

CHAIN MAIL



The Citizens for Safe Cycling Newsletter Dec 2000 Vol 16 No. 3
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The AGM 2000

by Fred Perel

My last visit to the Prescott tavern was full of bitter memories. It was when the Ottawa Senators got clobbered by the Toronto Maple Leafs during the hockey playoffs last spring. At the end of that sorrowful evening, as I stumbled out the door, I vowed to return under more pleasant circumstances. Little did I know then that it would be the future site of our Annual General Meeting. A splash of good cheer set the tone for the fine evening of Friday, November 3, 2000.



This is an AGM with a difference

The upstairs of the tavern is called La Scala dining lounge which was reserved exclusively for CfSC. The Prescott has been able to preserve its ambiance, reminiscent of its inception in 1931. All of the available munchies soothed our appetites. There was an array of veggies & dips as well as chips & salsa. Authentic Prescott-style pizza was also provided, combined with complimentary soda beverages as part of our free admission. What an awesome deal!

Because I have had to concentrate on other priorities this year, I haven't been able to see the CfSC gang as often as usual. That's what made me even more anxious to attend. The turnout was absolutely tremendous as representatives from the Ottawa

Bicycle Club and the Canadian Kilometre Achievement Program paid tribute to CfSC for its impact on cycling.

The AGM began with some casual mingling and laughter as members were eager to trade their cycling stories with one another. The long line-up at the membership desk moved efficiently thanks to the help of Charles Akben-Marchand. The information packages that he handed out consisted of the CfSC income statement prepared by Harry Mortimer, the agenda for the evening, summarization reports of the activities from this year's Board of Directors, and the biographies of those nominated for the Board and for the presidency.

Frances Tanner conducted the meeting at a lively pace. With an ever expanding pool of volunteers, it was even more arduous to select the winners of the awards which recognize the highest level of achievement in our organization. When the moment of truth arrived, Ed Ripmeester emerged as the Safety and Promotions volunteer of the Year. The advocate of the Year award went to Alayne McGregor, who has kept our members informed of the rapid adjustments made by the Transition Board. An honourable mention should also go to all the new Can-Bike instructors.

It must have been a truly special moment for those taking a place on
continued next page, second column

Chain Mail is published by Citizens for Safe Cycling the non-profit association which promotes cycling as a viable means of transportation in the Ottawa-Carleton region by advocating:

- Acceptance of the responsible cyclist as a legitimate road user;
- Education of all cyclists to improve riding and traffic skills, and of other road users to accommodate cyclist traffic as part of their normal driving skills;
- Improved Engineering to facilitate cyclist traffic, such as proper traffic control systems, adequate lane width, and sufficient parking;
- Legislation that is effective and enforced; and Representation of cycling issues to all levels of government

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Citizens for Safe Cycling
P.O. Box 248, Station B,
Ottawa ON K1P 6C4
Tel (613) 722-4454
Email: CfSC@CfSC.ottawa.on.ca

Contributions are welcome. Text may be edited for style, length, and clarity. Please send articles via Email to Phil@cfsc.ottawa.on.ca.
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President: Alayne McGregor 722-6210
Vice-President: Brian Martin 830-8207
Secretary: Grant Malinsky 730-2772
Treasurer: Michael Richardson 233-6809
Past President: Brett Delmage 729-0323

Directors:
Lynda Kadey 294-4605
Graydon Patterson 828-8665
Lisa Routhier
John Stevenson 738-2236
Membership Administrator; Charles Akben-Marchand

Email: CfSC@cfsc.ottawa.on.ca

The CfSC Board meets every month. All interested members are welcome to attend our meetings. Contact the President for details.

