lane expressway that separates the city from its beaches, as well as the visionary "Depave LSD" campaign. A few years ago the federation launched "Bike the Drive," an annual event where 15 miles of the superhighway are

closed to motor traffic, drawing 20,000-plus cyclists. The result – fresh air, tranquility, and a lakefront filled with people rather than steel boxes – offers a preview of what Chicago could be like in the future with fewer cars and more bikes.

www.biketraffic.org
www.chicagocriticalmass.org
www.foreverfreeandclear.org
www.bikethedrive.org

John Greenfield is a Chicago-based freelance writer who covers transportation issues, politics, travel, and taverns.

See www.momentumplanet.com for many Chicago-based links and locations.



PHOTO BY DON DORSA



“CHOPPER” CARL HARRIS ·

“CHOPPER” CARL HARRIS is a bicycle courier and church organist. As his nickname suggests, he “chops” his own freak bikes and rolls with the Rat Patrol bike gang. He’s also a Critical Mass regular, towing a sound system blasting R & B and funk.

How did you get involved in bicycling?

I always rode bikes but when I met other people who love bikes the way I do, that made me more energetic. I found out when I was younger that you can use a bike to leave your neighbourhood and see new things, so bikes were like my automobile.

What’s the hardest thing about riding a bike in Chicago?

The motorists, for one thing, and certain neighbourhoods. The motorists, they’re in a bigger vehicle, they go faster and they think that you’re in their way. The neighbourhoods you go in, depending on your ethnicity, people are gonna pick on you, bother you, whatever. Knock on wood, I haven’t had any problems.

What would you do improve biking here?

I would build more greenways that connect to each other. All the abandoned railroad lines go downtown, so it would be nice if we could build some more bike paths on them.



PHOTO BY DON SORSA

What bike rides or hangouts would you recommend to out-of-towners?

It depends on your style of biking. I like to ride on the lakefront – it’s peaceful and quiet. If you’re a messenger I would go to the Tom Tom. If you’re a commuter or bike activist, go to West Town. If you’re into freak bikes, the Rat Patrol is hard to track down ‘cause they don’t do nothin’ on time.

www.geocities.com/ratpatrolhq



PHOTO BY JOHN GREENFIELD

..... · ALEX WILSON

Alex Wilson, an early booster of Chicago Critical Mass, edited the CM zine *The Derailleur* and made thousands of t-shirts, flags, stickers and other schwag items to distribute free at the ride. He now runs West Town Bikes.

Why is Chicago a great city for biking?

Chicago is poised to become the most bike-friendly North American city in terms of utilitarian transportation. It’s easy to ride here because the city’s flat and it’s on a grid. There’s a pretty supportive city government and a very supportive bike community. My own opportunities to improve biking make Chicago a great city for me.

What are the challenges of riding a bike in Chicago?

The biggest problem is there’s too many cars – they’re a huge threat. When people drive inconsiderately they endanger the health and well-being of cyclists and pedestrians. I think most motorists don’t really understand this.

How would you improve cycling here?

If I could wave a magic wand and change things I would get people out of their cars and onto bikes. When you take cars out of the equation things are so much more civilized. Bicycling or walking is friendly and non-threatening and you’re able to take in your environment.

What rides would you recommend to visitors?

They should definitely go on Critical Mass – that’s a fantastic, fun time and you’ll usually get a great tour of the city. For recreational rides after work or on weekends you could meet up with the Chicago Cycling Club. If you want a more adventurous experience, the Midnight Marauders do kind of an urban mountain biking ride. Whatever your niche of riding is, you can find it in Chicago.

www.chicagocyclingclub.org
www.sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/midnight_marauders

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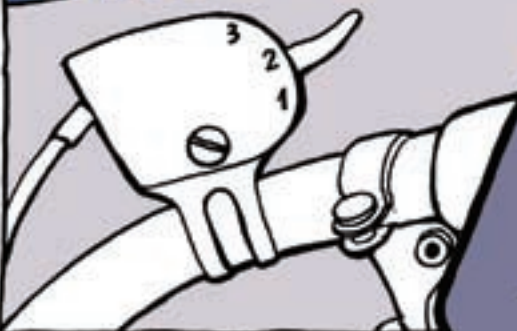
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three speeds is all you need

