



NEWSLETTER



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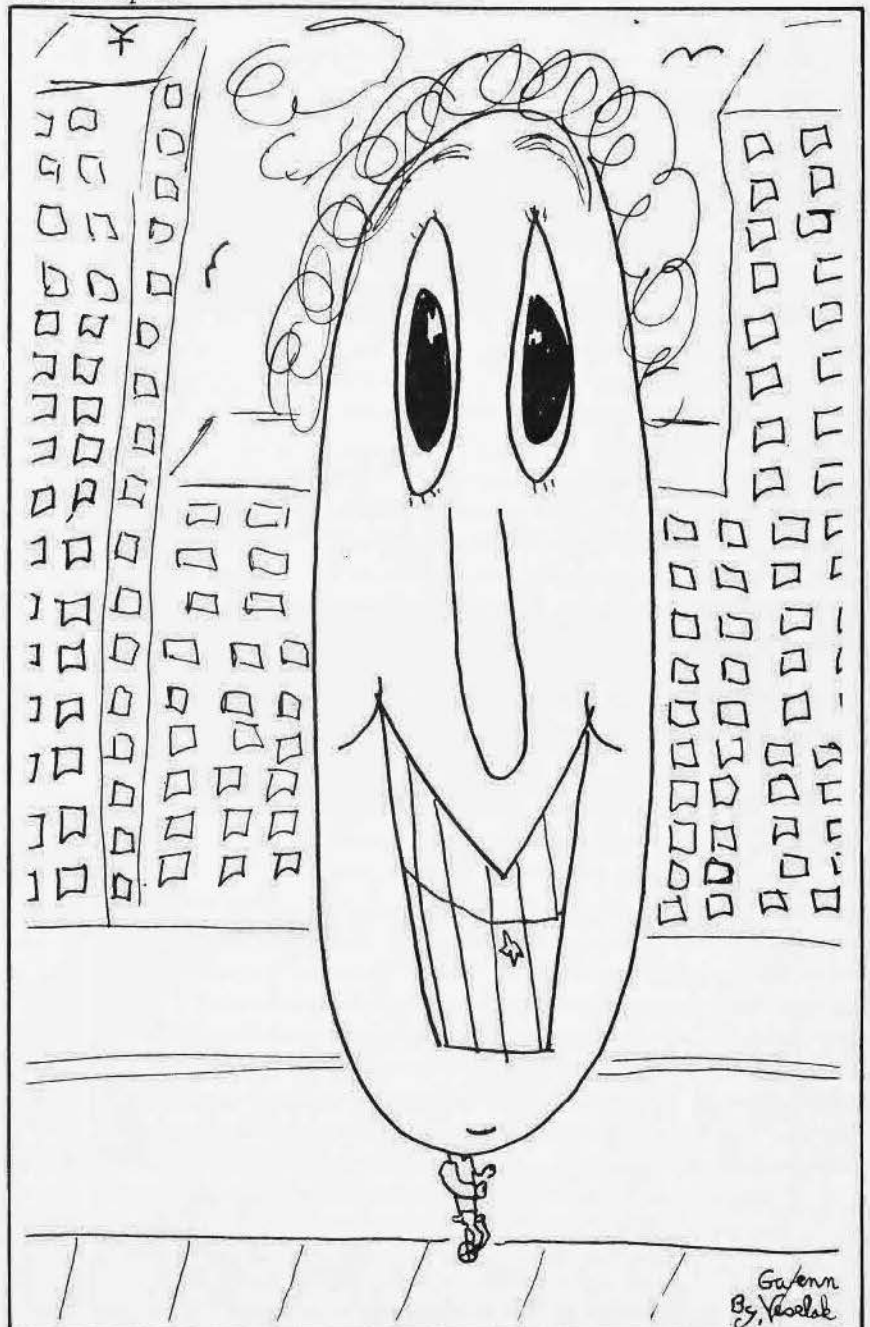
Roberto Tschudin Lucheme
7360 Gallagher Drive #228
Edina, Minnesota 55435

Send membership inquiries
and book orders to:

Joyce A. Jones
P.O. Box 40534
Redford, Michigan 48240

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"Happiness is."

Our pin-up picture is by Gwenn Marie Vaselak of Bayville, New York. She is 13 years old, and an eighth grader at Locust Valley High School in New York.

She writes:

"I am just starting to learn how to ride the unicycle. My father, Dr. Kenneth Veselak, teaches a circus arts course at Nassau Community College. He is the one who got my sister Lynn and I interested in unicycle riding. My sister rides the 6-foot unicycle. She also works as a clown with my father at fairs, feasts, and other events. I feel that riding a unicycle makes a person very happy, and that is why I drew the picture of the unicycle rider with the great big smile."

Thanks Gwenn! Nice picture!

COMING ATTRACTIONS!

In our next edition of the U.S.A. newsletter, we hope to have articles about the Amazing Meltz, Unicycling in Japan, the proposed International Federation of Unicyclists, and maybe, a translation of some work by Gordon Lundstrom! So, if you forgot to renew your subscription, or if you forgot to sign up your neighbors, do it now!

Thank you!

I would like to thank a lot of people for their help in getting this newsletter published. First my wife, Karen, who really helped a lot, both with layout and design. Next, the Redford bunch who offered to collate and staple and mail this newsletter off to you. That is a lot of work, and I am grateful to them for doing it. Next, to Bill and John and Mary Jenack for all their suggestions and support. And finally, to all of you, for writing-- for telling us what is happening to you-- for sharing your ideas and opinions and drawings and photos and . . . !!!

RTL

Federal Government to Invest in Circus Arts -- Including Unicycling!

USA member JOHN JENACK and a friend, Ms. Susan Roberts have succeeded in getting the prestigious National Endowment for the Arts to provide an \$18,000 grant for a circus arts program in the Shoreham-Wading River School District, Long Island, New York.

The grant is the result of the Endowment's recognition of the school district's prior record of success in the teaching of circus arts.

The Circus Arts program began in 1979 when Dr. Irwin August, physical education and movement instructor, developed a curriculum in traditional circus arts for the Wading River elementary school. The curriculum was offered to all third through fifth graders at the school on a voluntary basis and gave over one hundred children an opportunity to participate in a number of basic circus arts skills.

