

Upshift Fall 2015

Ride Illinois

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Glencoe, IL - An autumn view of a biker riding on the North Branch Trail Addition, a Forest Preserve District of Cook County extension from Chicago Botanic Garden to the Green Bay Trail.

Photographer: Michael Heimlich



Dear Members and Supporters,

Since 1992, our organization has been dedicated to one mission—to improve bicycling conditions around the state so that more people can safely and easily ride in Illinois. Over the years, we have evolved from a state chapter of the League of American Bicyclists to an independent organization with a strong advocacy voice in Springfield and municipalities all around the state. In that time, our membership has increased from a few hundred people to more than 2,200 Illinois residents thanks to your support!

Today, we are excited to introduce ourselves as Ride Illinois. It's a name that reflects the growing popularity of bicycling statewide and aligns a broad range of people with our mission. It's a name that clearly demonstrates what happens when our work succeeds and bicycling becomes safer and more accessible across the state. It's an action-oriented name that embodies the goal of our organization and will inspire everyone who rides a bike to Ride Illinois.

Our mission remains the same, and we will continue to work for more bike friendly roads and trails, more favorable policies and legislation, and more education on sharing our roads safely. Our new name positions us for future growth and inspire stronger support from new partners—individuals, businesses, peer organizations, and communities across the state. We also hope that this exciting change strengthens your interest in our mission, and that we can continue to count on your loyal support!

We will continue to work statewide for better bicycling, so you can get out there and Ride Illinois!

Sincerely,



Frank Brummer
President,
Board of Directors



Ed Barsotti
Executive Director

Check out the new Ride Illinois website!

We've launched a new website that complements our new name and logo, and offers us better opportunity to visually showcase how people throughout our state Ride Illinois! Join us at www.rideillinois.org and explore our news, resources, events, and learn more about what we're doing to make Illinois a more bicycle-friendly state.

Matching Gift Challenge

This December, every new membership received or membership renewed at a higher level will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$7,000 by our Board of Directors.

Join or renew online at www.rideillinois.org!

Illinois Bike Summit - A Great Success

One of Ride Illinois' strategies to make biking better in our state is to provide advocates and local/state agencies with information on how to do so. Whether it's providing direct assistance to a town, offering strategic guidance to local advocates, or presenting at seminars and conferences, sharing the whys and hows is a critical component in making Illinois more bike friendly.





The Illinois Bike Summit is a major event connecting advocates and professionals with best practices, inspiring examples, and others whose experience and expertise can help them.

This year's summit, organized by Ride Illinois and Champaign County Bikes, was held on October 28 in Champaign. The fourth in a series, the 2015 version offered a wider range of topic options than ever before.

At the summit, Ride Illinois presented awards to IDOT District 7, the Friends of the Cal-Sag Trail, and the City of Warrenville. Champaign County Bikes also hosted a series of less-formal "coffee talks" on a set of niche topics in bicycling.

The following day, both organizations also co-hosted a full-day, national training on the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide. The guide describes best practices of building a variety of bikeway treatments, including new types. While developed by larger, urban cities, the guide and training can help professional engineers and planners in other contexts, too.

"The Summit is always a great opportunity to learn from and network with others," said Ride Illinois Executive Director Ed Barsotti.

Special thanks to our many sponsors for helping make the event possible: Freeman Kevenides Law, University of Illinois, Alta Planning + Design, Christopher B. Burke Engineering, City of Champaign, Forest Preserve Friends Foundation Champaign County, Sam Schwartz Engineering, Farnsworth Group, Toole Design Group, TY Lin International Group, City of Urbana, Prairie Cycle Club, General Dacey Trail, and Champaign Cycle.

Scheduled sessions included:

- Local Bike Planning Basics: Products and Process
- Child Bicycle Education: Curricula and Facilities
- The Benefits of Trail Tourism and Cultivating a Culture of Hospitality
- Advocacy Leadership Development
- Protected Bike Lanes and Neighborhood Greenways
- Using BikeSafetyQuiz.com in your Town
- Winning a Grant for your Trail/Bikeway and Implementing It
- Bicycle Law Maintenance: When the Rules of the Road Need a Tune Up
- Complete Streets Tools and Implementation
- The Dazzling Dozen: 12 Best Bicycle Friendly Initiatives
- Every Bike Counts! Bike Counts, Censuses, and Surveys
- E-bikes are coming!
- IDOT's Complete Streets Policy
- Community Bicycle Workshops
- Two Bike Maps Makers Make Their Case:
 The Future of Paper and Electronic Maps

Presentations from our slate of over 25 speakers will be available on rideillinois.org.

