The Quarterly Newsletter of the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota

Safe Routes to School Going Strong Across the State
by Michelle Breidenbach, SRTS Education Coordinator

Safe Routes to School is going strong across the state! With encouragement, evaluation, enforcement, engineering and education making it possible for more kids to walk and bike to and from school as well as around their community safely, the demand for bike education and infrastructure to improve conditions for youth to bike and walk to school is far greater than available funding allows us to meet. However, BikeMN is prepared to meet additional requests, if funding levels for this critically important youth program are increased.

In the last year and a half our Walk! Bike! Fun! curriculum trainings have been as far north as Duluth, as far south as Worthington, as far west as Moorhead and as far east as Lake City, and we’ve held 16 total trainings. The WBF curriculum is now being used in more than 75 school districts and communities, by more than 200 educators across the state, which impacts the lives of more than 10,000 kids. The participants in our training are excited to get back to their schools and communities to share their new knowledge about riding on the road and their new confidence in teaching pedestrian and bicycle safety education. We ask to hear from these educators after they have used the curriculum with students. We get some really great stories back, like this one from a Minneapolis Public Schools fifth grader:

“I really liked the part when we took pictures at the lake, and I’m happy because we’re not polluting the world like in other field trips where you take a bus and go somewhere. I never knew that exercise was so much fun. Now I want to ride my bike every day.”

We also spread the word about WBF via webinars, presentations at conferences and meetings for physical education teachers, community education directors, school principals and everyone in the state – at the State Fair! At the Minnesota Education conference, we with approximately 10,000 educators who came to learn the latest and greatest educational tools and techniques.

Meet the Fleet!
by CJ Lindor, Education Specialist

As the BikeMN fleet prepares to roll out for its first full summer of usage, we wanted to take the opportunity to highlight some of the efforts BikeMN and partners are now able to realize, as well as some possibilities for others to utilize this awesome new resource. Last summer, we began to acquire 40 size-adjustable bikes from Bike Friday, which were designed specifically for use with Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs. They are stored and transported in our awesome van (pictured below) and trailer. The main purpose of this fleet is to provide communities and organizations access to safe and reliable bikes for bike education and encouragement events.

The fleet has been and will be used by a variety of groups and events across the state—we’re glad to work with anybody interested in providing bike education in their community! The types of events include Walk! Bike! Fun! trainings, bike rodeos, Open Streets events, activity fairs and of course classroom instruction. Priority is given to those who are implementing WBF lessons or who commit to completing this training and bringing this curriculum to their community. The fleet is also available for rental when it is not otherwise scheduled.

The fleet is also available for rental when it is not otherwise scheduled. It’s worth mentioning with gratitude that much of this work is made possible thanks to contracts we have with the Minnesota Department of Transportation as part of the SRTS program. We believe this is an important investment for the future health, safety and vitality of our whole state and want to thank all the advocates who have worked to make this a funding priority. We hope that you share this belief and let our leaders know how much you value their support!
The legislative session ended on time Monday, May 18 with nobody getting their top priorities and a special session looming. But, there is some good policy news to share with BikeMN members and stakeholders, even if there isn’t new funding for biking and walking.

First, the public safety finance and policy bill includes the BikeMN-supported “vulnerable user” language, which increases the penalty for causing a fatality or serious injury while committing a reckless driving offense from a misdemeanor to a gross misdemeanor. We will work with our partners to build a campaign around the new law that focuses on the national Vision Zero Initiative, which emphasizes the serious consequences of irresponsible driving.

There is also some good news related to the “lights on” transportation bill (S.F. 1647) that was passed. The final conference committee report that passed includes policy language that directs the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to revise the road design standards that local governments are held to when spending money from the Highway Trust Fund/gas tax. The revisions will make them consistent with MnDOT road standards, which offer more flexibility. We hope the new standards will allow more local control and flexibility, especially related to driving- and parking-lane width and adding room for bike lanes! This change also brings many other Complete Streets benefits to communities. BikeMN will monitor and participate in the process to develop the new standards, to make sure.

Also, we’re ecstatic that the $500,000 funding per year for the state Safe Routes to School program remains intact. That likely means that BikeMN will continue to be funded for implementation of the Walk! Bike! Fun! bicycle safety curriculum. Funding for the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) was also renewed, meaning BikeMN’s partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health will endure and that we will have the same level of support to provide cities and towns the help and resources they need to become more bicycle friendly. Many are asking for our help.

