

The Derailleur

An unofficial publication of Chicago Critical Mass

April 2011



Illustration: Andrew

This month's issue is jam-packed with information and types. (My excuse: it was raining IN my living room while I was on Deraileur deadline.) There are two articles written by Bill Wendt suggesting ways to improve the city for bicyclists (and everyone!), a sample letter of support for bicycle parking, an interview with The Racketeers, information about Women's Rugby and Chicago Bike Polo, an invitation to the first-ever Chicago Critical Mass ride (an offshoot of Ladies Mass), an article about bicycle lobbying and capitalism, a brief history of Active Transportation Alliance's Crash Support Group, a personal story of loss and how arm wrestling can save lives, and much more! I'll end this introduction with a call for financial support of The Deraileur.

Fellow Critical Massers:

In September 2006 I volunteered to publish The Deraileur, an unofficial publication of Chicago Critical Mass. I have spent over \$4,000 of my personal money to make sure the zine is available before CCM rides. (I am not independently wealthy, just crazy.)

I anticipated that the tradition of passing the hat before rides would continue and that I would easily stay afloat.

I have received many donations over the years (THANK YOU!) which has helped immensely. I'm still in the red and I think it is appropriate to ask the CCM community for financial support.

I am happy to report that \$623.71 was donated to The Deraileur in the month of March. I want to thank each person who has helped whittle my Deraileur Debt down to \$638.91! If you haven't already, please consider making a donation. I need more support in order to continue publishing the zine. To donate to The Deraileur through PayPal, log in and send funds to TheDeraileur@gmail.com. Be sure to use the Personal --> Gift option so your entire donation goes toward The Deraileur.

Thank you and Happy Friday!

wilow

The Deraileur, April 2011. The Deraileur (chicago4business.org/TheDeraileur) is an unofficial publication of Chicago Critical Mass made possible with donations of paper and cash from rides like you. Chicago Critical Mass is a free, fun bike parade which begins around 5:30 p.m. at Daley Plaza on the last Friday of every month. This issue was created by wilow raeco (TheDeraileur@gmail.com) and printed by Lee Diamond of Big Shoulders Press (bigshoulderspress.com). **Thank you:** Andrea Bedno, Bianca Maggery, CLARK, Gin Kigore, Hudson Valley SPARK, IGCC, Jani Krause, Jeff Coufal, Joseph Zhuda, Lauren Salko, Lee Diamond, Mr. Bike, Men, Owen Lloyd, Steven Vance, Susan Levin, The Racketeers (Andrea Bolko, Laura Oliver, Kate Puffhouse, Monica Mejs, Karlene Harke, Katie Waters, and Star Finley), William F. Wendt, Jr., Yves Engle, and the other usual suspects (you know who you are). **Credits:** Cover illustration "Transportation" by Andrea of andrewillustration.com, Chicago Bike Polo photo of Owen and Joe, Steven Vance photo copyright/andrea@bedno.com/5113029200, Route proposal: Andrea Bedno.

Deraileur Expenses By Category

Art Edition:	(\$324.30)
Paper:	(\$898.42)
Postage:	(\$11.89)
Printer/Toner:	(\$457.71)
Rubber Stamps:	(\$526.59)
Software:	(\$599.00)
Stapler/Staples:	(\$23.58)
Toner:	(\$1,767.67)
Total Expenses:	(\$4,219.16)
Total Donations:	\$3,580.25
Difference:	(\$638.91)

IDEAS TO RUN THE CITY

If I heard the radio correctly, the mayor-elect is looking for ideas on how to run the city. If I am not drifting into wishful fulfillment, he was offering jobs to people with ideas. Be that as it may, here are some ideas of mine, presented in order of fulfillment. If I ever get the chance.

1. Put public transportation on a sound technological and financial footing. Why pile billions into stagnant, obsolete technologies when a disgracefully ignored technology would do a lot more for a lot less? It might improve public transportation enough that many people would not want to own cars anymore. It could also support dense, compact, walkable neighborhoods where you do not have to drive everywhere. A heavy-duty version could get a lot of trucks off the road too and help develop industry. Why should transit operations be funded by retail sales tax? Retailing does not increase the rush hour, the major expense of the system. It ought to be funded by the benefit taxes of the downtown rush hour, the office industry and the landowners.

2. Share with City lawyers the original intent of the Second Amendment and the militia clauses. These say nothing about ownership of private firearms. Make it generally known what the framers meant by "keep and bear arms" and "the security of a free state." Do not disarm the entire population but pass reasonable restrictions on gun ownership. Do not embrace those restrictions abusively. Emphasize that the City has lost two police officers whose guns were taken away and used against them. Also that an officer was lost in a housing court enforcement, which can be abusive too. There is no way all guns can be confiscated. The police just have to live with

that, as the rest of us have to live with crime in general.

3. Share with others my long experience in self-education in several areas. The only real education is self-education. Why Johnny Carli Read was printed over a half century ago. The poorly-educated are more likely to commit violence. When will the schools ever be straightened out, anyway? If you want something done right, do it yourself.

4. Restore the lower rung of the economic ladder. Besides the above, cut out abusive taxation and regulation. Restore a Maxwell St. neighborhood, not a mere street market. Child labor in the family store was a wonderful formative experience. The economy has to be open to all corners; otherwise we get a pool of permanently unemployed.

5. Turn an old steel mill into a steam locomotive factory. The railroads have to increase freight train speed, both to get trucks off the road and to increase track capacity. The diesel is very expensive on fast, heavy trains. Electrification has "prohibitive" initial costs. There were modern steamers, however, that were more powerful than diesels at speed but cost less to operate. Even if this would not be a fitting project for City funds, Chicago could be the center of a new steam locomotive industry with runs to Omaha, Memphis, and Cleveland, for starters anyway.

The mayor-elect is reputed to be an implementer, which I am not. Maybe he can compensate for my deficiency.

-William F. Wendt, Jr.

ISEC Bicycling Campaign

Illinois Student Environmental Coalition (ISEC) is asking bicyclists and students of Illinois to help improve bicycle parking. First we want to concentrate on Chicago, and then we hope for statewide improvements in other cities of Illinois.

We plan on gathering signatures and delivering them to elected representatives. Last year's climate action campaign brought roughly 4,000 signed postcards to both of our Senator's offices, and we hope to do the same for the ISEC bicycle parking campaign.

You can sign the letter at greenstudents.org to support bicycle parking. Here's the draft of the letter that we plan on submitting this summer:

Bike Parking: Improve Standards in Chicago

To whom it may concern,

One of the biggest concerns for bicyclists is having a secure place to park their bicycle, whether directly in front of a store or in a secured bike parking facility at home or near the office. Secure and standardized bicycle parking infrastructure provides a stepping-stone for bicyclists to feel more secure about their bicycle, and ample bicycle parking in front of shops brings in business.

The city of Chicago lost 40,000 parking spots when the parking meters were removed and replaced with pay boxes. Doubling the current 12,000 bike racks to 24,000 is one step in the right direction toward a comprehensive transportation infrastructure for all residents. An even bigger step in the right direction would be the standardization of bike rack installation and

the allocation of bicycle space provisions, such as the zoning ordinance recently approved in New York City. Therefore, we propose that the City of Chicago make the following improvements for bicycle parking:

- 1) Double the amount of bike racks throughout the city due to lost parking meters;
- 2) Create bike rack standards for location (in front of stores) and installation (room for wheels);
- 3) Develop an ordinance for bike parking accessibility at new and retrofit construction projects, including sheltered and secure bike parking in office buildings and residential buildings (refer to the New York City Zoning Ordinance enclosed).

