

Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club

Newsletter

August 1999

Founded 1888

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TWBC's Oregon Odyssey 1999

Eighteen Tacoma Wheelmen got a taste of the varied terrain of southern Oregon (especially hills) during a two-week bicycle/camping trip that ended on the July 4 weekend.

The sagged trip was organized by Ralph and Dena Wessels and Roz and Carol Davis. The group started in Eugene and rode to Florence on the coast, down the

bicycle-friendly Coastal Highway to Crescent City in California, up to Ashland, way up to Crater Lake and ending at various points north of Bend.

The original goal was to reach Vancouver (WA) in time for the Fourth of July fireworks show. But the final day came early when cold high elevation rain prompted a group decision to abort the final 200 miles.

Four club members rode for only the first week. Two others joined during the second week. Riding all or parts of the journey were Anne Heller, Sue Matthews, Jan Brame, Stan Sanders, Ralph Wessels, Dena Wessels, Roz Davis, Carol Davis, Connie Reitzug, Mat Reitzug, Mary Kubiszewski, Scott Kubiszewski, Vern Matson, Toni Matson, Cynthia Hammer, Dorian Smith, Greg Torfin and Joyce Clifford.

The total trip was roughly 660 miles — 40 to 80 miles per day — with an accumulated elevation gain of nearly 31,000 feet.

There were several side excursions, including a jet boat tour of the Rogue River, a white water trip, two plays in Ashland, winery samplings, a lighthouse tour and spontaneous shopping. Despite the constant downpour in Tacoma, the group encountered rain (except the final weekend) only one day.

On a few days when sunblock was mandatory, the group climbed cruel, never-ending hills (for instance, leaving Ashland) seeking solace in ibuprofen and custom beer at day's end.

But for most days the mornings started with cool temperatures and ended with sunny warm weather while in the distance clouds floated across the Pacific Ocean or hawks cruised above rolling evergreen forest.

Often they rode into the campground, convinced they had just enjoyed, as Greg Torfin liked to remark, “. . . the best day of bicycle riding in my life .”

From the president's handlebars

Steve Brown, TWBC President

I always plan on summer starting on July 5. This year was no exception. I was in Eugene, Oregon on July 6th and it was already too hot.

For those of you that were not part of the 6,950 people who rode the STP (Seattle to Portland) you missed a great ride. Perfect weather, lots of food and tail winds during parts of the ride. A number of club members also rode back to Tacoma. Not surprising, the tail winds that blew me into Portland became strong head winds on the way back.

Moments before I became the new TWBC president at the annual meeting in June, it was announced that we had lost our second biggest fund raiser — the STP rest stop. This loss was a big disappointment to me. I wanted to thank the folks that did a lot of work preparing for this event. Joyce Clifford was the STP Coordinator. Beyond the coordination role, she compiled a full slate of volunteers to staff the rest stop. Dave Zehnder has helped with logistics for years. He was working again this year as liaison with Cascade Bicycle Club (CBC) and securing equipment for the stop.

Also, Ralph Wessels who worked the contract with CBC. He started with a contact that could have meant TWBC was doing the rest stop for free had the STP turnout been low. Later, he had negotiated a guaranteed minimum of \$3,500 before the whole thing fell through.

Now that the picnic is over the big event for August is bicycling — lots of it! The weather will be great — "I Guarantee It!" There is still room on the North Cascade Bicycle trip the second week of August. Club meetings will resume on Sept. 21.

STP publicized TWBC events

Dear TWBC Newsletter Editor,

Concerning the comment in the July article "Cascade Drops TWBC from STP" that "TWBC was not featured in STP literature". I would like to correct that misstatement. The Daffodil Classic was listed in the current 1999 STP application as an official training ride for STP.

Over the years STP volunteers have also called me to get copies of Daffodil and Peninsula Metric registration flyers to distribute at the STP training sessions. The coordinators for the training sessions have been big promoters of our rides, with incredible praise for our organization.

Recent STP applications have for the past several years included information about our organization and rides.

This publicity was done by Cascade for free. It would be hard to put a price on the addition of new members or riders for our events that was triggered by this free publicity

Carla Gramlich

Publicity Director, TWBC

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Scouts raise funds with popular Bike Corral

Dorian Smith

Throughout the year, the Boy Scouts of Troop 309 in Browns Point learn about bicycling for fun and scout badges. But during Fourth of July weekends, bicycling raises thousands of dollars for the troop's bottom line.

For the seven years the Scouts have been in charge of the Bike Corral at the Taste of Tacoma at Point Defiance Park.

The donation-only bike parking is a welcome service for cyclists who avoid the \$5 auto parking fee or the long hikes from street parking.

On a single day during the four-day event the scouts earn up to \$250. Some years they earn \$1,000 for the four-day event, noted Scoutmaster Terry Lathan.

On Saturday and Sunday this year, the scouts each day handled about 250 bikes, up to 80 at a time. The small roped-off area at the entrance to the park can hold up to 125 bikes.

The event is so lucrative that it is shared with another Boy Scout troop and Cub Scout Troop 308.

Terry said the Bike Corral started as a fund raiser for foreign exchange students, but the fund-raiser was too good to discontinue.

“It’s a no-brainer,” Terry said. They are considering a Bike Corral for the Freedom Fair. Terry said each Boy Scout Troop has a favorite activity and Troop 309 has chosen bicycling.