an appreciation of planetary hubs

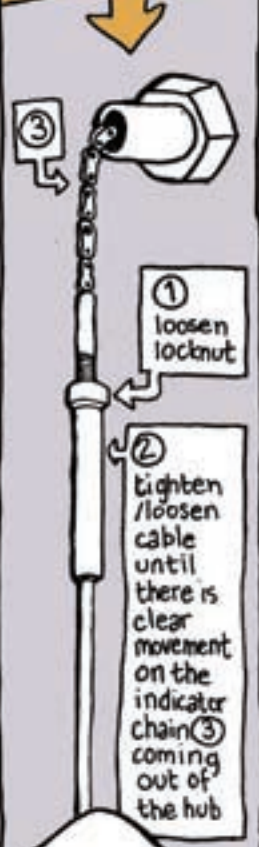
in comic form by Shawn Granton '08



Sturmeier-Archer introduced the 3-speed internally geared (or "planetary") hub at the turn of the 20th century. The most common model, the AW hub has been made since 1939, its basic design unchanged for 70 years. Despite being a common feature on Schwinn's and Raleigh's from World War II through the 70's, many modern mechanics know little to nothing about Sturmeier-Archer hubs and fear working on them. That's a shame, since they're probably the most reliable gear system ever made. 95% of the issues that arise with the AW hub are due to the cable or shifting mechanism, not the gear itself. (And that figure comes from Sheldon Brown, R. I. P.)

I bought a used road bike frame back in October and decided to do something different with it. As it's intended to be a citybike, I could've simply put a single-speed or fixie wheel on the rear. And I agree that one speed is adequate for city bicycling, especially if the city isn't that hilly (like Portland!) But I wanted to have a little more range than that, for the occasional hill or when I need to "power" somewhere, without going the whole derailleur route. Plus I wanted my bike to be unique. And I was missing the beautiful simplicity of my old Schwinn 3-speed, but not missing its weight. Why not turn a lightweight road bike into a classic 3-speed? So I had a Sturmeier-Archer AW hub built into my rear wheel.

WHEN THE GEARING IS "OFF":



GET YOUR BIKE READY FOR SPRING

BY KRISZTINA KUN PHOTOS BY BEN JOHNSON
(WITH A TIP O' THE CAP TO HOOPDRIVER)

7 THINGS TO DO

SUNSHINE AND WARMER DAYS and side streets bursting with cherry blossoms are all great reasons to get your bike out and dust it off. Is your bike ready to ride? Here are a few tips to get your bike ready for a new season of smooth riding.

1 WHEELS

First things first, your tires will most likely need air. Make sure to fill them up to the appropriate pressure; this will be written on the side of your tire. Spin your tires to make sure they pass cleanly through your brakes, fenders and forks without



rubbing. Watch the wheels as they spin, if you notice any wobbling at the rim, they will need to be trued (the spoke tension will need to be balanced). If you see bulges, large cuts, cracking or fraying, then you should get a new tire.

2 CHAIN

Is your chain clean? Is it lubed? To clean your chain simply back-pedal it through a cloth. Once it's clean, lube it up. Then run the chain through the rag again to remove excess lube from the outside surfaces where it will only attract more dirt and get on your clothes. While we're on the topic of cleaning, make sure your drivetrain and cogset are clean and don't have built up dirt and grime (like mine always do).

3 GEARS

Are your gears shifting smooth and silently? If

they are not clicking into place properly you might need to make adjustments to the cable tension, or possibly have your cables and housing replaced.

4 BRAKES

Is your bike stopping properly? If you have brake pads, take a look at them to see how worn down they are. If the pad is worn to the 'wear line', or there are no grooves left along all or part of the pad, or there's very uneven wear, then they need replacing. Squeeze your brake levers and note if there's any noise (grinding or squealing) or if they don't engage right away, in which



case your brake pads or cables might need adjusting. You should be able to confidently squeeze your levers as hard as you can (off the bike) without cables slipping or the lever getting too close to the bar. How close is too close? If the brake lever touches the bar, that's much too close, and that bike is unsafe to ride.

5 TIGHTEN

Make sure nothing on your bike is loose. Check the bolts on your handlebars, including the brakes and gear shifters. Check to make sure the seatpost and stem are secure and not raised above their maximum lines. Also check the bolts on any accessories such as fenders, racks and baskets.

