



“Peddlin’ the Pride

By Thom Nustad and Lori Carrell



From our perspective, it was truly the first day of summer: warm sunshine, balmy breeze... an



ideal day for a bike ride. If nothing else it would be quality time together and good exercise to boot. We had talked about “Peddlin’ the Pride” (visiting the Oshkosh lions by bike) before, but the weather was always less than cooperative. Today, all excuses vanished, and after donning biking clothes, pumping up the tires and filling our water bottles, we were ready to set out “Peddlin the Pride”. We printed out the map of the lion locations along with their descriptions and began the hunt for the king of the cats. Little did we know as we began the journey that five hours later we would return home, sunburned and fatigued, having visited each of the lions, and logged some 23 miles in the process!

The map was indispensable. Before you even contemplate “Peddlin’ the Pride” download the map obtainable on the UWO website <http://www.uwosh.edu/pride/index.php>).

Starting from our home on Oshkosh’s west side, we began our safari by first pursuing “Lion of the Valley” at Mercy Medical Center. The hunt continued to the new Aurora Hospital, and then a visit to the two guarding Community First Credit Union near Festival Foods.



These two (“Fur, Fin and Feather” and “Walkin’ on the Wild Side”, both done by Joye Moon and Joan Mosling) are worth the trip by themselves. Their educational value alone place them in a class all of their own. (I hope that these companions stay together and live out their natural lives at Traeger



Elementary and Middle Schools by fall.....stay tuned!).

The stretch that took us from west of highway 41 to the corner of Congress and Algoma was perhaps the most dangerous stretch. We would recommend an alternate in order to avoid the traffic there. Be creative! But risking life and limb was worth it when we visited one of our favorites of the pride, “Ivan”. Community First Credit Union in its multiple sponsorships scores again! His beauty and attention to detail is a thing to behold! Plan to take a little time getting to know him. It will be a friendship you won’t soon forget!



A quick jaunt across Algoma Boulevard allowed a chat with two more on the grounds of the Paine Art Center. “Journey to the Den of Dreams” is especially noteworthy. Sharing our map and admiration of the art with other adventurers at the Paine was a high point of the day. Don’t miss this leg of the journey.

Visiting “Bottlecap Lion” at Fratello’s provided an excuse to take an extended break for lunch. Eating outside in the company of other bikers and boaters made us feel that we were still on the journey. We were pleasantly surprised by the eateries own “Bottlecap”. The description made him sound very predictable, but he was far from it.



As we headed toward the campus we had the pleasure of peddling the historic and beautiful Algoma Boulevard. Meandering through the campus we became acquainted with two more pride participants. “Allegory” in front of the Oviatt House was easy to find, but “Heritage” was hiding on the second floor outdoor balcony at Reeve Union. His prideful placement high above eye level was a bit disappointing in terms of visiting privileges and photography. Why not bring him down so that we can pet him?

Heading toward First Choice Insurance Company on the corner of Wisconsin and Pearl provided a bit of comic relief as we played with the clown called “King of the Midway”.



We then began the downtown loop (the inset on the printed map) which provided access to fourteen of the thirty three lions. If you are not motivated to bike the whole pride, this area is a good alternative. This downtown pride can be peddled (or even walked) quite easily, and relatively quickly. We must admit that we did miss two of the downtown pride: “Patriot” and “Cryin’ Lion”, both of whom were caged indoors at US Bank and the Oshkosh Public Library, respectively. We’ll have to save those two for another day! It is, however, worth the time to visit with the lions perched outside the library that served as the inspiration for this project.



It was then that we realized it was time to safari out to the far eastern points of the journey: Menominee Park. Though it was tempting to cut the trip short to the east, the visit to the two cats in the park was a good choice on this beautiful Sunday afternoon with this exquisite park filled with laughing children and lounging adults. The sun sparkling on Lake Winnebago reminded us of the privilege of living in “Oshkosh on the Water”.

The time had come for the big expenditure of time and energy: the journey from Menominee Park to the EAA AirVenture Museum. Cutting through downtown, across the Ohio Street bridge and on to visit “The Lion Sleeps Tonight” at South Park was a piece of cake. The shaded winding trail through the soothing South Park stood in stark contrast to the trek out to EAA in the blazing sun. It seemed interminable to our tired, sunburned legs! A banana shake at Hardee’s on Koeller and South Park fortified us for the sprint out to the EAA.



After a quick jaunt out to visit “Aslan” at CitizensFirst Credit Union west on Highway 44, it was time for the home stretch. First was Culver’s on Koeller. It was there that we coincidentally ran into (no, not literally!) Pride of Oshkosh coordinator and artist Robin Asbury and husband/lion artist Daryl Asbury having ice cream with daughter Virginia.

On to visit the “King” at West Pointe Bank on Witzel Avenue, to “Ocean’s Pride” at Virchow Krause next to WalMart and then home!

We had “Peddled the Pride”! It may sound silly, but we high-fived and savored our accomplishment. With wobbly legs, sunburned arms and thighs, and an investment of five hours and 23 miles, the safari came to an end. And....it was worth it! More than exercise, the bicycle adventure had developed in us both a sense of appreciation regarding what this collaborative effort has accomplished: pride in our beautiful community, a focus which provides an opportunity for adults and children alike to spend time together, the enjoyment of artistic accomplishment, and additional funding of the arts. That’s quite a package!

To the organizers of this effort.....CONGRATULATIONS!

To the artists.....WELL DONE!

To the sponsors.....THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

And to those who have yet to enjoy “The Pride of Oshkosh”...take a lion to lunch!