



AMERICAN BICYCLIST

ADVOCACY BEYOND CITY LIMITS

Los Angeles advocates cultivate community engagement & region-wide leadership
pg 14

A FUN(DRAISING) TOUR DE FORCE

An inside look at New Belgium Brewing Company's wildly successful Tour de Fat
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BIKES FOR NEW MAINERS

Bike skills program boosts the mobility of new immigrants in Portland, Maine
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Summer / Fall 2015

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**2016 NATIONAL BIKE SUMMIT
& WOMEN'S FORUM**

MARCH 7-9, 2016



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Summer / Fall 2015



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THE LEADERSHIP ISSUE

To make bicycling safe, comfortable and accessible to everyone, we must recognize and celebrate the many diverse ways people are leading our movement. From community organizers to elected officials, from business owners to university students, **together** we can lead the way to a bicycle-friendly America for all.

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AMERICAN BICYCLIST MAGAZINE IS PUBLISHED AS A BENEFIT TO MEMBERS OF THE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN BICYCLISTS. IF YOU'RE NOT A MEMBER, AND YOU WANT TO RECEIVE THIS MAGAZINE AND SUPPORT THE INNOVATIVE ADVOCACY DESCRIBED WITHIN, JOIN THE LEAGUE AT BIKELEAGUE.ORG/JOIN.

ON THE COVER: Participants in the Women Bike, Women Lead program piloted by the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition and Multicultural Communities for Mobility. Photo by David Koos. Read more on page 9.



BENDING TOWARDS JUSTICE

In 1958, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." King reached back 100 years and used the phrase first attributed to sermons written in 1853 by Theodore Parker, a Unitarian minister who worked for the abolition of slavery.

What does the arc of the moral universe bending toward justice have to do with the League of American Bicyclists and each of us as members and sponsors?

Our goal is for many more people to become active in making their communities safer for cyclists of all ages and abilities and for the numbers to keep growing. We know that active children and adults are healthier, happier, and more aware of their environment.

The League understood the expansion of a Bicycle Friendly America would only be successful if the outreach of its many programs was inclusive. With support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the League took the bold step two years ago of developing its Equity Initiative. The objective was for the League to examine itself and formulate strategies to reach new and diverse constituents, many in underrepresented communities.

Look closely at the small Smart Cycling Quick Guide, which was funded by Jim and Gail Spann, major donors of the League's bike education program. The Guide, with its colorful graphics representing the diversity of people riding bicycles, are used by thousands of youth and adults in Smart Cycling

classes. Increasingly, League Cycling Instructors are women and members of minority groups, including speakers of Spanish.

The generous support from Trek is testament to the vision of its President, John Burke, to the value and importance of dramatically expanding the number of communities, business and universities under the League's Bicycle Friendly America program. The League estimates that, thanks to John's vision and the funding from Trek, more than 25 percent of the population in the United States now lives in a Bicycle Friendly Community. That is quite an achievement!

While working for equity is not always easy, the League embraced the belief that the bicycle movement is legitimized by the participation of everyone and especially constituents who were, for too long, underrepresented.

Which brings me back to the arc of the moral universe that bends toward justice. It is an arc that does not bend on its own. It takes effort, which means advocacy and action, tactics in which the League, its members and sponsors have decades of experience. It takes commitment and energy, attributes the League, its members, and sponsors have in abundance. But most importantly, it takes a firm and unwavering commitment from each of us, as individuals and in groups, to bend the arc together.

Throughout its long and illustrious history, the League has learned that the way we work together is more impor-



tant than the goal of any one person or group. The Equity Initiative showed that our common goal of a Bicycle Friendly America, grounded in the rich diversity of this country, requires us to develop confidence in ourselves and in each other.

As the League looks to the future, it understands the more people and groups from different backgrounds that are involved, the more quickly and completely we will achieve our common goal of an expanding, vibrant, and unstoppable Bicycle Friendly America that is more just for everyone.

Karen Jenkins

Karen Jenkins, League Board Chair
karenjenkins@bikeleague.org

INBOX

8 YEARS AND UP

I have an issue with the article "Rolling toward Diamond," published in the Spring 2015 issue of *American Bicyclist*. It talks about bicycling being accessible to all aged 8 to 80. I am 79 years old and my goal is 100 miles per week. I recently rode my age in kilometers. I suggest age 8 years and up.

— David Scofield, Windsor Locks, CT

UNITING VOICES ON CAPITOL HILL

Thanks for your informative message about the attack on the Transportation Alternatives Program — and congratulations to you all, especially Caron Whitaker, for staying alert to this sneaky vote on an anti-bike, anti-pedestrian measure that the proponents tried to disguise. This means that the League's legislative work is important and successful. I've made another small contribution, and will ask my Congressman to join the bicycle coalition.

— Dave Kosterlitz, Bethesda, MD

KEEPIN' UP THE (BIKE) FIGHT

Great job, all. Our membership dollars at work. Keep up the good fight.

— Joseph O'Connor, Brookfield, IL

FROM INSTAGRAM



@ridewisetma This student is learning to ride safely on the road! #TS101 #smartcycling #bikeleague



@markus_fargo And what did I see on the outskirts of town... #bikeleague

FROM TWITTER



Nate Evans @bmorebikes

Thanks to @BmoreCityDOT for all your bike friendly work! @BikeLeague @BikeMaryland

Lester Walters @UnPerroDeSuerte

@BikeLeague We don't need technology for safer cycling. The Dutch have already modeled for us how to create safer cycling. #VisionZero

Brooklyn Bicycle Co. @BrooklynBikeCo

3 cheers for @BikeLeague, who SAVED bike & ped infrastructure funding from Congressional cuts: buff.ly/1MW7f5db

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals @apbp

Congratulations to the newest Bicycle Friendly Communities! 69 million people now live in a BFC @BikeLeague

THANK YOU, ANDY!

League President, Andy Clarke, departs after 12 years

In July, after 12 years as President of the League, Andy Clarke informed the organization's Board of Directors that he would be stepping down from his position to pursue other opportunities. "It's the right time for me to move on and allow fresh ideas and new leadership to take the League forward," Clarke said.

In a letter to the League board, Clarke shared: "I have enjoyed the immense privilege of leading the League as its President. During that time, the organization has indeed led the movement to create a more bicycle-friendly America, and I am proud of the many accomplishments we've seen in our programs during my tenure."

"We accepted Andy's resignation with sadness, with gratitude for the leadership he has shown, and with excitement for the opportunity to enter a new era for the League," said Karen Jenkins, chair of the League's board. "Andy leaves us a powerful strategic framework, an outstanding staff, and programs that are delivering real change across America."

Clarke joined the League staff in April 2003 as Director of State and Local Advocacy, primarily to lead the Bicycle Friendly Community initiative. The BFC program has since experienced tremendous growth: More than 800 communities have applied for BFC designation and 69 million Americans now live in 350 BFCs. The program has expanded to include Bicycle Friendly Business and University designations, as well as an annual Bicycle Friendly State ranking.

A long-term partnership with Trek



Photo by Brian Palmer

has enabled the program to expand staff fourfold and invest in the creation of a database and resource library that annually assists more than 500 communities. These programs now set the standard and provide the roadmap for elected officials, city staff, and local advocacy organizations to create more bicycle-friendly communities.

Clarke took over as President in May 2004 and has overseen significant expansion and improvement in the League's core programs. National Bike Summit participation has risen from 200 in 2003 to more than 650 in 2015. By 2003, the League had certified only 1,000 instructors in the previous 30 years; the organization is now certifying more than 400 annually. The League had 425 affiliated local clubs and advocacy groups; now

that number stands at almost 1,000 nationwide.

Dave Cieslewicz, executive director of Wisconsin Bike Federation and former mayor of Madison, said he's met few advocates like Clarke.

"Andy Clarke is the consummate gentleman and he has been the ideal face of cycling: gentle, gracious, smart and with a great sense of humor," Cieslewicz said. "Tremendous growth in cycling has taken place on Andy's watch and it's no coincidence: Andy has guided the movement with just the right combination of strong advocacy and gentle persuasion. I know he'll keep on contributing to the movement in new ways in the future. I'd say I'll miss him, but I know I'll be working with him again in another capacity."



Under Clarke's leadership, the League was instrumental in the creation of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership and the National Complete Streets Coalition. As active participants in the America Bikes coalition (2003-2011), Clarke and the League have helped establish the bicycling community as an influential voice on Capitol Hill through several rounds of transportation bills and annual appropriations debates. In partnership with Kimberly Clark, the League created the National Bike Challenge and has continued to market National Bike Month and Bike to Work Day as significant national promotions that garner extensive media coverage each May.

Advocacy Advance — a six-year partnership with the Alliance for Biking & Walking funded primarily by the SRAM Cycling Fund — achieved a return of \$7,696 for every dollar invested and boosted the capacity of state and local advocacy initiatives with workshops, technical assistance, and grants.

In 2012, with generous leadership gifts from Jim Spann and Gail Copus Spann, the League began an update of its brand, website, policies, positions and overall image to further broaden the appeal, value and relevance of the organization.

Tremendous growth in cycling has taken place on Andy's watch and it's no coincidence: Andy has guided the movement with just the right combination of strong advocacy and gentle persuasion. I know he'll keep on contributing to the movement in new ways in the future.

More recently, the League has launched an internal equity, diversity and inclusion initiative which will be shared with the broader bicycling movement. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-funded Equity Initiative, alongside the pioneering Women Bike program, has helped to begin the transformation of

the League into an organization that is more inclusive, and more connected to and representative of the rapidly changing communities we seek to serve.

This year, the League adopted a Strategic Framework for 2015-2018 that sets the organization on an exciting, forward-looking path that will continue the organization's leadership in the movement for active transportation and more livable communities.

"Andy's relentless hard work and inspiring ideas of platinum-status, bicycle-friendly cities and states have unleashed a stampede across America to mount our bikes, reclaim our 'commons,' restore the health of our fellow citizens, and change our laws to make the nation livable," said the late Congressman Jim Oberstar, upon Clarke's 10-year anniversary as president of the League.

On that same occasion, Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) also applauded Clarke's leadership: "Cycling is not just the most efficient form of urban transportation ever designed. It is the key to fitness for our families, freedom for our children, and the easiest, quickest and most inexpensive way to increase road capacity. Andy, thank you for understanding these principles, for organizing the cycling community, and providing vision, good humor, and leadership as we all navigate the tremendous opportunities that cycling presents for all Americans."

Thank you, Andy!



MEMBER SNAPSHOT:

Sam Adams

Recently, we were honored to welcome Sam Adams, former Mayor of Portland, Ore., and current director of the U.S. Climate Initiative at the World Resources Institute to the League Board of Directors. Given his diverse background, we got his take on leadership to make biking better.

HOW HAS YOUR INTEREST IN AND LEADERSHIP AROUND BICYCLING EVOLVE OVER YOUR CAREER?

Growing up in Newport on the Oregon coast, my Dad got me hooked on bicycling. When I was 14 years old, he bought us matching bikes. We'd ride up and down Highway 101 and into the Coastal mountains. I still love the camaraderie, simplicity and freedom bicycling provides and that I first experienced as a kid. As a leader I seek to bolster biking's benefits of convenient exercise, affordable mobility and environmental sustainability.

