As the largest recreational cycling club in the Twin Cities, we realize that now is not the time to be silent. We are shocked and disturbed by the unjust deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and so many others. We recognize the powerful effect that systemic racism has had on our black community, as well as other people of color. We don’t have a lot of answers right now. We are listening. We are learning.

We recognize that we, the Twin Cities Bicycling Club, have work to do to connect with all races and cultures. We believe that black lives matter and are committed to creating a more inclusive climate within our cycling community. More to come.

(Approved by the TCBC Board of Directors on June 11.)
RECOGNITION CORNER

I would like to recognize some members who have been using the Forum to post a variety of routes on ride with GPS for us as we rode solo under the restrictions in place. In no particular order, they are: Johnny Pugh, Lyle Koehler, and Paul Loughman.

(From Mike Kubes)

I would like to recognize the TCBC Board of Directors members, who have been working tirelessly behind the scenes to help guide our club through the challenges of a pandemic. The Board is taking advantage of Zoom technology to meet frequently to review current guidelines issued by the State of MN regarding activities during these challenging times. They face the great challenge of balancing all of our desires to get out there for TCBC group rides with the need to be responsible for the health of our members and communities. I don’t envy them their job, and I hope we all appreciate the time and effort they are putting into making informed and responsible choices for TCBC.

(From Kate Kovar)

There are many of you out there that deserve some recognition. So if you know of someone who has done something that you would like to recognize, please send an email to recognitions@bikeTCBC.org. Please tell us who and why you think they deserve recognition.

PRESIDENT’S COLUMN

Hello everyone. I hope you are safe, healthy, and in good spirits. This has been anything but a normal year, to be sure. With all of the polarizing political rhetoric, the deadly impact of covid-19, and the murder of George Floyd and other similar injustices, it continues to be a challenging and educational year. Over most of my adult life, TCBC has been here for me, as an oasis of positivity, an outlet for stress, a break from the challenges of life, and a place where job titles, degrees, and salary don’t really matter very much. We’re largely just a group of people who like to ride bikes together. It seems like just yesterday that I showed up on my first TCBC ride in basketball shorts, high-top basketball shoes, tube socks, and a cotton t-shirt, riding a mountain bike I had purchased on a whim at the NOW Sports annual State Fairgrounds sale. TCBC welcomed me. I learned quickly, upgraded my clothes and equipment, and I became friends with people who are still my friends 27-ish years later. I know many of you have similar stories and have even longer history with TCBC than I do. Does everyone who does a test ride with TCBC feel as welcome as I did? Does everyone feel as comfortable and welcome in TCBC as I do today? Do people come to their first TCBC ride, look around and see other people they can easily relate to? I hope the answer to all of those questions is yes. We are listening, and we are learning how we can do better and how we can help to ensure that everyone who wants to be part of our community has the same access and feels at least as welcome as I did when I joined.

As I mentioned in my last column, I hope that you continue to find a sense of community within TCBC during these trying times. I also hope that you will continue to support our community by renewing your membership when it comes due so that we can continue to provide the services you are accustomed to receiving. Even during times when group riding is suspended, we continue to accrue financial obligations that we must satisfy. Quite a few members, or recently expired members, have asked why they should renew. Others have asked whether their annual membership will be extended or prorated for the time they couldn’t do group rides. For the financial reasons mentioned above, and because we feel our annual membership is already such a great deal, the answer is, no, we’re not currently planning to make any adjustments. Did you know a single marathon can cost up to 5 or 6 times as much as our yearly membership? A single 5K run can cost $45 or more? The benefits of membership are many, and are listed on the website under “Club Membership.” The benefits that are not listed on the website are also many and include: lifelong friends, social (and social media) connections, learning great new cycling roads/routes, organized out of town trips, access to a wealth of cycling knowledge, advice (if you want it) on pretty much anything related to cycling, help with tricky repairs or upgrades, and so on. I joined the board of directors because it was a chance for me to give back to an organization that has given so much to me. I hope you too find it to be as worthwhile as I have.

We will continue to strive to do our small part to be part of the solution, whether that be doing our part to be socially responsible in helping to stop the spread of the coronavirus, or whether that be working to find common ground between those who disagree, or whether that be educating ourselves and learning so that we can take actions that help lead to security, opportunity, and equality for all. We are just a recreational bicycling club, but we are also a community of people who can set a positive example and do our part to make things better.

Safe & happy riding,
Shelby
There are construction projects underway in St. Paul and the Twin Cities area. A new bridge is being built across the Mississippi River from near the 494 overpass to the Ford Bridge. The trail over the rail line just west of the river bridge to the beginning of the Dakota County side from the end of the 494 will be closed for seven days for repaving.

**CANNON VALLEY TRAIL**: This trail opened fully in May with some new bridges on the western half. I rode most of the trail and it was in excellent shape.

**SAKATAH SINGING HILLS TRAIL**: The six-mile segment from Elysian to Waterville is closed until September for repaving.

**THE BROWN’S CREEK TRAIL**: Counters showed daily average trail use this spring was up 58%! On May 2, the counter showed 2512 people crossing it, a record since it was installed.

