

Eau Claire Bike/Ped Times

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Local News

New Chippewa River Crossing

Construction of the new Hwy 29 south of Chippewa Falls will be complete this fall and for all those who thought, "Wouldn't it be great if there was a way to cross the Chippewa River between Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls – your wish is coming true. WDNR has awarded a grant to the Village of Lake Hallie to build a multi-use trail linking the Chippewa River Bridge on Hwy 29 to the Old Abe trail using 40th Avenue. Completion dates are still sketchy at this point but it seems safe to plan for the crossing to be available in 2006!

Clairemont Ave Bridge Progressing but Trail Won't Open on Time

A recent conversation with DOT brought the bad news: The Chippewa River Trail will not be ready to open on July 5th. Lunda Construction is on schedule but a delay is being created by the City of Eau Claire because of a sanitary sewer pipe laid on the railroad trestle. Until this pipe is moved, the stairs leading from the south bank to the trail and the trail itself won't be opened. DOT said the delay will be at least one week and possibly longer.

Altoona Bike Paths

The City of Altoona is working to expand its trail network. Three new segments are proposed to be added. The first starts at the intersection of 10th Street and extends along Lake Street to South Beach Drive. The second will connect Centennial Park to Valmont Ave using on- and off-street segments. The third will be more of a nature/hiking trail and will provide access to Otter Creek.

Why Won't That Red Light Change For Me?

Signalized intersections can be a source of frustration for bicyclists when the sensors do not detect bicycles. Many intersections are designed to give preferential treatment to the main thoroughfare. A low-volume side street or a left-turn lane is only given a green light when a sensor detects a waiting vehicle. These sensors use an inductive loop buried in the pavement to detect the

presence of a metal object. If their sensitivity is too low, these sensors may not detect small vehicles, leaving bicyclists waiting and wondering what to do. Unfortunately this problem can result in cyclists disregarding traffic signals and running red lights. Here are some strategies for dealing with this situation:

-If there are already automobiles waiting at the intersection, there is usually not a problem because they will set off the signal.

-If you are the only vehicle waiting at the intersection, try to position your bicycle to maximize the chance of being detected. Many inductive loops are simple dipole designs which look like large rectangles cut into the pavement. Position the rims of your wheels directly over the left or right side of this rectangle. More information on inductive loop detectors is available at:

<http://www.humantransport.org/bicycledriving/library/signals/green.htm>

-If your bicycle is still not detected, dismount and walk your bicycle over to the crosswalk. Press the crossing button and if it is safe to do so, return your bike to the intersection and wait for the light to change as usual. You can also walk your bike across in the crosswalk using the pedestrian crossing signals. Take note of the intersection that did not detect your bicycle and report it to the city. The sensitivity of the loops can often be increased enough to detect bicycles.

-Resist the urge to run the red light! Since bicyclists are given the same rights and responsibilities as other vehicle users, they should also be considered in the design of signalized intersections. Rather than getting frustrated and running red lights, we can turn our frustration into positive action for all bicyclists by taking note of intersections that are not functioning properly and reporting them to the city.

“Thoughts On Signalized Intersections” submitted by Turner Howard

More Tunnels In Place – Are you Using Them?

The Eau Claire School District says it wants students to take the safest route to school, even if that means going out of their way. After completing a review of intersections it considers hazardous for kids to cross, The ECASD determined it will stop busing kids across Highway 93 at Damon Street and Highway 12 at Vine Street because there are new pedestrian tunnels under the highways. An ECASD representative said they really want families to support using those tunnel areas and not have students crossing at street level on Highway 12 and on Highway 93. Apparently students don't necessarily agree. "We don't use (the tunnels) very much. We skate across the highway when we're going to the mall," said one student. Other issues have been raised about the safety and condition of the tunnel along Keith Street at Memorial High School and the tunnel along Riverside Drive under the North Crossing. There are rumblings about a tunnel being placed under Hastings Way when the new Waterford project goes in and CVTC is apparently floating the idea for a replacement to the pedestrian bridge. So what's your take on the matter? Are tunnels a great asset or colossal nightmare? Are some designed better than others? Which tunnels are you using

and which do you avoid? If you have comments – email bhndrsn@hotmail.com and put “tunnels” in the subject line. We’ll compile your thoughts and put ‘em in a following issue of “the Times...”

