

New Ride Leader Chair Lisa Soldat Brings Dedication and Vision to the Job

By: Ellen Guerin

Although Lisa has belonged to HBC for only seven years, she is already a key club member: serving as vice president and then president of the club, leading weekend trips to her home state of Iowa, and welcoming new members into HBC. In her professional life, she has helped to train Indonesian doctors to become Family Physicians; now, she is channeling her leadership skills to train HBC ride leaders, perhaps a more challenging task!

Lisa is a physician who specializes in Family Medicine; club members have seen her medical expertise on club rides, where she has literally been a life saver. She divides her time between her condominium in Minneapolis and her house in Des Moines. Although Lisa is officially retired, she continues to do some consulting in Indonesia. Wait . . . Indonesia? Yes - along with a University of Iowa colleague, Lisa has visited Indonesia 8-10 times to help train experienced Indonesian general practitioners in family practice areas such as women's health and pediatrics. A core group of Indonesian doctors, along with the help of Lisa and the U. of Iowa, worked to create a Family Medicine residency in Indonesia, at Gadjha Mada University in Yogyakarta. The Covid pandemic temporarily stopped the program, but a new class started in 2022. Recently, Lisa returned from a week helping to train the current Family Medicine residents in obstetric ultrasound. Most of her work has been on a volunteer basis.

As a new Ride Leader Chair, Lisa is enthusiastic about her vision for ride leaders, both old and new. She would like to see more ride leaders and more rides, including more regular "tried and true" rides, such as Shelly's Monday night rides or the Tuesday Round the River rides. Lisa also sees a need for more relaxed rides geared toward people who may be scared off by fast group riders. One example of this, according to Lisa, is Haggith Nadav's "Ease into Biking" series. Eventually, Lisa sees these riders as gravitating to faster rides.

Lisa has been on bike trips and travels around the world, but her favorite ride is RAGBRAI, right there in her home state of Iowa. She's done the ride with Mary Swanstrom's Loons three times: 2018, 2019, and 2022. Asked whether she plans to do the 2023 ride, RAGBRAI's 50th anniversary, Lisa said, "You betcha!" Since the ride goes through her home town of Des Moines, Lisa even hopes to host the Loons at her house.

Even though the road biking season may seem far off, Lisa has a message for club riders: keep the focus on safety. She worries that people may get hurt on rides unnecessarily. Yes, it's a pain to go through the safety announcements at the start of each ride, but she continues to see people doing unsafe things while riding. "Perhaps," she muses, "we need to empower sweeps to call out unsafe practices."

Anyone interested in becoming a Ride Leader, along with current Ride Leaders who need to update their training, is welcome to join Lisa for Ride Leader training on May 6th, 12:00PM, at Davanni's in Golden Valley. Lisa and other experts, including Ride with GPS wizard Greg Swanson, will inform and inspire the team of 2023 HBC Ride Leaders.