IDOT District 7 Recognized with the Ride Illinois Project Award

Congratulations to Illinois Department of Transportation District 7 on receiving the Ride Illinois' Project Award! The district was honored for the bicyclist and pedestrian bridge constructed over Interstate 57/70 in Effingham last fall. The project cost approximately \$1.8 million and included the 16-feet-wide, 264-feet-long bridge as well as a half-mile of trail leading up to it.





IDOT constructed the bridge which crosses over six lanes of interstate traffic, connects to the current trail system near Outer Belt West, and provides access onto West Fayette Avenue.

Miles of trail have been built west of Effingham. However, Interstate 57/70 lies between the trail and the community. "The interstate served as a barrier to the trail. Many local residents would have to drive to the trail and then ride," said Ride Illinois Executive Director Ed Barsotti. "IDOT saw that a bridge over the interstate would be a great way to connect the trail to the community."

Additionally, the bicyclist/pedestrian bridge was constructed away from the interstate intersection and on/off ramps to create a safe path for users. "For the first time, our residents can safely cross the interstate and bike on both sides of the county. The positive impact of the bridge is very evident," said Frank Brummer, Ride Illinois Board President and Board President for Trail Recreation Effingham County (TREC).

Input from TREC was one of the reasons that the bridge was constructed as a separate structure from the bridge that carries vehicles over the interstate according to Mike Fox, supervising field engineer with IDOT. "The location is a little more wooded and nicer to ride through. We know people are using it and it is definitely an attractive structure for our town," said Fox.

"I am really incredibly proud of the progressive thinking and the cooperation that comes out of IDOT District 7. They are very deserving of this award," said Brummer.

Warrenville presented with the Ride Illinois Initiative Award

Congratulations to the city of Warrenville! They were honored with the Initiative Award for their perseverance in becoming a Bicycle Friendly Community.

This summer, Warrenville was awarded the Bronze level designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) by the League of American Bicyclists. The Bicycle Friendly America program provides incentives, hands-on assistance, and award recognition for communities, universities, and businesses that actively support bicycling. They

also rank states annually based on their level of bike-friendliness, and Illinois now has a dozen BFC's.

The application process to become a Bicycle Friendly Community can be lengthy and challenging, and Ride Illinois has helped several communities with their applications.

Warrenville's process was assuredly not easy, as the small



Chicago suburb received several Honorable Mentions before finally receiving the award. It took the community approximately ten years, first applying to become a BFC in 2008, Warrenville planner Ginny McIntosh explained.

The city of Warrenville decided to apply for the Bicycle Friendly

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Community designation "to both enrich and promote fitness in our city," McIntosh said. "In addition, attaining BFC designation was a specific goal by the City Council, and was rooted in the formation of our Bicyclist and Pedestrian Advisory Commission." The city's bicyclist and pedestrian advisory commission was created in 2006 and meets monthly. The city also created a bikeway implementation plan that was originally adopted in 2008 and updated in 2010.

Warrenville is a small city with a population just over 13,000 and spans 5.5 square miles. "The application was geared towards larger communities and we had to learn how it applied to communities the size of Warrenville," McIntosh said. Ride Illinois provided guidance along the way. "Each time our city applied, Ride Illinois provided feedback on what priorities and plans we needed to focus on," McIntosh said.

Ride Illinois staff, most notably Executive Director Ed Barsotti, has been involved with reviewing the city's infrastructure, particularly when officials were applying for grants and suggesting bicyclefriendly features, such as bike lanes. He also worked with the Warrenville police department to educate local officers about the state laws pertaining to bicyclists.

Warrenville is a terrific example of how a small town with perseverance can achieve the Bicycle Friendly Community status. "For a small community with a small staff, a coordinated group effort is necessary. Since 2008, the city worked to institute many of the suggestions Ride Illinois provided, so each year there was more to reference on the application. A bike plan takes time to implement, so patience is necessary."

