

the cyclists' vehicle

newsletter of the
Edmonton Bicycle Commuters

Summer 1990

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PAGE

2. City Cycle Fest Wrap Up
3. EBC Advocacy, Rails to Trails
4. Accidents Happen
5. Bikes Not Bombs, Turning the
Transportation Tide
6. Sign of the Times
7. Air Solution
8. Of Helmets and Courses



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BIKE WORKS

Volunteers are on hand every Wednesday from 6:00-8:30 pm and Saturday and from 1:00 to 3:30 pm to show EBC members how to fix their bikes with our tools. Phone 433-BIKE during those times to confirm.

Members are reminded to feel free to drop in during regular office hours to use the Bike Works shop on their own.

The offices of the Edmonton Bicycle Commuters are located at:

10701 - 85 Avenue
EDMONTON, AB
T6E 2K9
(403) 433-BIKE(2453)

They will continue to be at this address for the foreseeable future, as we are not moving as previously considered.

The office hours will vary from season to season. Right now we're open Tuesday - Saturday from noon to 4:00 pm.

BICYCLE REGISTRATION

Help deter bicycle theft! For only \$8.00 you can register your bike with the EBC Bicycle Registry for five years. Write to us at our office address, call us at 433-BIKE, or drop in.

(Please read your U-lock insurance coverage. It may require you to register your bicycle in order to take effect)

ADVERTISING RATES

\$75 full page
\$50 half page
\$35 quarter page
\$20 business card

Classified: members - free
others \$5.00 first 30 words,
\$0.10 each additional word.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

The EBC newsletter appears four times yearly. The deadline for submissions to the Fall '90 newsletter is early October 1990.

If you would like to submit articles or help with the folding, etc. give us a shout.

Special thanks to those who contributed to this issue, and to all those who helped fold and staple, whoever they may be.

**** NOTE **** The articles appearing in this Newsletter do not necessarily represent the views held by the EBC.

City Cycle Fest '90 by Dawn Noyes, Coordinator

The 1990 version of Edmonton's bicycle festival was another success!

Lunar Cycle's tradition continued, albeit renamed CITY CYCLE FEST.

The events sponsored by EBC focussed on the services available to cyclists, as well as the current issues of concern.

Michael Replogle was our guest and provided a fresh perspective on the role of bicycles in cities and developing communities. He helped focus the issues for the Comprehensive Bicycle Plan, as well as the local Bikes Not Bombs activities.

The activist perspective was brought to light by Tooker Gomberg and the local appearance of the Air Solution project. The gas masks, reminders of the dangers to our environment, helped put a clear message across in the media. It helped to make the advocacy position even stronger.

Children's safety, bike maintenance workshops, Bike to Work Breakfast and Clean Air Day all provided EBC with a great community profile.

I would like to thank everyone for a great job - to Stacey and Sarah, who pulled together the staff, and to Angela and Steve, who covered an amazing territory of details. Also to the Board and volunteers who were indispensable.

CITY CYCLE FEST was a success because of the concern and commitment of EBC's members. It has been wonderful working with you all.

The Cover

Pictured on the cover is local cyclist and downhill kamikaze pilot Jim Moulden. He is a reminder to us all that number one, cycling is fun. His organized rides are challenging, and the safety of the riders comes first. He operates the Hardcore Mountain Bike Store, and manufactures radical though rideable bicycles that built tough and light. It is worth seeing the frame shop in the back of the store, which is located in the alley behind the south side of Whyte avenue on 101 street. Picture reprinted from the Journal with marginal permission.

10105 - 82 Ave. (rear) edm. alto.

tel/fax 439-4599

THE HARDCORE MOUNTAIN BIKE STORE
NOT FOR THE TIMID



EBC Advocacy on a Roll

Angela Bischoff

Thanks to all who signed and sent in full sheets of the petition for a safe and direct network of bikepaths/routes throughout Edmonton. If you watched the news or listened to the radio on or around June 28th, you surely heard talk about EBC presenting all 3500 signatures to Mayor Jan Reimer. We asked that the Transportation Department prioritize bicycle planning through budgetary commitments of at least 2% (\$3.2 million) of the total transportation budget of \$160 million. At present bikes are allocated a mere \$100,000, which is hardly representative of the cycling population in Edmonton.

