

Insider
For April 21, 2010
By Kim Burger

The annual Bike to Work Week observance is scheduled for May 17-21 and Cedar Falls - Iowa's first official Bicycle Friendly Community, is planning our own version and calling it Pack the Racks. There are a couple of reasons for the event including encouragement for people to consider bicycling as a healthier, greener transportation method, and to celebrate the newly installed bicycle racks in the downtown area, funded by a grant from the Black Hawk Gaming Commission.

Throughout the week of May 17th through the 21st, local bike shops are rewarding commuters who ride their bicycles to work. Riders are invited to stop into Bike Tech to enjoy free juice, fruit, snacks, and coffee courtesy of Cup of Joe; Europa will be offering healthy refreshments; and Scheels is in the planning stages of putting together special offerings for commuters.

On the evenings of May 7, 14, 21 and 28, the public is invited to gather at the Cedar Falls Recreation Center at 6pm for guided rides that will explore various routes designated as bicycle friendly by the Cedar Falls Bicycle Advisory Committee.

In addition to these local efforts the Iowa Bicycle Coalition is partnering with Bikelowa.com to create an online pledge and registration system. Persons can visit the website and sign the pledge. Statistics for fuel savings, total mileage, and which employers have the most bike commuters are posted on the website.

Last year, 2,395 commuters registered for Bike to Work Week, 716 employers participated, and 114 cities were represented. 22% of the registrants were 1st time commuters. Approximately 63,188 commuting miles were pledged and 3,510 gallons of gasoline were saved, resulting in an overall savings of \$7,336.83.

The Iowa Bicycle Coalition hopes to see double the amount of Bike To Work Week participants with a larger state-wide effort. Several communities across Iowa are beginning to celebrate Bike To Work Week. As the effort increases, so do the amount of people using bicycles for transportation.

The Iowa Bicycle Coalition is launching a survey to collect information on what employers need to make Bike To Work Week a success. The Bike To Work employer survey is at www.iowabicyclecoalition.org.

We encourage you to consider giving this a try!