

Evanston woman quits her car, rides her twike

By Frank Mathie

August 8, 2006 - The price of gasoline is at record highs. What's a person to do? Well, some people have switched to public transportation. Others are buying economy cars, and in Evanston, Margaret James is driving a twike.

When Margaret Jones of Evanston heads off to work or errands or for just an old-fashioned spin around town, she travels in something that's half bike and half electric car. It's called a twike. "It's two recumbent bicycles mounted in a kind of a car shell. So it's a human electric car or hybrid vehicle," said James, twike owner.

Half pedal power and half battery power. Together, the legs and the electric propel the twike to speeds of up to 40 mph. All Margaret does at the end of the day is charge her twike batteries for about five hours and she's ready for tomorrow.

"One of the great things about this bike is you get all this exercise and you show up at work with your brain flooded with endorphins instead of showing up to work stressed," James said

The twike is made in Germany and right now there are only five in the states. Margaret bought hers because, when biking, she had too many close calls with cars.

"Mine cost \$12,500," said James. "It pays for itself in gas. See, now it costs 25 cents for every 40 miles I drive. Compare that to gas. I figure in one more year I will be driving virtually free."

Now with a name like "twike," as you might imagine, there are a few pwablems, or I should say problems. You see, Margaret's friends have the tendency to make fun of her and her twike.

"They talk about putting things in my twunk. They talk about twavelling."

She has headlights, taillights, even hair dryers for heaters. Bring on the winter.

The Twike will be at the [Eco Transportation Show](#) Tuesday, August 15, from 4 to 7 p.m. at 300 North Jefferson.

