

## **Oshkosh Walk or Bike to Work on Fridays Month**

Tired of high gasoline prices, of paying an arm and a leg to get to work? Worried about your blood pressure, and how you're going to get your cholesterol under control? Wondering how you'll ever fit into last year's swimsuit?

Well, here's your chance to do something about it. Because, with all the power and authority vested in me as a Community Columnist by the Oshkosh Northwestern, I do hereby declare the rest of May and all of June as Oshkosh Walk or Bike to Work on Fridays Month.

Wow – this is going to be huge. Hundreds, perhaps thousands of pedestrians and cyclists thronging our streets this Friday, saving money as they get themselves into shape. "What a great idea!" the top honchos at our local hospitals are saying at this very minute, as you munch on your morning cornflakes.

"Why didn't we think of this?" they exclaim, slapping themselves in the forehead. (You'll recognize them all day today by the visible welts.) "We should organize prizes for the participants," says one, his loving wife nodding approvingly. "I'd bet the Tuesday Mid-Afternoon Rotary could help us line up sponsors for this," announces another to no one in particular. "We could have the police department distribute the prizes! Get me Chief Erickson on line 2!" says a third to her bewildered Middle Schoolers, forgetting she's still at home.

Already the Northwestern has begun to organize its coverage. "Get me my crack cub reporters," shouts Stew 'Permanent Welt' Rieckman. "You, cover Jackson Street. You I want on Ninth. And you," he says to the cute one, as she bounces up perkily, "I want you on Cherry Street, looking for anyone headed towards the University."

"But wait," you protest, "I live halfway to Winneconne." No problem. Because to qualify for the free heart-healthy meals at the Roxy that a half dozen squad cars will almost certainly be randomly passing out, all you need to do is walk the last mile or bike the last two. So if you work at City Hall, just park your car north of Nevada Street and walk from there. Or if you work at the Northwestern, Stew, park west of Sawyer and peddle from there.

"Well I would," you continue on, "but I really don't have the spare time for this." Nonsense. Even you, with your significantly expanded waistline, can waddle a mile in fifteen minutes. Driving, with the stoplights and the circling around for a parking space, takes five. So we're only talking ten minutes extra in the morning, and the same amount of time in the afternoon. Isn't your health and wellbeing worth that?

"But what about, you know, ...?" Yeah, I know. For a healthy individual, after a one mile morning stroll, not so bad, but you? Someone who hasn't exercised at all since, gee, has it been that long? But here's the thing. Remember about your kids, when they were babies? But then you'd get out the baby wipes, and pretty soon, fresh as a daisy? Same thing will work on you.

So there you have it. Half the city's workforce, actually using their legs for something other than pressing down on an accelerator. Your friends and neighbors, enjoying the morning air as they stroll to work. Even your boss, puffing away on an ancient Schwinn.

I'm looking forward to seeing you out there this Friday. I'll be the one stopped midway to work on Cherry Street, giving quotes to the good looking blonde.