

The Cyclist's Vehicle

Annual General Meeting

Some new, and some old, faces on new Board of Directors

The EBC AGM took place on the evening of October 14 at Organic Roots Food Market. First, the important stuff ... the Organic Roots folks had a fantastic spread set out for the AGM attendees including a delicious vegetarian chili and the biggest rum balls in Edmonton!

President John Collier started the meeting with a review of the year's activities. EBC activities have been distributed between bicycling advocacy and support for cyclists in Edmonton.


On the advocacy front, EBC is engaged in advising city planners as they work through several major roadway redevelopment projects that are either in the planning stages or are underway.

Bicycle awareness is rising in the city transportation and planning department and EBC has influenced planners to include bicycling infrastructure in their budget priorities. One success story of late is a bylaw change that now permits bicycles on almost all city and river valley pathways.

EBC support for cyclists in Edmonton manifests itself in many ways. Most EBC members know about BikeWorks, the best bike repair facility in the known universe, but they might not know that EBC supports a learn-to-ride program for disabled children. EBC bicycle parking facilities at summer festivals are another example of support for Edmonton cyclists. ... continued on pg 2

BIKEWORKS UPDATE

We are sad to say that, due to the usual winter slowdown, our congenial and hard working part time mechanic, Chris Anderson, is no longer with BikeWorks. Chris was a valuable and well respected member of the BikeWorks crew and we hope to see him there again. Jason remains our chief mechanic and shop steward. Check out the EBCer Profile in this issue of The Cyclist's Vehicle for a profile of Jason!

A reminder that **BikeWorks** is at 10047 - 80 Ave (in the alley) and its **winter hours** are **Wednesdays from 12 noon to 8 PM and Saturday/Sunday 12 noon to 6 PM**. Do-it-yourself rates are still \$2.00 per hour for members and \$5.00 per hour for non-members, which includes access to tools, shop space, and help as needed from our expert mechanic. In addition, used and some new parts are available at very attractive rates. We're considering some changes to the rate structure. For example, providing full blown just-fix-my-bike-please service at rates closer to those found in commercial bike shops, with perhaps some sort of means-tested rebates. If you've got any ideas or comments, feel free to drop by or call and discuss them with Jason or any of the board members. 

In This Issue

A new newsletter compiled by a new newsletter editor.

We have news from the AGM (pg 1) with messages from our new President, Phyllis BlackPlume (pg 2), and our old one, John Collier (pg 7).

Karly Coleman offers a report of her trip to the Pro-Walk Pro-Bike conference (pg 3) and three new regular columns make their debut - Route Finder (pg 4), Three for Free (pg 3), and Ask Dr. Cog (pg 9).

Finally, what's a winter newsletter without a winter commuting rant (pg 8)?

Kent McPhee
Editor 



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ... continued from pg 1

And, of course, Bikeology brings the bicycling message to the masses every July. In cooperation with the Metro Cinema, Bikeology this year had a film component which screened *Breaking Away* and *The Belleville Triplets*.

Treasurer Karly Coleman presented her annual report, 15 pages of superlative accounting detail. Highlights of the dollars and cents view of the year included hiring Tara Irwin as a summer volunteer coordinator, continuing support for BikeWorks, and a reiteration of the importance of casino income to the continued existence of EBC.


The next topic on the agenda was the makeup of the EBC Board of Directors. John Collier indicated that he is stepping down from the president position and he expressed his wish for some "new blood" on the board. John has had a long relationship with EBC and will continue to support the incoming president as a member-at-large. Secretary Brenda Heyer also stepped down due to her impending move to Toronto. Nominations were taken for board positions, all the following EBC members were acclaimed to the board:

- Jason Christianson-Demers
- Erich Welz

In addition, the following board members will continue on:

- Phyllis BlackPlume
- Karly Coleman
- Don Morrow
- David Hannis
- John Collier
- Raymond Pallard

The new board held their first meeting on November 17. Nominations were taken and accepted, motions were made, and votes were held. When the dust settled, John Collier was, as promised at the AGM, no longer our esteemed president. Our new esteemed president of EBC is Phyllis BlackPlume. The board executive is now:

- **Phyllis BlackPlume** - President
- **Erich Welz** - Vice President
- **Karly Coleman** - Treasurer
- **Raymond Pallard** - Secretary 

HELLO FROM PRESIDENT PHYLLIS

Happy New Year everybody (well, Chinese New Year is tomorrow, so I'm not too far off)! I'm Phyllis BlackPlume and I am the EBC President for this year. I'm excited to be able to notch up my level of involvement with the EBC. It's going to be a great year! I'm looking forward to seeing EBC rock and roll this year! I enjoy cycling as a safe and friendly activity and I want to continue to promote cycling as a safe, friendly, and smart alternative way to get around.