Strong bicycle parking standards will provide accessibility for all residents, provide local manufacturing jobs, spur retail businesses with slow/ultimate bicycle traffic, lessen our demand on oil, aid in the reduction of pollution, and improve local air quality. Chicago has a chance to join the leading cities in bicycling standards and set an example for the state Illinois by improving bicycle parking.

Providing strong incentives for bicycling in Chicago with abundant and secure bicycle parking throughout the city is one link in the chain of a bicycle-friendly city.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]



ISEC 10/2008/09/2008

Critical Profile: The Racketeers



wn: Tell me about The Racketeers. What do you do?

Shar: Bike dance! No, really!! We choreograph dance

moves while incorporating the BMX bikes. We come up with innovative ways to use the bikes and their parts in ways cyclists usually don't. More amateurs at tricks thus far but coming along nicely. Where are those BMX boys anyway!!!!...Shout out!! Come play with us and help us with our bike tricks.

Kelle: We are the newest group to join the bike dance revolution. Not surprisingly, this began on the West Coast, but has made its way across the globe, literally. It incorporates both biking and dancing in a very non-traditional way. Hopefully, this provides not just a great show, but also empowerment and visibility to bikes and those who ride them. Not to mention, it's just further validation of the best reason to ride: 'cause bikes are heck'n fun!!!

wn: Who came up with the idea?

Shar: It was Kelle and I who decided to create a bike dance troupe in Chicago. I asked her if she ever saw the ladies at Tour de Fat two years ago that danced with their bikes because I think it would be crazy fun to do something like that. Kelle enthusiastically responded "Uh, yes! The Sprockettes." Kelle lived in Portland for a while and is a big supporter and friend of The Sprockettes. She had been wanting to put

something together similar to that for awhile. I guess she found the right person to kick start it with since I have a passion for shaking my booty, aka Dancing, Choreographing, and Coordinating.

wn: When did you come up with the group?

Shar: It was the end of August when Kelle and I sat at happy hour with Katie Puffhouse discussing this concept and coming up with our name. Katie and Kelle are amazing brainstormers...so full of great ideas. From there Kelle and I started practicing at the beginning of September to get a little something together, then by the end of the month a handful of our fellow lady cyclists joined in the fun and were learning our first routine, Stray Cat Strut.



wn: Are you related to The Sprockettes?

Kelle: In that we are all sisters, yes. A couple of us were lucky enough to be given an invite from The Sprockettes to perform a sneak preview at Mini Bike Winter in Portland this year. And I remain thrilled at the reception and the support on their part.

Karlene: The Spockettes have been amazingly welcoming and supportive of us, as have the other bike dance troupes – The Bay Area Derailleurs, the B.C. Clites from Vancouver, the Gravy Greas up in Madison. We've talked about doing some performances together, perhaps this fall, which would be absolutely fantastic!

wn: How much time and effort is put into this?

Star: Quite a bit of time is put into it on a weekly basis, during and away from scheduled practices. Working on choreography, fixing the bikes, bike tricks, coordinating people and their time, cutting music, and team bonding is a priority as well.

Kelle: I think this varies. We may practice a little more as we approach a show, but the standard is about 4-6 hours a week. This also depends on our own attention spans!!

Andrea: Probably everyone whom I tell what we do or who sees us perform thinks this is an awesome idea. I think a lot of ladies want to be a part of this or something like it, but the fact of the matter is...this takes time and commitment. In order for The Rackettes to progress as a group, all of us need to progress individually and participate in development, creation of, and memorization of the routines. I think today we pride ourselves on being adaptive and flexible, but with that comes a lot of work! The Rackettes is a priority in each of our lives.

wn: How many ladies are involved?

Currently there are seven ladies actively performing in the group: Andrea Bolks, Laura Oliver, Katie Palfhouse, Monica Mejia, Karlene Hanks, Kelle Walters, and Star Finley.

wn: What kind of bikes do you ride?

BMX performance bikes and a couple children's bikes we rigged to work somewhat like a BMX. We are constantly trying to fix them because we are really rough on them.



wn: What can we expect at a performance?

Kelle: We dance, ride bikes, drink beer, and objectify you. You'll love it!

Star: Rock'n red and white outfits. High energy movement, dancing, jumping on and off bikes, and getting the crowd excited. I'll say it again: BIKE DANCING!

wn: Where can we see you perform next (besides tonight at the CCM ride)?

Star: May 7th, 12 p.m. We will be hitting the Chicago Ladies Rugby field to do a halftime show for them. Near Montrose Harbor...the field is off of Wilson.

Kelle: We've also been invited to do a performance at a Chicago Outfit roller derby game this summer and the Chicago Bike Polo tournament on June 25th and 26th!

wn: Why are each of you involved?

Shar: Three things really. Exploring a new area of bikes for me, being a part of a performance group again (with amazing women who are like family now), and, most of all, dance.

(Huge love of my life that has been lost for many years – very glad to have that back in my routine. Especially in an environment that is not competitive, judgmental, or weight restricting.) There is so much freedom and fun in this that I am truly addicted.

Kelle: Shiiiiit, who wouldn't! I have an itch to perform as well and if it can be done with a bunch of rad girls on a bunch of CBY bikes, shaking it to some fun music, all the better!

Katie: This offers an opportunity to spend time with intelligent, hilarious, lovely women and learn new dance moves and bike tricks.

Shar: Katie means "shake her tail feather."

Laura: Dancing isn't my thing, BUT bikes, wrecking things, and causing a some s--- and I joined because of the bikes involved. The motivation and excitement that we put into The Rocketeers pools over into other areas of my life, causing me to work harder and better all around. Plus, performing gives me a real high!

Karlene: I was relatively new to the Chicago bike community when Shar and Kelle told me about the idea for The Rocketeers and asked me to join. I said yes because it sounded like fun and a great way to meet even more cool people...and I haven't been disappointed. I love these ladies to

death, and we have an absolute blast everytime we perform, practice, or just hang out and have a beer!

Monica: I'd like to say I was recruited. I walked into a bar one night and walked out of it a Rocketeer. It was a BLUR. I'm involved with these girls because they are all quirky, outgoing, honest, and love shaking what their mama's gave them and biking as much as I do.

I consider them all my "bad ass" mentors - strong and remarkable. Really stupid.

Andrea: I had just moved to Chicago from Minneapolis, and I threw myself into the bike community as quickly as I could, where I met many of my fellow Rocketeers as the idea was just evolving. I am involved with The Rocketeers not just because it's fun as hell to come up with new bike moves, or get overly excited

when they work with the music, then string it together into routines. And not just because there is nothing more fabulous than having a beer and riding around on bikes, but also because these ladies are really something special.

w: What are your stage names if you have them?

Shar & Kelle: Of course we have stage names!!!

Laura: Each of our nicknames reflects a part of our personalities. I am Demolition; I am always the daring one willing to try out something that will most likely endanger me or others. It's normal for me to fall off my bike, wreck into something,



or do something a little dumb. I rarely hesitate to try something new.

Star: That's an understatement.

Andrea: I just turn my head and try not to look sometimes.

Katie: I'm known as Bruiser because I'm the one who tends to try odd activities that result in bruises...also am a Blatz who tends to bruise easily. Plus I like to beat up people.

Karlene: Kellie's is Boom Boom, a nickname from her Radical Cheerleading days in Portland that stuck with her. I am Dr. Doozypants, Star is Drill Sergeant for her "Focus and get it done attitude," Andrea is Marilyn Monroe, and Mexico is Red, White, and Cine (aka our "Baby Dolling").



us: I heard at the art show closing party that one of your performers would be absent that night because she just got bit by a dog but you were able to find a replacement and practice with her minutes before your performance. Is this true? How's the bite healing?