CfSC operates the Cycling Safety and Promotion Program at: 251 Bank St. Suite 504
Ottawa ON K2P 1X3
Tel (613) 567-1288
promo@CfSC.ottawa.on.ca
Cycling Safety and Promotion Co-ordinator, vacant

CfSC needs volunteers and members in order to do an effective job. Please call CfSC if

you would like to volunteer for any Cycling Safety and Promotion activity.
Call 722-4454 to volunteer for advocacy work.
Cycling Advisory Committee Representatives
Ottawa: Michael Richardson 233-6809
Nepean: Ewen Todd 225-4316
Gloucester: Boyd Aitkin 746-4136
Region: Brett Delmage 729-0323 the

AGM continued

Board. The Board has a diverse mix of newcomers; an instructor, Graydon Patterson, a co-op student, Lisa Routhier, and a parent, Lynda Kadey. Many thanks to Robert Meynell, who has worked admirably as director this year. Alayne McGregor, who has already done so much for CfSC, succeeds Brett Delmage as president. Alayne would later sum up the evening by saying that, "the AGM was a fun time with a very productive meeting", and she went on to thank our guest speaker Jim Glover for, "providing a series of compelling stories concerning the aerodynamic functions of various human powered vehicles".

The AGM also marked the end of an era as ten eventful years with Brett as president came to an end. Everyone who has had any contact with CfSC in the last decade is aware that Brett is a very hard worker. However so much of what Brett has done has been hidden from public view, only those who are close to the CfSC administration may be aware of just how great has been his contribution. Sometimes in the past years CfSC has had some difficult moments; it was Brett's strength of character which largely made it possible for our organization to get through those times and come out of them even stronger. While president, Brett never wavered in his goals for CfSC nor in his sense of responsibility to the organization. For many

Canadians Pierre Trudeau personified a certain vision of Canada. In much the same way Brett has personified CfSC and its dedication to safer and more popular cycling

President's Report: November, 2000

by Alayne McGregor

Growth: isn't it wonderful, and how are we going to increase it? That's all we've been hearing lately here in Ottawa-Carleton. As a software designer myself, I'm not complaining: I appreciate the increased job opportunities and the diversification of the economy.

But there's been a lot less talk about what that growth will actually look like. Will we just get five more Chapel Hill housing developments, and ten more collections of identical glass office towers like Kanata North and Colonnade Road? What if this growth massively increases the car traffic on your street, making it more dangerous to cross or cycle along? What if it means that your job gets moved 20km away, too far to practically cycle? Who will decide where this growth will occur -- our newly-elected City Council or the developers and entrepreneurs?

The record so far has not been good: earlier this fall, Regional Council listened so hard to Rod Bryden and his cohorts that they overrode the recommendations of their own staff and the Kanata councillor, and rezoned a huge development near the Corel Centre. Staff had recommended some of the lands be reallocated to commercial and residential development, even though the original Corel agreement did not allow this. Council went further and added more land to the development.

Looking for some insight from business, I recently attended a luncheon sponsored by the local chapter of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). Bronwen Heins, president of the Kanata Research Park development, spoke about "Transportation Infrastructure and the needs of our expanding high-tech sector".

Her basic message: the high-tech sector is expanding in Kanata and Nepean at rates eight times the projections in the RMOC Official Plan. They like Ottawa, for its quality of life and for the availability of talent here, as well as the fact that engineers don't need to commute two hours each way to work, like in Silicon Valley.

The high-tech sector likes to "cluster" (she used this word repeatedly). They want to be near other high-tech businesses for synergy and so they can poach employees easily. Therefore, they prefer the west end to the east end -- specifically west of the Rideau River. Most high-tech employees live in the west end and supposedly prefer to work there. She kept emphasizing the power of engineers to set working conditions and locations -- they want cafeterias, work-out centres. They want convenient locations and they make their employers choose them. Engineers want convenience since they're working long hours so they'll want to drive. (In my experience and that of other CfSC members, the employer picks a new location and tough luck if you don't like it -- you find another job or lump it).

Next message: the high-tech sector operates on very fast deadlines so they expect equally fast response from the city to bend to their needs. If the city isn't immediately

accommodating, they'll go to North Carolina or India. It's a global market; they're competing in it -- Ottawa has to compete for their being here. (Sounds more like blackmail to me.) Next message: there's already backups on March Road. The city has to increase the road infrastructure. Now.