While I know many EBC members, you might be asking "Who is Phyllis BlackPlume"? I've been a member of EBC for 3 years and a board member in the past couple of years. I commute by bike as much as I can summer and winter (when my landscaping job doesn't take me too far). I enjoy long distance cycling and I have a particular fondness for the Muffaloose.



Upcoming events that you won't want to miss include Bikeology and our participation at the festivals around town, and we're also expecting a casino this year. There will be plenty of opportunity to come out and meet some fellow EBCers and support the organization by volunteering. Let's see you put on your volunteer hat at least once this year!

I invite everybody to contact me anytime with any questions, ideas, or comments that you have. [You can email Phyllis via the web site's contacts page, or call EBC and leave a message for Phyllis - Ed.] I promise to do my best to serve you and cycling in Edmonton!

Happy Cycling!
Phyllis BlackPlume
EBC President 

PRO-WALK PRO-BIKE TRIP REPORT

Early in 2000, Molly Turnbull and I initiated a grant for EBC that gave us the funding to install 23 racks on ETS Routes 1 and 4. The project was very well received, and you can see evidence of it every day, travelling between Capilano and West Edmonton Malls.

In 2003, we submitted a presentation of our project to the Pro-Walk Pro-Bike Conference Committee. The conference is a bi-annual event, each time hosted somewhere new in North America. Representatives from health professions, cycling advocacy groups, and planners converge on the chosen location for 3 days of bikey fun.

We were accepted as a poster presentation. This type of presentation was a new model for the conference; however they had been inundated with presentations and were trying to accommodate them all. Over 600 delegates attended the conference in Victoria.

EBC agreed to pay the conference entrance fees for myself and Janis Noble of the Edmonton Transit System. From there we developed the poster display and off we went.

The conference itself was fabulous, with all manner of bikey things presented - ideas, designs from around the world, paraphernalia. Best of all, we were surrounded by like-minded folks who adore cycling.

The sheer volume of topics was staggering. I carefully mapped out my choices and then each day ran helter skelter to each of the things I wanted to see. Interestingly, there were many Edmontonians there, including Janis, Constable Karl and his partner from the Edmonton Police Service, and Claire Stock as well as other representatives of the City of Edmonton. Amongst the group of us, I think we were able to cover off many of the sessions. If you are interested in seeing any of the documentation I brought back, leave a message for me at 433-2453.

Our poster presentation was on Thursday morning. Whilst many of the presenters set up and dashed off to other presentations, Janis and I arranged that one of us would be at the table for the duration of our presentation. This paid off for us, as we were able to chat with the folks that wandered in and out of the sessions, and check out the other displays as interest took us.

All in all, it was a wonderful experience. I recommend that if you have a grand bikey idea brewing in your mind, you should approach the EBC board with a proposal and a budget and convince them of it as well.


Karly Coleman
Intrepid Bike Conference Attendee
Victoria B.C. September 2004 

The bicycle is the most civilized conveyance known to man. Other forms of transport grow daily more nightmarish. Only the bicycle remains pure in heart. - Iris Murdoch

THREE FOR FREE *Providing interesting web links to Edmonton's bicycle commuters since last Wednesday*

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/cycling> An in depth look at the science of cycling with sections on *The Wheel, Drives & Gears, Frames & Materials, Braking & Steering, Aerodynamics, and Human Power*. Entertaining and not too technical with over 20 audio and video clips, interactive javascripts, and lots of images. You'll find information on the history and unique culture of cycling in addition to the hard science stuff.

<http://living-room.org/bikepeople> Living Room is a place for exploring the history, the technology, and the sensations of community. Join them to discuss urban and suburban design, transportation modalities, habitat preservation, urban farming, social and environmental economics, and anything else related to the communities, human and otherwise, of this planet.

