

The GPTN Newsletter is published quarterly and is distributed to GPTN members and other interested parties.

For more information, contact: Elaine Hammer, 402-477-0242, or www.gptn.org



Great Plains Trails Network

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Great Plains Trails Network

Spring 2016

Issue 123

Trail Trek 2016: Riding on the N St Bikeway

By Roger Hirsch

We like to think that all annual Trail Trek fundraising events are great, but 2016 really offers something special.

Trail Trek 2016 is scheduled for June 26th, and the new N Street Protected Bikeway – bikes only, thank you! – will be a segment on three of the four official trails featured in 2016.

In addition to new segments and experiences, Trail Trek 2016 will again feature drawings for free bicycles donated by co-sponsors The Bike Rack and Cycle Works, corporate challenge competitions, “SAG” stops with entertainment and refreshments, and lunch provided by event co-sponsor Hy-Vee. Naturally there will be a colorful commemorative T-shirt.

Other major sponsors include the Lincoln Journal Star, our own Great Plains Trails Network (GPTN), radio station KFRX 106.3, Lincoln Surgical Hospital, Pepsi, John Blumer Investment Advisors, and the Lincoln law firm of O'Neill, Heinrich, Damkroger, Bergmeyer and Shultz. Lunch at the Haymarket will be served 10:30 a.m.-noon. Participants do not have to be present at the 11 a.m. drawing to win a bicycle – but those who don't miss the glory, applause and the group photo for GPTN's newsletter and GPTN.org web site!

This year proceeds from Trail Trek registrations and sponsorships will be designated for major improvements on the Murdock Trail through Northeast Lincoln between 48th and 70th Streets.

For 2016 Trail Trek participants – everyone from preschoolers to serious bikers – the N Street Protected Bikeway will be part of the Haymarket-based six-mile family loop, the 28-mile Lincoln loop, and a repeat of last year's 50-mile 'eat-my-dust' sprint from Lincoln through Eagle to Elmwood and back.

Registration materials will be available at some Lincoln stores, bike shops and Lincoln Parks and Recreation. In addition, participants may register at journalstar.com/trailtrek? And through a link on GPTN's web site gptn.org.

All participants start and end at the parking lot at the Haymarket ball park, 403 Line Drive Circle. Starting times will be staggered to ease the experience for everyone and allow organizers to manage services.

All routes will start from the parking lot by cycling across the “LINCOLN” bridge onto Canopy street through the Haymarket to N Street: *Continued on Page 3*

Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch

The City of Lincoln is developing a 7.5 mile-long corridor linking Pioneers Park and Spring Creek Prairie with a recreational trail. GPTN is raising \$60,000 to support construction of the first phase of the trail within Pioneers Park. Please consider donating to this exciting project.



Make contributions payable to: Nebraska Trails Foundation

Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Designated Project: _____

**Mail to: GPTN
5000 North 7th St.
Lincoln, NE 68521**





Great Plains Trails Network

since 1988

dedicated to the goal of developing a network of commuter and recreational trails within Lincoln and Lancaster County

2016

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LINCOLN READY TO BE 1# AGAIN

Lincoln finished in 2nd place out of more than 800 communities in the 4th annual National Bike Challenge during 2015. Madison, Wisconsin edged out Lincoln again to take top honors for two years in a row after Lincoln achieved 1st place in the 2013 Challenge. Nebraska also finished in 2nd place in the Challenge among all 50 states., just behind Wisconsin. The National Bike Challenge is back for its 5th year, and Lincoln and the State of Nebraska is ready to regain top honors.

The Challenge begins on May 1st and runs through September 30, 2016. The National Bike Challenge registration can be found at <https://nationalbikechallenge.org/>. The challenge is free and open to anyone.

There are three apps you can download to automatically upload your rides from your smart phone – Endomondo, MapMyRide, or Strava. Participants can also enter their mileage on-line each day at the website. The National Challenge will offer a chance for participants to win prizes in drawings each month, May through September.

