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ARLINGTON HEIGHTS BICYCLE CLUB

August
2023

Arlington Heights Bicycle Club, rolling with our community since 1971.

AHBC Board Seeks Member Input

by Pete Schmelzer

"I suggest that the Bike Club _____." (You fill in the blank!)

As the Board convenes during the upcoming fall months to plan for rides and related activities, we welcome your thoughts on what you would like the Club to be and do in 2024. General topic areas include:

- Ride formats
- Ride destinations
- Member meeting topics
- Social activities

- Community involvement

By September 1, send your ideas to me via email at president@cyclearlington.com

The Board's goal is to help members enjoy cycling together in a variety of ways; tell us your thoughts!



cyclearlington.com

Welcome

No matter how far, how fast, where you ride, or why -- the Arlington Heights Bicycle Club has something for you: leisurely to advanced-paced rides; social functions; and a commitment to safe riding. And we don't take ourselves too seriously. Come ride with us!



Salvation Ride in Sheboygan, WI! - Photo courtesy of Paula Matzek



Member Meeting

7:00-8:30 P.M.

27

Giving Old Bikes New Life,
presented by Working Bikes



Member Meeting

7:00-8:30 P.M.

25

Cycling Technology: It's Not
Just for Gearheads with Sheri
Rosenbaum

Loopy 2023

Arlington 500 by Vic LaMantia

On Sunday, June 4, 225 riders from all over the Chicago area enjoyed perfect weather for this year's edition of the Arlington 500. More than 40 club members turned out as volunteers supporting the event on Sunday and on the day before for road marking and pre-ride. (Rumor has it that Tom Drabant is still out on the course picking up signs.)

The Arlington 500 was moved

to Fremont Center Middle School in Mundelein this year because Barrington High School was unavailable due to construction. With the new venue came new routes: four loops, all originating from the school.

The four loops, color-coded Red, Green, Blue and Purple, enabled riders to choose distances of 17, 39, 59 or 81 miles, or, by repeating the Blue loop, 100 miles, a century option popular with many riders.

The loops also enabled the use

of the school as a single site for both registration and rest stop. The riders registered at the school and then took off, returning to the school/rest stop upon the completion of each loop. The single site made for easier set-up, operation, and take-down. In addition, the single site saved all the expenses that would have been associated with an additional site.

In addition to promoting cycling, the event made a nice profit for the club which will be available to support club activities and donations to

Cycling Technology: It's Not Just for Gearheads

by Paula Matzek

At the October 25th member meeting, we welcome back our friend Sheri Rosenbaum for another exciting presentation. Sheri is an avid cyclist, Trek Advocate, and writer. She has a dream side hustle of testing new products and writing reviews for RoadBikeRider.com and her blog, Sunflowers and Pedals. Sheri will share some

of the latest developments in bicycle and rider technology that make cycling safer and more fun. Sheri invites everyone to bring their favorite piece of cycling technology (gadgets and gear) to share with fellow members. Let's make this a fun and interactive meeting.

500, Continued from Page 2
cycling organizations such as Ride Illinois.

A hearty thank you to all of the AHBC members who helped make this ride a success.



11

Annual AHBC Banquet

Emmett's Brewing
Company, Palatine



24

Member Meeting

7:00-8:30 P.M.

Bike Fitting, presented by
Crank Revolution



Photo by [Dmitry Limonov](#).

A Guide for How to Use Your Gears

by Pete Schmelzer

Bikes have evolved a long way since we first pedaled a single-tracker as a child and then advanced to the wonders of a three-speed bike. Wow! Cool! Three speeds!

Now you likely have front and rear derailleurs, with two or three rings on the front and a whole bunch of gears on the back. What's a cyclist to do with all these gear combinations?

Continued, *Gears*, Page 4

It took using my gears the wrong way to finally teach me how to use my gears the right way. I would push the hardest gears possible for the road tilt, thinking that would make me go faster. Those other riders who were spinning so fast? They were wimps who didn't have the leg muscles that I had.

