

2014 Bike to Work Day Workplace Challenge

Bike to Work Day is an annual event held each spring throughout the country that promotes bicycling as a fun way to commute to work. This year, almost 350 people registered for the challenge in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady Counties, amounting to over 3,500 bicycle miles, replacing about 148 gallons of fuel, 2,900 lbs. of CO₂, and burning about 159,000 calories! A survey was distributed, which 51 registrants completed. About 90% of survey respondents did bike to work, and the average number of miles was 11.2 round-trip. Responses to open-ended questions are on the reverse.

Trophies were donated by Bikeatoga, Albany Bicycle Coalition's Lorenz Worden, Troy Bike Rescue's Dakota and Sheila, and Steven Rolf Kroeger. Trophies will remain with this year's winner until Bike to Work Day 2015.

Winners were as follows:

In Albany County:

The trophy for the most riders goes to **City of Albany Employees**. There is a tie for the highest participation for a large organization, between Cohoes City Hall and BERP (Bureau of Environmental Radiation Protection). The highest percent participation for a small organization goes to the **Alliance for Quality Education**. **Robert Dansereau** at BERP rode the longest commute.

In Rensselaer County:

Capital District Community Gardens had the most participants and **Gary Roosa** at the NYS Office for Children and Family Services won the trophy for the longest commute.

In Saratoga County:

Skidmore College had the most riders, the highest participation (large organization) goes to the **Kitware Weasels (Kitware, Inc)**, and **Chris Harris** of the Kitware Weasels wins the trophy for the longest commute. In addition, **Lake Avenue Elementary** continues to hold onto the school trophy.

In Schenectady County:

Union College had the most riders. The large employer with the highest participation is **DEC** (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation). The small employer with the highest participation is **Horizon Productions**. **Dana Rackliffe** of the Von Rollers team (Von Roll Isola USA Incorporated) rode the longest commute.

Additional Survey Results - Sample

Was there anything that surprised you?

- How little time it took me.
- In general, cars were respectful about sharing the road.
- How fast I rode that day. Averaged 20.5 mph!
- What an easy trip it was. Loved it.
- That I made it without collapsing.
- How much I enjoyed it.
- Had a conversation with another rider.
- How seriously, dangerously bad a potholed road can be: I ride a good deal around here so I know to watch out for potholes, but on a regular commute route it's a strong disincentive to ride.

What did you like about your ride? i.e. certain roads or parts of the ride; how it affected your day...

- Had more energy for the rest of the day. The rain was refreshing.
- It felt safe even on relatively busy New Scotland Ave.
- Beautiful day, nice peaceful way to start my day.
- Passing along the 6-mile water works trail. Had never ridden along it. Nice.
- The Route from my house to work is actually quite pleasant. I travel on State Street where there are good shoulders, through neighborhoods, through Central Park and on the new Vale Park Bike/Hike Trail.
- Makes me feel more awake from the ride in.
- It felt good to arrive at work under my own power. My co-workers were impressed.
- I discovered a new way home on Wednesday, which was quite enjoyable. On Friday, I was sorry that it rained, as it threw a bit of a wrench in my home commute plans.
- It's always great to bike anywhere. When I got to work, I treated myself to an outdoor cup of coffee and it was nice to enjoy the morning briefly before getting down to serious work. I like the camaraderie of the Saratoga group.
- The freedom I felt in riding to work with my own 2 wheels and pedal power.
- The wind, sun, fresh air and watching the wildlife scurry around - I felt 12 again.
- Got my energy level going by getting exercise first thing in the day.
- Trail-Zim Smith is a good alternative.
- The ride was energizing.

What didn't you like about your ride?

- Narrow roadways
- No bicycle lanes
- Potholes
- Union Street - Nott Terrace and Union Ave Intersections not bike friendly.
- Potential rain took me on Central Avenue in case of really bad weather.
- Sharing Delaware Avenue on the way home can be tricky.
- Road surface on Avon St. in Schenectady is HORRIBLE; they need to repave that puppy.
- Traffic and the bumpy roads in Ballston Spa. No good bike lanes.
- Western Avenue. Traffic circle on fuller. Honking and impatient cars. Lack of bike lanes.
- Motorist passing too closely or cutting me off.
- The first mile of my ride has some hills and curves. The road also does not have much of a shoulder at times. It had to be very vigilant about cars. The second mile is straight but no shoulder at all. That was also a bit scary.
- Bike lane near Stuyvesant Plaza along Western Ave. full of dirt and grit.
- Rte. 29 between Weibel to Henning is in really rough shape. I try and find alternative routes to get to Saratoga, but sometimes it is about time and I can't take the long way.

- Worrying about the weather. It also takes about 15 minutes longer to bike than to drive but it takes less time than to take the bus. I also don't pass, and thus can't stop at Starbucks on the way in :) which I do when I drive. Also, riding the short distance on Brandywine was not pleasant.