To be fair, she also mentioned the importance of the east-west light rail link (which goes to Colonnade Road and Kanata North), along with coordinated commuter buses from the rail stations to high-tech companies. She said it was absurd that a secretary living in Barrhaven should take two hours by bus to get to Kanata North (I'd agree with that). She talked about the importance of integrating housing with high-tech buildings (at least the office buildings) so that more people can walk/cycle to work. She mentioned that her development is paying for a purpose-built recreational path over NCC lands from Carling Avenue to facilitate walking and cycling.

In her talk and in the questions afterwards, there was no real discussion of how taxpayers were going to pay for the improvements needed in roads or transit or paths.

So that's what the high-tech business people are seeing as their vision for our new city. Is it yours? Will it allow you and your friends or family to use your bikes when you wish? It's going to be an ongoing debate in the new city, every a new development or a road expansion or planning guidelines are approved.

But there are alternatives. In the next *Chain Mail*, I'll talk about "smart growth" and neotraditional

planning: some of the ways that engineers and planners are starting to try to balance growth and liveability. If we don't want the two-hour car commutes now common in the original Silicon Valley, we need to find those alternatives.

I'd like to thank the CfSC membership, the outgoing and new Board of Directors, and particularly those who attended our Annual General Meeting for your faith in acclaiming me as President. As I mentioned at the meeting, I'm expecting an "interesting" year, both politically and organizationally.

I wouldn't have even considered taking this on without the support and encouragement of the Board, and particularly Past President Brett Delmage. Brett has always been there to solve problems (wherever they occurred), to encourage people to keep involved, and to make sure everyone is aware of what's going on. He's become so good at it in the ten years of his presidency that I think few people are aware exactly how large and how varied his contribution has been. I'm certainly going to have problems reaching that level, but knowing it has been done keeps energizing me.

CfSC Pays Tribute

Three Outstanding Members

Brett Delmage not only fought for the establishment of the Regional Cycling Advisory Group: he was CfSC's rep from the first meeting in 1991 to its last in December. During that time, he worked to ensure that non-concrete programs, like the cycling map, Bikes on Buses, and enforcement, were not forgotten. He

educated himself on the ideas and mechanics of traffic calming, and examined theory and results in Ottawa, Canada, and the world to see which types of traffic calming hurt and which helped cyclists -- and then used that to comment on projects here. He also commented on more cycling facility and road change blueprints than could possibly fit in 50 recycle bins, and used his experiences cycling across the Region to ensure that facilities were improved everywhere.

Boyd Aitkin was appointed CfSC's rep to the Gloucester Cycling Advisory Committee in 1994, and worked both there and on RCAG to ensure that east-end linkages weren't forgotten, both on local roads like Bearbrook, and arterials like Innes and Blair. He also was part of GCAC's annual pit stop on Green's Creek every spring to encourage cycling commuting. As well, he worked to ensure that Gloucester installed bicycle racks at all city-owned and operated facilities (a total of 99 racks).

Ewen Todd was a strong voice for the establishment of the Nepean Cycling Committee in 1991, and joined the committee as CfSC rep in 1994. During his term, the committee improved path and road linkages for cyclists in Nepean, as well as encouraging cycling through its annual booth at Nepean Days, its website and articles in local papers, and its awards for contributions to cycling in Nepean. When Nepean City Council almost closed down the committee in 1998, Ewen worked to ensure its continuation.



Ed Ripmeester Receives Safety and Promotion Volunteer of the Year Award at AGM

Jim Wilson, our October Volunteer of the Month

Jim "Sir James" Wilson is a volunteer who's a joy to work with. He's dependable and hard-working, and always gives you the feeling he's enjoying helping out.

Sir James has been awarded the October award for volunteer of the month specifically for his work in checking out the 100km route for the "Tour of the City Halls" 2000 Harvest Ride. He rode that route twice: first to check it out several days before the ride, and then led the 100km riders the day of the ride. He also went out of his way to pick up some of the prizes for riders.

But that's not all he's done for CfSC: he's also helped with distribution of Better Bicycling and

provided photographs for the "You're never too old to cycle" pamphlet to encourage cycling for mature adults.

