

What Is This Bonktoberfest Everyone Is Always Talking About?

Joe Folsie

Bonktoberfest is an annual gathering of mountain bikers from around the Midwest who get together the second weekend in October to camp and experience an epic mountain bike ride. Bonktoberfest traditionally has been held at the Berryman State Park near Potosi, Missouri, with the ride occurring on the 25-mile Berryman trail loop. This year we are moving the festivities to the Syllamo trails near Mountain View, Arkansas. Local legend is that Bonktoberfest was started several years ago by a few EarthRiders from the Kansas City area who made the trip to Berryman two years in a row and before they knew it a tradition was born. The ride/camping trip/party has grown to include riders from all over the United States. Riders and campers of all experience levels are welcome. There is no set course, and this is a self-supported weekend. Generally, small groups will caravan down and pool resources. There is no 'sponsor' for the event, it's all for the fun of riding and enjoying the beautiful fall Arkansas scenery. This year the second weekend in October is the 8th, 9th and 10th, with some riders heading down as early as Thursday the 7th.



Pete Barth floats across a creek at Syllamo.

offer a variety of terrain, a large amount of climbing and descending, and a trail system that allows for rides of varying distances between 8 and 38+ miles. Four different trails make up the stacked-loop trail system. Scrappy Mountain loop and Bald Scrappy both flow nicely over some well-built contour line trail and are

approximately 12 and 7.3 miles respectively. The White River Bluff loop is about 4.5 miles and is supposed to have some fun technical features. The Blanchard loop is about 12 to 14 miles and is the more challenging trail, with steeper climbs and descents and a higher overall degree of difficulty. Even though the Blanchard loop is accessible from the Blanchard Springs campground, many riders

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The Syllamo trails are highly recommended by many local riders and

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ER Meetings

SEPTEMBER

Landahl Park

6:00 pm, Weds. Sept. 21st
Argo Road Trailhead

BONKTOBERFEST

October 8-9th
Syllamo Trails, Arkansas

OCTOBER

Blue River Park

Noon, Sat. Oct. 22nd
Sandtrap, 130th & Holmes

NOVEMBER

Bikes & Trikes for Tykes

Details TBA

Bonktoberfest 2005

(Continued from page 1)

drive to one of the other nearby trail-heads, avoiding a grueling climb right out of the campground. The Syllamo Mountain Bike Trail is named after a Creek Indian named Syllamo who lived in the area; it is pronounced sil'-lā-mō. A good map of the trail system is available at: www.ozarkoffroadcyclists.com/html/syllamo_trails.html

Camping facilities at the Blanchard Springs campground are also highly recommended. We have a group campground reserved, which you are welcome to use for a small nightly fee. The campground is about a 5-1/2 hour drive from Kansas City, depending on where in the metro you start. *Note:* it is recommended if you are going to make the drive to research the route in advance and take a reliable map. Getting lost in the Ozarks

is easy and not fun! Located off Arkansas State Highway 14, Blanchard Springs Campground is about 14 miles North of Mountain View. To get to Syllamo, take 71 Highway South to I-44 East to Springfield. There, take 65 Hwy South to Arkansas State Hwy 66 East. Go through Mountain View to Highway 5 North, then to Highway 14 West. Watch for the signs for Blanchard Springs on the right.



EarthRiders' past web-person (Sean Cairns) and current web-person (Ryan Roenmich) take in the Arkansas view.

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www.fs.fed.us/oonf/ozark/recreation/syllamo_bike.html



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BikeSource gives \$500 to EarthRiders

At the Kill Creek meeting in August, Craig Stoeltzing of BikeSource (Comer of 135th and Quivira, 913-451-1515) presented the EarthRiders with a \$500 check. **Thank you, BikeSource,** for your generous support of our efforts to grow the sport of mountain biking in the Kansas City region!

Trail Stewards Meet

The annual Trail Stewards meeting was held on August 30th, where 15 local trail honchos coordinated maintenance and construction efforts for the 2005/06 trail maintenance season and to discuss global trail advocacy subjects (mapping and signage standards, etc). The 2005/06 trail days calendar will be coming out in the next few days; check it out, and consider coming out for a trail day, to give back a little love to the trails that love you so much.

