

Welland Tribune (ON)

Breakfast launch for bike season

Tue 27 May 2008

Page: A3

Section: Local/Region

Byline: Sheri Bolton

Illustrations: Public and Health promoter Marian Landry flips pancakes as part of the bike to work kick-off celebration yesterday morning Breakfast was served to anyone who rode to Market Square on their bicycles from 7 a.m. until 10 a.m. ;

Cycling season has begun and the region is encouraging more people to use human power to get around by offering the rewards of improved health, a cleaner environment and about 50 prizes.

Bike to Get There season officially kicked off Monday with a pancake breakfast at Market Square in Welland from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m.

About 50 people showed up to eat a little breakfast outside, and about 40 of them came on bicycles, on their way to work

"We just really want to celebrate the launch of bike season," said Marian Landry, Niagara Region public health department health promoter, who herself bikes to work

During launch week, May 26 to June 1, cyclists can fill out a ballot, available on www.rnbc.info, every time they complete a round trip to get somewhere.

The ballots can be dropped off at Niagara Region public health, Campbell East Building, 2201 St David's Rd., Thorold or mailed to Niagara Region Public Health, P.O. Box 1052 Station Main, Thorold, Ont., L2V 0A2, before June 15 to be eligible to win a grand prize valued at over \$300

The winner and a guest will get dinner and an overnight stay at the Keefer Mansion Inn in Thorold.

Teams can also enter the draw during launch week. The first 40 team captains to register for launch week will receive a \$20 coupon for the Old Bank Bistro in Fort Erie or Keefer Mansion Inn.

Teams must also fill out ballots to be eligible for the grand prize during launch week

"Then for the rest of the season, you fill out the passport and you fill in every single trip you take," Landry said.

The season runs from June 2 to Oct. 31.

The passport is a monthly form, which resembles a calendar, that cyclists can use to keep track of their daily treks. They can be obtained on www.rnbc.info or from Thornton's Cycle and Sports on Lincoln Street in Welland, among other locations in the region.

When each month is up, participants can drop their passport off at Thornton's to be eligible to win prizes like helmets, gloves, gift certificates and bike gear packages.

Draws will be held on or about the 15th of the month until November.

The contest is open to all cyclists in Niagara.

"When we use our bikes we're more than physically active," Landry said. "We're saving our environment."

Besides reducing carbon emissions, cycling also reduces wear and tear on the roadways, Landry said.

Niagara has a lot of trails that cyclists can use rather than biking on roadways, but safety is always important, she said

"The perception that cycling on the road is not safe is one of the many barriers to not cycling more," she said. "We need to raise awareness both to vehicular traffic and to cyclists."

On the weekend a 13-year-old Welland boy suffered serious head injuries after being struck by a truck while riding his bicycle on Niagara Street. He was not wearing a helmet

Landry recommends that everyone wear a helmet while cycling

Motorists, she said, need to be aware that bicycles are legal vehicles on the road, but cyclists also must remember that while on the road they must adhere to the rules of the road.

"But we do see a lot of unsafe things happening," she said.

Cyclists who want to learn more about safety can check out a DVD available at the Welland library, *Enjoy the Ride, Essential Cycling Skills*

"There's things for everybody to learn about cycling safety," she said

"Probably the hardest part for people is getting themselves organized to start using their bicycles."

She said a lot of things can be stored in panniers (bike bags), including a change of clothes, laptop, purse and notes for work

When people have all the proper equipment, cycling to where you live, learn, work and play can be easy, safe, enjoyable, healthy and cheap

"We want people to start thinking about using their bikes as a mode of transportation," she said

Other events in Welland this week are:

Today - meeting at the Seaway Mall at 7:30 a.m. to bike to work and leaving Civic Square at 4:30 p.m.

May 28 - meet at Merritt Island at 7:30 a.m. for a one-hour bike ride before work.

May 29 - meet at Bauer Trail at 7:30 a.m. to bike to work and leaving Civic Square at 4:30 p.m.

May 30 - meet at Blue Star Restaurant for breakfast at 7 a.m. before biking to work and leaving Civic Square at 4:30 p.m.

For more info on how to get cycling or to participate in bike week contact 905-688-8248 ext. 7422, or visit www.rnbc.info

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Metroland - Halton Division

Ride a bike and you can pedal your way to prizes

Fri 23 May 2008
Page: 01
Section: Niagara This Week
Byline: Ashley Guay
Column: 6
Dateline: Article

With the warm weather finally here, why not give up the car and take a bicycle for a spin?