IN YOUR TENURE AS MAYOR, HOW DID YOU MOBILIZE AND EMPOWER THE DIFFERENT LEADERS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY TO IMPROVE BICYCLING IN PORTLAND?

We built on groundbreaking efforts like those of then-City Commissioner, now-Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR). We looked at inspiring examples from other cities. We researched the heck out of the key issues. I involved all transportation mode stakeholders in the process of developing the 2030 Portland Bicycle Plan and set a public goal for Portland to attain Platinum Bicycle Friendly Community status.

HOW HAVE YOU CREATED COLLECTIVE BUY-IN TO MAKE PORTLAND MORE SUSTAINABLE AND BICYCLE-FRIENDLY?

I take what I like to call a "radical common sense approach" to the work. I seek to offer clear direction, an outcome or goal and explanation how it fits into the bigger context of making Portland more prosperous, healthy, educated and equitable. Still, while offering direction, I try to keep an open mind. Research is key. So is gathering a representative group of stakeholders together to advise at every step of the work.

I take what I like to call
a 'radical common sense'
approach to this work.

DURING YOUR TENURE AS MAYOR YOU SHARED YOUR DESIRE TO MAKE PORTLAND "THE MOST SUSTAINABLE CITY IN THE WORLD." HOW DID BICYCLING PLAY INTO THAT VISION?

Because of bicycling's multiple benefits, to the individual and the community at large, it was a key point of action to make Portland "the most sustainable city in the world." Portland's bikeway infrastructure was lacking in East Portland and Southwest Portland, so we worked hard to address these deficits and brought local residents and business owners to the table to help get it right. We also did public opinion research to gain insight into what it would take to get more Portlanders to take more trips by bike. The views of this group shaped our work to prioritize the construction of greenways that connect neighborhoods, more separated bike lanes and green bike boxes.

BICYCLING ADVOCATES HAVE BECOME LESS INCLINED TO HIGHLIGHT BICYCLING AS A MEANS TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE. HOW CAN WE GROW PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN THE CLIMATE PROTECTION AND BICYCLING MOVEMENTS?

In Portland and Oregon, bicycling as part of needed climate action remains front and center! In my new role at the World Resources Institute, I lead a team of researchers to analyze and develop new policies and support coalitions that will encourage U.S. transition to a strong, low-carbon economy. At WRI, we have just embarked on an effort to compile and report on greenhouse gas emission data on a city-by-city basis in the United States. We're working to include all transportation-related climate pollution data, including a more accurate accounting of avoided greenhouse gas emissions from bike trips. It's nerdy stuff but it's important research that can serve as a factual basis to improve how we plan and operate bike infrastructure and more fully integrate it into all transportation projects.

WHY ARE YOU EXCITED TO SERVE ON THE LEAGUE BOARD?

I want to use lessons learned as a local government leader to help bicycling reach its full potential in this nation as a neighborhood-strengthening, cost-effective transportation option that offers multiple benefits to promote health, environmental sustainability, affordability and access equity. As a Board member, I also hope to help strengthen the League's partnerships and connections with both national business and racial justice organizations.

CLUB SPOTLIGHT:

Kansas City Metro Bicycle Club



Earlier this year, the Kansas City Metro Bicycle Club released a public service announcement (PSA) on the importance of sharing the road and safety for all on Kansas City streets. We caught up with Steve White, President of KCMBC, to talk about the PSA and how bike clubs can get involved in advocacy.

WHAT'S THE STORY BEHIND THIS PSA, "JOHN'S STORY"?
All of us who have been riding any length of time have been touched by the injury or death of a fellow cyclist. But precious few of us feel there's anything we can do about it. As the umbrella organization for cycling in Kansas City, the KCMBC wanted to change the perception among drivers (and cyclists, for that matter) that deaths and injuries due to vehicle-cyclist collisions are unavoidable and "just happen."

That's why we made this PSA. We have others in the works, as well. Right now these spots are running on social media and on local TV here in KC. We're doing community events, too. Drivers need to know they have a responsibility to ensure our safety on the road. And cyclists need to know it — and own it — as well.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE VIDEO TO SHARE THIS STORY?
We began with video because it lets us tell our story in a compelling, visual manner that humanizes us as cyclists. We wanted to show drivers that we are no different than them, so they could relate to us and, unconsciously if not consciously, say, "That could be me...I'm a regular person with a job [and maybe

a family], and I wouldn't want to get run down or harassed, either." We also wanted to show them that we're doing our part to be responsible and predictable out there. This first spot is one minute, but we plan to do 15- and 30-second spots, as well.

WHAT ROLE CAN LOCAL BIKE CLUBS PLAY IN BICYCLE ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION IN THEIR COMMUNITIES?
With the PSA release, we've been doing TV and radio appearances, and educational clinics, as well. In these interviews, and at various points in our PSA campaign, we acknowledge that we as cyclists need to obey the laws, be considerate of drivers, be predictable and responsible. It takes both drivers and cyclists working together to make safer roads.

We also need to understand that, for a lot of drivers, it's not always belligerent aggression that causes bad outcomes. Many of them just don't know what to do around cyclists. It's not really taught in driver's ed, and people learn bad habits from each other out on the road. So that's another area we're exploring: teaching in driver's ed classes.

By the end of 2015, our club will have put on seven road skills clinics, four Wrench-It Series and five major rides — in addition to our other initiatives like our Ride Marshal program and involvement in cycling infrastructure improvements. Four of our board members have become LCIs (League Cycling Instructors) this year and we encourage other clubs to embrace education and encourage messaging about safe driving and safe cycling.

One of our goals with the PSA is to make a template for other cycling organizations. It takes some time, but anyone with a smartphone can make a PSA. Getting it on the air wasn't terribly difficult, either: We emailed local media and outlined some local and national stats, including the loss of 80 cyclists to vehicle collisions in the KC metro since 1991.

I'd also recommend other clubs and cycling organizations talk to each other. It's very easy to get in touch via social media these days. For instance, we've opened a channel to another club in Tyler, Texas (Bike Friendly Tyler), that is also actively advocating for safety, and shared ideas back and forth. Making efforts like this reminds us that we're not alone in safety concerns, and that there's strength in numbers.

HOW HAS THE PSA BEEN RECEIVED IN THE COMMUNITY?

We've had a lot of cyclists write to us, and comment at group rides that they've seen it and appreciate it. We're even getting feedback from non-cyclists, which is really the goal — to let drivers know that they also have a role in our safety. There are always going to be some aggressive drivers; we realize that we can't reach everyone. But if we can educate ourselves, and educate drivers (most of whom are willing to listen), we feel we can make major progress in reducing cyclist deaths and injuries due to traffic collisions.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE KANSAS CITY METRO BICYCLE CLUB AND SEE THE PSA AT WWW.KCMBC.ORG

2016 NATIONAL BIKE SUMMIT

Save the date for the 16th annual event!

Mark your calendars: The 2016 National Bike Summit & Women's Forum will be held in Washington, D.C., March 7-9.

The 16th annual gathering of bike advocates, industry leaders and congressional champions will again take place at the Renaissance Hotel in Downtown Washington, D.C.

The premier advocacy event of the year, the National Bike Summit unites the voices of bicyclists on Capitol Hill. The Summit has shown its real impact, leveraging increased investments in bicycling at the federal, state and local levels.

This year, with the theme of "Together We Lead," the Summit will activate and elevate leaders from all areas of the movement. The Summit will propel this unified and diverse voice for change on Capitol Hill and beyond.

This dynamic event includes keynote addresses from top government officials, members of Congress, and leaders from advocacy and industry; workshops that highlight innovative advocacy ideas and trends from around the country; and an organized Lobby Day to bring our message about the benefits of bicycling to our elected officials on Capitol Hill.

Join us March 7-9, in the nation's capital as we lead the movement into a new era. Register at bikeleague.org/summit.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT SUMMIT@BIKELEAGUE.ORG



WOMEN BIKE, WOMEN LEAD

League mini-grants produce new toolkits

Last year, the League's Women Bike program awarded \$3,000 in mini-grants to support new and growing programs that engage women in bicycling. This summer, two of those programs shared their lessons learned and published toolkits for other communities to replicate their successes.



Photo by David Koos

WOMEN BIKE, WOMEN LEAD

Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition + Multicultural Communities for Mobility

The goal of the Women Bike, Women Lead pilot program was to increase women's capacity to become community leaders by giving them a basic understanding of public policy; the relationship between biking, health, family and community; and the importance of coalitions for providing the support needed to do this work.

In October, Daniella Alcedo, of the Pomona Valley Bicycle Coalition chapter of LACBC, and Maria Sipin, of MCM, discussed how they were able to grow allies for the bicycle and pedestrian movement through women's leadership.

Watch the webinar recording and download the Women Bike, Women Lead toolkit at bit.ly/womenbike_womenlead



Damu Curtis

YOUTH SPOKESWOMEN MENTORSHIP

Bike Easy + NOLA Women on Bikes (New Orleans)

The aim of the Youth Spokeswomen Mentorship program was to increase the representation of women from diverse backgrounds in the bicycling community while cultivating paid leadership opportunities for youth in New Orleans.

In August, Marin Tockman, of NOLA Women on Bikes, and Virginia Brisley, of Bike Easy, presented their recommendations and lessons learned from working with youth leader Damu Curtis, including identifying a clear vision for the impact of project for both the organization and for the youth participant(s).

Watch the webinar recording and download the Youth Spokeswomen Mentorship toolkit at bit.ly/spokeswomen_mentorship

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Three new faces join the League Board of Directors

With immense gratitude for their years of service, we bid farewell this summer to several members of our Board of Directors, including **Jennifer Laurita**, **Alison Hill Graves**, and **Matt Moore**. To fill their seats, we were excited to welcome (and welcome back!) several new members, who will help lead the League in years to come.



Sam Adams is the former Mayor of Portland, Oregon. Now the director of the U.S. Climate Initiative at the World Resources

Institute, Adams leads WRI's efforts to analyze and develop new policies and

support coalitions that will encourage the United States' transition to a strong, low-carbon economy. As Mayor, and a member of the city council, Sam was a strong advocate for safe bicycling and pedestrian options. He helped expand Portland's bikeways system by 75 miles, and focused new investments — like the Bike Box Program — to address the 25 most dangerous streets and intersections for bike and pedestrians. He expanded the Safe Routes to School program and launched Portland's summer Sunday Parkways [Open Streets] program, which attracted nearly 110,000 participants in 2014 alone. In 2008, Portland was designated a Platinum-level Bicycle Friendly Community — one of only four in the country.



Ralph Monti is the President/CEO of Special Interest Media, Inc, an international media advisory firm. His distinctive global client list includes

consumer, business-to-business, and association publishers, as well as online companies. He has a diverse media career that includes launching an international magazine as an entrepreneur, leading the successful turnaround of two media companies, and consulting to the world's top media firms. He is the author of four non-fiction books and was awarded a Benjamin Franklin Award for excellence in career writing. He's created and led media launch sessions to groups of Chinese media professionals at the Univer-

LCI CORNER

Biking for Boomers

Reengaging a generation in cycling

Minnesotans know that their state is a great place to ride a bike. But, at the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota (BikeMN), we still see an opportunity for getting even more people riding.

