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ARLINGTON HEIGHTS BICYCLE CLUB

March
2023

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

I Think I Can, I Think I Can... Lead an AHBC Group Ride!

by Pete Schmelzer

Like the Little Engine that overcame thoughts of inadequacy, you too can overcome your doubts and lead a ride for the Arlington Heights Bicycle Club.

I used to think, “Me, lead a ride? No way!” I was quite comfortable, thank you, obediently riding behind more experienced people, who made leading a ride look so easy. No worries for me — just follow the leader and enjoy the ride.

After several years of riding “on the wheel” of others, I realized that several of my favorite solo

routes could be used for group rides. I knew how to signal turns, ride at a steady pace, and safely cross busy intersections.

The Club needed ride leaders. By observing others do it, I knew how to lead a ride. The guilt of letting someone else do it had maxed. I was out of excuses.

“This is the first ride I’ve ever led,” I nervously confessed

while collecting waiver autographs, “so good luck to you!” But the ride was completed safely, and I appreciated the “atta-boys” I received from grateful riders. I realized, “I can do this!”



I found it to be a bit lonely at the top, as I missed out on the social banter that happens back in the pack. I did have to pay more attention to potholes and traffic, but that’s always a

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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!

New Arlington 500 Location!

by Vic LaMantia

The Arlington 500, our club's annual invitational, will be held this year on Sunday, June 4. The location has been moved to Fremont Center School in Mundelein after we were notified that Barrington High School would be unavailable due to construction.

With the new location comes new routes. We have designed a cloverleaf of four loops, all originating from Fremont

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AHPD & Member Meeting

Sgt. Russ Mandel and other members of the department will discuss safe cycling in Arlington Heights, including rules of the road and plans for enforcement.

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See Page 3 for more details



Bike to School Day

Join your friends and neighbors to encourage youth ridership on National Bike to School Day! Volunteers are requested. [Email Brian Larson](#) if you would like to learn more.

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e-Bikes Have Arrived!

by Vic LaMantia

Whether you know it or not, by this time, you have likely encountered an e-bike! E-bike sales are booming, outselling electric cars. So what does this mean for cycling?

After some initial reservations, most have embraced e-bikes as just another form of cycling. Following the lead of most other states, the State of Illinois has

passed legislation that generally accords e-bikes the same privileges as other bicycles and subjects them to the same rules. However, e-bikes have been restricted on some trails and paths, so e-bike riders need to check with the authority governing any given trail or path.

The State of Illinois places e-bikes in three classes:

- Class 1: E-bikes with pedals, 20 mph limit
- Class 2: E-bikes

without pedals, 20 mph limit

- Class 3: E-bikes with pedals, with a 28 mph limit (minimum rider age of 16 years.)

Bicycle clubs have generally embraced e-bikes. Many do restrict the use of Class 2 e-bikes, as they are essentially scooters in the form of a bike. As for Class 1 and 3 e-bikes, it seems that most clubs that have considered the matter welcome these two classes of e-bikes, merely requiring that

Continued, e-Bikes, Page 3

Safe Cycling in Arlington Heights

by Paula Matzek

Curious about bike laws and enforcement in our local area? Club members, guests, and community members are welcome at the April 26 meeting of the Arlington Heights Bicycle Club at the Arlington Heights Police Department. Sgt. Russ Mandel and other members of the department will discuss safe cycling in Arlington Heights, including rules of the road and plans for

enforcement. Bring your questions about bicycling law to this important meeting:

Wednesday, April 26,
7:00 P.M.
Arlene Mulder
Community Room
Arlington Heights Police
Department
200 E. Sigwalt
Arlington Heights

e-Bikes, Continued from Page 2
their riders observe standard elements of cycling etiquette, such as avoiding erratic moves in a group riding situation.

The AHBC does not currently have any specific rules regarding e-bikes. For the Arlington 500, we are specifically inviting Class 1 and 3 e-bike riders.



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Ride of Silence

Come out to observe the 30th Annual Ride of Silence, honoring those who have suffered cycling-related injury or death.

See Page 5 for more details.