**FROM AN ARTICLE THE LAST WEEK OF APRIL**: An attempt to determine how much trail use has increased since Covid-19 restrictions were put in place in mid-March, using bicycling and pedestrian data collected by MnDOT and the DNR around the state via trail counters. Trail use in much of April looked more like an average summer day. Trail use steadily increased with each Covid-19 development in March and April. As to the best time of day to socially distance on trails (as of late April): Only 7% of daily traffic occurred before 10 AM. The busiest time: 63% of trail use was between 1 and 6 PM.

**THE SHOOTING STAR STATE TRAIL**: This trail was extended last fall when a 9-mile section from Rose Creek to Hormel Nature Center in Austin was paved. It connects with Austin city trails. The trail now reaches 28 miles from Austin to LeRoy. (It’s interesting that the DNR website has not been updated yet to show this.) From near Taopi, a four-mile leg will someday reach south to the Iowa border and connect to the Wapsi-Great Western Line Trail. This 27-mile paved trail heads southeast from the border to Elma, IA. Together with Austin’s series of trails, the connected network will be 72 miles long!

**MESABI TRAIL**: Construction this year will include 9 miles from Embarrass heading north towards Tower, leaving a 6-mile gap. It is hoped the entire trail will be finished in 3-5 years from Grand Rapids to Ely, totaling 155 miles. Most is already done.

**HEARTLAND TRAIL**: There are hopes for an 86-mile segment west from Park Rapids to Moorhead, and a 40-mile extension north from Park Rapids to Itasca State Park.

**WITH THE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS**, many of the events we would have been needing volunteers for have been canceled. When the restrictions are lifted and we get invited to them again, I will post them on the Forum. Until then, keep safe and riding solo.

If you have any questions about volunteering for the club, send an email to volunteer@ biketcbc.org. Thank you to all the volunteers that make this club great.

**IN BRIEF**

**MINNESOTA VALLEY TRAIL**: A new segment is planned to be paved by this fall for 1.7 miles from Lyndale Avenue in Bloomington (near 35W) to the east, on the north side of the river.

**MISSISSIPPI RIVER BLVD** in St. Paul from the Marshall/Lake Street bridge to the Ford Bridge will be closed to all through motor traffic for a week for the trail on the Dakota County side from the end of the 494 river bridge to the beginning of the bridge over the rail line just west of Hwy 13.

**SUMMIT AVENUE** between Lexington and the Mississippi River: existing bike lanes will be widened and/or buffered this year.

**MINNESOTA VALLEY TRAIL**: A new segment is planned to be paved by this fall for 1.7 miles from Lyndale Avenue in Bloomington (near 35W) to the east, on the north side of the river.

**494 BIKE BRIDGE** from near the Minnesota Valley Wildlife Refuge on the western end to Pilot Knob Road on the east end: Badly needed repair was scheduled to happen in mid-June for a week for the trail on the Dakota County side from the end of the 494 river bridge to the beginning of the bridge over the rail line just west of Hwy 13.

**MISSISSIPPI RIVER BLVD** in St. Paul from the Marshall/Lake Street bridge to the Ford Bridge will be closed to all through motor traffic for various road and sewer projects. Bikers and pedestrians will have to share the trail until August or September.

**IN BRIEF**

**NEXT TCBC NEWS DEADLINE** will be Monday, August 3, for the Sept-Oct issue.

**TWO STALWART TCBC MEMBERS** recently did the annual inventory of our storage garage. Many of the supplies stored there were used for the annual Watermelon Ride, and without that event in the future, we need to do something with the stuff and the space. More news to come.

**FROM THE BICYCLE ALLIANCE OF MINNESOTA**: Detroit Lakes was awarded for their efforts to build better places for people to bike with a bronze-level Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Award from the League of American Bicyclists. Willmar maintained their bronze-level BFC award and Proctor was recognized with honorable mention. A bronze-level award recognizes communities for their commitment to improving conditions for bicycling through investment in bicycling promotion, education programs, infrastructure, and pro-bicycling policies. There are 482 communities across the country that have received national recognition as Bicycle Friendly Communities, as part of the movement for safer streets and better bicycling for everyone.

**SECURITY ALERT**: Don’t leave phones and other electronic devices powered up and hidden in your parked vehicle. Turn them off and they should be okay. Thieves can use various apps to scan parking areas for bluetooth and other signals to locate them (and know what the device is.)

**ACCORDING TO ECO-COUNTER DATA**: during the week ending June 7, there was a 37% increase in number of people riding bikes in the U.S. over the same week in 2019.

**THE BICYCLE INDUSTRY HAS BECOME ONE OF THE FEW BENEFICIARIES** of the pandemic. It sent shock waves through the supply chain and left customers racing to buy bikes before they sold out. Some suppliers of lower-priced models were all taken. Bike sales nationwide surged 50% in March! They were mainly adult leisure bikes. Longtime cyclists hope the unexpected bike boom results in lasting changes to city infrastructure such as streets being closed to motor traffic and more protected bike lanes.

**Mike Kubes**

Volunteer Coordinator
volunteer@biketcbc.org

**Check your Phone!**

Get instant notification every time a Bikeeverywhere map is updated.

Updates are free.