Kill Creek August Meeting

The EarthRiders regularly monthly meeting (third Wednesdays) was held in August at the Kill Creek trails, West of Overland Park off K-10. The JoCo crew put on a great event, with a "bike parts" scavenger hunt for prizes, and free food provided by Quiznos Sub (see ad previous page) and soda by Pepsi. Our upcoming meetings are listed on the front of this newsletter.



Above: Kill Creek has excellent shelters. In the foreground, Todd Posson toys with his new trials bike while riders continue to come in off the trail. Below, hungry EarthRiders feast on Quiznos Subs and chips.



Nothing compares to the simple pleasure of a bike ride.

John F. Kennedy

<http://www.quote garden.com/bicycling.html>

Ride Schedule

Mondays: Friz on the Plaza. Meet at Mill Creek Park (the horsey fountain), 6 p.m.

Tuesdays: Taco Tuesday at the Blue River Parkway Trails. Meet at Good Time Charlie's parking lot (formerly Pat Murphy's), 130th and Holmes. Rides start at irregular times after work, generally several groups of varying abilities.

Wednesdays: Hump Day at Kill Creek. Leaves from the Shelter 1 parking lot 6-6:30 pm.

Rides are subject to weather and leader availability, and are "show and go." Check the appropriate forum thread for the latest updates (sign up at www.earthriders.com).

BikeMO: A Celebration Ride for the Missouri Bicycle Federation's Successes of 2005. Holt's Summit, MO, 5 miles north of Jefferson City on Hwy 54. Sat., Oct. 15, 2005, 9 a.m. 35, 62 & 100 mile routes. Web: <http://MoBikeFed.org/BikeMO>. Pre-registration is encouraged. The ride is fully supported with periodic rest stops and sag vehicles.



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Don't Drive - Ride!

Pete Barth

*I'm fightin' my friction to kickin'
my addiction...to gasoline.*

Too much drivin'! Drive to the bank, drive to the store, drive to work, drive to get more. No more!

I wish. I know it's a pipedream and it's not always possible, but I'm trying, and I do what I can. Re-calibrating the mindset to first consider riding where I need to go, and drive if I have to. I've got the bike, and I'd much rather be riding than driving...why not? Bikes are not just for recreation, but for transportation too!

I live in the epitome of suburbia - Johnson County - and yet it's not too difficult to run many errands by bike. Sure, some things are further away, but that just means a longer ride - what's wrong with that? I've found that simply overcoming the mental inertia to do it is the hardest part, but there are a number of things you can do to make things easier.

First of all, get over the urge to have to "suit up" in order to ride. For short trips, street clothes and sneakers work fine. Just take it slow and easy — it's not a race — and you won't die or suffer chronic crundle bungle. Promise!

Although not a necessity, a dedicated commuter or townie bike makes it super-convenient to just get on and go. Mine's an old rigid mountain bike with narrow slick



tires. It rolls along quite nicely and has a comfortable upright riding position. Skip the clip-less pedals – plain old platform pedals feel good to your feet whether you're wearing sneakers, sandals, boots, or whatever (though you might think twice about the 6" stiletto heels).

Hauling stuff: If you're only carrying small-to-

medium sized loads, messenger bags or a rack & panniers work fine. Or a backpack. Or a milk crate zip-tied to your handlebars. It doesn't have to be pretty - focus on function over form. A side-benefit of a crappy old beater is that it's less attractive to thieves. If you can't

Who needs a car and a seven-forty-seven
When you can't buy a gallon of gas
Who needs a highway, an airport or a jet
When you can't get a gallon of gas
There's no more left to buy or sell
There's no more oil left in the well
A gallon of gas can't be purchased anywhere
For any amount of cash
— *The Kinks, A Gallon of Gas*

resist the urge, or you have an image to maintain, it's easily possible to go all-out with high-end, top-dollar gear. The choice is yours.

For serious stuffage, however, nothing beats a trailer. BOBs work great (on-road or off). Two-wheel, side-by-side trailers are generally a bit more stable on smooth surfaces and can haul more. Kid trailers work OK for the occasional grocery run, but for heavy work look at trailers such as those at Bikes At Work (www.bikesatwork.com).

I built my own trailer out of some old steel bedrails I cut and bolted together, and a pair of salvaged 20" BMX wheels (so depressing the perfectly good stuff sent to the landfill just 'cause people are tired of it). It's ghetto, and not the lightest thing going but it rolls along just fine and I'm not planning to lug it cross country.

