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Unicycle makes perfect transportation for LU student

September 01, 2008 ¦ Carmen Fleischauer

Kurt Collins' unique talent — riding a unicycle — makes him recognizable among fellow students and teachers at Liberty University.

"I'm pretty well-known now," Collins said. "Even when I am not riding people will say, 'Oh you're the unicycle guy.' I get a lot of people honking their horns at me when they go by."

Collins first stumbled upon the unicycle in the basement of his Elkton, Md., home a couple of years ago.

"I decided it was going to be my summer project to figure out how to ride it. It took me six hours to be able to ride, about two hours a night."

Collins said that his parents were not aware that he was attempting to learn the unicycle.

"They didn't know I was trying to do it, and by the fourth day I just took it outside and started riding it, and they thought it was pretty amazing."

Collins perfected his riding over the next couple of years, and when it was time to go to Liberty, he was ready to bring the unicycle with him as a way to get around campus. Even with the extensive LU Transit bus system, Collins prefers to ride his unicycle everywhere he can.

He does not have a large record of crashes, unlike many who ride road or mountain bikes. Once, his shoe laces caught in the spokes, causing him to fall, but he learned a lesson and now tucks the laces inside his shoes. One might think that riding a unicycle may be dangerous, but Collins would disagree; he doesn't even wear a helmet.

“It’s pretty safe, actually. I think it is safer than when I was riding a regular bike. If you lose your balance, or something, there is a whole lot less to hit you on your way down. It sort of falls out of your way and you fall on your feet, standing upright. You’re not leaning over or anything.”

Collins’ other interests are graphic design — his major — art and snowboarding. As a sophomore, he is not quite sure where life will take him, but he is letting God lead. He plans to continue pursuing art in his spare time.

As far as his future with the unicycle, Collins said, “I’m going to try to step things up. It’s fun, but it was also a way to get exercise. Now it’s getting too easy to get around campus on it (even up the hills). I’m going to try to find something a little harder.”