



Illinois *Bicyclist*

Summer, 1996

- [Hutchison, Davis Honored](#)
 - [Helmet Law for Children Introduced in Chicago, Promised for Illinois](#)
 - [Bike To . . . Challenge Results](#)
 - [Department of Natural Resources Sites with off Road Bicycling Trails](#)
 - [Hannibal Bridge](#)
 - [ISTEA Projects Move Forward](#)
 - [Cook County Trails Compromise](#)
 - [Mountain Bikers "Maintenance Mania" by Don Palermini, TURF](#)
 - [Riding the River with a Helmet by Chuck Oestreich, LAB Director, Rock Island](#)
 - [Champaign-Urbana Bike Planning By Chuck Dold](#)
 - [Pekin Plan - a Model Plan](#)
 - [Trails Project Continues Dialog With DuPage County](#)
 - [America's Best Kept Bicycle Secret by Steve Olderr, Oak Park Cycle Club](#)
 - [Sturges Named to League Executive Committee](#)
 - [Musser Recognized](#)
 - [LAB News by Barbara Sturges, Region 8 Director](#)
 - [Support LIB . . .](#)
 - [LIB Online](#)
-

Hutchison, Davis Honored

LIB President Eric Hutchison, and LIB Webmaster Paul Davis were recognized, at the LAB Rally in Dayton, for their volunteer efforts on behalf of bicycling.

Hutchison, Advocacy/ Government Relations Chair of the Illinois Valley Wheelm'n, was given the LAB Regional Director's Volunteer Award for his leadership of Peoria area bicycle advocacy efforts since 1992.

Davis, a member of the Folks on Spokes Bicycle Club, received the first League of Illinois Bicyclists Volunteer of the Year award for developing and maintaining the LIB web pages.

Eric Hutchison's local advocacy efforts began with a "Top Twenty" list of local road

improvements presented to the City of Peoria. Eric and his committee have outlasted city officials to finally achieve 14-foot outer lanes on a key arterial, helped the City develop a bike map, and have been involved in bicycle planning for Peoria, Peoria County and nearby Pekin.

As board member and now President of LIB, Eric has led in establishing goals and action items for the statewide organization.

Samuel Joslin, editor of the Illinois Valley Wheelm'n newsletter notes that "Eric places top priority on communicating with members, and has made advocacy an important part of club activities," overcoming fears that "'politics' could divide the club and seriously harm it as a recreational body."

Helmet Law for Children Introduced in Chicago, Promised for Illinois

An ordinance requiring bike riders younger than 15 to wear helmets in Chicago is before the Chicago City Council. According to the Chicago *Sun-Times*, the law would hold parents responsible and impose \$50 per offense fines. In January, a similar law is to be introduced in the state legislature by Senator John Cullerton (D-Chicago).

Senator Cullerton was joined in his call for statewide child mandatory helmet legislation by the Families Advocating Injury Reduction (FAIR), the Coalition for Consumer Rights, the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago and the DuPage County Health Department.

LIB's position has been that we favor a good education program that teaches both adult and child bicyclists how to ride safely and the value of wearing a helmet. We believe that allowing children to discard their helmets at age 15 or 16 sends the wrong message, and are concerned that many children would respond to a helmet requirement by not riding bikes.

ABATE, a motorcyclist group, has been credited with stopping previous helmet legislation proposals in Illinois.

The *Sun-Times* article quoted Mayor Daley as saying he always wears a helmet but using one is "more common sense" than a matter to be legislated. Daley was described as an "avid biker known to take marathon rides near his summer home in Michigan."

Bike To . . . Challenge Results

The Springfield Bicycle Club was the winner of the Bike to Work, Bike to Errands, Bike to Fun Contest held during Bike to Work Week, with 1,431 miles reported. Folks on Spokes was the runner-up with 811 miles, followed by the Naperville Bicycle Club with 240 miles. Most (1,159) of the Springfield club miles were To/From club rides, which they report regularly. Micci Bly accounted for 240 of the Springfield club's miles, much of it riding to Carbondale for the club's S.H.I.F.T. (Southern Hilly Illinois

Family Tour) Memorial Day Weekend Ride.