John Jenack, a Circus Education Specialist and Instructor of Circus Arts at Nassau Community College, donated his time observing the program and made suggestions for its expansion and improvement. John also agreed to serve as a technical consultant and instructor of circus arts for one year, personally assisting Dr. August in all matters relating to the program. The grant will allow for John's full-time services.

The new expanded program will allow participation of students in grades three through eight, in all three elementary schools and also in the school district's middle school.

(Paraphrased from the November, 1980 issue of the Shoreham-Wading River Central School District Newsletter)

All views expressed in this newsletter are those of the respective authors. They are not necessarily those of either members or officers of the Unicycling Society of America.

WHOOPS! We Made a Mistake!

Correction by Bill Jenack.

In the Summer and Fall 1980 newsletters, the information on the size of Goran Lundstrom's 63 1/2 inch wheel unicycle apparently got transposed with the date, and it was published as being an 80-inch wheel.

Goran is well over 6 feet tall, but an 80-inch wheel would be quite a feat, for even an extremely tall basketball player!

So...for the record...Gordon's big wheel is actually 63 1/2 inches in diameter, or 1.6 meters.

Incidentally, Goran Lundstrom and Bo Miller of Sweden have recently written a 57 page manual on unicycling that has just been published. It accompanys sales of the fabulous new Miyata Unicycle that has become so popular in Sweden.

Gordon's sport shop, through which he and a partner are promoting the sales of unicycles among other things is known as UDDA SPORTER. That translates into English as ODD SPORTS, and is a most appropriate name for their novel shop.

The unicycling manual is quite comprehensive, and in addition to instructions for beginners and advanced cyclists, lists current unicycling records, and on page 46, has photos of Goran and his immense wheel.

Unfortunately, the manual is printed only in Swedish at the present time.

(Editors Note: Any translators among us?)

Specifications for the King Size Uni:

- Diameter 63 1/2 inches
- Mainly aluminum
- Anodized blue (spokes, fork)
- Anodized black (center)
- Weight 14 kg
- Made by Goran Lundstrom in 1980.



BENEFITS - SHOWS - PARADES - PARTIES

ONE-WHEEL WONDER UNICYCLE CLUB

UNICYCLING • JUGGLING • CLOWNING

1019 ASHFORD PKWY.
HOUSTON, TX 77077 PH (713) 496-7970

MIKE FINN of Texas sent us a copy of his business card. Looks nice!

(Editor's Note: I found this letter interesting enough to merit being published in its entirety).
The author is Goran Lundstrom, in Sweden.

Received 10-23-80

1-81



Dear Jenacks,

Thanks for letter dated sept 16th.

I have made some devil sticks and with my small compressor it is fairly easy. Instead of the wiffle balls I have tried cube cutted rubber foam (high quality) pieces which makes them idela for children and also indoor "develling." I have had great success not only here (Jack was very fascinated of the devil sticks but not of balls or clubs) in the neighbourhood but also at my courses at different hotels. It takes a day or two to get teh average Swedish engineer taking active part himself I have found out.

I have got enquires to sell them but I have no time yet to make them. I have however tried to get someone interested in small scale manufacturing, among others the Swedish prisoners. But it normally takes 6 monyhs here between proposed idea and reaction ~~xxxx~~ so we will wait and see.....

The interest in unicycling is slightly "booming" here now and I try to goveny it in a serious way (and longlasting) There are however some "treasure finders" who try to massell at low prices but without guidance , so we have to fill the gap.

Our recently started club, the unicycling club HOLMIA of Bromsten in Sweden is very active and out of the around forty members ten are very skilfull. Jacks instructions and tapes did a deep impression. Coasting for example is mastered by two of the members by now, one making 6 full revolutions. We will perform several times this winter all over Sweden with our amateur program.

Time is my big problem just now - therefore I enclose my last letter to Jack; some of the info in there might be of interes! to you.

The interest in juggling seem to be as easy to spread as unicycling. I have or from Juggle Bug just to keep the surrounding satisfied. Any information you have on the Juggling in the US is welcome. How does John proceed?

As a proffesional educatong organisor for engineers on amongst others advanced automation I do feel worried about the "slow" acceptance of the present and coming high speed of automization. The almost unmanned factories will come rather soon and worthwhole occupations must be found and accepted. Juggling I think is one of these new replacacers. It can give man the same feeling of importance, satisfaction and community as a work shop job did before.

Some of the kids here are very juggling talented. I do exsercise daily, up 5-10 minutes, and the feeling to master the basic three ball and club routines is wonderful. The youngsters need less than half my time to master a new trick. But I can.

I have made some simple unis for Malin, now 3, and Markus, 1, and they are amused. ^{Daughter} ^{Son}

The 63 inch is completed and I have ordered photos to be made by my smallest brother (~~1.92 m~~ 1.92 m). Henrik

If you find some of the content here interesting for the newsletter can you forward?

The booklet on unicycling in Swedish should be ready by this month. Time again is a problem. The drawings to the book are faboulus.

The international part of my job is interesting: robots in DDR, polyurethanes in Bulgaria and robots in France this coming spring. England, Germany , holland and other countries are also on the list.

Best regards

Göran



The Unicycle Club of Puerto Rico.

LETS WELCOME A NEW CLUB!

