

The Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club Newsletter

October 1997

William Hoehne, Editor

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TWBC Board Meeting

The next TWBC Board meeting will be held Tuesday, October 7, 1997, at the Skyline Village Apartments Recreation Building, 5702 N 33rd St., Tacoma, WA.

The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. All members are welcome. Bring your own food and beverage. Call 759-4464 for directions.

Orting City Council Thanks TWBC Members Pass 1997-98 Budget

Orting City Councilmember Scott Drennen presented a plaque to club president Janice Jensen at TWBC's club meeting on September 16, 1997. The plaque represented an appreciation of TWBC's activities with the city.

TWBC donated \$500.00 to the City of Orting to help with a variety of bicycling activities. TWBC also worked on the Orting section of Rails to Trails, and provided information on helmet ordinances in Washington State.

Councilmember Drennen announced that the City of Orting had just passed a helmet ordinance for bicyclists 17 years of age or under on September 11, 1997. The ordinance will take effect in 60 days. Councilmembers David Inge and Cheryl Temple were also instrumental in the passing of this helmet ordinance.

Also on the agenda for the meeting was a vote on the proposed budget for 1997-98. Club members approved the budget as published on page 5 in the September, 1997 newsletter. All members are encouraged to save this page for future reference.

Tuxedo Talk And Power Bars

by Ernie Stephenson, TWBC Vice-President

We have several interesting and exciting speakers coming to talk to us throughout the year, folks, and the leadoff person is no exception for our October 21, 1997 Club meeting!

Estelle Gray is without a doubt a name known to most of you. She is not only the owner of R&E Cyclery, but also co-holds the women's cross country tandem record, is a prolific writer on bicycle issues, an active member of the Cascade Bicycle club, and is closely related with Rodriques Cycles, where she is considered a foremost authority on bicycle design particularly related to women's riding problems and solutions. She is also a very class person and superb speaker.

She plans on doing an adaptation of her famous "Tuxedo" talk she gives at STP orientation meetings.

Let's combine food and entertainment at our meeting and add to it the age-old question of ALL cyclists how the heck can you make a Power Bar edible? Some of you pedallers may not realize this, but one of the primary roles of the Vice-President is to provide food and entertainment at club meetings. Now, munchies and "swag" (door prizes) are OK, but how about something a little new?

Here's the deal: If you have a favorite home recipe for a special cookie, energy bar, high-energy muffin, or whatever, here is your chance to shine. Put together that special concoction and bring it to the October meeting.

Entries will be judged on product appeal (keep it from looking like something your rear wheel rolled over), taste, totability and presentation. We will come up with some special prizes for the top three winners. This promises to be fun, so try out your culinary cadence!

Our meetings start at 7:00 p.m., and are located at the South Park Community Center, 4851 South Tacoma Way, Tacoma, WA. Call me at 536-0197 for information.

Pedal Pushin'

by Janice Jensen, TWBC President

The Courage Classic has come and gone with its usual success. The TWBC team consisted of 72 riders, with Dave Tison as team captain. We had macho riders who rode two passes in one day, and crazy riders who rode an extra day by leaving a car at the end point and riding to the start 70 miles away. Can you guess who these riders are? The food was wonderful, and the weather was much cooler this year with rain now and then. The evenings were spent reminiscing about the day's ride and anticipating tomorrow's. I can't imagine a better way to spend a long weekend!

Except maybe a week long organized bicycle tour. I just came back from Wheelin' Washington, and what a week that was! This was my first tour, and the first time I've been on the saddle for 7 straight days (ouch)! I met people from all over. Oregon, California, New Hampshire, Arizona and Yakima were represented. I liked a couple from Yakima. The man was originally from Brooklyn, and he still had the accent and the attitude! We had lots of sunshine and just a little rain on the last two days.

The scenery was magnificent, with breath taking sunsets and night skies filled with thousands of stars. Yes, I made many wishes, but here I am anyway! Some places I never wanted to leave, like Orcas Island, my favorite. I must have sat on the beach for hours before and after dinner and after dark, enjoying the beauty and peace.