Kellie: That is oh so true. A neighborhood dog attacked my dog and one minute before I was going to leave for the performance. He had

to have his ear reattached that night and I just needed some antibiotics. We're all good now though! I just wish there was some video from that performance so I could see how well those clacks pulled it off. Hang on, as I wipe this tear off my cheek.

Laure: What a night...We did find a replacement for the evening. Our dependable Bruiser, Katie, happened to be on Critical Mass that evening. She had temporarily stepped out of this particular performance due to other life priorities...but just like that she jumped back into leathers red and white (clothing the rest of us had in our bags). Then, without skipping a beat, was on the dance floor again! It was like she was never gone. Pretty impressive with only two run thins before we hit the stage.

Andrea: As I pulled up to the bike art show to change into my Red and White, my stomach sank when I heard Kellie and her dog had been attacked, and it sank a bit deeper when I realized we were going to have to change everything up last minute. I am starting to come to terms with the fact that we can be ready as we can be for a show, but a million things can go wrong...music cuts out, dogs bite our members, the space may not be the right size...but the show still goes on!

us: Any funny stories to tell about practices or performances?

Kellie: When we were first coming up with our chant, we couldn't seem to say it accurately or with any rhythm. Everytime we tried, we said about 3-4 too many U's. We got it now, though! E-A-CKE-TL-ERS!

Star: Too bad all the attendees at FBC and Mander rides for a couple months had to

enjoy listening to us try to get it right over and over and over again.

we: Do you have anything else to add?

We are always looking for new members to join in our fun and performance options! Hit us up at

theracletterschicago@gmail.com or follow us on Facebook or The Chantrel.

we: Thanks for your time, ladies. I am looking forward to watching you perform and to see how your performances and members evolve. (Photos provided by The Racketeers.)

Chicago Women's Rugby & The Racketeers May 7!



Come watch a great game of Rugby as the always exciting (and beautiful and classy and fun) Chicago Women take on the always scrappy Detroit Women. There will be a super-fun HALFTIME SHOW performed by the all girl BDX Bible Dance Troupe The Racketeers!! Kick off is at 11 a.m., halftime will be around noon, and fan-times will continue all day. The field is right by the lake, how awesome! (Wilson East Sports Field, North of Montrose between LSD and the Lake.) OUR RUGBY GAMES ARE ALWAYS FREEEE AND OPEN TO EVERYONE!! It will be springcalf!

Chicago Women's Rugby Football Club (CWRFC) was founded in 1976. Legend has it that the Chicago Women's Rugby Team was founded by a bunch of women who thought they would show their husbands and boyfriends just how rugby was **REALLY** played! CWRFC hosted

the first Women's National "Rugby Classic" in September 1978 and the 2nd in September of 1979, the start of Nationals as we know it. Chicago Women's RFC have made appearances at the National tournament since 1978 with a break from 1998-2001. We proudly returned to qualify for Nationals in 2002, 2003, and 2004.

Our club partners with philanthropic causes including the Girl Scouts, Sporting Chance (Girls in the Game), and Hibernica Home. CWRFC also facilitates and encourages players to continue on to become coaches, referees, and to get involved in our Local Area Union (LAU) after their playing days are over. We have played Division I rugby since the divisions were created. We've had good years, bad years, fun years, and sad years - best of all has been the 30-year rugby journey.

We welcome all who are interested in the sport with open arms - you don't need to be a player to be part of CWRFC! If you do happen to be looking for a team to play for in Chicago, look us up! New players are always welcome! Whether you have been playing rugby for ages, or haven't heard of the sport, come join us! There is a place for you on our team! E-mail Kate Williams at recruitment@cwrfc.org (Content: cwrfc.org)

Chicago Bike Polo



Lauren Saker said, when suggesting a profile on Chicago bike polo, "It's no lullable game, but bike polo can improve bike handling

skills, confidence, and other good things female riders need. Chicago has both hardcourt polo at Garfield Park AND grass polo at Stearns Quarry Park. Hardcourt is already in full (mallet) swing on Sunday afternoons. I don't know when grass games start for the year, but the folks at Blue City Cycles ought to."



Sharon Venzel

Owen Lloyd of Blue City Cycles said, "We play Grass bike polo at Stearns Quarry on Sunday afternoons, usually starting at 4:30 or so. (After we close up at the bike shop.) This is weather permitting, of course. The location is the north side of the field at the western edge of the park. Anyone can show up and play; we provide mallets and the ball."

From Chicago Hardcourt: Chicago Hardcourt Bike Polo began almost four years ago, built on a foundation of grass polo and a trip to

NYC. We moved around inside the parks system before finally finding a home on a set of decommissioned tennis courts in Garfield Park on Chicago's west side.

Want to learn more about Chicago Hardcourt? E-mail polo@chicagohardcourt.com or stop on by the court in Garfield Park any Wednesday night or Sunday afternoon.

Right now we are working on organizing the Birch Minor Tournament June 25 and 26. Our budget is \$1,000 dollars. The two things we need most is wood for making the courts and money.

Chicago Bike Polo is currently ranked second in the world following the performance of Team Machine Politics at the 2010 World Hardcourt Championships in Berlin, Germany. Sincere thanks are due for the support we've gotten from our friends, family and our sponsors. Much appreciated.

Heavy travel or inclement weather can have their disruptive effects but generally pick-up happens three times a week: Wednesdays and Fridays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 12 p.m. We stop when we're spent.

The tournament season barely stops so there's always the chance that a few of us have returned from a tournament with good news. Our roster of players changes yearly. Our interests vary.

We also rely on help from the community to make this possible. If you or anyone you know is interested in sponsoring Chicago Hardcourt, please drop us a line.

Chicago Critical Lass



A new women-only bike ride is starting up in May! Critical Lass is a ride for women/Trans cyclists of all ages! Sets created to facilitate camaraderie, increase visibility, and encourage both novice and seasoned riders to get on their bikes. We will maintain a leisurely pace and will go no faster than our slowest rider so, whether you are 18 or 80, please join us!

Meet on the third Thursday of each month at Polish Triangle (Division/Fuller/Milwaukee) in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood, arriving

at 6 p.m. for a 6:30 departure. The route will change monthly, always ending at a restaurant or bar for drinks, wash, and conversation. Depending on the venue, children may or may not be welcome. Rides will be uploaded to MeetUp.com so if you are unable to make it to Wicker Park by 6:30, you can track the ride and join it at any point. The first ride will be May 19th, 2011. More information is available at facebook.com/CriticalLass (Photos provided by Critical Lass.)



Bike Lobbying & Capitalism

"Let's make sure we get the business and economic message out first. Bikes mean business." -Gary Spigitt, Bikes Belong spokesperson, describing a recent lobbying effort on Capitol Hill to the Washington Post.

If you care about safety, livability or fresh air it's hard to criticize someone pushing for bike infrastructure. But, compared to what do "bikes mean business"? A pedestrian's socks and shoes? Bikes can't compete with buses or trains let alone personal cars as a source of profit. In fact, part of the bike's appeal is that it is a relatively simple and inexpensive product, even if the manufacturers

and travel companies leading Bikes Belong want to promote high-end recreational cycling.

Those who promote cycling should be careful about reinforcing the idea that business interests ought to direct public policy. Bikes, feet and trolleys play a subordinate role in the North American transport hierarchy largely because transit policy has been designed to serve business interests.

As an aside about the lobbyists who have led the Good Roads Movement helps illustrate the point. Begun by bike makers in the 1890s, the Good
(Continued on p. 18)

INSPECTING THE INDIRECT INTERESTS OF BICYCLE RIDERS

Bike paths and parking are nice, but my biggest gripe as a former year-round, go almost everywhere bike rider was just too many cars on the road. The interests of bike riders would be best served by getting cars off the road, quite in harmony with those of the larger society.