A third option is the Xtracycle (www.xtracycle.com), which is sort of a mongoloid cross between a rear rack and a trailer. I don't have any personal experience with these, but they're an intriguing alternative.

Once you've ridden to your destination, it's important to secure your ride while you're inside taking care of your business, lest you find yourself walking home. Here in suburbia I feel safe with a simple cable and combination lock, and I usually leave my seat bag on the bike. That won't work for everybody; assess your situation and get what makes you rest assured.

Another way to replace driving time with riding time is by bike-commuting to work. That's a whole other subject, though, deserving of an article all its own (stay tuned). For now I'll just say that, again, overcoming the inertia to just do it was the hardest part for me. Now my bike-commutes are some of the most satisfying rides I do.

With just a minimal mind shift, and a minimum of equipment, it's entirely possible to reduce your own gasoline addiction.

Fundraiser for a Fallen Friend

On the night of September 2nd, our friend Zeke Shepherd was involved in a serious bicycle accident, landing him in the intensive care unit at Research Medical Center with a head injury. He is recovering — slowly — but his medical bills when all is said and done will be astronomical. A fund has been set up for donations to offset his costs, and many, many friends and bike suppliers are supporting him by providing swag to be raffled off or auctioned. On September 15th, EarthRiders gathered at the 75th Street Brewery for a ride (costumes encouraged), party, raffle, and fundraiser for Zeke. According to the organizers, over \$5,000 was raised. More will be needed, and more will be happening. Check the forums at www.earthriders.com for the latest news.



Left: bikes parked at Zeke's house. Top: Ken Miner awards raffle prizes.



Top: Karen Owens and Chris Pinkham show off their Sunday best. Below: Joe Folse and Damon Turner look sweet upon the seats of a bicycle built for two.



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		3 person FAST (any combo of 3 riders)	\$40/person
		3 person SUPAFAST (any combo of 3 riders)	\$40/person
		5 person OPEN (any combo of 5 riders)	\$40/person

schedule of events

- 7:00am Park gates open. Set-up camp.
- 7:30am Race Day registration opens.
- 9:30am Registration closes.
- 9:45am Racer meeting.
- 10:00am And they're off! The 5th Annual Rapture in Misery is underway. Both races start.
- 4:00pm 6 hour race ends. Awards ceremony will begin approx. at 5:15pm.
- 10:00pm 12 hour race ends. Awards ceremony will begin approx. at 11:15pm.

*Camping will be available after the event. So stick around and enjoy a peaceful sleep under the stars. Gates will close at approx. Noon on Sunday.

Rain or Shine

BIKE SOURCE

DIRT (with COOL THERM) 2005

So What's in the Bag?

Nate King

MMBP Director

Like many mountain bikers, I use a Camelbak when I'm out on the trails. The initial reason for going with the backpack was the capacity to carry lots of water, and to drink it easily. It's a lot easier for me to drink when all I have to do is bite the valve,

hands free. But as I've had the pack longer, the main reason I still go for it now is the ability to carry everything I need, and to have it all in one easy-to-transfer-between-bikes package. I have a Camelbak M.U.L.E., and everything I need fits in my pack pretty easily and doesn't weigh me down too much. But what is all that stuff? Here's a look at what's in my

pack. If you've been riding a while most of this will be pretty basic stuff, but if you're new to the sport, hopefully this will be helpful.

Being Seen

Starting with the outside, I have a blinky attached to the outside all the time. You never know when you're going to get caught on the road after dark, and the ubiquitous blinking red light is the cheapest, simplest, easiest thing you've got to be sure that the driver behind you sees you. While you're at it, throw some reflective tape on your cranks, too. The fact that the cranks are always moving makes them super visible when reflective. As for the blinky, I've got a Cat Eye model with the little bungee cord strap built in, which I like because of the versatility. It's on an elastic strap (as opposed to a plastic clip), making it easy to attach to a bag, to the bike, wherever it needs to go.

Wheel Supplies

If you get a flat tire, the one thing you absolutely must have is a pump (or some other way of getting air in the tire — e.g. CO2 cartridges). Doesn't do any good to have a patch kit or a spare tube, with no way to put air in it! I've never wanted to mess with CO2, so I've got my trusty pump tucked in to the back mesh pocket. Gravity and the elastic mesh are the only things holding it in, but it hasn't fallen out yet, after many years and many rough rides. I also have a couple of tire levers, one or two tubes (only one at the moment, but I often carry two), and a patch kit. I don't like the glueless kind, so I have the old-fashioned glue patches.

