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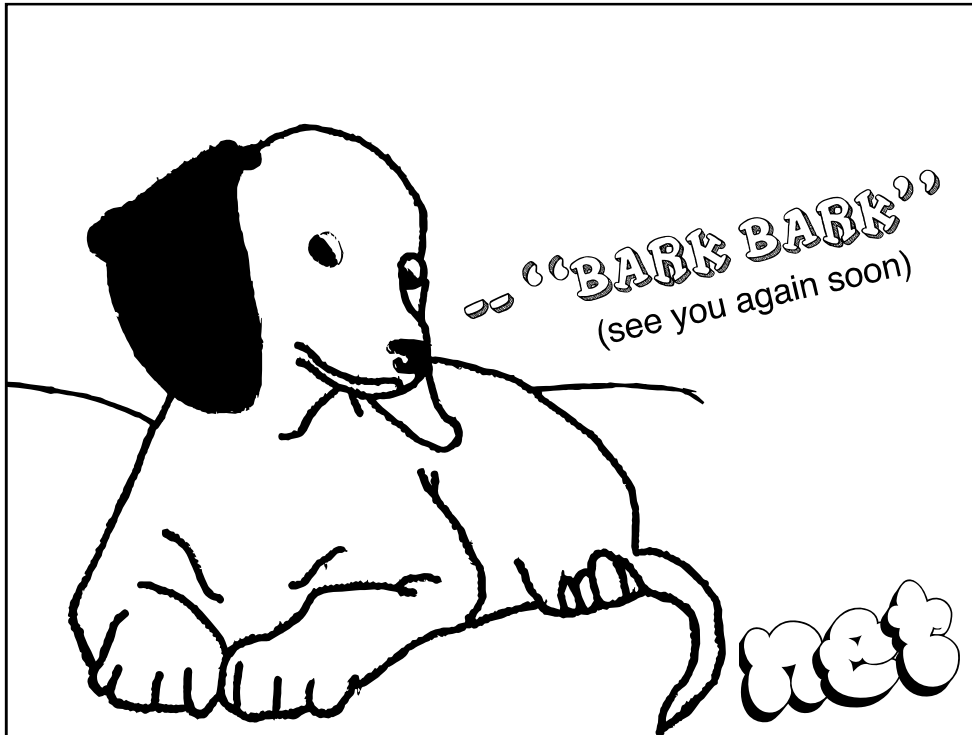
*** WEEKLY ***

*** GUELPH'S OFFLINE ALT-WEEKLY * FREE EVERY THURSDAY ***



The best of what's happening every week here in Guelph
* and * The Dragon Celebrates Free Comic Book Day *
* Spring Bloom Bicycle Ride * What's going on with Food in the Region *
* plus * Bird Day 2026 Festivities *

Issue 001 - April 30 2026



REPRINT

REPRINT

a welcome from us

get in net!

Hello and welcome to the debut issue of NET.

I figured I'd get this introduction over with right at the top so you have a sense of where this is coming from and why it exists and how you are holding this piece of paper in your hands right now.

My name is Michael. I moved to Guelph in the summer of 2019. This 'zine is the result of my last ~7 years here in your city, from settling in as a newcomer without familial ties to this land and watching many things that existed here wash away through the covid lockdowns to the difficult rebuilding stages multiple communities have suffered through and sometimes triumphed over in the years since restrictions lifted and life got back to "normal".

Spending my late teens and early 20s living in Toronto through the aughts (2000s) I was spoiled with the ease of picking up a NOW magazine, EyeWeekly or XTRA on my way to work Thursday mornings and having my entire weekend planned out by lunch. Alongside the listings-based guides to the city, those publications were filled with valuable and memorable local reporting on arts and entertainment, often from perspectives inside those communities themselves.

In today's nearly print-less world, we are forced onto our phones to trudge through endless brainrot until something of value catches our eye. Nearly everyone I speak to tells me they hate it. They want to spend less time on their phones. They remember when things were better and it really wasn't even that long ago.

NET isn't meant to replace the current scroll/click/shove your phone back in your bag model. I'm sorry to say that I do believe we are mostly stuck with how things are. Many events and actions in our world still need an online presence just to purchase a ticket. If you're curious about a film listed here in NET, you'll still have to hit YouTube to watch a trailer. We can't and don't want to replace that.