Two weeks later, three of the EBC Advocacy committee met with Mayor Reimer to discuss our priority for bicycle planning in Edmonton. Our agenda was concise - we asked that a Comprehensive Bicycle Plan be developed by the city Transportation department. At the time, city planner Peter Heppleston was working on one, but it was shelved due to lack of time. We asked that the plan be prioritized, creating a working document for city departments to plan for bicycles as a viable means of transportation.

The next day the Mayor's office called to confirm that Mr. Heppleston would be working on the plan full time, with a first draft by the fall of 1990! Incredible!? Kudos to Mayor Reimer.

The plan will be a detailed study, specific to Edmonton, of bicycle infrastructure engineering, education, enforcement and encouragement, including goals and implementation recommendations. There will be an opportunity for public input, so keep your eyes open for public meeting notices. Meetings will be held every second Sunday evening at 7:30 pm, so just drop by.

Could Edmonton be on its way to becoming the bicycle capital of North America? Ay carumba! EBC is Happenin', Thanks to many, things are buzzin' at EBC these sunny days with activity and action. Extra special thanks are extended to Steve Talman, "leader" and management committee; Ken Lewandowski and Gabriel Wong, bike fixers; Bernie Jacques and Ron Cattaruzza, they keep the Bike Works working; Dawn Noyes, City Cycle Fest '90 organizer; Sarah Jain, Stacey Hutchinson and Steve Beiko, EBC slaves, I mean staff; Angela Bischoff, fundraiser and advocacy; Andy Hengst, membership co-ordinator; Bonnie Heritage, registration program; Tooker Gomberg, international EBC ambassador; Leona Lacroix, office; Gary Lukawesky, photocopier; Lionel Cook, negotiations; John Collier, Brian Johnston, Leigh Willard and John Wetherill, advocacy; Glen Fitzpatrick, newsletter editor; and all the others who have spared their time and energy to make EBC more effective.

Rails to Trails

A local Rails to Trails campaign has just been started up! What that means is that we are trying to get the old CP Rail lines turned into a multi use trail (bicycles and pedestrians).

The CP line that we would like to convert stretches from 103 Street and 84 Avenue to 110 Street and 104 Avenue. This track is about to be abandoned, and talks may be in progress with the city on a purchase, so we need to act fast.

The CP line would be great for a trail because it is on the right of way (no stops) and it was built as level as possible, so there are no steep inclines. This means safety and convenience. The trail would link the University to the (proposed) Grant MacEwan college, and it would be the first bicycle trail in the downtown area. Many people could benefit from such a trail; senior citizens, crosscountry skiers, walkers, joggers, local businesses, and of course, cyclists.

There is speculation of a trolley car going on the tracks across the High Level Bridge, and a multi use trail along side of it is quite compatible.

I am very excited about the benefits of this project, but it will be a long hard fight that I don't know if we can win.

If you are interested in helping out with this project, please contact Leigh Willard at 439 4439.

Words From The President

"The more I think about our U.S. domestic transportation problems from this vantage point (China), the more I see an increased role for the bicycle in American life. I am convinced after riding bikes an enormous amount here in China, that it is a sensible, economical, clean form of transportation and makes enormous good sense." (George Bush)

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Father John Speaks

I can see you now, putting away your panniers, a cloud of frustration and irritation hovering o'er your brow. Yes, I know, a bus cut you off, a taxi tried to change lanes through you, or a truck full of party animals screamed a variety of postulations on your ancestry as they shot by you. We bicycle commuters may be healthier and better adjusted than the average person, but deep down inside, as any street corner evangelist will tell you, we are not completely happy; but, Dear Friend, I am here to show you a New and Better Way.

