

the **sou'wester**

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Bike hub built by community



Raimy Gallant

NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

How many people does it take to start a non-profit bike shop? A whole community of volunteers and cyclists it turns out.

Now in its second season, the South Osborne Bike Hub was born from a community forum held in January 2010 on how south Osborne residents could help make the area more eco-friendly.

Jaret Olford was present at the 2010 meeting, and he knew he had the means to access rent-free space.

"I was the first vice-president at the Lord Roberts Community Centre at the time, so I had access to the building, which houses us now, and I was able to work effectively with the community centre to get the space up and running," Olford says.

Volunteers donated carpentry skills, web design and social media skills, tools and mechanical expertise.

"It really was a community effort," Olford says. "Everybody stepped up with their own talents to get things done."

A core of 12 volunteers now operate the shop for five to 10 visitors a night, which Olford says is successful for the size of the shop.

The bike hub, located at the Lord Roberts Community Centre's field outbuilding, is about more than just reducing carbon emissions, according to volunteers. Since opening, the bike hub has hosted two community rides, "just to get people on bikes as families, as friends, as neighbourhoods, and to keep cycling in the public consciousness of our community," Olford says. The two previous rides attracted 35 to 40 cyclists, and the hub would like to host a third community ride in the fall.

For Marcia Geary, volunteering at the bike hub is a family affair. Geary, her partner and her daughter all volunteer at the hub.

Geary's main concern is that people have access to knowledge about how to maintain a safe bicycle, which the bike hub provides. She also hopes that as cycling grows in popularity, so too does acceptance of it.

Volunteer elbow grease alone doesn't keep the bike hub in brakes and pedals though. The continuation of the bike hub is dependent on donations from owners of repaired bikes. Donations of old bicycles, parts and tools are also required as are a steady stream of new volunteers.

The South Osborne Bike Hub is open Mondays and Thursdays from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Raimy Gallant is a communications co-ordinator with the Community-Led Emissions Reduction program in Riverview and Lord Roberts.

Neighbourhood Forum is a readers' column. If you live in The Sou'wester area and would like to contribute to this column, contact jim.timlick@canstarnews.com.



Adult cyclists need to know their place

Readers' roundup

To the editor:

I moved into the much-maligned North End in 1988. A friend of mine, who had lived on Burrows and Arlington for 40 years before I moved in, told me that the area was quiet, safe and low-crime.

And so it has been. I've volunteered in a lot of elections in the area, from The Maples to Point Douglas, knocking on doors, putting leaflets in mailboxes morning, afternoon and evening, and it has been safe.

Whenever I see or hear the usual negative stereotypes of this part of the city, I wish that whoever is peddling them would come and live here and see how positive this end of town really is.

But we do suffer from a major crime issue here, on a seasonal basis. It's the same one that every part of the city suffers from, from spring until late fall: hordes of adult cyclists illegally riding their bikes on the sidewalks. I swear, there are far fewer adult cyclists on the roads, where they belong.

I really wonder about the eyesight of these illegal cyclists. Can they not SEE all the adult cyclists riding safely on the roads? Or all the pedestrians on the NARROW sidewalks that they are sprinting down? Or all the secondary roads in between the main drags where the car traffic is light and which outnumber the main drags four-to-one?

Since most of the adult cyclists are up on the sidewalks even on the almost-traffic free secondary roads, they obviously are blind to that, too.

Since these adult cyclists illegally on the sidewalks obviously cannot see very well, they should have their bikes taken from them. Permanently!

I have tried to get the cops to start ticketing these illegal cyclists. Dream on. Their excuse is that they are too busy. With what? I'm supposed to be living in one of the most crime-ridden parts of the city (but) there's hardly any of it here.

At any rate, the biggest crime issue in my end of town (and everywhere else in Winnipeg) are all the illegal adult cyclists on the sidewalks.

**Kathleen Taylor
 Winnipeg**