But probably his biggest achievement is in running the Canadian Kilometre Achievement Program (CKAP) for many years in effect single-handedly. This program encourages cyclists to improve and increase the amount they cycle, and every year recognizes cyclists who have accumulated many thousands of kilometres. The program recognizes both annual and lifetime achievements. Without Jim, the program wouldn't now exist, and we would have lost another tool for getting people out on the bikes more.

The Last Reports of the Cycling Advisory Committees

Regional Cycling Advisory Committee Report

Members who have not already done so are urged to read Brett Delmage's detailed report on the Regional Committee's work which will be found on the CfSC web page. The report relates the committee's efforts to promote safe cycling and to further the planning and construction of safe, bicycle friendly facilities at the Regional level. Many specific projects are mentioned. Cyclists, upon reading the report, will come to appreciate just how important this committee has been to them. Almost every day virtually all cyclists will use a road, see a sign, use a map, or benefit from some other facility whose design or installation has been influenced by this committee.

OCAG Report

by Michael Richardson

This year was a busy year for OCAG. Multiple meetings were taken up discussing Johnston Road. The underlying issue is a long familiar one: build Bike Lanes or not. The CfSC Bike Lane policy was ultimately adopted as basis for an OCAG policy on Bike Lanes.

To a certain extent, this eclipsed the question of how does the City of Ottawa approve new developments -- considerations for walking and cycling are not foremost on the minds of developers. Yet, they want to retrofit their designs with Bike Lanes so they can claim to satisfy the demand for "quality of life". No Bike Lane will ever turn a hostile, high speed road with poorly designed intersections into something people want to cycle and walk on. Cycling infrastructure starts with land planning and multi use zoning.

There are still many items left on the city's Comprehensive Cycling Plan that have not yet been implemented. The list is well documented and well prioritized, and will form the basis for the new cycling advisory group's work next year.

Of course the OCAG report to the AGM is also available on the CfSC web page.

Report on the Activities of the Nepean Cycling Committee for the Year 2000

A most thorough report on the activities of this committee was prepared by Ewen Todd before the

AGM and is available to members on the CfSC web page. There you will find a brief history of the committee, changes in personnel during the year 2000, a description of committee activities such as Nepean Days, a list of the various issues raised at a number of meetings, and a description of work done on the 2000 edition of the Regional Cycling Map. The report also talks of the meetings held with other cycling advisory committees to prepare the Terms of Reference for the proposed new City of Ottawa Cycling Committee.

Since that report came out, Nepean Cycling Committee members were given certificates by Lee Farnworth on behalf of the Nepean City Council. These certificates recognize the work done by the committee to further the cause of cycling in the city of Nepean. Committee members were informed of the proposed Ottawa Cycling Committee; no doubt many will want to make a contribution by serving on this new committee.

Gloucester Cycling Committee Report

CfSC members will find the Gloucester Committee's Report, prepared by Boyd Aitkin, on the CfSC web page. The report mentions work done on bicycle parking, on long term traffic planning and on efforts to bring bicycling to the attention of the general public. As with all the existing cycling advisory committees, this is the last year for this committee. Boyd closes his report by expressing a personal hope to be active in planning for cycling in the new city of Ottawa.

The New City

New City: Some Good News but Nothing Final Yet

With the new Council now elected, it's getting closer to the real fight to ensure that the new City of Ottawa keeps supporting cycling. The election results were mixed: two long-time cycling supporters (Al Loney and Linda Davis) were defeated, but two virulently anti-cycling councillors (Betty Hill and Robert van den Ham) also lost. A good number of strong cycling supporters from the former Ottawa, Gloucester, and Regional Councils were elected.

With the new councillors and increased preponderance of rural wards, it's still too early to say how the votes will go.

The Transition Board will be releasing its budget Dec. 1, about the time you will be getting this newsletter. The CfSC Board has identified six priorities to look for (and fight for if they're not there) in the new budget:

- a. Ensuring funding of \$60,000 for the Cycling Safety and Promotion Program;
- b. Ensuring the existence of and staff support for the Ottawa Cycling Committee;
- c. Ensuring road maintenance levels are at least at the same level as the old RMOC;
- d. Ensuring cycling budgets are at minimum the level of the combined municipalities, this to include both facilities and promotional work like the Cycling map and the Ultimate Bike Guide, and this to include studies and surveys necessary to ensure effective use of this budget;
- e. Preserving cycling and related staff within the TUPW

Department;

f. Ensuring continuing existence of the TDM (transportation Demand Management) group and programme.