6 BEARINGS

Everything that spins on your bike depends on bearings. You can tell pretty easily when it's time to seek expert help. If a wheel jerks to a stop, or the steering feels like

it has notches, then those bearings are too tight. If a wheel, when held firmly at the rim and jiggled side-to-side, is felt to clunk or rattle, then those bearings are too loose. If these problems appear, your bearings need adjustment, overhaul, or replacement.

7 THE "DROP TEST"

Pick your bike up about 3 or 4" and drop it (while keeping it upright) on the wheels. This won't hurt it. If you hear or feel anything rattling (aside from the chain or your lock) then investigate further and decide whether it's a



safety issue or something that if maintained now will save you time and money in the future. If necessary, take your bike to your favourite mechanic for a tune-up, sign up for some lessons or supervised shop time, or get yourself a good maintenance book.

All set? Grab your helmet and lights (with fresh batteries) and head out for a lovely spring ride.

Krisztina Kun was a fair-weather cyclist until the cost of transit became worse than wearing raingear. Now she's slowly cultivating her inner bike geek.

Hoopdriver is MOMENTUM's beloved former bike-mechanical guru. Yes, "Hoopdriver" is a nom de plume, based on the novel by H.G. Wells reviewed in this issue.

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MAINTAIN YOUR grip on power

BY JUSTIN BERGER



REVIEW:
HELMET HERO

BY DAVID NIDDRIE

AS A PHOTOGRAPHER and a cyclist, I have tried a number of different ways to take on-the-go images while riding around town with my friends. From attaching my point-and-shoot Fuji to the handlebars with a Gorillapod (works quite well, actually) to riding no hands downhill just to “get the shot;” I was happy to test something made for this kind of work: the GoPro Helmet Hero sport camera.

At first glance I was quite underwhelmed. How could this tiny device (4x6cm in size) possibly create “as advertised” TV-quality video and high-res stills while looking like a simple toy with only two buttons? I poured out the package of helmet adapters, straps and quick-release clips and configured it for my lid. It’s an easy process since it was designed to fit any shape of vented sport helmet.

I took off into traffic and reached up to my helmet and started filming while waiting at the next light. One drawback – and something a number of cyclists asked me about – is the lack of control once the camera is in place. You need to have faith that you have actually pressed the

THE ANCIENT OPPRESSION of foot binding has mercifully been abandoned – except by some cyclists. The claim is that attaching your feet to bike pedals with cleats, clips, or straps is much more efficient because it lets you to pull up as well as push down as you pedal. But if you ride with feet unbound, worry not! The real trick is to pull back slightly at the bottom of the pedal stroke, as if you are scraping your feet on a doormat. This works on any pedal if your shoes have good grip.

However, having your feet fly off the pedals can also be dangerous, especially on a fixed gear or recumbent bike. Having your feet attached prevents this and encourages rapid pedaling, which is easier on one’s knees. Connection to the pedals also facilitates lofting the wheels of your bike to show off or avoid obstacles. So if that’s enough to convince you to strap your feet to your pedals, you might as well do it right.

Powergrips are durable, cheap, and effective. The inch-wide webbing straps won’t scratch up your Manolo Blahniks’ the way regular toeclips will; they let you move your foot around on the pedal as comfort demands, and a twist of the foot instantly binds or releases them. They have all the advantages

shutter, or wait until you can take it off your head, check that it’s running, and replace it. Edit later, as they say. The Hero uses AAA batteries and an SD card (up to 2GB) so there is plenty of storage space and power to keep it rolling for a few hours.

The video is very sharp and smooth at 30fps; vibrations from the road are practically nonexistent. The camera has a normal field of view, but there is a wide-angle lens you can add for \$40. In addition to the impressive video mode, there is also a single-shot image function, a burst of three sequence shots, or – and this is a cool one – the ‘photo every five seconds’ function. Bike for two hours and the Hero will take 1,400 images over the course of your ride.

Although there are audio capabilities, using

of both toe clips and clipless pedals with none of the downsides. Really – that good! Powergrips come in two lengths: regular for up to size 11 feet; and extra-long. They fit any pedal that would use standard toe clips. You can buy them complete with pedals, but the straps by themselves are a better value. Powergrips are made in Colorado and sell for the unoppressive price of around \$35 at finer bikeshops (\$22.95 online).

www.mountainracingproducts.com



the camera as intended in its waterproof case (up to 100 feet) silences any sound you may want to record. The two sound modes take vibration into account and are decent, but I can’t see how you’d record audio in the field unless strictly handheld.