Department of Natural Resources Sites with off Road Bicycling Trails

Off Road Bike Trails

Site	County	(miles)
Argyle Lake	McDonough	8.0
Jubilee College	Peoria	15.0
Kickapoo	Vermilion	8.5
Pyramid	Perry	16.5
Red Hills	Lawrence	4.5
Rock Cut	Winnebago	14.0
Total Miles		66.5

Hannibal Bridge

What happens when a bridge that has been used by bicyclists becomes part of the interstate highway system, where bicyclists have not been allowed? In the case of the bridge across the Mississippi at Hannibal, we'll find out before the new bridge is opened and the old bridge is closed, according to Bill Yuskus of IDOT, the Illinois Department of Transportation.

Mr. Yuskus has told both the Quincy-Hannibal Bicycle Club and LIB that "The design of the new Hannibal bridge . . . can accommodate bicycles. "However, neither Illinois nor Missouri currently permits bicycles on interstate highways. There are ongoing discussions with Missouri on allowing bicycles access to the new bridge upon removal of the existing structure."

Letters to IDOT and to the Missouri Highway and Transportation Department pointed out the importance of this bridge to both local and long-distance riders, such as the League of American Bicyclists' cross country Pedal For Power ride. The Quincy-Hannibal Bicycle Club first raised the issue of bicycle access with IDOT in 1994.

ISTEA Projects Move Forward

Thirteen projects of interest to bicyclists have moved through the bidding process. Contracts should now be signed, and, in some cases, work started.

The projects are:

Champaign County: 4.2-mile Sangamon River Valley Corridor Trail.

Cook County: IL 83 Bikeway Connection of Centennial and I&M Canal trails, 2-mile Bikeway in Rolling Meadows, Trail and Bridge over Salt Creek , Jackson Park (Chicago) Bikepath, 4.5-mile Algonquin Road Trail.

DuPage County: Woodridge - Lake Carleton, Park Bikeway improvement; 0.92-mile Woodward Avenue Bicycle Path; 0.7-mile Blackwell Entrance Trail; 0.75-mile Timber Ridge Forest Preserve Link.

Madison County: 7.4-mile Vadalabene Trail.

Will County: 12.25-mile Old Plank Road Trail, 135th Street Bridge including bikeway.

Construction for smaller projects, such as the Woodward Avenue Bicycle Path and the Blackwell Entrance Trail should be complete by early fall. Larger projects, including the IL 83 Bikeway Connection, Vadalabene Trail and Old Plank Road Trail, are targeted for completion in mid to late 1997.

Cook County Trails Compromise

After three years of difficult negotiations involving bicyclists, conservationists and equestrians, the Cook County Forest Preserve District has designated new non-paved, multi-use trail systems for the Deer Grove, Palos and Sag Valley Forest Preserves. The 35 miles of designated Palos and Sag Valley trails include singletrack trails. In addition, other trails, including singletrack segments will remain open as "demonstration projects" to determine compatibility with the ecology. Results from these projects will be used to evaluate design and construction criteria for future planned trail segments.

Other features of the agreement include seasonal trail closures - for weather and protection of animals - and a trail courtesy program - staffed by volunteers from trail user groups.

Bicyclist Carl Birkelbach, of RIDE, Recreation for Individuals Dedicated to the Environment, said about the negotiations, "What continues to amaze me is how an antagonistic group can move to form a team. It comes from mutual understanding and respect for each other's positions."