The CfSC Board has also asked members of the cycling advisory committees to support these priorities. The Gloucester committee did so Nov. 20, with the intelligent proviso that maintenance standards should be at the highest level of all the merged municipalities, not just the RMOC. CfSC has received word that the Transition Board has approved renewing our base \$40,000 contract for the Cycling Safety and Promotion program for 2001, although this must still be ratified by Council. However, the CfSC Board also submitted a request for an increase, to \$60,000. CfSC has not received an increase since we took over the contract in 1994, and costs have recently soared, including a 25% increase in rent. The Board has realized for a number of years that the program was not sustainable at its current funding, both in terms of not being able to pay sufficient wages and of the wear on volunteers. We asked for what we think is a reasonable amount to run a program that will properly cover the new city.

There is no news yet, bad or good, whether a Cycling Committee will be established. The Transition Board has recommended there be 12 advisory committees to council, but has left it up to Council what they should be. Other likely committees would include Youth, Volunteer, Disabilities, Arts, Environment, Heritage/LACAC, and Transit.

If the concept of a Cycling Committee is approved, city staff say it will not likely

start sitting before April, because of time needed to finalize and approve the terms of reference, and advertise, interview, and appoint members.

In the meantime, members of all current cycling advisory committees (from all cities and the Region) will continue to work together and with city staff to ensure that cycling concerns are still considered in road/path projects and in encouraging cycling. Their first joint meeting is Jan. 9.

Encouraging Words from the Mayor-Elect

From Bob Chiarelli's campaign web site at <http://www.bobchiarelli.com/SAFEStreets2.htm>; a few selected paragraphs.

Safety on our streets is critical to our quality of life. Our sense of security and our confidence in the safety of our families is compromised when we do not address basic traffic violations like speeding, reckless driving and failure to stop at red lights.

Safer cycling

Ottawa, with its safe streets and a network of recreational paths that are the envy of other urban communities, is home to a rapidly-growing number of cyclists - both recreational cyclists and commuters. This poses opportunities - making cycling an even more viable transportation option. It also poses challenges - the number of bicycle-related traffic incidents - the number of bicycle thefts. Bob Chiarelli plans several initiatives here.

Enhance bikeway patrol program/

launch cycling safety audit
In co-operation with Citizens for Safe Cycling and the NCC, cycling safety audits throughout the new city will be started in 2001 to determine existing conditions and to develop recommendations for improvements to streets, intersections and paths.

The Bike "rodeo" project

The Region of Ottawa-Carleton developed a very successful bicycle safety campaign for schools in the early 1990's which is now also supported by CHEO. Bob Chiarelli promises to build on the success of this program starting in the spring of 2002 by introducing annual bicycle "rodeos" for elementary school-aged children in each area of the new city. Leading up to these rodeos,

Bob Chiarelli would support a partnership with Citizens for Safe Cycling and school boards to deliver a bike safety program in schools. Sponsored by the Ottawa-Carleton police, Parks & Recreation and Citizens for Safe Cycling, the rodeos will help first-time or beginning cyclists learn about properly equipping a bicycle and traffic safety.

OUR NEW DIRECTORS

Graydon Patterson in His Own Words

I am a year-round commuting cyclist, logging several thousand kilometres per year. I truly enjoy the freedom, peace of mind and flexibly cycling provides me as a mode of transportation around the city. I sold my own vehicle back in 1997, and

our household is now a single vehicle one. I regularly cycle around much of the urban core, with more emphasis on downtown and the west end where I have worked. I enjoy long and short bicycle rides and tours and usually do one or two camping trips by bike each summer. I also enjoy mountain biking, for which our area has exceptional facilities.

I am a Can Bike II instructor, and have been actively been teaching courses since 1997, with an average of 6-8 courses per year since then. I regularly teach the Kids Can Bike courses which offer its own unique challenges - but that is not to say adults can't surprise me sometimes also.