With a price of \$170, this little camera delivers what it promises in video capability with very bright, clear images that look great full screen. Stills are not quite up to par with what you can find in a digital point-and-shoot (some distortion in the corners, not super high-res), but having waterproof capabilities and the five-second function makes it a fun addition for those summer ride-and-swims we’re all looking forward to.

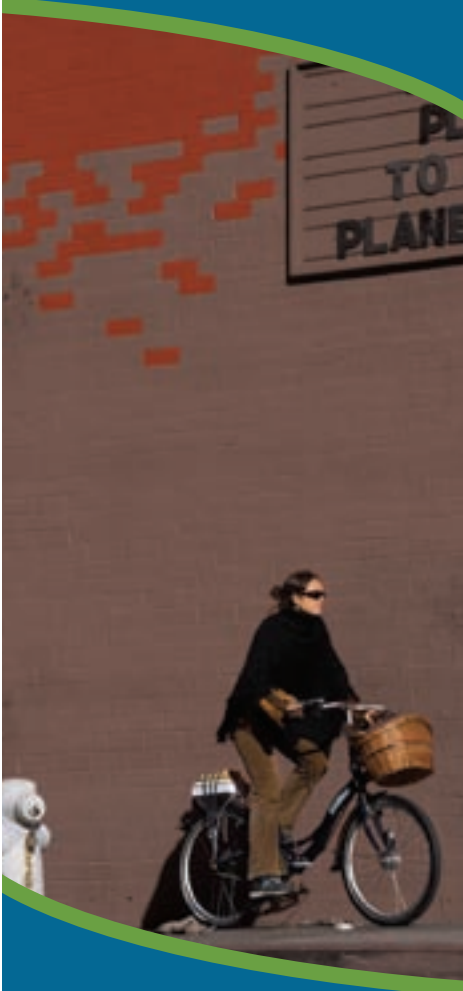
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PHOTOS BY PAMELA PALMIRA



JOYRIDER'S NAN EASTEP

STYLISH IN EVERY WAY

BY MOLLY MCCOY

TUCKED AWAY IN the corner of the Temescal Farmers' Market in Oakland, California, a woman sits at a foot-treadle sewing machine surrounded by handmade articles of clothing. Parked behind her is the Christiania rickshaw in which the machine, clothing, and tent arrived at market. Nan Eastep is a seasoned tailor and clothier who focuses most of her time and energy on creating hand-made apparel and accessories that are tailored specifically for bicycle riding. True to her ideals, her fabrics are sourced sustainably whenever possible and local seamstresses earn a living wage helping her with assembly.

In addition to a stylish application of color, fit, and design, Nan's Joyrider clothing line of commuter bike wear incorporates a surprising level of functionality. She adds attractive pleats for better range of motion, cinches to pants and sleeves, gussets for comfort, and pockets right where you

never knew how much you needed one. While her current mainstays are smart wool knickers and waxed cotton rain coats, she also offers recycled wool arm warmers, and an innovative vest pack that distributes weight nicely. New creations are always under way. Years of experience have given Nan a discerning taste in materials: the wool of her knickers is of the highest quality and the waxed cotton she uses seasons with wear.

"If I can use my skills as a clothing maker to do business with an ecological conscience offering a product that seduces people to ride their bikes, I can trust that I am approaching the radicalism of the people who inspired me to do this work in the first place."

Nan is an inspiration to cyclists and others who strive to extract ourselves one bit at a time from an unsustainable culture.

Check out Nan's work at joyriderclothing.com



TOUGH (VELO) LOVE IN QUEENS WORKSMAN CYCLES

BY SEGUE FISCHLIN

THE LAST ADJECTIVE you'd use to describe a Worksman Cycle is "trendy." While their components and designs have been updated "subtly" over the years and their selection of offerings has grown, their commitment to make "cycles designed to move people and their supplies" hasn't wavered. Started by Russian immigrant Morris Worksman in 1898, the original intention was to provide a 'cleaner' alternative (ahem) to the horse and buggy. Horse and buggy has fallen out of favour and now the internal combustion car is being called into question, but this cycle manufacturer remains. In fact, they are experiencing a revitalization in interest in their products. This holdout from a bygone era has many distinctions under their belt. They are both the oldest bicycle and largest adult tricycle manufacturer in the US. They are steadfastly "doing the impossible:" manufacturing products within the bounds of New York City—a distinction that has not gone unnoticed by the *New York Times* and others.