But all that did was make my leg muscles tire faster on hills. I was spent early in rides, even bonking and having to rest, while those fast-spinning wimps kept riding merrily along. But I really didn't want to shift so much. It was easier to just stay in one gear and slowly, painfully grind it out on hills. Wrong!

So here's my attempt at simply explaining how to use all of your gears.

"Cadence" or "RPMs" is the number of pedaling revolutions you complete in one minute. The "right" cadence is unique to each rider; that is, don't compare yourself to that other rider who rides so fast but has a different body type and level of training.

To find your own cadence, find a long, flat, safe stretch of road where you can ride without having to stop. Change gears until you find a gear where you are most comfortable riding, not spinning so fast that you become breathless and not

spinning so slowly that your legs ache.

When you find your comfortable pedaling speed, count the number of pedaling revolutions in one minute of consistent, flat riding (or 30 seconds and double it.) That's your optimal cadence for a flat surface. (There are cadence meters on some bike computers and data tracking devices, but counting works too.)

Now let's say your optimal cadence on a flat surface is 70 — that is, 70 pedaling revolutions per minute. When you come to a hill that you have to climb, shift into a gear that keeps you pedaling at your optimal cadence of 70. You may have to shift several times depending on the changing incline, but try to keep that comfortable pedaling speed consistent. The same works for downhill riding — shift to a gear that keeps you riding at your optimal cadence (or, like me, enjoy occasionally coasting on the downhills.)

Think about it: In theory, if you ride 30 miles at the same cadence from start to finish, no matter how much climbing or descending you do, you will not find yourself breathless from pedaling too fast or have screaming legs from pedaling too hard. If I have to choose, I lean toward faster pedaling that relies on my cardio-vascular fitness rather than harder pedaling

that exhausts my leg muscles.

If your bike has three front rings, you will probably want to do the above experiment in the middle front ring. If your bike has two front rings, you can find the optimal cadence for each ring, but they should be quite similar.

My bike has two front rings and I usually ride in the big ring because it has more power on flat surfaces where I do most of my riding. I change into the smaller front ring when I have to do more uphill riding. In either front ring, I try to maintain my optimal cadence number.

After a while, you will not have to rely on counting or a cadence meter. You will naturally shift to the gear that maintains your optimal cadence.

As I've been told by several experienced riders, "You paid for all those gears — use them!"

What's in YOUR Bike Bag?

by Paula Matzek

The television commercial for that credit card company asks, "What's in YOUR wallet?" While it's none of our business what's in your WALLET, we wanted to know what's in your BIKE BAG. Here's what you told us.

Bike repair items

- Two replacement inner tubes (Jack L., Dave M.)
- A CO2 cartridge tire inflator or a small pump (Jack L.)
- Nitrile, rubber, or plastic gloves to wear during repairs (Don A., Bill K., Dave M.)
- Single packages of make-up remover wipes to clean hands after a repair (or after eating a sticky snack) (Kris S. A.)
- Tools, such as tire levers, Allen wrenches, a multi-tool, a chain tool (Dave M., Jack L.) Be prepared, advises Dave, who once "repaired" a front derailleur using a rock and a stick on a road in Utah. And as several of us have always said, carry the tools even if you aren't sure how to use them. Someone else will know.
- Tweezers for removing a tiny object that is causing



a slow leak (Dave. W.)

- Dollar bills or small pieces of Tyvek (from a Fed Ex envelope?) for "booting" (covering a hole in) a tire (Brian H., Gary G., Mike P.)
- A Presta-Schraeder valve converter (Brian H.)
- Duct tape or electrical tape, a small amount wrapped around a pencil or a film canister (Roger H., Paula)

Health, safety, and comfort items

- Cell phone (Janet H.)
- I.D. and insurance card or a copy of each (Janet H., Gary G., Pete S.)
- Emergency contact info. (on paper, on a Road I.D. bracelet, or on a sticker in your helmet) (Pete S., Gary G., Paula)
- List of current medications (Pete S.)
- Credit card or cash (Dave W., Janet H.)