I like the challenge of cycling in winter, long self-supported camping tours and extending my normal 10 km commute to 40 and 50 km rides before work. I usually participate in the Rideau Lakes tour, the Kokanee 24-hour mountain bike relays and some of the local rides.

I find it unbelievable that most people accept the many hundreds of dollars it costs per month to run a motor vehicle, and many have two vehicles (as I did)! Is this our purpose in life, to put in all those long hours of work, away from family and friends, to support an expensive car habit?

Lisa Routhier; Her Bio

Hi! My name is Lisa and I'm one of the new directors on the CfSC Board. I have been a recreational cyclist for most of my life, but I really started to take cycling seriously when I moved from out of the suburbs to Lowertown. My bicycle has been my main mode of transportation for about six months

now, and I am enjoying the learning experience that comes with trying to navigate through the city.

I am currently in my last year of the Environmental Studies program at the University of Ottawa. There's something about transportation that intrigues me, just thinking about the constant movement of people, where they are going, and how they choose to get there. And so, I am writing my honours essay on utility cycling in Ottawa and what factors are limiting its potential. I will be including a special feature on the feasibility of winter cycling, so I invite all year-round cyclists to send me a little email if they are interested in participating in my survey (Lisa.Routhier.@cfsc.ottawa.on.ca).

I look forward to a fun and productive year with CfSC!

Lynda Kadey Says Hello

I am fairly new to CfSC. I was very impressed with CfSC and quickly got my CANBike II..

I am married with two young children. My husband is one of those former racing types, now into commuting and recreational cycling. I come from a background of recreational, touring and commuting. We have begun tandem riding together. It was the only way I could keep up to his pace. I also take the children around the community in the trailer and on the trail-a-bike. Needless to say, I have become very reacquainted with my granny gear especially on those hills. With the introduction of the Rack and Roll on the buses, I have been able to get back into commuter cycling.

I started cycling as a child. Initially,

I probably spent more time pedalling backwards. When I received my first real bike I got quite ill and spent my time on the bike with it leaning against the wall and myself pedalling backwards. Gee, I wonder why I don't like stationery bikes. Eventually I got off the wall and started to pedal forwards. Since I grew up in Toronto, I got to practice cycling in the city. I also lived near some pathways that provided hours of recreational cycling.

I strongly believe in education as one of the most important cycling issues. I also would like to see a greater level of cycling as a sustainable form of transportation and recreation. That means a very integrated approach to everything from planning, infrastructure, research, education etc. I hope in my year on the board I will be able to assist in this capacity

FROM OUR MEMBERS

The Canadian Kilometre Achievement Program

by Fred Perel

Danny Chew is the self-proclaimed "Ultramarathoner" of cycling. In the July, 1998 issue of *Bicycling Magazine*, the native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania announced his aim of accumulating one MILLION miles on his bicycle. He has already done almost one half of that distance and hopes to reach his goal about the time he turns seventy.

Realistically none of us are at the same level as the ultramarathoner, but he can inspire us to keep track of our distances as we cycle. Agnes Davis, a member of Citizens for Safe Cycling, keeps a cycling log of her mileage. In the Spring issue of *Better Bicycling*, she reports that the

log and photos of her cycling accomplishments give her with a strong sense of pride. Barney King of the United States Cycling Federation emphasizes in the May, 2000 issue of *Bicycling Magazine* that such a log is the most effective tool for monitoring your progress as you strive to meet your cycling goals.

Throughout Canada, any cyclist can participate in a program which provides its members with an incentive to ride more. It's the Canadian Kilometre Achievement Program and has been the benchmark of cycling achievement for many years. Ottawa Bicycle Club tour leader Jim Wilson keeps the statistics. There are individual awards for reaching specific goals during a season as well as lifetime achievement awards and club awards. The Hewes Award is presented to the club, possibly the O.B.C., C.F.S.C, or the Kanata-Nepean Bicycle Club, with the most collectively recorded kilometres. Please encourage your riding partners to get involved.