The company is now owned and operated by Wayne Sosin and Jeffrey Mishkin (married to the granddaughter of M. Worksman). Mishkin is active CEO and handles back end production and purchasing, while Sosin handles sales, marketing and customer service as President of the firm. I had the great pleasure to speak with Mr. Sosin.

How did you get involved with Worksman Cycles?

As a native New Yorker, I had known the Worksman family for some time. They had mentioned to me that they were looking for ways to grow the company and at that time, I thought, "Well, it's sort of a small company and not what I'm looking to do." I was 24 and working for a

Fortune 500 company as a sales rep. I was quickly promoted to Zone Manager and I really thought I was headed on the fast path to success. I was sent to a national sales meeting and realized that I was just one of thousands of people. The manager I reported to—whom I had never met—barely knew my name after having worked there for over a year. After returning from this meeting, I thought, "In this big company, I am just a number. In this small company, I could make a difference." And I started to really appreciate the products that they were making. So I decided to join the company. That was 30 years ago. I've been here ever since.

Worksman Cycles claims to make the "toughest bicycles in the world." What makes them the toughest?

Our number one goal is durability. Our rims are 50 per cent thicker than your average bicycle rim; we use 11 gauge spokes and 16 to 14 gauge tubing in our frames. Our tricycle axles are 7/8" to 1" in diameter. Our chains are 1/2" x 3/16" rather than 1/2" x 1/8" or thinner—the standard on most bicycles.

Why three wheels and not four wheels like the early Ford "Quadricycle?"

Size, cost, manoeuvrability. A lot of our tricycles are used indoors in factories to get personnel around. It's what we're best known for even though the public doesn't see that. If you go to a large factory, like Ford Motor company, you will see workers carrying their tools and supplies on the back of a Worksman tricycle. The three-wheel design is very steady without going to four wheels. We do have four-wheelers, but the three-wheelers are far more popular.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 39



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So Ford Motor Co hasn't ever totally gotten away from the bicycle?

(Laughs) Yeah, I hadn't thought about it that way, but that's true. In fact, it's funny, now that you mention that, there are a lot of motorized vehicle companies that utilize Worksman tricycles, everyone from Harley Davidson to Mercedes Benz, Daimler-Chrysler, and GM.

How have things changed in terms of who uses your products?

As factories in the US closed and moved overseas, we lost a lot of good customers for our industrial tricycles. However, we are now selling more light-duty recreational tricycles. Our big markets are senior citizens and special needs riders. We still sell, as always, to delivery services, restaurants and grocery stores that deliver, pizza shops, and hot dog vendors. While the commercial sector is our smallest market, we built our reputation in the 1930s by building the Good Humour Ice Cream



tricycles. Our products were utilized to vend ice cream in virtually every neighborhood in the United States.

Why are you still manufacturing in the US?

We believe in it. I don't want to get on my soapbox, but every time a plant in the US closes, workers lose jobs, America loses skills, and America loses a lot of flexibility in its own ability to make things. We

feel we have an efficient factory, we have a good staff of people that we're committed to. We're not a mass manufacturer, so that gives us the flexibility of being able to make the colours, the wheel styles, the sprocket sizes that customers want. Having said that, we have no choice but to import a lot of our components because you just can't get them made here. We, too, are dependent upon overseas suppliers, but the finished product – the welding, the painting, the machining, the assembling – is done right here. We're proud of that.

It's not easy doing what we do, because we're bucking a lot of trends. We've been laughed at in many circles for a lot of years. The rise in gas prices really has people thinking more open-mindedly. For the first time recently, I can honestly say I've seen a much different reaction when I tell people what we make. Instead of people curiously looking at you like "Man, that CAN'T be a good business," people say, "Well, that's actually a really good idea, maybe that's something we could use."

