

Bike Co-op members call themselves a family

by A.J. McClanahan

Contrary to rumor, members of the Humane Society Bicycle Co-op are not witches. Nor are they gun-slinging violent reactionaries with a "get list," according to Lawrence Wilson.

"We're not trying to be nondescript," Wilson, leader of the group said.

He's probably correct. The group's uniform (which might be the source of most rumors) consists of knickers, miniature engineer hats and shaved heads. The women do not have shaved heads, but wear their hair extremely short.

"Our purpose is presentation," Wilson said, and the bicycle is their medium.

"Everybody hides—that's why the long hair and sloppy clothes. All those people are doing their best to be unprepared to do something. Nobody's speaking up."

The group's base is the co-op, located at 21st and R Streets. Their uniform apparently lends itself well to bicycle riding.

They also consider themselves a family and a religious order, according to Wilson. He acts as priest and in that capacity marries members of the group and interprets dreams.

"We intend to go to the state and see if we can become recognized as a religion," Wilson said, "but that takes money."

There are six members of the group, four men and two women, with two other women's membership pending. They all live together, but insist on remaining in man and woman pairs.

"We are bicyclists and we are the only pro shop in town," Wilson said, stressing the word only.

The Co-op, which serves anyone who comes in, charges \$8.00 an hour for mechanical work. But Wilson insisted the Co-op does a lot more than bicycle service.

The group treats the customer differently than other bike shops in town, Wilson said. He said he is willing to spend hours teaching someone to ride a bicycle for free. Bicycles also will be adjusted to fit the rider exactly.

The co-op also sells bicycles (mostly foreign), parts and apparel. The merchandise often is priced lower than at other bike shops.

"We aren't trying to be a nonprofit group, because we're depending on the co-op for most of our income," he said, but they aren't trying to make a big profit.

"Just enough to pay the rent and our food bills."

Educational levels of the group range from high school degrees to a B.A. (Ms. Kaye is a social worker) to an M.A. in chemistry (held by her husband Roger).

"Everyone in the group is undergoing analysis, searching for each one's identity," Wilson said.

The group is militant in the sense that they are "involved" instead of "being active," according to Wilson.

Being active means keeping busy. Becoming involved means to really find out what's going on within oneself and the environment, Wilson said.

One way to become involved is to run a bicycle shop instead of letting big business handle it. That's why the co-op is called "humane," according to Wilson.

Twenty-four hour service is offered to customers. Members will answer calls at any time of the day or night.

All anyone has to do to support the co-op is to recognize the bicycle as revolutionary, Wilson said.

"Riding a bicycle means no power to anybody," he said, explaining that the problem with this country is a power syndrome exemplified by driving powerful cars.

Cars also are indicted by the group because of the pollution they cause, but the group does not advocate the abolishment of all other means of transportation except bikes.

Wilson said a better bus and train system is needed, besides more people riding bicycles.

"If you do ride the bicycle, that is one less car on the street."

It would not be impossible for someone to join the group, Wilson said, but he would first be subjected to Wilson's scrutiny. He also would have to be able to leave everything behind, and get along without the "umbrella of the establishment," Wilson said.

Modified proposal may revive NOVA

NOVA may be back in business next semester, according to project director Edgar Kelly.

The revised proposal for the student volunteer program was mailed Thursday to the regional and national offices of ACTION, the federal service agency which controls the program.

The new proposal calls for 40 UNL students, 15 UNO students and five Medical Center students.

The UNL project will center around work in day care facilities and in the education and mental health fields.

UNO's phase of the project will be working in youth development and Medical Center students will work in economically unstable rural areas.

Action on the proposal is expected around Nov. 10, according to Kelly.

NOVA was cancelled for the fall semester when ACTION cut funds for the program.

The cutback in funds was blamed on bureaucratic obstacles.



Members of the Humane Society Bicycle Co-op regard the bicycle as revolutionary.

The secret of Schoenau

by Milan J. Kubic

VIENNA—Nineteen miles south of this ancient Austrian capital there stands an old, rambling 60 room castle surrounded by a 70-acre wooded park that itself is sealed off from the rest of the world by 15-foot-high walls.

Once a hunting lodge and pleasure dome for Austrian nobility, the gloomy complex of shadowed halls, dark alcoves and spiral staircases known as Schoenau Castle is a constant source of mystery for the curious Viennese.

Its inhabitants come and go, silently and anonymously, in speedy Mercedes-Benz buses, passing through a crumbling brick gate topped by a stern sign saying, "Durchgang Verboten!" (No trespassing.) Rumor has it that the castle is kept under round-the-clock watch by armed guards, aided by fierce watchdogs.

For years, the Viennese press has been speculating eagerly on what horrors transpire inside Schoenau Castle. "A center for Spies and Brainwashing!" crowed one newspaper. "Transit Point for Slave Trade!" gasped another.

And officials of both local and national governments maintain a studied ignorance about the goings-on in the castle.

But, in fact, what has been going on in the seedy-looking castle for the last five years is neither evil nor spooky. If anything, it is simply poignant. For Schoenau Castle is a way-station for Russian Jews on their way to Israel.

A few of the Jews who emigrate from Russia have saved enough money to fly to the West. But most financially weakened by being forced to pay about \$1,000 for the privilege of renouncing Soviet citizenship

and acquiring an exit visa—can barely scrape together the funds to buy a ticket on the grimy Chopin Express, which pulls out of the Moscow train station each day just before midnight.

A day and a half later, the weary emigrants arrive at Vienna's Southern Station, where they are met by officials of the Jewish Agency.

One day, spurred on by the tales of sinister and undercover activities, I drove out to Schoenau Castle. Once past the forbidding gate, I found the road unobstructed.

A group of newly-arrived emigrants stood at the entrance, clad in shoddy Russian trenchcoats and clutching heavy, old-fashioned portable radios. They were so excited at seeing a Western automobile that when I offered them a ride three hopped in and directed me around the park.

In return for the ride, the emigrants led me inside the castle where the gritty walls were hung with El Al posters of Jerusalem. "This is our hotel," one of the Jews said in Russian.

With a staff of only three cooks and five cleaning women, the massive castle—which sometimes shelters as many as 250 transients—would hardly meet the standards of an American tourist.

But the emigrants, who rarely stay more than two days before flying off to Israel, seem more than content. Those who speak a little German sometimes venture into the nearby village to spend their dollar-a-day allowance on Austrian pastries or to sell the few bottles of vodka they brought along from Russia.

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