

# Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club

Newsletter

July 1998

Founded 1888

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## Ernie Stephenson Elected TWBC President for 1998-99

Club members elected Ernie Stephenson President for 1998-99 at the Annual Meeting on June 16, 1998. Ernie served the previous year as Vice-President.

Two new Board members join the list of officers this year-Steve Brown was elected Vice-President, and Ralph Wessels was elected Director of Special Events.

Other members re-elected to their positions are: Jan Brame, Treasurer; Mary Kubiszewski, Touring Captain; William Hoehne, Newsletter Editor; and Bob Myrick, Director of Government and Community Relations. Janice Jensen takes the position of Past President on the Board.

A club member was elected to the position of Secretary, but declined to accept the position. This means the position remains open and needs to be filled at once. If you would like to serve as Secretary, or know someone who will, please call Ernie at 536-0197.

Congratulations to the new Board, and success for the new fiscal year!

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## Seattle to Portland Spanaway Check Point Volunteers Wanted!

**Ralph Wessels**  
**TWBC Director of Special Events**

The Seattle to Portland ride is almost upon us this year. Our club will again be running the Spanaway rest stop. A change from previous years is that the one-day riders will be leaving Seattle on Saturday instead of Sunday.

This means that volunteers are needed on Friday evening and beginning early Saturday.

Volunteers will receive a free "Volunteer's" T-shirt, cap, and lots of traditional fun. The rest stop is also one of TWBC's major income sources for the year.

Please contact Dave Parker at 253-565-3057 and volunteer. A few hours of your time will make the rest stop a success for the STP and our club.

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## **RAMROD Rest Stop**

### **Bob Myrick**

RAMROD stands for "Ride Around Mount Rainier One Day."

RAMROD is Thursday, July 30, 1998. About 600 to 700 riders will participate. TWBC members have been asked to volunteer at a rest stop or stops this year. Peggy Fjetland, Bob Cook, Phyllis Lay, and Joy Roelofsz have already expressed interest in this fun activity. We will probably staff the Deer Creek water stop just down the hill from the summit of Cayuse Pass. Other rest stops could also use our help.

Volunteers earn the right to do the Wimprod, a two-day supported ride around Mount Rainier. The start is at Enumclaw, with an overnight stay at Alexander's Inn in Ashford. The Redmond Cycling Club runs two Wimprods, one on August 15-16, and the other on September 12-13.

If you want to volunteer, please call Peggy at 841-4458 or me at 473-7455, or contact Don Harkleroad via e-mail at [mrdon@seanet.com](mailto:mrdon@seanet.com).

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**No TWBC Club Meeting In July-STP? RAMROD? Live It Up, Gang.**

## From the President

Ernie Stephenson  
TWBC President

Karin and I were watching TV the other evening, and a spot came on for the CarLess Commute. The final screen showed, among other things, the TWBC logo. Karin thought me a bit daft (Well, more than usual) when I exclaimed its presence on a popular channel and not PBS or another public service medium (Well, it is my club, and I'm honored to be a member of arguably the oldest bicycle club in the United States.

In fact, did you know we have been around even before Washington received its statehood? One Mr. Starling (whose possible first name was Michael) invented the "safety bicycle" in 1885, only three years prior to our establishment.

On a more recent and practical note, however, members of this club have been active in community affairs at state and local levels. Safer cycling access, and legislation for helmet laws are the result of some of these efforts. When we realized some parents could not afford bicycle helmets for their children Carla Gramlich helped establish Helmets on Wheels.

We stage two major rides that receive both acclaim and registration from the entire Northwest region. In addition, at a personal level, there are rides available all year for every level of rider.

We all have a right to be proud of who we are. And I thank you for giving me the honor of presiding over this fine organization in the coming months.

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## **Peninsula Metric Century And Sunshine**

### **Carla Gramlich**

This year we had sun and a wonderful time. Lots of volunteers spent many hours to make this ride a great success. Two weeks before the ride, Bob Cook and Toni and Vern Matson spent many hours marking the course. Their hard work showed, and we got many compliments on how easy it was to follow the course.