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FRAME GEOM

ILLUSTRATIONS BY IAN HOFFMAN

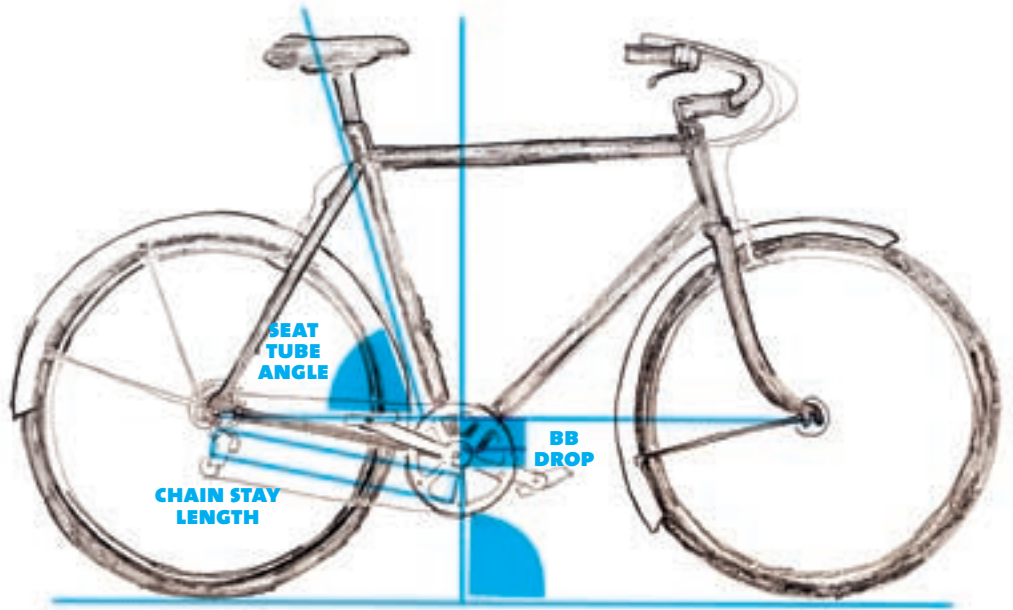
THE DIMENSIONS AND design of a bicycle's frame fundamentally determine how it will ride. Understanding which features of the frame affect corresponding aspects of its behaviour can be very helpful in determining what kind of bike is right for you. Herein, a primer on bicycle frame geometry – a look at how certain aspects of a frame's design determine how it will “handle” or ride as a bike. I'm going to examine bottom bracket drop, seat tube angle, and chain stay length.

BOTTOM BRACKET DROP

Draw a horizontal line between the front and rear drop outs (where the wheels attach) of the frame and fork. Now, draw a perpendicular line that passes through the center of the frame's bottom bracket. The distance between the centre of the frame's bottom bracket and the first line, measured along the second, is the frame's bottom bracket drop: how far below the wheels' axles the bottom bracket sits.

Mountain, cyclocross, and track frames have little bottom bracket drop – their bottom brackets tend to sit quite high. The primary reason for this is clearance: to keep roots, rocks, or a severely sloping track from hitting the pedals, chain rings or frame, the bottom bracket is kept high and out of the way. A higher bottom bracket also shortens the chain stays and downtube of a frame – the tubes of a bicycle put under the greatest stress during riding – thereby giving a stiffer, more responsive feel.

But stiffness and clearance come at the expense



of stability; the lower the bottom bracket, the lower the bike's centre of gravity, and the more stable it will ride. Touring and commuter frames should have a lot of bottom bracket drop, as their function is more practical than performance. Road bikes tend to fall somewhere between the two extremes.

Note: bottom bracket drop, rather than height, is used when talking about a frame because the height of a bike's bottom bracket depends both on the frame design and the size of its wheels and tires, while a frame's bottom bracket drop remains constant.

SEAT TUBE ANGLE

The angle of the seat tube is measured in relation to the ground, and tends to fall somewhere between 68 and 75 degrees.

A frame's seat tube angle determines the position of a bike's saddle in relation to its bottom bracket. Since the bottom bracket is the axis around which the bike's cranks and pedal rotate, this in turn affects the orientation of the rider's legs and body in relation to the bike. Seat tube angle also influences the distribution of the rider's weight between saddle and handlebar.

