

THE DERAILLEUR

The unofficial publication of Chicago Critical Mass



CYCLING SISTERS ISSUE -- APRIL 2010

A C A P E D A L

ON THE RADIO – an adaptation of the song by Regina Spektor

Do do do do dudo Du duna duna

Uuh Uuh u-a-a-uhOooo oooo Aaaah aaaah

This is how it works,
A little cold at first,
And then you feel just right,
And then you start to sweat.

Your fingers all go numb
Despite your warmest gloves
But then when it gets warm
Yeah we survived the storm

If all the private cars
Began to rust away
You know I'd find the time
To aid in the decay

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- May**
- 1 Bad Girlz Biking ride (Cycling sisters s.side), May Day Tweed ride, and Dykes Pedaling Bikes ride
 - 4 Crossing Guard Appreciation Day
 - 5 Women's Cycling Series at Alberto's Cycles
 - 8 Kidical Mass and Go Green, Go Dutch, Go Bike event
 - 15 Kidical Mass and Solar Schools ride
 - 19 Chicago Ride of Silence
 - 22 GreenFest and Slow Bicycle Society ride
 - 23 Tour of Humboldt Park (fundraiser for West Town Bikes)
 - 26 Crash Survivors Support Meeting (activetrans.org)
 - 28 Chicago Critical Mass
 - 30 MB Financial Bank **Bike the Drive!**
- June**
- 5 Cycling Sisters Workshop: Clean and Lube your bike 2pm
 - 7 South side ride
 - 12 World Naked Bike Ride-Chicago
 - 12-18 Bike to Work Week
 - 18 Bike to Work Rally (wit' da Mayor)
 - 19 Architecture Tour by bike of Garfield Park
 - 25 Chicago Critical Mass
 - 26 Full Moon Fiasco ride

Useful links for Women Cyclists

- thechainlink.org Everything you need to know about what's happening in the Chicago cycling scene (including the Cycling Sisters)
- cyclingsisters.org Our original website
- chicagocriticalmass.org Info, flyers, history, maps about CCM
- bikewinter.org Tips and tricks, upcoming events, etc to make you a year round commuter
- teamestrogen.com Webstore with womencentric cycle clothing, also home to a great forum on women's cycling issues
- breakthegridlock.org Teaches you how to give up the car and live light on Planet Earth
- activetrans.org Website for the largest local advocacy group on cycling and pedestrian issues
- bikelib.org League of IL Cyclists
- sheldonbrown.com Every you can think of about bike tinkering
- copenhagencyclechic.com High fashion on a bike
- chicagobikes.org CDOT's bike-specific website

Credits and Acknowledgements

**Willow Naeco, Kathy Schubert, Tzipora Rhodes, Gin Kilgore,
Todd Allen, Jewish Cycling Sisters, Julie Hochstadter,
Hannah Bass and Jane Healy (ed)**

IL House Bill 43

Provides that where traffic signals are not in place, vehicles **must stop and yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk** rather than yielding the right-of-way by slowing down or stopping if need be. Provides that on a school day when children are present and so close that a potential hazard exists because of the close proximity of the motorized traffic and when traffic signals are not in place or in operation, vehicles must stop and yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk rather than yielding the right-of-way by slowing down or stopping if need be to so yield.

Effective immediately.

Passed by both branches of legislature on 4/29/2010

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Tips to make cycling easier if you are a woman:

(gleaned from Cycling Sister posts over the years)

- 1. Own the road.** You have a right to be on the road. Don't let drivers intimidate you into riding in the gutter. You should pedal about 3-4 feet away from the curb and about 4-5 feet away from the door zone. Remember, a driver who honks at you is paying attention to you.
- 2. Build your confidence by riding with others.** Riding with experienced cyclists helps you learn what to do and how to handle challenging situations.
- 3. Get a good saddle.** Selle an-atonica, Hobson's EasySeat, and Terry's women-specific saddles all get top ratings.
- 4. Fenders--a girl's best friend.** Avoid schmutz on your pants or jacket by installing fenders and/or a chainguard.
- 5. Use a menstrual cup.** The Diva Cup and the Keeper are endorsed by many women on the Cycling Sisters listserve. Don't be a hostage to your monthlies.

In spite of all we know
The traffic problem grows
A million angry beasts
That dominate our streets

While we were on our bikes
Riding through the night
Just hoping we don't die
Cuz someone couldn't drive

And on the radio
You hear the words again
An accident occurred
At such n' such address
As if there's no control
When you get behind the wheel

by Tzippy Rhodes

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[x2] – other melody --

Picture a car-free zone

Nuthin can hurt you on your way home
Ever get hit by one?
Talk about impact to the system

[x2] – verse 2 --

No one on the corner has legs like us

We be riding bikes stead of takin the bus
We pack and deliver like UPS trucks
But we don't waste dollars just pumpin that gas

[Chorus x2]

[x4] – bridge --

Some ride fixies gotta pedal

Some o some can just coast

[Chorus x4]

by Tzippy Rhodes

A C A P E D A L

METAL BIKES- a stylized cover of M.I.A.'s Paper Planes

La la la la la
la

H-cshhh H-cshhh
Ooweee YAh

Ooweee YAh

[x2] – verse 1 --

I don't drive no car I don't fly no planes

If you catch me at the corner got a bike between my legs

Try to cut me off – I make em all pay

Patch a flat tire in a second if you wait

[x2] – chorus --

All I wanna do is *ding ding ding*

And a *honk brrrrring *

TAKE BACK THE STREETS

(Calling All Wheel Women, continued)

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What causes these differences? To invoke a stereotype, are women more likely to be fearful? (nature/nurture/both--take your pick) Or does frequent riding simply lead to higher comfort levels in traffic, regardless of gender? Should we be helping women (and men, too) gain the experience, skill and confidence to ride anywhere, anytime? Or, should we focus our energy on providing cycling environments that meet people's current comfort levels?