[www.bikeeverywhere.com](http://www.bikeeverywhere.com)
**BIKE U**

**Bike U**  
**Tuesday, July 14, 2020  8 pm**  
**Zoom Meeting**  
**TOPIC:** Body Weight Exercise for Strength and Mobility  
**PRESENTER:** Dan Polta, NASM Certified Personal Trainer | LA Fitness, Master Trainer  
Dan will demonstrate a body weight routine for strength and flexibility. You will learn how to apply exercises with limited equipment. You will gain confidence and improve your cycling power and endurance. All experience levels are welcome. There will be time for questions after his presentation.  
**Stay Safe. Stay Sane.**  
Diana Cohen  
BikeU@biketcbc.org

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**Just a reminder that our sponsors are there for us!**

Our sponsor bike shops for 2020 include: Erik’s Bike Shop, Cars Bike Shop, Gateway Cycle, Maple Grove Cycling, Now Bikes and Fitness, Bicycle Chain, Gear West Bike-Triathlon, and Tonka Cycle and Ski. Most bike shops are open, as bikes are considered essential transportation. I really should try riding my bike for transportation rather than recreation one of these years!

Our sponsor bike shops are taking precautions (only letting a certain number of customers in at a time, sanitizing bike touch points before and after service, etc.) It’s a great time to get your bike(s) ready for your solo riding adventures as well as when we can all meet again. Most of our sponsor bike shops are gracious enough to offer TCBC members a discount on their purchases. The discount varies from shop to shop. Please remember to thank the staff for being a TCBC sponsor and feel free to inquire if they offer a discount for our club and how it can be used. These discounts are another nice perk for belonging to TCBC!

Our sponsors are a very important part of our club and we are grateful for their continued support. They often donate gift cards and other gifts to our annual banquet and other events. Remember to be courteous, friendly, and know that you are an ambassador of TCBC and a walking advertisement to our club every time you step into one of their shops. Make us proud!

**Ann Harris**

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**Enjoy 55 miles of beautiful, paved rail-trails across central Minnesota.**

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**TCBC NEWS DEADLINE** is usually between the 4th and 10th of the month for the next month’s issue.

**TCBC NEWS** is published by the Twin Cities Bicycling Club, formed in 1993. Mail and checks can be sent to: TCBC, PO Box 131086, Roseville, MN 55113
Dakota Rail Trail Extended

This well-paved trail now extends through parts of three counties and reaches 35 miles from Wayzata to Lester Prairie. I checked out the westernmost part this spring.

From St. Bonifacius, it’s 8 miles past the north shore of Lake Waconia to the trailhead in Mayer, where there is paved parking, next to the Carver County Veterans Memorial. From Mayer it is 4 miles to New Germany, with a small paved trailhead and no shade. This stretch parallels County 30 about 50 feet away.

It’s just under 4 miles to the Lester Prairie trailhead, which is paved and has a gazebo and two convenience stores nearby. The trail continues to the western edge of town but then stops. This leg has some nice countryside and halfway through you can tell you have hit the McLeod County line because the pavement is newer (completed last year). Lester does have some size to it.

From Mayer west, the trail is very straight and flat, not crossing many roads. Warm sunny days would offer some shade from vegetation.

Interestingly, Lester is only 5 miles south of Winsted, where the paved Luce Line extends west to Hutchinson. There are roads you could use to bike between them.

By Doug Nelson

TCBC's Current Status as of Mid-June

No group rides have taken place since mid-March. The Board continues to consider when rides will be allowed, based on state safety guidelines. Keep checking the website. We are hoping by sometime in July.

STARTING ON JUNE 14: SOLO RIDES, described on the website.

CANCELLED: The Fourth of July ride. It was not going to be the Watermelon Ride, but we had hoped to offer something with multiple options. This is unfortunate, as this will be the first Fourth since 1981 that the club has not held a large bike ride. Another tradition ends. Ironic that some of the road segments used on the routes have been improved since last July and are better for biking.

CANCELLED: Tour de Meeker.

CANCELLED: Tour of Saints.

TO BE DETERMINED: The Fall All Club Ride would be Saturday, Sept. 5, out of Minnetonka. We hope it can take place.

ERIK'S LARGE BIKE SELECTION IN THE MIDWEST

PROUD SPONSOR OF TCBC
SAFETY MAN

Ask Mr. Safety Man

(We reprint the occasional column of this still-active TCBC member, which may still be relevant today! This is from summer 2002.)

DEAR S.M.: Even though I’m a new TCBC member this year, it hasn’t taken me long to notice that there is a discrepancy between what is preached about stopping for stop signs and what actually happens. It’s quite common, especially with fast groups, to see the lead rider blow through a stop sign and witness everyone blindly follow him or her. What do you make of this contradiction in TCBC between policy and practice?

B. Wildered

DEAR B.W.: What you are witnessing on some TCBC rides is the “biker lemming effect.” After many years of observation myself, I’m convinced that if the lead rider in a fast TCBC group would ride off a cliff into the ocean, the rest of the group would surely follow. Breaking away from that herd mentality is not easy, but it can be done. We all need to realize that proper stopping for all stop signs is not only paramount to our personal safety, but also crucial to the image we project to the general public. So please help us change the “monkey see, monkey do” culture among cyclists and think for yourself when it comes to safety and obeying the law. We really want TCBC to also stand for “Twin Cities Best Cyclists!”

