

GEARED TOWARD YOU

In the modern age, you'll find that nearly anything can be customized to your needs and taste, no matter how strange. Sometimes, however, creative personalizing can go a long way. Such is the thinking behind HubBub Bicycles in Chesterland.

"Custom-only bicycles were a dream of mine more than 15 years ago," says founder **Diane Lees**. "When I was involved with City Bike [in downtown Cleveland, 1989 to 1996], I was 'voted down' for the concept." After City Bike was sold, Lees took one year off the bicycle business to write *The HubBub Guide to Cycling* and develop her concept for a custom-bike shop. Today, that concept is HubBub Bicycles.

"When we opened in 1997, the entire bicycle industry said it couldn't be done," says Lees. "Today, it's more mainstream. However, we are one of the only stores to actually design each and every frame." HubBub uses renowned builders from across the United States to construct its bicycle designs.

The efforts of HubBub have not gone unnoticed. Recently, the store was recognized by the membership of the League of American Bicyclists as the number one bicycle shop in the Great Lakes region, and 18th in the entire nation. The store won for its customer service, support of local bicycling activities and programs, and the attitude of the shop owner and staff. HubBub prides itself on being different.

"You can walk into many upscale bicycle shops today and shell out anywhere from \$2,500 to \$9,000 for a 'stock' bike. Our average price is about \$5,000, and you will always have a perfect fit," says Lees. "We expect the bicycles we design and build to last between 10 and 20 years. If you take your initial investment and divide it over the life of the bicycle, you can see the advantage."

The store caters equally to advanced cyclists and novice riders.

"Our designs are especially comforting to the person who is ready to begin riding more miles and needs confidence, along with the other benefits of the custom fit," says Lees. "We design and build more bikes for women than probably anyone in the area." In fact, according to Lees, the store may design more bikes specifically for women than anyone in the country. For those wishing to make the push to riding longer distances, such as fund-raising multi-day rides, the store helps outfit, train and advise cyclists.

Armed with the perfect bike, the next step is finding the perfect place to ride it. "We [Lees and partner **Brian Jenks**, who has been at the shop since 1998] have a few local places that we love to ride," says Lees. "For those fast, fun rides, we enjoy the Rocky River Reservation. When time is short, we will take our tandem out from the shop and ride the hills around Geauga County ... we like riding the Chagrin Valley and beyond. We've even ridden to Solon to shop for groceries at the Mustard Seed Market. They were so nice - packed our panniers with crushed ice and away we went!" For more information, visit www.hubbub.com. ■