NET is helping you limit how much scrolling and digging you have to do to find a curated, selected window of what's happening where you live, work or study. It used to be like this, and it worked really really well. Let's try that again.

NET is 100% volunteer driven. We talk to our friends and community for ideas on what to feature, and we're folding and stapling on our living room floor. My publication experience ends with the elementary school newspaper in grade five. I do have a background in online and community radio. I feel there is some overlap in the ethos and vibes of both that world and the print-weekly world. Like every enjoyable thing in life, I am learning as I go. This is an idea, an experiment and a labour of love.

NET is looking for volunteer contributors to cover the pieces that get left behind in our ONLINE world, on topics that are important to Guelphites and highlight our arts community. Please reach out if you have ideas you'd like to see in print that match this vibe.

- Michael



NET WEEKLY GUELPH

Michael K Newton - Founder/Many Things
G.G Ill - Food

Andrea Bidgood - Active Transportation
Tori Maas - Cover Illustration
'Natasha' - Woodburn Dog Art

Consider this the demo tape
Issue One: April 30 2026
Circulation : 1st edition 225 copies

Available at the following fine locations :

Bonza Pizza, Guelph Music, Loose Goose Cafe
Red Brick Cafe, Royal Cat Records,
Three Pieces, The Dragon

Back Issues available for print
by donation at netweeklyguelph.com

make plans to visit us on the
world-wide-web at netweeklyguelph.com

trying to help you stay off your phone
just a little bit more since April 30th 2026.

advertise
your thing
right here.



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MONDAY

The Devils Punchbowl, Fishmilk, Cody James McDusa and Nate and Caleb - 6:30pm - \$10 - **the Albion**, 2nd floor, 49 Norfolk

Open House/Makers Meetup - 8pm - **Dioyde Community Workshop**, 700 York Rd. ••

TUESDAY

Paint Night! painting "willow song", 6:30PM, tix \$35 ADV, **Fixed Gear Canteen**, 5 Edinburgh

Trivia with *Aaron Dale* 10PM - no cover - **The Jimmy Jazz**, 48 Macdonell St ••

Merge records' *Destroyer* (solo) with *Fortunato Durutti Marinetti*, doors 7PM, \$30 ADV, AA/19+ - **Sonic Hall**, 12 Wyndham St N

WEDNESDAY

West End Community Centre's 25th Birthday party! - complimentary sweets and a full day of free drop in programming. 11am to 1PM, **W.E.C.C** 21 Imperial Rd South.

Triva @ 8PM - **Brothers Brewing**, 15 Wyndham St N ••

Open Stage, 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the Month, 7PM, **PWYC - ANAF Guelph**, 32 Gordon St

Open Jam hosted by Trick Vilbar from *The Last Armada* - 10PM, **PWYC**, 19+ **Jimmy Jazz**, 48 Macdonell St ••

A Friendly Guide:

PWYC = Pay What You Can
(\$ Sugg. = Suggested "PWYC" Price
AA = All Ages
19+ = Alcohol Served/ID Required
ADV = Advanced Ticket Price, more at door
•• = Weekly Recurring Event



helping you find something to listen to since 2019
a music newsletter by dan gorman
thediscovertab.substack.com

Want your event or show listed in NET? call the hotline at 1-800-805-5818 and leave a clear message with details of the event.

Not totally turned off by the internet? There are several great **ONLINE** resources to find out what's happening here in Guelph and these three are especially worth mentioning...

www.guelphspotlight.ca

@musicguelph on Instagram

www.whatsupguelph.com

on the big screen

The Art of Adventure (PG) @ the Bookshelf, Fri 4:30, Sat (CC) 4:30, Sun 4:30, Wed (CC) 6:30

The Christophers (NR) @ the Bookshelf, Fri 7:30, Sat 7:30, Sun (CC) 7:30, Mon 6:30, Tue 6:30, Wed 2:00

Michael (PG) @ The Mustang Drive-In, Fri, Sat, Sun 8:45PM

Mile End Kicks (R) @ The Bookshelf, Thurs 7pm

Power to the People: John & Yoko Live In NYC (G) @ Galaxy Guelph, Sun 4:30pm

The Housemaid (14A) @ The Mustang Drive-In, Fri, Sat, Sun 10:45PM

The Bookshelf is located at 41 Quebec St.
The Mustang Drive-In is located at 5012 Jones Baseline, Guelph