One key demographic is adults aged 55 and older — a group in which the number of people *not* riding exceeds those who are riding. As Minnesota strives to become more bicycle-friendly, this cannot be ignored.

With that in mind, BikeMN launched a summer-long partnership with AARP Minnesota targeting this age group. The partnership included several pop-up tune-and-ride events, a Bike Basics for

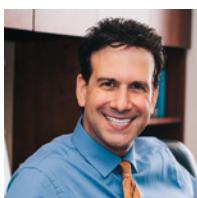
Boomers series, a Joy Ride endurance-building series, and more.

"We see these activities and this partnership as a way to grow confidence for older adults," said Dorian Grilley, executive director of BikeMN.

One of the key components is selecting the right instructor. The Bike Basics for Boomers instructor, Peter Breyfogle, is both a League Cycling Instructor and an AARP member. As a peer, he was the ideal leader for the course — and immediately put students at ease.

The course began with classroom discussion before moving into parking lot drills. After building students' confi-

sity of Peking in Beijing, China. Ralph is an avid bicyclist and a champion of bicycle advocacy and bicycle safety education. He's a past president of The Bicycle Touring Club of North Jersey, one of the nation's largest bicycling clubs, and is a League Cycling Instructor.



Ken Podziba is the President and CEO of Bike New York, the nonprofit bike education organization that organizes the TD Five

Boro Bike Tour in New York City — the world's biggest charitable ride. Bike New York also produces Bike Expo New York, the country's most-attended con-

sumer bike show. Podziba is most proud of the growth of Bike New York's education program — the largest of its kind in the country — which offers free bike education classes, after-school programs, and summer camp activities throughout the five boroughs of New York City.



Harry Brull returns to the League Board after serving from 2005 to 2014. Professionally, he served as Senior Vice President of

Personnel Decisions International (now part of Korn/Ferry), an international consulting firm grounded in Industrial/Organizational Psychology. During his 37-year tenure, he designed

selection and promotional processes for organizations ranging from Ford Motor Company to the Peace Corps. His particular areas of specialty are services to government and non-profit organizations. As an educator, he has taught kindergartners, undergraduates, and graduate students. He has delivered national and international addresses on a variety of topics. He currently lives in the small Colorado mountain town of Salida, which he and his wife discovered on the 2006 Ride the Rockies.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE LEAGUE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT WWW.BIKELEAGUE.ORG/BOARD

— Carolyn Szczepanski

dence, it ended with a ride led by each participant. One participant, LaVerne Gilliam (pictured right), noted that, even though she's been cycling for several years, she was surprised by how much she didn't know.

And the Bicycle Alliance learned a lot, as well. For instance, with this type of course, we discovered that a low student-to-teacher ratio is helpful for both students and instructors. "As an instructor, you must take time to address their specific concerns or you'll lose them," Breyfogle said.

In promoting the course, we also learned that, for this demographic,

word-of-mouth is a much more powerful tool than Facebook and other online approaches. In fact, we are focusing on word-of-mouth communication for the upcoming Joy Ride series and advance registration counts are already higher.

But the biggest lesson learned? Our partnership with AARP is and will continue to be a fantastic opportunity to re-engage an entire generation in cycling — and help more Minnesotans ride more often. Read more about BikeMN's work at www.bikemn.org.

JO OLSON IS THE COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER AT THE BICYCLE ALLIANCE OF MINNESOTA.



Participant LaVerne Gilliam

GIVING

Thank you to the following organizations and individuals who contributed to the League, above and beyond membership dues, from March to August 2015.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS:

For Andrew Wright of Bicycle Technologies International

100% Speedlab

Bicycle Technologies International

Candace Hintenach: *"In memory of a dear person who touched my life by working with him."*

Century Bank: *"Our hearts are broken at this tragic loss and our thoughts and deepest sympathy go out to Bicycle Technologies International and all of Andrew's family and friends."*

Commercial West Insurance Agency

JenkinsGavin Inc

New Mexico Spokettes Racing Team

SRAM: *"Our deepest sympathies. Andrew will be missed!"*

\$5,000 +

Organizations

New Belgium Brewing Co.

Individuals

Jim Spann & Gail Copus Spann

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Organizations

Baltimore Bicycling Club

Fox Valley Bicycle & Ski

Gainesville Cycling Club

Perimeter Bicycling Association of America, Inc.

Rolf Prima Wheel Systems

Santa Rosa Cycling Club

Individuals

Les Case and family

Ethan Grossman

\$500 - \$1,000

Organizations

Evanston Bicycle Club

PedalMN

The Sales Factory

White Clay Bicycle Club

Individuals

Anonymous

Guy Babineau

Larry Mysz

Roanne Sones

Sundback-Owens Family

\$100 - \$499

Organizations

Arkansas Bicycle Club

Bull Shifters Bicycle Club

Mohawk-Hudson Cycling Club

Peninsula Bicycling Association

Sun City Cyclers

Twilio

Westerville Bicycle Club

Individuals

Karen Adam and family

Anonymous

Anonymous

Anonymous

Leslie Arminski

Rob Attack

Susan Barrows

Stuart Bauchner

Larry Beane

David Berning

Robert Blanchard

William Bloxom

Spencer Borden

B. Bowers

Donald Briggs

Randall Brodersen

Michael Brown

Matt Brown

Maggie Burgett and family

Russ Buschert and family

Joseph Calabro

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John Cinatl

David Cole

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Wendell Dilling

C. Eric Eades

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William Hartong

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Stephen Hiltner

Hollingshead Family

Eric Holtz

Greg Houston

George Ingram

Dale Johnson

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BEYOND CITY LIMITS

Los Angeles advocates work to build capacity, leadership and equity in LA's Southeast Cities

BY CAROLYN SZCZEPANSKI



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY BICYCLE COALITION

Like many young boys, Baru Sanchez wanted to be like his big brother. Growing up, Sanchez watched his sibling catch air on his BMX bike, doing tricks that made Sanchez aspire to ride, too. When he was 12 years old, Sanchez's family moved to the City of Cudahy, a small but dense community of 24,000 people in southeast Los Angeles County. Again, like so many young boys, he explored his new neighborhood on his bike, until he entered high school.

Now, more than a decade later, Baru Sanchez is back on two wheels — and he's the one hoping to inspire and empower others to get out and ride in a city that's been overlooked for cycling infrastructure and undermined by government corruption.

Sanchez isn't one to sidestep a challenge. He's the third of five children, the first to graduate high school and, after getting a college degree, worked his way up to senior auditor at an area accounting firm. In 2013, when he was just 25 years old, he pledged to put those skills to work for his city, which was rebuilding after an FBI bribery sting that brought down the city's former mayor, a councilman and the director of code enforcement.

In Cudahy, more than 90 percent of the population is Latino and 30 percent live below the poverty line. In addition to rent-controlled housing and accountable government, one way Sanchez wants to uplift his community is through better biking. And he's working with the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition to authentically engage his fellow residents in that effort.

Like Sanchez, the LACBC seeks to serve the residents of Cudahy. With a mission that extends beyond the City of Los Angeles, LACBC's constituents are the more than 9 million people who live in the 88 incorporated municipalities that make up the entire county. Many of those cities are dense, diverse and full of folks who bike and walk. But especially in the southeast areas of the county, many of those communities — like Cudahy — don't have safe infrastructure for active transportation.

In Cudahy, more than 90% of the population is Latino and 30% live below the poverty line.

Why? According to Eric Bruins, LACBC's Planning and Policy Director, it comes down to planning — and the resources to do it. "One of the main things we've discovered is that there's so little planning done at the regional level and there are real gaps in LA County," he says. "Only one-third of the cities have bike plans — the well-resourced cities. The lower-resourced cities are not doing the planning to plug into the region as to what their needs are... So we've developed partnerships that are really geared toward capacity-building to provide resources to local cities to make them more competitive for state programs."

In 2014, the LACBC got a "Big Ideas" grant from Advocacy Advance — a partnership of the League and the Alliance for Biking & Walking — to support this critical work. Their goal: To create active

transportation master plans for five cities in the southeast Los Angeles County area (Bell, Bell Gardens, Commerce, Cudahy, Vernon) so they'd be eligible and competitive for infrastructure and programmatic grants.

That funding leveraged additional dollars from the Annenberg Foundation, which paid for a grant writer. But LACBC knew they couldn't build a bicycle-friendly future from the confines of a city hall conference room. They needed to get the community involved.

Bryan Moller knows those communities well; the LACBC's Policy and Outreach Coordinator grew up biking and skateboarding in Bell. Over the course of several months in early 2015, Moller helped to organize a series of community bike rides that partnered with local organizations in the target cities, including the LA River Revitalization Corporation and East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice. They distributed fliers in Spanish and English, inviting residents to ride and share what would improve their experiences bike, walking and taking transit.

Las ciudades de Bell, Bell Gardens, Commerce, Cudahy, Maywood y Vernon quieren saber su opinion sobre como hacer mas facil y mas seguro andar en bici, ser peaton, y como mejorar el acceso al transporte publico. Unase a nosotros en estos paseos para explorar su comunidad y aprender como participar.

The cities of Bell, Bell Garden, Commerce, Cudahy, Maywood and Vernon want to hear from you on how to make it easier and safer for you to walk, bike and access transit. Join us on these rides to explore your community and learn how to get involved.

During the rides, participants discussed key questions like, how can we improve access to the Los Angeles River from our communities and close the gap to downtown LA? How can walking and biking support our bigger goals of creating a healthier, safer and more livable southeast region? How can biking and walking connect people and places that make our neighborhoods unique?

That input was also gathered through a two-page survey, also conducted in Spanish and English. "It was really robust outreach," Moller says.

And even Moller was somewhat surprised by the response. "In Latino cul-

ture, it's not necessarily positive that you take the bus or you bike places," he says. "There's the perception that people bike because they have no other means. But everyone was really into it. These cities have some of the highest walking, biking and transit commuting numbers in LA County, so it was super exciting that this could really set the tone for a region-wide conversation."

We started doing a monthly ride to get awareness out there that the city was applying for grants for bike lanes and Safe Routes to School, so we were building that bicycle community now rather than later.

Sanchez was eager to play a leadership role. Having attended California State University, Long Beach, he saw the im-

pact the bike lanes in that Bronze Bicycle Friendly Community had on the community — and local businesses. He saw cycling as not only a means for his residents to get out of Cudahy to access services across the region, but also to celebrate and elevate the strengths *within* his community. And he recognized the importance of involving residents before the paint hit the pavement.

"We started doing a monthly ride to get awareness out there that the city was applying for grants for bike lanes and Safe Routes to School, so we were building that bicycle community now rather than later — so we have that community ready to use those bike lanes," he says.

One thing that became clear to Sanchez from the community rides is that residents of Cudahy don't just want a means to get from point A to point B. Parents want to enjoy open spaces with their children, he says. Families want to spend time together doing healthy activities, like biking.