Over the last few months I had two serious confrontations, one with a bus, and the other with a taxi. As near as I have been able to discover, both were completely unprovoked, and both involved the driver to discourse at length on subjects unrepeatable in this family publication. A normal occurrence I hear you say; however, I took note of the time, location, and the numbers of the offending vehicles, and as soon as possible I phoned in a courteous complaint about their driver's behaviour, asking for an explanation and expressing curiosity as to if I had done anything to incite the drivers.

The taxi company phoned back the next day to inform me that their driver had been fired! Apparently when they tried to discuss the problem, he blew up and swore at them as well. Unfortunately, things did not progress so quickly with the Transit Department. They took my complaint and didn't get back to me until four weeks later. As well, union contracts stipulate that driver discipline be strictly confidential, so all that they were able to tell me was that it is on his record, and that he is being monitored.

If you want courteous treatment for cyclists, then it's up to you! Carry a note book and write down all of the details while they're fresh in your mind. phone the companies and be persistent; politely insist on an explanation or apology. If it's serious, inform the police as well, and get witnesses if you can. Remember, dangerous drivers intimidate people from bicycle commuting, and can cause serious injury or death. The life you save could be mine!

John Collier

Be On The Lookout

A great magazine on cycling in Edmonton has been printed, and is available at bike stores and EBC. It is called "Edmonton Outdoors 1990 Bicycle Guide", and can be considered as a manual for cycling in Edmonton. It encompasses all types of cycling, and includes the City's plan view and designated off road trails, plus a map supplement. It is worth while reading, and the other good news is that it's free!

Ralph's Observation: It is a mistake to allow any mechanical object to realize that you are in a hurry.

What to do if You are Involved in an Accident

Cycling accidents are disorienting and disturbing events. Statistics on them are incomplete at best, as many are not even reported. In many cases, cyclists involved in accidents are not treated fairly, because not enough is known about exactly what happened.

What follows is a condensation and adaptation of a pamphlet produced by **Cycle Watch** in Toronto:

Immediately after an accident, you will be in a state of shock. If you have been knocked off of your bike, and it is safe to do so, it is sometimes useful to stay down exactly where the accident left you until the police arrive. Getting up quickly makes the motorist less likely to stop, and witnesses less likely to come forward. Ask a bystander to assist you in getting the names and addresses of witnesses, if possible.

A motorist has a legal obligation to exchange information at the scene. Get the name, address, phone number, driver's licence and licence plate number of any motorist involved; the name and badge number of any investigating police officer; the name of the motorist's insurance company; and the names and phone numbers of as many witnesses as possible.

Write down everything which you remember about the accident. Draw detailed maps and diagrams, and, if possible, take photographs. Note street names, traffic lights and signs, and use arrows to show the positions and directions of all vehicles involved or in the vicinity. Include the time of day, the weather and road conditions, what you were wearing, and make note of anything that the motorist(s) and witness(es) may have said. If the accident causes physical injury, however slight, go to a doctor. Get a written assessment of your injuries, and if possible, photograph them.

Report the accident to the nearest police station if it involves physical injury or property damage of over \$500.00.

Avoid having your bike repaired if you intend to seek compensation for damages. If you must repair it, get a written assessment of the damages from a bike store first and keep a record of all repairs required as a result of the accident. Also keep any damaged clothing or equipment.

Bikes Not Bombs by Elspeth Crawford

In Canada, bicycles are mostly for fun. In many Third World countries, where few can afford cars, a bicycle can mean the difference between a family making it or failing economically, between a child getting health care or not, between a farmer getting advice or his crops being ruined, between a woman carrying 70 pounds of firewood on her head for five miles or easily hauling it on her bicycle. Bicycles provide affordable mobility essential to meet basic human needs. They also help workers in health, education, and development spend more time working and less time walking and waiting for buses that sometimes never come.