Mountain Bikers "Maintenance Mania"

by Don Palermini, TURF

Chicago-area mountain bicyclists have begun an ambitious schedule of work days to help rehabilitate some of the unpaved trails in the southwest suburban Palos Division of the Cook County Forest Preserve District. The Trail Users Rights Foundation (TURF), a Chicago-based trail advocacy group, kicked off a series of 12 "Maintenance Mania" work and ride events with a demonstration and recruitment day on July 13 at Wolf Road Woods near Willow Springs, Ill.

"We've been doing small maintenance projects out here for close to three years now," said TURF President John Siwinski. "Now we have the go-ahead from the county to do

some more intensive projects that are much needed."

Work and ride days are scheduled for August 10, 17 and 31; September 7, 14 and 28; October 12 and 19; and November 2. For information on these events call the TURF Hotline at (847) 470-4266 or visit TURFnet at <http://members.aol.com/turfinfo>.

Riding the River with a Helmet

by Chuck Oestreich, LAB Director, Rock Island

"Ride the River" is an annual citizens' bicycle ride which sees 6,000 bicyclists exploring both sides of the Mississippi River in the Illinois-Iowa Quad Cities on Fathers Day. It is unusual in that it is one of the few mass rides in which riders and their bikes are ferried across such a major river.

Many families enjoy the ride, and in the past many participants, unfortunately, have been helmetless. This year organizers of the ride took positive action to help change that situation -- both for 1996 and the future.

They organized a major helmet sales promotion held in conjunction with the 26, 20 or 12 mile ride. Six groups worked together to sell helmets at the bargain price of \$5.00 to registrants. The groups were:

- The Safe Kids Campaign of the Quad Cities - organization
- The Quad Cities Bicycle Club - funding, sales, and fitting of helmets
- State Farm Insurance - funding, sales, and fitting of helmets
- Ride the River - funding
- Bell Helmets - manufacturer
- Adrian Carriers - transportation and storage

All money raised by the sales was put into a fund to be used for reduced price helmet sales at future rides.

Was it a success? QCBC volunteer Jan Reynolds explains: "We were taken completely by surprise. I expected a leisurely morning of occasional sales, but I didn't have a moment's rest until we had to stop because we ran out of helmets.

"In about two and a half hours, we sold 375 helmets. That's 375 heads protected every time they're on a bike. I'm happy about that."

Champaign-Urbana Bike Planning

By Chuck Dold

I hadn't intended to send a message, but when I rode my bike to a meeting of the Champaign-Urbana Traffic Engineering Committee (CUTEC) of the Champaign-

Urbana Area Transportation Study (CUUATS) through a pouring rain, arriving soaked to the skin, everyone was fully convinced that I was serious about cycling.

The committee dealt with three items. First, Urbana is leading the way for an accident reporting data base which will include Champaign and the U of I. The want to learn where most accidents occur, and will use the data to request funds for road improvements.

Second, a Mayors' Bicycle Safety Committee has been established for both communities; Claudia Washburn represents the Prairie Cycle Club.

Third, a Campus Area Traffic Study is to be initiated, covering both cities and the University. A consultant is to be hired and the Prairie Cycle Club should be represented on the Citizens Advisory Committee. The study should address the state of the University's extensive bicycle path system, which has been maintained only minimally in the past few years.

CUUATS also reviewed plans to expand Curtis Road, a country road to the south, into a four-lane highway with an interchange to I-57. The present planning document says that sidewalks and bikepaths will be included "where feasible." I want matters to be a tad less vague when public hearings are held this fall.

Pekin Plan - a Model Plan

Members of the Illinois Valley Wheelm'n presented the City of Pekin with an action plan, including policies, maps, and a list of projects to improve cycling in the area. The plan, developed by Bill Clark, Len Bobbitt, Judie Noyes, Jim Vaupel, Glen Thompson and Eric Hutchison, was requested by Pekin Director of Public Works Dennis Keif.

The Pekin Plan policies have been compiled into a generic format that could be used as the basis for a bike plan for any municipality. For a copy of the model plan, contact Eric Hutchison, 209 W. Crestwood Drive, Peoria, IL 61614, 309-685-3921.