That broad spectrum of potential

City of Cudahy Council member, Baru Sanchez





Bryan Moller, LACBC Policy & Outreach Coordinator



Eric Bruins, LACBC Planning & Policy Director



Tamika Butler, LACBC Executive Director

riders not only made it easier to find allies among his colleague within the City of Cudahy, but also inspired Sanchez to think about even bigger collaborations. He's reached out to elected officials in neighboring municipalities, developing a coalition of southeast leaders.

"It's small cities thinking big," he says.

Tamika Butler, LACBC's Executive Director, says collaborating with leaders like Sanchez has inspired them to think bigger — and more intentionally — about the scope of their work as an organization, as well. "For me, it's part of the reason equity has become such a clear front runner as one of our principles," she says. "Our work in the Southeast Cities is on the forefront of that in bike advocacy." And Sanchez has been leading that pack.

"Councilmember Sanchez has been a shining example of not only talking the talk, but riding the ride and really being there with us," she says. "I think the elected officials vested in this are all about community pride and community improvement. What's been really impressive here is the community engagement is genuine and being led by elected officials from and with the community. That really brings authenticity on each of these rides. Members of the community are there, they're talking about what's happening

and what's not happening and feel like they're being listened to."



What's been really impressive here is the community engagement is being led by elected officials from and with the community. That really brings authenticity on each of these rides. Members of the community are there, they're talking about what's happening and what's not happening and feel like they're being listened to.

"That community engagement impacts our ability to think regionally," she continues. "Sometimes, for policy's sake, people want issues to end at the city limits. But that's what's great about these

rides; during the course of the ride you're very rarely in just one city."

The course of LACBC's work in the Southeast Cities, Bruins points out, has really just begun. A key lesson learned for other advocates: Especially when you're building trust in a new community, it takes time, energy and resources to do this work.

"We haven't cracked the code on outreach and engagement," Bruins says, "but we've got a good start. Now we're building deeper relationships with partners and local elected officials to establish a more regular presence in the community moving forward. The funding that we got from Advocacy Advance allowed us to dip our toe in. It's going to take a lot more resources to sustain it and build long-term capacity in the region."

Sanchez, for one, is in it for the long term. "I've been to Amsterdam and I'm not saying Cudahy is going to be there soon," he says, with a laugh, "but I do foresee a future with more bicycling."

READ MORE ABOUT LACBC AT WWW.LA-BIKE.ORG.
LEARN MORE ABOUT ADVOCACY ADVANCE GRANTS AT WWW.ADVOCACYADVANCE.ORG.

LACBC staff photos by Serena Grace

ONE FINE DAY

Boise becomes America's Bicycle Capital for 24 hours of bike-friendly fun

BY JIMMY HALLYBURTON

I was walking up the empty concrete steps of the capitol building with a megaphone slung across my shoulder when the clock struck midnight.

My heart racing, my hands shaking, I turned around to face the now peaceful streets of Boise and its illuminated skyline. Voided from the noise and movement of daytime, it looked like an empty notebook, waiting for a new chapter of limitless potential to be written.

Slowly raising the megaphone to my lips, I took a deep breath and broke the silence: "With absolutely no authority whatsoever, I would like to proclaim

May 7, 2015, as the day Boise first became the Bicycle Capital of America!" Our 24-hour pedal-powered journey of transformation had begun.

With absolutely no authority whatsoever, I proclaim May 7, 2015, the day Boise first became the Bicycle Capital of America!

Slowly but surely, we would attempt to create a movement to put Boise on a path to become the Bicycle Capital of America.

The Boise Bicycle Project (BBP) has always prided itself on being an organization that shoots for the stars; we've never seen the point in aiming lower. When the wheels started turning in 2007, we had a vision that Boise could one day become the Bicycle Capital of America — and that we would create the spark and fan the flames to get it there.

For eight years we'd been doing our darnedest to turn that vision into a reality and the fire has grown steadily. Boise had become a better place to bicycle for all of its citizens. We were proud of our work, but ready for something bigger.



When the clock struck midnight



the mission began!

We were ready for a wildfire!

To get this wildfire started, we decided to create a living, breathing picture of what Boise would look like if it were the Bicycle Capital of America. If people could experience it and see the physical change, we believed the heat of enthusiasm would consume them.

The first step was to get people riding. So we created a social media challenge for individuals and local businesses to go #CarFreeForBBP on May 7.

Similar to the "Ice Bucket Challenge," once called out, it was your duty to pass the challenge on to three other individu-

als. If you were called out as a business, you were challenged to pass it on to your staff and three other businesses. Our goal was to create a social media frenzy that would get more people riding on May 7 than any other city in the country and any other day in Boise's history.

Next, we needed to create real permanent change, and we needed to make it visible to the community. While people were going #CarFreeForBBP, on May 7, we (Cass Jones and I) would be pedaling alongside them for 24 straight hours, creating community-transforming events on the hour, every hour. For those sit-

ting at home or in their offices, we would broadcast the entire journey through social media, keeping them involved every pedal stroke of the way.

While people were going #CarFreeForBBP, we would be pedaling alongside them for 24 straight hours, creating events on the hour every hour.



Jimmy Hallyburton

As midnight approached, the community was ready and waiting to see if we were actually going to pull it off. More than 18,000 people had watched our #CarFreeForBBP challenge video, hundreds of individuals and businesses had taken the pledge, and new challenge videos were popping up on Facebook every minute.

It was going viral!

Midnight had struck, our Bicycle Capital of America proclamation was made, and Cass and I jogged down the capitol steps to our bicycles. From this point on, we were on the clock, on a mission, with no time to waste.

In the next 24 hours we would pedal 116 miles — 80 with a torn Achilles tendon — through unpredicted frigid temperatures and eight hours of pouring rain. Despite bicycle problems and borderline hypothermia, we didn't miss a single stop.

» We delivered 26 bicycles, helmets, and safety lessons to kids in need.

» We installed bike racks, free locking systems, community repair stands, and bicycle art all over town.

» We provided free breakfast, lunch, yoga, music, bike repair, and art shows for commuters.

» We installed new bike lanes and single-track trail along popular bike routes.

We would pedal 116 miles through unpredicted frigid temperatures and eight hours of pouring rain. Despite bicycle problems and borderline hypothermia, we didn't miss a single stop.

» We delivered meals on two wheels, bicycles to local charitable programs, and a Boise City Council Member and her family to the airport via pedicab.

» We handed out 44 free bicycle lights to un-lit riders.

» We led hundreds in our Pedal Powered Parade led by the Chief of Police.

» We introduced the community to the new bike share system.

» We conducted PSAs on radio, on live television, and in studio.

» We never stopped pedaling.

When the clock struck midnight, Cass and I climbed back up the capitol steps, this time a little more slowly, a lot more exhausted, but just as excited about the future of bicycling in Boise. This time the streets weren't empty. We were surrounded by bicyclists. *"Now we have a new challenge for the community: A challenge to not stop until we become the permanent Bicycle Capital of America. Thank you, Boise. Ride on!"*

JIMMY HALLYBURTON IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE BOISE BICYCLE PROJECT, BOISEBICYCLEPROJECT.ORG



Cass Jones



RIDING RED

Utah's rise as a rural, conservative — and bike friendly state

Bicycling is growing not just in dense cities and urban centers. It's blossoming in rural states, too. States with more fiscally conservative governments are investing in making bicycling safer and more accessible. For instance, Utah has rocketed from the middle of the pack in the League's Bicycle Friendly State ranking to the No. 5 Bicycle Friendly State in 2015. How are they doing it? We spoke with Phil Sarnoff, Executive Director of Bike Utah, to learn more about the Beehive State's rapid growth.

UTAH IS GENERALLY A RURAL, POLITICALLY CONSERVATIVE STATE. HOW HAS THAT SHAPED YOUR ADVOCACY?

Utah is fiscally conservative, so a good portion of our advocacy focuses on the economic benefits of bicycling. This approach hits on the air quality, economic development, and health issues facing Utah — and how bicycling can be supportive in each of these areas.

Utah is fiscally conservative, so a good portion of our advocacy focuses on the economic benefits bicycling can bring to the state.

The topography of the state makes many areas susceptible to temperature inversions and air pollution, predominantly from motor vehicles. Elected officials are recognizing that our air quality is negatively influencing the state's ability to attract new businesses and to encourage tourism. We work closely with transit agencies and air quality organizations to incorporate bicycling as part of multi-modal solutions for residents and visitors.

Utah is often recognized as one of the healthier states, but still faces the same problems and costs associated with sedentary lifestyles. We're actually commissioning a study to look at the economic, environmental, and health benefits that biking and walking bring to the state. This will show that further investment in bicycling and walking make good economic sense on all of these levels.

IN WHAT WAYS HAS THAT GEOGRAPHIC AND POLITICAL IDENTITY INHIBITED AND AIDED YOUR WORK?

Geographically, our biggest challenge is weighing how we allocate our resources. The vast majority of Utah's population resides directly north and south of Salt Lake City. Focusing on this area would give us the biggest impact based on our time and budget. But, if we want to become a state where bicycling is a choice for everyone, we need to focus on working with all communities regardless of size and location. Politically, we would like to have a better working relationship with our U.S. Senators and Representatives. Surveys in Utah have shown that people want more places to bike and walk, but this information doesn't seem to be filtering up, despite our best efforts.

The best thing about Utah is the vast number of places where you can participate in outdoor activities. People here are used to being outside, which makes bicycling for recreation or transportation not that much of a stretch. We are known nationally and internationally as a great place to ride and this is starting to generate support across the state from communities who see bicycling as an economic development opportunity. Being fiscally conservative, investing in bicycling has a high return on investment when compared to other ways public funds might be spent.

We haven't found political affiliation



Photo courtesy of City of Salt Lake City

to be a defining characteristic that has made anyone anti-bike. Our working relationships with most people within the state have been overwhelmingly positive. For the most part, it seems as though people want Utahans to be prosperous and healthy. Our role as an advocacy organization is to show everyone, regardless of political affiliation, that bicycles can be supportive of the same goals with far less investment and more long-term gains.

HOW HAS UTAH GROWN IN THE PAST, SAY, 10 YEARS WHEN IT COMES TO BEING A BICYCLE FRIENDLY STATE?

The most notable difference is how enthusiasm has grown in smaller, more rural communities. Ten years ago, much of the bicycle focus was on Salt Lake City, Moab, and Park City because these areas are well known for great road and mountain biking. In addition, many areas of the state are estimated to double in population over the next 50 years, which has elevated the level of discussion regarding quality of life. Bicycling has become part of this conversation and will continue to be a critical piece moving forward.

— By Liz Murphy



TOUR DE FORCE

Behind the scenes of a festival that's becoming a massive funder of bike advocacy

BY CAROLYN SZCZEPANSKI

Beer, bikes and bemusement. That's the tagline for New Belgium Brewing Company's traveling festival, the Tour de Fat. But, over the past 16 years, it's become so much more than an amusing vaudevillian celebration of cycling and suds. The Tour created by the Platinum-level Bicycle Friendly Business has become a significant funder of local bicycle advocates in communities across the country.

One of the main ring leaders in this philanthropic circus is Michael Craft. We spoke with him about the evolution of the beloved festival and what it takes to put on the production that, to date, has raised more than \$4 million for local bike advocacy groups.