A local Challenge, the Lincoln Bike Challenge, will run at the same time. Registration in the national challenge automatically enters local participants in the Lincoln Bike Challenge. The Lincoln Challenge will offer its own support, prizes, and a party in early October to celebrate the end of the Challenge.

The national program partners are PeopleForBikes and Cottonelle Brands, The Lincoln Challenge is presented courtesy of Cleaner Greener Lincoln, WasteCap Nebraska, BicycLincoln, the Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department, Lincoln Parks and Recreation and several bicycle shops in Lincoln.



GPTN NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

February — April 2016

Welcome to new members: Charles Bacon, Pam Baker, Brianne Bayer, Kelley Beasley, Jolene John-Beckstrom, George Boshae, Dawn Brock, Penni Bruning, Michelle & Chris Cederberg, Glynnis Collins, Todd Douglass, David Dryburgh, Jon Hanseling, David Ley, Roland Meirose, George Marvin, Mary Ryan, Scott & Mary Senne, Jill & Brett Stohs, Joyce Tontegode, Pat & Jerry Trainer, LeeAnne VonSeggern, Michael Walsh.

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Thank you to the following renewing members: Bruce Abernethy, Su Allen & Jack Higgins, Mary Amen, Dale & Peggy Arp, Ardith Barber, Beverly Barry, Stephanie & Sean Barry, Rod Basler, Scott & Maggie Bigelow, Peter & Ann Bleed, John Blumer, William Bonacker, Pat Bonge, Tim & Lynn Borstelmann, Brassil Chad, Deb Brown, Jill Brown, Douglas Campbell, Clay Capek, John & Eileen Carroll, Jim & Kim Carveth, Jeff Chevront, Tom & Mary Jo Cherry, Max D. Clegg, Jim Crook, James & Valerie Crook, Steve Danahy, Bernt Davis, Jason & Maggie Davis, Don & Crystal Day, Don Dingman, Gene & Andrea Dinkelman, Paul Durbin & Barb Calder-Durbin, Nancy & Hess Dyas, Michael Eppel, Denise Essman, Deb & Dean Fisher, Lynn Frankowski, Ruth Gerber, Mike Germer, Ribert Geschwender, Corey Godfrey, Teresa Gregg, Karen Griffin & David Wood, Matt Harris, Paul Harrison, Chris & Julie Heinrich, Richard Hekl, Camon Hershey, Ann Heydt, Randy Hiatt, Sandra Hilsabeck, Roger & Bette Hinrichs, Lee Hitt, Marie Hitz, Todd & Nancy Jarchow, Sitaram Jaswal, Al Jensen, Courtney Jerke, Lynn & Susan Johnson, Donice & Tom Kaspar, Martha Kaul, Jeff & Heather Kimble, Randy Kinney, Terry Klein, Art Knox, Al Koontz, Barb Kortum, Ed Kouma, Mike Kreikemeier, Cindy Kugler, Diane Laffin, Jean Lake, Jim & Doris Lewis, Phyllis Larsen,

Thank you from the 2016 GPTN Board of Directors. Your memberships are crucial to GPTN's efforts.



Back row (L-R) Brett Baker, Roger Hirsch, Jordan Messerer, Karen Griffin, Chris Heinrich, Corey Godfrey, Jeff Kimble, Kris Sonderup, David Scoby

Middle row (L-R) Ron Case, Parks Coble, Matt Baumeister, Gary Bentrup, Dale Arp, Greg Rosenboom, Steve Dunbar, Bob Torell

Front row (L-R) Elaine Hammer, Marynelle Greene, Dena Noe, Charlene Dunbar, Courtney Jerke, Mary Torell

Not Pictured: David Burd, Ann Ringlein, Damon Hershey, Jamie Warren, Ray Stevens, Jr., Bill Wehrbein, Carolyn Collier

Lincoln Track Club Membership Application

The Lincoln Track Club, Inc. was established in 1975 by an eager group of track enthusiasts. Although our title contains the reference to track, we have become a distance oriented club. Our membership includes some of the nation's finest road racers as well as a great number of fun runners.