Everyone seemed so relaxed and friendly, a great group. 155 riders and 9 staff took part. Some days were short miles, while others were longer, but everyone rode at a comfortable speed, and all arrived within a reasonable hour. We had to sign in at the mid day checkpoint and at the end of the day at camp. The daily route guides were excellent, and the ferry rides the best!

Our last ferry was a passenger ferry from Ocean Shores to Westport. The boat was rocking side to side in swells about 4 to 5 feet high, which triggered one of the riders to start singing the Gilligan Island song. "The water started getting rough, the tiny ship was tossed", and the

rest of us quickly joined in. By the time the song was over we were just about to shore. We all laughed at the adventure we just took (in our minds), and had a great time.

I made new friends and I valued an old friendship even more. There's lots of photo and more important are the memories of people helping one another. Some people were a little slower than others and some were always in a hurry but everyone was very helpful and enjoyed just being together, whether it was dinner with the crowd or a walk on the beach or a quite talk between two friends - we all had the same common interest - bicycling!

Take a trip, and remember ride smart, ride safe!

Any Accident Can Ruin The Rest Of The Day!

by Carla Gramlich, TWBC Director of Special EventsThe club has experienced a slight rise in bicycling accidents over the past two months. I hope everyone recovers quickly, and get back in the saddle soon. Here are some helpful tips to help avoid some accidents.

Obey All Laws!

I am sure that any recent accidents among OUR members did not violate any laws. I am also aware, during my travels, that those OTHER bicyclists are breaking many laws.

Many cyclists disregard stop signs and do not travel with traffic. Know the laws and obey them. This includes ALWAYS wearing your helmet while on your bicycle. This will also help present a better image for all cyclists.

While we are talking about laws, here is a little common sense. Riding with earphones may not always be illegal, but it puts the bicyclist at a great disadvantage. I rely on all my senses to help get around safely. Wearing earphones will limit your hearing, and that could be dangerous. It will also prevent you from hearing that we are stopping for lunch at the next restaurant reason enough to leave the headphones at home.

Defense, Defense, Defense

I travel daily down North Yakima Street. I have the right of way for the entire street. I constantly scan and make sure that cars are obeying the stop signs before I cruise or pass a stopped car. This defense mechanism has helped me avoid many untimely meetings with automobiles.

Making eye contact with the drivers is another way to be sure the driver has seen you. Having the right of way and getting hit by a car that blew through a stop sign will not prevent injury.

Remember, any contact with a car can really hurt.

When I travel at night, I take the position that cars cannot see me I am invisible. Numerous times I have stopped because the car is rolling through a stop sign. I would much rather give

up my right of way than risk bodily harm. This may add a minute or two to my commute, but the time is well worth it.

Mirror, Mirror

A few years ago I rode the Oregon Double Century. One requirement for the ride was a mirror. Over the years I have been inconsistent about using a mirror. This ride sold me on riding with a mirror.

I use either a bicycle mounted type or the kind that clips on my glasses. If you are dependent on your mirrors in your car, this will hold true while bicycling. Scanning the area around you with a mirror is needed for your defense.

A mirror may add an ounce or two to the bike, but the advantage is well worth the weight. I constantly scan my mirror to have some idea of what cars or bicyclists are behind me.

I still look back over my shoulder before passing or entering a lane, but the mirror provides additional help. I am also dependent on the mirror attached to my glasses while off my bike. This allows me to know who is sneaking up behind me.

Bring On The Night

Years ago, Steve and I went over to Vashon Island for dinner. We were used to the long summer days and forgot that September has shorter daylight hours. After a very nice meal at Sound Ford, I noticed that it was very dark. Adding to our dilemma was the lack of street lights on Vashon, making it a very dark place to ride.

We had a couple of blinking lights between us, and bravely (or were we just idiots?) made it back to the Ferry Terminal. This was a harsh lesson on being aware of when it gets dark and being prepared.

Now that fall is here, planning is needed to avoid your own accidents while riding in the dark. Many lighting systems are now available. For occasional riding at night a small, inexpensive model may be the thing for you.