APPARENTLY NEW BELGIUM WAS CONCEIVED ON A BIKE SEAT? TELL US ABOUT THAT.

Our co-founder was riding his bike through Europe and in Belgium he was on a fat-tired bike, a mountain bike, when he fell in love with the Belgian beer culture. He wanted to bring that Belgian-style beer back to the States. His neighbor at the time was an artist and when he was talking about the trip he realized that a cruiser bike image should be the thing we put on our flagship beer.

It's all kind of a coincidence, like it was meant to be. It wasn't some strategic marketing plan 24 years ago to put a bike on one of our beers; it was just an artistic interpretation of a trip done by bicycle. It's certainly done a lot of things for us. The fact that bicycling folks would be drawn to us because of that brand image is something that no one knew 24 years ago. And it's become such an iconic symbol of sustainability that we've gotten dedicated beer drinks and lovers turned on to bicycling. And a lot of employees are applying to the brewery because of the cool beer that's got a bike on it. But it all started from a very genuine love for the bike.

SO HOW DID TOUR DE FAT GET STARTED?

Well, the idea was that all these cyclists had been so good to the brand and the beer — that their finding a home with this beer has given us the opportunity to have a philanthropic arm. Being a business for good, a business of change is part of our core values. And the Tour de Fat was something

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY NEW BELGIUM BREWING CO.

BICYCLE FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

that could make a splash, that we could make fun. And it's been an exciting evolution. It wasn't as popular 16 years ago. It was kind of like a couple of guys with a couple of kegs and a couple of fun bikes in the park. This year in Washington, D.C., we had 9,000 people show up and generated \$65,000 in five hours.

WHAT MAKES TOUR DE FAT UNIQUE?

You know, bicycling in particular can sometimes be seen as this condescending self-righteous mode for people who don't ride. The way that we've done it is to make the bicycle fun and inclusive rather than exclusive. We really frame Tour de Fat as being pro-bike and not anti-car. We're promoting everyone who bikes. No matter how much or how little you ride a bike, riding a bike is good.

We've really been successful in talking about how much happier you are when you're riding a bike and making a festival that is different than anything else. It's really a bike festival with beer, rather than a beer festival with bikes. It's important to us that we've turned people on to riding more and driving less and we have all these wonderful nonprofit partners.

SO IN D.C. YOU PARTNER WITH THE WASHINGTON AREA BICYCLIST ASSOCIATION. IS THAT HOW IT WORKS IN EVERY CITY?

Yeah. Partnership is how this has grown. It's how can we raise money and at the same time turn people on to our beer. Basically a generic model is we partner with about three bike-specific nonprofits in each city. They can be from a co-op, from the state organization or local advocacy chapter. The beer is the biggest fundraising arm of the Tour de Fat. Legally, we can't give beer to nonprofits for free, so we sell kegs of beer to them for a very minimal cost. The local groups rally the troops to volunteer, which can be anywhere from 350 to 600 volunteers per show. In 2007, we did 13 shows and raised about \$250,000. In 2014, we did 10 shows and raised \$625,000. By the end of 2015, we'll have surpassed the \$4 million mark for Tour de Fat.

THERE ARE SOME CITIES – LIKE D.C. – THAT YOU'VE RETURNED TO FOR SEVERAL YEARS. HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO SEE THE IMPACT OF THE FESTIVAL?

We just had our 100th show this season and the popularity of it has skyrocketed. Every year more and more people are coming and bringing their friends and we hear countless stories about the impact it has. Every city we go back to it feels like there's more infrastructure and it's amazing to think that it's thanks, in part, to the money raised at Tour de Fat. We trust that the nonprofits will spend the money where it makes the most sense. We don't care if it sharpens pencils or hires staff; we trust that they know what to spend the money on.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE ASPECT OF THE TOUR FESTIVITIES?

One aspect that's really stood out is called the Car for Bike Trade. In every city for the past four or five years someone gives up their car and we give them \$2,200 to spend at a local bike shop to build themselves the perfect commuter rig. We haven't





10 COMMANDMENTS OF TOUR DE FAT

- » Put no means of transport before thy bike.
- » Honor all other bikes. All bikes are good bikes, and all those who ride them are good people.
- » May every generation come forth.
- » Thou shalt come as a participant not a spectator: It's a costumed celebration of human-powered transportation.
- » Thou shalt not bring booze; but enjoy the supplied malted adult refreshments responsibly.
- » New Belgium shalt not profit: Our goal is to raise money for bicycle and environmental charities. On any other day, dressing like a freak and hanging out in the park with thine buddies might be reason for being called a Philanderer, but today thou ist a Philanthropist!
- » Remember the purpose, and bring not your pooches.
- » Keep the day true with thy good juju: The ride is free, but we suggest a \$5 donation to the good bike advocates who put it on for you.
- » Thou shalt rise early. Once we're full, we will handle overflow like a bar: one in, one out.
- » Thou shalt not steal thy neighbors' bike.

THE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN BICYCLISTS

The League of American Bicyclists' mission is to lead the movement to create a Bicycle Friendly America for everyone. As leaders, our commitment is to listen and learn, define standards and share best practices to engage diverse communities and build a powerful, unified voice for change. The League represents the interests of the nation's 57 million bicyclists. With a current membership of 300,000 affiliated cyclists, including 21,000 individuals and 700 organizations, the League works to bring better bicycling to your community. Contact League officers, directors or staff at League of American Bicyclists, 1612 K Street, NW, Suite 308, Washington, DC 20006-2850, 202-822-1333; bikeleague@bikeleague.org, fax: 202-822-1334.

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AMERICAN BICYCLIST MAGAZINE

Editor and designer: Carolyn Szczepanski

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missed a show yet. We take the car and a national charity sells it and that money goes back to the nonprofit. They pledge to live car-free for a year and we ask them to blog about it. I remember there was a mother who said, "I've got two kids and this is going to be really tough for me, but I'm up for the challenge."

Almost all of them are still riding and it's started this whole network of car traders, building that culture of car-free folks. It's really about getting people to feel safe and inspiring them to make a lifestyle change. And the biggest take-away for me has been the dramatic increase in the popularity of bicycling. It's become a real vehicle for transportation.

TOUR DE FAT JUST FEELS... DIFFERENT THAN ANY OTHER BIKE EVENT I'VE EVER ATTENDED. WHAT'S YOUR SPECIAL SAUCE (ASIDE FROM THE BEER, OF COURSE!)?

You know, I feel really strongly about bike advocacy. I haven't missed a National Bike Summit in five or six years, and I do a lot of state summits. I so appreciate the passion and the love but I think a mentality

shift has to happen. In the advocacy family everyone's got something they're super passionate about but I think that, when we're talking about changing the world by bike, we can't ignore the *fun* element. We didn't want to start a festival that would guilt people into riding bicycles. We also didn't want people to feel guilty about when they don't or can't ride their bicycles. We just want to inspire people to ride.

WHAT'S UP WITH THE COSTUMES?

We decided a long time ago that when everyone's a freak, nobody's a freak. There's something about Halloween, which is my favorite holiday, where you get to be a superhero or whatever you want to be. We really encourage that. Some cities take it really far. Boise is one of the best; everyone comes in costume. Fort Collins is really good too, and D.C. is catching on. I think it's the whole mentality of getting out of how you are day-to-day, wearing your underwear outside your pants.

We also have a slow ride race (pictured below) that's always classic. The idea there



is to take time in your life and appreciate your surroundings.

WHAT ABOUT ALL THE FREAK BIKES? DO YOU MAKE THOSE AT NEW BELGIUM?

All the bikes are iconic. They're pieces of art that our carnies worked so hard to make. And the rideable art is really focused on re-teaching people the mechanics of how a bicycle works. It's not just something you jump on and go down the street.

And there's been some art in the parades like you wouldn't believe. In Fort Collins, there was an old Red Baron-style airplane made entirely from recycled New Belgium boxes — powered by a bike. There's always Pee-wee Herman creativity and I've seen a buffalo, a rhinoceros... Tour de Fat has inspired so much creativity.

HOW MANY FOLKS AT NEW BELGIUM ARE TASKED WITH MAKING TOUR DE FAT HAPPEN?

There's seven of us. We have an operations manager who handles the police security,

parks permits and distributor stuff. My job is advocacy relationships and serving as the communications conduit between the organization advocates and volunteers.

We have a creative manager who handles the stages, the performers, and the band. He created the vaudevillian traveling bicycle circus that we are today.

We also have three guys we call carnies who are full-time at the brewery who build and weld and create the art. Almost everything at Tour De Fat is handmade, repurposed and recycled. Everything on the stages, all those wooden signs, everything is hand, custom-made by these three guys.

SO THE REST OF THE PEOPLE THAT PUT ON THIS MASSIVE EVENT ARE VOLUNTEERS? WOW.

Yeah, in some cases 600 to 700 volunteers. Every person that's helping out in the parade. Set up. Tear down. It's 100 percent volunteer. It could not happen without that nonprofit relationship. We all come together to raise a lot of mon-

ey — and every penny stays with these folks. A lot of people don't know that, but we're the No. 1 fundraiser for 95 percent of the nonprofits we work with.

YOU'VE BEEN DOING THIS FOR AWHILE. WHAT KEEPS YOU EXCITED ABOUT TOUR DE FAT?

Every show is different and unique, which is fun. Every venue is different. And we see more people coming from different cities to see a Tour de Fat in a different city. It's getting bigger, exponentially bigger. We had over 25,000 in Fort Collins at Tour de Fat this year. Granted, that's our backyard and we were doing it for the 16th year but that day alone raised over \$100,000 for our bike partners. It's gotten to be a philanthropic machine all because we sell beer and make people happy and celebrate the bicycle.

LEARN MORE ABOUT TOUR DE FAT, INCLUDING HOW TO APPLY FOR 2016, AT NEWBELGIUM.COM/TOUR-DE-FAT



2015 CITIES

- » Washington, D.C.
- » Durham, NC
- » Chicago, IL
- » Twin Cities, MN
- » Boise, ID
- » Fort Collins, CO
- » Denver, CO
- » San Francisco, CA
- » San Diego, CA
- » Tempe, AZ

STARTING FROM SCRATCH

Students at Iowa State University unite across disciplines to design a bike sharing system for their campus

BY MARK KARGOL

The spokes began to align in 2013. That spring, Jordan Maurice, a senior in industrial design, conducted a transportation study of the Iowa State University (ISU) campus as his senior project. With real-world implications for his fellow Cyclones, he presented his findings to the Government of the Student Body (GSB) and school administrators. Lo and behold, just a few months later, the President of the GSB added a bike share project to the list of sustainability initiatives for ISU.

Of course, as Maurice's research showed, a bike share system would address more than environmental stewardship. Enrollment had increased by nearly 6,000 students (16%) since Maurice's

initial study and the campus was facing overcrowding issues. And, with more people traveling by bike and on foot, boosting safety for pedestrians and cyclists had become a key priority, as well.

But the school took an innovative path to making that vision a reality. Rather than hiring a consultant or looking to outside vendors, ISU brought together dozens of students in a number of different disciplines to conceive, design and build a bike share system of their very own — from scratch.