The best way to get cars off the road is to make the public transportation system efficient and effective. A lot of people are tired of driving everywhere anyway. Although the present system has its islands of success, by and large it is a failure compared to driving, which is why there are so many cars on the road. For years the system has been seeking billions to restore and expand itself. Never mind the stagnant, obsolete technologies, not substantially improved in a century or half-century. They are fixtures, sacred cows, not to be questioned or examined further. Car culture knows very well what "totaled" means. It is an alien concept to transit culture, however. For years CTA has been seeking some \$6 billion to get itself in good repair, which is equivalent to plunging some 60 grand into a dunker. Never mind that a completely new and superior system could be constructed for considerably less with a disgracefully ignored technology.

Accountability is not what you expect but what you inspect. Two aspects of public transportation are woefully under-inspected. Improvement of public transportation has to proceed on two fronts, the technical and the financial. Otherwise active, intelligent people freely admit to woeful ignorance of these topics. Thus their expectations will be woefully frustrated and disappointed until

they spend a considerable amount of time in a much more aggressive inspection mode.

There is a technology that would do considerably more for considerably less than established rail technologies, were it properly inspected and implemented. This is not the place for a detailed analysis, but, in short, its structure consists of a standard steel beam held aloft by girdled light poles. Under the beam and over the vehicle are alternating current electromagnets, also known as Linear Induction Motors. A fraction of an inch below the beam, they generate magnetic forces in two directions, along the line of travel and perpendicular to it. Thus they suspend, propel, and brake the vehicle without the heavy, complicated, expensive, wearing, impacting mechanisms needed by the steel wheel on steel rail. The structure and vehicles do not need a separate right-of-way, do not interfere with road and rail traffic, block very little light, do not interfere with adjacent activities, and make about as much noise as an elevator. The vehicle can be little more than a skid that buses drive on and off, to allow them extended, high speed express runs, retaining normal rubber-tire flexibility in pick-up and distribution at each end. A heavy-duty version could likewise get trucks off the road, and be, for all practical purposes, a self-enforcing, high-speed, high-capacity lane.

A more fundamental problem is transit finance, which has little connection between positive results and costs, or, rather, a negative connection. Federal and state hand-pay for transit projects, local affairs that benefit only a small

fraction of federal and state taxpayers. Additional costs do not create the resistance they would if locally funded, with taxpayers readily comparing costs and benefits. Thus an irresistible, but ever-present and hardly noticed, temptation to run up a bill. This creates a junior military-industrial complex always settling upon rigid, expensive, time-consuming alternatives. The unofficial motto of the transit bureaucracy is "Leave no federal dollar on the table."

In the Chicago area operating costs are paid by a retail sales tax. Retailing, however, does not increase the rush hour load of the transit system, its major expense. The marginal costs of off-peak service are just about nothing, a former president of CTA once said and as I quoted him for several years at CTA budget hearings in his presence without contradiction. Once the rush hour is paid for, one hour a weekday in the morning, one in the evening, the other 158 hours a week is largely paid for too. Yet what do the transit agencies cut in a budget crunch? If they cut rush hour service instead, the downtown office industry and landholders would feel impelled to finally kick in their business expense.

Transit ought to be funded like elevators, which are funded by floor value capture. They do not make a nickel at the fare box, but without them the larger operation is useless.

It will be a big job, but road funding needs a sound basis too, one correcting costs and benefits. Indirect beneficiaries of highways should pay a tax on nearby parking. Direct beneficiaries of auto transportation, those actually riding, ought to pay congestion pricing, a premium to travel at those periods most in demand, not only to raise revenue, but to shift travel to less congested periods. State and federal funding, of roads and

transit, which do not correct cost and benefits, will make it difficult to achieve local balance.

Again, accountability is not what you expect, but what you inspect. Without a lot more inspection of public transit, and the above propositions in particular, bicycle advocates could easily sleepwalk themselves into leaving the status quo unchallenged. The standard reply they give, in yours truly's experience lately has been, "Well, I just do not know about that," which is not an answer. It's high time to hit the books and check things out. Especially so, when one former transit staffer is gaining something akin to guru status in bicycle circles.

Yours truly and Steve Schickman have had a passing acquaintance going back over 20 years, when he was executive director of the Central Area Circulator, an effort to put a 10-mile, \$775 million trolley system in and around the downtown. Its main function was to have been getting commuters from west loop stations to Michigan Avenue. I considered the monorail and running diesel commuter trains directly to the Grant Park right-of-way far more economical and effective alternatives. In all that time I cannot recall his ever even nodding "N" to me. We did have a conversation at an CTA budget hearing several years ago, in which he admitted to having secured funds for the CTA southwest line, that project having rejected "light rail" as too expensive and causing too much congestion. That rejection took an entire chapter of a November 1980 alternatives analysis. The trolley was covered in 1995 by a state legislative committee after its principal downtown constituency objected to paying one-third of the costs, another third to have come from state funding and the rest from federal funding, if I remember correctly. It was a federal "New Start" provision, which inspired the project in the first place.

(Continued on p. 22)

Critical Good: Crash Support Group

While riding my bike to work in August 2007, I was in a crash. I suffered some pretty severe physical injuries. They mostly healed, and there are some lingering physical effects. Even worse was the mental and emotional trauma that followed. I was afraid to ride again and had panic attacks sometimes just crossing the street or hearing a car honk. On a smaller scale, it was depressing to see and hear about everyone else riding. I stopped volunteering at the Active Transportation Alliance (then the Chicagoand Bicycle Federation) and quit going to their events. I felt trapped in my house because cycling was my main form of transportation and I wasn't comfortable doing that anymore.

I started seeing a therapist to deal with my anxiety. My goal was - and still is - to be back on a bicycle as much as I was before the crash - riding to work a few times a week, doing errands and social things all by bike. Even after several months of therapy, I still could not ride without an escort.

My therapist suggested I find a support group to help me ride again. I called the Active Transportation Alliance and spoke

to Falon Mihalic, the safety coordinator there. She did not know of any groups, nor did the person I spoke to at the Chicago School of Professional Psychology. Instead, they put me in touch with Edmond Yontzob, Psy.D. Falon, Edmond, and I decided to meet to create the group. Active Trans agreed to sponsor, and Edmond said he would facilitate.

One thing people ask is, "Isn't there already a group?" We could not find one in the city, and Falon couldn't find any when she looked at the national level. I went to the library and checked out books on support groups.

This is what groups generally offer: You learn you are not crazy or even unusual for what you are going through. There are people who know



BEEN IN A CRASH?
WE'RE HERE TO HELP.

Crash Support Hotline
312-869-HELP (4327)

The Active Transportation Alliance offers crash support resources for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Call our Crash Hotline and we'll provide options and referrals for questions about legal, insurance, advocacy, and support.

We also offer a free and confidential Crash Support Group with monthly meetings facilitated by a trained professional.

Learn more at www.activetrans.org/crashsupport or e-mail crashsupport@activetrans.org.



Chicagoand's voice for better biking, walking and transit

what you are going through and listen. Your friends and family don't understand, they love you, but they are tired of hearing you talk about it. They think you should be "back to normal," but everyone heals in his or her own time. In the group, sometimes talking helps, sometimes listening helps.

I have never been a member of a support group before, and I hope to find out how long it will be before I am back to normal (or the new normal, whatever that ends up being), how to ride on the street where the crash was, and what riders do to

make themselves most visible. Some of this I am learning just on my own, but it seems to take a long, long time.

-Susan Levin

Reprinted from the December 2008 (Vol. 1 Issue 1) of Mode Shift, an Active Transportation Alliance newsletter.

The next Crash Support Group meeting is on May 23. See the event listings on page 26 for more details.