To provide longer coverage at night, an investment in a rechargeable system, that is easy to maintain, is needed. Adding a blinking LED light and light colored clothing with reflective strips is also smart.

If you are currently commuting, fenders, lights, waterproof panniers, and reflectors will be needed to continue your commuting during the fall and winter months. I have one bicycle so equipped just for commuting. This allows me the flexibility to ride anytime of the year at anytime of the day or night. I have been known to ride at some pretty strange hours.

Learn From Any Accident

The corporation I work for takes safety very seriously. Following any accident a review is held to help avoid any future accidents.

If you have had an accident, and would like to provide some insight to our members, give me a call (752-4038). Even if the accident was completely the driver's fault, it is helpful to understand what types of drivers are out there.

Remember to always carry an ID/Insurance Card on your body while bicycling. Carrying this information on your bicycle will not help if you are taken from the scene of an accident and your bicycle is left behind. Also include your name and an emergency phone number on the inside of your helmet. May this information never be needed.

Local Tour Book Available

Citizens for a Healthy Bay has a book called Touring Commencement Bay by Bicycle. Inside are descriptions and maps to 24 bicycle rides in this area. These rides are virtually flat. The book also gives some pollution history of the area. The book is available from the CHB office at 771 Broadway in downtown Tacoma, or call 253-383-2429 for information. You can make a \$2.00 donation for each copy.

Government Relations Report

By Bob Myrick

Director of Community and Government Relations Trail Portion Completed

As you may remember, Janice reported on this event in the last newsletter, but Carla Gramlich is still excited about the August 16 dedication of the Orting to McMillin section of the foothills trail, which the Foothills Trails Coalition has been working on for many years.

TWBC helped dedicate the new portion of the Foothills Rails to Trails, and we were recognized for our help in maintaining the Orting to McMillin section. Pierce County Council member, Jan Sharbo, an active cyclist, thanked our Club for its part in building the trail. Take the time to visit Orting and our portion of the trail.

Carla reminds us that this trail is primarily being completed because of the efforts of volunteers. The next time you are near the trail, check it out. Watch how it changes those towns! Bicycle shops in Sumner and Orting have reported that people are bringing their old bicycles in for repairs. People are now able to walk and bicycle safely in the Orting Valley. What phenomenon has promoted such behavior? The Foothills Rails to Trails!

New Bridge?

Speaking of trails, the County wants to build a new bridge across the Puyallup River near the existing Clarks Creek Bridge just northwest of Puyallup. Unfortunately, the County wants to tear down the old bridge. This bridge is part of the planned Puyallup River Trail. Word has it that the cost of maintenance is pretty low, so you would think it would be an easy sell to keep.

Questions To Candidates

Carla is full of great ideas. She wants to develop questions to send to candidates for public office. If she can pull this off, we will see results in next month's newsletter. Anyone interested in this project can call her at 752-4038. This project lies at the heart and soul of the GRC!

New Bike Map

Steve Brown reports that a new bike map of the Commencement Bay area is available. Tours of sites of environmental interest are included. The map is available at the Citizens for a Healthy Bay office on Broadway Street in downtown Tacoma.

Hwy 99 Bike Lanes

Good news from Fife: bike lanes on Hwy 99 for 1.5 miles. Doreen Weiss of Fife Planning says another half mile of bike lanes is scheduled for construction next year. Watch out for that one-mile gap between projects. Thank you WSDOT, for supporting bikes. Please note that projects using federal funds are required to provide for bicycles and pedestrians, or have a good reason why they do not.

Bicycle Advisory Position

Speaking of the State, as you may remember TWBC requested several months ago that WSDOT add a Pierce County position to the Bicycle Advisory Committee, which advises WSDOT about bikes. Mike Dornfeld, WSDOT bike ped coordinator, says that adding a position is a budget issue (travel expenses, etc.) and he is exploring the possibilities. Knowing how budgets are done, this could take a while.