BUILDING ON A RICH HISTORY OF BICYCLING

In the 1970s and 1980s, Ames, Iowa, was home to the Raleigh/Levi cycling team based out of Michael's Cyclery, produc-

ing riders like Andy Hampsten, Connie Carpenter, and Steve Tilford. Michael's Cyclery also provided mechanics for the 1984 Olympics.

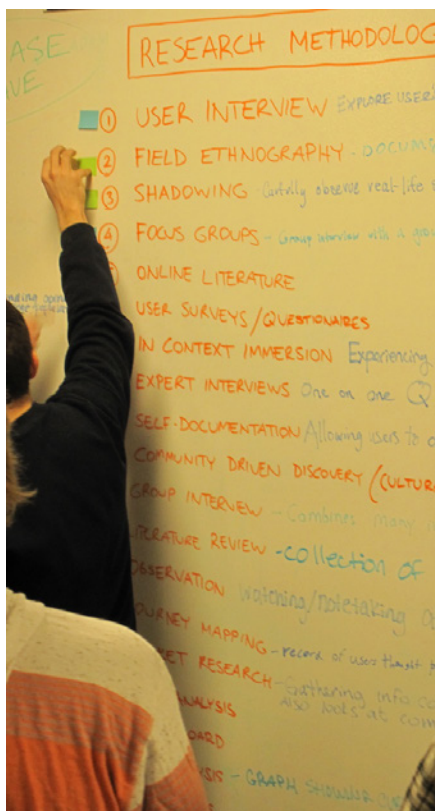
Recently, a trail network has been built around central Iowa with more than 600 miles, including the High Trestle Trail. And, of course, any talk about bicycling in Iowa has to include RAGBRAI, which has included Ames along its route four times. This history, and a campus where students are looking for convenient ways to get around, has created a very active cycling environment.

A BIKE SHARE BUILT FOR CYCLONES

The Industrial Design Department led the charge to engage that excitement in



Initially a bike seems like a pretty simple machine, but it's the complexity of the bicycle that makes it a really great area for students to study. You have motion, structures, friction, dynamic and static loading, aesthetics, and ergonomics. Add in electronics and networking for the bike share and students get a manageable but complex problem to be solved.



the academic setting to create real-world results. The department proposed to top administrators a studio class to design the bike share system for campus.

We found the administration and facilities on campus had been discussing many of the topics that we addressed in the class — but didn't have the answers. By bringing these problems to the students they were able to develop practical solutions and invest in improving the campus for the future.

BUILDING THE BASE

In that first semester, we set the framework for everything that would come after. We worked alongside the students but asked them to research existing bike share systems and find out what is working well and what the problems are.

To help with this we brought in industry experts from SRAM, Salsa, and All-City Cycles. Students visited the QBP headquarters in Bloomington, MN, and the SRAM headquarters in Chicago, IL, giving them the chance to speak face-to-face with designers, engineers, and prod-

uct managers about ideas they had for the ISU Bike Share system.

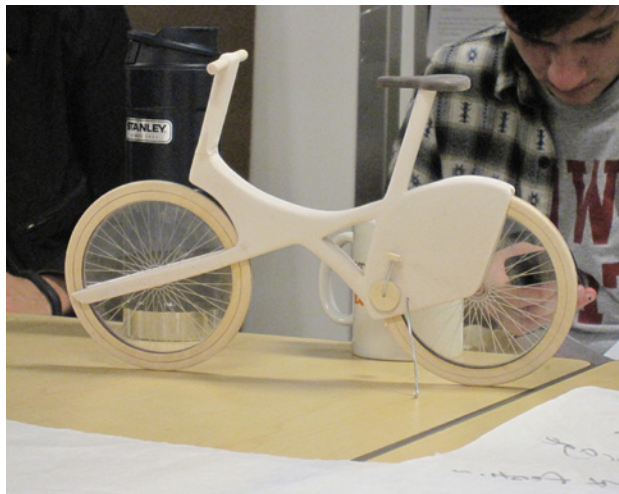
The biggest surprise for me was the students overall lack of experience working with or even thinking about bicycles. Each semester the students would have to take several weeks just getting oriented with how a bicycle works and the parts necessary.

Initially, the bicycle seems to be a pretty simple machine, but it's the complexity of the bicycle that makes it a really great area for students to study. You have motion, structures, friction, dynamic and static loading, aesthetics, and ergonomics — add in electronics and networking for the bike share and students get a manageable but complex problem to be

solved. This fits well with an academic structure and the 16 weeks of a semester.

By the end of that first semester, the first group of students had identified issues with current systems, and proposed some great solutions for problems that all bike share systems face. They then created three conceptual bicycle and dock designs, completed initial planning for locations and quantities, and sketched out phone app designs.

In Fall 2014, it was time to bring in students from other departments to round out the effort. Students from mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, computer engineering, computer science, and community and regional planning joined the project.



CYCLES OF COLLABORATION

Giving students the opportunity to work on a real-world project with students from a wide range of majors caused some growing pains at first, as students discovered that not everyone works or communicates in the same way. But, by the end of each semester, the students were able to effectively communicate and work alongside each other regardless of their major to realize their place in the process and the interdependence to develop the bike share system to where it is today.

One of the students commented that he has had four internships and this class taught him more about working in the real world than any of those internships. That says a lot about the value of this project in the academic development of the students involved.

It was also critically important for all of the teams to work together without preconceptions of ego and stereotypes of what an industrial designer or engineer is like. All teams and individuals had to respect the experience and knowledge of the others.

As for the instructors, we had to keep tabs on the teams. We had to let them mess up. But we also had to keep them on task.

To do that we constantly emphasized that this is a system within a larger system. It takes everyone — and everyone has to leave their ego at the door because the leading team will change as the project matures.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

In the second semester, students started to work on the nuts and bolts of the system itself, with different departments tackling critical tasks within their field.

Community & Regional Planning

- » Completed a comprehensive evaluation of campus bicycling conditions and created a detailed analysis of docking station locations, and quantities of bikes and docks.
- » Conducted a multi-phase plan for improvement of bicycle infrastructure on campus, including a proposed dedicated 15-foot-wide bike-ped pathway running across campus, bike boxes at intersections, repainting of sharrows, new signage, extension of existing bike paths, and removal of on-street parking on one of the most congested roads on campus to allow for a dedicated two-lane bike path. This became a document with more than 300 pages!

Electrical Engineering

- » Worked on electronics to make the bike share locking mechanism, and check-out system.
- » Ensured the power supply would work on a single dock module rather than being linked to a kiosk, allowing the system to be scaled at any location by adding or subtracting any number of docks.
- » Explored various power sources for the docking stations, including solar power, to allow stations to be installed in remote areas where power may not be available.

Computer Science

- » Created a software specification for the administration side of the system, and the phone app,

including various user and administrative requirements, and additional features for creating various promotional opportunities on the phone app.

Computer Engineering

- » Developed software allowing the tracking of bicycles, dock information, and user information for accountability of the bikes.
- » Created software to interface with the campus wireless internet system, creating a secure means of data transfer, and the administrative interface of the software.

Mechanical Engineering Department

- » Took several ideas and designs from the previous semester and brought them together into a working bicycle, allowing students to understand the impact of geometry on bike handling, as well as the importance of component selection.
- » Evaluated two of the frame designs based on strength and manufacturability.

Mechanical Engineering

- » Worked on the docking station design — including the interface between the dock and the bike — and created an innovative locking mechanism that allows for the bike to be returned to a station even if the stations are out of service due to a power outage.

SEEING RESULTS

The third semester of work began in January 2015. This class built on the work of the previous two semesters to refine and prototype a production-ready system. This system incorporates the physical requirements, materials, component speci-



fications, working electronics, software, bikes, dock, and other items to bring this to reality.

Students also developed a complete streets policy and design guide for the City of Ames and the Iowa State University Campus, planned a regional bicycle summit, and designed and constructed a bike shelter on campus made entirely from recycled materials. In addition, students worked with university personnel to complete the League's Bicycle Friendly University application.

Thanks to the commitment of the students and faculty to this project and its impact on sustainability on campus, the program received the 2014 Live Green Award for Excellence in Sustainability for Exceptional Leadership in Sustainability from Iowa State University.

Now, moving into the fourth semester of the project this fall, our focus is taking the working prototype that was developed in the spring semester and addressing some of the potential problems we've identified — and revising the hardware for production. The students are also further developing the software to incorporate a full stack of analytics and developing the mobile app for users of the system.

BENEFITS FOR ISU – AND BEYOND

The classes have produced some really great work. From initial concept development, phone applications, and redistribution planning, to the engineering and design of a bicycle that rides beautifully and, despite its weight, has riders commenting about how light it is. From a complete streets policy and campus infrastructure improvement plan, to a fully operational docking station with electronic lock, cloud-based software, and an RFID checkout system that interfaces with the bicycle. It's all an amazing accomplishment for students over a four-semester timeline.

This summer we were approached by the Iowa State University Research Park to discuss the possibility of a bike share on its campus. The University research park is in the midst of a 200-acre expansion that will include a 40-acre park and several new buildings. This park will include bike trails that will provide a critical link between Ames and the High Trestle Trail.

We are currently working on securing funding to have a pilot project operating when two new buildings open at the research park. This phase of the project will focus on providing a quick and convenient way to travel throughout the research park and to and from the main

The students at ISU love the school and the campus, and the opportunity to do this project has motivated them to produce professional-level solutions and documentation that will be used for years to come.

ISU campus. With talent being the No. 1 motivation for companies to locate in the research park, an efficient way for students to travel from campus to the research park is very important. Depending on funding, it's our desire to expand the system, not only throughout the ISU campus, but the City of Ames, as well.

The students at ISU love the school and the campus, and the opportunity to do this project has motivated them to produce professional-level solutions and documentation that will be used in future years to shape the campus.

MARK KARGOL IS A LECTURER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY MARK KARGOL.

AMBASSADORS OF STREET SAFETY

Statewide advocates aim to reduce bicycling fatalities with local focus

BY TOM HELD

When Anna Lardinois ventured to the Urban Ecology Center a few miles from her home in a busy Milwaukee neighborhood, she went to learn more about bicycling safely, never thinking that she was a small part of a \$2.5 billion federal initiative to reduce crashes and fatalities on roads.

Or that the class offered by the Wisconsin Bike Fed would transform her life.

Fear had limited the 44-year-old's bicycling to the two off-street paths easily accessible from her apartment, including one she reached only by driving her car.

"I wanted to be able to ride places, but didn't have the courage to do it," says Lardinois, who runs Gothic Milwaukee, a company that organizes historic walking tours of her home city. "I was afraid to ride on the street. I wanted to be a bike commuter, but I didn't have the confidence or the courage to do it."

Now, the theatrical former English teacher pedals Gothic promotional materials around the city on her Globe commuter bike, tours with a women's

riding club and bikes 15 miles to enjoy a favorite coffee shop.

The lack of confidence that limited Lardinois emanated from a lack of skill and knowledge, factors that hinder a good number of the estimated 2.5 million people who ride bikes in Wisconsin.

They also lead to unsafe riding and driving practices that contribute to crashes each year.

