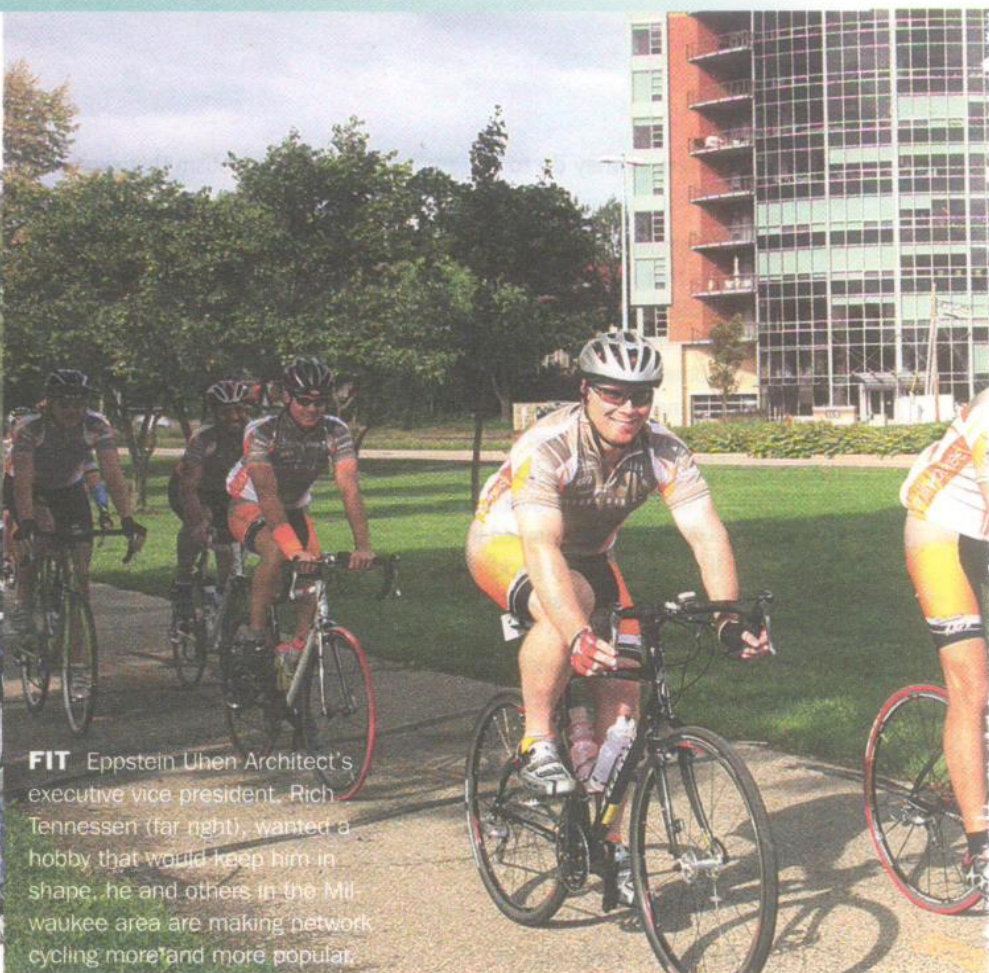


EXTREME Tim Eiring (in black), director of business development at Centare Group, takes his hobby of BMX racing to a dangerous and extreme level.



FIT Eppstein Uhen Architect's executive vice president, Rich Tennesen (far right), wanted a hobby that would keep him in shape, he and others in the Milwaukee area are making network cycling more and more popular.

Their own thing

Some area executives have unique hobbies

The lull in the nation's economy and high gas prices might be enough to put a sufficient damper on summer vacation plans this year, but some area executives have revived old interests that keep them closer to home and are a little bit easier on their bank accounts.

Tim Eiring, director of business development at Brookfield-based Centare Group, enjoys BMX racing.

"I got into it when I was 14," said Eiring. "Actually my whole family got into it. We used to travel all over the country competing when I was younger."

Eiring lost interest in BMX racing during college but recently picked up the extreme sport again three years ago. Eiring is 32 years old and the youngest in the group of men that he races with.

This will be the first year that BMX racing is a fully medaled Olympic sport. Eiring admits that he is nowhere near that level, but he boasted he has actually beaten one of the guys on the Olympic team in a race.

"I have competed in around 20 national events in the last three years and have managed to win a few of them too," he said.

Most BMX riders, including Eiring, race on 20-inch BMX bikes. They race with eight other riders usually on a quar-

ter mile track that is essentially a dead sprint filled with jumps and obstacles before the finish line. With eight riders on the track at a time, and accelerated speeds, crashes are a common occurrences on race day.