Friends of the Cal-Sag Trail receive the Ride Illinois Partnership Award

The Friends of the Cal-Sag Trail, headed by Trails for Illinois Executive Director Steve Buchtel, accomplished quite a feat in creating the new trail that spans 26 miles from Lemont to Burnham, especially considering the sheer number of different entities involved.

The Friends of the Cal-Sag Trail, headed by Trails for Illinois Executive Director Steve Buchtel, accomplished quite a feat in creating the new trail that spans 26 miles from Lemont to Burnham, especially considering that a dozen different agencies were involved.



"From the beginning, it was a big tent effort," said Steve Buchtel. "From day one, all of the Cal-Sag corridor—residents and agencies—were invited to every meeting and those meetings were always well attended."

The project was jumpstarted by a growing interest in the south suburbs to develop the underutilized riverfront as a way to boost business and residential growth. Funds from Senator Dick Durbin's office were the first to support the Cal-Sag Trail project, and Ride Illinois worked closely with Durbin to secure funding for the initial engineering study.

The Friends of the Cal-Sag Trail organization was able to strategically obtain two main grants for the trail—



one for the west end and one for the east end—as opposed to having each community apply for funding to build their own portion of the trail. "Lots of these big regional trails take twenty years to complete because they have mayors that change, public sentiments that change, and financial resources that change. It's like a chain. You lose one link, you lose the chain," Buchtel said. "Giving all the towns a stake in the same two grants supported their participation and made it a stable and more efficient process."

The trail officially opened this past June with the west end of the trail paved and work continuing on the east end. The trail is expected to be fully complete in 2017.

"The diversity of the areas along this trail is what makes it unique," said Debbie Stoffregen, President of the Friends of the Cal-Sag Trail Board. "The biodiversity, economic diversity and historical significance of the area, make it a destination trail for anyone wanting to see and understand Chicago's southland. This trail has it all."

Thank You to All Our Fiscal Year 2015 Contributors

Ride Illinois thanks the following generous members (including 282 who chose not to be listed), bike clubs, and others for your support from October 2014 through September 2015. Without your help, we would not be able to do our work of improving bicycling in Illinois. We hope you'll continue your support in FY16!