Reaching Anna Lardinois and thousands of others like her in-person is what separates the Bike Fed's Share & Be Aware program from other local and state-wide bicycling safety efforts around the country. From the North Woods to the urban centers, 12 Share & Be Aware Ambassadors teach safety and share-the-road lessons with thousands of people who bike, walk and drive. They educate at local events and community centers, and teach future motorists in driver's education classes.

In five years, the ambassadors have reached 45,000 people at events, another 13,000 at safety classes and nearly



seven million through media messages.

Their goal is to reduce crashes and fatalities involving people on bikes and on foot by five percent. By some measures, they have succeeded.

The Bike Fed launched the program in 2011, and the number of crashes involving people on bicycles has dropped 13 percent, from 1,173 in 2010 to 1,021 in 2013, according to an analysis of Department of Transportation Statistics conducted by a researcher at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. In 2014, Wisconsin recorded the lowest number



PHOTOS PROVIDED
BY THE WISCONSIN
BIKE FED



The goal of Share & Be Aware is to reduce crashes and fatalities involving people on bikes and on foot by five percent. By some measures, it has succeeded.



of people killed while bicycling in more than a decade. Unfortunately, the 13 fatalities in 2015 are evidence that the prior four last years may have represented a statistical outlier.

Dave Cieslewicz, in his second year as the Bike Fed's executive director, says the difficult 2015 on the roads for people biking in Wisconsin only reinforces the importance of the Share & Be Aware message and approach: reaching people who use all forms of transportation.

"Everybody has to share the road out there and any program that focuses exclusively on cyclists will come up short," Cieslewicz said. "That our program tries to reach everyone is very important."

Larry Corsi agrees. He oversees the Share & Be Aware program in his role as state program manager for the Bureau of Transportation Safety, a division within the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. He was impressed when Jessica Binder and Dave Schlabowske, managers at the Bike Fed, approached him with their plan in 2011.

Their goals and initiatives aligned with a new emphasis on bicyclist and pedestrian safety coming out of the U.S. Department of Transportation and the office of the Surgeon General. "The value is having more people spread across the state," Corsi says. "It allows us to be involved with more training and education. You never know how many people that has saved or how many crashes it has helped to eliminate. The more people you can train and educate, the better off you are."

The \$250,000 that funds the Bike Fed's efforts flows from the U.S. Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

through the Bureau of Transportation Safety and to the local work. The HSIP program distributes roughly \$2.5 billion per year for infrastructure projects and educational programs, providing a pool of money to support campaigns like Share & Be Aware in communities across the country.

Binder learned the basics of running a bicycling safety program in Chicago and brought the concept to Milwaukee when she joined the Bike Fed in 2004. Most significantly she recognized the importance of combining one-one-one or small-group interaction with a larger media campaign.

The Bike Fed spends part of its HSIP funding on billboards, flyers, an earned media specialist and a website — but Binder believes its message resonates strongest on the streets.

"The lesson of looking out for people bicycling and walking is most effective when someone talks to you about something local," Binder says. "That direct connection leads to greater impact and more change."

The local Ambassadors respond when a fatality or crash occurs in their area, and assess the location and contributing factors to target their message, whether it's a call for roadway improvements or more attentive driving, walking and bicycling.

The wide deployment makes the Share & Be Aware a challenge to manage at times. But a focus on communication, weekly staff conference calls and constant information exchange help to alleviate the potential chaos. Each of the ambassadors creates his or her own schedule of events and teaching sessions, giving them a closer connection to the

SHARE & BE AWARE

By the numbers (2011-2015)

5%

goal reduction
in bicycling &
walking fatalities



2.5 MILLION

estimated number of
bicyclists in the state
of Wisconsin



\$250,000

in funding from the
federal Highway Safety
Improvement Program

road users in their area. They also know more about the potential local hazards than a manager hundreds of miles away.

"The program relies on committed staff around the state," Binder says. "We have ambassadors in all corners who are passionate about walking and bicycling. They bring that passion to the work and make the program effective."

Binder was the passionate educator and advocate who greeted Lardinois when the nervous cyclist arrived at the Urban Ecology Center in May 2014, more than a thousand miles ago.

"I was a little intimidated when I got there," Lardinois recalls. "Everyone else was a more skilled rider, but everyone made me feel comfortable. They answered my questions. They could not have been nicer."

A short presentation on the rules of the road, hand signals and proper positioning led to maneuvers on the street: starting, stopping, looking back for traffic, making turns, building skills and confidence.

Lardinois is convinced that being there in person, being engaged in the process, helped her far more than an on-line tutorial.

"I've told a million people about this," she says. "So many people approach me and say 'I wish I could do what you're doing. I say, 'Anyone can do what I'm doing. Just go to this class.' This actually did change my life."

TOM HELD IS THE SHARE & BE AWARE MEDIA AMBASSADOR FOR THE WISCONSIN BIKE FED. LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SHARE & BE AWARE PROGRAM AT BIKEFED.ORG



» **12** Local Ambassadors
who provide in-person training and response to fatalities in their areas

» **13,000**
people trained on sharing the road strategies since 2011

» **45,000**
people reached by ambassadors at local events since 2011

» **7 MILLION**
people reached by Share & Be Aware media messages

BIKES FOR 'NEW MAINERS'

Bicycle coalition program helps refugees plant new roots in the Pine Tree state

BY SHOSHANA HOOSE



Mpunga Coco Kazadi

The seaside city of Portland, Maine — population 66,000 — has become home to thousands of immigrants from all over the world. During the past four decades, waves of refugees and other immigrants have arrived from Vietnam, Cambodia, Bosnia, Sudan, Somalia and many other countries. About a third of the students in the city's public schools now speak a language other than English at home.

Among the most recent arrivals are people fleeing repression and violence in central Africa. Many come to the United States on temporary visas and then seek asylum. They are not allowed to work for at least six months as they await initial processing of their cases. Some asylum seekers live in shelters, and most scrape by on very little money.

Over past decades, waves of refugees and other immigrants have arrived from Vietnam, Cambodia, Bosnia, Sudan, Somalia and many other countries... Last year, the coalition partnered with local organizations serving immigrants to launch a pilot project called Bikes for New Mainers.

Two years ago, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine began receiving requests to donate bikes left over from its annual swap to asylum seekers and other so-called "New Mainers."

Nancy Grant, the coalition's executive

director, said many of the recent immigrants "don't have driver's licenses, don't have motor vehicles and are asked to go all over town to complete paperwork, to attend different kinds of orientations, to sign up for and take English classes."

"If they had bicycles," she said, "it would make life a lot easier."

Last year, the coalition partnered with local organizations serving immigrants to launch a pilot project called Bikes for New Mainers. Adults who complete a free, nine-hour course in bicycle safety receive a used bicycle, helmet, lights, bell, lock and a \$50 gift certificate for bike repairs.

The class has been offered five times and demand is strong. More than 60 people applied for the May class. The coalition selected only experienced cyclists, since class time was too limited to teach beginners how to ride.

The nine students came from Iraq, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Angola and Uganda. Most were used to riding under very different circumstances than in the United States. The African students said there are no laws to protect cyclists in their home countries, and no one wears a helmet.

Eugenie Mydear learned to ride a bicycle with no gears or brakes in a Ugandan refugee camp. It is not considered acceptable for girls and women to ride there, she said, so she would sneak out on her brothers' bike. Her family depended on the bike to haul water and groceries since they had no car. They'd blast the horn to let people know they were coming.



Eugenie Mydear learned to ride a bicycle with no gears or brakes in a Ugandan refugee camp. It is not considered acceptable for girls and women to ride there, she said, so she would sneak out on her brothers' bike. Her family depended on the bike to haul water and groceries since they had no car. They'd blast the horn to let people know they were coming. "We learned how to use our feet" to slow down, Mydear said. She still has a scar from a childhood bike crash. **Bikes for New Mainers** got her rolling in her new home in the United States.



Program graduates

ing. "We learned how to use our feet" to slow down, Mydear said. She still has a scar from a childhood bike crash.

The Bikes for New Mainers class met for three evenings in May. Nathan Hagelin, the main teacher, is a League Cycling Instructor. He taught students how to fit their helmets snugly, and showed them how to position themselves in traffic as they approach intersections. He encouraged them to be courteous to pedestrians.

After an hour in the classroom, students were eager to try out their skills. Hagelin passed out orange and green safety vests, assuring students that they were very fashionable. "Don't give me that face!" he teased.

The students learned how to pump up their tires. Then, Hagelin led them on a trail ride through the city and along the beach to Portland harbor. They practiced making hand signals and changing gears. They maneuvered safely over railroad tracks. "On your left!" they called out, as they passed pedestrians.

As they approached downtown, Hagelin warned the class, "We're going to have some cars, some hills, some traffic lights, some tight situations."

Students rode single file, just as they'd been taught. They smiled and shouted

triumphantly as they arrived back at the parking lot.

Two days later, they went on a longer ride through neighborhoods that many had never seen before. They stopped at a bike shop where they can do their own repairs. The class ended with a little graduation ceremony and lots of photos. Mydear couldn't wait to send one to her family in Uganda to show them her purple and white Diamondback mountain bike.

Mydear said her husband back in Uganda considers her a hero for learning how to cycle better than he can. She's using her bike to get to adult education classes. Soon, she said, "I'll be riding all over the city."

Maine's cycling community has helped support the Bikes for New Mainers program. Volunteers assist in teaching the class. Coalition members and recycle-a-bike programs have donated used bicycles, and a local cycling club

gave locks. The coalition has provided helmets, lights and the instruction. A Portland consulting firm gave the class a free meeting space.

To make the program sustainable, the coalition may have students build their own bicycles in the future, rather than getting them for free. Grant, the executive director, said she would like to hire an interpreter to translate curriculum materials. Eventually, she hopes that one of the immigrants who graduates from the class will begin teaching it.

Mydear said her husband back in Uganda considers her a "hero" for learning how to cycle better than he can. She is using her bike — with gears and working brakes — to get to adult education classes. Soon, Mydear said, "I'll be riding all over the city."

Find out more about Bikes for New Mainers at www.bikemaine.org or by emailing info@bikemaine.org.

SHOSHANA HOOSE WRITES "LEG WORK," A BI-WEEKLY COLUMN ABOUT BICYCLING AND WALKING FOR THE "MAINE SUNDAY TELEGRAM" NEWSPAPER IN PORTLAND.

MY STORY

BY MPUNGA COCO KAZADI

I am from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). I came to Portland, Maine, in February 2015, fleeing politically motivated threats and assaults. Those traumatic events triggered my resolution to stay in the United States and seek asylum.

As a former employee for a multinational company, I have faced unexpected challenges as I reshape my life. I am surviving on very little money while awaiting work authorization from the federal government.

During my first months in Portland, I walked everywhere I possibly and reasonably could go by foot. That included adult education classes, the library, the grocery store and the post office. Walking helped me to satisfy my curiosity and discover new places. I walked for exercise and to relieve anxiety. Sometimes I caught a bus for longer trips, but that meant spending money.

I learned about the Bikes for New Mainers program through a flier posted at a Portland Adult Education class. I just couldn't believe it — three days of training, a bicycle, a helmet and a bicycle lock... all for free? Was it a joke? I confirmed the information and started counting down the days.

