



ILLINOIS VALLEY WHEELM'N



greater peoria's bicycle club

July 2002

Club Meeting - July 10

The July meeting will be at Safety Town, as usual and we will hear about Bicycle Law in Illinois. I do not have a speaker yet, but have talked with quite a few law enforcement offices (you'd be surprised how many we have) and they all have officers available to speak. So, at this point, we may have one well-qualified officer or maybe several that could conduct a round table discussion about the bicycle laws in Illinois and how they affect us.

Bill Semmens

I.V.W. member discounts!

Josh at Bellevue Bicycles has generously offered a 10% discount on all purchases including bikes to all I.V.W. members. All you have to do is take your latest I.V.W. newsletter with mailing address showing your name and expiration date. Bellevue carries Trek and Klein bikes and the new line of Nike cycling clothes. Stop in and see them and take advantage of your discount!

Tour Around the River recap

Being blessed with a beautiful day, twenty-two people came out to enjoy the day riding the roads through the Illinois River valley. Twelve people chose the 75 mile route and ten opted for the century. These special rides are a great way to share that favorite route you have with other club

members. Anyone interested should contact the ride chair to schedule a ride. Thanks to all who came and I'll see you on the next ride!
Greg Durst

Bikes for Kids a huge success!

Many, many thanks to all who helped in bringing Bikes for Kids back this year. Due to the efforts of everyone involved, 225 kids will be experiencing the thrill of that first bike! I am still amazed at that number. That brings the total to over 1100 bikes in the seven years this program has been in place. Remember, probably none of these kids would have a bike without this program and all that makes it happen.

I.V.W. members involved were Mike Pula, Steve Kurt, Lori & Matt Durst, Dave Gerht, Bill Semmens, Eric Hutchison, Ron Jetton, Ron Douglas, Steve Grube and Larry Paustian. I always hesitate to name names for fear of forgetting someone, (forgive me if I have) but these people can't go without mention. Most gave up the entire day and worked incredibly hard so a kid they will probably never know will have a bike to ride. Thank you.

Local bike shops participating, Kevin from Russell's Cycle & Fitness, John and Harold from Illinois Cycle, Josh from Bellevue Bicycle and Kyle from Bushwacker. These shops donated a mechanic and lots of tires, tubes, cables, and everything else needed to get these bikes in good working order. This could not happen without support like this from our local bike shops. So, let us support these shops and also tell them thanks the next time you are

there. Thanks also to the Sheridan Village Merchants Assn. for the tent to keep the sun off of us, and the nice lunch from Panache. Having a bike as a kid is a thrill that every child should enjoy. All of these people involved made that experience happen to a whole lot of kids who otherwise would never know that thrill and freedom a bike can bring to a child. A heartfelt thank you goes out to each and every one of you.

Greg Durst

New Members

Mike Haedicke E. Peoria
Michael & Barbara Hutchins & family Morton
Tim Lemons & Gaik Ong Peoria
Paula & Arthur Rawlings.....
..... Morton
Rob Schaller..... Peoria
Krishna Vara Groveland

Renewing Members

Bill & Freda Clark... Washington
Bill & Brenda Clark & family
..... Pekin*
Ron & Paula Douglas Peoria^
David & Toni Faught..... Pekin
Mark Ferguson Peoria*^
Don Jacobs..... Washington
Bonnie Johnson Peoria
John Mogler Washington*
Gary Mort Washington
Tim Raitt..... Washington^
Sheldon & Mary Ann Schafer
..... Peoria^
Charlie & Jane Sieck & family
..... Dunlap^
Glen & Marty Thompson & family Tremont
Jack Welch..... Groveland
William Wilson Peoria^

* LAB member ^ Advocacy

Illinois Valley Wheelm'n

Greater Peoria's bicycle club
Affiliated with the League of
American Bicyclists and League of
Illinois Bicyclists

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Submissions, including stories, news,
images, and/or humor are welcomed.
Deadline: 15th of each month

IVW On the Web

<http://www.geocities.com/ivw.geo>

enter the above as one line; no spaces

I&M Canal @ Marseilles

July 26, 27, & 28, 2002

Friday evening we'll set up camp at Illini State Park Campground on the south bank of the Illinois River across from Marseilles. This is an Illinois state park on highway 15 just where it crosses the Illinois River at Marseilles. Travel time is about 1.5 hours, less than 100 miles. Friday night's supper is on your own, some of us will go into Marseilles to eat. Both fast food and local fare is accessible by bicycle.

We will be in the "Great Falls" camping area East of the river bridge. Calling the park 815-795-2448 can reserve campsites. This may be recommended for the big rigs. Tents can camp two per site or one with rig so we should all register as more than one person and share the sites.

