## Critical Mass brings city cyclists together

By Dan Zweig

STAFF WRITER

On Friday, a friend and I jumped on our recently refurbished bicycles and headed north from IIT towards Daley Plaza to participate in Critical Mass. Critical Mass is where cyclists from Chicago get together on the last Friday of every month and ride on a different route through the city as a mass. This inevitably blocks traffic for minutes at a time as the group travels collectively through green lights, even after they turn red. We just caught the group as they passed near Monroe and State, and joined in the mass.

The group rides together through the city at a comfortable pace, waving to cars and pedestrians, yelling "Happy Friday" to everyone who they see. Bikers come out in support with their radical interpretations of bikes, from the oldest looking bikes to the newest, and this Friday they were in costume for Halloween. The route took everyone out of downtown and through Bridgeport, out 35th to Western and up to McKinley and Little Village. At a point we pulled over to see the mayhem, as we had been keeping up mostly with the front of the mass, and saw minutes of bikers pass by, some with tandems, some with kids in carts pulled behind them, a few bikes that were two bike frames welded one on top of the other, there was a handful of skateboarders and long-boarders, a paddleboat reinterpreted as a bike boat, vintage bikes, road bikes, mountain bikes, and small bikes that you think could never



make it a mile. Costumes included a Duff Beer 6-pack, robots, werewolves, vampires, bananas, and anything else you would see at a Halloween event in Chicago.

The plan was to travel through these various Southwestern neighborhoods and end at a bike shop, where a celebration and fundraiser was going to be held. It was approximately 12 miles. When the mass arrived - I estimated 2,000 bikers - the bike shop was closed with a sign that read "Party cancelled by order of Chicago Police Department." In a few minutes the mass was together again heading back for downtown.

The idea behind Critical Mass can be interpreted by many different people as many different things; my interpretation is to take away the cars' control of the city and give it back to people. It is an exciting collaboration of thousands of bikers who can get together on a Friday night and enjoy themselves, while raising awareness of bicyclists and passively lobbying for better treatment of bikers as well as better infrastructure for the city. Chicago Critical Mass has been doing this every month for 15 years, demonstrating one last venue where anyone can meet up and have a good time, without dependence on cars and without spending any money.

Even if you cannot participate next time, or the next after that, I think it would be well worth it to take time just to go and watch the mass ride downtown. This is an experience no IIT students should miss in their brief collegiate experience.



Images courtesy of Dan Zweig

## Movie Review: 'Wreck-It Ralph' smashing success

By Katie Peters

COPY & LAYOUT EDITOR

We will never be too old for animated movies. Well, okay, there are some movies we are too old to watch, but this is not true of the newest Walt Disney Animation Studios movie, Wreck-It-Ralph. The movie is about a video game character that no longer wants to be a bad guy, and so travels to different video games to prove himself as a hero. It was more geared towards our generation than the 5-year-olds in the theater who outnumbered us 50 to 1. There were appearances from old favorites from the video games we played when we were younger including Sonic, Bowser, Pacman, and an awesome spoof of Call of Duty. Just watching the movie dragged out the nostalgia and made me enjoy it that much more.

movie was heartwarming and funny. Sarcasm from video game characters abounded, and I left the theater wishing I had access to a Nintendo 64 or old-fashioned arcade. The characters were well developed and you easily become attached to them as the movie progressed. One of the best parts of the movie was that it was not a remake of a movie or book, and was able to function on its own plot without the ending being ruined. Yes, it was an animated movie, and yes, it had not reached the PG-13 or R rating that most college students feel that they are required to watch, but it was definitely a worthwhile movie to buy an AMC Gold Pass for at the Welcome Desk. Plus, it would also be an extremely fun movie to dress up for (Pacman ghost costume, anyone?) and would be an easy way to confuse a lot of third graders. Looking for something to do this weekend? Definitely take the time to go see this movie, and be prepared for another Disney hit!



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