The Bikes Not Bombs Campaign has sent over \$500,000 worth of bicycles and spare parts to Nicaragua to aid in health, education and development and form bicycle assembly workshops that are the foundation of Nicaragua's emerging bicycle industry. These employ dozens of Nicaraguans, including many disabled veterans, who put thousands of bicycles onto the streets. Volunteers in local chapters across the U.S., Canada and Britain collect and ship donated bicycles for reconditioning in the Nicaraguan workshops. Following Michael Replogle's recent visit to Edmonton and his inspirational presentation at Tools for Peace, a small committee of interested individuals was formed. This group wants to ship good bikes, parts and funds for the purchase of new bike kits to Nicaragua. One way of raising funds is to repair bikes not suitable for shipping but which could be sold here.

If you would like to be involved in any way or want more info call Elspeth at 488-4979.



Transportation Alternatives

The Transportation Alternatives Project of ITDP "works to change global transportation policies to better meet the needs of the poor and to protect our planet's resources for future generations." For more information about ITDP or the Transportation Alternatives Project, drop in at EBC or write ITDP, P.O. Box 56538, Washington DC 20011. Regular Membership is \$US 30. ITDP is also responsible for several other projects including Bikes not Bombs.

Turning the Transportation Tide by Andy Hengst

Michael Replogle is the Director of Transport Modelling for the Montgomery County Maryland Planning Department and President of the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP). He spoke to interested listeners on May 31, 1990 at the University of Alberta campus as part of City Cycle Fest 1990. Replogle's work at the Planning Department involves growth management, comprehensive planning and computer modelling of land use and transportation.

As a planner and bicycle advocate, Replogle gave us his well informed opinion on how to best approach current transportation issues both in North America and in developing countries. As well, I think, he gave some of us a more solidly-founded motive for being bicycle advocates ourselves.

He cited global warming as a threat to the environment and explained the need and the difficulty in bringing it under control quickly, given that our way of life in the developed world has evolved with and is largely dependent on cars; with currently available technology (i.e. the internal combustion engine) these vehicles are recognized as major contributors.

In the industrialized world where most households can afford a car, transportation planners provided us with roads and highways. If roads got congested, we built wider ones. The more we built the more we relied on cars. The result was a pattern of urban sprawl, effectively ruling out walking for many daily trips due to distance, and cycling for many trips due to safety concerns.

But global warming, though potentially a very serious threat, is not the most obvious and direct result of this pattern. Traffic congestion, smog, and resource consumption all suggest that an automobile dependent society cannot sustain itself indefinitely. Changes will have to take place to make us less dependent, whether they be new technologies (unlikely, thinks Replogle) or a restructuring of the community. "The pattern of development is more important than the rate of growth" says Replogle. (An interesting note: even bicycle-dependent societies can have congestion problems, for example an intersection in China was measured to accept 74,000 bicycles in the space of one hour!)

Transportation systems are society's circulatory system, allowing us to move ourselves and the things we need to live and do our work. "The old paradigm of providing capacity, speed, and mobility

must be replaced by one which maximizes efficiency and wise use of resources to meet people's daily activity needs" says Replogle.

"To ensure sustainable transportation planners must encourage many modes of transport." Examples of modes of transport are walking, bicycling, taking a bus or train, driving, and others.

Countries like Japan, where as much as 30% of the population commutes to work by bicycle, will be better off in dealing with the global warming problem than other developed countries. As North Americans, we will need to find ways to overcome our dependence on the automobile, while the Japanese are less dependent on it and are better prepared with alternative modes of transportation.

Mr. Replogle's slide show was filled with examples of attempts at making bicycles welcome, many of them successful. "Traffic calming" zones in West Germany actually impede automobile traffic, encouraging use of bicycles and walking. Some cities banned cars outright in heavily travelled areas.

There were also examples of existing technology being applied in creative ways. Automated bicycle parkades in Japan take your bike by the handlebars and pull it inside, giving you a 'ticket' in return. When you come back, you give the machine your ticket and it tells you which gate (there are quite a few) your bike will appear at in a minute or two. Inside there seems to be a computer controlled "warehouse", able to store incoming bikes in any available space. The cost to build this device is \$1000 per bike, not much compared to \$20,000 per car stall in a large parkade!

