

County bike touring website now online

Site details some 500 miles of routes

By Lisa Curtis
News Graphic Staff

Ozaukee County — Bored with biking the Ozaukee Interurban Trail? Dave Harney has a website for that.

After many years of planning and thousands of miles of bicycling, Harney and a group of volunteers have launched www.bikex.net, an interactive website that provides a dozen on- and off-trail routes throughout Ozaukee County.

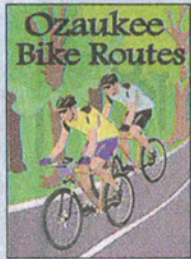
The Ozaukee Bike Routes website offers turn-by-turn directions for some 500 miles of touring routes. Each route includes information on scenic views, historic villages, rest stops, parks and preserves and other points of interest.

"Ozaukee County's paved rural roads, trails, parks, pastoral scenery and historic villages present a world-class environment for adult bicycle touring," said Harney, of Grafton.

The shortest route is 25 miles and runs from Forest Beach Park in northern Ozaukee County to Cedar Grove and back. Along with a map and written directions, each route is rated for its difficulty and includes comments about high-

Bike trail help needed

■ Help is always welcome in planning bike routes or other activities related to the www.bikex.net website. To volunteer, contact Dave Harney at admin@bikex.net.



lights of the ride.

Harney said he is working with the Treasures of Oz to incorporate some of their featured natural areas along the way, like Lion's Den Gorge in Grafton, Tendick Nature Park in Saukville and Virmond County Park in Mequon.

Treasurers of Oz Chairwoman Marjie Tomter said the relationship is a nice pairing and gives bicyclists a specific place to visit.

"We've got all of these wonderful places in the county," Tomter said. "At least for me, it's better to have a destination if I'm going to keep biking. You can either go from site to site or just make one a destination."

The longest route on the website is 80 miles and goes from Lion's Den



Photo by Mark Justesen

Dave Harney and his wife, Rosalee, bike over the River Bridge in Grafton, one of the sites a bicyclist a rider can find on the new BikeX.net website.

Gorge to Sheboygan via Terry Andrae State Park.

"This is a relatively easy ride, other than being 80 miles long," according to the route profile. "Most of the hills are on gentle rolling farm roads with very little motor vehicle traffic."

Approximately 9 miles of the route is on the Ozaukee Interurban Trail.

A 100-mile route is listed on BikeX, but is not yet mapped out. Harney said he will work this summer to create shorter routes as well.

Ozaukee Bike Routes also serves as a forum for sharing information

among riders. The Members Page allows bicyclists to log in and create a profile, then discuss routes, equipment, stops of interest, bicycling legislation and more.

Harney said the website not only encourages more area residents to bicycle as a major recreational activity, but promotes tourism in the county.

"Not only does the county have nice roads, but nice places to visit," he said.

(Lisa Curtis can be reached at lc Curtis@conley.net.)