<http://www.ridetheroad.com> While Peter and Sally toured the world for 30+ years they devised a bicycle friendliness rating system to grade each of the 60+ countries on 5 continents they have biked. Peter says: "We have come up with the 25 best places to bike in the world with this system. The 25 best in the world is almost complete (we can't find our route notes on Morocco). Every route has an overall map, the rating explained, photos, route maps and road stories. We simply love bicycle touring and have designed this site so the traveler can download our route maps and ride the road!" 

ROUTE FINDER

"What way do you go?"

In any gathering of two or more bicycle commuters the conversation inevitably turns to routes. A big part of commuting by bicycle is finding one or more good routes to get you where you're going. Finding out what other people are up to is one way that we can build up our little internal storehouse of good ways to get around town.

This edition of Route Finder offers up some advice on route finding and nominates a couple of good ways to traverse various bits of our fair city.

Route finding is all about not getting run over, getting there in good time, and enjoying the trip. After all, the journey is the reward, right? What makes a good route? Some of the factors involved in route selection include transit time, road conditions, weather, time of day, and the mood you're in. You'll find yourself making tradeoffs depending on all these factors.

Let's say you're in the mood for a nice, low stress commute and you've got a little extra time to spare. In that case, you might avoid the main roads and take a more circuitous route with a low cars-to-bikes ratio. One of my favourite stress free routes to work

takes me down a couple of bike paths, through a car dealership parking lot (usually good for one "Wanna buy a car?" comment per year from the salesman), down a good long paved back alley (which, for some reason, I find especially entertaining on garbage day -- it's amazing what people throw out), and through an industrial area with nice wide streets and little traffic.

Then again, you might've slept in and need to get from A to B quick. The most direct routes are often

exactly the same routes that the esteemed city traffic planners have designated for our four wheeled friends. This means more exposure to traffic, which as the statisticians out there know,

means a greater risk of unpleasant outcomes (be seen! be safe!).

... continued on pg 5



UPCOMING CANBIKE COURSE

A CANBIKE cycling course teaches the cycling skills that will take you with confidence into the riding situations you want to face. Practise bike handling maneuvers, reading and responding to traffic situations, and hazard avoidance. Learn in the classroom and on the road with certified cycling instructors. You'll have new abilities and confidence, and be looking for more opportunities to get out and around!


EBC provides nationally certified cycling education to children (CANBIKE for Kids), adults who

have never ridden a bike before (CANBIKE) and adults who wish to upgrade their riding skills (CANBIKE II). CANBIKE courses are created for cyclists who wish to become better cyclists in traffic. These courses are excellent for cycle commuters, tourists, and cycling professionals. CANBIKE is a pre-requisite for many security and police forces throughout Canada.

Topics include:

- learn where to ride in traffic
- traffic handling skills
- bike handling skills

- group riding
- bicycle types, selection, adjustment & repairs
- how to ride in rain, cold, heat, and at night

The next CANBIKE sessions are planned for the spring of 2005. Keep an eye on the EBC web site for details, or if you'd like to be notified, drop an e-mail (newsletter@edmontonbicyclecommuters.ca) or call 433-BIKE and leave your contact info and which course interests you. 

ROUTE FINDER ... continued from pg 4

If you find yourself riding at night with minimal lighting or visibility enhancing devices, you're best to consider taking the long, low traffic route. Trust me. On the other hand, if you've got 45 watts of lighting, two red flasher lights, a police-special reflective vest, and enough Scotchlite on the rest of you and your bike to make 3M send you Christmas cards, then you're probably OK on even the busiest roads. In fact, drivers appreciate it when you go out of your way to be visible. That can't help but alleviate the periodic whining about bad cyclists that crops up in the media from time to time.

Enough about finding routes. Time to talk about a couple of good ones.

91 Street Whitemud to Argyll

First up is the path along 91 Street from the southern end of Millcreek Ravine to the Whitemud Freeway. It's a fast and wide path with few intersections and usually even fewer pedestrians to deal

with. While the path from Millcreek south to 51 Street has been there for a few years, the city recently extended it all the way to Whitemud. South of Whitemud, 91 Street has a good wide shoulder which will bring you down into the access points for western Millwoods. Going north, the path leads into the Millcreek trail system which will bring you downtown in comfort and style. As an added bonus, this year the city is keeping the path clean and free of snow. I haven't had to wait more than 24 hours after any major snowfall before it is cleared!