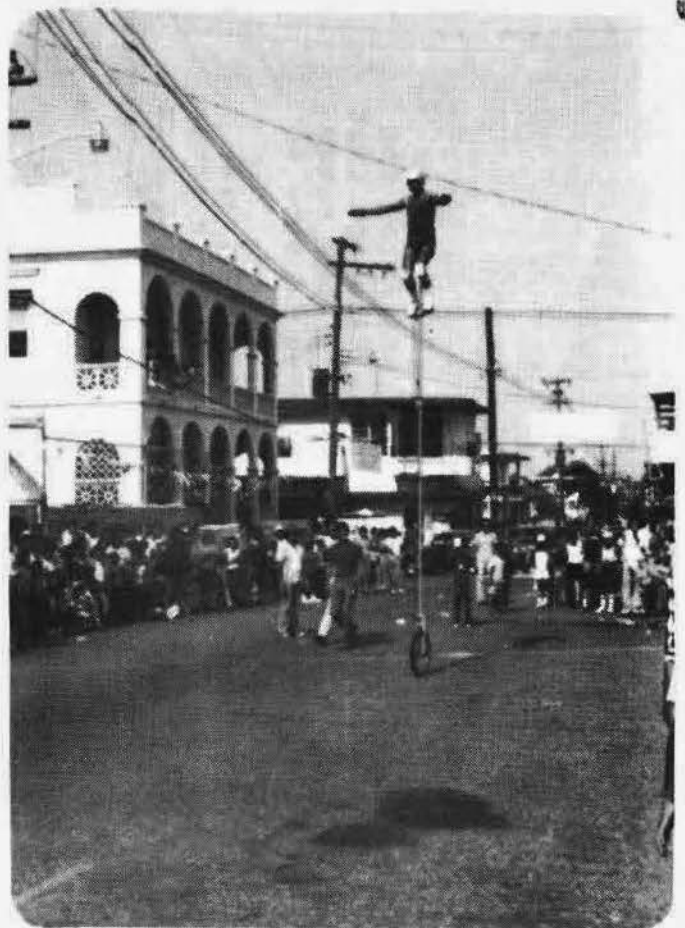
Larry Ramos writes from Puerto Rico that he is the President of the Unicycle Club of Puerto Rico and that their club grows more and more every day, as more and more people show an interest in unicycling.

Here are some pictures of his club in action -- performing in street festivals, and in general having lots of fun!

* * * * *



A Unicycle Race in San Juan, Puerto Rico.



David Ramos-Fifteen Foot Uni



David Ramos - 6 Foot Uni

Jose Luis Ortega
Nine Foot Uni

IDEAS FROM IOWA!

by Kenneth G. Fuchs

To Alleviate Saddle Sorness: Take a 12" X 8" piece of Insulite (the hard foam campers sleep on) and round off the corners. Sew each end of the foam into tight briefs along the inside portion of each leg's hem, so that foam extends below hem. Additional sewing around edge of foam may be necessary.

For jumpers, insulite will become an second hide.

For long distance people, the insulite will increase seat width (Schwinn) by about 30%. For normal people, the insulite will provide a smoother ride.

Credit for this idea goes to UNI-STAR, RANDY BARNES.

What Can You Do With a Big Wheel (40")?

I've seen or done the following:

- (1) Standard Big Wheel Mount: grab front of seat with dominant hand, pull forward or backward 'till dominant pedal is down, roll wheel $\frac{1}{2}$ turn forward, grab wheel well forward of seat with other hand, jump forward onto pedals (dominant foot lands first), release wheel and pedal forward.
- (2) Ride at 130 rev./min. (15 MPH) for short distance.
- (3) Ride 20 miles in 1 hour 40 min.
- (4) Ride backwards.
- (5) Idle.
- (6) Ride one foot, other leg extended forward.
- (7) One foot idle, other leg extended forward.
- (8) Spin.
- (9) Twist (Idle with cranks horizontal).
- (10) Ride backwards or one footed in circles (4 meter).
- (11) Standard 24" mount into idle (mount 40" as one would normally mount a 24").
- (12) Same with just one foot.
- (13) Standard big wheel mount without grabbing wheel.
- (14) Standard side mount (leg over front of seat).
- (15) Same with forward motion or jump.

- (16) Standard 24" mount into idle with 15-pound bag of groceries.
- (17) Ride with same bag for 4 miles, with twisting or idling for red lights.
- (18) Hop up inch or two into air.
- (19) Ride over 4 inch curbs, slowly.
- (20) Ride through snow banks and on ice.
- (21) Ride forward with seat in front.
- (22) Ride forward with both hands holding feet.
- (23) Jump mount holding seat with one hand.
- (24) One foot forward to one foot idle, other leg extended.
- (25) Ride forward juggling three pins.
- (26) Ride backwards with someone on shoulders.

For doing stunts and even just riding, I would recommend using a 40" or smaller big wheel, depending on body size and most importantly, leg strength.

The four big wheels in the UNICYCLING FEDERATION OF EARTH (UFE), Ames, Iowa: a 40" Miller cycle, two 46" and a 56" built here using knowledge gained through a visit with Tom Miller after the 1980 National Unicycle Meet.

After a few hours riding the 56", my accomplishments included standard big wheel mount, sharp turns, 4-meter circles, and a little one-foot, twisting, idling and backward riding.

I plan to complete a set of big wheels (29", 35", 40", 46", 51", 56") this spring. I've built a two-wheel unicycle frame and plan to have the cycle completed early this year. Also, a friend and I are planning to construct a unicycle built for two this spring.

Unicycling Stunt Theory (The Composition of Simple Body and Unicycle Movements Into Unicycling Stunts, and Ultimately Unicycling Shows): At any one instant of time, a unicyclist can be doing one thing with his left leg, still another with his right leg, and others with his hands, head, mouth, and nose etc. Furthermore, he may be leaning his body in any radial direction and twisting to the left or right in varying degrees. As the unicyclist does these things, his unicycle(s) (and optional props) react to his body's

commands.

A unicycling action is what one part of the unicyclist's body is doing in a time instance. However, if both legs are pedaling forward, it is more convenient to consider this a single unicycling action. Also, if both arms and upper torso are twisting clockwise, this too can be considered a single unicycling action. But, one leg pedaling backward and the other extended forward are definitely two separate unicycling actions.

A unicycling instance is the composition of all unicycling actions performed in a time instance. Remember that each body part does exactly one unicycling action in a time instance. The following is an example of a unicycling instance, where each action is numbered:

- (1) Both feet pedaling backward,
- (2) Upper torso is leaning forward,
- (3) Hands and arms are juggling three pins,
- (4) Mouth is smoking a cigar with a smile,
- (5) Head turns toward audience.

We have a new unicycling instance whenever a part of the body does a different unicycling action. For example, a new unicycling instance occurs when the above-mentioned unicyclist extends his left leg forward.

