

Trail 305 and the funky, corrugated tunnel of love

by Erica Ryberg

The winter I lived in Minneapolis, I discovered that when it was 10 degrees below zero, my eyeglasses iced up while I rode my bike. I rode on frozen lakes, too, but winter quirks and inconveniences are nothing compared to the many layered experience of trying to commute by bicycle in Prescott.



Here, daytime and nighttime temperatures have a typical range of 30 degrees, meaning that whatever you pick out to wear in the wee morning hours will cook you alive if you don't shed it by noon. That being said, mountain biking is over in Minneapolis by November 16. And in some ways, it's just getting going here in Prescott. For one thing, it's cool enough to mountain bike without risking dehydration and heat exhaustion, and for another, you have many of the trails to yourself.

With that in mind, my uninitiated boyfriend and I headed out to Lynx Lake to get him started riding on trail 305. Just as time fills in the potholes on memory lane, so did it smooth out trail 305. I'd forgotten about the steep drop-offs, the hairpin curves and the loose, rocky chutes. What I remem-

bered was a gently winding single track trail that follows Walker Road from near Highway 69 past Lynx Lake. It's that too, plus the scary-to-newbies stuff I'd forgotten.

So, as we rode the trail, it all came back soon enough, and my mountain bike newby- honey was ready to go home after a couple of miles of trail 305.

Fortunately, just past the Highlands Center for Natural History, there's a trail exit off to the right that passes through a giant metal drainage pipe. When you come down the hill after the Center and the trail climbs to the left, head right up the drainage and there it is. It's meant for human traverse just like the pipes then-Public Works Director Larry Tarkowski had installed in Prescott Valley. And due to the corrugation, it's best to hum as you ride through it. Singing isn't bad either - I sound way better in a drainage pipe than I ever have on my own. Some folks also think it's a great place to paint, at least according to the graffiti artists who made it into the pipe ahead of my honey and me.

The pipe terminates on the west side of Walker Road at one of the only free parking lots in any of the Prescott National Forest recreation areas. This is convenient knowledge, because further down the little drainage are some lovely rock formations, petroglyphs on the north side of the canyon, and a year 'round pool or two. It's worth checking out when you're on foot, but a bit rugged by bike.

In any case, we got the honey-meister off of trail 305 and rode back to Highway 69 on the pavement. The part he liked best? "Going downhill on Walker Road really fast."

Archery education shooting for Arizona schools

by Art Merrill

Remember when archery was a phys-ed offering at public schools? Neither do I. But it used to be that way and it can be so again. It should be especially attractive now, when so many schools are trying hard to integrate disparate classes, like combining English with Biology by having students write science essays.

Arizona Game & Fish Department is actively promoting its Archery in the Schools Program, which teaches Olympic-style target archery to students in grades 4 - 12 as part of the school's physical education curriculum. The program is actually one of national scope, begun in 2003.

Because of the limited availability of "loaner" archery gear, Arizona's Archery in the Schools Program has been limited to about 40 schools the past two years, with more than 40 schools on the waiting list. AZG&F put more funding into the program this year, so a lot of those schools are now on board. The archery industry is also helping out, allowing schools to buy equipment for half price, about \$2,400. AZG&F trains and certifies teachers from participating schools as archery instructors.

The program itself is a two-week course and includes instruction in "how-to," history, safety, equipment, mental concentration, and self-improvement. Students shoot at bulls-eye targets in front of an arrow-resistant net in their gymna-

um, so winter weather isn't a limiting factor. The equipment is kid-sized and state-of-the-art (my bow hasn't been state-of-the-art for half a decade...). The educational bonus is that the program gives teachers creative possibilities for integrating archery with academic studies such as social studies, mathematics, visual



Above: Photo courtesy of AZ Game & Fish. Left: RHH photo

arts, history, English and language arts. And - go figure - teachers say that students' behavior and attendance improve on archery days.

If you can't convince your school board to bring archery back to phys-ed, your kid can still get a shot at it in February. AZG&F is conducting a three-segment archery fundamentals class for youths aged 8-18 at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility north of Phoenix. The 90-minute segments are on Feb. 10, 17 and 24; they provide the equipment. Limit is 24 students per class, so don't wait. To register, contact Denise Raum at (602) 789-3567. For more information on the Archery in the Schools Program, visit azgfd.gov/education or call Denise Raum.

Big Pig gets you a new bow

If you got drawn for archery-only javelina for January 1-25, 2007, there's still plenty of time to sign up for the Prescott Valley Archery Big Pig contest. If you harvest the largest javelina, PV Archery will hand you a brand new Mathews Outlook compound bow.

"But everybody who gets a javelina gets something," said PV Archery's T.C. Turner.

While "something" means various hunting related goodies from various manufacturers, it also means a second PSE bow awarded to a random winner. The hunter who bags a javelina closest in weight to the average weight of all the javelina recorded in last year's contest will win the bow.

This is not intended as a serious hunt contest; rather, the Big Pig contest has always been about camaraderie and bragging rights among archers. That's why the entry fee is only \$5.

Signup deadline in Dec. 31. For more information, call PV Archery at 772-0255.



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