Other volunteers, like Jim Powell, spent hours planning the menu for each rest stop. He then made several shopping trips to buy all the supplies. Jim also prepared wonderful spreadsheets, which made it a snap to get food to each stop. Volunteers like Jim make everything go a lot smoother.

Karen Forbush and her entire family, once again, ran the Southworth registration and rest stop. Carol Davis donated the whole day to the Gig Harbor rest stop. Both registrations ran smoothly under their direction. Janice Jensen's family and friends took care of the Purdy rest stop. Riders appreciated the wonderful bagels and strawberries that were made available at the Purdy Stop.

For the sixth year, the Port Orchard Chamber of Commerce provided volunteers and food for the Port Orchard rest stop. One volunteer commented that he really appreciated the friendly faces of the Chamber volunteers after struggling up a couple of nasty hills.

Dave Tison and Kent Wienker spent the entire day driving between check points and helping riders on the course. Any rider that had mechanical troubles benefited from their dedication.

The above examples are why the PMC was once again a great success. Thanks to all the volunteers for the time they were able to donate to the ride. The riders really appreciated your hard work.

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## **Tacoma Women's Bicycle Club**

**(aka Biker Babes)**

### **Carla Gramlich**

It is official, only two Biker Babes are left for the STP. Janice Jensen has been struggling with asthma all season. Her doctor has told her allergies are triggering her asthma. She claims the note from her doctor says she can't ride the STP. We have to take her word for it because we can't make out what the note really says. She is very disappointed, but we know as soon as she is physically able, she will be back in the saddle.

It is now Toni Matson and I who are heading south on July 11th. Which means I will be all by myself when Toni takes off up the hills. Before, Janice and I got to look at each other and just shake our

heads as she sped up any mountain at her break neck speed. This may be the motivation to get faster on hills.

This past month we rode the Double Metric Century route. We started the ride with a large group, and it naturally split into them and us after the first twenty miles. "Them" included Kent and Thomas on this ride. Toni and I rode with John Thomas all day because he was deathly ill with the flu the day before the ride. Steve Brown was with us for almost half the ride, and then he caught up with me and said he did not want to ride with me anymore. He found a short cut that included ten miles of gravel and cut about 20 miles off the route.

I was really wasted after this ride. My lower back was killing me all day Sunday. On Monday the bicycle was in the shop for a shorter stem and handlebars that are slightly narrower. I tried this new setup a week later and felt great as we cruised up and down the PMC hills. Toni and I agreed that the Peninsula route got flatter this year.

We rode over some more hills a week later on Vashon Island. I spent Saturday, my rest day, walking the Sound to Narrows fun run. Sunday, I rose early and started with Bob Myrick and John Thomas on the great Morton loop. Again we saw "them"-John, Thomas, Kent and David, for the first ten miles. Bob took the rest of the group to his favorite bakery in Eatonville. After Elbe, Bob had to turn back because of mechanical trouble, which left us without a leader.

Now the group was down to Toni, Michael and Marsha on the tandem, and myself. We were happy to cruise behind the tandem on the flats, but we were on our own going up the hills. I saw Toni

more than usual because she was fighting a terrible cough. Even with this cold she was a blur going up most of the hills. After 154 miles we were glad to get back to Tacoma(no back problem, but still some pain in between my shoulders.

I get to rest and acclimate myself to the hot weather on a weeklong bicycle trip in Ohio. When I return I will take one more long ride of 120 miles before the STP. Most of my rides have been more difficult than the STP. This may make the trip a little more manageable. I will find out in a couple of weeks if the training has paid off.

**Next month: Why we did the STP in a day, and plans for the year 2000!**

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## **TWBC's 110th Year!**

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### **Riding With A Cold?**

**Dorian Smith**

It's early Saturday morning and you wake up with the sniffles. Maybe also you feel a slightly scratchy throat. Maybe a few joints ache as you crawl slowly out of bed.