A unicycling stunt is a sequence of one or more unicycling instances.

A unicycling show is a sequence of one or more unicycling stunts performed by one or more unicyclists.

Now, given the above unicycling theory and an ever growing list of unicycling actions, it should be possible to compose an infinite number of unicycling shows. To get you started, here's how to create a list of unicycling actions:

First, choose a body part. Possible body parts include right leg, left leg, both legs, right arm, left arm, both arms, upper torso, bottom torso, head, right hand, left hand, mouth, eyes, face, fingers, right ankle, and left ankle.

Next, choose an action or group of actions that that body part is capable of doing simultaneously. Possible actions include pedal forward, pedal backward, pedal faster, pedal slower, walk wheel forward, walk

backward, walk faster, walk slower, hop, tiwst left, twist right, lean forward, extend backward, extend left, extend right, extend up, extend down, pedal idle, walk idle, turn right, turn left, turn right sharp, turn le sharp, spin right, and spin left.

Note that the last six are a combination of leaning, twisting, and wheel motion or describe a head action. Note also that pedal idel can be described as a sequence of pedal forward, pedal backward, etc.

As an aid in creating unicycling actions you can set up a two-way chart with one way listing body parts and the other listing actions. Here's a small scale version of the chart.

An X in the chart indicates a possible unicycling action.

(Editor's Note: If you would like to contact Kenneth Fuchs to discuss his ideas, his address is:

Kenneth G. Fuchs
3908 Ontario Street
Ames, Iowa 50010

And if you have an idea or two you would like to share with your fellow USA members, just write to your nimble-fingered editor, and you, too, can appear in print! After all, that's what this newsletter is all about!)

* * * * *



	<u>R leg</u>	<u>L leg</u>	<u>B leg</u>	<u>R arm</u>	<u>L arm</u>	<u>B arms</u>	<u>L torso</u>	<u>U torso</u>
P forward	X	X	X	X	X	X		
P backward	X	X	X	X	X	X		
faster	X	X	X	X	X	X		
slower	X	X	X	X	X	X		
W forward	X	X	X	X	X	X		
W backward	X	X	X	X	X	X		
W faster	X	X	X	X	X	X		
W slower	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Hop	X	X	X	?	?	?	X	?
Tw left	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Tw right	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
L forward	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
L backward	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
L right	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
L left	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
E forward	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
E backward	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
E left	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
E right	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
E up	X	X	X	X	X	X		
E down	X	X	X	X	X	X		
P idle	X	X	X	?	?	X		
W idle	X	X	X	?	?	X		



Meet new U.S.A. members PAT and MIKE HEALY! They live in San Francisco, California, and they sure look happy and heal-th-y!

NEWS FROM THE CLUBS!

More News from the Clubs!

The UNI-GANG of Spring, Texas sends this message to all their unicycling pals:

"We enjoyed taking part in the Uni-Olympics last summer. It was a real experience.

"We now have 25 members in our club here. We rode a demonstration (exhibition) for one of our community harvest festivals - a good time was had by all.

"In September, we had a club picnic and invited the Finn family to do an exhibition for us. The Uni-Gang and the ONE WHEEL WONDERS see a lot of each other since we live so close together.

"We are anxious to hear from our new friends - see you at the NATIONAL UNICYCLE MEET this summer!"

Signed: Eloise and Jim Baccus.

(Editor's Note: If you would like to write to the UNI-GANG, the address is:

The UNI-GANG
414 Basswood
Spring, Texas 77373

* * * * *
(And thanks to the UNI-GANG for adding new members Scot, Monty, and Melanie Baccus to our growing Unicycling Society of America membership! The more, the merrier!)

* * * * *

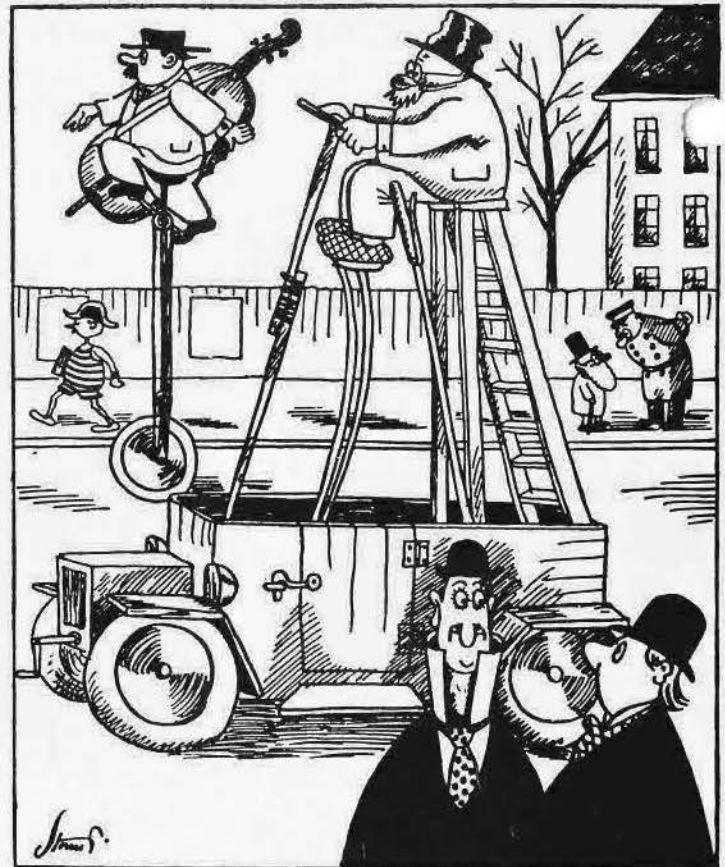
Cartoon submitted by Goran Lundstrom → translation:

"These two cycles (one of which is an auto) clearly show the superiority of the cycle in traffic. It can be maneuvered precisely and with elegance in any direction. The auto, on the other hand, is always getting in the way of itself, and of others."

The KOKOMO ROAD RUNNERS UNICYCLE CLUB reports they've now expanded to 32 members, and have been busy with parades nearly every week plus many performances at shopping malls, schools, nursing homes and lodges.