- Cheap shower cap to wear on or under your helmet in heavy rain (Gary G., Ford and Lynn)
- Plastic bags to wear inside your shoes in case of rain (Gary G.)
- Insect repellent if you are riding in a wooded area or near water (Steve C.)
- After Bite for insect bites or stings (Donna P.)
- Good lip balm with SPF 30 (Janet S., Paula)
- T.P. (Jack T.)
- First aid supplies (alcohol wipes, antiseptic cream, Band-Aids, gauze, tape) (Carol V.)
- Waterproof matches if cycling in a remote area (Roger H.)
- A small snack (energy bar, small bag of Goldfish crackers, fig bars...) (Cindy B.)



AHBC Explores the
Land of Lincoln on the
Grand Illinois Bike Tour





AHBC Rides in the Arlington Heights Fourth of July Parade





Photo courtesy of Paula Matzek

Riding Safely in a Group

by Paula Matzek

Whether you are new to club riding or have been cycling in a group for years, we can all agree that safe riding is our number one goal. With that in mind, let's review some guidelines for safe group riding.

Be predictable.

Keep a steady pace without surging or coasting

Ride in a straight line without meandering from side to side.

Announce changes, turns, and stops in advance using hand signals and vocal cues.

Maintain a safe interval and do not overlap wheels

with another rider.

Ride single file on busy streets.

On quiet streets/roads, it may be permissible to ride two abreast, but never more than two. It's the law!

Communicate.

Before passing another rider, announce "Passing on your left." (Do not pass on the right.)

Announce hazards ("Car back," "Hole," etc.) and pass the message up and down the line.

Keep the ride leader informed. If the rider or riders behind you fall behind, make sure that information gets passed to the leader in a timely fashion.

Speak up about others' unsafe riding behavior. Mention it to the leader or sweep if it persists.

Obey lights and signs.

Stop at red lights. Do not try to beat the light to stay with the group.

Use caution at all intersections, and yield to motorists that have the right of way.

Follow the leader.

Stay behind the leader and in front of the sweep.

Let the leader or sweep know if you are leaving the group.

Let's continue to have a safe riding year!

AHBCyclist

Google Group

by Gary Gilbert, AHBC
Webmaster, AHBC member
since March 1995

As many of you are aware, there is an active Google email group used for communication among AHBC members and other interested people. Instructions on joining the group are on the cyclearlington.com website on the New Member Welcome page. A member of the Google group can send an email to the entire group by typing ahbccyclist@googlegroups.com in the “to” field.

Since we moved to Google Groups from our previous Yahoo email group on November 1, 2020 there have been 1,548 email messages sent to the approximately 300 members of the group. That is an average of 1.5 group emails each day. More than half of the members

of the Google group are not current club members, but former members, friends/family of current members, other people in the cycling community, or people curious about AHBC.

When a new member requests to join the email group, their messages initially are moderated and either allowed or denied until we can determine that they have joined to legitimately be a part of our cycling community. This allows us to detect and remove those who attempt to join solely for the purpose of sending spam.

Google Groups never sends a copy of an email to the sender of that message. You have a copy in your “Sent” messages folder. We’re many years away from the days when email was unreliable, so you can now be certain that your email message has been delivered to the group.

Want to read or search for

an old email message? You can see the full history here: <https://groups.google.com/g/ahbccyclist>

There are many sources of information on how to write an effective email. For some examples, do a Google search for “writing an effective email.”

A few requests:

1. Please always, always sign your email with your first and last name. Not all recipients have all the club members’ email addresses in their contacts. Your name at the end of the message makes it easier for the recipients to know exactly who is sending the email.
2. Please choose judiciously between “Reply” and “Reply All.” Remember, you are speaking to 300+ people on a “Reply All” and only to the sender on a “Reply.” Do all 300 really need to read your message?

