

WHY I RIDE

Why I Ride?

By Mark Wahlgren Summers

Why bike? Simplest reason in the world: habit. I was raised riding a bike to school in Connecticut. Winters were long, bleak and snowy, but it definitely beat waiting at a bus stop forever, and my parents weren't about to drive me a measly three miles to and from every day. At the time I

could pedal through anything. Compared, say, to Vermont, biking in Lexington's easy. There may be two days, maybe three, when the bicycle has to remain at home (ice storms, freezing rain, that sort of thing), but there's nothing more pleasant than laying down a track through an inch of snow that hasn't been trodden into rock-solid lumps by other people's feet. As for rain...well, that's what good slickers are for.

There are plenty worse cities for getting to and from, as well. Admittedly, the big streets are a little dodgy and the one and a half laners out of town are invitations to either poetry or suicide, depending on whether a car is coming or whether you can just concentrate on the scenery. But carrying groceries home on a bike is simple enough; heavens, I once carried a dining-room table home on the back of my bicycle, though I wouldn't do something so tarnation stupid again. Drivers mostly are forbearing enough.

The case for biking is: a) it's environmentally friendlier than some other modes of transportation; b) it gives a per-

son time to think—or whistle; c) it's not very noisy; d) repairs don't cost CEO-sized outlays; e) you don't need to worry about whether you've fastened your seat belt; f) it affords at least the semblance of exercise, and sitting down the whole time; g) you get the chance to smell things and hear things, unless you're wearing an iPod at the time. To me, reasons b), c), and f) are the most important, but the real reason is, as I said in the first paragraph, a matter of habit. ■

Mark Wahlgren Summers is a history professor at UK.

Bike Riding is Essential; \$4/gal. is too much

By Gerald Evans

Iride bikes because it (the act) makes me sane. Pathologically it gives me a release of endorphins that keep me away from 'happy pills.' Systemically bikes give me the ability to get there and forget where I am going while bikes allow me to leave there and forget where I was. Riding makes me feel good and feel strong. I like riding bikes because it gives me an enduring sense of happiness all day long.

If I don't ride a bike I get grumpy. When I am not riding a bike, my friends can

tell. When I don't pedal the bike my butt gets soft, my belly grows and my bike collects dust. Bike riding is essential because \$4 a gallon for gas is too much.

Riding bikes in and around Lexington is easy. I commute everyday to work, warm or cold, rain or shine. I wear a helmet, lights and protective clothing. I enjoy riding in weather and traffic as well as the comfort and convenience of parking.

Always wear a helmet and keep rain gear close as two wheels is best when ridden most. ■



started, I think I was the only person riding a bicycle in our high school. By the time I graduated, the school actually had shelled out for a bicycle rack. It was a good, hearty commute: thirty minutes

I once carried a dining-room table home on the back of my bicycle.

each way or more, and the only really tough part came going downhill towards a lake, where the winds were so fierce that the bike often would be stopped halfway down as I coasted along. The route became so second-nature that I often would pedal the whole way to school with my hands in my pockets, having discovered that with the right kind of lean, you can turn corners perfectly well, without a spill. (I wouldn't recommend it to other people; the laws of physics don't necessarily apply in Kentucky).

So coming to Kentucky, I figured if I could pedal through three-foot snowfalls, I

Bike Month Events

KyMBA Informational

May 19, N. Lexington Family YMCA, 7pm
Kentucky Mountain Bike Association (KyMBA) is organizing a group of mountain bike enthusiasts to represent central Kentucky. KyMBA's purpose is to promote mountain bike advocacy, identify opportunities for growth, unite mountain bike enthusiasts, and develop and maintain trails. We are looking for a broad spectrum of mountain bikers to join this group. If you are interested in learning more or getting involved we welcome you to attend this informational meeting.

Ride of Silence

May 21, 7pm - 8pm, Centenary Methodist Church
Join cyclists in a silent slow-paced ride in honor of those who have been injured or killed while cycling on public roadways.
Visit www.rideofsilence.org for more info.

Mayor's Bicycle Task Force

May 22, 101 East Vine Street, 11:30 am
Mayor Newberry recently appointed this citizen-based committee as a direct outcome of the Lexington Bike Summit. Contact the chair, Brad Flowers at flowersbrad@googlemail.com.

Share the Road Ride

May 23, 5pm, Woodland Park
Bicycling is a CLEANER, HEALTHIER, CHEAPER, and FASTER way to travel. However, it can be scary and intimidating to get back on a bike if you haven't been on one in years. Riding in traffic can be stressful stuff too. This ride will begin with a discussion of local bicycling ordinances and will be a great opportunity to gain confidence riding your bicycle on the street.

Horsey Hundred 2008

May 24-25, 8am, Georgetown College, Georgetown, KY

Experience Kentucky's Bluegrass on a bicycle during the 31st running of the Bluegrass Cycling Club's Horsey Hundred. There are several routes to choose from on Saturday and Sunday from 29 to 75 miles; OR challenge yourself to full Horsey Hundred—a 100 mile century route that will take you over a wide range of terrain typical of the Bluegrass. Registration is required and includes maps, rest stop snacks, lunches, road support and ice cream social.
Visit www.bgcycling.org for more info.