In essence, our club is a nonprofit community service organization, established to promote running throughout this area and provide educational assistance for its runners. Our quarterly newsletter has become an informational running publication for local runners. The LTC is a member club of both the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) and USA Track and Field.

The Lincoln Track Club is not just about running. It's also about volunteering. This is the one ingredient that makes LTC work. The whole organization is made up of volunteers and we can always use more.

Please consider joining one of Nebraska's finest volunteer-run organizations. LTC members receive entry forms for all LTC races, FastTimes (our newsletter, which is e-mailed quarterly), an invitation to our annual meeting, and a discount of an entry fee for a single LTC road race. All memberships expire at the end of the calendar year (December 31).

2016 LTC Calendar

3/19 State Farm (10M/5K/1M)
 4/9 Novartis (10K/2M)
 4/30 Mayor's Run (1M)
 5/1 Marathon/Half-Marathon
 6/4 Havelock (10K/3K)
 7/10 Lincoln Mile
 7/197 Uplifting Athletes Run (5K/1M)
 8/13 Thunder/KFOR (5K/1M)
 9/131Buffalo (5M)
 10/23 Governors (15K/5K/1M)
 12/4Holiday Run (5K)

To join the Lincoln Track Club: www.lincolnrun.org

give
 To Lincoln Day
 May 26, 2016
 LINCOLN COMMUNITY
 FOUNDATION

GPTN, through the Nebraska Trails Foundation, will participate in the Lincoln Community Foundation Give to Lincoln Day. Every donation you make on May 26th helps your favorite charities even more because they will also receive a proportional share of the \$300,000 challenge match pool!

To donate: <http://givetolincoln.razoo.com/>

Support Lincoln Trails

By donating to the
 Nebraska Trails Foundation
 through the:



Community
 Services Fund
 of Nebraska

www.communityservicesfund.org/

Continued from page 1

Six-mile "Family" Route: The short route – a six-miler designed for families with small children – will use the N Street bikeway east from Canopy Street to the Billy Wolff Trail, then north to the Jayne Snyder Trails Center. It will have an official 9 to 10 a.m. start time. As last year, those who use the six-mile route will have snacks, entertainment by Dave Marsh, face-painting, and other activities available at the trails center. They may also see The Hub – a new Lincoln cafe that opened in the trails center late in 2015. The trails center stop will be open between 9-11 a.m. After a rest, those in the six-mile family loop will continue north on the Billy Wolff Trail to the Salt Creek Levee Trail, and return along that new trail between 14th and Charleston streets to Haymarket Park.

Sixteen-mile "Nature Center" Route: A repeat of last year's popular 16-mile route to the Pioneers Park Nature Center and back, the 16-mile trek will be the only route to skip the N Street bikeway experience. Also starting officially between 9-10 a.m., 16-mile cyclists will link from N and Canopy Street to the Jamaica North Trail south to Bison Trail, then west to Pioneers Park, and will follow the same route back to Haymarket Park. Snacks and entertainment by the Twisted Ponies will be available at the Pinewood Bowl entrance. The group is sponsored by a grant from the Nebraska Arts Council and Nebraska Entertainment Council. The stop will be open between 9-11 a.m.

Twenty-eight Mile "Lincoln" Route: The 28-mile route will start from Haymarket Park during an 8 – 9 a.m. timeframe, follow the N Street bikeway route, and go southeast from the N Street bikeway on the Billy Wolff Trail to the Rock Island Trail. The trek then continues south on the Rock Island Trail



to the Helen Boosalis Trail at 27th and Hwy. 2, thence west to Old Cheney Trail, and further west to 84th street. The route continues north on 84th to the Novartis Trailhead, where the Lincoln Bicycle Club will sponsor a SAG stop. No entertainment is planned at Novartis unless trekkers can get club members to sing a few stanzas of "Mairzy Doats". Or anything else for that matter. The Novartis Trailhead – which will service both the 28- and 50-mile treks – will be open between 7:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Those on the 28-mile route will continue from Novartis Trailhead north on 84th to the Murdock Trail and its link to the Dietrich Trail, which jogs through north Lincoln neighborhoods to the Billy Wolff Trail near 17th street. At that point it continues north on the Billy Wolff Trail to the Salt Creek Levee trail, then west back to the Haymarket Park area.