There is No Road Rage in Ladies Arm Wrestling

Finding a new passion while struggling to regain the confidence to ride

Most people would be surprised to learn that I have been struggling with major depression and PTSD for many years and that it has been debilitating since 2009. That said, I have a great support system and am determined to get well.

A major piece of my depression has been the loss of my bike. Not that someone stole my bike (I have a couple extras, of course) but that someone (or, rather, several people) stole my courage to ride a bike and my ability to love riding a bike. Bikes have been my IDENTITY since the summer of 2002 so it has been a huge loss.

I was feeling pretty hopeless, not knowing what to do in Chicago without a bike, because 99.9% of my friends are cyclists (really, I did the math), until my most recent visit to Upstate NY in the

fall of 2010 when I got re-energized by being around my dearest friends and when I went to my first ladies arm wrestling meet.

Something about seeing my friends (most of them have known me since I graduated high school and during those years spent in NY I had NO FEAR of ANYTHING), remembering what I used to be like and what I used to be passionate about, mixed with the awesomeness of ladies arm wrestling changed my thinking. Since I no longer feel safe riding a bike, I really need to find something else to be passionate about until (or if) I regain my confidence to ride.

Following is my "farewell letter" to the Chicago cycling scene and my first impressions of ladies arm wrestling. I used to say that Chicago Critical Mass saved my life (and it did) but my life was in need of saving again so I think it's

safe to say that ladies arm wrestling has already saved my life. I know I can't be the only person struggling with losing the courage to ride a bike or losing the joy of riding a bike so I hope these words will encourage you to attend the Crash Support meetings and/or find something else to be passionate about while you recover from whatever is preventing you from feeling safe and joyful while you ride. ~sm

Hello bikey friends,

For several years I've been struggling with how to feel safe riding my bike again. I stopped riding my bike regularly in late 2008. I had been riding my bike 1000+ miles a week year-round since the summer of 2002 and all but two of my friends in Chicago were found through Critical Mass (and associated groups) so maybe you can imagine how heartbroken I still am to have lost my very best friend, my bike.

As you may know, I had some encounters with a few rotten motorists too many and some encounters with rotten cops from 2006 forward. Those encounters were not the kind where you're shaken up and then get back in the saddle. They were physically, emotionally, and financially devastating.

I have been going to therapy and Susan Levin did Chicagoland a huge service by getting the Active Trans-Crash Support group going. That group is a tremendous help. (They meet again on May 25 if you're interested know someone who could benefit. activetrans.org/crashsupport)

I'm still not brave enough to ride alone and

sometimes it's just too depressing to go on a Critical Mass ride because it reminds me of how riding used to be and how much I miss my independence, my health (my mental illness cost me my job of 7 years and I gained 75 pounds since I stopped riding), as well as the exhilaration and adventures that come from riding.

Maybe someday I'll be able to ride again. Maybe not. Instead of forcing myself to ride in fear, I have decided to find a distraction, or rather, a new passion. And I'm pretty sure that passion is going to be ladies arm wrestling.

Ladies what?!

While visiting friends in Upstate NY last fall, I was invited to a Hudson Valley BRAWL (Broads Regional Arm Wrestling League) meet in New Paltz. I didn't know what to expect. The event was held outside of a local market. There was hardly any room to stand!



The women wrestlers were dressed up in fabulous character costumes to match their Roller Derby-like names: Princess Slayah, Luscious Lo-Hand, Huff 'N' Stuff, Bummy Bruiser, Mrs. AMerica, Pushy Calore, Jackie O'Nasty, Mighty NhoDyeT, LumberJill Thunderbush, Betty Blowitz, etc. Luscious Lo-Hand, for example, came complete with movie star sunglasses, sexy clothes, an ankle bracelet, and an attitude!

Each wrestler had an entourage (Lucious In-Hand had her probation officer) who collected "bets" from the crowd. You put your money in the bucket of whichever wrestler you thought would win. But unlike a regular bet, where one of the gamblers wins the money, all of the money went to charity. That night's charity was an agency called HOPE, which (if I remember correctly) helps women who have escaped a domestic violence situation get back on their feet and also helps women start their own businesses.

The wrestling itself was a ton of fun. Some of the ladies cheated (using two hands or standing up) so a rematch would be called. One of the more touching moments of the night was when little girls were called from the audience to wrestle with one of the featured adult wrestlers. Of course every little girl won. I could imagine what a lasting impact such a win would have on those little girls and how they might grow up to be accepting of the queer scene or not afraid to be themselves because of BRANN.

When I got back to Chicago I was still pumped up about and inspired by BRANN. I told myself if Chicago didn't have ladies arm wrestling, I would start my own Chicago league... dammit! And then Google made it easy for me: I found CLLAW (Chicago League of Ladies Arm Wrestling).

 I went to their mini-meet at Whole Foods in Lincoln Park in January. I was terrified. What if they didn't like me? What if they only raise money for beer? What if they only wrestle in bars and I'll never

be able to see a big meet because I still don't have a photo ID? (I shredded mine after one of those rotten cop-experiences.)

I sat down at a table and the meet began. Rokke L. Squatch was the mistress of ceremonies and Dick Douche (rhymes with souffe, touche, and touper, I swear) was the referee.

First up was Beverly. The Real Housewife of Chicago, and Connie Vict. Connie immediately threw down Beverly but in the second round someone cheated so there was a rematch. This time they had to wrestle left-handed. Connie beat Beverly in the left-handed round and the final round. (Must have been all those push-ups in the joint)

Barano Split and Heidi were up next. These girls were evenly matched in size and strength and it was a grueling showdown. Heidi won the first round but got called out for cheating on the second round (her feet weren't flat on the ground). Barano Split won the redo of round two and went in for the kill on round three.

After a short break, people from the audience were asked to wrestle. Lisa (best known as the girl reading a book since Rokke sang a song about "the girl reading a book" as Lisa approached the stage), despite losing to Megan from Sidehow Theatre Company, said her first arm wrestling match ever was, "Eliberating!!" Megan, whose win was not easy, said of Lisa, "She's so strong!" A kid wrestled next with a woman named Lindsay, both of them from the audience. It was a long match and the kid prevailed. Audience members won a CLLAW t-shirt for their wrestling participation.

CLLAW wrestlers went back to work. Now it was Connie Vict against Banana Split (who, by the way, was dressed up in a human-sized banana costume) for the best out of five. Connie went for the kill in round one and two but Banana gained the upper hand in round three. Round four (a left-handed round) began and as Connie started to knee ground, she stood up, taking a penalty. Connie then had to wrestle with a penalty bag (sponsored by Macy's) on her head. The penalty didn't sway Connie, however, and after she won that fifth and final round, she ran a victory lap around Whole Foods.

The winner of the raffle was announced: audience member Jonathan won a CLLAW t-shirt. (I have got to get my hands on one of those t-shirts!)

But the ladies of CLLAW weren't finished yet! I joined them on a marketing side on the Red Line. We rode to Roosevelt, spreading the gospel of CLLAW to curious passengers. I have to admit it was sort of fun to not be the spectacle in a group for once, not being dressed as Santa on this day, and watched Banana Split back in the stores. We then rode up to Addison, inviting more passengers to the

big meet coming up.

The ladies invited me to their next planning meeting so it turned out I had no reason to be afraid. They are all super-nice and they welcomed me warmly to their scene. And so

it appears I have found my new passion: ladies arm wrestling. I am open to becoming a CLLAW manager or wrestler down the road but I'm going to be in the background for now as I get my feet wet. If you're interested in getting involved, here's their web site: cllaw.wednesday.com



Connie Vict, CLLAW champion from the April 2011 CLLAW IX event. (Photo from CLLAW blog.)