They also report that they have elected new officers: The new president is TONY KINNEY (who was a past treasurer) The new vice president is JERRILYN PUGH. The new secretary is SUNNY SAYLOR (who has served in the past as both president and treasurer for the club). The new treasurer is LAURA GRUBE, and the new first instructor is ANITA HARRIS.

As for the position of Chairman of the Board, JACK QUILLEN was re-elected. Good luck to all of you!



Disse to cykler (hvoraf den ene er et automobil) viser tydeligt cyklens overlegenhed i trafikken, idet den kan manøvreres fløkt og elegant i alle retninger, medens automobillet stadig er i vejen for både sig selv og andre.

MORE NEWS FROM REDFORD!

Since the REDFORD TOWNSHIP UNICYCLE CLUB's non-profit corporation status is renewable every year on October 1st., the group has adopted that time for the election of new officers. This year, the President is MR. GORDON MITTEN; Vice-President, Mrs. LUCIA BAHORICH, Secretary, Mrs. GAIL LIEDEL; Treasurer, Mrs. CAROL BRICHFORD; Representatives: PAT BARNIER, NANCY BRICHFORD, and JOHN FOSS; Alternate Representatives: CAROL BAHORICH, and HANS MILLS; Publicity, Mrs. LIZ MILLS; Wardrobe, Mrs. BEVERLY LIND; Scrapbook, Mrs. FLORENCE CUNNINGHAM and Mrs. AUDREY HETTEL; Achievement Awards, Mr. JOHN FOSS; Membership Chairman, Mrs. LORAIN SUTHERLAND; Assistant Chairmen: JANET SUTHERLAND and NANCY BRICHFORD.

The new year began with several "firsts" for the Club. On November 22, 1980, they were part of a vaudeville show held in a Detroit theatre. The show was a "sell out" and included several radio and t.v. personalities in the audience. The Club members were surprised and pleased to be mentioned by TED STRASSER on his radio program the next morning as one of the really fine acts of the evening. Also in the audience was LYNNE BOYLE, who is one of the persons in charge of programming for the Channel 7 t.v. (Redford, Michigan geographical area) DAEDAL DOORS program. The Club was invited to be the guests on the January 25 program where they performed for fifteen minutes followed by a question-and-answer period. The Club is used to performing in gyms, streets, and parking lots. But these opportunities presented the challenge of working with twenty-four riders in the confined areas of a stage and t.v. studio.

Our thanks to Carol Brichford for this article! And again, our thanks to her for her work as a Newsletter Editor! This editor is beginning to appreciate how much is involved!

HELP PAY FOR THE 1981 NATIONAL MEET...
BY ADVERTISING IN THE PROGRAM!

To help cover costs of the 1981 National Unicycle Meet, the Redford Township Unicycle Club is soliciting advertising to be placed in the meet program. Ad costs are as follows:

- Full Page - \$25.
- Half Page - \$15.
- Quarter - \$ 8.

Clubs get a lower rate:

- Full Page - \$12.
- Half Page - \$ 8.
- Quarter - \$ 4.

Family Ads: \$ 2.

(Families are asked to list names of both husband and wife, and, of course, those of all the children. Please underline names of riders.)

Riders Ads: \$ 1.

(Riders names will be listed under Club name.)

All checks should be made payable to Redford Township Unicycle Club, Inc.

All inquiries about size, format, and so forth should be directed to:

Liz Mills
35970 Perth
Livonia, Michigan 48154

IMPORTANT! The deadline for ads is June 1, 1981, so please, if you would like to place an ad, please contact Liz right away.



MURRAY D. CHAPPLE

JUGGLER • UNICYCLIST
• MIME • STUNTS • TRICKS •

(803) 294-2935 • (803) 576-4310

The Rules for the 1981 National Unicycle Meet state that a CLUB must be registered with the U.S.A., Inc. at least two months before the date of the NUM to inter "Club" competition.

Only Clubs meeting all of the following criteria will be registered:

1. Is registered with the U.S.A., Inc. as an Active, Sanctioned Club
2. Averages at least two functions per month as a unit (a function may be a practice, performance, or parade)
3. Rides in National Unicycle Meet competition (Club Trick Riding and Parade) with all of their riders attending that NUM
4. Promotes the aims of the U.S.A., Inc.

Any GROUP may register with the U.S.A., Inc. and receive a Certificate of Registration.

A file will be kept of all the Clubs and Groups registered. Any advanced information on the Meet, etc. will be sent to the contact person.

To receive a Certificate of Registration (and the Rules and Regulations of the 1981 NUM, as stated in the Fall, 1980 NEWSLETTER) fill in the following form and mail it to the Secretary-Treasurer at P. O. Box 40534, Redford, MI 48240.

Official Club Name: _____

or

Group Name: _____

Contact Person: Name _____

Address _____

THE PEN PAL REPORT!

Anne Thompson of Chettenham, Colos. England wrote JOYCE JONES looking for a pen pal. Joyce put her in touch with Susan Sutherland, who wrote Anne back and even sent a picture of herself. Anne was delighted!

Maybe you could use a pen pal somewhere far away. U.S.A. members are everywhere!

U.S.A. Member Rhett Bryson writes that he can make up rubber stamps with various unicycle images. If you would like to know more about this, you can write to Rhett at the following address:

Rhett Bryson
Magic and Wizardry
118 Duncan Chapel Road
Greenville, South Carolina 29609

NEWS ITEM

by Bill Jenack

Smiling KEN BRITTON, our congenial retiree unicyclist from Canandaigua, New York, arrived at the National Unicycle Meet in a car bearing the novel New York State license plate pictured at left.

Ken has three cars, and each bears license plate signifying one of his hobbies. The three plates are UNICYCLE, ANTIQUE, and JOG.

Aside from being a gung-ho unicyclist, Ken is an antique car buff, and also an ardent jogger.

Much of his spare time he spends constructing unicycles and teaching local boys and girls how to ride them.

Upon retiring several years ago, Ken took up the sport of unicycling and now surprises all with his dexterity in riding backwards, one foot, etc. on both regular and giraffe unicycles built by himself.