Ride the Railway

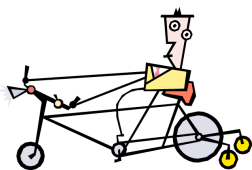
For our next route, picture if you will, a route connecting 118 Avenue with the rest of the world and you have the Bicycle Highway. It runs along the old CPR rail right of way, at approximately 121 Street and connects to everything you ever wanted in a bike route. If you are heading to the downtown core, off you go, via either the Oliver Square connection or 105 Avenue. Those feeling more adventurous

can take 104 Avenue. Rush hour is a total adrenaline blast! If your destination is in points south, you can hook up to 112 Street, 121 Street or 116 Street as you wish. These streets easily make connections to the High Level Bridge including a lovely jaunt on the new contra-flow lane on Victoria Promenade.


Pick up an official City of Edmonton bike routes map at the EBC worldwide headquarters any time during BikeWorks hours. They are also available at bike shops and on the web at:

http://snipurl.com/bike_edmonton

Route Finder needs your help! Have you got good routes to get from point A to point B? Have you noticed a road that has been transformed from a pothole-laden death trap to a smooth tarmac for transport? Has a great new pathway has opened up in your area? Let the Route Finder know by sending an email to newsletter@edmontonbicyclecommuters.ca or by dropping a note to the EBC. 

WHY RIDE A BIKE?

A Zen Teacher saw five of his students return from the market, riding their bicycles. When they had dismounted, the teacher asked the students, "Why are you riding your bicycles?" The first student replied, "The bicycle is carrying this sack of potatoes. I am glad that I do not have to carry them on my back!" The teacher praised the student, saying, "You are a smart boy. When you grow old, you will not walk hunched over, as I do." The second student replied, "I love to watch the trees and fields pass

by as I roll down the path." The teacher commended the student, "Your eyes are open and you see the world." The third student replied, "When I ride my bicycle, I am content to chant, nam myoho renge kyo." The teacher gave praise to the third student, "Your mind will roll with the ease of a newly trued wheel." The fourth student answered, "Riding my bicycle, I live in harmony with all beings." The teacher was pleased and said, "You are riding on the golden path of non-harming." The fifth student replied, "I ride my bicycle to ride my bicycle." The teacher went and sat at the feet of the fifth student, and said, "I am your disciple." 

EBCer PROFILE

This edition of *EBCer Profile* highlights none other than Jason, our chief BikeWorks mechanic.

What is your name?

Jason Wispinski

What do you like to do when you aren't cycling?

When not biking you can find me powerlifting, shooting my bow, cross country skiing (in the winter), and enjoying fine whiskey (in any season!). My guilty pleasure is a PlayStation 2 and my favourite thing to do to relax is work in my garden - which doesn't necessarily mean I'm not relaxed in the winter, just less so :-)



What are your favourite rides/routes around town? What is your current commute?

I don't have a specific favourite ride or route that comes to mind, but I am stoked to be able to commute from my new place in Riverdale through the river valley and Mill Creek on an almost car-free route.

What bike(s) do you ride now?

I am lucky enough to own a bunch of bikes, each for a different type of riding. I have a low rider, a dirt jump bike, a heavy duty full suspension for freerides, an old school Italian road bike, and a cyclocross. I change my winter commuter bike according to the weather. When it's cold I use my trusty Brodie mountain bike and for the slush a single speed road bike. [That's a lot of bikes...there are advantages to being a bike mechanic! - Ed.] I have a formula that will help any bike nut know how many is enough: $E = N + 1$ (where E is enough and N is the number of bikes you currently own). The N+1 that I am working on is a replica of the Gary Fisher clunker (the so-called first mountain bike).

What cycling gear is a "must have" for you?

My "must haves" include my SPD sandals and my car repellent green jersey.

How long have you been riding a bike? When and why did you start commuting?