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Garry McGovern	Joe Van Houtte	Lance Beigh	Michael Pritchett	Robert Murray	Thomas Pulver
Gary Carollo	Joel Erickson	Larry Anglada	Michael Quirk	Robert Noe Robert Oakleaf	Thomas Repede
Gary Hermanek	John Connell	Larry Frank	Michael Romanco	Robert Preuss	Thomas Rozanski
Gary Koester	John Craven	Larry Gitchell	Michael Root	Robert Secor	Thomas Sawczuk
Gary Vicari	John D'Ambrose	Larry Jackson	Michael Stewart	Robert Tesar	Thomas Witt
Gary Watson	John Elliott	Larry Sears	Michael Walczak	Robin Saydek	Tim Corcoran
George and Sandy Burrier	John Fuhrmann	Larry Smith	Michael Wilner	Roger Hitchings	Tim Jacobson
George Capps	John Hamby	Larry Wexler	Michele Poradzisz	Roger Pomerance	Tim Marty
George Mann	John Kinyon	Lawrence Griffin	Mike Childress	Ron Dierks	Todd Cagnoni - City of Rockford
George Vickers	John Knoepfle	Leann Whalen	Mike Cichon	Ron Himmelman	Todd Dahlquist
Gerald Schmitz	John Magney	Len Pollak	Mike Intravartolo	Ron Kapper	Todd Stocke
Gerry Mueller	John McKee	Leon Malone	Mike Loomis	Ronald Eash	Tom Callum
Gina Kenny	John Muhr	Leon Ungier	Mike Sinner	Ronald Harrelson	Tom Dickman
Ginny Luptak	John Rudnicki	Leonard Jefferson	Mitchell Polonsky	Ross Bogue	Tom Gerschick
Ginny Raths	John Saarima	Les Warden	Mitchell Pomper	Rudolf Habben	Tom Knorring
Gonzalo Andino	John Sanders	Leslie Gordon	Nancy Martin	Russell Krochock	Tom Wolf
Grand Schwinn Cyclery	John Sanford	Leslie Scott	Nancy Nesyto-Freske	Ryan Handley	Tony Knepper
Greg Davis	John Schuller	Linda Herrmann	Nancy Walsh	Salvador Ortiz	Tracy Hall
Greg Liebman	John Slater	Linda Warner	Neil Blackstone	Sam Betar	Troy Kitner
Greg O'Brien	John Stark	Linnea Myers	Neil Maloney	Sandra Brown	Victoria Graves
Gregory Nash	John Underwood	Litchfield Tourism	Norm Iverson	Scott Chisholm	Victoria McAdams
Gregory Wheeler	Jon Bierman	Lou McMurray	Patricia Barker	Scott Schaedel	Walter Slazyk
Hal Carlson	Jose Ramirez	Lynn Hollahan	Patricia Cline	Seth Stein	Walter Wermuth
Hal Fine	Joseph Bonus	Lynn Welch	Patrick Gannon	Shelby Bernard	Wayne Mikes
Hal Tarr	Joseph Pasteris	Lynne Gallucci	Patton Feichter	Shirley Jayne	Wayne Pond
Harv Koplo	Josh Rezba	Marc Stoskal	Paul Danko	Sid Frankel	Will Heelan
Henry Stawarski	Joshua Locher	Marcelino Rosales	Paul Gearen	Stacey DeLorenzo	William Austin
Inge Nicklaus	June Jacque	Margaret Bertucco	Paul Mueller	Stephanie Applebaum	William Baltutis
Irwin Katz	Kane DOT	Marian Kneer	Pete Viehweg	Stephanie Olson	William Mattingly
Jack Grott	Karen Hauser	Mario Benavidez	Peter Bell	Stephen Fisher	Willis Bowser
Jack Nevin	Karen Kiley	Mark and Roxanne Junge	Peter Burns	Stephen Foust	Z Tour
James Bryniarski	Karen Schenkenfelder	Mark Bitterman	Peter Lemmon	Stephen Grube	
James Daley	Karen Schwartz	Mark Ellickson	Peter Sherer	Steve Arendas	

Registration open for 2016 Grand Illinois Trail and Parks Bike Tour



Join us for the 14th annual Grand Illinois Trail and Parks Bike Tour from June 12-17, 2016! This year's route will cover almost entirely new ground, highlighting some of the best sections and attractions of the Illinois' Route 66 Trail. Also known as the "Mother Road," the Route 66 Trail is an international draw for bike tourists. This unforgettable six-day ride will be making a loop starting and ending in Coal City, with stops in Oglesby, Washington, Bloomington-Normal (two nights), and Pontiac.

Each day's ride offers a basic route and a longer option, on quiet rural roads and some trails. Basic daily route distances range from 43 to 64 miles, with an average of 50. Longer route options are up



to 70-80 miles. The fourth day will be a layover day, during which riders may ride the Constitution Trail and the Route 66 Trail, explore Bloomington-Normal, or just rest.

There will be plenty of time each day to explore and enjoy the small towns and attractions along the route and in our overnight host towns.

Most riders camp, but a motel option is available for an additional cost. Overnight group camping will be at Oglesby's Lehigh Park, Washington High School, Comlara County Park north of Bloomington-Normal, and Chatauqua Park in Pontiac. Motels will be nearby, with riding distances within 1-2 miles shorter or longer than campers' distances each day.

GITAP is a relatively small ride with friendly riders, leading to many returning customers renewing friendships each year. This year's registration will be capped at 225
—so don't wait too long to sign up!

For those who have considered bike touring, GITAP is a great taste of why so many people enjoy touring by bike. "This is a very achievable tour with reasonable route distances and terrain," said Ride Illinois Executive Director Ed Barsotti. Additionally, your luggage is transported to the next site while you ride. "You just have to enjoy the day of biking," Barsotti said. Catered breakfasts and dinners are provided, with lunch on your own along the route.