Fifty-Mile "Eat My Dust" Route: Fifty-mile bicyclists will use a 7 a.m. 'crack-of-dawn' starting time, and will also follow the 28-mile route. Like last year, those speedsters will add the Mopac Trail segment from Novartis Trailhead through Eagle to Elmwood, then back through Eagle. Following lunch at Eagle, they return along the Mopac to complete the 28-mile route. Entertainment by Trail Trek mainstay Chris Sayre will again be at Eagle's city park. SAG services will be available between 10 a.m.-12 p.m., while lunch at Eagle will be between 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. A ham radio connection will allow lunchers at Eagle to learn of winners during the drawing for bicycles at Haymarket Park.

New Experiences: It isn't just the N Street bikeway that's new for 2016. The 28- and 50-mile routes will incorporate the recently remodeled trail along Capitol Parkway between the trail bridge west of Randolph St. and the underpass at 27th street, and a re-opened Rock Island Trail segment at Sheridan Blvd. Trekkers will go under the new Sheridan Blvd. bridges – site of Lincoln's long-gone trolley-carrying "Penny Bridge" – on the Rock Island Trail. They will also experience the new segment along Old Cheney between 70th and 84th streets, in addition to the new Salt Creek Levee trail between 14th and Charleston streets.

As always, Trail Trek volunteers will be available to aid participants along the way. Registrants are always welcome to chart their own routes, but volunteer and other services will not be available on unofficial routes.

Welcome to Trail Trek 2016 – and remember, "Something Special" trekkers trek rain or shine!

BIKE To Work Week



The City of Lincoln is partnering with the local bicycling community to encourage residents to participate in Bike to Work Week, May 13-20th. Participants who commit to riding to work at least one day that week can receive a free reusable bag full of information and coupons (while supplies last) and will be entered in a drawing for prizes. Bicyclists are encouraged to complete pledge sheets prior to the event. Pledge sheets will be available at Cycle Works and The Bike Rack beginning May 6.

A free Kickoff Rally is set for the morning of Friday, May 13 from 7 am until 9 am at the Jayne Snyder Trails Center in Union Plaza. The adjacent Hub Café will be offering a selection of pastries at a deeply discounted price of \$1.50 per item for the morning ride.

A closing event will be held on Friday, May 20 from 4 pm

until 6 pm at the Jayne Snyder Trail Center. The Hub Café will provide participants a special coupon offering a \$1 off local beers on tap or wines by the glass on the day of ride and 20% off food good any time.

BicycLincoln is also working on some special deals with local business for the Bike to Work Week similar to what the Hub is offering. Registered riders will be given a sticker from BicycLincoln to go on helmet and list of businesses offering discounts to participants during the week.

Bikers are strongly encouraged to wear helmets. The City also reminds residents that it is illegal to ride a bike on sidewalks in downtown and other congested districts. For more information, visit lincoln.ne.gov or contact Mike Heyl, Public Health Educator, Lincoln Lancaster County Health Dept., at mhey1@lincoln.ne.gov or 402-441-3889.

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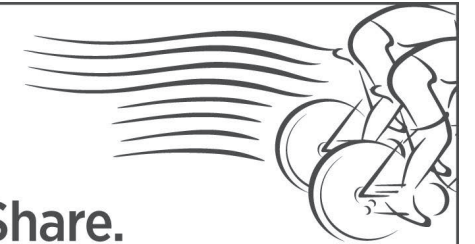
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BICYCLING LINCOLN™

BicycLincoln is a community group that supports and promotes bicycling in the city of Lincoln. Our mission is to provide information and a unified voice for bicycle advocacy in an effort to make cycling in Lincoln more friendly, safe, easy, accepted, and "so that more people bike and bike more often."