Plot Uncovered

Janice Jensen, our watchful president, uncovered a plot to scuttle bike lanes in her City of University Place, and dispatched Mat Reitzug to save the day. Matt attended the Council meeting and successfully lobbied for the bike lanes on 40th Street. Thanks Mat! Janice wrote a letter to the Council supporting the decision to stand firm.

More about UP: Janice is thrilled about the roundabout at 40th and Sunset, and urges all to see it. Watch for sidewalks on Sunset, courtesy of Puget Power, which is installing a new gas main over to Gig Harbor across the Narrows.

Pedestrians Arise!

Scott Pierson reports that he attended the National Pedestrian conference in D.C., and the pedestrian movement is gathering more and more strength, a good sign for bicyclists. The Bicycle Federation of America, which added pedestrians to its mission in 1989, organized the conference.

The good news is that federal ISTEA funding will survive pretty much as it has been with some tweaks. The bad news is that there is still resistance to "frills" like sidewalks and bike lanes. Current pedestrian research, although pretty esoteric, is exciting stuff for pedestrian coordinators and land use planners. Want to learn about crossing guard training? Hot stuff. Want to see Mark Fenton, *Walking* magazine's editor-at-large, hold race walking trials next to the hotel on a balmy D.C. night, filled with a brass blues band? Want to discover that communities all over the country are finding out that pedestrians, transit, bicycling and economic development are all blood brothers and sisters?

Speaking of transportation modes, while we bikers are not supposed to denigrate the car, Dan Burden noted that parking garages have essentially killed downtown Syracuse, New York. What a shame.

A Swarm Of Butterflies

Closer to home, successful efforts in Seattle to incorporate art into transportation and other projects are being made. When artists are brought into standard engineering projects, some amazing ideas are tossed around. Imagine a bike/ped bridge that looks like a giant insect! Now imagine a new Narrows Bridge as a swarm of butterflies! Many ridiculous ideas like these turn out not to be so ridiculous. And communities love them. A Seattle storm water treatment plant was so artistically designed that some couples now tie the knot there, right next to the sewage treatment plant! Public works do not have to be boring! Creative ideas can turn the mundane into special places. We hope to see this approach used in bicycle and pedestrian projects around here.

NowBike Conference

Three club members made presentations at NowBike's bicycle pedestrian conference in Seattle last month.

Ralph Wessels presented bike, motor vehicle accident data for 1994-96. He said that bike crashes not involving motor vehicles are being collected for the next report. If you have a crash, call Ralph (or Dena, our secretary) and he will tell you how to officially make your misfortune a statistic. A majority of road accidents occur at intersections.

Michael Ronkin of the Oregon DOT says that the accident rate for riding on sidewalks versus the road doubles, and accidents riding the wrong way on the sidewalk quadruple! These accidents are at intersections, too, so if you have to ride the sidewalk, be extra careful. Scott Pierson presented a study about parent's attitudes about walking and sidewalks. Twice as many parents drive their kids to school in NE Tacoma Elementary (few sidewalks) than in Sherman Elementary (many sidewalks) because of their fear of abduction and traffic accidents. He says that curbs, sidewalks, and a planting strip make a defensible space for kids, in the minds of the parents, anyway.

Carla Gramlich served on a panel called "Developing Friends of Trails Groups", because of her involvement in trails, along with other trail advocates. Trails are growing, and so are support teams. We can thank ISTEA federal highway funding for that. ISTEA ends on October 1. Let us hope Congress reauthorizes a new version soon. If it does not, it may extend the old ISTEA a year.

Possibly, next year's conference will be the ProBike conference, and not the one NowBike puts on.

Bicycle Map

Bob Vogel, Pierce County Nonmotorized Coordinator, is about ready to release a draft bicycling map. Anyone wanting to review it should call Bob at 798-7250.

(If you have questions about this report call Bob Myrick, Director of Community and Government Relations, at 473-7455.)

Helmets And Seat Covers

by Dena Wessels, TWBC Secretary

One safety factor for cyclists is actually being seen by the motorist. Being visible and being seen are two different things. Some of our members have been run into by motorists who "looked straight at (through) me, and then turned right into me."

