

Retail Spotlight

Century Cycles Gets Youth on Bikes

BY RAY KEENER

While Bikes Belong's national Safe Routes to School program continues to flourish, some retailers are working at the local level to get more kids on bikes.

One example is Scott Cowan, owner of three Century Cycles stores in the western suburbs of Cleveland, Ohio.

"I approached Bay High School [in Bay Village, Ohio] after seeing a newspaper story about a group of BHS students who rode their bikes to school to protest high gas prices," Cowan said.

If they could do it for one day, reasoned Cowan, why not encourage them to ride their bikes to school for an entire month? Bike to School month in May 2008 was a rous-



Bobby Olsen and Dan Flanagan have fun on the kick-off morning of Bay High School Bike to School month on April 28.

ing success. Students rode 15,566 miles.

It got hundreds of teenagers regularly riding their bicycles to school, a lifestyle change that continued for many throughout the summer. Surprisingly, the program also got parents to visit Century Cycles, inspired by their children to ride their bikes for short trips and exercise.

Century Cycles and Bay schools already have their sights set on 2009, when the program will expand to include Bay Middle School. Targeting 1,600 fifth through 12th-graders, the Bike

To School Challenge will continue to encourage youth to choose bicycles for transportation to improve the environment, the community and their health.