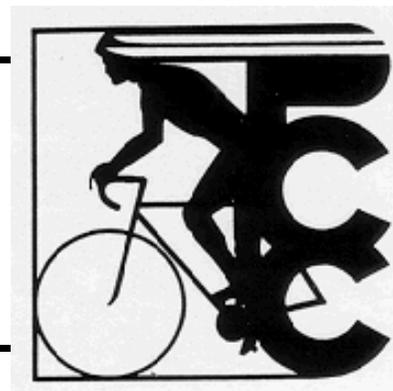

The Prairie Cyclist

Newsletter of the Prairie Cycle Club, Urbana-Champaign IL
January-February 2011



Holiday Gathering Report December 7, 2010

The PCC Holiday Membership Meeting and Dinner occurred in the banquet room of El Toro restaurant at 2312 West Springfield Avenue, Champaign

These board members were elected and inaugurated:

Lorrie Pearson, President
Richard Brannon, Secretary and Membership
Angela Holcomb, Treasurer
John Prince, Activities coordinator
Bob Morris, Publicity coordinator
Michael Fuerst, Newsletter Editor

The members also voted to exempt the newsletter editor from the term limits applicable to other board members.

The Chill Is On! Saturday, February 19, 2010

The Tenth Annual Illini Chill Ride will be held in St. Joseph on Saturday, February 19.

Folks have participated at various levels – from getting the ticket, eating the food and swag, and laughing at people who rode; to "just" doing the 20 miles with the hot chocolate to remind their legs what a bicycle is; to riding out from Champaign, doing the "extra 20 miles for proficient riders," and making it an endurance event.

The ride includes a lumberjack breakfast, hot chocolate break and spaghetti lunch, and is held *regardless* of the weather.

For more information:
http://www.stjoechamber.org/illini_chill.html, and click on the pages of the registration form

Grand Illinois Trails and Parks

The 2011 Grand Illinois Trails and Parks (GITAP), the League of Illinois Bicyclists' premier bicycle tour, will occur Sunday, June 12 to Friday, June 17. The 160 rider limit often fills by mid March. This ride is an inexpensive vacation, appropriate for a recession

The six-day ride begins at Sycamore High School (Sycamore IL), then heads west to White Pines Forest State Park for a two night stay. The second day at scented White will allow for varied rides of your choice, including a century. Then it's off along the Rock River to Rock Cut State Park for another two overnights stay. Many fun activities will be available there, including a cycling century, exploring the wonders of Rockford, and perhaps even a canoe excursion on the Rock. On Thursday we head east to the a brand new city park in Crystal Lake. After an overnight by the lake, we wend south on our last day down the Fox River Trail and the Great Western Trail. All told our mileage will be a minimum of 170 miles, but you can ride 475 miles by taking extra loops each day except for the last.

For more information and registration forms
<http://www.bikelib.org/maps-and-rides/rides/gitap/>

PCC Social Hours

Two Friday PCC social hours are to be held at Radio Maria in downtown Champaign on February 18 and March 18 from 5-7+pm, strategically timed to occur before the 3rd Sunday board meetings. The main focus will be socialization among like-minded people who might not otherwise get together in the off-season. Radio Maria offers a wide variety of Tapas appetizers as well as an extensive menu of adult and adolescent beverages. If interest is shown, we might extend it into the riding season.

Meet the PCC Board Members

Lorrie Pearson, new PCC President 2011-2012

Bike: Trek 2.3 (mint/ white)

I am relatively new to the club, joining in 2009 after purchasing my first road bike. I volunteered as the Publicity Chair before being elected as President last December. Top on my agenda is improving the website (any website designers care to assist?) and adding to the list of already solid weekly rides. If you have other suggestions or would like to lend a hand to the club, please contact me.

Richard Brannon, Secretary and Membership

Bike: Novara Strada (REI's own brand), at least 10 years old and with several modifications.

My wife and I, now both retired, moved to Champaign a little over two years ago from Seattle, to be in the same community with our only child (a grown daughter). While in Seattle I was active in the Cascade Bicycle Club for a number of years, doing both group rides and tours with them. The Prairie Cycle Club was the best way for us to continue bicycling and meet people. An opportunity arose to volunteer for the Secretarial position, and then the Membership position and I took both. Besides biking, I also enjoy running and hiking, and also have joined the local running club.