The next CLLAW event is set for July 15. \$10 will get you in the door but if you want to drink for three hours straight, hand over \$25 and you're good to go! All proceeds from meets go to Sideshow Theatre Company and a charity of their choice. There will be prizes all night long.

Sideshow Theatre Company just finished a play with robots. Not people dressed in cardboard boxes pretending to be robots but actual robots! It's called Hedditon and details can be found here: sideshowtheatre.org/hedditon.html

As for how I will remain in the bible scene, I will side Critical Mass when I find couragous. I

hope, but am no longer willing to force it, to be able to ride my bike regularly without fear again someday.

In my experience, each negative encounter with an angry motorist or uninformed aught cop-tipped a piece



Andrew Bedno: Lonely Locked Bike Bits. (massup.us/10b1c)

of me apart, leaving me feeling like what remains of the "abandoned" bikes you see locked up outside or to the rack in your apartment building's basement. Please know that there is a person and a story behind each one of those "abandoned" bikes.

(Continued from p. 10)

Roads push for government-funded roadway failed to gain much momentum until bike magnates (and others) started producing automobiles and lobbying for roads for cars. (Early U.S. carmakers Pope, Peerless, Rambler, Winton and Wills all began as bike makers.) Financed by the world's leading bike magnate, Albert Pope, the League of American Wheelmen (LAW) promoted road building for cyclists. Yet LAW's political clout was limited and change came slowly. In 1902 the American Automobile Association, which included former bicycle manufacturers, emerged as a successor to LAW. Many lobbyists remained, but they were far more influential lobbying for roads to serve cars than they had been in the bicycle movement.

The bicycle lobby achieved relatively little because it could not attract a host of associated industries. Unlike the car, it's a simple product. Just two skinny tires and a frame. While some bike companies were profitable, they did not generate close to as much economic activity as the auto industry.

Stephen Goddard describes the attitude during the 1900s resource boom spurred by the car: "To the industrialists, who were now selling glass, rubber, steel, concrete and their end products in numbers beyond their wildest dreams, whatever

needed to be done to sustain the boom and to build pressure for good roads simply had to [be] accomplished."

Today, the economic might of the automobile is hundreds, probably thousands, of times greater than the bike. During their recent lobbying effort on Capitol Hill Bikes Belong told John Sarbanes, a Democratic representative in Maryland, 31 stores in his district selling bikes grossed \$20 million in 2009. Compared to the car, this is a drop in the bucket.

All 435 congressional districts have at least one car dealership and most of these do more than \$20 million in sales. New U.S. car sales topped \$450 billion in 2007, with the used car market generating another \$260 billion. For government statisticians, automobile sales warrant their own category of retail trade. At its high point in 1977, auto dealers accounted for a whopping 28.5 percent of all U.S. retail trade.

In 2005 the global automotive industry was worth \$2,100,000,000,000 and ranked eighth among the world's largest economies. Yet only about one in three automotive dollars is generated directly by carmakers. The rest comes from repairs, fueling, finance and insurance, amongst other allied ventures. Gasoline is a trillion dollar industry and

banks do \$700 billion in car loans each year. At \$160 billion annually the U.S. auto-insurance industry is one of the most successful offshoots of the automotive sector.

A plethora of companies, which do as much business as bike makers, deal in everything from training new drivers to towing idle vehicles. There are parking operations, snow removal companies and people who salt the streets; more than 50,000 U.S. car washes bring in \$4.6 billion from automobile dirt while U-Haul pulls in over \$2 billion a year.

The list of industries that profit from the car is virtually endless. Even in death, the car is a money-maker. An entire culture has been spawned by weekend adventures and day trips to search out junkyard gems. Including chains the six thousand auto scrap yards strewn across the USA do \$10 billion a year in sales. But many bits and pieces don't make it to the yards; landfills are the final resting place of a huge amount of material from cars. This is another multi-billion-dollar industry.

Beyond direct spin-offs, the private car underpins a host of (heavily capitalized) businesses that would not exist if bikes were the dominant form of transportation. Wal-Mart, for instance, grew on the back of the highway to become the biggest company in the world. Similarly, the motel (or "motor hotel") business created by and for the car does tens of billions of dollars in sales annually while the \$1.20 billion fast food industry began on Southern California highways and continues to do most of its business via the drive-thru.

Spurring car infrastructure has also allowed for the massive growth in house sizes. Brick, wood, ceramic, glass, paint, glass and pipe producers have all benefited. Appliance manufacturers are

the better for it too. It's not easy fitting two fridges, a dishwasher a freezer, a washer and dryer, a pool table, six beds and four TVs into a small house or apartment; big houses are a boon to the appliance industry. "Urban areas have less junk than suburbs," said 1-800-GOT-JUNK's Darryl Arnold. "But only because they have less space. My residential jobs in apartments and condos downtown are on average one eighth of a load, compared with closer to half a truck load in the suburbs."

When all is said and done, cars facilitate an extra large culture, which is grand for business. Propelling the capitalist economic system full speed ahead, the automobile is a vehicle of endless consumption. (Capitalism would prefer everyone traveling to the grocery store by private jet but since that's not practical 3,000- or 4,000-pound metal boxes will have to do.)

The car's ability to generate business explains in large part why public monies are overwhelmingly devoted to this dangerous, unhealthy, and unsustainable form of transport.

Those who want cities structured for safer and more ecologically sustainable forms of transport need to challenge, rather than reinforce, the idea that transit policy should be designed to expand profits. Proponents of the bike and walking will thrive as more people challenge the logic of a system driven by the endless accumulation of profit.

-Fies Engler and Bianca Mugenji

E-mail fiesengler@hotmail.com for information on the North America tour for the book "Stop Signs: Cars and Capitalism on the road to Economic, Social and Environmental Decay."

College of Complexes

The Playground For People Who Think

April 10th: Special May Day Speaker. Transition Joe's Update on Organized Labor - Long-time activist Joseph Balka returns to report on the efforts to expand economic justice in the workplace. 8:00 p.m. at Lincoln Restaurant (8008 N. Lincoln Ave.) Tuition: \$1 plus \$5 food/drink. Format: 1-part program (Presentation, Q&A, Remarks/Rebuttal). The college maintains no membership and is operated entirely on a



volunteer basis. Open to the public. No reservations are required. If you would like to make a presentation, or simply more information about the college, contact Charles Padlock, Program Coordinator at cpadlock@hotmail.com or (312) 842-9036. The Next Open Date is August 13th or any subsequent Saturday of the year. College of Complexes: Sustaining the academic tradition of "One Fool at a Time."

Break The Gridlock!

Volunteers Needed for May 22 Urban Assault Ride



Break The Gridlock is thrilled to announce that this year's Urban Assault Ride, sponsored by New Belgium Brewing, will benefit Break the

Gridlock, The Clamhok, and West Town Bikes. Our task is to recruit volunteers for jobs such as beer security at Murphy's Bleachers and helping (and cheering) at checkpoints. Sign up here: urbanassaultride.com/chicago/volunteers/150 Volunteers will receive a t-shirt, food, drinks, and beer (21 and older). As an added incentive, our friends at Active Transportation Alliance are offering Urban Assault volunteers a discount for Bike the Drive, which is the following weekend. Please consider volunteering for this fun event. Your time helps support local causes that promote biking and reduce car dependency. I remember doing homegrown Urban Assault rides in the late 90's with friends I met through Chicago Critical Mass. They created fantastic late night, often off-road, capers in pockets of Chicago that I never

second quite able to find on my own in the daylight. The rides were a blast, and they helped me fall in love with cycling whether for adventure or mundane errands. It's great to see these kinds of goals being promoted on the Urban Assault website: "Bikes make you physically and mentally healthy, bikes reduce dependence on oil, bikes reduce traffic congestion, and bikes don't pollute. They're also a ton of fun to ride and that's the part that we bring to you in the Urban Assault Ride. We'd like to see you use your bike more for transportation and the event is designed to show you how to get around town efficiently on your bike. As the old proverb states, 'Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he'll eat for a lifetime.' In the UAR, you'll teach yourself how great bikes are for getting around town...and that's the best way to learn. After you experience the event, we hope you'll be more inclined to grab your bike lock and act your car legs when you cruise down to the store to pick up a 6-pack of Fat Tire." -Gus Kilgore (breakthegridlock.org/urbanassault)