There are two cineplex theatres in Guelph located at both 485 Woodlawn Rd. W (Guelph) and 85 Clair Rd. E. (Pergola Commons) Outside of special interest screenings, those listings can be found at cineplex.com

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whats going on

THURSDAY

Karaoke with host *Stale Dale* 10PM - 19+ PWYC/
FREE at the **Jimmy Jazz** 48 Macdonell St ••

Australian blues and soul musician *Shaun Kirk* -
7PM, \$25.00 - **The Albion**, 49 Norfolk

Cyber Funk Night - doors 9pm, \$10 - **The Albion**, 49 Norfolk ••

FRIDAY

Headbang for Hunger a benefit show for the Guelph Food Bank featuring *Finnery Lane*, *Equilibrium*, *The Detour* - doors @ 7PM AA, PWYC/\$10 sugg - **Silence**, 46 Essex St

Barrie Alt Rock group *CRAST* with Guelph Post-Hardcore band *VIDA* and Barrie Hard-Rock outfit *Half Tight* - 10PM, PWYC - **Jimmy Jazz**, 48 Macdonell St

Golden Throats Karaoke #173 - 9PM, no cover/
PWYC - **ANAF Guelph**, 32 Gordon St

Spring Bal Folk Dance - presented by Guelph Arts Council, folk dance to live music by *Duo Gowan Stam*. Workshop and Dancing. more info at GAC. - 6:30PM, PWYC (\$15-\$35 sugg.) - **Guelph Arts Council**, 42 Quebec St.

Guelph Pro Comedy - First Friday of Every Month. *Secret lineup of Comedians* - 8PM, \$20 adv - **The Albion**, 49 Norfolk

Borscht Party#3 fundraiser for Ukraine, live music, language class, Ukraine trivia - 6PM - 10PM-
Brothers Brewing, 15 Wyndham St N

Guelph's *The Flamingos* live in concert - 8PM tix \$29.00 and up - **River Run Centre**, 35 Woolwich St

DRAGRAVE ft *Bodywaltz*, *Kara Melle*, *Molly Kewl*, *Axelle Wolfe*, *Summerr* - 10PM, \$20 door, 19+ - **Sonic Hall** 12 Wyndham St N

SATURDAY

PARKRUN the *Eramosa River Trail* every Saturday morning 5KM volunteer led run/walk - 9am Start - FREE - **85 York Rd** ••

FREE COMIC BOOK DAY - celebrate 2026 free comic book day at the Dragon. 10am to 6pm - **the Dragon**, 110 Macdonell St

Guelph Bird Day 2026, free drop in celebration of all things bird. Guided walks, activities, groups and vendors - 9am to 5pm - FREE/AA - **the Arboretum Centre**, 200 Arboretum Rd

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Preseason Baseball featuring the *Guelph Silvercreeks v Waterloo Tigers*. FREE - 1:30PM - **Joe Kaine Baseball Park**, 40 Municipal St,

Live music matinee at the red chev with *White Water*, *Exceptions*, *Silvercreek* - 2PM, \$20 - **The Red Chevron**, 34 Elizabeth St

Songwriters Circle first Saturday of every month, all skills and instruments welcome - 2-4pm register at @artnotshame - **Art Not Shame**, 119 Wyndham St N

Royal City Roller Derby home opener, doors 3:30, game 1 4:00, game 2 6:15 - tix \$15 cash - BYO-chair - **Victoria Road Rec Centre**, 151 Victoria Rd North

\$2 Bill and His Bad Pennies with support from *The WoeBeGones* - 8PM, PWYC - **the Cornerstone** 1 Wyndham St N

Juno nominated Orillia group *BLEEKER* with support from London's *Texas King* and *Living Room For Small* - \$22.50adv, AA/19+ - **Sonic Hall** 12 Wyndham St N

Monty & The Crew, 8PM - 19+ - **Kings Sports Bar & Grill**, 468 Woodlawn East

DJ's *Berschriker & coolguywholelife* bring you **GOTH NIGHT** 10PM, no cover/PWYC, 19+ - **the Jimmy Jazz**, 48 Macdonell St

