

Emilia Crotty



WILEY NORVEL

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Occupation: Bicycle Education Program Associate, Bike New York

Age: 26

Are you a T.A. member? When did you join?

Yes! I joined and roped my out-of-town dad into joining when we first rode the NYC Century in 2004.

Where do you live and work? I live in Sunnyside, Queens. Bike New York's office, where I work, is actually within the big Youth Hostel on 103rd Street and Amsterdam on the Upper West Side.

What kinds of volunteer activities have you done with T.A.? I started by stuffing envelopes, then went on to attend events like bike lane openings, plaNYC community forums, and rallies (hard work!), and now am a member of the small, but dynamic Queens Committee.

Can you tell us a bit about the Queens T.A. Committee? Like all good committees, T.A.'s Queens Committee first met in the living room of two of our members. We started out with humble ambitions: to improve conditions for Queens' cyclists in one way or another. Now we're planning a Tour de Queens. Our members are regularly teaching local kids how to ride two-wheelers for the first time. We're writing letters to the editors of Queens' newspapers left and right. And we're hosting elected officials at our monthly meetings. Our Committee members are well-connected, eager, hard-working, and funny! I really look forward to each meeting.

What was your best experience volunteering? In May, I volunteered to lead a Culinary Bike Tour of Queens as part of the Queens Committee's participation in Bike Month. It rained, but 10 of the most positive cyclists came out to join me for the ride. We made about 9 stops and ate everything from Peru-

vian pastries to empanadas to Indian sweets. We finished by drinking under the umbrellas at the Beer Garden, of course! It was great. (Check the 2008 calendar for a repeat performance.)

What upcoming projects are you working on (both with T.A. and T.A.-relevant projects)?

With the Committee I'm working on putting together the Tour de Queens. I'm also working with Partnerships for Parks' Karen Overton to offer what Bike New York calls "Teach Your Child to Ride a Bike" classes to as many Queens kids and parents as we can.

"Like all good committees, we first met in a living room."

What sort of projects would you like to see T.A. pursue that you would be interested in working on? I think it's about time we push the DOT to convert the Green Streets brick walkway that already exists within the Queensboro Plaza median into an east/west-bound extension of the bridge's bike/pedestrian lane so that I can get over to Sunnyside safely and quickly. I'll dig it myself if I have to!

Share some thoughts about working with other T.A. volunteers and staffers: T.A.'s staff continues to amaze me time and time again. I expect there to be so many more of them behind the scenes, but then it's the same few people you see out there making such a difference for the rest of us. And it's such a pleasure to work with other T.A. volunteers, particularly the fantastic Queens Committee.

What are some issues that concern you as a bicyclist in NYC? It scares me to death when I see bicyclists riding against traffic, especially when they're riding directly at me! This kind of behavior speaks to a real need for bicycle education in NYC among adults and kids alike. Formal bicycle education, like Bike New York's free Savvy Cyclist and Bike Driver's Ed classes, gives participants a basic idea of how they should drive their bicycles as vehicular traffic on our urban streets, which would prevent a good number of crashes. (Check out www.bikenewyork.org and click Safety/Education.)

Thoughts on T.A. as an organization: T.A. is a force. I'm proud to be a small part of the great work that they do. □