State News

The Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin... Making Wisconsin a better place to bicycle!

Mark your calendar, challenge yourself, and come join the fun! Sunday, September 18, 2005; Cedarburg, Wisconsin

Hundreds of groups use bicycle rides as a means to raise funds. But these rides are only possible because Wisconsin is a great place to bicycle. The Bicycle Federation is making sure that Wisconsin stays a great place to bicycle by working to ensure bicycling is a viable, healthy, and environmentally sustainable means of transportation, recreation, and sport. BFW provides bicyclists of all ages with information on recreational rides, safety tips, and commuting skills while educating decision makers about the importance of bicycling to our communities.

Your participation in the Cedarburg fund raising ride will help BFW accomplish these goals.

Registration in the event includes parking, an event t-shirt, coupons for the Wine and Harvest Festival (occurring on the same day), support wagons, and rest stop refreshments.

You can download a registration form at http://www.bfw.org/new_bfw/events/BikeforWisconsin_registration.php or call 608-251-4456 to have one mailed to you.

MORE INFORMATION: Contact the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin P.O. Box 1224, Madison, WI 53701-1224 Ali Dwyer, ali@bfw.org, 608-251-4456

National News

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING BILL MOVES INTO CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

On May 17, 2005 the Senate passed SAFETEA - a bill to reauthorize

Federal transportation programs - by an overwhelming majority. Immediately prior to passage of the bill, an effort to reduce overall funding by \$11bn by slashing funds for transportation enhancements, congestion relief and transit programs was defeated decisively by 86-14. The Senate action paves the way for the final stage of reauthorization: a conference committee to resolve the differences between the House and Senate bills. There's good news for bicyclists in both bills, including:

- Core funding for bicycle projects remains intact and at slightly higher funding levels than in previous years

- Both bills include creation of a new Safe Routes to School program; the only issue is the level of funding. The House bill has \$875 million over five years, the Senate has \$312 million

The Senate bill would ensure 13% of safety construction funds nationwide are spent improving the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.

For more information, keep visiting www.bikeleague.org and www.americabikes.org.

Completely Different

Cyclists Stage Naked Demonstrations in London, Madrid Against Over-Use of Cars

LONDON — Hundreds of naked cyclists staged demonstrations Saturday to protest the West's dependence on gas-guzzling cars -- and to push for more use of bicycles.

The organizers of World Naked Bike Ride 2005 said protests were expected in a number of countries, including Australia, Canada, the United States, Ireland, Italy, Latvia and Israel.

In London, crowds gathered to watch as about 100 cyclists left Hyde Park Corner on a journey that took them past some of the capital's most famous landmarks.

Most of the riders had stripped naked for the 6-mile (10-kilometer) ride past Piccadilly Circus, Big Ben, Covent Garden, Oxford Street and the U.S. Embassy.

Some bikes carried banners reading "Oil is not a bare necessity but a crude obsession" and "Support the trade justice movement."

"It's a protest against oil dependency and car culture and the overuse of cars for unnecessary reasons," said Chad Neilson, 24, from north London, who was one of the organizers.

"There is too much pollution. It stinks in London, and we use too much fossil fuel."

In the Spanish capital, Madrid, dozens of nude cyclists pedaled along major thoroughfares past famous landmarks, drawing surprised looks.

Most were men, naked except for shoes and helmets, or caps to fend off the hot Spanish sun.

"What we clearly want to show is that we feel naked against the traffic," said an organizer who gave only his first name, Javier. "Every day we have to put up with the traffic, the aggression of the drivers, their speed and bad manners."