John Prince, new Activities Coordinator

I rediscovered cycling in 1993 as part of an effort to end a 20-year smoking habit after a second sinus surgery. 100,000 smoke-free miles later, I think it's time I put something back into the sport. While my personal preference tends toward rides of 60 miles or more at a 17 mph pace, I hope to offer plenty of activities for recreational riders of all abilities, both on and off the bike. On the road, we hope to continue to offer our weekly menu of rides throughout the summer for persons of all abilities and schedules. Secondly, we will need to organize our annual invitational metric, CU Across the Prairie. A third focus will be organizing and coordinating participation in trips to other nearby (1-5 hour's drive) invitationals as well as encouraging the use of the group's web page for impromptu rides. Of course, I cannot and will not do these all by myself. Many of

you have already stepped up, and I thank you! But we still need YOU, not only to work, but to offer ideas, perspectives, and resources that would not be available. Please contact me with these ideas, perspectives, and resources at johnmprince@hotmail.com

Bob Morris, Publicity coordinator

I joined Prairie Cycle Club in Spring, 2003. Since then I have worked on most of the annual C-U Across the Prairie rides, ridden on most of the wonderfully informal Perrysville (Indiana) rides at summer's end, and done a number of "point-to-point" week-long excursions such as RAGBRAI (Iowa) and Katy Trail (Missouri) as well as the "loop rides" I prefer, including several years of GITAP (Illinois). I'm returning to the PCC board position I held from 2007-2009.

Michael Fuerst, Newsletter Editor

I have been a PCC member for three years and newsletter editor for two.

Angela Holcomb, Treasurer. I have been a cyclist for over ten years. Cycling can be a way to improve fitness and to bond with nature. My goal is to improve participation and activities for all levels of cyclists.

Upcoming Organized Rides

Two good lists of rides in the Midwest this season are <http://brinin.org/> and <http://www.mikebentley.com/bike/mwrides.htm>

Everything You Wanted To Know About Bicycling

..... can be found at Mike's Mega Bicycle Links <http://www.mikebentley.com/bike/index.html>

Winter Biking Tips

From the the blog at www.peopleforbikes.org

Posted on Jan 6, 2011

Throughout much of the country, we're in the heart of that time of year characterized by frozen precipitation, darkness, and cinnamon scented candles. For many people, it's time to hang up the bike and hibernate. Certainly there are compelling reasons why it might be safer or smarter to leave your bike at home during the winter. Bah humbug, we say to that! Winter biking is one of life's great pleasures.

Wintertime is when bicycling for short trips really makes sense. There's no time to get cold during a 10-minute ride. Also, it's not necessary to suit up in cycling-specific neoprene gear—that wool sweater will work just fine. Besides, by the time you've scraped the ice off your car windows, you could have already arrived at your destination by bike.

Picking the right route is key. Take the back streets, if you can. On small neighborhood streets, you don't have to worry as much about car traffic. It also gives you the chance to scope out who has built the biggest snowman. Heck—maybe you can even join in! Well-maintained bike paths are also a great way to travel in the winter, although not every city is diligent about keeping them clear and ice-free.

Need some inspiration? Look no further than Minneapolis, Minnesota, where some of the hardest winter bike commuters exist. On the city's Midtown Greenway, cyclists still make 15,000 trips per month in the winter, despite average temperature highs in the 20s. Yet, you don't have to be a practiced snow rider to stay on your bike when the snowflakes fly. When big snowstorms unexpectedly hit the typically rainy and temperate Portland, Oregon last year, 69% of cyclists surveyed said that they kept riding despite the severe weather and the poor road conditions that accompanied it.

Why pedal through the winter? For short trips it can be faster than driving. If there's a chance you'll spin

out of control on snowy and icy roads, it's cheaper and likely safer to do it on a bicycle on a back street than in a car on a busy road. It keeps you active during the time of year when it's hard to stay motivated to exercise (earn that eggnog!). But, most importantly, nothing compares to the sheer joy of leaving fresh tire tracks in a layer of new snow.

Here are some of our winter riding tips.

- 1) Got a mountain bike? These are great winter commuting steeds.
- 2) If it's slushy out, a fender (or two) works wonders in keeping you dry.
- 3) Ski helmets make for warm bike helmets.
- 4) Boots and flat pedals are convenient and make it easier to put a foot down in squirrely conditions.
- 5) Ride slowly and relax!

Contribute to the Newsletter

If you have any photos, or a 1-2 paragraph account of rides you have taken, or links to interesting articles or web sites about bicycling, send them to the newsletter editor, Michael Fuerst (mjerryfuerst@yahoo.com)

Save us a stamp

Individuals receiving a post office mailed copy of this newsletter can save both an itsy-bitsy part of a tree and also some of PCC's 44-cent stamps by emailing the editor (at mjerryfuerst@yahoo.com) that *you will read future newsletters on-line*



The Prairie Cycle Club is an affiliate of the League of American Bicyclists, the League of Illinois Bicyclists and the Champaign Park District

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The board meets monthly, usually on the third Sunday of the month, at Panera's at Mattis and Kirby. Everyone is welcome to attend, just to listen in or to bring ideas or feedback.

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