



SPOKE FOLK BICYCLE CLUB

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TOPICS THIS MONTH

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- **CHRISTMAS PARTY**

Spoke Folk celebrated Christmas with two kinds of chili, hot cider, and other goodies at the home of Marsha Parker.

- **NEW YEAR'S RIDE & JANUARY MEETING: 1/1/12 at 2pm**

On New Year's Day, seventeen Spoke Folk members met at Merrill Cabin in Ottumwa for cocoa, hot apple cider, pies, cookies, and visiting. Six members participated in a short ride, despite cold temperatures and strong winds. 2012 should be a great year, having been properly rung in!



- **SPOKE FOLK MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

Spoke Folk, it's time to renew your club membership. Annual membership runs from January to December. Please find the form included with this newsletter and return it (with a check) so your flow of bicycle information will not be interrupted.

- **RAGBRAI**

Registration for RAGBRAI XL began in November, 2011. **Spoke Folk** members can register online at www.ragbrai.com/registration. We are club # 0076.

Spoke Folk RAGBRAI forms are included with this newsletter. To be included in the Spoke Folk RAGBRAI group and/or to use the bus and gear transport, complete the Application for RAGBRAI 2012 Rider(s) and Transportation Fees. If you have been thinking about adding RAGBRAI to your life experiences – go for it! Spoke Folk are happy to support newbies. The bus we are planning to use has room for 33 riders. First come first served - get those registrations in; don't wait for the Feb. 24 deadline if you want to be sure of a seat on the bus.

RAGBRAI XL riders should note changes instituted for 2012. See RAGBRAI.com. See <http://ragbrai.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/2012-Online-Registration-FAQ.pdf> for frequently asked questions about RAGBRAI XL online registration.

- **SPOKE FOLK RAGBRAI DRIVER**

Has anyone you know expressed interest in driving the Spoke Folk RAGBRAI truck this summer? If anyone is interested in being considered for this position, please contact Josh so names can be added to the applicant pool. The position pays \$500 for the week, plus tips. In addition to driving the truck with rider's camping gear, the driver will be responsible for selecting campsites at each RAGBRAI town, riding a bicycle to place signs that guide our team to the camp site, and texting the riders of each day's camp location. Other services that drivers perform are listed in last month's Spoke Folk news letter.

- **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Spoke Folk monthly meetings are usually on the first Monday of each month, **HOWEVER**, since January ends on Tuesday this year the February meeting will be on **January 30, 2012** at 7 pm at the North Hy Vee Diner. If you are in town, please consider joining us. We will discuss the RAGBRAI route for 2012, which will have been announced on January 28.

Ottumwa's 7th annual Eagle Walk January 14, will begin at 8:30 AM at the Bridgeview Center with a hike along the Des Moines River to "walk, talk and learn" about eagles. Displays and other activities will be available in the center for those wishing to stay inside 8:30 AM-2:00 PM. Spectacular views of eagles flying and feeding on the Des Moines River from both inside and outside Bridge View. The event is presented by the Wapello County Trails Council. For more information, call (641) 682-8764 x141 or go to www.WapelloCountyTrails.com.

For other events, see www.bikeiowa.com. Weekly club rides will resume in the spring.

- **OTHER NEWS: BLUE ZONE**

The Spoke Folk bicycle club supports Ottumwa's competition to be designated one of Iowa's official "Blue Zones". Blue Zone communities place an emphasis on healthy living in all aspects of community life. As of this writing, Ottumwa has made the first cut and now is one of 58 communities applying for ten "Blue Zone Community" grants. Spoke Folk are hoping to see more bicycle trails and other ways to encourage bicycle use, such as bike racks downtown, signs indicating bike routes, and community bicycle events if Ottumwa is awarded "Blue Zone Community" status (or even if we aren't awarded the status). You can show your support and strengthen Ottumwa's position by visiting the website and adding your name and Ottumwa's zip code (52501) to the list. No other information is required, so try to enroll family members and friends as well. Anyone over 13 can pledge support: text BZP to 772937 or go to <http://www.bluezonesproject.com/citizens/signup>