

# Bicycling has a lot to offer

Everybody knows how to ride a bike, right? Wrong, says Robert Dickleson, 39, of Livonia, a longtime cyclist and currently president of the Michigan Council of American Youth Hostels, a local advocate for the enjoyment of bicycles.

"My advice to you is to ride whatever you have and enjoy it," said Dickleson.

"It's best to have a bike that suits you, but don't go out and buy more bike than you need. The real criteria is that the bicycle be the right size and appropriate for what you're doing," he added.

Dickleson believes too many assumptions are made about bicycles: (1) a fancy and highly technical bike is the best; and (2) everyone knows how to ride a bike.

"A bike won't feel good or be fun if it's not meeting your needs. It may be that you'd be happy with a three-speed bike that takes you around the neighborhood spring and summer evenings. Your kids might be most comfortable on a trail type bike."

Bicycling is just one of several

activities that are the strong points of the area AYH. It's the camaraderie of the cyclists that Dickleson likes the best.

"AYH offers an opportunity to join one club that does so many different things.

"The bicyclists in the club plan day trips, weekend trips, distance trips, picnics and just some casual sightseeing as well. In May I'll go to Ohio for a two-day 210-mile tour sponsored by the Columbus Council of American Youth Hostels."

Dickleson recalls the upsurge in bicycle sales 12-15 years ago during a fuel crisis. He pictures many of these bikes collecting dust in garages or basements and encourages folks to give the two-wheelers another try.

This spring AYH, headquartered in Berkley, will offer classes in "effective cycling" that help cyclists develop a better relationship with their bikes and being on the road. Sure, notes Dickleson, you can get on and pedal away. But do you know how to ride with traffic, how to cope with on-the-road emergencies and can you apply

the fine points of riding that really mean the enjoyment you are looking for?

For the road, one should consider a pump a part of the bicycle. A couple of tools for minor adjustments and a tire repair kit should round out the supplies one takes.

"Proper tire inflation can also help you avoid problems," he said.

Bicycle maintenance classes sponsored by AYH at area bicycle shops are held several times a year. Some of AYH's bicycle club's current plans include a progressive dinner ride in May and August, scavenger hunt in June, combination bike and canoe trips, poker run, destination rides, and Sunday dinner rides.

"One of the things I like about bicycling is that I don't have to go some place to use it. I hop on my bike to go down to the store or visit a friend.

"There are no pressures . . . just enjoyment," he said.

Call the Michigan Council AYH at 545-0511 for more information about bicycle club meetings and spring and summer events.



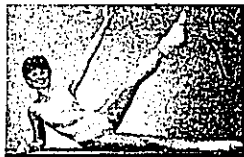
Combination bicycle/canoe trips are just one of several activities that residents in the Greater Detroit suburbs can enjoy through the Michigan Council of American Youth Hostels, headquartered at 3024 Coolidge Highway in Berkley.

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