

Green Notes

Polar Bottle Invests in Employee Bike Fleet

BOULDER, CO—Judy Amabile, co-owner of Polar Bottle, outfitted her business with bikes after hearing a presentation at this year's Bicycle Leadership Conference on the benefits of providing bikes for staff to use for fun, fitness or errands. Further impetus came from John Burke, Trek president and a founder of Bikes Belong, who challenged people at the conference to return to their communities and promote bicycle use. Amabile did just that. She started by calling Full Cycle co-owner Kevin Kelly. "I want to buy five bicycles to keep at the office for my employees to use for errands, lunch rides, whatever they want," she told Kelly. Amabile and her staff visited Full Cycle in late February to pick out a fleet of five bikes to fit the 13 staff members. While providing bikes promotes healthy lifestyles for employees and makes a positive impact on the environment, Amabile also thinks it's about looking at what a person needs in a bike used for business. "For example, if you provide a bicycle so people can ride to lunch or at lunch, they need fenders and a chainguard so they don't get dirty. If you want them to use the bikes to take letters to the post office then you need baskets," Amabile said. Polar makes insulated water bottles for cycling and other outdoor sports.



Photo by Ray Keener

Judy Amabile of Polar Bottle shops for bikes at Full Cycle.

Scorecard Helps Vendors Reduce Packaging

BLOOMINGTON, MN—Quality Bicycle Products has begun a voluntary packaging scorecard program to nudge its vendors toward thinking about the environment during the shipping process. QBP's Advocacy, Community and Environmental Committee devised the card to score packaging on post-consumer content uses, weight, volume and materials used. While filling out a scorecard won't be required, QBP hopes its vendors at least look at it and do the math to see how they might lessen their impact. "It's a plan that we'd like to unroll to vendors saying, 'Hey, we've scored your product, we would like you to score your product.' It's not going to be an enforced thing at all and, hopefully, it will start the conversation on how we could reduce packaging and do it in a more sustainable method," said committee member Seth Nesselhuf. To start, QBP will mandate that its proprietary brands move in the direction of using recycled content in packaging. "Surly is making great strides in this area," Nesselhuf said. "A lot of their packaging is very simple." QBP wants to become a resource for companies looking to reduce the environmental impact of shipping by steering them toward manufacturers that use less harsh products like soy-based inks and recycled paper.

BOB Expands Green Efforts for Bike Month

BOISE, ID—In honor of National Bike Month in May, BOB, manufacturer of bicycle cargo trailers, is demonstrating how easy it is to use alternative transportation. According to the League of American Bicyclists, 40 percent of all trips are made within two miles of home, and a four-mile roundtrip by bicycle keeps about 15 pounds of pollutants out of the air. BOB will support bicycling through community and company-wide challenges and events next month. BOB is a participant and sponsor of May in Motion, a month-long program that rewards employers for educating employees about transportation issues and encouraging participation in transportation alternatives. The company also installed an alternative transportation brochure kiosk with bike racks, and plans to offer employees free bike repair clinics, a vanpool and carpool subsidy, as well as sell and subsidize the cost of bus passes. BOB will also support Boise Bike Week May 12-17 and several company employees plan to volunteer at the first Idaho Green Expo on May 17 and 18.

Do you have some green news? Contact Nicole Formosa at nformosa@bicycleretailer.com to be included in the column.