Critical KIVA

loans that change lives: kiva.org/team/chicagocriticalmass

ANONYMOUS, SERVICES: SEWING (LEBANON)

\$100 Loan Funded 1/23/10

\$100 Paid Back 02/19/11

This Kiva borrower is a 29-year-old married woman from Lebanon and the mother of two school-age children. She established a tailoring business in her home in 2003. She specializes in producing handcrafts and embroidery. She raises her children alone because her husband travels out of the country to earn income for his family. She decided to have her own business to support her husband with the heavy family expenses. Today, she is requesting to borrow \$100 from Kiva partner Ameen z.a.l. to purchase additional merchandise to expand her production and her income. In the future, she hopes to open a formal gift/gift shop where she can sell her handmade products.

HOW DOES KIVA WORK?

1 Lenders like you browse profiles of entrepreneurs in need and choose someone to lend to. When you lend, Kiva collects your funds and then passes them along to one of their microfinance partners.

2 Kiva's microfinance partners distribute your loan funds to the selected entrepreneur. Often, Kiva's partners also provide training and other assistance to maximize the entrepreneur's chances of success.

3 Over time, the entrepreneur repays their loan. Repayment and other updates are posted on Kiva and e-mailed to you.

4 When you get your money back, you can re-lend to someone else in need, donate your funds to Kiva to cover operational expenses, or withdraw your funds.

Chicago Critical Mass Kiva Team: 16 members, 370 loans, \$9,700.00 loaned.



loans that change lives

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Kiva Lending Team: Chicago Critical Mass

Summary: [Home](#) - [Home](#) - [Team Manager](#) - [View Profile](#) - [Account Info](#) - [Get Loan Info](#)



Location: Chicago, IL
Category: Consumer Goods
Team ID: [161](#) [View Profile](#) and [Request to Join](#)
My Loan Portfolio: [View](#) [Add](#)
Account: Chicago Critical Mass is a nonprofit organization of like-minded lenders that helps entrepreneurs, small businesses, and individuals in need. We provide a safe, high-impact microfinance platform to make our borrowers' lives better. About 1000 people fund loans on Kiva every day. We're here to help you do the same. [View our Kiva page](#) and [learn more](#) about how you can help.
Updated: [View](#) [Add](#)
Team Size: [View](#) [Add](#)

Women & Trans' Night



Need a comfortable place to learn how to change a flat or overhaul your bottom bracket? Want to wield a wrench in a non-patriarchal

environment? Then check out Women and Trans' night at West Town Bikes (WTB)! This Open Shop is for the women and transgendered bike-lovers ONLY! Stop by WTB every Wednesday from 7-10p for Women & Trans' shop night. Bring your bike project, from brake adjustments

to squeaky hubs, and your willingness to learn. Women instructors are on hand to assist as you use the tools and ask questions. The instructor's ability to assist you will be limited by time and the total number of participants. Participants should be familiar with the repairs they plan to work on. Beverages and snacks are encouraged. No sign up needed, just show up! Use the side entrance (1147 N. Campbell). Donations are appreciated! Bicycle mechanics are paid \$10 per hour on average at most bike shops. Please keep this in mind considering the amount of time and work you do while at West Town Bikes.

(Continued from p. 12)

This was several years before Critical Mass created a voice for bicycle riders. It was also several years before Schickman became KTA executive director, where his principal effort went into the "Moving Beyond Congestion" campaign to raise billions to rebuild the system, including the commuter train system that bolstered its ridership by building extensive parking lots at stations and which canceled service in the recent snow because not enough riders could get there. This is not the way to cut car dependency or reduce suburban sprawl.

The trolley project spent some \$59 million on a pile of paper and trips to Europe. A \$100 million bus project would have had similar travel times and not left 10 miles of trolley tracks in the streets to create a bicycle hazard. The only claimed advantage of the trolley was a superior capacity that would have required 20 mph average speeds to achieve. The CTA Dan Ryan line does not average that fast down the middle of the expressway. The bus alternative might be worth writing. The buses could make long, fast

express runs on the monorail, getting city dwellers to 7 a.m. suburban jobs and suburbanites to 9 a.m. city jobs or vice-versa. Thus they could make two trips in a rush hour and give the rush hour a supremely efficient backhaul. They could serve low density suburban areas with computer matched riders, bus-sized pools of passengers traveling the same route at the same time, not unlike the carpools that have been around for over two decades, and help sprawling areas build themselves up.

These are not ideas likely to come from former transit staffers, least of all Steve Schickman. They will have to come from transit activists who inspect first and expect later. Schickman well understands the power of activism. He spent several years trying to recruit organizations into his "Moving Beyond Congestion" campaign. Transit activism is a tough row to hoe, but figure it got us wheelchair access and announcements for the deaf and blind. Let's not waste it on some old, same old.

—William F. Wendt, Jr.

How To Rock A Pinch Roll

by John Cabrera (johncabrera.com)



It's 1987. You're walking through the halls of your middle school, high school, technical college. You're nodding to fellow students standing at their lockers. You're working it.

You're looking good. You're feeling good. Cause even though your parents (or your spouse) wouldn't let you get that pair of skinny ankled Guess jeans you wanted so badly...you've fashioned a brilliant plan to show them.

With just a few folds of the cuffs, you've got that pair of Lee jeans rocking The Pinch Roll. You're rocking it out.

Only something is a little off. Those fellow students? They aren't nodding back. Some of them...are laughing? And that's when you notice. You've been walking around for god knows how long with one of your rolls completely fallen.

What the hell happened? And how could it have been prevented?

The following tutorial is a step-by-step guide to one of the cheapest fashion trends of the 80s. Items you'll need: A pair of loose ankled jeans,

flared no wider than boot cut. A pair of tube socks (optional).

Step 1: The Pull

Most people I've seen perform a Pinch Roll totally forget this critical step. They go straight for The Fold, and because of it they end up with a messy cuff area. To trick onlookers into thinking your jeans are actually authentic skinny jeans, you want no sagging, pulling, or bulging around the cuff area.

Starting with a nice clean pull at the inseam of the jean will do just the trick. Hold the thick joining of the cuff and inseam between your thumb and index finger.

Step 2: The Fold

Most people prefer to call this step The Fold, so as to keep the word Pinch just for the full name itself. But few disagree that this is the most important step of the four, and clearly from which the name Pinch Roll derives.

The trick here is to fold the jean from the knee, creating a very sharp isosceles triangle. Be sure to match the folded seam with the cinched seam around your ankle. Then press it in place with your thumb. You want this to be nice and tight. Most cases of a fallen Pinch Roll could have been prevented at this step with a slick tight fold.

WARNING: Pulling The Fold too tight may cut blood circulation, causing your foot to fall asleep or in extreme cases, gangrene.

Step 3: The Crimp

Crimp it...simple as that. Make one clean

upward, exterior crimp around the entire cuff of the jean. Start with the newly pinched part of the seam where your thumb is pressed, and use the exact width of the seam as your guide. Once crimped, the seam should be sitting tightly in the inner crease of the crimp.

Step 4: The Roll

Yeah!! A nice clean pull, a sharp tight fold, and a crimp that would make your mother proud... now roll it! Don't be shy!