But there is a great ride scheduled in Kitsap County, and the sun is shining for the first time in a month. You prepared your trusty 21 speed bicycle the night before. The chain is lubed and the tires are pumped up to 120 pounds. Purple Gatorade sits snugly in the bottle

cage, and a fistful of chocolate power bars are stashed in the rack trunk.

To ride or not to ride, that is the question. Hamlet's quandary was never greater than a bicyclist's decision to ride with an invasive virus.

When this question was posed to a number of Tacoma Wheelmen and one medical professional, one answer was clear. When a cold is wracking your lungs, stay home, drink plenty of fluids and rest. Check out the latest Harrison Ford video. Pamper yourself or you will only delay recovery.

But should you pull on the Pearl Izumi lycra when the viral setback is merely annoying?

An anonymous nurse at Group Health, who believes in exercise, advised "common sense." When pressed for more details, she added: "Just don't overdo it. You don't need to usually stop it altogether. When you are sick, you need to give the body time to heal itself. The body does wonderfully well by itself. Sleep is the best thing for a cold, and drinking plenty of fluids. Take naps. Ride half as far."

This advice was far too cautious for Roz Davis. "I don't worry about colds. I let colds worry about themselves while I do what I'm going to do anyway."

On the other end of the scale was club ride leader Mary Kubiszewski, who believes discretion is the way to better health. "It's not a good idea to ride with a cold. It makes breathing hard. Sometimes it can push the cold into the lungs."

Her son, Scott, agreed. Sniffling between his answers, he said, "I rode with a cold (on a 60 mile ride the previous day). I had a hard time getting up a 30th Street type hill that was about three and a half miles long."

Of course, some of us would have a hard time anyway getting up 30th Street.

Some people believe that the timing of the cold is important. "If it's the early part of a cold, stay home," said Anne Heller, the club's unofficial historian. "But if it is later in the cold, do something aerobic to push out the virus."

Most people seemed to recognize their limits. "I will ride if I have a runny nose or a slight cough," said past president Dave Tison. "If I'm really congested or have a fever, I probably wouldn't ride."

"Another factor during the winter is wet and cold weather. If it's rainy and approaching 40 degrees Fahrenheit, I usually don't ride. Hypothermia is a real possibility under those conditions. Besides, my feet turn to ice! I have been known to ride my mountain bike in the snow though!"

Bob Myrick, who leads many of the club's most vigorous rides, said he suggests moderate activity. "If the chest hurts, we should not exercise. But if the head hurts, it's okay." But then Bob confessed that he doesn't always follow his own advice. "It is well known that I have no common sense. I have developed bacterial infections and pneumonia from exercising too hard during stressful times."

Finally, some riders fall into the Ralph Wessel category—they are not much interested in testing the limits of their bodies.

"If I don't feel well, I'll stay home," Ralph said. "I'm not sure whether exercise helps get rid of a cold or makes it worse. But if I don't feel good and know I won't enjoy the ride, I'll stay home. I ride because I want to enjoy it."

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## The Bike

**Ernie Stephenson**  
**TWBC President**

**The Rider:** Dena Wessels.

**The Bike:** Custom built Rodriquez touring bike.

Some of you may have been there. It was a deep winter meeting when Estelle Gray came down from Seattle to share some secrets of custom bike building and formal evening wear.

This was a special evening for Dena Wessels because, for the first time, she was to see her new frame for what would become a beautiful touring bike. It would be hard to tell which beamed brighter, Dena's proud face or the special marble textured paint job on that new frame.

Dena is actually a fairly recent comer to the sport. Like all of us, she has probably ridden since she could walk, but she did not start riding seriously until 1989. She and hubby Ralph heard stories of a family member who had ridden the STP.

Dena and Ralph have always been active, with Dena doing karate, Middle Eastern dancing, and slogging (faster than jogging, slower

than running). But Ralph and Dena never had a sport they could do together, and cycling just seemed to fit.

The result was matching "her" and "his" Mijata "Alumicross" touring bikes. After all, the salesman said they were sturdy touring bikes, not racing models.

This was fine for Ralph, but Dena was miserable on a frame that was just too big for her. Her and His sweatshirts might be cute, even jerseys, but it soon became evident that frame sizes are a personal thing. About this same time they joined the Wheelmen and started learning some things about bikes.

