

Wheelmen Make 12-Lap Century Ride Around Island



The Wheelmen line up by twos for their 10-mile ride through town. The ride began just outside Fort Mackinac and ended at Mission Point, after a full circuit of the Island.

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tion.

The morning of Saturday, August 13, wheelmen lined up two by two along Main Street for the requisite 10-mile ride. All cyclists dressed in authentic late-19th century outfits to bike around the Island. Since helmets were not part of the dress back then, cyclists did not wear them here. Randy Oleynik, captain of the Michigan state chapter, said helmets are not as necessary for the slower, 10-mile ride.

"We ride a lot slower, we ride in a big group so we can control how it goes better," said Mr. Oleynik. "It's a big enough procession that everyone sees us and gets out of the way."

It was smooth sailing for cyclists on the Island. After a bit of rain Saturday morning, skies were clear and temperatures cool. Getting the antique bikes to the Island, however, was not necessarily as easy as biking along the scenic pathways.

Some cyclists are able to fit their bikes into the back of a truck, but many have to make special hitches for a car, resembling those for a normal mountain bike, but specifically engineered for a high wheel. Luckily,



From left, Scott Chamlee of Southgate, Randy Oleynik of Carlton, Charlie Harper of Muscatine, Iowa, and Bill Smith of Westland are suited up for the century ride. Bikers dressed in contemporary clothing and wore helmets for the 100-mile ride around the Island.

mechanical know-how seems to go along with the hobby.

"A lot of the guys are mechanics, or mechanically minded," said Mr. Linley. "We'll meet up later at car festivals, and antique car shows."

There were, of course, no cars to be seen during the state meet. The meet is held every two

years, traditionally on Mackinac Island.

The Wheelmen is a national, nonprofit organization. They are dedicated to remembering and teaching the heritage of American cycling and to restoring and riding early cycles.

Their official Web site is the-wheelmen.org.

Bike Art Brings Trillium Heights Neighborhood Together

By Leslie Rott

The bicycles decorating Pam Amitai's front yard Sunday, August 14, made it look like Christmas, Halloween, and the Fourth of July in August. They belonged to the residents of Trillium Heights, who gathered for "Bike Art 'Near' the Park" to share food, fun, laughter, and to strengthen neighborly ties.

Organized by Trillium Heights resident Patrick Shannon, the idea for the decorating competition came last year over a couple glasses of wine with neighbors and the tossing around of some crazy ideas. Last year, residents decorated their sewer grinder boxes, which are posted conspicuously in their yards.

Bruce and Sue Miller are credited by Mr. Shannon with coming up with the theme for this year's bicycle decorating contest.

"This is just a feeble excuse to get everybody together," said Mr. Miller.

No professional assistance was allowed and there were no limits to which contestants could go. Nancy Kriss created her "Mrs. Kriss-Mass" bike because Christmas is her favorite holiday and used her last name in a play on words, which all of the participants found particularly amusing.

Playing kazoos was a popular activity, and despite the effort put into decorating the seven bicycles entered in the contest, none of the Trillium Heights residents who participated took themselves very seriously.

"It doesn't take a lot to have a party," Mr. Shannon observed.

Residents also enjoyed a barbecue and discussed neighborhood issues. One particularly difficult issue was finding someone to judge the contest. The group contemplated doing the judging themselves, but had a hard time deciding who should win what. In the end, the situation was resolved as a neighborhood decision was made for best of show



Above: Ali Keezer (left) and Jim Shannon (center) with "Fire Bike," which was armed with water balloons and siren, and Tom Shannon with "Ghost Bike."

Top right: Rogene Huibregtse (left) with her "How Much is that Doggie in the Basket" bike and John Huibregtse with his "American Pride" bike. Pictured with the Huibregtsees are their nephews, Matt, Nick, and Erik Bachause.

Bottom right: Nancy Kriss (left) with her "Mrs. Kriss-Mass" bike and Pam Amitai, last year's overall winner, with her "Lilac Racer."

and the other awards just sort of fell into place.

The following is a list of categories, bicycles, and their winners:

Home and Garden: "How Much is That Doggie in the Basket" by Rogene Huibregtse

Potpourri: "Lilac Racer" by Pam Amitai

Spirit of America: "American Pride" by John Huibregtse

Living History: "Anne's Tablet" by Sue Miller

Government: "Fire Bike" by Ali Keezer and Jim Shannon

Other: "Ghost Bike" by Tom Shannon

Best of Show: "Mrs. Kriss-Mass" by Nancy Kriss

Each participant received a button.

"Everybody's a winner in this neighborhood," said Mary Anne Shannon.

Mr. Shannon hopes more children will get involved in a future bicycle decorating contest and that the event can spread to include children who live in Harrisonville.

"Bike Art 'Near' the Park" was a follow-up to last year's "Grinder Art 'Near' the Park."

Trillium Heights residents, who live near Great Turtle Park, plan to hold the event again next year, and "Porch Art" is tentatively scheduled to be the theme, suggested by resident Robin Dorman.

Proceeds from this year's event will be donated to Great Turtle Park.



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