On Saturday and Sunday mornings the ride will leave the campground at 9:00am and travel across the river to the Marseilles riverfront trail area to check for the arrival of day riders who may not have found the campground. Saturday we will be traveling east on the trail through Seneca to Morris. Lunch will be found in Morris catch as catch can. Sunday we'll go west. Ride distance will be up to your ability, as the trail has no end.

Bring a dish to share for Saturday night's supper. Day riders are welcome to stay and eat with us in the campground. Judy (& Mel) Perrill 347-6971 have volunteered to organize the campsite activities.

All the trails are flat and crushed rock, narrow tires are usable if you're a confident rider. Some small soft spots have been encountered.
Larry Paustian, 694-3947.

Fox River ride

July 15, 2002

A small group will meet for a ride along the Fox River near St. Charles, IL (just west of Chicago) at 9am. The ride will start at the St. Charles swimming pool. For details, contact

Celeste Hansen at 693-1018 or
celhansen@aol.com

Bike Rodeo for KIDS

Saturday, September 7, 2002 at
9AM

Safety Town on Sheridan

The IVW has agreed to assist with this event this year. Volunteers are needed to perform bike fits, tire changes, and other minor adjustments. Bring tools, rags, and expertise with you. The kids will be bringing their own bikes in for safety and fit checks.

This event is sponsored by the American Red Cross, Safe KIDS Coalition, Russell's Cycle, and the Peoria Park District. If you can spare a couple hours for this we would greatly appreciate it. This is a great way to let the community know about our bike club. These kids will be the future IVW members.

Call Marge Semmens 693-9388.

Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail

Marge and I have volunteered to organize another Elroy-Sparta bike tour in August. The dates will be Aug. 16-18. For those of you not familiar with this trail, let me tell you how great it is. The trail is located about a six hour drive from Peoria, in the rolling hills of southwestern Wisconsin on an abandoned railroad bed. As you may have guessed, it runs from Elroy to Sparta. The eastern end is about two hours drive northwest of Madison. It runs through the most areas that Wisconsin has to offer and has three very long tunnels. The trail surface is crushed limestone, similar to the Rock Island trail. Marge and I always use our road bikes with their narrow tire and never have any problems getting through. Of course, trail bikes work just as well, also.

Here is the general plan. Leave as soon as you can on Friday and drive to the town of Wilton and go to the town park. (We'll make arrangements for car pooling if necessary.) Look or ask for the IVW when you get there and find a place to camp. Get there as early as possible as the park can get quite full. The park has some electricity, water and showers. You're on your own for meals on Friday, but we usually come up with some sort of group thing for those that are there. Marge and I generally get up there early enough for an afternoon ride to check out the Amish farmers.

On Saturday, we'll ride over to Elroy and then up to Camp Douglas for lunch. That's about 27 miles each way. The hardier riders generally take the back roads one way to really enjoy the great downhill areas. When we return to camp there is time for swimming or relaxing before a group supper.

Then on Sunday we all head towards Sparta for lunch and the return trip back to camp. Sunday's ride is about 35 miles round trip. We can usually get back to camp early enough to back up and be home before dark.

If you want to learn more about the ride or want to get your name on the list of people going, call or write Bill or Marge Semmens at 309-693-9388 or Semmens@MTCO.com.

The Difficult Job of Education

Recently, a friend shared an opinion column with me. It was from a Texas publication called The Villager. Like many opinion columns, this one had the appearance that the author was desperately looking for something to write about. This writer happened to pick the subject of "people who shouldn't be on the road". Her targets

included cyclists, rollerbladers, and joggers. A short quote follows:

"I see many other families enjoying the bicycle paths, as well. Unfortunately there are some cyclists who apparently think they're too good for the bicycle paths. We all pay so much money for the parks and pathways that it amazes me to see so many people not using them. Oh, I know the argument that they use, "We're 'serious' cyclists and we need to go faster than the pathways allow us to go. We can't have people in our way."

Well, I don't buy it. One of our neighbors is training for a triathlon, and just this morning I saw him cycling. I was relieved to see him because, believe it or not, he was on the bike path. How much more "serious" can you get than training for a triathlon? I guess he's just smart enough to realize he is safer on the bike path.

It is not just the fact that I have to share the road with these cyclists that bothers me. If they obeyed the traffic laws like the rest of us, perhaps that might be a different story. First many of them travel in packs. What happened to following in a single-file fashion? Next, almost without fail, they don't stop for stop signs. They just assume that you will give them the right of way and blow right through the stop signs."