SAFETY MAN

NEW DAKOTA RAIL TRAIL EXTENSION

TCBC Route Ideas

As summer arrives in Minnesota, it’s hard to imagine the biking season without feeling comfortable enjoying our regular TCBC rides. It can be harder to get motivated to ride on one’s own, and we have come to enjoy those great routes put together by TCBC leaders. With Covid still active in our community, there will be members who will not feel comfortable venturing out on group rides when they start up again. But don’t give up, instead turn to TCBC for some help! Some of our experienced ride leaders are out there on their bikes, reviewing routes and posting them on the TCBC Forum. It’s great to know you can head out on a route that won’t contain any surprises, thanks to leaders’ willingness to share where they have ridden. And an extra bonus is they are posting routes that are less busy with other bikers and walkers.

To find these routes, go to the TCBC home page and click on the Forum button. Most of the route options can be found under “Rides and Trips” with other updates about riding posted under “General”. Thank you to the riders sharing their routes! If you have been out and about on your bike and want to share a route, we would love to have you post it on the Forum. Still missing some of your old favorite rides with TCBC and want to do them on your own? Many ride leaders have posted links to their routes on their TCBC calendar postings so if you have a hankering to ride TGIF, Thursdays Out West, Tuesday Tune-up, Kodiak Kruze, or the Whole Enchilada, just go back to last season’s calendar to grab a map off the ride posting. And if your favorite ride doesn’t have a link to a map, you could always email the ride leader and see if they could provide one for you.

Even after TCBC resumes organized group rides, you don’t have to ride with a group to enjoy great riding around the metro area. Another option would be to contact the ride leader and let them know you would like to do their ride, but prefer to keep your distance. You can get a copy of the route, sign in with the ride leader, and ride off the back of the group once the ride heads off. Each of us is responsible for finding the riding style and ride spacing we are comfortable with, given our own personal health concerns.

Take advantage of the hundreds of rides that have been put together by TCBC ride leaders and get out and enjoy your summer on your bike!

By Kate Kovar

BikeFergusFalls.com

The Central Lakes Trail Starts Here

KATE KOVAR
American Bicyclist: Bike Club Notes June 2020

(From the League of American Bicyclists)

House draft transportation bill contains $6.3B for biking and walking infrastructure

The draft bill includes funding for Transportation Alternatives, increasing funding to local governments and for recreational trails. The bill requires states to do Vulnerable User Assessments to identify dangerous corridors and areas for bicyclists and pedestrians, and requires states to address those problems. It also requires states to set safety performance measures that lower fatalities.

Read the full statement with the Safe Routes to School National Partnership at bikeleague.org/blog


Ride in the National Bike Challenge all summer!

Now is a great time to encourage people to give biking a try. Help get new people on bikes and track all of your summer adventures via the National Bike Challenge. You, your friends, and your colleagues can log your miles, compare stats, and offer high-fives from a distance!

Sign up at nationalbikechallenge.org

A few stories from the League blog (bikeleague.org/blog):

What we mean when we say “Safe Streets for EVERYONE”™

Safe streets for everyone means more than bike lanes and sidewalks. It means that everyone is free to move on our streets, in our neighborhoods, and throughout our cities without fear of violence, racial profiling, or police brutality.

Be A Bike Ambassador During The Covid-19 Pandemic

We are experiencing a bike boom during this pandemic. The data and the news articles are undeniable evidence that people are biking more than before but how do we make sure people love biking the same way we do? At the League, we’ve been doing everything we can to make sure people can bike safely for transportation or recreation during the pandemic starting with pushing for bike shops to be considered essential businesses, to advocating that decision makers create more spaces for people to ride, and working on Capitol Hill to ensure there is the funding that will make safe streets for all.

Supporting the Future of Transit

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, frontline transit workers are risking their lives to provide rides to essential workers and people in our community who need access to food, healthcare, jobs, and other critical services.

As a reminder, when you’re out riding at this time:

- Follow the guidance of your local health department and the CDC
- If you’re feeling ill, please stay home
- Ride alone or with members of your household. Follow local guidelines for expanding your social network, but please keep in mind the safest rides are solo
- Try to maintain six feet of space from others
- Wash your hands frequently
- Avoid spitting, an uncovered cough, nasal drip, or other droplet transmission
- Wear an athletic mask or cycling buff that covers your nose and mouth when riding around others
The Virus Effect

The pandemic has altered our lives in so many ways and created a new normal that none of us wants.

For me personally, it ended my ski season abruptly and canceled a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Europe with my daughter and granddaughter, with only a 2/3 refund. But when it meant terminating club group rides, it became depressing and downright painful! Riding solo was going to be challenging for this “sort of” social butterfly addict.

After riding solo for a short while and being desperate for companionship, a couple of us, who had been mostly socially secluded, formed a very small group. We longed for all of our other buddies but two was better than none. Pretty soon I started to see some real advantages out of this major change in my life. Such as: You can be very spontaneous (less than 48 hours) and can choose your time to ride. You can ride any route, on any day of the week, at any time of the day. Sometimes you don’t even need the car to drive to a ride, just start from home. You can combine 2-3 routes into 1 ride. If you don’t like a certain road, or a certain hill or any section, you can skip it or change it, it’s no big deal. If you’re meeting a riding friend, you can show up at the last minute and not have to worry about being left behind, it’s no big deal. If you want to do a short cut, it’s no big deal. If you want to explore new roads, even while on a ride, it’s no big deal. You don’t have to worry about being dropped, at all, period. You can find lots of good, free stuff on the curbs. You can even stop at a garage sale without holding up a group. And lastly, if you’re tired, or the weather just isn’t as nice as you’d like, NO PRESSURE to RIDE!