SUNDAY

Spring Bloom Bike Ride - See feature on previous page, FREE - 10:30am, through Ward 1 - meet at **Carter Park**, 1 Fletcher Court

OPIRG Garlic Mustard Pull + Plant event, 10:00 - 12:00 noon, **Wolfond Park**, 139 Cardigan Street

Lovers Rock Sundays, reggae music, vendors, poetry and brunch specials, 12 Noon, \$10 - **The Albion**, 49 Norfolk ••

Toronto's *Orpheous Choir* joins *GCCC* in a double choir concert comprising over 100 voices for **SOUND | SPACE** - tickets \$5 to \$35, 4PM @ **Harcourt Memorial United Church**, 87 Dean Ave

Open Mic for musicians, comedians, poets and more - 10pm - no cover - 19+ - **Jimmy Jazz** 48 Macdonell St ••

Chest Fever and friends perform the music of Bob Dylan for **'How Does' It Feel?** - 8PM - \$39.50 ADV, AA/19+ @ **Sonic Hall**, 12 Wyndham St N

free comic book day

Michael, NET

The Dragon Celebrates Another Year of the Popular Initiative

Despite the many road closures and renewal projects that will occupy segments of the downtown for years to come, Guelphites of all ages will have something to celebrate in the downtown core this first weekend in May.

While for the time being, Wyndham St. may look like the aftermath of a superpowered battle, tucking into the Old Quebec Street Mall you will find yourself amongst a celebration that's been going 24 years strong. The Dragon, a long-standing Guelph destination for Graphic Novels, Manga, Boardgames and collectibles representing many subcultures - will once again be celebrating Free Comic Book Day this Saturday, May 2nd.

Free Comic Book Day is a promotional effort that originated as a suggestion by Joe Field, the owner of the Concord, California shop "Flying Colors". Field and the organizers initially landed on this weekend in 2002 to coincide and piggy-back off the hype of the opening of the first of many big-screen blockbuster Spider-Man movies, and it has become an event worth looking forward to for both longtime comic book fans and newcomers to the hobby every May since.

The Dragon was one of the initial 2,200 retailers who participated, giving away over two-million free comic books that inaugural year. 24 years later, and not without some organizational changes, FCBD continues on at retailers across the globe. Music fans may see similarities with Record Store Day, which has brought mainstream resurgence to the world of vinyl records and independent record shops.

"I don't think that screens can dominate so much that the physical experience of reading a comic can go away"

- Jenn, The Dragon

Although, whereas the exclusivity-focused nature of the record collecting world may drive much of the interest, long lineups and instant Discogs resellers we see for R.S.D, FCBD prioritizes the financial all-access of putting comics into the hands of new and existing readers, not that FCBD doesn't have it's share of exclusive drops and sought after titles.

The Dragon, which first opened its doors to Guelph in 1998 just down the street from it's

current location, has found a home in the ever-changing Quebec St. Mall since 2009, allowing an expansion of its selection of graphic novels and boardgames inside a building that is less and less retail mall and more and more community hub, certainly with the additon of the Guelph Arts Council and Guelph Tool Library on the premises.

Often on weekends you might find a market, gallery or exhibiton happening along the main aisle of the mall, a much welcomed departure from the usual mobile phone kiosks and novelty sock booths the average 'mall experience' contains.

A notable amount of the cities metal or aggressive music shows happen at the Red Papaya, and the through-traffic a Guelph Storm game brings can't be ignored. I walked past the Red Papaya one evening to find the space double booked to accomidate overflow of the previously shuttered ONYX club's bookings.

One half aughts can-con artist K-OS (of 'crabbuckit' fame), the other a professional wrestling ring.

"it cannot be understated how valuable print media is" - Jenn, The Dragon

While you may not catch a MuchMusic superstar performing at Quebec Street Mall this weekend, Free Comic Book Day fun will be in full swing by 10am.

The owner of The Dragon, Jenn, notes that in addition to the designated issues that get printed for the celebration, visitors can expect additional first-come-first-served giveaways and a drop-in appearance from the Guelph Spider-Man herself. Attendees will be given five free comics just for coming out on FCBD with an additional five comics for every twenty-dollars spent in store.