I was at the Capitol a lot this session talking to legislators, educating staffers, and working with BikeMN lobbyists to advocate for bikes. There were many things that led to the challenging end of session this year. I don’t think it ended the way anyone had planned. That said, I am happy that we made real and impactful policy change, and we’re already making plans for next year! I really think that the best way to make change is to keep working at the local level to implement programs and build support one community, one county at a time. That is, of course, where you come in. Please let us know if there are any opportunities to work in your community.

Finally, we owe a very heartfelt thank you to Senator Scott Dibble, transportation committee chair. He was the champion of Move Minnesota’s comprehensive, multi-modal (including bike/walk) and sustainable transportation funding package and turned it into the Senate’s top priority. We also owe thanks to the many Republican and DFL representatives and senators that authored the funding and policy bills mentioned above. Thanks are also due to the Move Minnesota coalition partners for including non-motorized transportation as part of their comprehensive package; the mayors of Rochester, Duluth, Moorhead, Bemidji, Willmar and Grand Marais for authoring published opinion pieces in support of bike and pedestrian inclusion in transportation funding; and the Minnesotans for Healthy Kids Coalition for lending their clout and for their unwavering support. Thanks also to the Complete Streets gang, county attorneys, Minnesotans for Safe Driving and American Bikers for Awareness, Training, and Education (ABATE) for their help and support of the policy bills. Lastly, but not least, thanks to BikeMN lobbyists Vic Moore and Joe Olson. We would not have been successful without them on the front lines!

“People want their loved 8-year-olds and 80-year-olds to be able to safely negotiate their communities via walking and bicycling.”
Thank You, BikeMN Board Members

Kelly Corbin of Rochester was voted in as BikeMN’s newest board member at our Annual Meeting on May 3, 2015. We’re so excited to welcome her to the team, and we want to take this chance to introduce her to our readers. But first, we must say farewell to the dedicated BikeMN board members who have reached the end of their terms: Tom Engstrom, Lisa Luokkola and Kayla Rossiter. We want to thank them on behalf of the whole BikeMN team and all members for their dedicated service and commitment to bicycle advocacy. They have helped to pave the way for new board members who will carry on their legacy.

We caught up with Kelly to talk to her a bit more about biking and learn about what motivated her to be a part of BikeMN’s board of directors.

**What inspired you to be on the BikeMN Board?**

It’s been so helpful receiving Technical Assistance from the Bike MN team over the past five years. Their knowledge and energy is truly inspiring! Without their help we wouldn’t have bike education in schools, a bike coalition in Rochester, local League Cycling Instructors and so on. Since they have helped me so much with my work in Rochester, I thought joining the board would be a way I could give back to the organization to show my gratitude.

**What role do you play in Rochester and southeastern Minnesota as a bike advocate?**

I started the “We Bike Rochester” coalition last year and we are starting to make positive changes in the Med City! We have some key “grass tops” leaders in our community who are helping us pass policies, bike plans and make infrastructure changes. However, they need an organized group of advocates to show their support for these changes—and that’s our goal. We’ve also heard from city council they’d like to see more education for bicyclists and car drivers on how to share the road. Taking their instruction to heart, we are at many community events doing educating at booths, bike rodeos whenever possible, and offering presentations to work sites, volunteer organizations and through Traffic Skills 101 others classes.

**Do you have a favorite bike-related project?**

Helping the Rochester Public Library’s Book Bike program this spring! I saw what Boston Library was doing on social media and shared it with some library friends in the fall. Next thing I know, we are meeting and writing grants to make it happen with the help of some fantastic bike commuters and advocates within the Library. The Book Bike has been a great tool for us to talk about bikes as a transportation option in Rochester.

**Outside of cycling, what are some of your hobbies, passions and major things happening in your life?**

My lifelong passion has been figure skating. As a true Minnesotan I started as soon as I could walk, and I continue to compete to this day!Figuring out how to bike commute to the Ice Arena with my skates and gear has been a challenge since I haven’t found too many other bike commuting figure skaters to compare notes with!

I just bought a new house and am in the process of moving! My new location has fewer hills and highways to cross in Rochester so that I can get closer to my goal of not owning a car. Being car-less in Greater Minnesota is bit more of a challenge, but if we design our communities better I hope it can become a more realistic option for many!

Let us help you plan your best summer ever! Actually, make that your best summer AND fall because we’ve got great rides for every type of bicyclist scheduled through October. Mark your calendar for your favorite BikeMN rides and our newest offering, the Headwater to Hills Tour! Learn more about the rides at www.bikemn.org. And remember that BikeMN Members get a discount on all of our rides!