Check them out at <http://bicyclincoln.org/>



Ride. Share.

That's what the Great Plains Bike Club is all about. We actively promote bicycling with rides for all levels of riders in and around Southeastern Nebraska.

Weekly rides with a leader | Show 'n go rides
Ice cream & coffee shop rides | Moon-lit rides
Hammering training rides | Trail rides

We sponsor the Spring Fling ride in April and Heatstroke 100 in August. We also promote bicycling safety through community-sponsored events. For more information and an on-line application to join the club, go to greatplainsbikeclub.org.



NORTHWEST
Thursday, JUNE 2
6:00pm 12 MILES
Meet at the Trails Center (21st & Q) Union Plaza Park

NORTHEAST
Thursday, MAY 26
6:00pm 16 MILES
Meet at the Trails Center (21st & Q) Union Plaza Park

SOUTHWEST
Thursday, MAY 19
6:00pm 16 MILES
Meet at the Trails Center (21st & Q) Union Plaza Park

SOUTHEAST
Thursday, MAY 12
6:00pm 15 MILES
Meet at the Trails Center (21st & Q) Union Plaza Park

TOUR de lincoln 2016

Explore Lincoln on the trails!
Each ride features a different quadrant of the city.

Refreshments 15 minutes before each ride. Shorter options available. For weather cancellations, gptn.org. No registration fee is required, just show up ready to ride! Helmets please.

Official Event of the **LiveWell CHALLENGE**

SPONSORED BY **Lincoln Parks & Recreation** and **Great Plains Trails Network**

For more information visit gptn.org or call Marynelle, (402) 429-2034.

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The Nebraska Bicycling Alliance is a nonprofit corporation primarily supported by public donations, memberships and grants. Our mission is to promote health and safety for all who ride bicycles in Nebraska.

The vision of the Nebraska Bicycling Alliance does not compete with existing clubs or organized bicycling groups, but rather enhances and supports all of these groups, bike shops, health and safety groups, city planners, policy makers and NDOR. We plan to promote bicycling in Nebraska when needed at the State and local levels in any way we can with project design, seeking federal funding, promoting safe routes for kids, and public education.

Learn more at: <http://www.nebike.org/>

The Canine Scrub



Self-Serve Dog Wash
2774 South Street
Lincoln, NE 68502
(402) 477-2782



www.TheCanineScrub.com email@TheCanineScrub.com

HOURS:
Monday: 10 AM – 7 PM
Tuesday – Saturday: 10 AM – 5 PM
Sunday: 12 PM – 6 PM



TRAIL UPDATES!

Pioneers Park Trail – Phase III: This project will provide a connection along the southern edge of Pioneers Park with the western edge of the park and is part of the Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch.

As part of this project, the Ben Verley and Harrington trails at the Pioneers Park Nature Center will be closed for the construction on a new bridge. Expected completion is August 2016.

Neighborhood Connectors: The City has started work on three projects to better connect neighborhoods with the trail system, The MoPac Trail will have a new connection to 52nd Street, and the Rock Island Trail will have a new connection at Arlington Avenue. Both trails will remain open. The Boosalis Trail will have a new connection at Dunn Avenue. This work will require the closure of the trail from 20th to 27th streets for about four days. The suggested detour is Kessler Blvd., just north of Highway 2.

Trail Closures: A sanitary sewer project at about 6th and Calvert streets will temporarily close portions of the Salt Creek Levee Trail and the Jamaica North Trail starting Monday, April 11. The work is expected to take until mid-May.