Unfortunately, some planners see an entirely automobile-based transportation system as a guarantee of prosperity. This is true in many developing countries, who take loans to buy oil and construct roads for cars which few of the citizens can afford. Over 100,000 cycle trishaws (three-wheeled load carrying bicycles) have been thrown into the sea by authorities in Jakarta, Indonesia, who see trishaws as symbols of backwardness.

One of Replogle's slides showed how a bakery was able to incorporate trishaws into their distribution system, saving fuel and repair costs and even speeding up service!

Replogle did suggest that bicycles and cars may not mix easily in a transportation network for cars. Reducing the speed limit helps, and "planners must find ways to induce predictable behaviour" to avoid conflicts in traffic. Slides were shown that illustrate flaws in surprisingly many "bicycle friendly" facilities.

Overall, I think this was an extremely valuable event for anyone interested in bicycle advocacy or broadening their understanding of large-scale urban planning and policy.

Sign Of The Times

It was like a 'good news/bad news' story.

The good news was that the Groat Bridge would be overhauled and put into top condition by the end of 1990. The bad news was that, to accomplish this, the east side of the bridge (including the only sidewalk) would be closed off from April until the end of August.

Now I know that legally, cyclists are not supposed to ride on the sidewalks. But on the roadway of the Groat Bridge, the lanes are narrow, the traffic is fast and usually quite heavy. I don't like to test my luck by cycling on the roadway even when all four lanes are open, never mind when half of them are closed off and drivers are frustrated by the delays due to the construction. In my opinion, the sidewalk is the safest place for cyclists, provided that they are courteous and careful about pedestrians, who have the legal right of way on a sidewalk.

Good news! The construction company built a temporary walk way above the median, so that sidewalk traffic could still use the bridge this summer.

Then the bad news (coincidentally, I first noticed this on Earth Day): a sign was posted by the walkway saying 'Positively No Running...No Bikes'.

A nearby sign gave a phone number for Stuart Olson, the construction company. Later that week, I called to ask why the sign had been posted, and to explain how important that walkway is to cyclists and joggers. I have made a point of saying that I appreciated the walkway being built in the first place - we need to give out bouquets as well as beefs where deserved!

The receptionist was very helpful in relaying my comments to the project manager, and in calling me back with a response.

Which brings my story to good news again. Not long after, the 'No Bikes' portion of the sign was taped over. It might have been my phone call; it could have been someone else's call, or several calls - the point is that the message got through! My thanks to Stuart Olson.

Ruth Cheriton

Check Your Label

Your mailing label shows a year and a month at the top right. Your membership expires on the last day of that month.

Thanks to Sport Chek who have generously donated a bike work stand to EBC.

Thanks To



And Chianti's Restaurant For the Moonlight Ride March-April 1990 From the Editor

How the BABC's stats compare with other advocacy groups

CITY:	GROUP:	METRO POP.:	MEMBERSHIP:	RATIO:
1. Edmonton, Alberta	EBC	786,000	450	1,746.67
2. Washington, DC	WABA	2,456,000	849	2,892.82
3. Boston, MA	BABC	2,470,000	285	8,666.67
4. Oakland, CA	EBBC	3,790,000	271	13,985.24
5. New York, NY	TA	14,598,000	925	15,781.62
6. Philadelphia, PA	BCDV	4,025,000	192	20,963.54

Population figures from The World Almanac, 1990 (for U.S. cities). Count includes those segments of a metro area with a population density of at least 5,000 persons per square mile. Edmonton population figure from Webster's New World Dictionary.

The Boston Cyclist

As part of City Cycle Fest '90, a great time was had by all who went on the Moonlight Ride, except perhaps those poor people on the tandem whose freewheel self destructed. It was a casual tour of the eastern end of the river valley was followed by excellent food and good company at Chianti's on Whyte avenue and 105 street. The moonlight, good weather, and the feast were all free, and so were the spirits of those who went to this party on two wheels. In retrospect, though, if you drink, don't ride.