Our optional nightly Velosophie program, with discussions about interesting bicycling-related literature, will return once again to this year's GITAP. GITAP is conducted by Ride Illinois with assistance from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Explore the Grand Illinois Trail with our newly updated guide!

Ride Illinois and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources have partnered to produce an updated guide to help you plan your next long distance trip along the Grand <u>Illinois Trail.</u>

The trail makes a 535-mile loop from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi and back across the state along the Illinois River and Hennepin Canal.

The guide divides the trail into ten segments, each with a map, cue sheet, and listing of local features, accommodations, food, and bike repair.

The guide is available to download for free at www.rideillinois.org.

GITAP Ride Director Chuck Oestreich retires



After 13 years at the helm of the Grand Illinois Trail and Parks Bike Tour, Chuck Oestreich is putting down his checklist as Ride Director. Back in 2002, Chuck came up with the idea of the weeklong bicycle tour. The ride would benefit the tiny League of Illinois Bicyclists (now Ride Illinois) organization, for which he served as board member and Secretary for two decades.

GITAP relied heavily on Chuck's skills of handling hundreds of details. But just as important was his effervescent, down-to-earth personality. From making a rainy ride day brighter, to joining the Guys and Dolls cast one GITAP evening, to deftly handling a raccoon in his tent—Chuck's self-deprecating humor and eternally optimistic style truly made GITAP a success.

Best wishes to Chuck, in his "second" retirement! We look forward to seeing him at GITAP 2016 as evening meeting emcee!

Meet our Three Newest Board Members

Perry Knop



What I do:
I am a political
science professor
at John A Logan
Community
College in
Carterville and
have taught
political science
courses for over
25 years.

What I tell my students about biking:

When I introduce myself to students at the beginning of the year I always talk about my passion for cycling and that I ride a lot for an old guy. But most importantly, I tell them that I still feel like a kid every time I get on a bike!

My favorite biking experience:

Being able to ride with my wife, Sheila Simon, on a regular basis. In 1997, Sheila and I took a two week biking trip in Tuscany Italy. We have been constant biking companions since.

Inspiring book that I have read:

The most inspiring book I have read in the last year is Believer by David Axelrod. The book is about David's journey through politics in Illinois and how that trip prepared him for Barack Obama's presidential campaign in 2008. David worked on Paul Simon's 1984 U.S. Senate campaign and when Paul (Sheila's father) ran for president in 1988.

Deborah Renville



What I Do:
I am an English
professor at
Kankakee
Community
College. I also work
part-time at the
local bike shop,
Tern of the Wheel.

Names of bikes:

I have a Trek

Multitrack 700 named Stella, a Trek Lexa S named Lexi, Surly Straggler named Greta, Trek Domane named Chelsea, Salsa Mukluk named Artemis, Dahon Speed P8 named Dora, and I'm working on building up a vintage Bianchi.

Why I decided to become an League Cycling Instructor (LCI): Because I am passionate about biking and want to serve my community in whatever capacity I can in cycling education and promotion. Like many communities, we have a great deal of momentum building in the Kankakee area right now that expands far beyond die-hard Spandex-clad athletes, and that is really exciting. I love cycling, and I love sharing the joy of cycling with others.

Fun fact: I founded a bike book club in my community called B3 in K3: Bikes, Bites, & Books. We are celebrating our one-year anniversary this month. We read a book about biking each month and then bike to a local restaurant to eat and discuss the book.

David Rudis



What I Do: I'm a retired banker and am active on a number of private and non-profit boards.

Why I ride: I love both the athletic part

of cycling along with the social aspect of riding with others.

Most interesting place I have biked:

I've been on tours out west and in Europe and I've enjoyed them all!

My vision for Ride Illinois: I would like to see Ride Illinois grow so that we can promote more programming and bike friendly initiatives across the state. More people are bicycling now than ever before, and it's happening everywhere in our state. I would like to see all of those people align with our organization and our membership base grow.

Interesting bike fact: Before I got serious about cycling I bought a hybrid bike thinking it was the reasonable thing to do. Regretted it immediately. Sold it within six months and got a great road bike instead.



Share the Road License Plates

Make a statement when you drive and help make cycling safer at the same time. The license plates deliver a key message while raising money for Ride Illinois's safety education efforts.