By Linda Johnson

An Uninvited Guest: The 2010 Jelloman Ride

The Old Rainmaker was patient as we rolled out. This was a 54-mile ride, to Stillwater and back, and time was on his side. We must have made an enticing target as we rode east, stretched out along the shoulder of Hwy. 96. But the Clever Cloudpopper held his hammer in abeyance. He could strike at any time, but he would wait for the propitious moment, when his victims were scattered and vulnerable.

We stopped at the halfway point, at Main and Myrtle in Stillwater, and I suggested a sit-down breakfast. I persuaded Bob and Bruce to join me. This played right into the hands of our hidden adversary. As we squandered precious minutes over pancakes and eggs, we were attending ourselves for the coming slaughter.

When we emerged from the Main Cafe to tackle Myrtle Street Hill, the Shrewd Old Storm continued to hide behind ambiguous clouds. Unseen, he monitored us as we crested the hill, as we pedaled through Stillwater, as we coursed the rollers of Hwy. 12. Only when we neared Mahtomedi did the rainstorm begin to show his hand, opening with a smattering of widely scattered drops. Even then we had no reason to suspect more than drizzle, a gentle mist briefly present and quickly gone.

But Old Man Rainstorm had more up his sleeve than drizzle. He cranked open the water valve, and soon we were peppered with a steady wet attack as we descended the gentle slope of Stillwater Road through Mahtomedi.

“We should look for a place to wait this out,” said Bruce, clearly the wisest of the threesome.

“Oh, it may not rain long,” I said, unwarily collaborating with our foe. “And besides, this isn’t an electrical storm. At least not yet.”

We three soldiered on. The storm danced and feinted as we rounded White Bear Lake, crossed Hwy. 61, traveled Goose Lake Road, and passed Lake Vadnais. The Crafty Watermaker would pretend to retreat, and there would be minutes of relative calm when it looked as though the storm would pass. But every time the Persistent Precipitator returned, with renewed energy and
River Falls Revisited

Spring and early summer 2020: The ride-alone days, or pretty much.

I have been doing some routes in our latest Bike Atlas — some old favorites, some that I have never done (and some I am not very interested in doing again). Saturday, June 6, my thoughts turned to River Falls, WI. We used to have our Annual Weekend on Wheels every summer, and 12 years it was held in River Falls, with the last year being 2000.

It’s a nice college town, and some of us stayed in the dorm there — Crabtree Hall, remember? Anyway, what many of us will recall was the number of daunting hills around the area — many of which seemed to be included on bike routes, and which of course added to the scenery — and the physical challenges. The weather would be what I was waiting for to do that ride — sunny, 70’s, low dew point, east wind so I could finish with a tail wind.

I did basically the Diamond Bluff Express so I could do part of the Trimble Valley. I did not go to Diamond Bluff as I figured 40 miles would be enough — and it was that day!

I drove to old reliable Hoffman Park, used over the years to start many rides. Bathrooms were still locked and no water, which I halfway expected but it was still disappointing — and for plenty of other park visitors too. I headed south and soon was out of town.

The hills began. Some I remembered only too well from some rides, some I had completely forgotten — maybe for good reason! Okay, I will confess, I walked parts of four hills. When you are alone it’s easier to do that I reckon.

I kept seeing brightly marked cars zooming around. I found out later they were on some kind of car rally, driving around to count predetermined objects on a list like picnic tables in a park, and they would end up in Brainerd that day!

I kept heading south, then went east on 430th Street to descend into the Trimble Valley — and it was a curvy descent and there was plenty of braking. The valley was, as always, beautiful. The road crosses the river on many bridges. Surprisingly, as I approached the tiny town of Trimble, there was a sign saying ROAD CLOSED. I kept going as it would have been miles to backtrack around, and of course bikers know that they can often get through where cars cannot.

A river bridge was being reconstructed. There was plenty of framework but it didn’t look good. I stared at it. Then a couple of guys came walking along and said I could get over it, and then proceeded to do that themselves. I watched as they walked over a plank, which bent somewhat under their weight. Okayyyyyy....

A little tougher while carrying a bike! The plank wasn’t much more than a foot wide. I tried to stop my legs from shaking and edged slowly the 20 or so feet across. It started to bend...if I fell, it would be around 6 feet into sand and dirt, so it wouldn’t be too bad unless the bike landed on top of me or me on top of it....and I made it onto the main part of the bridge, which was easy enough. On the far side, there was a similar plank and a similar drop. This time it seemed easier. Thank goodness I had watched those guys get across!

Just up the road was the famous Gaslight Bar, often used as a rest stop by bicyclists and of course the other kind of bikers. I got water and bought some pop. There were plenty of car rally people and motorcyclists, and believe me, no masks were in evidence.

After that the rest of the ride was an anticlimax. More hills, more old roads that needed some repaving, going through Beldenville. All the turns had road signs where I needed to see them, which really helped. Cruising down some nice hills to approach River Falls. And back to good old Hoffman Park for a picnic.

Would I do it again? On a day like that, maybe!

By Doug Nelson
The 4.7-mile Stillwater Loop Trail suddenly opened the first week of June. A ceremony planned to have at least 4700 people holding hands along its entire length at the same time (possibly to set a record) did not seem to be a wise idea in the pandemic era and was scrapped. An official opening ceremony is now tentatively planned for August 28.