Salt Creek Levee Trail - The trail is open from Park Blvd. north and to the Van Dorn and Bison trails. Trail users can connect to the Jamaica Trail using the Van Dorn Trail to S. 8th and then the South Street Trail. Jamaica North - Take the South Street Trail to S. 8th, and then go south to the Van Dorn Trail to connect to the Salt Creek Levee and Bison trails.

EVENT CALENDAR

MAY

- 1—National Bike Challenge Kickoff
- 12—GPTN Tour de Lincoln Bike Ride—Southeast
- 13—Kick-off Rally for Bike to Work Week
- 19—GPTN Tour de Lincoln Bike Ride—Southwest
- 20—Closing Event for Bike to Work Week
- 22—Oak Creek Valley Bike Ride
- 26—GPTN Tour de Lincoln Bike Ride—Northeast
- 26—Give to Lincoln Day

JUNE

- 2—Tour de Lincoln Bike Ride—Northwest
- 26—14TH ANNUAL TRAIL TREK



Join the University Sertoma Club of Lincoln as they sponsor their 17th Annual Oak Creek Valley Bike Ride on **Sunday, May 22, 2016** starting in Valparaiso, Nebraska, located only 18 miles north of Lincoln on Hwy 79. Ride the trail, or enjoy riding through the beautiful Bohemian Alps.

This ride is a fundraiser benefiting many sponsorships of University Sertoma. Proceeds will help fund Camp Sertoma, a camp for children with hearing disabilities, Prescott Elementary School and the Nebraska Hearing Bank.

Check-in from 7:30 - 8:00 a.m. the day of the ride at the Trailhead at the North Oak Bridge, 356 North Oak Street in Valparaiso, (about two blocks west from Highway 79). Everyone must check-in to make sure you are registered and the liability waiver is signed. The ride begins at 8:00 a.m.

Free T-shirts, to riders who pre-register by May 11, 2016.

Entry fees are as follows:

Pre-registration - \$30.00 - Single Rider / \$60.00 - Family

- Entries must be postmarked by May 11, 2016
- Includes T-shirt

Children age 12 and under, ride free (must be accompanied by an adult)

So come out for a great ride and support a good cause! For further information and the entry contact Kathy Anderson at dkanderson@windstream.net 402-430-6084 or contact Don Freeman at 402-499-3500 dfreeman69@neb.rr.com.

Register On-line at www.bikeride.sertoma.net

Hope to see you there!

A Nod to N Street Bikeway History

By Roger Hirsch

We know the N Street Bikeway is a historical first for Nebraska, and GPTN has emphasized that point.

There is a lot of history to N Street however, and GPTN's historians have been diving into the books to find an interesting tidbit about what used to be on N Street much, much before our bikeway.