He is a regular participant at the National Unicycle Meets. (Photo by Denis T. O'Sullivan.)



A Nice Letter from Ken Britton!

"Enclosed is a check for my membership renewal. Already looking forward to the next meet in Redford next summer. (Editor's Note: Me too!)

"My friends Jac Tao Bron drum and Dave Noaku and I had the time our lives at the meet. Jac Tao built an ultimate wheel as soon as he got home and got so he could ride it. I built mine, but haven't done anything with it yet. Dave hasn't built his. We bought the metal part to hold the pedals from Tom Miller at the meet. Bought the rims and tires and tubes at the Kokomo Schwinn dealer who is very reasonable with his prices and is one great fellow. Kokomo is much closer to Chicago so parts are cheaper than here in Rochester, N.Y.

"I loved that anecdote by the Redford group in the newsletter. I enjoyed the whole newspaper as usual. Please thank Carol for me again for the great job she has done. Joyce, too, has done a swell job as secretary-treasurer and sales person (Editor's Note: I agree!).

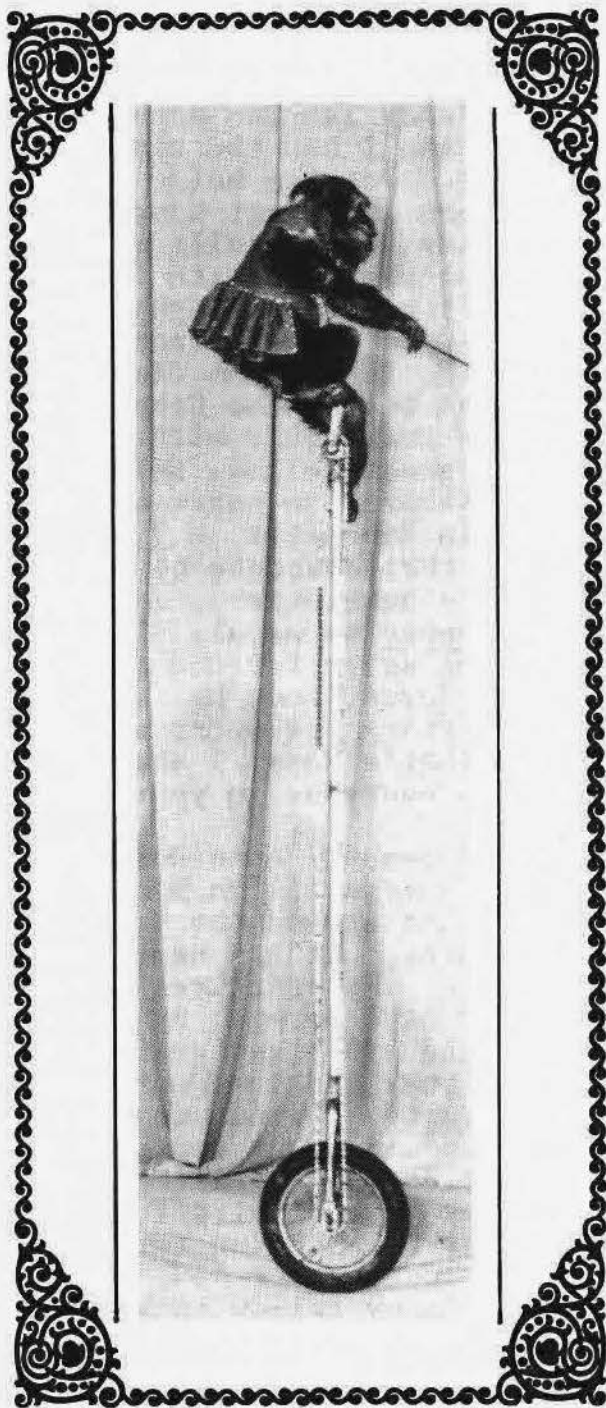
"I like everyone in your Redford Group.

"Last December, Anne Dori and I put Steve Tulich (age 16) on my 20" Schwinn and walked him around the Y.M.C.A. gym for 15 minutes. He had never been on a uni before. He practiced a little a couple of days later. By the third day, he could mount and grab my hand to get his balance and I walked around with frequent mounts. Within another day or two, Steve could mount and ride well enough to ride my 26" balloon tired uni and also my 5 1/2 foot giraffe! I sold him my other 20" Schwinn (with new bearings I put in) for \$50. You never saw such a happy fellow in your life."

Yours sincerely,

Ken Britton

(Editor's Note: We now know that unicycles are a good hedge against inflation! Good thing something is!)

"MARY" Simian Unicyclist

MEL HALL, one of the greatest unicyclists of all times (see FAMOUS PERFORMERS pg 6 July 1977 N.L., recently dug up this photo of his trained baboon Mary riding a unicycle and forwarded it to Bill Jenack. Although Mel himself retired from active unicycling over 20 years ago he remained in show business and about three years ago appeared for several months with his MEL'S BABOONS act in the ONSTAGE CIRCUS that played for several months in Freeport, Long Island. JOHN JENACK as "JeanPaul, Lord of the Wheels" was also with the Onstage Circus at the time and this afforded the long awaited opportunity for the Jenacks and the Halls to get together. All of Mel's family, his wife Aurelia, two daughters Carmen and Nini, and two sons Ervin and James were also in the area at the time either with the circus of playing the Westbury Musci Fair. This was quite unusual as they are usually scattered all over the country. This past summer Ervin and Nini played the Great Adventures Park in New Jersey, James was with the Kastle Bears at park in Hogpatch, Arkansas, Carmen was with her pony, dog and baboon act in Hudson, New Hampshire, and Mel as Happy Buster the Clown, played occasional dates in and around Beaumont, Texas where he now resides. Such is the life of one of the most active circus families in America that has been carrying on for decades. Most circus folks held the belief that while you can rather easily train an animal to ride a bicycle, it would be next to impossible to train one to ride a single wheel. However Mel Hall who has always been noted for doing the impossible himself on one wheel did train his little baboon Mary to ride a giraffe and she was a tremendous hit.