I had learned how to ride a bike in the

DRC. My uncle used a bicycle to haul his maize, beans and peanuts to market. We also used bikes to carry people, but road conditions were poor. Cyclists had to yield to cars and use as little road space as possible or they would get honked at frenetically.

In the Bikes for New Mainers course, I learned that U.S. cyclists are road users just like other drivers; we share the road with motorists. I no longer let the motorist lead on the road. We are equal and respect each other — we communicate. How powerful is that?

I am a zero-income Portland resident for now and my bicycle is the perfect tool to take me places around my new city.

The course's instructor was amazing, and the presentations were clear and practical. I came out of this course confident as a bicyclist. I am able to educate others, too.

I am a zero-income Portland resident for now and my bicycle is the perfect tool to take me places around my new city. Since I got my bicycle, the city seems smaller. It takes me 30 minutes to



walk to the grocery store from my apartment, but only five minutes to bike there. With the bicycle, I can venture further and deeper in the city, discovering more attractions.

I am grateful to the anonymous person who donated this bicycle and to the Bicycle Coalition of Maine. You are making a great difference.

LEADER OF THE PACK

Ayesha McGowan aims to be the first Black female to go pro — and bring more women like her into the sport

BY AYESHA MCGOWAN

A few years ago I was with a group of friends who decided it would be a great idea to participate in an alleycat race run by some local New York City messengers.

I spent some time watching alleycats on YouTube, and I had a pretty good idea that, in order to win, I'd have to make some dicey decisions to save time. Weaving through traffic, and narrowly avoiding pedestrians are all a part of the game. And I was ready to play.

After a few years of that type of adrenaline, I grew a little older and a lot wiser. I also became a very active bicycle advocate. The idea of running yellow lights and nearly mowing down pedestrians wasn't my idea of fun anymore.

So I sought a safer way to go fast.

The transition happened pretty much simultaneously. My last alleycat was Monster track 2014 and my first road race happened about a month later.

I wasn't really paying attention to the clinic description. I also made the mistake of skipping the pre-clinic talk hosted a few nights earlier. I was under the impression that someone would talk to us, and we'd do a few drills before we went home.

I was so wrong. Sure, someone did talk to us, but afterwards, they put us in a race with mentors — and told us to go for it.

I was on a borrowed bike that was too small for me. I didn't really know what was going on, but I knew I was supposed to stay toward the front and sprint at the end. I did both and ended in fifth place.

I couldn't think of a time I ever had so much fun *not* winning something before. I was hooked.

It was 2014, so I was positive there must be an African-American female in the pro-peloton at some point in history. There was not. There is not.

Funny enough, I spent so much time on a track bike that I just assumed I would become a track racer. I never imagined I would turn into a roadie, but lo and behold here I am.

It took me a few weeks to get a bike of my own, and by the time that happened the initial doubt and anxiety from before my first race had reemerged. Lucky for me, there was a race right around the corner from the house where I grew up in Piscataway, New Jersey.

It was comforting to be "at home," but it wasn't a great race for me. The leaders were lapping the field — with me in it

— and I was pulled before I could finish. Regardless of my lousy result, I had so much fun I couldn't wait to do it again. The anxiety was gone!

Once I was less concerned about how terrified I was, I began to notice that the women's peloton didn't contain very many brown faces. In New York City there are brown faces throughout the men's fields, so I was pretty surprised to see this wasn't also the case for the women.

At first, I didn't think too much of it but as I attended more and more races, I started to consider it a problem. Not because bike racing necessarily needs more brown lady faces, but because I am positive that more brown ladies would really enjoy racing! I felt there was a whole group of people who were missing out on the fun, and that was just silly.

I searched the internet and polled forums of Black cyclists hoping to find a forerunner in my movement. It was 2014, so I was positive there must be an African-American female in the pro-peloton at some point in history.

There was not. There is not.

By the end of my season, I made the decision to make a significant difference. Since I've always been a fan of advocacy by example I decided to "be the change." The more African-American female representation we see in the peloton,

the more African American females will identify themselves a potential bike racers. This starts with just getting out there and letting ourselves be known.

Grassroots groups like Black Girls Do Bike are carrying the torch to inspire a love of cycling in general. I didn't start my bike journey in a race.

I started it by commuting, and enjoying myself on a bicycle. Just like when I was a kid. This is where we start. Planting seeds in these little groups, letting friends know when there are racing clinics and offering to escort them there. Give them pointers, offer them support and, most importantly, letting them know they are totally capable.

I really hope that in the years to come, I see more brown faces in every race. I would love to be the first African-American female professional road cyclist, but if someone else beats me to it then I will know the change I hoped to see in women's racing is coming sooner than I expected.

No matter what happens, I am beyond excited by the endless amount of possibilities.

FOLLOW MCGOWAN ON HER BLOG
WWW.AQUICKBROWNFOX.COM



McGowan racing: Photo above by Johnny J Hsu; photo below by Nate Smith III



McGowan advocating: With Laura Solis (left) at the 2014 National Bike Summit

DEAF VELO ALLIANCE

Promoting and advocating cycling within the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities of Chicago

BY MELISSA MANAK AND NICK NG

During the winter of 2014, a group of five deaf individuals got together to discuss cycling in the city of Chicago — and what the cycling community was lacking.

Despite so many local bike advocacy groups supporting local cycling they felt a lack of support for deaf individuals that wanted to get involved. With that, they started a new group for deaf individuals and others who know sign language to share their passion for cycling.

After several meetings and research

into other organizations that do similar work, the Deaf Velo Alliance was born with a mission to promote and advocate cycling within the deaf / hard-of-hearing community.

Our role is to educate by using the transactive model. We use deaf-friendly social media to post cycling events for experienced riders and host forums and buddy programs for those who haven't cycled or are not comfortable cycling within the Chicago area.

Our group is open to anyone who is

deaf, hard-of-hearing or hearing (and knows sign language) with one goal in mind: cycling for pleasure.

By using social media to our advantage, we have expanded our group from five to more than 70 members from many different parts of the metro area.

We plan to build a larger presence within the cycling community by increasing awareness of the diversity of cyclists. This includes further educational collaboration with different bicycling groups within the city, like Slow Roll Chicago, Women Bike Chicago and other organizations and city departments.

Since our beginning, DVA has done several group rides, both short- and long-distance, with members of the deaf community. We have taken advantage of many of Chicago's existing and new cycling facilities to the benefit of many of our members.

One of the most memorable rides was from the Chicago neighborhood of Rogers Park to Kenosha, Wisconsin, totaling 42 miles with seven individuals of varying cycling skill levels.

Our goal was to visit the Kenosha lighthouse and take in the sights of the changing fall season. While the ride was



DVA ride to Kenosha, WI

certainly beautiful, we did experience technical challenges. Nonetheless, our spirits were still upbeat all the way to the end. We celebrated with large pizzas.

This year we promoted a 14-mile round trip between the Shedd Aquarium and Promontory Point to celebrate the beginning of the cycling season, which included a stop for eating s'mores around a bonfire.

Twelve riders participated in the ride, with one member using the local bike share "Divvy" and three others meeting us there to enjoy plentiful s'mores and the view of the Chicago skyline.

One rider on the bonfire ride mentioned that, through this first group ride, he had learned the value of communicating within group rides, especially when he's been accustomed to being an independent rider for so long. This reinforces why we started this group: to band together to become an alliance.

Our hope for the future is that we use these rides as a tool in our advocacy work, in addition to expanding our forums and introducing our buddy system to new riders who want to join us.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT WWW.DEAFVELO.ORG



Melissa Manak (DVA founder), an EdTech fellow at Chicago Public Schools and Rogers Park resident, began bicycling as a child, sneaking off with her sister to freewheel down her neighborhood hill. Years later, Melissa moved to Charlotte, NC, for a master's degree in Geography: Community Planning. There she began commuting on a bike regularly. After graduating, she relocated to Chicago and has been involved in deaf and bike communities. You can find her riding on Lakefront Trail, on a Linus Mixte or 2014 Trek District S. Her goal is to be an urban planner focusing in disability and elderly planning.

Nick Ng (DVA board member), a designer hailing from Norwood Park, made many memories leaving skid marks as a kid. From biking to rollerblading to skateboarding to driving (and embarrassingly, scootering), he loved anything on wheels. However, when he started commuting to work by car, it left him feeling cranky. Being tired of not having the sun on his back and rain in the face, Nick took up bike commuting. Since then, he has enjoyed exploring networks of alleys, streets, and trails on his Mercier Kilo TT and 1987 Peugeot Tourmalet.



FEEDING THE HOMELESS BY BIKE

One or two mornings each week I wake before 5 a.m. and load up my Yuba Mendo with food to deliver to my homeless neighbors in East Los Angeles.

It started in September 2013, when I had a heart attack and was told I needed to change my lifestyle. For six months I only walked. One cold morning I was considering returning home when I saw two figures shivering under a sheet sleeping on a bus bench. Soon after that I started to collect blankets and food for the homeless in my neighborhood.

All the food I distribute is donated. People who live in my neighborhood allow me to pick oranges, lemons, and grapefruits from their trees. Pedro, who runs Listo Produce, donates a 40-pound box of oranges, tangerines, peaches, or bananas monthly, and KIND Snacks recently donated five cases of snack bars.

At first, I used my wife's old bike equipped with two worn panniers and a blue plastic milk crate attached to a rear

rack. The 30 to 60 pounds of food and water made the bike unstable — more than once it tipped over spilling oranges and water bottles onto the sidewalk. Several months ago Yuba Bicycles offered me a new Mundo cargo bike, which allows me to carry the loads more easily, but, more importantly, the double kickstand lets me get off the bike. I can now hand people food without worrying the bike will tip over. Some of the homeless are amputees or are in wheelchairs and I no longer have to toss them oranges and hope they catch them.

It's still dark when I set out and normally the only sounds I hear are dogs barking and a rooster crowing as I ride toward the main boulevard. I pass closed restaurants and hair salons, a dry cleaner and a bakery. At my first stop, only five blocks from my home, I deliver food to three men who sleep in front of a shoe store. A year ago, one of the men would often curse at me and tell me to get lost;

PHOTOS BY AURELIO JOSE BARRERA. Clockwise from top left: Riding eastbound on Whittier Blvd in East LA with a basket full of oranges; Vegan burritos, water and fruit ready to me delivered to homeless; Man sleeping on steps on Whittier Blvd; Barrera leaving food for a sleeping man; Barrera (left) at a bus stop with Diana on Whittier Boulevard.

now he tells me to be careful riding on the street.

I continue to ride down Whittier Boulevard and dark alleys looking for men and women sleeping in doorways, beside trash bins, on stairs. Behind a craft supply store a group of eight men and women sleep in blanket on the parking lot floor. I greet them with a loud "Good morning! Buenos Dias!" I hand them food and get on my bike towards home. "Que dios lo bendiga" (God bless you) several of them yell out as I ride away.

AURELIO JOSE BARRERA IS A STAY-AT-HOME DAD, GRANDFATHER AND FORMER PHOTOJOURNALIST IN THE LOS ANGELES AREA FOR 25 YEARS. TO DONATE, PLEASE VISIT WWW.GOFUNDME.COM/FRUITBYBIKE.



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