Most of us cannot hope to match the "ultramarathoner" and do a million miles. However, those who have the resiliency can strive for the 100,000 km Lifetime Achievement Award which has already been given to Les Humpheries and Bruce Timmermans. To register simply visit the C-KAP website [www.mondenet.com/~jimckap].

Save Gas; Use Your Bike

by John Stevenson

I would like to address the typical casual cyclist who likes to go for a ride on a nice day.

We are all well aware of recent increases in gas prices. Here is something you can do about it. A car gets very poor milage on short runs. In suburbia most trips are short, to a meeting at the local church or to pick up a litre of milk. Such trips can be done on a bicycle.

To adapt your bike for transportation day and night, rain or shine, simply add fenders, lights and a carrier.

My "Watch for Bikes" Crusade

by Fred Perel

As a non-stop bicycle activist, one of my strongest ambitions has been to promote goodwill between motorists and cyclists whenever they're on the road together. That is why I have launched my own crusade by distributing "Watch for Bikes" stickers ever since they were introduced by the newsgroup forum of Citizens for Safe Cycling on June 18, 1999. This fascinating idea was implemented by the Canadian Automobile Association four years ago. The "Watch for Bikes" sticker is really a transparent decal that's imprinted on the bottom of the side mirror. Once it's properly installed, the decal is a reminder to drivers to "Watch for Bikes" before they make a lane change or open the door of a parked vehicle. It's a sticker that may be relatively tiny in size, but it's a major breakthrough in reminding motorists to remember cyclists.

A lot of credit goes to Nick G. Ferris, who coordinates the "Watch for Bikes" program for C.A.A. in their Central Ontario headquarters.

In July of 1998, Nick reported that over 90,000 decals have been distributed throughout the country.

In order to spread the good word to motorists everywhere, my very own "Watch for Bikes" crusade has taken centre stage. Every time I mail a personal letter, a "Watch for Bikes" sticker is attached to it by a paper clip. I've been bold enough to put the stickers inside all of my business letters also. This has included sending the unpeeled decals along with charitable donations, bill payments, formal registration for all of my competitive long distance running events, and most intriguingly, with my official form for joining the Green Party of Canada.

The other dimension of my crusade has occurred during social outings when I hand them out in person. For example, I gave them out to the volunteers of Escapade 2000 on July 2, among them was Ottawa Bicycle Club touring director David Gibson. They've also been received by Ross and Wendy Richardson after a long, enjoyable ride with the Kanata-Nepean Bicycle Club. For some extra bravado, I handed a pile to the front desk of CHEZ 106 FM on 134 York street in exchange for taking so many of their cool bumper stickers.

My "Watch for Bikes" crusade has been such a rewarding experience, that I encourage CfSC members from around the globe to vibrantly get involved by distributing them in the same way that I have. You can acquire a reasonable number of "Watch for Bikes" stickers by dropping by the CfSC Safety & Promotion office on 504-251 Bank street. If you happen to live in the west end Ottawa, then they're available at the C.A.A., right beside Peter's Health Foods in Lincoln Heights Galleria (2525 Carling

Avenue). Please tell Doug Meyhew, the coordinator for Eastern Ontario, that I said hello.

So, what are you waiting for? The holiday season is just around the corner. What better way to share your gleaming Christmas or Chanukah spirit than by including a "Watch for Bikes" sticker before sealing the envelope of a card? If Santa Claus would put one on the side mirror of his sled, then Ole' St. Nick would spend more time delivering presents instead of filling out accident reports.

A Poetic Message for Us All

Ed's note; the following was submitted a couple of weeks ago. It is a great pleasure to publish it complete with the author's introductory note.

Hello,
My name is Frank McGregor. Even though, in the distant past, I have posted here before, it is safe to say that I am not a regular contributor and unknown to most members. I am a relatively new member of CfSC, summer of 2000. I am a Can Bike II program graduate, and have recently attended a Can Bike Instructors seminar.

By way of introduction and in the spirit of the upcoming holiday season, I present to you a light hearted poem. This poem is based on my observations of a cyclist this past Friday.