Eiring is recovering from a crash he suffered at a national event in Rockford, Illinois a few weeks ago.

"I am nursing a few scrapes and bruises from that race but the worst injury I ever suffered was a broken collarbone and I have had more stitches than I can count," he said.

According to Eiring, a rider can compete in as many races as they want to annually. For him it is around 30-40 races on the weekends.

"There are a number of different tracks in Wisconsin that attract quite a few people," he said. "There is a track in Oshkosh, Rhinelander, Wisconsin Rapids, Fond du Lac and in the winter time in Elkhorn on the Walworth County Fairgrounds there is an indoor track."

Eiring has seen individuals as old as 65 competing in these races and plans to continue to do so for as long as his body lets him.

"I envision myself racing as long as I can," he said.

His wife, Kristine, is pregnant with the couple's first child, but according to Eiring racing has always been a big part of his family and will continue to be so in the future.

Long distance

Rich Tennesen, executive vice president of Eppstein Uhen Architects of Milwaukee, prefers a racing bicycle. Tennesen recently completed a leg of the Race Across America competition with four other individuals.

"In high school I rode a bike, and I always wanted to bike across the country," Tennesen said. "In our current positions we couldn't take that much time off so that's what stirred us to enter the first leg of the race which runs about

1,000 miles from Oceanside, California to Taos, New Mexico."

The group plans to add a few more individuals to their team and hopes to complete the whole race next year. Race Across America is 3,000 miles in length and can be done, according to Tennesen in approximately seven days.

"It's done in a relay format, one rider is on the ground biking at all times and then we take shifts and different legs of the race," he said.

The team of individuals is currently in negotiations with California-based Specialized Bikes about team sponsorships to raise money for charities.

Tennesen picked up biking again after his hobby dropped off once he got to college.

"I've been doing it for three or four years now, I was reaching the age where I wanted to keep myself active," he said.

After Eppstein Uhen opened its new office in Madison, Tennesen and a group of individuals biked from Milwaukee to Madison to commemorate the move.

"That ride turned into an annual fundraising and networking ride," he said. "It has inspired a lot of other people

RELAX Laura Iding, director of trauma/surgical/medical and ICU nursing at Froedtert Hospital, writes for Harlequin publishing company.



to get involved in cycling as well."

People on the west coast say cycling is the new golf, said Tennesen.

"More and more people are getting together and cycling for a business networking event, because it's faster and you get exercise at the same time," he said.

Another group that Tennesen is involved in features a monthly two hour cycling ride in the Milwaukee area, strictly designed and centered on business networking.

Romantic writer

Hobbies don't have to and certainly do not always involve physical activity. While, Laura Iding, director of trauma/surgical/medical and ICU nursing at Froedtert Hospital in Milwaukee, does train for triathlons her primary hobby is drastically more subdued.

Iding is a romance novelist for Harlequin Publishing Company.

"I started writing at a very young age, but my parents decided that I needed a steady career as well," said Iding. "That's why I went into nursing, I have been working for 19 years and I am currently working around 230 people, and my writing has always been a release

in a health care environment, in a doctor's office or trauma unit, because that is what I am familiar with," she said.

Iding sold her first book in December of 2003; they are available online on the Harlequin web site and are most popular overseas. Her books are published in other languages as well including French, Finnish, and Italian she said.

In August, her 18th book is part of a Harlequin promotion to spur their American market. Her book will be available in Barnes and Noble stores and other large bookstores across the United States.

Iding graduated with a bachelor of science degree in nursing and got her masters in business. She admits she had to learn a lot about the publishing industry and the stylistic techniques used by writers but said organizations like the Romance Writers of America, which has chapters in every state, are there to really help aspiring writers.

"I'm all about trying to balance work and life, I go home at night after a long day and it's nice to have something to take my mind off work," she said.

According to Iding, there are many talented romance writers being published from Wisconsin.

Rockin on

Not only are there talented writers in the Milwaukee area, the region also boasts a slew of talented musicians and various festivals to feature them. Kevin O'Toole, executive vice president and a

principal at Hunzinger Construction Co. in Brookfield, is a self-taught guitar player, and a member of the band H2-Oh.

O'Toole and his band mate Henry Lewis II recently recorded a CD and just finished promoting their music as a featured artist on a packed Potawatomi Bingo Casino stage at Summerfest.

H2-Oh's music, according to O'Toole, is of the contemporary folk rock era and is inspired by artists like John Mellencamp and James Taylor.

"We are song writers. Right now we are doing a lot of festivals and a lot of opening act work," said O'Toole. "We

... **HOBBIES** continued on pg. 16

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