I have never owned a car or even had a license to drive one. I've been biking since day one, never being a bus rider or ride moocher. My longest commute would have been back when I lived in Port Moody, BC. I worked in downtown Vancouver, which is about a 90 km round trip from Port Moody. I guess you could say that I'm a commuter because I think of a car as

resource abuse. You simply don't need several thousand pounds of metal to transport a human, especially around town. Until less than a hundred years ago that was the case for everyone so I don't see human powered transportation as unusual - rather that cars are the biggest mistake we made since coming down from the trees.

How much do you ride in a week, say?

In the winter I ride about a hundred clicks a week. In the summer I like to do a road ride of over a hundred clicks at least once a week and trail rides of 2 hours or more 4 or 5 days a week. The last several years I have measured my riding more by air time and spend

about ten hours a week dirt jumping and freeriding.


What kind of lock do you use?

My current lock is a Master Lock Street Cuff. It looks like a giant pair of handcuffs and is very compact and secure. At home my bikes are locked with a New York Kryptonite and a motorcycle security chain. I lock up my bikes even when they are in the house or garage because more bikes are stolen from garages than bike racks. Cable locks are basically useless and there is no such thing as a good neighbourhood.

What is your riding style? Cruising? Fast? Courier crazy? Etc.

I would say I am a fast rider - courier crazy is misleading because many of them are not so fast, but sometimes they are. On my low rider I have been clocked at over 50 km/hr for a short burst. My personal record is 378 km in 18 hours pulling a Bob trailer - that is one record I don't think I will ever beat.

Any bicycle commuting advice?

A concept that has been solidifying for me is that bikes generally ride in an invisible lane to the right that only exists in the minds of drivers. This often leads to being passed so close you almost get hit and leaves you no room to manoeuvre in bad conditions. So take your lane! We are not blocking traffic, we are traffic! The more cyclists refuse to ride in the leftover space, the sooner we can have our own lanes. I also would like to say that the sidewalk can be a very dangerous place for a bike. A huge percentage of bike/car collisions occur when bikes come off the sidewalk onto the street. If you must ride on the sidewalk, be extra aware of this danger zone. 

OUTGOING PRESIDENT RAMBLINGS

Well, my second day in the sun is done and I am off to lurk in the shadows once more. I certainly was not one of the best presidents EBC ever had, at least not this time round, but I tried not to cause too much trouble. Not an easy task at times let me assure you.

EBC's elders are getting long in the tooth. Perhaps it is time for us to take that one-way ride into the cold night. We now have mortgages, spouses, children and other volunteer commitments. We are very good at keeping things going but we do not have the fresh, inventive, and yes sometimes crazy, ideas of youth. It is time for new people to get involved and take EBC forward. I am pleased to be signing off now as

the new executive has a good crop of fresh talent. Where are they headed? I am not sure. If you have ideas then come forward and get involved!

Bike Works is still the heart and soul of EBC. It is the reason we have a large membership and the reason we have lasted so long.

Along with being a community workshop it is also where most people find out about EBC for the first time. I would like to thank Jason, and Chris who left us this fall, for making it such a positive and fun place to be. Without their work and cheer, there just wouldn't be an EBC, period.

We all owe a big debt to Karly Coleman for her years of hard work at EBC. She is always there if anything needs doing. She has come up with many of the innovative ideas that we know and associate with EBC's core values and operations. Even better, she is still involved - thanks Karly! Please give her a big hug and tell how much you appreciate her every chance you get.

A few hard lessons from cycling Edmonton's streets for over 17 years:

- Learn to smile and laugh at obnoxious drivers. You will feel better and they will realize they have not affected you at all.
- Do stop at stop signs. There are enough people out there giving cyclists a bad name. Please do not join them.
- Always shoulder check before moving right or left on the roadway; even within the lane you are riding in. It isn't safe until you have looked and made sure it is clear.


• Waxing your chain really does work for on street riding. You chain stays clean and so do you. Immersing the chain in hot wax is best but I am lazy too, and use one of the various drip-on wax lubes. Not quite as good, true, but it is still better than using dust-attracting oil.

• Learn to spin the pedals faster and you will be able to go farther.

- Pedestrians are unpredictable so SLOW DOWN, use your bell and talk politely to them as you go by. Please treat pedestrians the same way you would like motorists to treat you.
- Unsure of yourself on the road? Take one of the CANBIKE courses and improve your riding skills.