Car-Free Day!

May 28, Everywhere. All day.
Take the car-free pledge and liberate yourself from the combustion engine for a day of fresh air and exercise so you can spend your gas money on something fun. Email your pledge to be car-free for a chance for a FREE Bike Lexington t-shirt.

KY Rails to Trails - Ashland to Lexington Relay

May 31, 7am, Princess in Boyd Co, KY
The Kentucky Rails to Trails Council will host the fourth annual bicycle relay ride from Ashland to Lexington on National Trails Day. The ride is to promote the development of multi-use trails throughout the state and the creation of a continuous rail trail over the 106 mile abandoned CSX railroad corridor between Lexington and Ashland. The relay will start at Princess in Boyd County and end at Pleasant Ridge Park in eastern Fayette County. The total distance of the cycling relay is 133 miles and is divided into stages that begin and end at different points along the corridor.

Visit www.kyrailtrail.org for more info. ■

—from bikelexington.com

Bike Lexington

Why walk when you can ride?

By Michael Porter

With gas surging toward four bucks a gallon, this weekend's Bike Lexington events will be a welcome sight for those searching for alternative ways to get to work and school that won't cramp style or wallet.

The 3-day event, part of National Bike Month, takes

related efforts in the Bluegrass, seeking to promote and expedite the success of new and existing initiatives," concluding, "the first big push was to take Bike Lexington from a one day event to a month long celebration of the various bike cultures in town." ■

"The first big push was to take Bike Lexington from a one day event to a month long celebration of the various bike cultures in town."

—Brad Flowers, chair, MBTF

place in and around downtown, with hundreds of cyclists taking over the streets to celebrate cycling for fun, fitness and transportation.

Kenzie Gleason, event coordinator for Bike Lexington also serves as the city's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator. She says, "Bike Lexington has evolved into a month-long celebration of bicycling throughout May (National Bike Month). We are working hard to make Lexington a more bike-friendly city by raising awareness and trying to make bicycling more accessible to all people. This desire to expand on new events, and better promote existing events, was expressed at the Bike Summit last fall. That's where the Task Force comes in. The Mayor appointed the Bike Task Force to help him implement the recommendations from the Summit. Their first order of business was to expand Bike Lexington. Through partnerships with many individuals, businesses and organizations the group has coordinated a calendar of bike activities including a velo swap, bike polo, bike safety education classes, bike mechanic clinics, a progressive bike dinner, commuter challenge, bike rally, races and more."

She defers to Brad Flowers, the chair of the new bike task force, adding, "I've been exceptionally impressed with the members, their enthusiasm and commitment to working with Mayor Newberry to make real progress on improving the bikeability of our city."

Flowers says the MBTF is comprised of 16 individuals with the mission: "to promote bicycling in Lexington as a means to better health, sustainable transportation, and economic development. Toward these ends, the MBTF will: Advise. The MBTF is a citizen advisory committee for LFUCG, promoting the implementation of the Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan and the League of American Bicyclists' criteria for Bicycle Friendly Communities. Advocate. The MBTF advocates on the local, state and national levels for bicycling as recreation and transportation, pursuing better communication, better policy and better facilities. Facilitate."

He says, "the MBTF acts as a hub for the various bike-

BIKE LEXINGTON 08



BIKE LEXINGTON THIS WEEKEND

Bike Lexington Prologue/Time Trial

Racing kicks off on Friday night, May 16th with a downtown 2-mile prologue. Brought to you by the McDonald's Cycling Team, the Avenue of Champions Prologue is the first race of the weekend. European style prologue. The festival starts the afternoon of May 16th with the first racer rolling off at 7 pm on the campus of the University of Kentucky. You'll launch down the start ramp, with a police motorcycle escort, for the 2 mile TT event.

Bike Lexington Rally

Saturday, May 17, 9am -12pm, Courthouse Plaza, Main & Limestone St

Join Mayor Newberry at the Bike Lexington 2008 Rally where 1000+ bicyclists will reclaim the streets and celebrate bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation.

You bring your bike, we'll provide the food, drink, live music and more.



Criterion Racing

Saturday, May 17th brings Criterion Racing on Main Street in downtown Lexington. The Pedal Power Cycling Team is hosting the Saturday festival on a wide open, fast, eight turn, smooth pavement course. The 1 mile race winds around the Lexington Courthouse with views for spectators lining the entire circuit. Family Fun Ride at 10 am. The Lexington Police department provides a rolling closure to protect riders of all ages on this ride through Lexington.

Coldstream Stage Race

Promotion Cycling's Sunday May 18th event is the culmination of Bike Week and the final race in the Bike Lexington Stage Race. Held at the Coldstream Research Campus, this new 2-mile course concludes the weekend. Racing begins at 8am sharp. ■

—from bikelexington.com