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The Regional Niagara bicycling committee is launching its second cycling season know as "Bike to Get There ... where you live, learn, work and play."

People who choose a bike over their vehicles have the chance to win big prizes. The first 40 teams to register their band of 10 cyclists will receive a gift certificate worth \$20 for the Old Bank Bistro in Fort Erie or the Keefer Mansion Inn in Thorold.

"So far we have had approximately 26 teams registered with 10 members per team," says Dianne Coppola, manager of the chronic disease and injury prevention division at the Niagara Region public health department.

Avid cyclists can also submit ballots as individuals. During launch week, which runs from May 26 to June 1, cyclists can submit ballots for each round trip to any destination to the Niagara Region Public Health department, or to cycle shops across the region to be eligible for prizes. Cyclists have a chance to win a grand prize of dinner for two and a one-night stay at the Keefer Mansion Inn in Thorold.

Some cyclists participating in the campaign, already take advantage of nice weather to get out on their bikes.

Ken Forgeron of St. Catharines owns four bikes and spends weekends taking bike rides with his wife

"I ride whenever I can usually from spring to fall," says Forgeron. "When you're driving in a car you fly by everything without taking it all in. When you're riding on a bike, you go at a much slower pace and you can enjoy scenery and nature."

Forgeron said he believes that many people don't know about the benefits that come with cycling.

"It makes people more healthy, they have more energy when they arrive to work or to wherever they are going and more energy when they arrive home at night."

"Our previous campaign was 'Bike to Work,' but last year we expanded it to 'Bike to Get There' because we thought it would encourage more people to get out there and cycle," says Coppola.

For more information about the program, call 905-688-8248 ext 7422.

Niagara Falls Review (ON)

Save gas, save the environment: Bike to work

Mon 26 May 2008
Page: A6
Section: Local
Byline: TIFFANY MAYER
Source: Osprey News Network

Thorold Mayor Henry D'Angela raised a few eyebrows the other week.

Not for any performance in the political arena, though.

It was his set of wheels.

Dressed in a suit, bound for a regional council meeting, D'Angela hopped on his bike and headed to work.

"I got quite a few looks," D'Angela said. "I guess drivers were amused I was wearing a suit."

D'Angela could have driven to the meeting. But in the name of good health with the spinoff effect of sparing the atmosphere greenhouse gasses, he didn't.

D'Angela, an accountant, even pedalled from Thorold to Virgil to deliver something to a client.

He also makes a point of two-wheeling it with his daughter Julie to her soccer practices.

This week, he has rounded up a few others at Thorold city hall to park their cars and hop on their bikes in recognition of Bike to Get There ... Where you Live, Work and Play. It's a week-long Niagara Region public health department initiative that kicks off today.

Marian Landry, the department's health promoter, hopes it will inspire Niagarans to hop on their bikes more often through the summer.

"Anything you can do riding a bike rather than taking a car will benefit the environment and your own physical health," Landry said.

Take it to the corner store to pick up that essential item you need in a pinch, for example.

If one million people replaced an eight-kilometre car trip once a week with a bike ride, we would reduce carbon dioxide emissions by about 100,000 tons per year, never mind what it will do your wallet by saving a few trips to the gas station.

From a health perspective, half an hour bicycling daily can increase your life expectancy by up to four years.

"If we all started to believe individual actions make a difference and we had individuals making positive choices, it would make a difference," Landry said.

D'Angela, who raced for 10 years

semi-professionally, said cycling isn't just for hardcore endorphin junkies.

"You can go at your own pace," he said.

The more you use your bike, the more likely it will become habitual, he noted.

Just make sure your tires are pumped, your chain is oiled and your helmet fits before heading out. D'Angela suggested keeping your helmet and sunglasses near your bike to make it easier to get going. He also keeps an extra change of clothes at city hall if he does a harder ride.

So far, 50 teams have registered to participate in Bike to Get There week, including the Thorold Municipal Team, comprised of chief administrative officer Mike Weir and councillors Ted Luciani and Shawn Wilson among others.

Planning director Adele Arbour will be escorting this Green Team member on a ride Wednesday.

I haven't been on a bike since I was 17, but apparently it's just like ... well, never mind. But Arbour has promised to go easy on me.

You also don't have to be on a team to participate in the event.

Those who do pedal during the event are eligible to fill out a ballot for each round trip to win a prize. The grand prize includes dinner for two and a one-night stay at Thorold's Keefer Mansion Inn to relax after all that pedalling.

There may even be bike lanes you can take to get there.

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