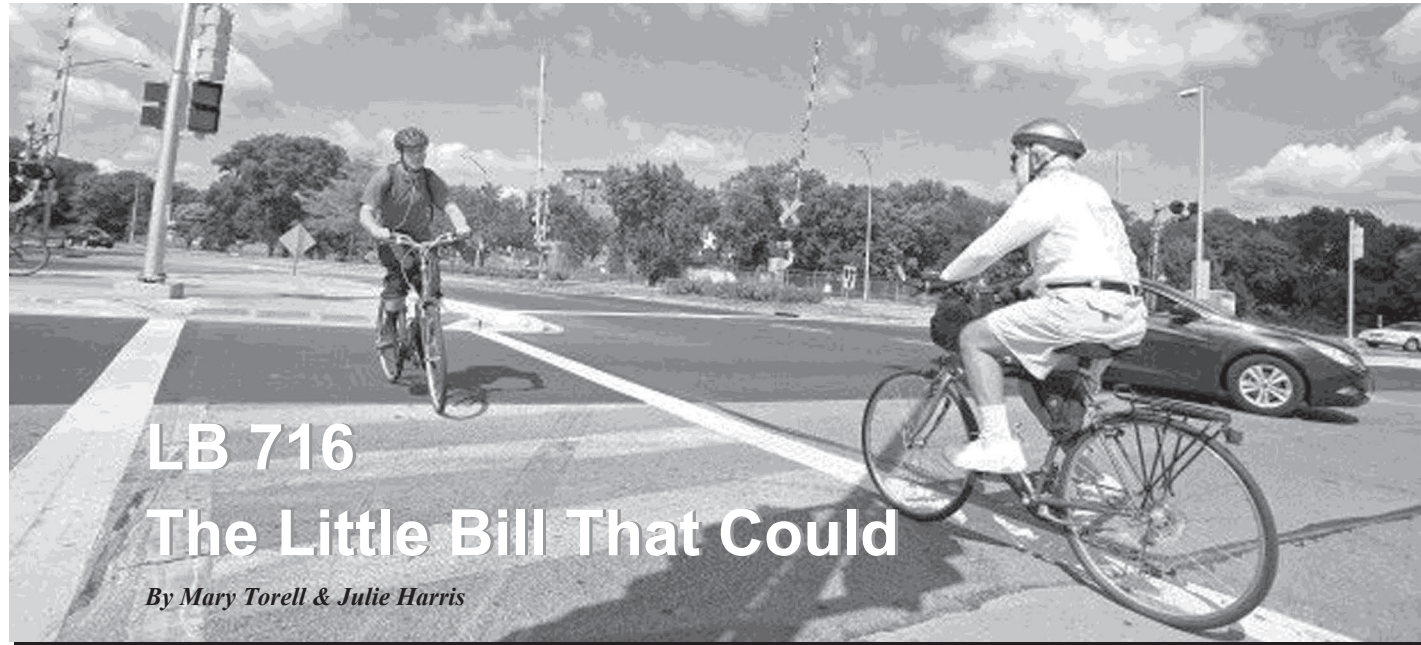
Our top prize goes to Herpolsheimer's (say it fast three times), pictured here in a photo from around 1915. It was one of the first "big box" stores in Lincoln, joined by Rudge-Guenzel and Gold's also on N Street, and Miller & Paine just a block away on O St.

If there ever was a prize-winning building in Lincoln amongst all the history that preceded, it had to be the Herpolsheimer Exposition Store on the southwest corner of 12th and N Sts. Prussian immigrant Henry Herpolsheimer opened a very prosperous dry goods store at 1109 O St. in Lincoln in 1880.

He purchased several lots at 12th and N Sts., and by 1890 his new building was open for business. It was one of the largest department stores west of the Missouri River – and with a motto "We Sell Everything" it was big. It had 73,000 sq feet and was characterized by large windows to let in daylight, earning it the moniker "The Daylight Store". Fixtures were made of oak and oxidized silver. Its 1895 catalog claimed it had 100,000 toys. The store was crammed with goods of all kinds. (We like to think its goods included those new-fangled bicycles.) There was a railway system that moved receipts, payments and change between sales stations and a central cash register.

Seeking to have the daylight experience at night, the store built its own electrical plant to operate elevators along with incandescent and large 2,000-watt arc lamps. Like many businesses, Herpolsheimer's Store failed to survive the Great Depression. It closed and was declared bankrupt in 1931 – when it had over 200 employees. Eventually razed, it gave way to a tire retail store.





For the first time in four years, Nebraska law has been improved, making bicycling better. LB 716, “The Little Bill That Could”, found its way to the Governor’s Desk in the short session of the Legislature, against all odds.

On January 6, 2016, LB 716 was introduced by Senator Rick Kolowski of Omaha.

LB 716 would clarify right-of-way laws for bicyclists and pedestrians. Language in the bill clarified the responsibilities of motor vehicle drivers and bicyclists at critical intersections. The bill also repealed the mandatory sidepath law. Repealing this statute gives a person the legal option to ride a bicycle in the road or street if necessary if they are unable to use a trail or other path. Proponents believed the clarifications in this bill would strengthen the rights of cyclists and pedestrians, clarify the expectations of motorists, and assist law enforcement's ability to enforce the laws.