I biked the loop on June 5 to check it out, and plenty of other folks were doing it too! This is a fine example of Minnesota and Wisconsin working together and they should be proud. This is all on off-road trails except where you have to cross a few roads. (The project was all completed by last fall except for the Lift Bridge — which will still lift for boats occasionally.)

One way to do it is take 94 east, exit on Hwy. 95, and go north a bit to a paved parking lot with a satellite, just past a road leading to the marina. (Or you could park elsewhere in Stillwater.) Bike south along the trail to connect with the 36 bridge, which opened in 2017. There are three large overlooks where you can stop along the climb — and it is a constant climb for over a mile, but not too steep. The trail enters Wisconsin and passes through a tunnel under County E. There is a nice rest area with paved parking, picnic tables, water, and a building with six individual bathrooms. From the parking lot where I started this is about halfway at 2.5 miles.

The trail leads past Houlton Elementary and then north. You reach a smaller paved lot at the top of the hill. The old Hwy. 35 hill is gone, replaced by parallel trails for bikers and walkers. This is quite a hill down to the river and that’s why it’s preferable to do the loop counterclockwise — I saw several people walking their bikes up this hill. (The old County E hill is no longer a road or a trail — some of us won’t miss it though Bob Hoffman will.)

The Lift Bridge has striped lanes for bikers and walkers (though some seemed to be ignoring them). You can stop anywhere along it for the views. At the western end, you take the trail south along the river. The trail splits into two options — upper and lower — both seem to be fine and they merge at the parking lot on 95.

This loop is highly recommended. But of course you would say that 5 miles is not enough and you would usually be correct! From the Stillwater end of the bridge, you can take the trail north, which becomes the Brown’s Creek Trail, and follow that through its beautiful valley to Duluth Junction. Turn right there onto the Gateway and take it to its end at Pine Point Park, 11 miles from Stillwater.

After a break there, head north on County 55, east on County 7, and south on County 11, left on Hwy. 96 for a little jog, and right on Hwy. 95 into town to connect with the Brown’s Creek Trail again. This loop out of Stillwater totals 20 miles and should give you all the scenery you would wish for — great trails, good roads, and some large hills both up and down. Enjoy!

By Doug Nelson
Why You Should Renew Too

In March, when I got the email telling me it was time to renew my TCBC membership, it was a no brainier .... TCBC is my biking family. Of course I renewed. I’ve been a member for over 30 years and during that time, I’ve met so many great people, made a lot of friends, discovered new and interesting riding routes, and found meaningful ways to volunteer and give back to the biking community. It’s always been important for me to support the club.

We are in a challenging time now and have limited opportunities to engage with our riding family. TCBC didn’t do anything to interrupt the season, a pandemic did. Now, more than ever, the club needs our continued support so that when the world gets better, we’ll be ready to ride safely again in group rides with our biking friends. I want to support the club and our leaders as they make the difficult decisions that will keep our club running and our biking family intact.

Last November, our TCBC family budget was made and we elected family members to be in charge. Early in the year, we had a big expense for our insurance, an amount based on membership from last year. We continue to have ongoing expenses. I cannot tell you how proud I am of our leaders and how they have been looking out for us. They meet all the time, they research, they talk and make decisions that don’t necessarily make us happy, but their decisions are informed and responsible, with our safety always at the forefront of their thinking. In my opinion, we are very lucky we have them watching out for us.

I’m sure some folks have been questioning why, when we’re not doing group rides, they should invest $30 or $45 to renew a single or family membership. I did the math and my family membership for 365 days costs me about 12 cents a day (8 cents for a single membership). I’ve always thought that was a steal of a deal and it has been part of my budget - forever. Yes, right now, it’s an expense with a delayed payoff, but, in my opinion, one well worth the investment.

Your membership also provides you with these benefits:

- Discounts at sponsor bike shops
- Insurance on posted rides
- Mileage tracking

As our President said in the last newsletter, “Your support allows us to continue to support the community that is so important to so many of us.”

The day will come and we will ride again. Hope to see you then!

Patt Seleen
TCBC Member

Ten Years Ago in TCBC

Here are some things happening in the summer of 2010

President was Patt Seleen, Vice President was Richard Franco, Secretary was Laurie Holm, Treasurer was Tony Stifter. Some people still have their same volunteer positions today!

We still had a LONG printed schedule of events in the newsletter.

TCBC survey results of members were announced. What do you like best about TCBC? The rides, the routes, the fun..... top three reasons for belonging to TCBC: exercise, being social, and variety of routes. 67% of those surveyed ride at least four club rides per month.

Gov. Pawlenty signed a bill that included bicycles in the Unchanging Red Light Law.

The May All-Club Ride attracted about 250 riders, the largest TCBC ride ever except for Watermelon and WOW!

E-bikes were starting to be discussed in the newsletter.

Bob Floyd had an article called “Create Routes and Use Them with your Cycling GPS.”

TOP 3 MEN IN MILEAGE: Richard Miller, Randall Huskamp, Ed Hassler (at midsummer).

TOP 3 WOMEN IN MILEAGE: Katie Angle, Gina McCrone, Mary Nelsen (at midsummer).

LEADING THE MOST RIDES: Randall Huskamp, Ed Hassler, Don Hopkins.

LARGEST RIDES: The Whole Enchilada was listed three times just during June.

