Bike Day Benefited Other Outdoors Lovers

By LEM MESEE
Outdoors Writer

"You could hear the birds for a change."

That was one of the spectacular things that struck State Rep. John Markes, the idea man behind last Sunday's bicycle day in Hines Parkway.

There were other benefits.

"A good number of people were doing their jogging and walking. They certainly were wise to do it because it was a day when there weren't any cars.

"There were people with back-packs picknicking there.

"People were saying hello to each other. People from Livonia were talking to people from Dearborn. Everyone was courteous.

"Young people picked up the rules of courtesy from members of the bicycle clubs."

So it appears that "bike day" was a whole lot more than that in the 11-mile stretch of highway in this Wayne County park. It made people nature-conscious, it spanned the generation gap, it made people conscious of each other.

Markes, who is a Westland Democrat, if anyone cares, would like to see bike day -- or "no cars day," to be more precise -- more often on that stretch of road.

He is asking the Wayne County Road Commission, which runs county parks, to set aside four of them next year. Like most nature lovers and cyclists, he would probably like to see one every Sunday -- they do something like that in New York -- but four a year would be a good next step.

But if those 10,000 persons who took part last Sunday want more bike days, they will have to say so. Big corporations, labor unions, farmers and school teachers aren't afraid to sound off if they want a law passed.

Make your view known to either:

Wayne County Road Commission, 2 Woodward, Detroit, Mich.

Readers Forum, Observer Newspapers, Box 2428 Livonia, Mich. 48151.

Writing a letter is more important than you may realize. If the true feelings of the county parks people could be known, they would probably say they're not enthusiastic.

"Bike day" is a departure from routine. Every time you make governmental employes depart from routine, they resist. I know. County bureaucrats can give you a dozen million reasons why something "can't be done" but rarely will they accept a new idea.

That's why getting the road commission to close off traffic on Hines Drive from Ford Road to Newburgh was such an achievement on Markes' part. That's why he deserves support, in the form of a letter writing campaign.

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