So many questions! Please come on out and help answer them:

What: Cycling Sisters' Solidarity Forum--talk with other cycling women about what, if any, unique challenges we face and how we can encourage more women to ride. Share questions, problems and advice--and participate in the regional transportation planning process! Special feature: flat-tire fixing demo and contest.

Who: Heather Convey, bicycle educator, CBF; Gin Kilgore, transportation planner, CATS; Ingrid Weisenbach, transportation researcher, CATS

from a June 2001 flyer circulated in Chicago area

Kidical Mass

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Rides are typically 4 miles at a 5-6 mph pace, roughly 1 hour with stops, suitable for children who have progressed beyond training wheels. Younger children are welcome on trail-a-bikes, child trailers and child seats on their parent's bike. Festive dress and decorations encouraged. It is expected that all kids bring a parent or guardian. Please wear helmets and ride safely. Arrive 10:30am for 11am start.



Next ride: 5/8 Palmer Square bunny park. Contact: Karen Furlong 773 235-4630
5/15 Starts by the ice rink at Warren Park. Contact: Todd Allen 773 267 8168

<http://www.thechainlink.org/group/kidicalmass>

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As it goes in Judaism; "two Jews, three opinions." There are many versions of what brought us together, and even more about why we stay together. The group has grown and fluctuates from month to month, but the same wonderful faces keep coming back for more.

We bring pot luck contributions. We bless the wine, the bread and the sabbath candles.

Then we enjoy our dinner and a wonderful sense of community with our Jewish cycling sisters. We have intricate conversations: sometimes having to do with what we have in common – being women, bikes, and Judaism – but mostly other interests and causes we're pitching.

This is a very interesting group of women with a powerful sense of social justice and action. Interests range from Girls Rock! to thechainlink.org, to City Farm, writing, blood donation, film and healthcare justice.

The conversation is always intellectually stimulating and leaves all participants with a chance to network, schmooze and leave with a

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photo credit: Kathy Schubert

Since October of 2008 a group of Chicago Jewish Women bicycle riders has been meeting almost monthly for a Shabbat dinner at various member's apartments.

The group was set up due to the common interests of its members, and the acknowledgement that there were a high number of Jewish women highly involved in the biking community, and thoughts of starting a riding group that speaks Hebrew, or has Jewish interests.

Calling All Wheel Women

By Gin Kilgore

My work in bicycle planning and advocacy is guided by these simple questions: *What can we do to help make cycling a safe and pleasant activity for all? How can we promote the bicycle as a form of everyday transportation?*

Inevitably, the issue of gender comes up in these musings. Casual observation suggests that women do not commute by bicycle as much as men, that women's options for finding bicycles and accessories are more limited, and that the stereotype of a cyclist is a lithe, white man in his 20s or 30s. Given the bicycle's role in the struggle for women's liberation, why aren't more women riding or more visible in the cycling community today? Do women encounter more real or perceived barriers in the cycling realm than men? If so, what should be done about it?

Many of Chicago's female bike commuters, advocates, racers, weekend warriors and messengers want to find out. On June 6, as part of bike month, there will be a Cycling Sister's Solidarity Forum to discuss what it will take to encourage more women to discover the freedom and pleasures of two wheels and provide an opportunity for women to learn cycling and commuting tips from one another.

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sense of having eaten a great meal and being able to start Shabbat with a peaceful energizing meal with some fantastic ladies.

In addition to Shabbat, we have met up for latkes on Channukah, and have considered pesach and other Jewish holidays as good meet up times in addition to having rides of our own. Additionally, many members have formed strong friendships and help one another in their activism outside of the formal Shabbat dinners.

If you are a Jewish female cyclist, please feel free to contact any of the members to get on the list. You can post at Jewish Women's Velo Club on thechainlink.org to find us.

Submitted by Kathy Schubert, Hannah Bass, Tzippy Rhodes, Julie Hochstadter



The Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) is asking for input and ideas on how to engage more girls, young female adults and women in cycling. The more ideas the better. The survey is open through May 15. **Females only, please.** Notes: Takes about 15 minutes, not suitable for mobile devices.

<http://tinyurl.com/APBSurvey>

Granted, gender can be a blunt tool for understanding the complex lifestyle choices of individuals. But as we try to figure out how to promote bicycling, we should explore all possible leads. Results from a recent survey¹ of Chicago cyclists suggest that gender *might* play a role in a person's relationship to cycling. The good news is that 72% of male and 69% of female cyclists reported they ride 1-6 times a week. No big gender difference there, just a lot of bicycle riding. However, there is a significant gender difference between occasional (1-4 times a month) and daily cyclists. Twice as many men as women are daily riders (19% vs 9%); twice as many women as men are occasional riders (18% vs. 7%).

Should this concern, or at least compel, those of us who promote bicycling? Why do twice as many male cyclists identify themselves as experts as female cyclists? Might this perception affect confidence level on the streets of Chicago? Another survey question asked where cyclists feel comfortable riding in Chicago. Men and women reported similar comfort levels on paths, local roads and bike lanes. However, men reported higher confidence levels on major roads.