THE WATERMELON COMMITTEE was Laurie Holm, Robert Mann, Deb Matchinsky, Hugh Gitlin.

There were nine crashes reported in June.

The Gateway Trail bridge over Century Avenue was being built.

Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail was being debated in Edina — where should it go?

(Assembled by Doug Nelson)
TCBC Sweatshirts Available

What is this? A Zoom meeting? A Google meet? The Brady Bunch? No, it’s just club members sporting their new TCBC sweatshirts!

Order a sweatshirt now to feel connected, let others know about our great club, and keep warm until we can meet in person again! The online store opens and closes periodically and orders are filled quickly after a store closes. The cost is $32 and that includes shipping and handling. FYI, the color is “navy heather” although it looks gray on some pictures. Refer to the TCBC homepage or Forum to place your order today!
Back to the 60's (Fahrenheit)
A Scenic Ride Along the North Shore

This article originally appeared in our September 2008 issue and has been slightly edited.

“This is the second hot day (not second hottest, but just the second time) of the year,” the Park Ranger at the Grand Portage National Monument told us. It was late morning on July 27. It was one of those perfect days that just happen. There were few clouds in the sky, and we had been enjoying a moderate tailwind on our ride from Grand Marais, with a temp somewhere in the high 60’s, cool enough for me to wear knee warmers for two hours.

I had forgotten how pleasant and scenic it can be to ride along the North Shore, especially when the Twin Cities are hot and humid. Riding from Grand Marais to Thunder Bay on Highway 61 where the shoulder is as wide or wider than the traffic lane, the most attractive aspect was that we were often within 10 to 20 yards of the water. Many times it felt as if we had opened the door of a refrigerator and were standing in front of it to cool off. There is nothing like the feel of fresh, cool air coming off the lake to invigorate you as you ride along it, basking in the unending panorama of blue sky and water.

This ride reminded me of a ride from the Libby, MT, dam to Eureka along the Kootenai Reservoir, which extends from Libby all the way to Canada. I left Libby in the morning and took the highway that follows along the east side of the massive reservoir. I rode for 40-50 miles and never encountered any type of building. The ride along the North Shore reminded me of that. From Grand Marais, for about 40 miles, there are no stores. Some of the “resorts” might have a restaurant, but there are definitely no convenience stores or things like that until you reach the Trading Post in Grand Portage (where you also find a casino, resort, etc.). To me, that section parallel and closely adjacent to the water has to be one of the most scenic rides I have ever done in Minnesota.

Stopping at the Grand Portage Monument allows one to step back into the days of the early fur traders who populated the region. If you can hike a bit, there is a one-mile hike that allows you to view the highest waterfall in Minnesota (shared with Canada).

Leaving the park, we made our way back to the highway and began the ascent of Mount Josephine on the highway. The climb is longer than the hills that we have in the metro, but probably not as steep. That is not to say it is not worth it, because the view of the lake and surrounding islands is nothing short of spectacular. Going into Canada meant we could do it again on the return trip.

I was resigned for an extended stay among the hot vehicles when one of the border agents began pointing back at us. I knew he meant us because he held his hands above his head and moved them to resemble the pedals of a bike going around. He motioned for us to bypass everyone, including the motorcyclists, and come up to the front. I could not resist telling one of the motorcyclists that “you’ll get there quicker if you pedal it” as we went past them.

The border agent quickly processed us through and we were on our way up Mount Josephine again. And another scenic view from the top!

On the return trip to Grand Marais we still had great temps, but we were now getting to see how much help the wind had provided. Somehow the wind had not seemed that strong as we went north, but it certainly seemed stronger heading into it. Geri kept remarking that going north, a lot of the hills we were now climbing were not there. I just attributed it to the hill gnome. I am sure everyone has encountered his or her work at one time or another.

By Steve Scholl
I have never been naturally comfortable on a bicycle. In 2003, I had been away from cycling for more than 15 years, and I was quite out of condition. When I tried to get back into biking, I found the endeavor so uncomfortable and unenjoyable, I was not inclined to repeat it.

One day, I was by chance in Hoigaard’s and ran into a bike department employee whom I would describe as being a disciple of recumbents, especially the Tour Easy by Easy Racers, an expensive bicycle. When he saw that I was not favorably disposed toward the price tags on some of his wares, he began extolling the virtues of Sun Bicycle’s EZ-1 Super Cruzer – available for $450 American money. He strongly encouraged me to take one for a test ride in the parking lot. It proved to be a fun bike, and I bought it. Even though it was little – 20 inch rear wheel and 16 inch front wheel – it would not fit in my car. I drove home and got a lift back to the store, and I made the 16-mile ride home on my new bike.

At that stage in my life, a 16-mile ride would normally occasion the need for a few days off, but the next morning at sunrise I bolted awake, and within 15 minutes was rolling down the road on the Super Cruzer, as happy as a pig in the mud. That was the beginning of a 16-year string of riding multiple thousands of miles each year, a string which came to an end in 2019.

As 2020 arrived, I was thinking of dragging out the old Super Cruzer as a way to get me riding again. However that solution was from the old days. I had been there, and I had done that. I am, after all, a thoroughly modern guy, currently possessed of a high definition antenna TV and a 4G flip phone. So it is that I am inclined toward a modern solution to the old problem of getting me back into bicycling.