If any readers know of another animal that has been taught to ride a unicycle do send in the details to your newsletter editor.

SPECIAL! The HALLS of Fame!

by Bob Stoddard

Once upon a time, in the days of the Zoppe-Zavatta resinback riding act, there was a unicyclist by the name of Mel Hall who married Aurelia Zoppe, a member of the above named act and an aunt of Joe Zoppe.

After some time passed they had a son and named him Irving.

Nine generations of circus performers on his mother's side and three generations on his father's side lived in the blood that flowed in the boy's veins.

After two whole years as an average circus kid, his father started teaching him to ride the unicycle.

In his father's act, Mel came to the point where he was to mount a nine foot high unicycle - without the aid of a ladder of any type. During the build-up for this feat, he looked about for some kind of assistance. This was Irving's big act. He would ride in on a small unicycle with a two foot ladder, which naturally, was not enough aid, so the boy stood on his hands, on his father's right arm, and then stood on his head with the palm of his hand.

(Yes! Mel mounted the unicycle without any aid).

The popular newspaper feature of that decade "Believe It or Not" by Robert Ripley featured the miniature unicyclist as "the youngest ever."

When sister Carmen became two years old, she too, became part of the act, as did brother Jimmy in turn. Baby sister Jeanine beat them all by starting when she was 18 months old.

In 1953 (or 54), Gil Gray of the Gil Gray Circus featured an act called the "Cycling Whiz Kids" composed of the Hall children.

The act was popular and successful until 1976, when the family's love of animals broke up the act, but creating four new acts.

Sister Carmen now has My-Imba's Baboons. Brother Jimmy has Castle's Bears (Ever wonder how Jimmy Hall wound up with Castle's Bears? Simple, his middle name is Castle - named after the famous wire walker and current circus owner).

Jeanine works as Javanna with ¹⁻⁸ baboons.

Besides being an excellent clown, Irving is the only family member who still has a unicycle riding act, and is performing it currently with Circus Atayde in Mexico.

Irving couldn't participate because he was performing in the Texas Shrine Circuses, but the rest of the former Whiz Kids found themselves together again, working for Gil Gray at the 1980 State Fair of Texas with their two sets of baboon acts and the bear act. For their second act, the three former Whiz Kids revived their old act and re-proved an old adage, "if you did it before, you can do it again!"

Mrs. Hall says that "after a four year lay-off from the unicycles, the act came back quickly - but the muscles were sore for the first few shows."

Someday the Hall of Fame will have to reckon with the fame of the Halls!

(Editor's Note: Bob Stoddard is a member of the Texas Mid-Cities Clown Alley 85 and lives in Duncanville, Texas. This article originally appeared in The Circus Report, No. 8, February 23, 1981, and is reprinted by permission of both its author, Mr. Stoddard, and Circus Report publisher Don Marcks. We are grateful to both of them).



Irving Hall

CONGRATULATIONS TO CATHY FOX!

According to the Guinness Book of World Records, November 30, 1980, Cathy Fox of Marion, Ohio set a speed record for 100 miles in 10 hours 37 minutes 10 seconds on June 7, 1980.

But if you looked it up in the World Book of Records, you might have some trouble finding it...which led our friend Steve Gordon to write:

ONE DAY AT THE BOOKSTORE

By Steve Gordon

You were browsing through your local bookstore the other day when a thick hardcover book caught your eye. "Wow" you say, "it's the 1981 edition of the Guinness Book of World Records." You pick it up and flip through the index to find the section on unicycling. "Boy, I can't wait to read about Cathy Fox and Jack Halpern setting records for 100 miles." You find the unicycling section, on page 305, and begin reading.

Suddenly you stop, shocked. You run up to the salesman and scream at him, "WHAT THE HECK IS THIS? NOT CATHY OR JACK, BUT SOME OTHER CLOWN WHOSE TIME WAS SLOWER THAN BOTH OF THEIRS!!!" The salesman couldn't explain, but I can.

"Who is this mysterious clown?" you ask. It's little old me. Now I figure I owe an explanation of how that happened since few people were aware I ever did it.

May 3, 1980. Balboa Park, Encino, California. 3:59PM. A man and his machine are ready to journey approximately 32 times around a 3.06 loop of bicycle path. The man: me. The Machine: a Schwinn unicycle frame equipped with a 26" wheel, 4½" crank arms, speedometer, odometer, and custom-made saddle with water bottle. Seven witnesses on bicycles prepare to take turns invigilating the entire ride. 4:00PM exactly. The trek begins. 11 hours, 50 minutes, and 35 seconds later, at 3:50 in the morning, it ends, after taking 13 three-minute rests, after being chased by two dogs for seven miles, after

drinking two gallons of orange juice, after coming within inches of several head-on collisions with out-of-control roller skaters; it's finally over and I thank God I survived though I wonder if my future children did. I'm also thankful for the survival of my father, one of the bicycle witnesses, who fell asleep on his bicycle at about 3:30AM and went off the bike path and hit a tree (neither he, the bike, or the tree were hurt). The next day I can't walk, I can only smile.

Soon after there's a newspaper article which is sent along with a log book (kept by the witnesses) to the Guinness folks in New York who reply that it is the fastest unicycled 100 miles they know of, SO FAR. Shortly thereafter I learn of Jack Halpern's ride, bettering my time by about a half hour. Then Cathy Fox betters his time by 50 minutes. And I despair: ALL THAT TIME, MONEY, AND WORK, AND ALL FOR NOTHING!

And then the good fairy of unicycling smiled upon me. Apparently there was a deadline by which the Guinness people must receive entries to be included in the next edition, and by some stroke of luck my entry was received before the deadline and others were not. That's how a clown like me got in the Guinness Book.

The "Newly Verified Records" section at the back of the book includes Cathy Fox and her June 7th, 1980, 10 hour, 37 minute, 10 second 100 mile ride (page 654).

Now the big question: was it worth spending the time of seven witnesses and myself, paying over \$100 to prepare a special unicycle, plus months of physical and mental preparation and planning for the ride, plus the several days after the ride worrying about whether the numbness will ever go away? Was all that worth one sentence at the bottom of page one of a 672 page book?