The bill was heard in the Transportation & Communications Committee on January 25, 2016. No opponents to the bill spoke at the hearing, however, questions from the senators left us with mixed feelings on whether it would get the votes needed to get out of committee. Work continued behind the scenes to educate committee members on the benefits of the bill. On February 19th, LB 716 advanced out of the committee onto General File with a vote of 5-0.

Although the bill cleared this first hurdle, things looked bleak. Because of the short 60-day session, and the number of other important bills introduced, it appeared that our bill might die on the vine, waiting for a chance to be heard on General File.

The only hope was to get the bill on the list of 25 designated as a priority by the Speaker, which miraculously happened on February 22. The bill also had a committee amendment to satisfy Senator Curt Friesen of Henderson, adding language that made the bill stronger.

Although the bill made it to the General File agenda to be debated on the floor by the entire Legislature, it was the last item on the list. We waited patiently for two weeks for the debate. The short session, coupled with the amount of filibustering happening on bills ahead of ours, again made our chances bleak. With time running out, Speaker Galen Hadley gave a deadline of April 4 as the last day to debate the remaining bills on General File. Any bills not heard by the end of April 4 would be tossed out.

On April 4, with 30 minutes to go until the deadline, LB 716 made it to the top of the agenda and was finally debated by the entire Legislature body of senators. Senator Colby Coash of Lincoln questioned why the mandatory sidepath should be eliminated. Senator Dave Bloomfield of Hoskins questioned Senator Kolowski on the bill’s language when a bicyclist crosses a crosswalk, particularly young children. Senators Patty Pansing Brooks of Lincoln, Mike Gloor of Grand Island, and Robert Hilkemann of Omaha all spoke in support of the bill. After a brief debate, the bill was advanced to Select File.

We resisted the urge to feel like we were home free, even though bills on Select File pass very quickly unless someone really wants to stop it. Once it’s passed from Select File to Final Reading, there’s a very good chance it will make it to the Governor to sign into law.

Our fears were realized when two new amendments were filed to LB 716 before Final Reading. On April 5, Senator Coash filed an amendment *to strike the language that eliminated the mandatory sidepath provision* from the bill. Senator Bloomfield also filed an amendment that stated *“Any person who is younger than sixteen years of age shall dismount and walk his or her bicycle when crossing a highway by any route, including, but not limited to, a bike path or a crosswalk”*.

On April 6, an Action Alert was sent out by Julie Harris of the Nebraska Bicycling Alliance with an update of LB 716 including the amendments filed. She also posted information on social media asking people to contact their senators asking them to support the bill without the new amendments that were bad for bicycling. Within six hours, Senator Coash was pressured by so many phone calls and emails, that he withdrew his amendment.

On April 7, the last day bills would be allowed debate on Select File, again with ours at the very bottom of the agenda, Senator Bloomfield filed another amendment that stated *“A bicyclist riding a bicycle on a sidewalk or across a roadway or shoulder in a crosswalk shall have all the rights and duties applicable to a pedestrian under the same circumstances but*

shall yield the right-of-way to pedestrians”. This language actually made our bill even stronger. Senator Kolowski accepted this amendment and Senator Bloomfield withdrew his previous amendment. LB 716 received enough votes to be placed on Final Reading. The finish line was well in sight.

But of course, the drama didn’t end there. One more amendment was filed, this time by Senator Bill Kintner of Papillion. This had the potential to kill the bill altogether if the amendment was adopted, due to the timing. Thankfully, at the last minute, Senator Kintner withdrew the amendment.

April 13, LB 716 was the final bill passed on Final Reading before the Legislature adjourned. “The Little Bill That Could” was presented to Governor Ricketts and approved and signed by the Governor on April 20, 2016.

Thank you to everyone that called or emailed their senator to ask them to support this bill throughout the entire process. This is a huge win for bicycling in Nebraska and just a glimpse of the changes we are capable of when we join together to make our voices heard.

MSP (Mandatory Side Path) Laws