June 20: Train & Trail Tour
All aboard for this one day bike and rail event, hosted in partnership with Metro Transit. The event takes the North Star Commuter Line to Big Lake and follows the Mississippi River Trail bikeway back to Minneapolis. Space is limited! Register at www.bikemn.org/train.

June 27: June Dandy
A casual trail ride to the fair suburb of Hopkins for an afternoon of antiquing! Wear your finest vintage outfit and roll in style with us. Registration includes ride support, a discount card for local businesses and a gift! Learn more at www.bikemn.org/dandy.

July 12: Tour of Saints
It’s not a race. It’s a heavenly little ride! Wend your way along quiet country byways around Saint Joseph and savor treats fresh from the bakery and garden. Register at www.tourofsaints.com.

July 25: Twin Cities Tour de Fat
Bikes, beer and bemusement in Minneapolis’ Loring Park complete with costume parade by bike, a silent auction benefiting BikeMN, music and more! Learn more at www.bikemn.org/TDF.

August 23-September 2: Headwaters to Hills Tour
Jump on this bicycle tour celebrating the Mississippi River and the completion of the Mississippi River Trail bikeway! Visit the communities along the route and camp in style for more than a week. Register at www.bikemn.org/H2H.

September 13: Saint Paul Classic Bike Tour
Traffic-free glee awaits you on Minnesota’s biggest bike tour. This ride is called “Classic” for a reason! Enjoy scenic views, great live music and refreshments to match. Register at www.bikeclassic.org.

October 11: Mankato River Ramble
Enjoy some of the best bicycling Minnesota has to offer on this ride that explores the fall beauty offered by the Minnesota River Valley. Riders will also enjoy live music and tasty local treats. Register at www.bikeriverramble.org.

Headwaters to Hills Tour
This ride is celebrating the completion of the Mississippi River Trail (MRT) in Minnesota! It features the river’s headwaters and more than 800 miles of MRT, with stops in picturesque towns like Walker, Red Wing and Winona. The ride kicks off with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Itasca State Park at the headwaters. There, riders will dip their tires, then begin their journey crisscrossing the Mighty Mississippi. For $600/person for BikeMN members and $650 for non-members, this trip is a summer cyclist’s dream come true. There will be two rest stops each day with fruit, snacks and water, and a hearty dinner in the evening. The ride also offers SAG support, gear transfer, bike transfer, speakers and entertainment each evening—more! This ride is offered in partnership with MnDOT and Wahoo! Adventures. Register at www.bikemn.org/H2H.

A Note from the Artist
Saint Paul-based illustrator Roberta Avidor was chosen to be the artist for this year’s Saint Paul Classic ride art that will be featured on t-shirts and on the Ride Guide. Here’s what she had to say about her inspiration for the beautiful artwork: “For the past three years or so, I have been a volunteer at one of the Rest Stops at the Saint Paul Classic. I am always impressed with the liveliness and colorful clothing of the cyclists. Everyone’s in a great mood, and it’s all enhanced by the treats and the music. I wanted to capture it all here.” Thanks, Roberta!
League of American Bicyclists’ Bicycle Friendly AmericaSM program offers states, communities, businesses and universities an opportunity to be nationally recognized as bicycle-friendly. Minnesota was recently recognized as the #2 Bicycle Friendly StateSM (see page 6) in the country, holding strong with this ranking for the fourth year in a row. Minnesota holds claim to two Bicycle Friendly UniversitiesSM (BFU): University of Minnesota (gold status) and Gustavus Adolphus College (bronze status). Students in Moorhead have noticed and want to catch up. Both Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) and Concordia College are working on Bicycle Friendly University applications and intend to pursue recognition from the League of American Bicyclists this fall, with technical assistance support from BikeMN.

Sustainability groups at both MSUM and Concordia College are spearheading efforts on campus to become more bicycle-friendly. On Earth Day, both celebrated bikes by inviting Will Mackaman, member of the Minnesota GreenCorp working as an Active Transportation Coordinator with PartnerSHIP 4 Health, and myself, to participate in their eco-friendly activities on this day.

Earth Day bicycle activities kicked off at Concordia College, with Will and me presenting lightning talks to students and faculty in Knutson Campus Center during lunch. Will spoke about how he fell in love with bikes while studying abroad in Groningen, the Netherlands, and I gave an overview of bicycling in the bronze-level Bicycle Friendly Community of Bemidji that I call home!

“Working with Concordia and MSUM on their bicycling events has been the most fun I have had with a job in a long time," said Will. “The students at both schools and in both environmental clubs are so passionate about the Earth and nature, and I wish I could’ve been that passionate sooner in school. I actually got a bike from that workshop, so that is what I have been using. I mainly bike for fun and to get a little exercise.”