The hope that someone may discover the colourful and bold new world of comics has stapled FCBD as a still-standing holiday in the publishing world.

Whereas the days of being able to grab a title from mainstream publishers like D.C and Marvel at your local convenience store or on the bottom row of your grocers magazine rack are likely behind us for good, the comic book shop as a community third space still resonates as a valid and important model.

Above and beyond using FCBC as an excellent

REPRINT

enticer to introduce young people to the universe of graphic storytelling, Jenn told me of The Dragon's internal "Comics for Excellence" program that further rewards students at the end of the school year with free comics for every E on their report card, noting separate age-appropriate selections for both Elementary and High-School students.

When asked of the importance of comic books in a very digital world, Jenn expressed "I don't think that screens can dominate so much that the physical experience of reading a comic can go away". Outside of the goal of FCBF to attract new readers to independent comic book stores, Jenn notes a changing demographic of customers. "We've seen less of the nostalgic reader who kept reading into their middle age and now a lot of people in their early 20's who are going off and exploring who they are as people, who have a little bit of disposable income, trying things out, so we are seeing younger people getting into the medium".

While another cultural footprint of the 'way things used to be' - the video rental store, has been rendered almost completely extinct outside of niche insider locations in larger metropolitan cities, North American comic sales have nearly doubled in the last ten years, from a just under a billion U.S dollar industry in 2014 to just shy of 2 billion dollars in 2024.

On speaking to the power of physical comics versus a tablet or ipad screen, Jenn notes "Print matter will always have added value over screens because

of the way your brain processes the information. It does unlock a different part of your brain and does engage it in different ways and comics especially engage both sides of the brain, the literature side and the visual side and it cannot be understated how valuable print media is and especially comic print media". Jenn continues, "Especially with younger readers, the graphic novel is such a huge part of their lives, Scholastic has done an amazing job putting on book-fairs through schools that are now Graphic Novel heavy and lots of kids have come to comics through that".

The American-style comic book we've come to know and love, the ones that spawned many many cultural offshoots of video-games, action figures, collectible cards, television shows and blockbuster movies, is nearing its one-hundredth birthday, originally coming to popularity in the 1930s. But despite being somewhat of a sole-survivor amongst many subcultures and mediums of the 80s and 90s, the generation-spanning excitement of Free Comic Book Day brings some reassurance that a tactile, physical media hungry world isn't a complete nostalgic memory and more or less something that remains strong and vibrant, as much as it ever was, especially once you stop scrolling and log-off long enough to enjoy it.

You can stop by The Dragon, located inside the Quebec Street Mall at 55 Wyndham St this Saturday morning from 10am onwards for the celebration. Long Box Silver's, a newly opened shop at 137 Wyndham St. N will also be participating in FCBF 2026 and opens at 11am this Saturday morning for the festivities.

culture

Michael, NET

Bird Day Festivities Not Just For The Birds This Weekend

This Saturday May 2nd, Bird Safe Guelph, an OPIRG (Ontario Public Interest Research Group) action group hosts Guelph Bird Day 2026 at The Arboretum Centre located at 200 Arboretum Road.

This free, drop-in event will feature activities for Guelphites of all ages, including guided Bird Walks through the Arboretum, local artists selling Bird-related art, and information tabling from local nature-based groups. Wild Ontario, an environmental and science education program in the College of Biological Science at the University of Guelph will be present with birds of prey for up close viewing.

Bird Safe Guelph is part of the Sustainability Ambassadors program at The University of Guelph. They are volunteer based and focus on helping local birds thrive along with providing education on what the greater public can do in their own homes to support local birds.

Looking for ways to help our local birds outside of Bird Day? Bird Safe Guelph suggests reducing the amount of light outside your home and considering changing the colour of your lights from cooler, blue tones to warmer yellow tones to minimise disturbance to migrating birds.

A list of local resources, including local birding content that can be found at the Guelph Public Library, is available on the BSG website: birdsafeguelph.ca.

Bird Safe Guelph was founded in 2020 and saw regional acclaim for their initiatives with bird-proofing windows at the University and within our public transit system. Guelph Bird Day 2026 festivities run from 9am until 5pm and are free for attendees. Some of the guided bird walks require preregistration which can be found on the BSG website. Dress accordingly for the outdoor weather.