Volunteers Needed

If it isn't all over by the time you read this, the EBC needs volunteers to work one or two shifts at The Fringe, August 18 - 26, 1990. This would include sitting at a table, handing out information and selling memberships and registrations, and watching The Fringe go on all around you. There will be daytime and evening shifts available. If you are interested, please contact Stacey at the EBC office (433 BIKE). There will be a volunteer meeting sometime soon.

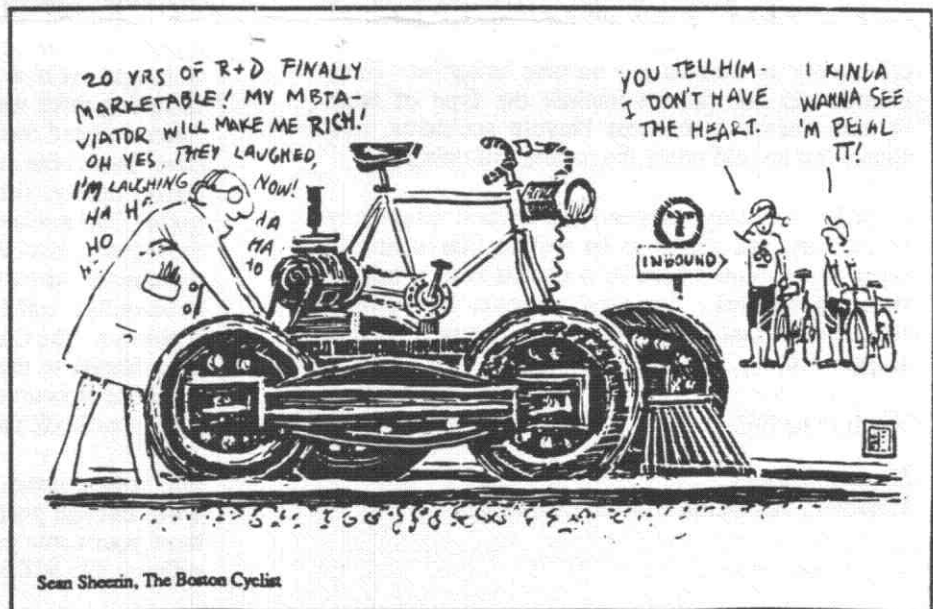
Air Solution

Edmonton bike guru Tooker Gomborg is on tour through 9 North American cities, complete with contamination suits and gas masks (I wonder what the U.S. border control thinks of that!). Tooker is encouraging car drivers to give Mother Earth a break, and bike or bus instead. He's received some good media coverage including CBC National radio. And here in Edmonton 8 EBC'ers were seen giving out 1500 tickets "Environmental Summons" to car drivers downtown.

Tooker's Air Solution Slide Show, part of the same tour, is also receiving rave reviews. It is a 'must see' for all those who appreciate exceptional photography, and for those ready to learn more about their auto addiction. It hits the auto industry right where it hurts by exposing the truth about cars and their true costs to society and to the planet.

If you'd like the Air Solution Slide Show brought to your community, school or group call EBC at 433 BIKE.

SMOKE FREE DANCE
with 'Soul Latina' on Saturday September 15
8:30 PM @ Westwood (11315 - 65 Avenue)
Proceeds to go to:
Edmonton's Clean Slate Election Debt
Tickets \$7/\$8
For information phone: 439 3020



Sean Sheerin, The Boston Cyclist

**Reprint of a Letter to the Journal
(Printed here in entirety)**

Dear Sir,

The present municipal policy of integrating bicycle and motorized traffic leads to regular altercations between bikes and cars. The frequency of these altercations can be reduced if both cyclists and motorists behave predictably and respect each others rights to the road. The recently published City Cycling Map has some very good instructions on how to ride safely in traffic. I recommend that everyone, both cyclists and motorists, pick up a copy and learn some traffic tips.