Many of you might know that Dena and Ralph go on some pretty far flung rides, as well as stage some pretty significant ones of their own. In fact, it was on the Lilac Surprise east of the mountains several years ago that Dena had to take herself off the course. She had been stretched on the Mijata for so long she was too stiff to react quickly. She did not feel safe for other riders and cars in the area, not to mention herself.

It had become obvious by this time that a custom built bike would be her only answer for a comfortable long distance ride. Those of you who have had bikes built know this is no simple or quick process. A lot of things have to come together mechanically. in an engineering sense, as well as financially, personally, and esthetically.

A lot of decisions have to be made before the first tube is cut, but Dena decided that Rodriquez would do this. In her case this was a pretty good idea. Estelle has probably one of the premier shops for solving problems unique to female riders. But having the bike made

would take time, and STP 1997 and the Wessel's San Francisco ride were coming up. An interim bike had to be found.

The interim bike turned out to be a Trek 2120. It was an improvement over the Mijata, but it still did not fit well. Another problem was the STI double action shifters. These are great for rapid shifting and gear changing out of the saddle, but Dena found herself leaning into the brake hoods too hard. Something about the design made it obvious that bar end shifters would have to be her choice.

So now Dena has spent her first season with her new mount, and she is a happy lady. You do not own a custom bike, you meld to it, and this is what she is learning.

### **The Nuts and Bolts of it All:**

For starters the frame has a very petit 48cm seat tube with a matching 48cm top tube. This, folks, is tight geometry! Dena has mentioned that technicians who have ridden it felt it to be twitchy, and she has had a little trouble at very high speeds.

The tubing is True Temper OX Gold (also sometimes called OX4). It is one of the new generation of thin walled light steel alloys that actually strengthens when heated. Joints are butted and sculptured.

In order to solve the tight spacing of the cockpit, Nitto 38cm Dirt Drop bars were installed onto a very short -15 degree stem. The Dirt Drop ends flair out, allowing knees to pass comfortably between them. Dena might be little, but she has broad shoulders. This is why the bars are fairly large for a woman's size.

The saddle is a Terry "Liberator." This is one of the new hollowed out saddles that have been popular with women and are just now being tried by men. Dena was bruised up pretty badly on a couple of rides and finds this design forgiving.

Brakes are cantilever touring models-pretty straight forward. The gruppo is a Shimano 105 set-up. Back cogs run 12 to 28, while the front triple rings are 30-42-52. You call it, she can go like the wind, or climb telephone poles!

The tight geometry also dictated using 650mm rather than 700mm rims, which are 32 hole Suns with two-over spoke lacing front and back. The rubber is Continental.

Dena added a few special touches of her own. She prefers pedals and "cages", and changed the straps to coordinate with the special red paint.

She is also a big believer in safety, and wants a street legal bike. This means reflectors front and back. Fenders, rear rack, computer and bell are also included. She had to go with a Turbo Cat lighting system, as it uses a velcro mounting device and was the only one that would attach to her oversized Nitto bars.

### **Down the Road:**

A custom bike does not need too much retrofitting. That is one of the wonderful things about them, but there are always a few touches, albeit minor. In Dena's case they include some special brake adapters that shorten the grab to better accommodate her small hands. She also plans to switch to Vittoria Kevlar tires in the near future.

### **Words to the Wise:**

"You can spend money on a properly fitted bicycle, or you can spend money on doctors and massage therapists." Dena learned this the hard way, as she has a congenital knee anomaly that requires the right pedal to be blocked out. She has learned that jumping on any old bike may not add up to enjoyable and comfortable cycling, and encourages new riders to learn, research, and pick out what is right for them. The sport will be that much more fun and enjoyable.

Thank you, Dena. Ride well.

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## **Cycling Ads**

### **For Sale:**

Bike-52cm LeMond carbon (originally made by Carbonframe) with Kestrel EMS fork, full Campy Record gruppo with Ergo and Delta brakes, Fir sew up rims with Continental tires, 3ttt bar and stem, Regal saddle.

