

The Bike Stable

Introduction:

The Bike Stable is a student run bicycle co-op, which provides free bicycle maintenance and assistance to Western Michigan University students and community members alike. We assist our visitors by sharing our tools as well as our knowledge about mechanics and bikes in general. Visitors get the opportunity to work on their own two-wheeled contraptions with the guidance and support of the friendly, encouraging mechanics here at the Stable.

Our mission is to work with students, staff, and community members in order to promote, encourage, educate, and create a safe environment for learning. While working towards advancing non-motorized transportation infrastructure and meeting our proposed 2065 Climate Neutrality target to reduce green house gas emissions on campus and in Kalamazoo.

The Bike Stable begun by two ambitious western students and a SSG grant. It was originally located at the Gibbs House garage with only basic tools. Numerous grants helped expand the tool selection allowing for better service and a deeper understanding of bike mechanics. Eventually the Bike Stable found its new home in the Office for Sustainability shared studio space.

Projects:

The Bike Stable team has consistently worked towards improving and organizing its space and service. The main project we focused on was the Open Shop every Friday. Our open shop day is unique since a wide range of people visited us. We also worked on some storage space solutions for donations we received from visitors. We also upgraded our tool list, since we can perform more technical bike-related jobs, such as bending frame, reaming, facing and thread cutting.

- The best day of the week: “Western Wednesdays”. Right after winter was gone, we continuously kept attending to the flag poles and set out tools out to help anyone who was passing through with bike issues.



Image #1: Western Wednesdays

- **Barry-Roubaix clean up team 2016:**

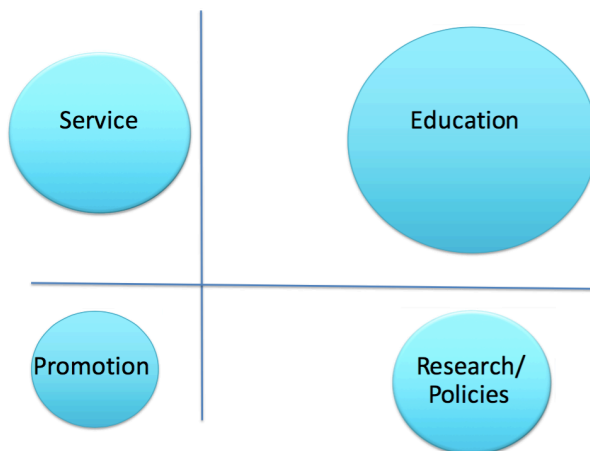
Once again, Hastings hosted the largest gravel road race in the world with more than 3,000 riders. In collaboration with Bell's Brewery and Cabbage bros, the Bike Stable team volunteered with 15 other volunteers to clean the three different routes of this competition. We covered 64 miles in bikes while picking up trash and recyclables. One thing we noticed, is that the road was not initially clean, since the items we collected came from other sources, such as fast food bags, beer cans, and other consumables. At the end, we weighted 7 containers of trash and 38 water bottles from the riders.



Images #2 #3: Barry Roubaix competition

Methods and Results:

Image #4: Bike Stable Model



Our model is divided into four major areas starting by the most important: Education, Service, Research/Policies efforts and finally Promotions/Marketing.

We believe in education and that if we start by educating people about their commuting options, common issues and understanding basic maintenance skills, people will eventually overcome and gain knowledge that will be useful for them and the choices they'll make in the future. Our Open Shop is

dedicated to have one of the friendliest service on campus, we are truly sure that if we keep a welcoming environment using proper communicative skills we will attract the kind of curious people we want to attract. Our efforts in researching the best way and/or commuting option for students on campus have always been something we wanted to study more in depth. Our university lacks of policies that gives fare rights to all kind of transportation methods, either if someone is skating, rollerblading, biking, walking or driving a car. Our interns do their best to study policies and fare right for all. Promotional efforts are our simplest form in our structure; basically we get more of our visitors by “word of mouth” or fliers around campus.

Charts & Graphs:

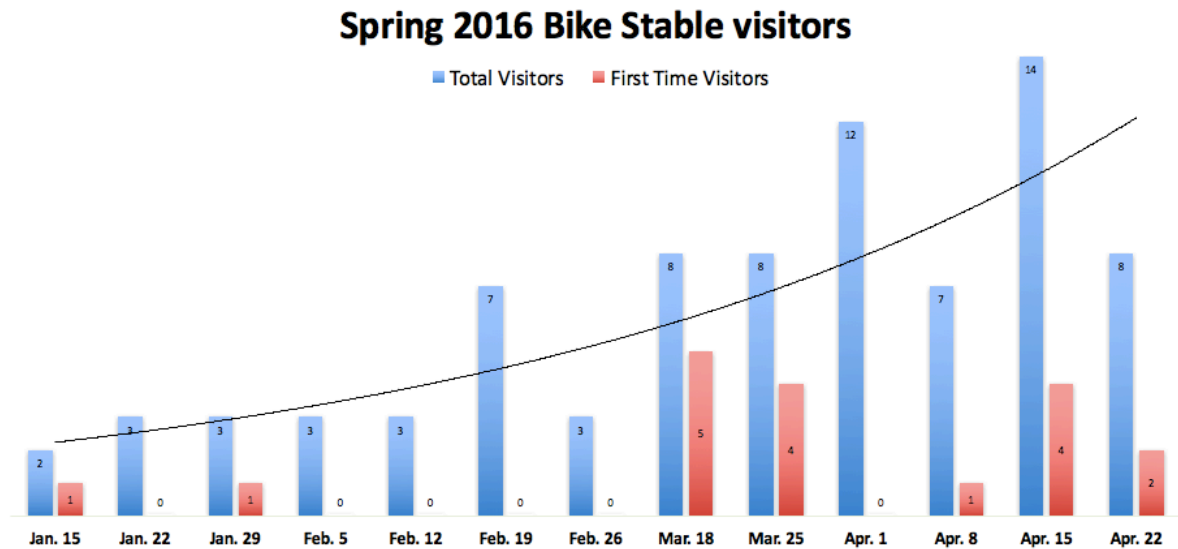


Figure #5: Bike Stable visitor's graph

This semester, we had a total of 81 visitors, where 18 of those visited us for the first time. January and February behaved different due to severe weather, while March and April had warmer temperatures.

Commentary, Reflection, and Next Steps:

Our summer 2016 will be great and we hope to have a good number of visitants. Here are some details we have about the upcoming semester:

- No more FRIDAYS. Our “Open Shop” summer day will be updated to our <https://wmich.edu/sustainability> website before Summer May 8th
- Set of long bike rides along Michigan area to be announced. A tentative schedule will be sent via e-mail to interested people.
- Build-a-bike program: Get the chance to build a bicycle from scratch and earn it.
- Attend the Bicycle Friendly America Conference @MSU to learn about what other universities are doing in terms of Non-motorized initiatives.