Vision of Safety

by Frank McGregor

T'was the night before last. One dark Friday night,
When first I did see her. There, on my right.
Away in the distance and easy to see

All covered in lights like a Christmas tree.

As I approached her, up from the rear
A vision of safety and I drove near.

White light in the front, red flasher in back
All her belongings in panniers and rack.

Gloves on her hands, scarf on her face,
Shiny new helmet strapped firmly in place.

Riding in line straight as a rule,
This lady is smart. She's nobody's fool.

Riding on Carling, near the cows moo,
I wondered if she'd been to the Can Bike II

A vision of safety it was plain to see,
Until we approached, those traffic lights three.

The lights were all red, you know how it goes,
I stepped on the brake and felt my truck slow.

What happend next I could not believe,
My vision of safety she started to weave,
Inside of one car and past another
She better stop soon! Or she'll never recover.

Right through the first light, a shake of her head
Could she not see? It was round, and red.

All visions of safety were shattered complete
Perhaps at the next light, she'll put down her feet.
But straight through again as if in a

trance
Eyes dead ahead, not a right or left glance.

In front of cars stopped, she's labelled us all,
Cyclists run lights!! Out goes the call.
Despite all her efforts, like dressing up bright,
In one fleeting moment she's damaged our fight.

To my surprise, as I continued to watch,
Near the third light she slowed down a notch.
She puts on the brakes and comes to a halt,
But the damage is done.
Completely her fault.

My vision of safety, I begin to wonder,
She did this on purpose. On purpose, a blunder.
Run two red lights but stop for the third,
Her actions, no sense, completely absurd.

"Ironic" I say as the red light turns green,
How she dresses the part and wants to be seen.
Yet courts our friend Danger, two times of three,
The odds are against you, my vision of safety.

With apologies to Clement C. Moore

Reflections After a Few Weeks in France

by Philip Shea

Toward the end of the summer just past I had the great good fortune to do a leisurely bike tour in southern France with my wife and a few friends. The joys of the tour I will

be happy to extol to anyone willing to take the time to listen to me and to pay for the beer. However while I was there a few thoughts did occur to me about CfSC and the work it is doing in the Ottawa area. I had these thoughts for the simple reason that there does not seem to be a similar organization in Toulouse, the southern French city which we used as a base for the better part of a week.

Toulouse is a wonderful city with many lovely things to see. Drop by l'Office de Tourisme and a friendly clerk is happy to hand over a very nice map showing all sorts of bike paths and bike lanes. But when a cyclist tries to use the map a most frustrating and dangerous time ensues.

There are bike lanes, all with very nice signs and solid lines to keep motorists at bay. Typically we could cycle maybe one or two hundred metres and then there would be another very nice sign indicating that the bike lane had come to an end. There would be no alternative but to head out into traffic usually at a point where the road narrows. Of course in a city as old as Toulouse it has not always been possible to widen roads to easily find room for both bikes and cars, but it appears that whenever there had to be a choice between room for cars and room for bikes it was the cars that won

Perhaps the worst case is the main boulevard which links the train station with the major tourist attractions and hotels in the downtown area. Apparently this boulevard was just redone a few years ago but little thought was given to bikes. Consequently the map encourages cyclists to go through parking lots in among cars

that are frequently backing up or to use the sidewalks which are crowded with pedestrians.

Not all is awry. The mayor and administration have declared that they want to get people out of their cars and that bicycles are an excellent alternative. There are some very nice bike paths along the various canals in the town. The trick is to get to them. Just before we left, the mayor decreed that the upcoming Sunday would be a car free day, autos would be banned from the downtown streets and only pedestrians and cyclists would be permitted.

Obviously there is some political will to reduce the reliance on the automobile and remove some of the cars which are strangling the old cities of France. However there does not seem to be an organization which is willing to remind the local bureaucracies that changes to the infrastructure must take more than just cars into account. There is a lot of interest in cycling as a sport but there does not seem to be anyone who promotes cycling as a way of commuting to work and to the stores. And from the behaviour of the few cyclists I did see on the street, no one is educating them to cycle in a safe and courteous manner. Sometimes it takes a trip abroad to make us appreciate what we have here.

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