Bike-60cm GT Edge aluminum frame, BRC carbon fork, Control Tech stem.

**\$450.00**

Contact Ernie Stephenson at 253-536-0197. **For Sale:**

3 Thule Roof Bike attachments with internal rails. Can be used with any Thule system. \$100.00

Call 566-1255.

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## **Letter to the Editor:**

So far this year, I've ridden in your Daffodil Classic (100m) and PMC (100m). There was a remarkable difference in the two.

The Daffodil Classic seemed better supported, and staff was better organized. During the PMC, other than the traditional street markings, I saw very few signs warning motorists about bikes, and I only saw one or two sag wagons pass by.

I (we) was also one of the fortunate riders who left from Southworth early enough that I didn't get the word about the re-routing around the gravel death climb. Whoopie.

I was extremely disappointed with the souvenirs-a stupid tattoo was all I got for 6 hours of sweat, unless you count the opportunity to raise my heart rate to 210 beats per minute, not once, but twice.

What happened to the shirts? I would have gladly paid for one. Will they be available later?

Don't get me wrong, I (we) had a great ride, the course is great, and the weather couldn't have been better, but you guys/gals can do better.

**Dennis Azevedo**

Port Orchard, (by e-mail)

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## **New and renewing members**

**TWBC Welcomes and Thanks the following new and renewing members for June, 1998**

**New Members:** Scott W. Biles; John Cook; Heinz Haskins; Karen Hetzog; Ken Homan & Family; Fritz & Ani Jakob; Robert Kares; Valda S. Moore; Bill Newman; Andrew Ohme; Eric & Christina Page; Henry Retailian; Janet Stanley; Ben Tavenner; and Mary Wainwright.

**Renewing Members:** Doug & Sharon Aukland; Janelle Baldwin; Sue Batali; Sara Blakeslee; Philip Blenkush; Dan Brown; Lana Chaffee; Susan Coley; Bill & Ruth Daugherty; Jim Davis; Pat Donovan Family; Dolores Fitch; Bob & Betty Fleming-Jones; Mike Flodin; Hank & Hazel Giddings; Scott D. Groff; Pat B. Guira; Martha A. Hartley; George F. Hedges; Patrick Honan; Janice, Ray, & Tiffany Jensen; John Joyce; George Kelley; Bev Kesselring; Fred Knox; Lori Lastufka; Barbara Lee; Peter Lindahl; John Loesch; Dale & JoAnne Longfellow; Michael & Marcia Madden; Melody Mayer; John McNett; B. Menanteaux; Ron Menge; J. D. & JoAnna Miller; Gary E. Moore; Diane Munson; Bob Myrick; Carolyn L. Nelson; Scott & Carrie Nelson; Dean Northrup; Rob & Paula Olson; Joseph Osborne; Bill Pavone; John Daryl Peranzi; Connie & Mat Reitzug; L. Ricigliano; Charles Robert; Ernie & Karin Stephenson; Elaine Sumey; John & Melanie Summerour; Fred & Margaret Swift; Greg Torfin; and Ralph & Dena Wessels.

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## **Bicycle Travel Case and Bob Trailer Available**

**Steve Brown,  
TWBC Vice-President**

Bicycle travel cases and Bob trailers are available to club members. The bicycle travel case is a hard shell with a hinged back. It can be shipped or taken on the plane. Some airlines will charge you extra for shipping the box. There are ways around the charge, but they require advanced planning. Call Steve at 253-752-4038 for details.

The Bob trailer has a single wheel, and can be attached to most newer bicycles with quick release rear wheels. This is a great option if you have not invested in panniers and front and rear racks. The case or trailer are available for \$20.00 for the first week plus \$10.00 for each additional week. A \$200.00 damage deposit is required. The trailer can be borrowed free of charge for weekend club camping trips or for club service activities such as trail maintenance.

Call the ride line at 253-759-2800 to borrow the box or the trailer.

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Have you volunteered for the Spanaway STP Checkpoint?  
Call 253-565-3057 and volunteer