A steeper seat tube brings the bike's saddle more into a vertical line with the bottom bracket, thrusts the rider forward into a more aerodynamic riding position, places more of the rider's weight on the handlebars, and puts more demand on the rider's hamstring muscles. Triathlon bikes tend to have steep seat tubes, because they're built almost exclusively for speed and tend to be ridden by

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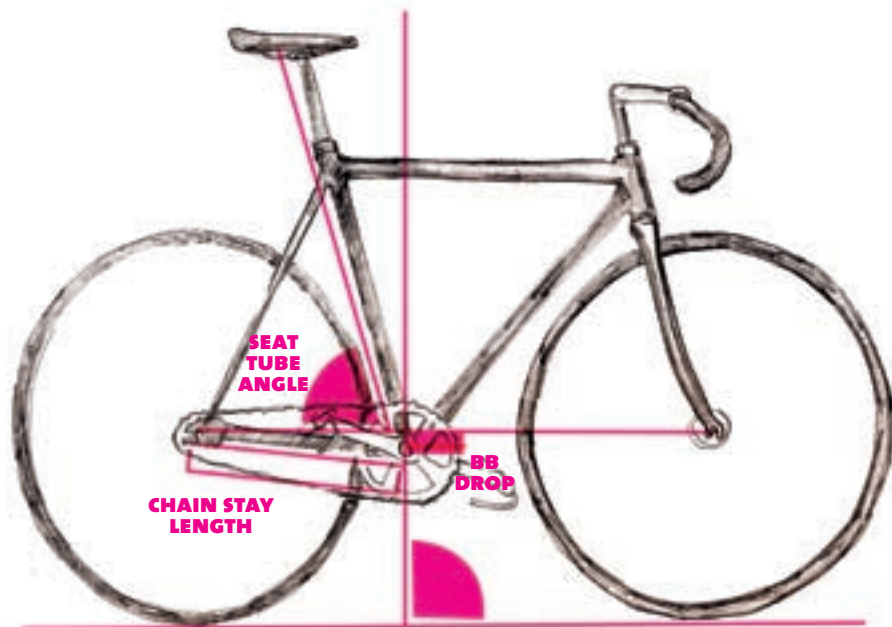
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SEAT TUBE ANGLE



people who are strong runners (and therefore have well-developed hamstring muscles).

The shallower the seat tube, the further the bike's seat is pushed behind its bottom bracket. This puts the rider in a less aerodynamic position, but it also puts more demand on the thighs and glutes (which tend to be well developed in cyclists), and places more of the rider's weight on the saddle, thereby increasing rider comfort.

A steeper seat tube means a shorter seat tube for a frame of a given size, again making for a stiffer, more responsive feel, while a shallower seat tube requires longer chain stays, the effect of which I'll address later.

A steeper seat tube also allows for a more direct transfer of power through the rider's legs, although a shallow seat tube angle puts the rider

in a better position to exert power at low cadence, therefore assisting with seated climbing.

Finally, seat tube angle plays a large role in bicycle frame design for women. Most production bike frames tend to be built for men of "normal" proportions. On average, women tend to be shorter than men and proportionally have longer legs and shorter torsos. The smaller the frame, the steeper the seat tube, because (all else being equal) more room is needed for the rear tire to clear the frame. Since women generally ride smaller frames, this works against their physiology – a steeper seat tube is a shorter seat tube, allowing less room for full leg extension. This conundrum is sometimes remedied by using longer chain stays or smaller wheels – both of

which allow for shallower seat tubes – on frames designed specifically for women. But since this increases the cost and time of production, many companies don't bother taking it into account.

CHAIN STAY LENGTH

A frame's chain stays are the tubes that run from the bottom bracket to the rear drop outs (where the rear wheel's axle attaches). One can measure either the actual length of the chain stay or the "effective" chain stay length because, all else being equal, bottom bracket drop will increase or decrease the length of a frame's chain stays without pushing the rear wheel any further back.

The modern trend, among virtually all bikes, is towards shorter chain stays. Shortening chain stays makes them stiffer and less likely to flex, enhancing power transfer from pedalling. This reduces the wheelbase of the bike, making it feel snappier and better able to handle low speed turns. It also puts more of the rider's weight over the rear wheel, thereby improving traction. Mountain bikes in particular benefit from short chain stays.

On the other hand, the longer wheelbase afforded by longer chain stays makes a bike more stable, especially at higher speed. Longer chain stays will flex more and ensure that the rider is not sitting directly over the rear wheel, thereby providing a more comfortable ride; they allow for both a shallower seat tube angle, which as previously noted, is better for seated climbing and for women's physiology. They also provide more tire clearance, allowing larger tires to be employed and making it easier to remove the rear wheel from the frame. Finally longer chain stays will keep the rider's heel away from a rear-mounted pannier. For all of these reasons, commuter and touring bikes benefit from longer chain stays.