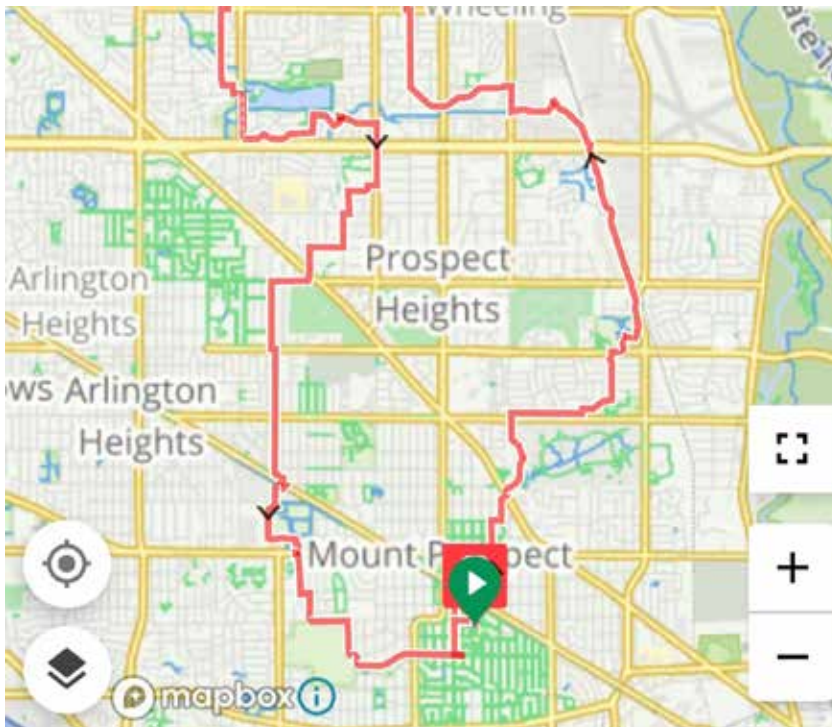


04

Arlington 500

New routes and a new start point will celebrate this year's Arlington 500!

See Page 2 for more details.



Interested in RidewithGPS?

by Rebecca Frank

The Ride with GPS Committee has been hard at work for YOU! Our committee goal is to create a ride library of digital routes for our members, including new and veteran ride leaders, and to provide a service to everyone exploring cycling opportunities in and around Arlington Heights. These digital routes can be utilized on your GPS-enabled bike computers, wearables,

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Photo courtesy of Gary Gilbert

500, Continued from Page 3
Center School – three short loops and one long loop – enabling rides of 17, 34, 51 or 75 miles. A century option is available by repeating the long loop. The cloverleaf design means that both registration and the rest stop are at the same location. As you would expect, this arrangement costs less and is easier to operate than two locations.

In 2023 we are building on the significant improvements implemented last year: fully digital registration (how did we do it before?), and an updated rest stop menu (how did we live without sub sandwiches?)

Safe Riding in Illinois

by Paula Matzek

Looking to be a safer, more informed cyclist on the streets and roads of Illinois? [The Illinois Bicycle Rules of the Road are available online!](#) Read up and be ready for the upcoming bike season!

RidewithGPS, Continued from Page 3 and smartphones to provide route directions on our club rides.

Come to the May 24 AHBC meeting for an overview of our Ride with GPS club page. We will provide the following information:

1. What functionality, routes, and ride collections are currently available
2. What committee work is still in progress
3. How YOU can contribute to the Club ride library.

We will also include a working/practice session so that you can become more familiar with Ride with GPS on your device.

For the Greater Good: The 2023 Ride of Silence

by Pete Schmelzer

On Wednesday, May 17, the AHBC will join with more than 300 cities worldwide to observe the 30th Annual Ride of Silence, honoring those who have suffered cycling-related injury or death.

This community-wide event welcomes AHBC members and non-members, who wear black arm bands, some made of cut-up, used bike inner tubes. The solemn, silent format of the ride demonstrates respect for fallen cyclists and raises motorists' and city officials' awareness of cyclists' legal right to public roadways.

The AHBC's 2023 Ride of Silence begins at 6:45 pm with sign-in and opening

remarks at Recreation Park, located at 500 E. Miner Street. The Ride begins at 7:00 pm, moving at 10-12 mph for ten miles through downtown Arlington Heights and nearby neighborhoods, with a police escort, in complete silence.

[You can get more information from the AHBC website](#)



SILENCE

Chain Gang

by Pete Schmelzer

As a novice bike rider, I honestly thought all the black muck on my bike chain was a good thing, that it was “grease” that made things work better, like transmission fluid in a car. For years and years, I never cleaned it.

When I began riding with the Club, I noticed that most riders did not have this essential “grease” on their chains. Their chains shone like silver. Was I supposed to clean off all the grease? Yuck! How?

An Internet search yielded dozens of different ways to clean a bike chain. Like choosing ice cream, I couldn’t decide on one method because there were too many options.

While on Club rides, I began asking those on bikes with “silver” chains how they did it. Again, it was like picking ice cream. When asked their favorite method for cleaning the bike chain, no two people gave me the same answer.

Therefore, I share with you now “my way,” a compilation of the best that the Google machine and other riders have to offer. Here’s how I clean my bike chain.

First, I put on thin rubber gloves, thereby mitigating the “yuck” factor. I put the bike up on a bike stand and lay cardboard and newspaper under the

chain area, whether outside on grass or in the basement.

With a scrub brush I do my best to clean the grease off the front and back rings and the chain itself. While loosely holding an old rag on the chain, I rotate the pedals both ways to remove another layer of grease.

I use an inexpensive chain-degreaser tool made of plastic and containing several scrubby-looking brushes, like the brushes in a car wash. The tool has a handle on the side, like holding a pistol at a 90-degree angle.