Momentum for bicycling continues to grow in the region. “I grew up around bikes,” said Kim Haley, a Concordia College student majoring in math and chemistry. “My dad has always biked to work no matter the weather. I really started to understand how they worked last summer though. I volunteered a bit at the Fargo Community Bike Shop and learned a lot from doing that. I actually got a bike from that workshop, so that is what I have been using. I mainly bike for fun and to get a little exercise.”

BikeMN is excited to partner with both MSUM and Concordia College in their pursuit of Bicycle Friendly University status. We are looking forward to bringing the new Bike Basics for Students course beyond Moorhead to universities throughout Minnesota to increase confidence and safety for students riding on the roads for a variety of leisure activities and for transportation to work and school!
Congratulations!

Nice work Minnesota, and congratulations to bicycle advocates across the state! It was announced earlier this month that Minnesota has retained its ranking as the second most Bicycle Friendly State in the nation, according to the annual list from the League of American Bicyclists. The state has consistently ranked in the top five since 2008, proving that bicycle infrastructure and initiatives are important in Minnesota.

“This ranking signifies that we continue to move in the right direction,” said Tim Mitchell, Minnesota Department of Transportation Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator. “We still have some work to do to accomplish our collective goal to become the most Bicycle Friendly State, but the efforts and leadership of all the agencies that support bicycling shows we are continually making progress.”

Competition was especially stiff this year. The top five ranked states saw some turnover, although Washington and Minnesota managed to hang on to their positions. In 2015, the five most bicycle friendly states in the United States are:

1. Washington
2. Minnesota
3. Delaware (Up from #4 in 2014)
4. Massachusetts (Big jump from #10 in 2014)
5. Utah (Up from #8 in 2014)

These rankings prove that being a Bicycle Friendly State takes ongoing work and effort. Thank you to all of the bicycle advocates across the state who are proving to the nation that Minnesota is THE place to bike! Learn more about these rankings and read more detailed scorecards at www.bikeleague.org.

Get to Know the Latest Bicycle Friendly Businesses in the Land of 10,000 Lakes

Six new Minnesota companies have been recognized as a Bicycle Friendly Business (BFB) by the League of American Bicyclists. Now our state boasts 68 total BFBs! Once again, Duluth had a great showing and claimed half of our state’s BFB awards. Three more came from greater Minnesota. And, last but not least, Minnesota’s only Gold BFB award this round came from the heart of South Minneapolis. With the new and renewing BFB awardees, a whopping 75,000 Minnesotans can proudly say they work for a Bicycle Friendly Business. We can’t wait to see who is on the list after the next round of BFBs is announced in the Fall! Check out the full list of BFBs across the state at www.bikemn.org/BFB.

Newest Awardees:
Freewheel Bike in Minneapolis - Gold
Western Lake Superior Sanitation District in Duluth - Silver
Ringdahl Ambulance, Fergus Falls - Silver (Up from Bronze)
Northern Cycle in Bemidji - Bronze
Arrowhead Regional Dev Commission in Duluth - Bronze
Community Action Duluth - Bronze
Saturn Systems Software Engineering in Duluth - Bronze
Rochester IBM - Bronze (Renewal)

Honorable Mentions:
The City of Duluth
Duluth Transit Authority
Jefferson People’s House
Kraus-Anderson Construction
St. Louis County
Whole Foods Co-Op
Zeigeist Arts
The Travelers Companies

BFB Spotlight

Getting to Freewheel Bike’s Midtown Bike Center in South Minneapolis can be a bit of a challenge. If you’re traveling by car, that is. The entrance to the bicycling hub is on the Midtown Greenway, a multi-use trail that is closed to motorized traffic and extends for more than five miles, much of it below street level in a re-purposed rail corridor.

As brazen as the choice of location may be, Freewheel Bike is always bustling with commuters, club riders and helmet-clad kiddos who visit for tune-ups, bike storage or a hot mug of Peace Coffee at the in-house Coaster Brake Café. (It also happens to house the public office of BikeMN!)

“The bike center model is great because it anchors the cycling community,” says Sean Collins, Mobile Operations Manager at Freewheel. “We have facilities for customers and staff, including the rental shop, the public showers and locker rooms. It gives a place for people to come and enjoy cycling.”
THANK YOU!

Thanks to everyone who attended and supported BikeMN’s Annual Meeting on May 3. We enjoyed a lovely group bike ride and great conversations! Congratulations to the winners of the Minnesota Bicycling Awards.