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A promotional graphic for 'Twin Six' merchandise. It features a central illustration of a woman in a cowboy hat, plaid shirt, and scarf, holding a beer. The background is a dark wood grain. To the right, the 'TWIN SIX' logo is displayed with 'TRADE MARK' on either side. Below the logo is a list of merchandise: T-SHIRTS, JERSEYS, CAPS, BAGS, SOCKS, BOTTLES, and POSTERS. At the bottom right, the website 'TWINSEX.COM' is listed.

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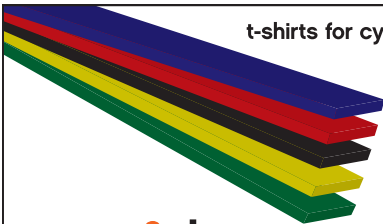


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alternative needs transportation mike flanigan

ALTERNATIVE NEEDS

TRANSPORTATION, or A.N.T., is Mike Flanigan's one-man bike building operation. Flanigan's specialty is building transportation bikes, racks, and cargo bikes with clever names like the "frontal-load-onto-me." Partly due to his influence, the North American Handmade Bicycle Show created a "City Bikes" award category in 2007. Mike has been in the bike trade since 1983 and he joined the Boston bike building scene in 1989, working for Fat City Cycles as a painter and then helping to found the bike-building co-operative Independent Fabrication in 1995. After eight years of working co-operatively, Flanigan decided to strike out on his own as A.N.T. and he hasn't looked back since. He runs his shop out of a converted shoe factory in Holliston, Massachusetts and he has made his home nearby with partner Betsy Eckel Scola and her two children.

Mike is a kind-hearted, thoughtful and outspoken proponent for transportation biking. When we ask people which custom bike builders we should write about in **MOMENTUM**, the resounding response is "Mike Flanigan of A.N.T." We spoke with Mike Flanigan recently and we have a small portion of that conversation here. Check out momentumplanet.com for a longer audio podcast version.



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MAJOR TAYLOR

What is it like to bike around in Holliston?

Well it's beautiful. It's a quintessential New England setting: rural with small tree-covered roads with stone walls on either side and Victorian houses and the white church with the steeple and the old town center with the cemetery with the slate tablets. It's very picturesque and beautiful.

Do you see other cyclists in your town?

Nobody like me. I ride around in street clothes on my A.N.T. style bike that looks like a European city bike. There are a lot of cyclists and many of them are commuting but they're more the sport style cyclist so they've got the cycling garb on a road type bicycle and they're commuting somewhere far away, probably into Boston and whatnot.

What are the differences between working cooperatively at Independent Fabrication versus having your own shop?

I couldn't have had one without the other. When I helped start Independent, I didn't know all the things that I wanted to know, and I was also afraid to strike out on my own at that time. I was a painter at that time. I knew how to weld, but I was really a painter and I didn't know a lot about fabrication, so being one of the founders of I.F. helped me go in the direction I wanted to go. Once I was involved I really wanted to make sure that it was successful before I left.

What do you love about making your own bikes?

I do pretty much everything, all the way through. I like to get to know the people that I'm building a bike for. I get a relationship going with somebody, and I design the bike, make it, and do the finish

2006 NAHBS BIKE



work, I build the wheels, assemble it, ship it. It's a continual process. I go all the way through and I hope to do everything correctly the whole way. When you're doing everything yourself, it can be difficult, but you tend to catch things that might get missed in a bigger operation.

What qualities do you like about ants?

It's this little creature that works independently, but also with a large group. Their needs are pretty basic and they can carry things back to the hive, large things, many more times their own weight. There's a cargo aspect to it there but I just like that they're independent but also part of this larger group. I see the metaphor for bicycles in the same way, particularly bikes that have baskets and racks on them.

Each A.N.T. bike is made by Flanigan himself and one of his custom rides can cost between \$2,000 and \$6,000. A.N.T.'s website proclaims: "Most people have this fear of investing in a bike for commuting, but it is their most-used bike!"



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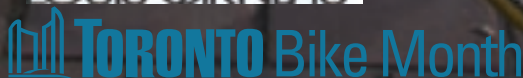
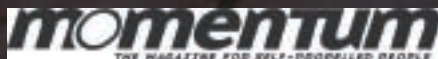
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