A French startup called Connected Cycle has developed smart pedals for when your bike is stolen or (ahem) you forget where you parked it.

“The pedal comes with other bells and whistles, too,” writes Liz Core on Grist. “It sends signals to the app to track your speed, route, incline, and calories burned on each trip. Plus, get this: The pedal generates its own energy, and uses its own internet connection.”

Innovation

The most interesting cars at the Detroit Auto Show were bikes.

“The designers,” according to Adele Peters in Co.Exist, “think it’s possible for society to shift to more sustainable transportation like these concepts—like a driving version of the slow-food movement perhaps. ‘It would take a shift in values that embraces physical labor, accepts less comfort, and is willing to invest more time into travel,’ [developer] Van Dyke says. ‘For those that do shift, the payoff is huge—a drastic reduction in energy use, better health, and the exhilaration of exercise.’”

Reinventing the wheel

A cardboard bike sounds as plausible as a chocolate teapot, according to The Economist, but one Israeli is building them anyway.

The bike’s frame, wheels, handlebars and saddle are cardboard. The tires—harking back to the early days of cycling—are solid rubber from old car tires which means they can’t be punctured.

The chain, like the timing belt of a car, is also made from old car tires. The pedals are plastic recycled from bottles and the brakes are recycled too. The finished product weighs 9kg, a bit less than an ordinary bike, and can carry a rider weighing 220kg.

The cardboard bike will cost $9-12 a unit to manufacture, making it far more affordable than a conventional bike and a very good fit for many countries with rough roads and low incomes.

Changing business to change the world

Inspiring speaker John Beale is coming to Victoria on May 26 for a free public panel discussion about social innovation.

He’ll describe how the VillageReach team created a for-profit enterprise to finance getting medicines the last mile to isolated communities in Africa.

John will be joined by other inspiring innovators Jill Doucette of Synergy, Yolanda Meijer of Habitat Victoria, Brent Mainprize of the Gustavson School of Business and the National Consortium for Indigenous Economic Development, and Matt Murphy of Gustavson and Value Added Africa.

The conversation will be lively – please join us! Details are on CSSI’s website.

Bikes at UVic

The volunteer-run SPOKES program at UVic has loaned out 12,842 bikes in the last 12 years. For info on how they can help you, check out the Spokes Facebook page or the website.

Bike to Work Week

Bike to Work Week has been happening in many countries for years. In Victoria, there are heaps of celebrations and support, teams and prizes.

Many units at UVic are fielding BtWW teams, and Go Gustavson! is ready to roll.

We welcome cyclists and walkers – new and experienced, occasional or regular. We’ll have support, reminders, prizes, and treats, so think about saddling or lacing up and joining us! Email Rachel at cssi@uvic.ca to sign up and be eligible for the prize draws!

Search the web for your local organization – dates will vary. New York is already finished, UK is yet to come.