Could You Handle a Week Without Driving?

by Brian Larson

“People without a car or unable to drive should be able to get to where they need to go safely and effectively.” That’s the slogan of the National Week Without Driving challenge, which asks elected officials, decision-makers, and community members to consider the needs of non-drivers in policy and infrastructure decisions. The event is held this year from October 2nd through 8th. Learn more about the event and register at the America Walks website:

<https://americawalks.org/national-week-without-driving-october-2023/>

The Arlington Heights Bicycle Club recently received thanks for our participation in the May 20th Arlington Heights Community Bike Ride. You can read the Commission's letter below!



Village of Arlington Heights

33 S. Arlington Heights Road
Arlington Heights, IL 60005-1499
(847-368-5000)
Website: www.vah.com

Arlington Heights Bicycle Club
Pete Schmelzer, President

Mr. Schmelzer,

My name is Richard Lenski, and I am currently serving as Chair of the Arlington Heights Bike and Pedestrian Commission. I am reaching on behalf of the Commission to provide thanks to your club for the help and support you provided for the Community Bike Ride on May 20th, 2023. A special thanks to Pete Schmelzer and Ford Sakata who took time out of their week to meet with the Bike and Pedestrian Commission to plan the ride.

We would like to thank the Arlington Heights Bicycle Club members that provided support on their bicycles during the community bike ride to ensure a safe ride. Many of the club members were seen providing support, guiding riders and helping at intersections. We are thankful to all of the club members that participated in the bike ride and allowed the community members to ride safely through the streets of Arlington Heights. With your support, the community bike ride was a successful social and health beneficial ride.

The Commission looks forward to a continued partnership with the Arlington Heights Bicycle Club as we plan the 2024 Community Bike Ride and other bike and pedestrian initiatives this year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Lenski".

Richard Lenski
Chair
Arlington Heights Bike and Pedestrian Commission

Cc: Briget Schwab, P.E., Village Staff Liaison to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission



Meet a Member!

Want to know more about the folks who ride with you?

We're interviewing a different member each issue.

This month, we caught up with member Kathy Colón

1. When and how did you learn to ride a bike?

I was probably 6-ish years old. My mother did not ride a bike, so I am sure that my older brother or sister pushed me up and down the sidewalk and enjoyed watching me fall over from time to time!

2. When and why did you join AHBC?

I joined AHBC in 2018 (I think?) I met John Naylor on a bike tour in Wisconsin. He and Wayne Woodworth paid my membership dues so that they would get credit for out-of-state miles with the club! But I like the variety of rides and the people in the club and have stayed on my own.

3. What paced group do you usually ride with?

I usually ride with the intermediate folks but enjoy a leisure ride from time to time. I like the "destination" rides, like to SuperDawg or Chicago's oldest house. The

trail rides are always fun, too.

4. What bike(s) do you currently own?

My primary bikes are a Specialized Roubaix road bike and a Giant Tough Road gravel bike. Yes, I have other bikes — a Trek hybrid for the beach and a Bianchi for fun.

5. What is your favorite lunch stop on club rides?

I like a good grilled cheese sandwich, so the diner spots are my faves.

6. Do you ride year-round?

I try to ride into December and on above 40-degree days when I can in January and February. I don't like the cold!

7. What was your favorite ride or cycling event last season?

I rode the C&O/ GAP (Washington, D.C. to Pittsburgh) with Adventure Cycling last fall. It was somewhat challenging but really beautiful. It passes through many historic areas.

8. What is the longest ride you have ever done in one day?

I used to do a ride with some local friends from Zion, IL to Ellison Bay, WI. It was a three day ride with the first two days being back-to-back centuries. I completed that ride 4 times. Been there, done that!

9. Did you volunteer last year at the Bike Swap or Arlington 500, and, if so, what was your job?

I had a conflict this year, but last year I helped with parking at Barrington High School.

10. What are your favorite non-cycling activities?

I like being active. I swim, do basic yoga, hike, and snowshoe. At home, I usually have a book nearby along with a knitting project of some kind.

11. Is there anything else you want to share with us?

I recently was promoted to Nana with the birth of my first grandson, Leon.

Have you got an interesting story to tell which we can include in the next newsletter?

Email us at info@cyclearlington.com