Later in the column, she makes these comments:

"My husband, Bill, has come up with a slew of ways to rid the streets of these defiant non-path users -- from water pistols to paint guns. Then there's the more traditional, open the door as you pass them on the road stunt. You know, just to scare them. He thought about taking a small car on the pathways to prove a point, but then he realized he would just annoy those good path users. He's even come up with a "smoke them out" plan that is a bit more complicated. Not that I condone any of these forms of retaliation. It does, however, make it a bit more bearable to share the road with these people when you can laugh about it.

I don't know what the answer is. I suppose that the police would have to get involved. If they would ticket those who cannot obey the law, perhaps they would at least begin to ride more responsibly. The laws are there for safety, and everyone knows that the roads are dangerous enough for those in cars obeying the law, much less for those who choose to ignore them."

Understandably, a lot of cyclists were upset about the suggestion of harassing cyclists and other legitimate road users. The Villager was forced to issue a statement that the author's intent was "to blow off steam in a tongue-in-cheek manner".

Despite the irresponsible suggestions of the author, some valuable insights can be gained from this. One is that many people are under the mistaken impression that bikes belong on bike paths, and not on roads. On a number of occasions, IVW members have been yelled at and told "get back on the bike path where you belong".

Certainly there is a need for better education of motorists so that they understand that bicycles are legitimate road users, with the exception of roads where bicycles are specifically excluded.

Still, doesn't the author have a valid complaint? Do any of us doubt that she has seen cyclists running stop signs or riding in a mob large enough to block a complete lane? This is not an uncommon sight on IVW rides!

There seems to be a belief that bicycles are like pedestrians, only faster. No laws apply. For better or worse, that isn't the case. The laws of Illinois clearly state the following: **"Traffic laws apply to persons riding bicycles."**

This includes obeying all traffic signals.

The law also mentions where the rider should be located in the lane:

Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway shall not ride more than 2 abreast, except on paths or parts of the roadway set aside for their exclusive use. Persons riding 2 abreast shall not impede the

normal and reasonable movement of traffic and, on a laned roadway, shall ride within a single lane subject to the provisions of Section 11-1505 (625 ILCS 5/11-1505).

This is a particularly interesting portion of the law. It appears many club riders don't believe they are restricted to riding two abreast, while many motorists think cyclists are restricted to riding single file.

How many recall the editorial in the Peoria Journal Star last year, where cyclists were depicted as road hogs? One of the letters is written by an East Peoria cyclist who comments "...we have a right to the roads too. But not two-by-two". Even people who should be supporting our legal rights aren't educated adequately. This shows how hard it is to educate both motorists and cyclists.

The lack of education on both sides of the issue often leads to hard feelings and ill will. At times, it has prompted attempts to pass laws to keep cyclists off of rural roads "for their own safety". In the last couple of years, a bill was proposed to the Texas legislature to keep cyclists off of the "farm to

market" roads. The argument was that cars and trucks couldn't always see far enough ahead to avoid running over cyclists, so the cyclists should be kept off of the roads. Ludicrous, isn't it? Perhaps, but how many readers know that Illinois has officially declared that bicycles are not intended users of the roads? After a recent case where a rider was injured due to a poorly maintained road surface, the state decided that it and cities didn't have to keep the roads safe for bicycles.

So what are we members of the IVW to do about this situation? Two things come to mind:

1. Obey the traffic laws. This has the effect of promoting better public relations (not making motorists mad because you just ran a stop sign in front of them). It also means that you will be acting like other road users, and will be more predictable, and therefore less likely to be involved in an accident. Honestly, despite some evidence to the contrary, I think motorists would prefer to not run over cyclists. The expense of the bodywork, and the hassle of filling out insurance forms makes it just too

much trouble. The laws relating to bicycles are posted at the IVW web site.

2. Support or become involved in bicycle advocacy. Advocacy includes efforts to make the general public aware of the rights of bicyclists, to protect the rights of bicyclists, as well as to encourage more people to enjoy the benefits of bicycling. The League of American Bicyclists is the national group for bicycle advocacy, while the League of Illinois Bicyclists is geared towards issues specific to this state. Their webs site are at: <http://www.bikeleague.org/> and <http://www.bikelib.org/> Eric Hutchison is the club member who is your resource for advocacy.

Take some time to consider what you can do to comply with the law, to promote harmonious co-existence with motorists, and to protect the tenuous rights you currently enjoy as a cyclist.