John Collier
Past President 

GOODBYE BRENDA HEYER

We regret to inform you that our fabulous board member, Brenda Heyer, has moved away from Edmonton and has stepped down from the EBC Board of Directors. That is, however, the only sad part of this communication. Brenda has moved on to wonderful, new adventures including becoming a mom and living in Toronto. She'll no doubt be taking the cycling community there by storm! While we will miss her energy, drive, and creativity, we wish Brenda every happiness with her grand adventure. 

WINTER COMMUTER RANT

"Did you ride your bike? ... You did? You're brave!"

On a cold day I'll get that a half a dozen times at work. I get it from people who have heard rumours that I winter commute. I get it from people who know I winter commute. Hell, I get it from people who see me enter the building sporting a bike helmet, goggles, and a beard full of ice. People are fascinated with the concept of riding a bicycle during the winter months. I'll bet that some part of their brains are thinking that it would be a cool, rugged individualistic thing to do. Unlike the summer month reaction, people usually don't give the "excuses-why-I-don't-ride-my-bike" litany in the winter. My theory is that they, in their minds, bestow upon me some sort of special super power (or perhaps some sort of mental health problem) that permits me to ride my bike year round. That way, they can admire my fortitude (or pity my disability) without having to contemplate actually doing it themselves!

Little do they know that, for the most part, all it takes is a little time and a little preparation and they too can join the ranks of "crazy" individualists who ride their bikes in the winter.

Firstly, to ride in winter means to take longer to get to where you're going. Darkness, slippery roads, bike lubrications that turn to molasses, and 14 layers of clothing all require a certain moderation in the speed at which one travels by bicycle. Unfortunately, we live in a society that values destinations more than it values journeys. How many people do you know who live 20 minutes from work by bicycle or 10 minutes by car and still insist that they don't have time to ride? Most people aren't even willing to sacrifice 10

minutes let alone what it takes to do a little winter commute. Winter commuting does take a mellow "enjoy the trip even if it is 20 below and my glasses keep fogging up" attitude if one is going to keep at it for more than two trips.

The other key ingredient is preparation. One must actually dress for the weather. This is a somewhat foreign concept to a generation or two of people who have grown up having never taken more than about 35 steps outside at any one time. People I meet are amazed that I just spent 45 minutes outside ... where it's cold ... real cold. It's as though people have forgotten that, if you dress for it, you can experience the outdoors for more than 2 minutes with absolutely no ill effects whatsoever (OK, I still haven't found a way to keep my fingers from getting "a little cold" at -25. If anybody has anything that'll work, let me know!). I don't know how many times I've seen people in -20 degree weather dashing from car to building entrance wearing little more than a windbreaker. People, dress for it and you'll be OK! If you are going to do any serious winter riding, make sure you have good face coverage. Most people know about dressing in layers and getting good gloves and boots, but it took me years to figure out what a difference a good neoprene face mask and a pair of ski goggles make! When my one-size-too-big-so-I-can-fit-a-toque-under-it helmet gave up the ghost recently, I got a helmet meant for snowboarders (but rated for cycling, too) with extra insulation and removable ear flaps. Combined with a headband it is the best winter helmet I've owned. Stripped of all its extra fleecy bits, it is even serviceable as a summer helmet.

... continued on pg 9




WINTER COMMUTER RANT ... continued from pg 8

So what, you ask, does it take for me to use the nearest snow bank as a bike rack and start hoofing it or looking for the nearest multi-person vehicular transfer station (otherwise known as a bus stop)? The answer is snow, deep snow, lots of snow. In deep snow you might as well walk. I find it just too difficult to make meaningful forward progress on a bicycle when it's squirming all over the place and 90% of pedalling effort is expended in snowplough-like activities. Sometimes it doesn't even take snow that is all that deep. For example, when the hard pack starts breaking up and we're left with a 10 or 15 cm layer of what is essentially highly lubricated quicksand on the roads, I find it better to seek out harder ground. Which means parking lots, car-tire-cleared ruts (on less busy

streets), and *ahem* the "s" word (that's "sidewalk", but you didn't here me say it). If only the bylaw makers of our winter burg applied the same snow clearing rules to the roads that they foist upon the good and fair property owners who pay their salaries. Heck, I'd be happy if they just did a better job with their pathways.

