

RBBC Newsletter- May 2018

In this Issue:

- Ride Report
- National Bike To Work Week
- RAGBRAI Report

Officer Report- we are seeking a new secretary, please contact the club email (rbbccclinton@gmail.com) if you are interested or would like more information.

Upcoming RBBC Ride Schedule:

- June 24th: Rock Creek- Bikes? Check. BBQ? Check.
- [June 27th: Second Monthly Full Moon Ride](#)
- [October 13th: Lumber Jack and Jill Ride- Start working on that beard!](#)

Other rides:

- June 8th & 9th: TOMRV- Holy Hills Batman.
- June 16th: BACooN Ride 5
- July 21st-26th: RAGBRAI- Are you ready?
- August 19th: Pie Ride- Bikes + Pie. Does it get any better?

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, June 21st at McKinley Street Tavern, 7PM.

Ride Report:

First Full Moon Ride:

On May 29th the first monthly Full Moon Ride was held. What started on a whim with very little advanced planning turned into quite the ride! There were between 40 and 50 people who attended and while the weather wasn't great for gazing at the moon the riding conditions were extremely nice. The ride began at 7:30 at Elijah Buell Terrace with Legend's serving as the turn around point. After the sun went down and the moon was up (we presume) we turned on our lights and made our way home. It was a casual 10 miles and I for one am excited for next months ride!



Figure 1: Pre-Full Moon Ride Photo

National Bike to Work Week

The alarm goes off, getting louder and louder by the second. The morning sun is just peaking through the window not yet high enough to light the entire room but casting shadows onto the far wall. That pesky alarm is still blaring as you rub the sleep from your eyes and you finally shut it off as you shuffle to the bathroom, or maybe that was just the most recent in a long line of 'snoozes'. You brush your teeth, shower and find some clean clothes. If you are better at getting up than I am you allotted time to eat breakfast and have coffee before leaving, but if you didn't you, like me are leaving the house in a frenzy because you already feel late. What's next? Do you hop into your car to hit the road or are you pulling your bike out of the garage to ride to work?

For the last three years every morning I climb in my truck and head to work. The idea of riding to work has crossed my mind, I like being active and healthy. While it sounded nice I always convinced myself that it wouldn't work. I have a lot of tools that I use on a daily basis and they all stay in my truck. I reasoned to myself that while it sounds great it just wasn't feasible to ride to work because I theorized that it would slow me down and be a burden. That was until this May.

Every May since 1956 the American League of Cyclists have sponsored National Bike Month and this year May 14th- 18th was National Bike to work week. They sponsor this month in the hopes of advancing the movement to build a bicycle friendly America for everybody. I have talked with many people who ride to work every day in good and bad weather, they still talk highly of it despite the challenges. I have continued to stay firm in my belief that biking to work would just be too difficult for me. Despite my trepidations I decided National Bike to work Week was the time to put my theory to the test, was riding to work really an extra burden? The first step was getting myself out of bed on time.

I am not one to sleep in but am known for hanging onto every extra minute to stay in bed. Getting up early enough for breakfast or an early morning class has always been a difficulty of mine, but it was made easier knowing I was getting out of bed to do something I was excited about. The fresh air and the breeze were a great feeling in the morning but, having ten minutes to myself is what put me over the edge. I don't prescribe to meditation but I think a nice morning ride provides me with a similar experience both to start and end my work day. A bit of time just for myself to reflect and reset myself. Equally challenging to getting up was getting out the door in a timely manner.

To accommodate riding to work my morning had to become more efficient. Normally I would leave from home and go straight to the job site for the day without going to my office but to ride, I needed to go to the office every morning to pick up my truck. In addition to the extra stop it required extra time to ride rather than drive. Without sacrificing too much of my coveted sleeping time I became better at preparing for my morning the night before. In addition to that I couldn't carry as much on my bike, this forced me to be more selective leaving items at home that were not critical to my day.

These things made me more prepared for the morning, no longer did I find myself doing laps around my house to gather everything up. After figuring out the most efficient way to get out of the house I now needed to find the most efficient way to ride to work.