I fill the tool with several ounces of a household cleaning liquid (Simple Green for me), hold the bottom half up to the chain, snap the top half over the chain and onto the bottom half of the tool.

I turn the pedals both directions so that the chain moves freely through the brushes in the tool. There’s a sense of satisfaction when the green liquid turns yucky and I begin to once again see the chain’s original silver color.

After removing the tool, I use Clean Streak (comes in a spray can, also



Photo courtesy of Harvey Tan Villarino

known as “White Lightning” and somewhat expensive) to remove any remaining grease, especially on the rear cassette rings. I use a clean rag to completely dry the chain, which now sparkles!

The final step toward a healthy bike chain is to apply a lubricant. My choice is a wet lubricant (there are dry lubricants), and I painstakingly drip one drop on each pin/roller, keeping the newspaper under the chain to catch any stray drops. There usually are 116 links on a bike chain, so it takes a while.

Finally, avoid the temptation to lubricate your chain right before heading out on a ride. The lube will be wet and will be more likely to retain the dirt that kicks up on the ride, thereby defeating the purpose of the entire process.

How often should you clean and lubricate your chain? Try asking other riders. You’ll find it’s like picking ice cream.

Lead Rider, Continued from Page 1
good thing on a bike ride. And I experienced the satisfaction of indirectly returning the favor for all the ride leaders who made the effort to pull me along for many years.

Sure, you have the same doubts. So ask someone you think is a good ride leader if you can “co-lead” their ride. The Board is developing some online training materials, but on-the-ride training is best, where you can get feedback from an experienced mentor.

The Club is stronger when we have more rides, at varied paces, to different locations. And we do need more willing ride leaders. I think you can, I think you can. Will you lead some AHBC rides for us?

Video Inspiration

by Kim Heuer

As you wait for warmer weather to come, here are few YouTube videos that will keep you inspired!

[Three Peaks & In Between - Ultra Cycling Documentary](#)

“tells the story of Jana and the cycling race of her life. During the Three Peaks Bike Race she undergoes the full range of emotions multiple times, while covering more than 2000 kilometers and 30.000 meters of altitude gain. At the end of this extraordinary race it shows, once again, that the most intense moments and long lasting memories arise along the way and not once you cross the finish line.” - Gear and Grit

[Can an amateur cyclist finish the Tour de France?](#)

Have you ever wondered if maybe, just maybe you could ride and finish the Tour de France? Well, here are a few middle-aged riders (we are middle-aged) who decided to try and find out what it takes to ride the Tour and finish!

[Future YOU — inspirational](#)

This is all about YOU. A short video to help you work on that little voice in your head, YOU can be better, I’m counting on YOU!

Our Favorite Bike Tours

by Paula Matzek

At the February AHBC meeting, members shared information about their favorite out-of-town bike tours and touring companies. The tours ranged from weekend trips in the Midwest to week-long or longer tours outside of the U.S. Click the links for more information.

[Amishland and Lakes, IN](#)

[Root River Trail, MN](#)

[GRAIL - Gary Gilbert - IL](#)

[Grand Illinois Bike Tour](#)

[Pedal Across Wisconsin](#)

[RAGBRAI, Iowa](#)

[GRABAAWR, WI](#)

[Will to Ben, WI](#)

[Cottonwood 200, KS](#)

[Natchez Trace, AL, MS, TN](#)

[PAC Tour](#)

[VBT Bicycling Vacations, Worldwide](#)

[Timberline Adventures, US, CAN](#)



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 Andy Krock.

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

Are you kidding? At my age I'm lucky if I remember my address!

2. When and why did you join AHBC?

I joined in 2015 a few years after my son and biking buddy moved out of state and I wanted to get back in to biking with others.

3. What paced group do you usually ride with?

I typically ride advanced intermediate, but I'm happy to ride intermediate (happier every year!) and sometimes Don, Jack and Mic let me tag along on advanced rides with them!

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

I ride a Specialized

Roubaix with the club and an old steel Trek 800 "mountain bike" on the trails.

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

Any decent gas station, but probably the Speedway at Kelsey and 14. (I have refined tastes!)

6. Do you ride year-round?

You bet! 32 degrees and higher with some sun on your face can be a great ride. People ski in the winter, why not bike?

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

The Horsey Hundred out of Georgetown, KY. Beautiful county and LOTS of rolling hills. Can't wait to do it again.

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

I do a couple of centuries a year, nothing longer.

I am considering trying RAIN this year, which is 160 miles from Terre Haute to Richmond, IN.

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

I was always a runner at the Swap (and will miss that event terribly.) Last year I was rest stop team lead for the 500.

10. What are your favorite non-cycling activities?

Mainly work; I'm not retired yet! But my hobbies are my two dogs, my tropical fish, some target shooting, and I hope to get back to torturing my classical guitar.

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

Just how much joy riding with all of you has given me over the last 8 years. AHBC is a great group of people.

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

Email us at info@cyclearlington.com