

Blue Island Fun Ride route:

- Meet at Daley Plaza, 5:30 P.M.
- Take Clark Street south to Roosevelt.
- Take Roosevelt west (R) to Blue Island.
- Take Blue Island southwest (L) to Loomis.
- Take Loomis south (L), over the CS and S canal, crossing Archer to Lyman.
- A brief jog right on Lyman, followed by a quick left onto Haynes. Travel south on Haynes for one block.
- Cross 31st to hook up onto Racine (a little zigzag to your right).
- Travel Racine through the old Stockyards area to 47th St. (2 miles).
- Go right (W) on 47th Street. Travel west to Damen (1 mile).
- Go left (S) on Damen. Travel south a long ways! (5 miles).
- Hook up with the Major Taylor bike trail at either 85th St. (in the Gresham neighborhood) by cutting west (R) for two blocks and taking the gravel path up the hill at the access point (slightly challenging access) OR continue S. on Damen until you cross the Major Taylor at 87th St. (easy, grade level access)
- Look for Jane and crew!
- Take the Major Taylor south until 94th St. Don't ride all the way to the path end next to the Jewel lot because it's just too weird to figure out how to get through in the evening. Go right (west) one block to Vanderpoel.
- Go left (south) on Vanderpoel (slight jog in the street to cross 95th St., so pay attention).
- At 96th St., turn right (W). Go up the hill (past Ridge Park) to Longwood.
- Turn left on Longwood. Travel south on Longwood for about 3 miles to 119th St. You are now in Blue Island!

Phone Numbers:

Howard (c): 773/710-4143

Jane: 708/388-8662 (h)

Maple Tree Inn:

Blue Island History

The quaint town was established in 1835 as a way station for Chicago travelers on the historic Vincennes Trail. Many of the first settlers were tavern and general store keepers, blacksmiths and wagoners. Blue Island's early industry was lodging and livestock trading.

By 1858, German settlers had established four breweries in the growing city, and in the 1870s, the Rock Island Railroad marked the beginning of Blue Island's transformation into a trade hub. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the biweekly farmer's market was the largest in the Chicago area providing produce, livestock, and services to many of the farming communities and small towns to the South and West of the city.

Blue Island's early 20th century history was dominated by heavy industry—food processing, oil refining, brick making and railroads. In the latter half of the century, much of the city's heavy industry was replaced with service and retail businesses, although railroads still have a significant impact on the community.

Blue Island is a rich, historic city where friendly people do business, raise families and display pride in their community.

There are still strong neighborhoods of Italian and Polish immigrants as well as a growing Hispanic community.

Bicycling is a potentially hazardous activity—please be careful!

The route provided is merely a suggestion and offers no guarantee of increased safety—each rider is individually responsible for his/her own welfare.

Bike safety!