Trails Project Continues Dialog With DuPage County

Challenged by County Administrator Donald Zeilinga to provide estimates of bicyclists who would use roadway enhancements, Ed Barsotti, chair of the Trails Project of the Conservation Foundation of DuPage County intends to do just that.

After completion of the DuPage County Bikeway Plan, the Trails Project asked the County to adopt the August, 1995 IDOT Policy for accommodating bicyclists, as a step toward implementing the Bikeways plan.

The County responded with a request for information about projected usage of bikeways within county road rights of way. After some research, Barsotti provided the county results of studies showing that cities with high ratios of on-street bikeways to

arterial road miles had proportionately high levels of ridership - as measured by bicycle commuting. He then asked that the County adopt a policy of accommodating bicycle travel on strategic arterial and collector streets.

Administrator Zeilinga's again responded, saying, in part, "We will continue to explore ways mentioned in your letter to expand bikeways; however, it will, in my opinion, be very important for your organization to supply realistic estimates of the number of anticipated bicyclists who you believe would use the bike path as proposed in your letter. Because of the cost involved to construct these bike paths, it is very important to have accurate estimates regarding number of bicyclists who would be using these roadway enhancements."

Barsotti, with some consulting advice from CBF's Randy Neufeld, intends to make estimates employing DuPage County data with some Rhode Island research.

The Trails Project has also requested that a citizen's bike/trail advisory board be established and has provided the County Highway Department a list of possible accommodations for bicyclists. These include lane widening, bike lanes and paved shoulders where widening the roadway is possible. For resurfacing projects, reconfiguring (restriping) lanes to provide a wide outer lane was suggested.

America's Best Kept Bicycle Secret

by Steve Olderr, Oak Park Cycle Club

I've been biking 45 years now and just found the best road bike event anywhere. Yes, it's true I'm slow, but I may be ahead of you. There were 700 people there, but there would have been 7,000 if folks just know about it and tried it one time. God willing, I'm going back.

There were 33 different routes to choose from -- about 20 were offered each day -- flat, hilly, fast, slow, short, long, beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Sag service was available for all rides. Trek provided a support van to do free repairs. There were even free loaner tandems for riders who wanted to try them on a ride.

Children's programming was offered so you could take off on a ride while the kids had fun things to do with trained supervisors. In addition to biking, they had opportunities like fishing, crafts, museum trips, and games.

After the adult rides, more than forty different activities were offered. Country dancing, a police bicycle obstacle course that you could ride on a police bike, an ice cream social, a talk on bike commuting by the legendary John Forester, a slide show by "America's most determined cyclist" Dan Buettner on his trip down the length on Africa, an exhibit hall, strength training advice by a former Mr. World, and the chance to try a high wheeler.

There was even a free nine-hour Effective Cycling course. That's something that normally costs \$35, if you can find one. If you felt less ambitious, you could see free

movies, or just go sit in the pub with a cold beer and live music.

The whole thing took place over five days. Registration for all five days was \$80. A private, air conditioned room was \$76. Meals were another \$76. These were good hearty biker's meals, not fast food fat and sodium. Take off \$35 for early registration and the total cost was \$196 or \$39.50 per day. That's less than the cost of a room in a modest motel. Daily registration was also available, while lodging and meals were optional.

Everyone wore a name tag and shared a love of biking. I didn't know anyone when I arrived, but I never ate alone or rode alone. It was like a family gathering -- relaxed, friendly, and fun.

There's not a better recreational bargain in bicycling, or maybe anywhere. The only hitch was that you had to be a member of the League of American Bicyclists, since this was the LAB National Rally, which was held at the University of Dayton, in Ohio. But if you're reading the *Illinois Bicyclist*, you probably already are an LAB member, and you don't need a recitation of the benefits. Actually, I was an LAB member for five years before attending a Rally, and thought that membership worthwhile without it. Now I feel guilty getting by so cheaply. This is not a free lunch, but it's close.