Steve Kurt

ILLINOIS VALLEY WHEELM'N MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION	
Name #1 _____ <small>please print clearly</small>	Birthdate _____
Name #2 _____	Birthdate _____
Name #3 _____	Birthdate _____
Name #4 _____	Birthdate _____
E-mail address (print clearly) _____	
Address _____	
City _____	State _____ Zip _____
Phone () _____	
Signature (Name #1) _____	Date _____
<small>(parent or guardian if registrant is under 18)</small>	
Are you renewing, or is this a new membership? (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Renewing <input type="checkbox"/> New If new, how did you find out about the club? _____ _____ Are you an LAB member (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Basic membership: Individual (\$10) \$ _____ Household (\$12) \$ _____ Voluntary advocacy contribution: (\$5, \$10, \$15, other) \$ _____ Total enclosed \$ _____	
DISCLAIMER: In signing this form, I understand and agree to absolve the officers and members of the Illinois Valley Wheelm'n bicycle of all blame for any injury, misadventure, harm, loss, or inconvenience suffered as a result of taking part in any activity sponsored or advertised by said organization.	
Make check payable to: ILLINOIS VALLEY WHEELM'N, 6518 North Sheridan Rd., Ste 2, Peoria IL 61614-2933	

IVW 2002 Ride Information

Thanks to the efforts of several club members the ride schedule for the year already includes a variety of weekly and special rides. There are rides for all levels of ability, and more will be added as the season grows closer. If you have any ride suggestions, please call Mike Pula 243-9394.

Weekly Rides

- Monday Dunlap Grade School; Marge Semmens 693-9388; beginners and anyone else who wants to ride a nice leisurely pace; 6pm.
- Tuesday Dunlap Grade School; Steve Kurt 243-7684; levels 2 & up; 6pm.
- Wednesday Pleasant Hill Grade School; Larry Paustian 694-3947 & Dirk McGuire 699-8482; levels 2 & up; 5:30.
- Thursday Coal Miners Park (Pekin); Jim Vaupel 353-6104; levels 2 & up; 6pm.
- Friday Pearce Center (Chillicothe); Jim & Sarah Emmons 246-2166; beginners and families; all levels; 6pm.
- Saturday Washington (on the square); no leader; 8:30; levels 2 & up; currently riding
- Saturday Russels (Washington); Don Eberle 699-2790; 7:30; levels 2 & up; currently riding
- Sunday Evan Jones of Illinois Cycle will lead a training ride of 20 - 30 miles starting from the store at 8:00 am. The ride speed and distance will adjust to the group, however, it is generally for level 2 & up. Evan Jones 682-9346.
- Time Trial First and third Mondays of the month. Meet at Dunlap grade school @ 5:30. 10 mile course. Steve Kurt 243-7684; levels 2 & up

Rating Legend:

Level 1: Beginner, less than 20 miles, less than 15mph, not self-sufficient.

Level 2: Intermediate, 20 - 50 miles, 15 to 18 mph, partially self-sufficient.

Level 3: Experienced, 50+ miles, 18+ mph, totally self-sufficient.

Special Rides

Town Rides: Eric Hutchinson 688-7038 & Sheldon Schafer 682-1876 are once again leading their town rides throughout the spring and summer.

July 11 History Ride Start at the Riverfront Visitor Center Parking Lot. 6pm.

July 25 Sculpture Ride Start at Bradley University 6pm.

I & M Canal @ Marseilles; July 26,27 & 28 Larry Paustian 694-3947 will be leading a weekend trip along the Illinois River. Details are in this issue.

Elroy-Sparta; August 16 - 18 Bill and Marge Semmens 693-9388 will be leading a group up to this popular Wisconsin Trail.

Backroads of Bureau County; August 25 Mike Pula 243-9394 will lead a ride through Princeton and Bureau County. More details to come.

Family Poker Ride; September 10, 6pm. This will replace the regular Tuesday night ride. Distance is approximately 10 to 14 miles. Dunlap Grade School; Marge Semmens 693-9388

Fall wiener roast ride; September 28 Jim and Sarah Emmons will once again lead a ride for all levels to be followed by a wiener roast at their home in Lacon. More details to follow.

Invitational Rides

Here are some invitational rides in the area or those club members have highly recommended. Info on these and many other invitational rides can be found at Mike Bentley's web site: <http://mikebentley.com/bike/>

Pedaling for Kicks on Route 66 July 13 Bloomington, IL Richard Virderly 800-676-2353

Interplanetary Ride - August 10-11. Sheldon Schafer 682-1876

Capital City Century; September 9 Springfield Bicycle Club

No Baloney Ride - September 21. Bill Semmens 693-9388

Hilly Hundred; October 4,5 & 6 Bloomington, IN Billie Lane 317-255-6856

Summary of upcoming events:



July 10	Club meeting
July 11	History Ride
July 13	Pedaling for Kicks on Route 66
July 15	Fox River ride
July 25	Sculpture Ride
July 26-28	I&M Canal @ Marseilles
August 10-11	Interplanetary Ride
August 16-18	Elroy - Sparta
August 25	Backroads of Bureau County
Sept 10	Family Poker Ride
Sept 21	No Baloney Ride
Sept 28	Fall wiener roast ride

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