**LCI of the Year:** Pete Connor of Owatonna

**Bicycle Friendly Business Champion:** Shawna MullenEardley of Duluth

**Bicycle Friendly Community Champion:** Greater Mankato Bike & Walk Advocates

These individuals and groups were nominated by individuals from across the state and were recognized at the BikeMN Annual Meeting and Awards Presentation emceed by Skip Humphrey. Read more about them at www.bikemn.org/blog.

We extend our deep gratitude to all the members, donors, volunteers and supporters who make BikeMN a great and effective organization. The list below represents contributors between mid-January and mid-April.

**Bike Shop Members $50**
- Gear West of Long Lake
- Rydjer Bike of Austin

**Sustaining Monthly Members**
- Carl and Mary Tuttle
- Charles and Sherry Townsend
- Daniel Mettner
- John Johnston III and Ellen Hale
- Larry Clark
- Lisa Austin and Jim Reimer
- Mark Bayuk
- Michael Fuhrman
- Paul and Julie Teske
- Rick and Judy Kindseth
- Sage Dahlen
- Thomas and Katherine Kottke

**Aluminum Level $500 - $999**
- Chris Kimber and Lori Walker
- Kristan and Fred Rice
- Mike Beadles
- Miriam Simmons and James Schenz
- Samuel Thillen
- Sarah Johnson
- Seth Nesselhuf
- Tim and Noreen Farrell
- Todd and Jeannette Sample

**Century Level $100 - $249**
- Bab and Gary Strademo
- Bob Nesheim and Marlys Johnson
- Candy and David Kragthorpe
- Claire Stokes
- Dale Hammerschmidt and Mary Ameson
- Darren and Debbie Drosky
- David and Elizabeth Murphy
- David Wilson
- Elizabeth Walton and Mark Wright
- Jeff Ricker
- John and Diane Herman
- John and Lisa Daniels

**Individual & Household Levels $30 - $49**
- Abraham and Sara Welle
- Amy Brugh
- Andrea Flohr and John Pfluger
- Barb and Paul Schlaefer
- Barb Huibregtsen
- Beth Gauper and Torsten Muller

**Buck-a-Week Level $52 - $99**
- Bradley Crosby
- David Koehler and Nancy Dunnigan
- Gabriella Tsurutani
- Gary Krupp
- Jill and Jonathan Lord
- Jon Bornmann and Gretchen Harris
- Judd Zandstra
- Karen Becbuck
- Konnie Gurung
- Marjorie Kelly
- Penny and Michael Schomaker
- Roger Miller and Mary Zweber
- Steve and Kay Cook
- Virginia Kopp
- Deborah Frishberg
- John and Yvette Oldendorf

**Student & Senior Levels $20**
- Alison and David Edgerton
- Andru Peters
- Bill Corty
- Carolyn Olson
- Clareyse Nelson
- Dale Ragan
- David Gepner
- Donna and John Rotschafer
- Dylan Galos
- Eric Berg
- Gregory and Mina Leierwood
- Jane Odgers
- John Florin
- John Grimsley
- Larry and Ardell Narveson
- Maery Rose
- Marieth Lundeen
- Mel and Judith Knops
- Steve Medin
- Thomas Emme

**Educator of the Year:** Brooklyn Center Secondary School

**Advocate of the Year:** Saint Paul Women on Bikes

Want to add your name to this list? Find a donation form on the back of this newsletter or donate safely and securely online at www.bikemn.org/JoinRenew. Consider supporting bicycling all year round with a sustaining monthly contribution!
**Ride for less:** The BikeMN Member card gives you a discount on all of our fun events. The benefits now include $7 off the Saint Paul Classic Bike Tour per member. BikeMN Members also get $5 off the Mankato River Ramble, Tour of Saints, Train & Trail Tour, Bike Summit on Capitol Hill and more! New this year is a $50 discount on the inaugural Headwaters to Hills tour.

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**Local deals:** Bike shops and businesses around Minnesota value BikeMN members as customers. Many offer a discount if you flash your member card!

**Member premiums:** We send thank-you gifts for various levels of contribution. These change all the time, but include books, art and vouchers for free classes.

**Be heard:** With a BikeMN Membership you have an ear at the State Capitol for all of your bicycle-related political ideas and concerns.

**And more:** Visit www.bikemn.org/membersonly for our ever-growing list of benefits.

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**Membership and Donation Form**

Make a donation to Minnesota’s only statewide bicycle advocacy organization, and a week later an envelope will arrive in your mailbox with a brand new BikeMN Member card. You might post it on the refrigerator door, cram it in your wallet or forget it at the bottom of your purse. But, really, what is it good for?

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