The manner in which you ride and wear bright clothing and accessories certainly helps in being "visible" to motorists, so they actually "see" you. Some articles of clothing do not come in "See Me!" colors, though black bike shorts are certainly (a) handy (hand wipe) when you have dirt or grease on your hands from changing a tire, or putting your chain back in place. Most helmets, for some reason, seem to come in the darker color range.

I have started to make helmet and seat covers out of colorful lycra material. I made some for our recent San Francisco club ride. You could really see those bright things from a good distance down the road.

Believe me, just over the Oregon, California border, we needed to be seen by impatient drivers! Increase your ability to actually be seen by motorists by adding a helmet and seat cover to your biking accessories.

I will have a wide selection of ready-mades available at the October General Meeting, or I can custom make selections in the colors of your choice.

Be visible and be seen with a colorful helmet and seat cover as we move into shorter days, quick nightfalls, and the time of year when we have to set our clocks back.

For Sale

Jack Taylor tandem. 25 inch by 22 inch. Hydraulic brakes plus cable drum brake.

Index shifting, unique paint, computers, bags, rack, fenders, tools, inner tubes, frame pump, and box of spare parts. \$1,100.00, OBO. Call Milton at 922-6998.

New, renewing members

Welcome and Thanks to our new and renewing members for August and September, 1997:

New Members: Jim & Tami Antush; Chuck & Padder Buzzard; John Carmichael; Shari England; Santana Harris; Jeff Hart; Suzanne Leichman & family; Patsy Lovelle; Sally McHugh; Steve Merriam; Tod Scott; Kit Evans-Scott; Becky Shoemaker; Frank Shoemaker; and Zack Shoemaker.

Renewing Members: Tom Barocan; Mack, Debbie, Jila & Peter Bozanich; Jan Brame; Steve Brown; Deforest A. Bullock; Bob & Anita Burton; John Campbell; Karen Close; Karen Comer; Ann Dahl; William & Ruth Daugherty; The John Davis family; Robert Deehan; Jim Droege; Mike Flodin; Steve Forsness & DBA GFORSE BIKES; Ray Frye; Carla Gramlich; Roger C. Hampney; Martha Hartley; Mike Hassur; Linda Higgins; The Horn family; Phillip Johnson; John Joyce; L. Kincannon; Dianne Koch; Bob Koreis; Stephen, Mary, & Scott Kubiszewski; Warren Lew; Noreen Light; Chris Miller; Dean Northrup; Rob & Paula Olson; Joseph Osborne; Deborah Ottow; Bill Pavone; Marge Pearson; Mike Pfannenstiel; Jim Powell; Mike, Debbie, Chris, & Cassie Romaine; Barbara Root; Bud & Fran Schroeder; J. Sigurdson; Dorian Smith; Michael Smith; Kevin Terhune; F. Tong; Gregory Torfin; Jan Wieser; and Charlie Wolf.

TWBC NEWSLETTER October, 1997

TWBC Members are encouraged to submit articles, information, and letters to the editor for our newsletter. All submissions must be signed and written by the signatory, and are subject to editing. Views expressed in this newsletter belong to individual authors, and do not necessarily represent the views of the Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club or any of its members.

Deadline for all copy is the third Tuesday of each month for the following month's newsletter.

This is also our regular Club meeting day. Copy can be given to the editor at the meeting or

mailed to: William F. Hoehne, 5702 N. 33rd, Apt. 17B, Tacoma, WA 98407. Articles and

correspondence can also be sent to the editor via e-mail and fax modem. Send e-mail to

WilliamFHoehne@msn.com. Send faxes to 253-759-4464 after calling the editor first to ensure the computer is on.

Cycling Ads: Ads must be directly related to bicycling, and will be printed free of charge to Club members. Space limitations may require editing. All ads must be accompanied with name, address, and phone number of person submitting ad. Budget costs for the newsletter preclude publishing ads for non-members. Ads for local bicycle shops will be printed free of charge if the business offers a discount to TWBC Club members.