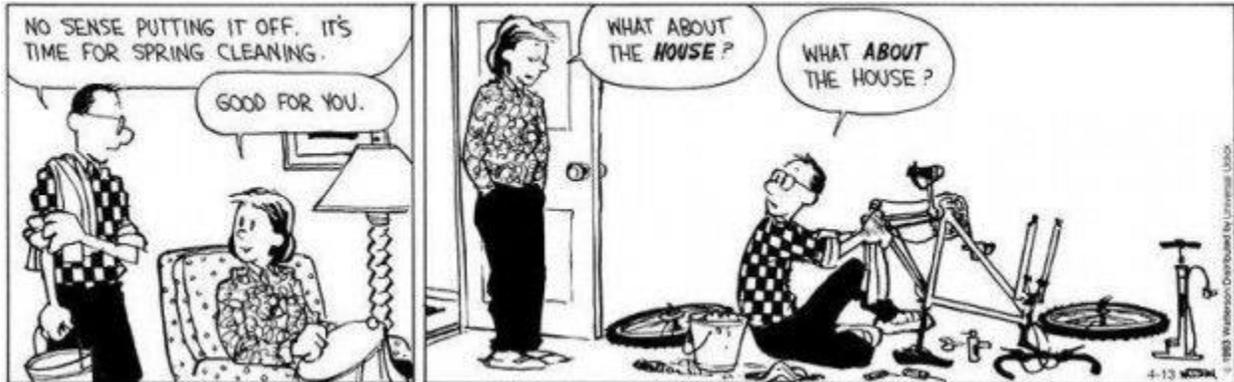
I know I am not alone in saying the route I drive to work each morning has become a bit monotonous. You take the same major road day after day. I found myself using major roads and taking in very little on the way to work. Since my route to work doesn't follow a major bike path I was forced to ride on road the entire way. In order to take lower traffic roads, I did go out of my way a bit to ride through neighborhoods that I otherwise drive around in my truck without a second thought. Riding through them on my bike brought a new perspective and allowed me to take in different portions of town. On bike I found myself trying out different routes and exploring different blocks both to find a quicker more efficient route and just out of general curiosity. I still ran into some difficulties.

It wasn't all rainbows and butterflies. Occasionally work throws me for a loop and I stay later into the evening. During National Bike to work week I had a few late evenings which drew work into conflict with evening plans. If I had driven to work there would have been plenty of time to drive home change clothes and head back out but on a bike this was a different story. When I was running behind the feeling of being late was exacerbated. My commute wasn't long enough to require strenuous effort to get to work and the cool temperatures in the morning helped but I can definitely see the inconvenience if one had to dress nice for work. Fortunately for me I only had to deal with a mild case of helmet hair. Despite the impairment to my hair follicles I was able to settle into a nice routine.

All things considered the transition from driving to riding to work was much easier than I anticipated. All of the issues that I thought I would encounter while true, I had over inflated in my mind. It did not take me much longer, my commute went from less than 10 minutes to just over 10 minutes. I live and work in Clinton which really helps keep the commute time and length down. Leaving early enough allowed me to avoid nearly all of the heat that is, until my commute back home. Bike parking is limited at my office but there is enough extra space that I was able to roll my bike inside and not disrupt anything or anybody while feeling safe that my bike would be there when I returned. I have heard concerns about the safety of the roads, but I found the more roads that I road on the safer I felt. All of the drivers were very respectful of me on the roads and of my space. Once established in the lane I stayed consistent and obeyed all laws of the road just as if I was operating an automobile. The only concern that would make me reconsider would be the weather. I lucked out and had good weather all week but if the forecast called for long periods of rain or snow that would cause me to reconsider riding during that period. Despite all the excuses not to ride I only needed one reason to keep doing it.

The League of American Cyclists lists a number of different reason why we should ride to work: physical activity is healthy, biking reduces our carbon footprint by reducing air

pollution, we can save money on gas. I fully support each of these reasons however for me the most important reason I ride my bike to work is its fun! As a kid riding a bike was a small way to be independent and that was freeing. I could hop on and ride to my friends down the street or to the park. It reminds me of summer days spent playing in the sun. Some might see work as the opposite of the summer days of our youth but for ten minutes each morning you can find me riding to work and having fun.



RAGBRAI Report- May 2018

We just got back from Alaska, and there were several RAGBRAI Applications in my e-mail and in the club mailbox. I spent yesterday logging them in and we now have the following totals:

	Total signed up	Taking the bus	Camping and having bags transported
Members	32	22	19
Non-members	45	30	36
Total	77	52	55

We have two buses reserved, and I am sure we will have enough to pay for them. Jon Fah has visited each of the pass-through towns and reserved campsites. I have talked to the people from Davenport, and it looks like we will be loading buses at St. Ambrose as we have in the past. I still need to find out what they have in mind as far as parking and camping. I should be receiving wristbands, etc. toward the first of July. I will distribute them when we load buses on July 21. For those not taking the bus, we need to make arrangements to get your wrist band to you.

During my vacation, I put my training mostly on hold, but I did bike on two different days. One day I biked with a group around a glacier lake: The Mendenhal Glacier near Juneau. Another day, I ride a train to the top of the mountains in British Columbia, and then rode a bike back down to Skagway at sea level. Mostly coasting, but I am going to count it in my mileage. It was a good trip. It was much cooler than in Clinton: Mid to 40's to 50's in the day. I was shocked when I got to O'Hare and it was close to 100. Anyway, I got my bike back from Chad today and need to start training in the heat and in the hills.

John Bonte,
RBBC RAGBRAI Coordinator