I.D.

Inside the bag, I have my Earth-Riders membership card and Jackson County volunteer card in a ziploc bag. I figure the only place I'd ever need to have my County volunteer

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card is on the trail, so I keep it where it'll be there.

Tools

I carry a run-of-the-mill biking multi tool, with lots of allen wrenches, screwdrivers, and a chain tool. I was sure to get one with an 8mm allen wrench for tightening crank arms, but now I guess they're making 10mm crank arm bolts (progress marches on?), so I'm not necessarily covered after all. Well, I am – but if you've got 10mm crank-arm bolts, I won't be able to help you! Be sure the chain tool on your multi tool is a good one. Some of 'em are great, some of 'em are junk. Try yours out to make sure it's good, before you're stuck on the trail somewhere finding out it's junk! I also have a leatherman multi tool (nice to have a knife, and something with pliers), and a 15mm wrench. The 15mm is for removing the rear wheel on a singlespeed when you need to change a flat or adjust the chain tension or whatnot. I also carry a real spoke wrench, one of those with lots of different sizes. I've never had good luck with the little built in spoke notches on the multi tools, so I have the real thing. It's pretty small, so it's worth carrying around. One odd tool I carry (that I will never even need to use, on my bike) is a cassette cracker. It's a nifty little tool called the Hyper-Cracker, made by Pamir Engineering, that I picked up way back when. Hard to explain how it works, but it's a small piece of stainless steel that fits on the wheel to remove or tighten a cassette body. Much smaller and simpler than a chain whip. I was riding with Todd Posson once when he could have used it and I didn't have it (it was in my toolbox back in my garage). Got home that afternoon and threw it in my bag, where it's been ever since. I'll probably never need it again, but you never know.

Zip Ties

What can I say about zip ties? They are the best. I've rigged up derail-

leurs, attached chainrings, even seen a guy stitch up his pants with zip ties. You can't beat 'em. Well, maybe you can beat 'em with one thing – duct tape. Wrap some around a pencil, snap off the ends, and lo and behold, you've got yourself a miniature roll of duct tape.

Etcetera

Digging through the bottom of the bag, I've also got a spare piece of chain tucked in a mini ziploc. This is especially important if you're on a singlespeed. If the chain on a geared bike breaks or gets bashed or something, you can always remove a couple links and get back to the trailhead with a shorter chain. Not so with a singlespeed. I've never had to use this extra piece of chain (knock on wood), but it's nice knowing it's there.

Last item tucked away is a kitchen trash bag (two of 'em, actually) for use as emergency raingear. They're simple, effective, and easy to carry – they take up virtually no space and weigh next to nothing. If you ever get caught in a downpour, just pull it over your head, poking holes for your neck and arms. Not really critical if you're caught in a warm summer storm, but for riding in colder weather or in the mountains, having a way to stay warm and dry if the weather suddenly changes could literally be a life-and-death issue. In the winter, I also tuck a stocking cap in the pack for the same reason. If you or someone you're riding with should crash and need to be out in the woods for a while, a helmet just ain't gonna keep you warm like a wool stocking cap.

When I'm officially riding as a Patroller, I also carry a first aid kit. It's pretty much a standard kit, off-the-shelf from Osco. Everything from bandages and wraps to tweezers and medical shears and a foldable SAM



splint. It does fit in the bungee straps on the outside of my pack, but the first aid kit, while fairly compact, is big enough that I don't carry it on the bike at all times. Usually I keep it in my vehicle. I do carry a smaller, very minimal first aid kit all the time – a couple 4" x 4" gauze pads, some gauze rolls, and a few various bandages. The smaller, all-the-time kit fits easily in a zippered pouch of the Camelbak.

So, that's what I've got. Sounds like a lot, but it all packs up pretty small and isn't too cumbersome. It's nice to have what you need, and to know how to use it, out on the trail. Here's to never having to walk back to the trailhead!

What's in your pack? If you have any clever ideas or items that you've been glad you're carrying, drop the editor a line at mgier@earthriders.com

Nate King is the director of the Midwest Mountain Bike Patrol based in Kansas City. For more info about the patrol or to learn about future training classes, contact nateking@kc.rr.com.



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