I now have something new – an Orbea Gain D-30 bicycle from Now Bikes. It is the fastest bike I have ever owned, because it is an E-Bike. If it doesn’t look like an E-Bike to you, that’s your own fault. You probably think that just because you can’t see the battery and motor, they aren’t there. That’s not true.

As E-Bikes go, the motor on my bike is not powerful and the battery is not big, but the bike is light, the power transitions smoothly back and forth between on and off as you pedal or coast, and it is easily ridden without any E-power at all. I ride the bike about half the time without even turning on the power. Some people want a more powerful E-bike, but in my case it is better that I do most of the work most of the time, whether with the motor off or on at the lowest setting.

It’s nice to have some extra juice on tap though. In early June I was tooling down a bike path when a fast guy blew by me so quickly I did not recognize him, but he said, “Hi Bob.” I am not one to challenge anyone on a bike path, but when a curb cut presented itself, I went onto the road, activated power at the top level, and easily caught up to him, within the reasonable standards of social distancing. I hope he did not find himself thinking, “What’s become of me? I can’t even drop Bob Brown.”

Bottom line: My new E-Bike is fun and it has gotten me back into riding a bike, which is the main thing, as we all know.

Bob Brown
more of the wet stuff. As the storm waxed and waned, we spread apart and regrouped, with me mostly at the front. I was the most persistent and foolhardy in the ill-considered foray against the deteriorating weather. I bounced up the Vadnais Blvd. hill to Rice Street and charged through the green light and across 694, and I found I was alone.

I waited, but the others didn’t join me. Apparently they had exercised the discretion I eschewed, and had taken shelter. By this time the storm had broadened his weaponry, and lightning was flashing a warning beyond the horizon. I shrugged my shoulders and resumed the turning of the cranks.

There comes a time in a rainy ride where I have lost all hope of dryness, where I can no longer pretend things aren’t so bad, where all thoughts of comfort are swept aside and I settle into my misery and slog unhappily but determinedly toward the finish. I’m busy ignoring the encroaching chill and persuading myself the lightning isn’t really that close, and I don’t have the mental energy to plan and execute a rest stop. Stopping, with its drop in body temperature and its dripping clothes in an unwelcoming convenience store, seems worse than continuing. And so I pressed on, shoes sloshing, jersey glumly stuck to my chest, socks heavy with rain water.

I really hoped I wouldn’t get a flat.

The cars, their lights on, rumbled by like tanks in enemy territory, and my map lay asogged in its clip. Ignoring the official route, I aimed my bike toward the parking lot via the most direct roadways: west on 37th Avenue, right on Stinson, left into the parking lot. I’d hoped the end of the ride would bring the defeat of Old Man Rainstorm, but my opponent wasn’t quite finished. He continued to pelt me as I stood outside, removing the front wheel with numbed fingers and stashing the bike in my Mazda. The Unrelenting Cloudbuster doused me with several more bucketsful before I could settle my soggy bike shorts onto the driver’s seat.

I learned something new that day. I can turn my Mazda’s temperature control up to 90 degrees. Take that, Oh Great Cold Wet One! I drove home, showered, and dressed in dry jeans and a heavy sweatshirt, and I was surprised to discover the rain had stopped, the sun had come out, and my clothes were uncomfortably warm. Mr. Rainstorm appeared to have surrendered. But I knew better. He was somewhere beyond the horizon, shaking a cloudy fist and shouting, “Wait till next time!”

By John Evans

**An Uninvited Guest: The 2010 Jelloman Ride cont.**

The 2010 Jelloman Ride cont.

As TCBC for the foreseeable future will not be scheduling group rides, we now find ourselves thinking about whether we should ride at all, and if so, what changes will we need to consider when we do ride.

Social distancing is still needed, at least 6 feet when we are standing or walking. When riding I suggest you should ride solo or in a small group, 2 or 3 at the most. Because of slipstream issues, riders should maintain longer distances between bikes going the same direction, probably 30 to 40 feet. If possible, use wide trails, such as the Greenway, or one-way trails and bike lanes and streets or roads to avoid bikes passing going the other way.

Use trails or bike lanes that do not have a lot of traffic. I have been riding only during the week between 8 am and 11 am when I have found there is less bike traffic than during the weekends. In Minneapolis in the mornings during the week I have found very little bike traffic on the Greenway, around the Chain of Lakes, on Park and Portland bike lanes, on West River Road, on East Mississippi River Boulevard, on the Minnehaha Creek Parkway bike trail, and on the bike lanes on Minnehaha Avenue.

I have gone to the suburbs, again during the week, where most of the trails such as: the Dakota Trail, the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail, and the Cannon River Trail have very little traffic.

There is still the question of whether one should wear a mask. They are uncomfortable and interfere with one’s breathing when biking. I have found that wearing a buff (muff) or neck gaiter is more comfortable, and it can be pulled up or down as needed to cover your mouth and nose. They can also be doubled up to provide more protection. I also carry a regular mask if I must stop and enter a place requiring the wearing of a mask.

Use common sense and keep riding.

**RIDE SMART, RIDE SAFE**

Paul Frenz
TCBC Safety Committee

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The TCBC membership year is 12 months from the date you become a member. Categories of membership are 1) individual and 2) household. For insurance purposes all members are required to sign a liability release annually. The newsletter mailing label shows membership numbers and expiration date and serves as your member card.

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