Next year, the Rally will be held at Purdue in Lafayette, Indiana, just a little over two hours from Chicago. The LAB also sponsors similar activities called GEAR's three times a year in various locations around the country. In 1997, they'll be in Florida in March and, next summer, at Williamsburg, VA and upstate New York. Watch *Bicycle USA* for announcements. If you love to bike, you've just got to try a Rally or a GEAR.

Sturges Named to League Executive Committee

Barbara Sturges of Park Forest was elected Secretary of the League of American Bicyclists at the board meeting held at the Rally in Dayton.

Barbara joined Michigan's June Thaden, President; Glenn Gadbois of Texas, Vice-President; Kentucky's Earl Jones, Treasurer; and At-large member Ann Sullivan of New York on the LAB Executive Committee. She has been active on the member relations committee

Musser Recognized

Terri Musser of Bolingbrook was profiled in the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals June newsletter. Musser is the President of Bicycles &, a planning consultancy that has recently developed bicycle plans for three Wisconsin communities; Kansas City, MO; Kansas State U., KS; and Bloomington, IN. Musser, a director of LIB and CBF, is working on an update of the Wisconsin Bicycle Map and Statewide Bicycle Plan.

LAB News

by Barbara Sturges, Region 8 Director

While Steve Olderr was enjoying the Rally, I was in Board meetings! However, they were not as long, dry, nor discordant as I had feared. Here are some of the high points.

First, as you have read elsewhere, LAB has a new executive director who seems perfect for the job at this time, Cosette (Cosy) Simon. She's sharp, dynamic, yet sensitive.

The Effective Cycling revamp remains LAB's highest priority.

Most importantly for LIB, the LAB Board has a greater than ever commitment to the pilot program of state chapter-affiliates, of which we will soon officially be the first. (Illinois showed support for the League by having 39 members attend the Rally; 19 of whom attended the Regional Director's breakfast!)

The state chapter-affiliate program will provide LAB an opportunity to grow in Illinois by providing us an incentive to see that the growth happens. When the program is officially in place, LIB will receive \$15 for each Illinois resident who joins LAB/LIB using one of our membership applications -- contact me or Al Sturges if you need application forms!

The LAB Board decided to endeavor to raise funds individually to help pay for the exciting programs which are planned and/or ongoing.

A strategic planning effort is about to begin, to ensure that programs are part of cohesive plan which is leading in the direction the Board -- and membership -- want to go. If you are on the Internet, subscribe to the Labmembers e-mail list to be part of the discussion. Others can have input to this planning effort by communicating your suggestions to me.

The Membership and Club Services Committee will soon make available a club "starter kit" with information to help people who are starting a new bike club. Watch Bicycle USA for information.

Support LIB . . .

the League of Illinois Bicyclists

Your Statewide Bicycle Advocacy Organization

Give \$25 or more and receive your choice of our Illinois Symbols T-shirt or LIB name badge.

Promote bicycling and Illinois at the same time by attaching your LIB name badge to your shirt, tool bag or trunk bag or by wearing our colorful shirt, with its red

cardinal and other state symbols, including the proposed state vehicle.

Send check to LIB, c/o Al Sturges, 6 Chestnut Court, Park Forest, IL 60466 (specify shirt size (M, L, XL) or name for badge).

LIB Online

Check out the LIB web pages at <http://www.LincolnNet.net/users/lrlib/> for lists of Illinois bike clubs, bike shops, invitational rides; reviews of safety education materials, Effective Cycling news plus links to other bicycling organizations Contact LIB Webmaster Brian Jacobs, at BJacobs@Enteract.com with any material for the web pages.

To subscribe to LIBLAB, the e-mail list for LIB news, send a two-line message to majordomo@fuji.physics.indiana.edu: subscribe liblab on the first line and end on the second.

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