Unfortunately, despite all precautions, some bicycle accidents may still occur; these commonly result in some form of injury to the cyclist. The vast majority of fatalities arising from bicycle accidents are due to head injuries. These injuries arise, for the most part, from the rapid deceleration of the head upon hitting a solid, immovable object. The skull, being hard, stops rapidly; the brain being softer, tends to flow towards the point of impact. This sort of temporary rearrangement of the brain, and its subsequent bouncing around inside the skull, leads to neural damage, burst blood vessels, concussions, and, at the very least, headaches.

The primary function of a bicycle helmet is not to make the person wearing it look like a geek. Rather, the helmet provides a cushion between the skull and the immovable object, so that the entire head decelerates more as a unit. A helmet is essentially a thick piece of firm yet crushable foam. It is this foam that gets destroyed in an impact, rather than things which are far less replacable.

Some hockey type helmets are sold as bicycle helmets. These are useful in stopping localized injuries, like a puck in the head, but lack the crushable foam. Instead, they have only a thin, soft padding, which, in an impact will immediately become effectively as hard as any surface being hit. Such helmets do not protect against the type of head injuries incurred in most bicycle accidents, and should not be sold under the pretence of doing so.

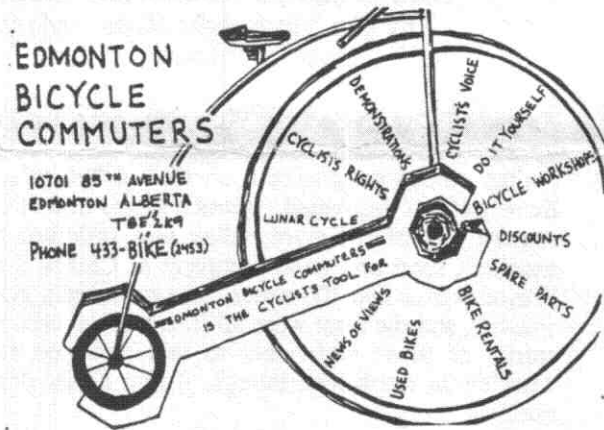
A further advantage of wearing a helmet, which may be illusory, but seems to be real, is that motorists seem to be more aware of a cyclist with a helmet than without one. For these reasons, we strongly recommend that all cyclists wear properly fitted bicycle helmets.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Talman
President, Edmonton Bicycle Commuters

Parks and Rec Courses

The City of Edmonton, Parks and Recreation Department is offering a number of great cycling programs in the Northeast District. For the beginner cyclist (ages 5 - 10), the **Ride to Survive** program will offer valuable information about bicycles and road safety. For more advanced cyclists (ages 12 - 14), **Pedal Power** will allow children to discover the bike trails and experience great stop offs along the way. For further information please call 428 - 3786.



Cycling Education Courses

Two Courses in the CanBike series instituted by the Canadian Cycling Association are being offered this summer and fall.

The CanBike 'One Day' course is a five hour elementary/intermediate commuter cycling course in three parts. The classroom session covers some general theory, handling skills are taught in a parking lot, and the group spends about three hours on residential streets with the instructor. The cost of this course is twenty five dollars.

The CanBike II course is a twenty four hour intermediate/advanced commuter cycling course. It is taught over a period of at least three weeks, including three weekday evenings interspersed with three weekend days. The evening classroom sessions cover basic bike maintenance and emergency repairs, traffic theory, riding in all weather, and riding at night. The weekend days include handling skills and emergency manoeuvres in a parking lot, riding on residential streets, riding on main arteries, and eventually, traffic circles and on/off ramps of highways. The Canadian Cycling Association awards a certificate to those who successfully complete the CanBike II course. This course costs sixty dollars plus a textbook that costs about twenty five dollars.

For both courses, exact times will be scheduled when enough people have indicated an interest. To have your name put on the lists, please call the EBC office at 433 BIKE (433 - 2453).