A bicycle saddle, that is. A newly paved bicycle path in Crystal Falls Township, part of the Heritage Trail network has been completed, and organization members and township officials are planning a “grand opening” June 16.

The Apple Blossom Trail now extends from Fourth Avenue in Iron River to Old Caspian. It all points to excellent opportunities to get on a bike and enjoy all the benefits of cycling.

I bought a new bicycle late last fall, and plan to use it on days I don’t have to travel for work. And that brings up the subject of bicycle safety—for both the rider, and those who share the roads with cyclists. I know I’ll have to start wearing a helmet—nearly 85 percent of all head or brain injuries could be avoided if cyclists wear helmets, and most bicycle crashes occur within five blocks of home, according to the Michigan AAA.

A bicycle is considered a vehicle, and we cyclists must follow the same rules of the road as a car.

Some of the most frequent actions contributing to bicycle accidents include entering a roadway from a driveway, entering an intersection without obeying traffic signals or signs, swerving without notice, riding against the flow of traffic and not using hand signals when in traffic.

We live in wonderful communities for biking. With bike lanes and paths being added continually, and the price of gasoline still at record highs, it may become an attractive alternate for the workday commute. Plan on giving it a try.

--Marian Volek