Speaking of hard pack, cars are good for one thing. They do a dandy job of packing the snow on various side roads and sweeping the snow off the major routes. We only need to train drivers to do a more even job of it and we've got it made. Industrial areas are actually quite good in the winter because those trucks have so many tires and they seem to do a lot of pulling over which quite nicely packs the snow all the way to the

curb. Hard pack snow (but not ice!) is also the next best thing to dry pavement when it comes to traction. Any decently knobbed tire, slightly underinflated to maximize surface contact area, will yield that satisfying squidgey sound that translates to "don't worry about a thing, I've got a grip here."

If you haven't tried a winter commute, I'd recommend you give it a go at least once, even if it's just to see how bad it really is :-). But when you do, make sure you arrive at work at an optimal time when you'll get spotted by the most coworkers possible. You'll enjoy the attention and they'll get some entertainment value out of it too ... a win-win situation! 

[Check out <http://icebike.org> for lots of winter bikey fun - Ed.]

ASK DR. COG

Dear Dr. Cog,

I ride throughout the winter and I'm too lazy to do a proper drive train cleaning when it needs it, which seems to be about every 2 days in the sloppy weather. Is there any way I can keep it clean without too much effort?

- **Lazy Bum**

Dear Lazy Bum,

When it comes to shortcuts in the diagnosis and treatment of the various ills and afflictions suffered by our two wheeled friends, you get what you pay for. If you don't do anything to your hard working winter chain, I'm afraid there's a good chance that the snow will last longer than your hardware. If you remove it and clean everything in varsol and lube every 2 days, your chain won't even know winter was here. A happy medium that I promote to my lazy-but-not-too-lazy readers is a chain cleaning device that cleans your chain while it's still on your bike. When used properly and according to directions, one of these babies can get a lot of crap off your chain. I won't say it's as easy as the lady in the Swiffer ad makes it out to be ... but slop, sand, and salt wash away with just a few moments of magical mechanical chain scrubbery. After you've cleaned your chain, don't neglect your derailleurs. Front derailleurs especially can seize up permanently if treated badly. The lazy man's way is to give them a healthy squirt of WD-40 for cleaning and then some lube on the pivot points to help displace metal enemies numbers 1 and 2: water and salt. That's a helluva lot better than letting them freeze and seize.

- Dr. Cog 

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Have a question for Dr. Cog? Let him know by sending an email to newsletter@edmontonbicyclercommuters.ca, by sending a note to the EBC, or best of all, by asking Dr. Cog or one of his helpers at BikeWorks.



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THE EBC MISSION

To promote and facilitate cycling as everyday transportation to Edmontonians by providing bicycle services and resources.

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

The Cyclist's Vehicle is published by the Edmonton Bicycle Commuter's Society. Want to contribute ideas or articles to the Cyclist's Vehicle? E-mail or snail mail your contributions any time.

The opinions expressed here are not necessarily the opinions of the EBC Board of Directors or editorial staff.

JOINING THE EDMONTON BICYCLE COMMUTERS

Join the Edmonton Bicycle Commuters in person by dropping in to BikeWorks at 10047 - 80 Ave (in the alley) or by mailing this form and a cheque to PO Box 1819 Main Post Office Edmonton AB T5J 2P2.

<p>Today's Date _____</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____</p> <p>Postal Code _____</p> <p>Phone Number _____</p> <p>Email Address _____</p> <p>New Member or Renewal? _____</p> <p>Do you want to volunteer? _____</p> <p> Newsletter? <input type="checkbox"/> Bike Parking? <input type="checkbox"/> BikeWorks? <input type="checkbox"/> Bikeology? <input type="checkbox"/> </p>	<p>Membership Costs and Benefits</p> <p>Family: \$25.00 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Individual: \$20.00 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Low Income: \$15.00 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Supporting Member: \$55.00 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Donation: \$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The privileges of membership are receiving this newsletter, BikeWorks discounts, social events, bike store discounts, feeling good by supporting Edmonton's cycling community. Thanks!</p>
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Happy Cycling!