

Community

Stations set up to encourage people to bike to work

A group of cycling advocates are urging local residents to consider biking to work.

That's why they will be out in force on two days next week to celebrate Bike to Work Week.

The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition will have commuter stations set up on Monday and Thursday to assist people who want to try biking to work.

One will be set up on Monday in downtown Maple Ridge, at Dewdney Trunk Road and 224 Street, in front of Haney Sewing and Sound, from 6:30 to 9 a.m.

As in previous years, there will also be a station by the Pitt River Bridge, this time on Thursday, May 14, from 6 to 9 a.m.

On both days there will be refreshments and several breakfast items, so come on out, meet other cyclists, share your successes and fuel up before you head to work.

You can also get your bicycle tuned up by an on-site bicycle mechanic.

"The weather this past week has been fabulous for outdoor activities, so I think this is a good time to introduce to residents of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows a group of people who intend to help make one such activity easier and safer for them," coalition member Jackie Chow wrote to The TIMES.

"A few months ago, this group of people decided to set up a local chapter of the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition, because we felt that much could be improved in our community for everyday cyclists. The VACC has already been working very hard to lobby for enhanced cycling infrastructure in

other municipalities in the Greater Vancouver area, the prime example of course being Vancouver, where cycling is becoming more and more a mainstream way of transportation. The goal of our local chapter is to get more people of all ages cycling in our communities as well, whether it's kids biking to school, adults biking to work, or seniors biking to the grocery store. We intend to do this by lobbying our local governments for better, safer cycling infrastructure."

The coalition also gives courses for adults and children to learn to cycle safely on the roads and in traffic: check out the District

of Maple Ridge's Summer 2009 Parks and Recreation Guide for the Streetwise cycling course. Furthermore, the VACC organizes cycling events, such as the upcoming semi-annual Bike to Work Week.

"If you believe we need alternate, non-polluting ways of transportation, if you want to lead a healthier life-style by taking up cycling, if you feel your children should be able to bike to school, if you would like to be able to hop on your bike and do some small errands, please let us know by sending us an e-mail at mapleridge-pittmeadows@vacc.bc.ca," says Chow.

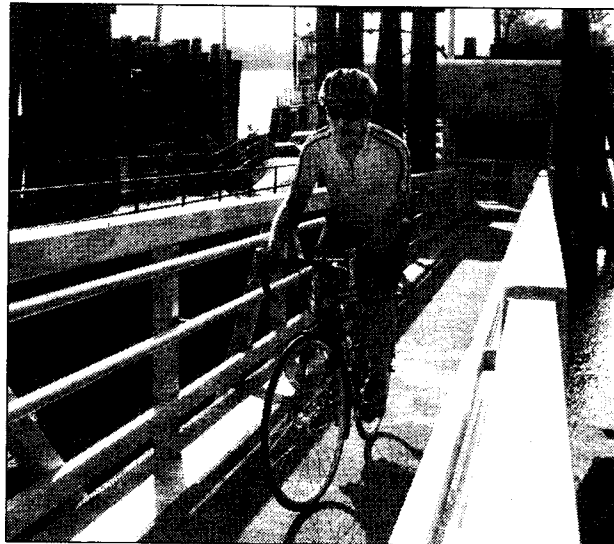
"We will put you on our

distribution list to keep you informed about our activities. We would really like to hear from people who would like to get actively involved as well."

Anyone who is interested is welcome to join the group at meetings, which take place at the Maple Ridge Public Library on the second Thursday of every month, from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Seminar Room.

You can also join and participate in an on-line discussion group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/vacc-pm-mr/>.

For more information on the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition, go to www.vacc.bc.ca.



File photo/TIMES

Maple Ridge's Steve Fruitman cycles to work in Langley.