It's hard to get this step wrong if you got the other three right. The most important thing to remember here is that you only want one roll. A big mistake novices make is to think that more is better. Not only will multiple rolls lead to a bulky

and high-riding Roll, it is also potentially fatal (see warning note in Step 2).

And just like with The Crimp, you want to use the newly crimped seam as your guide. Roll it the exact width of The Crimp.

Smooth out any air bubbles or unwanted wrinkles. Get it nice and flush.

And there you have it! A beautiful, 1987 Pouch Roll.

(NOTE: If you plan to rock a Pouch Roll, you'll probably want to choose a pair of tight fitting socks. A pair of floppy loose socks will only detract from the beauty of your work.)



HOW TO MOUNT A BIKE IN A MINISKIRT?



Mr. Bike sez: Want more smart-biking tips? Find 'em in my illustrated book, *Urban Bikers' Tricks & Tips*. Ask for it at bookstores everywhere, call 800/888-4741, or go to www.mrbike.com.

Chicago Bike Shop Database

The goal of the Chicago Bike Shop Database is to maintain up-to-date information about all bike shops in Chicagoland (all areas covered by the Chicagoland Bicycle Map). Visit chicagobikeshops.info for a complete list of shops, a map of shops via Google Maps, to read (and add your own) customer reviews and feedback about shops in the database, and to add a shop that is missing. Simple listings:

Rapid Transit Cycleshop



1000 W North
Ave., Chicago
(773)237-2388
rapidtransitcycles.com
Hours: Mon-Thu 10a-

5p; Fri 10a-5p; Sat 10a-5p, Sun 12p-5p. Overall Rating: 3.85 as of 04/19/11. Sells used bikes? No. Sells used parts? No. Offers Active Transportation Alliance discount? Yes. Offers rentals? No. Description: Chris Stodder and Justyna Frank, proprietors. Brands sold: Marin, Jamis, Kona, Brevore, Electra, Dahon, Birdy, Bike Friday, Bacchetta, Surley, Rons, Longbikes, Easy Rider, Catlike, Optima. Also Surley, Some, and Réchy frames available. Specializes in recumbents and folding bikes of which many brands are stocked. Also a full line of accessories and parts including Chrome bags, Charist child carriers, tagging attachments for kids, and a selection of popular cargo trailers (from BOB, Surley, and (B)labovoo). "Just about everything but roof racks & rollers, which we will happily order." Provides free workshops and seminars on topics including biking safety. Website includes a classified feature where users can sell their personal goods. Rapid Transit has been a long-standing supporter of the Chicago cycling community and been generous with donations for raffles/donor-proceeds. Rapid Transit promotes biking as the choice for alternative transportation, taking up biking safety and its environmental value. Additional location: 1005 S. Halsted St. Recent feedback: "I bought an older Raleigh road bike on Craigslist knowing it needed some work, so I took it here. New tires, cables, full tune and a couple of accessories installed free (that I didn't

even purchase at the shop \$79). The guy that took care of me did good work. He was helpful and definitely was not the quintessential snobby bike shop guy that some have said work at RT. He cared about what he was doing and wanted to help get my sweet a\$\$ ride rolling smooth. As with any bike shop -- if you walk in and act like you know it all, you'll most likely get treated like you know it all." --City Biker

Roscoe Village Bikes



2016 W Roscoe
St., Chicago
(773)477-7550
roscoevillagebikes.com
Hours: Mon-Thu 11a-

5p; Fri-Sun 11a-5p. Closed Weds. Nov-Mar. Overall Rating: 4.85 as of 04/19/11. Sells used bikes? No. Sells used parts? Yes. Offers Active Transportation Alliance discount? Yes. Offers rentals? No. Description: Alex & Lindsey Tweede, proprietors. Since April 2007. Space is restored tailor shop. The union-made cabinets from the 1940s have been converted to display bikes. Cater to all types of riders: commuters, competitive riders, and recreational riders. Shop dog Buddy has fan club: \$5 membership benefits annual rescue orgs. Brands sold: Jamis, XHS, Civia, Nive, Redline, Salsa, and Blue Competition Cycles. Sells kids bikes. Accessories including Bailey Works bags, Uvex helmets, commuter needs. All repairs guaranteed. Free estimates. Price list on display. Recent feedback: "I am traveling half across the city to get to this shop, passing many other bike shops. I wouldn't go anywhere else. Super friendly staff, very knowledgeable and helpful." --Jens

Upcoming Events

All of these events and many, many more can be found at thechainlink.org/events



Haymarket Ride May 1, 2011 Meet 9:30a, depart 10:30a from Haymarket Memorial (216 N. Dearborn St.) May Day, The REAL Labor Day, as observed all over the world! A slow-paced

ride highlighting many of the labor-related areas in Chicago. We may ride out to Forest Home (Waldheim) Cemetery where Emma Goldman and many labor leaders are buried. (Blue Line stop just north of the cemetery.)



Tour of North Center May 1, 2011 from 1-6p at Ravens Park (2509 W. Irving Park) 773-255-6347 Chicago Community Area #6, North Center is a vibrant and successful near-north side community

prized for its historic homes and friendly neighborhood streets. Many of the residents were laborers that worked in the factories and clay pits on the banks of the North Branch of the Chicago River. \$10. (\$5 if you attend the free pre-ride, free if you also volunteer to ride marshal.)



May Tweed Ride! May 1, 2011 from 1-6p at Red Lion (English Pub) (4743 N. Rockwell) Dress in your finest tweedy gear, strap a picnic basket on your steed, and let's ride! This is the weekend of the

wedding of Prince William and Kate, so it will be party in celebration for their happy day, and in anticipation of two of the BBC's Grand Marshals' impending wedlock this summer!



Freaky Friday North Side Critical Mass May 13, 2011 from 6-11p at Senn Park (5800 N. Clark) THE monthly North Side gathering of cyclists, 12+ miles, ending with food/drink. Bring friends, tunes,

bells, costumes, and cameras. A second big monthly mass, sometimes topping 100-riders.



Ride of Silence May 18, 2011 from 6-8p at Daley Plaza (Washington/ Dearborn) 773-370-2008 Honor fallen cyclists and raise awareness in this annual procession past Chicago Ghost Bikes. One day. One Time. Worldwide.



Tour of Lakeview May 21, 2011 from 1-6p at Lake View High School (4055 N. Greenview) 773-255-6347 Chicago Community Area #6 sits 4 miles north of Chicago's Loop. Comprised of

neighborhoods such as Wrigleyville, Lakeview, and East Lakeview, the area is home to numerous national and city landmarks, and several landmark districts. \$10. (\$5 if you attend the free pre-ride, free if you also volunteer to ride marshal.)



Urban Assault Ride May 22, 2011 from 9a-2p at Murphy's Bleachers (3005 N. Sheffield) The New Belgium Brewing Urban Assault Ride is the country's biggest bike scavenger hunt

series, hitting the streets of 10 cities in 2011. You and your teammate will grab your favorite two-wheeled steed and complete funky obstacle courses at checkpoints all over town. There's tons of sponsor prizes and a costume and mustache contest at the after-party.



Crash Support Group May 25, 2011 from 6:30-8p at Active Transportation Alliance (9 W. Hubbard, Suite 402) 312-427-3025 x 290 The Crash Support Group is for bicyclists and pedestrians recovering

from traffic crashes. Share your story at the Crash Support Group Meeting every 4th Wednesday of the month. Meetings are free, confidential, professionally facilitated, and open to the public. crashsupport@activetrans.org.

Earth Mass

April 29th 2011

ChicagoCriticalMass.org



Happy Friday!

Mark your calendar:
World Naked Bike Ride 8!
Saturday June 11th
ChicagoNakedRide.org