The culture section will look to highlight stories and events that shape our city and environment.

food

G.G. III, NET

The first episode of the final season of Mad Men opens with protagonist Don Draper directing a young woman on how to model a fur coat. Everything about the scene is seductive: the actors, the wardrobe, the period decor, the cigarette. And then, just as you're about to get swept up in it, just as you're about to overlook the cracks in the facade of this obvious dream sequence, the voice of Peggy Lee sweeps in to ask: "Is that all there is?"

I feel this way every time I eat in Guelph.

There is no way around it: the food here is mid. Michelin has visited several spots in Grey County, less than an hour north; the same is true of Kitchener, Cambridge and Dundas. Those municipalities also have tried, tested and iconic diners, sandwich shops, taquerias... I could go on. Guelph? Uh, do you like antojitos?

I know that's not all we have. There's lots to eat here – and most, if not all, of what's worth seeking out is brought to the city by newcomers keen to introduce Guelph to their cultures and cuisines. But when it comes to occasion dining, or to really having an ambitious culture of food and hospitality, it's grim out there. And it doesn't make sense! Wellington County, of which Guelph is the seat, is the only county in southern Ontario and southwestern Ontario in which acres of farmland are increasing, according to Canada's 2021 Census of Agriculture. We are surrounded by the literal best ingredients money can buy. What's our excuse?

active transportation

Andrea Bidgood, Bicycle Mayor Of Guelph

Spring Bloom Ride: Experiencing Our Streets in Season

I spend a lot of time thinking about how we move through the city, but sometimes just as much time thinking about what we miss when we move too quickly.

This is exactly what I hope to demonstrate in the Bicycle Mayor Ward Rides, starting with the Spring Bloom Ride.

As Guelph's first Bicycle Mayor, my role is about building bridges between people, neighbourhoods, and the systems that shape how we get around. Ward Rides are one way I'm doing that. They bring me into each ward to meet people where they are and experience our streets together.

This first ride through Ward 1 follows a route I mapped using the City of Guelph's Open Data tree inventory, filtered for early spring bloomers like magnolia, cherry, redbud, and orchard and crab apple trees.

Spring Bloom Ride

MAY 3 2026 | 10:30AM
START: CARTER PARK
FINISH: SUMMIT RIDGE PARK

BICYCLE MAYOR OF
GUELPH WARD RIDES
@BICYCLEMAYORGUELPH



Is it that, Guelph being a university town, the most lucrative approach for a restaurateur to take is cheap-n-cheerful, for the standards-free set? Is it that people here are governed by some sort of municipally specific self-loathing that nobody believes they deserve better? Or is it that Guelph's taste – like its politics – is dictated by the disposable income of an ever-more-conservative set of Boomers and aging Gen X-ers whose once progressive values have either stagnated or calcified over time into an obstinacy and refusal to change that presents itself as liberal-valued preservationism but culturally has manifested as something more insidious, something more ugly, something that has resulted in a city that's sat on its laurels in almost every conceivable way since, like, 1995?

I dunno! Food for thought, though! Ha ha!

Anyway, I'm really excited to be bringing a look at what, how, and why we eat the way we do in Guelph to Net Magazine because I feel it aligns pretty well with the mandate of the mag itself: the city is missing something, and the people yearn! My goal here isn't to proselytize or wax poetic about what the food in Guelph could be. I don't want to cut down the hospitality staff in this city who are largely making the best of a truly mediocre situation. But I do want to tell you what's good, and maybe challenge the people lazily holding the purse strings to do better.

But the route isn't just about flowers.

We'll also see the in-between spaces, the quiet cut-through paths and the small details that shape how it feels to move through a neighbourhood whether we walk, bike or roll.

A few spots I'm especially looking forward to include clusters of early blooms near Summit Ridge Park, some tucked-away connections that make the route feel surprisingly continuous, and the simple joy of moving slowly enough to actually notice what's in season while connecting with others.

Will everything bloom exactly on schedule? Probably not. Nature tends to lead and we can only just follow.

This is a gentle, family-friendly ride. A chance to reconnect with the city, with each other, and with the small seasonal shifts that often pass us by.

Come ride with us and see what's showing off.

Andrea's Bicycle Mayor Ward Rides will continue to feature in upcoming issues of net.