I dunno.

What I do know is that nobody can appreciate just how long 100 miles is until they travel it on one wheel.

OK, I've told my story, so quit screaming at the poor book salesman.

* * * * *

News from the Jenacks

Christmas Eve the JENACKS received a phone call from BARRY COPPY and his parents in England. On the 27th of December 1980, the Lappys were leaving for Romania where Barry will again be performing with the State Circus. in 1978 and 1979 Barry was a big hit there and each year, after a months stay in Bucharest at the Bucuresti Building, went on the road with the State Circus much as he did when he was with Ringling Brothers in this country.

They toured all of Romania and at each stop children and grown-ups alike were eagerly waiting to see him perform.

Barry's reputation spread rapidly and in 1979-80 he received top billing and performed not only in Monete Carlo but with circuses in Spain, Sweden, and England.

His routine on the Circus Bike is outstanding and during his unicycle routine he now juggles tennis racquets behind his back while rocking on his giraffe.

It is hoped Barry will return to the U.S.A. someday and let us see his new act which is now acknowledged as one of the best in the world.



Joackim Malm, the "Copernicus" of unicycling, coasting along. Look, no feet!

NEWS FROM THE TRAVELERS!

JACK HALPERN, back in Japan after a whirlwind tour of the United States, Sweden, and Germany writes:

"Unicycling is an organized sport in Germany, and a national meet is held every year together with artistic bicycling and cycle soccer. The meet I attended with SEM ABRAHAMS had 600 participants! The artistic bicyclists are very much interested in unicycling and in cooperating with us. My and Sem's demonstrations in Germany were warmly welcomed and everyone was enthusiastic about the idea of more international cooperation in unicycling. In fact, in both Sweden and Germany there is a lot of interest in sending teams to the National Unicycle Meet this year."

Jack also reports that he spent two days with Sem and Carlho in Holland, where he reports they are happy and well and forming a unicycle club. He also spent time with Goran Lundstrom, where he mastered Goran's unique walking machine, and watched Goran ride his 63½ inch beauty (see other articles on Goran's huge big wheel).

* * * * *



Jack Halpern with Swedish unicyclist riding the Walking Thing. What fun!

A Rambling Interview with Jay Green

Jay Green is a professional unicyclist and juggler who lives in New York City. In fact, he has won the U.S. National Juggling Competition three years in a row.

Recently, we ran into Jay Green during an impromptu performance at a friend's house. We asked him if he would mind reviewing his career for us, particularly in terms of his experiences unicycling.

"I started riding unicycles, oddly enough, after I'd already learned juggling. I'd been juggling since I was nine.

"One day one of my juggling partners (we had a group called the Juggling Nesters) brought along a unicycle. I used to hop up on it and practice for a couple of hours...and after about three or four hours I could ride well enough to get interested enough to buy my own unicycle. At the time, I was about 23 years old.

"I use the unicycle mainly for the entrance to my juggling act...it makes an exciting opening. Because it's awkward, you know, if you're a juggler and you have to just walk out on stage. It's hard to walk when you're juggling...it just doesn't look good...and it's boring to just walk out with your props in your hand. With a unicycle you come zooming on stage! It's much more exciting.

"To start off with, I do 30... maybe 45 seconds where I simply ride my unicycle. I have a line of clubs on-stage...I ride through them zig-zag... then I make tight little circles around the center club. After that it's a lot of juggling both on and off the unicycle. Then, toward the end of the act, I pick up the unicycle and balance it on my chin.

"I've had a lot of fun on unicycles. Back when the New York World's Fair was going on, I rode there all the way from the YMCA in Queens (one of New York's five boroughs). It was about 41½ miles. Luckily, I had a large big-wheel unicycle...that had been given to me by a friend. It had a wooden rim...and needed a lot of repair work before it



would go. But it moved pretty fast, and if Wally Watts hadn't done it first, I might have thought about riding around the world!

"I still have that unicycle...but now the crankshaft is broken, and nobody around here seems to know how to fix it. (Editor's Note: Maybe somebody reading this article would like to write to Jay about ways he might fix it?)

"Another thing I enjoy doing with my unicycle is riding to work on it. I have a business on the side where I do intricate jewelry engraving, and in mid-town Manhattan it costs \$8.00 to park for a day. So I drive into town and park down by the river's edge -- where the parking is cheap -- then I pull my unicycle out of the trunk and ride the rest of the way to work. I just love the looks that people give you when you ride on by on a unicycle. Some people are afraid to look at you -- scared they will be on Candid Camera! Other people look at you like you're crazy.

"There's always one joker who says 'Hey buddy, you lost one of your wheels!' I answer right back, 'Well, I got a good deal -- 50% off the sticker price!'" ★

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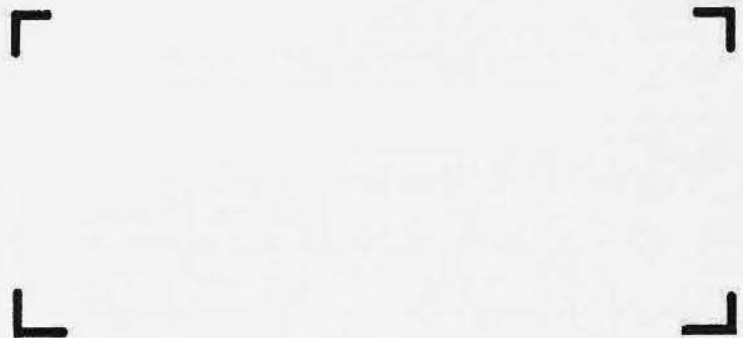
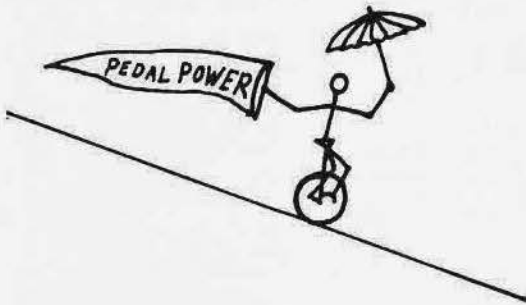
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