Terry is an avid cyclist. Another Scoutmaster Chuck Morrison is a member of the Rails-to-Trails coalition.

The Scouts (about a third are 11 years old) earn merit badges for trips and bicycle maintenance. Trips have included the San Juans and Seattle-to-Portland ride.

The Scouts use the proceeds from the Bike Corral to pay for their annual Scout Camp.

At the Bike Corral the Scouts are taught how to greet bicyclists and offer parking. The careful check-in system provides some security. The cyclists are given part of a ticket with a number.

On the matching half of the ticket which is attached to the bike, the rider writes his or her name. If the rider loses a ticket stub, the bike can be retrieved using a driver's license. If the Scouts are unsure, an ID check can also confirm true ownership.

Terry said the scouts have perfected the way to rope off the bikes to prevent them from tipping over, using special knots that they have learned. Bikes with kick stands (only 10 percent) are separated from the others..

He said they get a lot of repeat customers; many cyclists said they depend on the Bike Corral at the Taste of Tacoma. He would like the Bike Corral to be mentioned more prominently in Taste of Tacoma publicity.

The Scouts enjoy studying the wide variety of bikes that appear at the Bike Corral, Terry said. He noted that this year most bikes were standard road bikes (10-speeds), not mountain bikes. There were a couple of double recumbents and a group of five antique bikes with balloon tires.

One rider showed up with a \$12,000 Eddie Mercyx bike that was custom-made at the Belgian factory.

Over the seven years there have been no mishaps or lost bikes or cycle computers. (The Scouts ask cyclists to take their computers with them.). The only inconvenience has been cyclists who return to pick up their bikes long after the end of the day.

This year only three owners of "department store" bikes expressed extra concern about security. They even provided their own chain and locks.

Almost a cover girl

Tacoma Wheelmen are not only models for the cause of bicycling. They are also becoming models for eager camera lenses.

The image of TWBC Ride Coordinator Connie Reitzug was displayed prominently not once but twice in the most recent issue of Adventure Cycling Tours 99.

The nationally distributed magazine publicizes organized bicycle vacations in North America. Connie is seen on Page 5 in a contemplative pose wearing helmet, sunglasses and her neon yellow Tacoma Wheelmen's jersey. She also is featured on her Cannondale in a full back-page photo. The photo is slightly blurred, emphasizing Connie's enthusiastic speed. She is smiling broadly.

Last year Connie and husband Mat rode in Adventure Cycling's Cascade Peaks bicycling vacation — from Redmond to Chelan and Leavenworth. In 1995 they rode in the 13-day, 647-mile Montana bicycle vacation.

After that vacation Mat himself was featured in the magazine but only in the background of a photo of a young woman drinking from a waterbottle.

And finally Ken Wienker, who is an employee of Tacoma Cemeteries, is featured on his road bike in one of a series of newspaper ads for New Tacoma Cemetery. The ad campaign publicizes that the cemetery's 80 acres of undeveloped park-like setting on Chambers Creek Road West are open to joggers, bikers, walkers and nature lovers.

For sale

Free ads are offered to club members. E-mail to twbc@excite.org. They must be related to bicycling and may be edited. All ads must be accompanied by name and address or phone number. Ads for local bicycle shops will be printed free twice a year if discounts are offered to TWBC members.

For Sale: Topeak Deluxe Trunk Bag: Detachable. 1,700 cu. in. \$50. Topeak QR Beam Rack. Detachable seatpost rack: 20-lb. load capacity. \$50. Bert Dionne, 253-862-5627.

For Sale: Jack Taylor tandem; size 21-inch and 19-inch. Phil Wood hubs with two Phil Wood disk brakes. 48-spoke wheels, rear rack, Reynold D.B. tubing throughout. \$1,500.00. Also Trek Antelope 800 16-inch frame, 24-inch wheels \$175.00. Leave Message: 253-756-5359

TWBC Board highlights

These topics and issues were discussed at the Tacoma Wheelmen's July 6 board meeting.

New board lineup: Newly elected president Steve Brown introduced the new lineup of board members: Steve Brown, president; Anne Heller, secretary; Karin Stephenson, treasurer; Connie Reitzug, touring captain; Bob Myrick, Community Government Relations Liaison; Ralph Wessels, Special Events Director; Dorian Smith, newsletter editor and webmaster; Ernie Stephenson, past president.

Vice President needed: The club is still searching for a person to fill the slot of vice president. Among the duties of that position is coordinating the club's monthly meetings. Steve said he talked to about a half dozen people without success.

He said he has material and possible programs left over from his tenure as vice president which could be used for at least six future monthly meetings. The board discussed splitting up the responsibilities among two or more people. For instance, someone else could arrange the club meeting's food.

Other board members said that prospective candidates should be told that they will not be expected to run for club president. Without that obligation, volunteers may be willing to run serve the vice presidency.

Club picnic: As announced earlier the picnic will be held at Manitou Park beginning at 11 a.m. July 18 with food served at noon. Rides will be scheduled to the picnic. Some club members may opt to attend the Mountaineers-sponsored Mount Rainier Centennial Relay celebration in Tacoma's Old Town at 2:30 p.m. So they may be riding to the picnic, eating and immediately leaving.

Wheelmen staffing STP Spanaway food stop: The board discussed at length the failed negotiations between TWBC and the Cascade Bicycle Club regarding the Seattle to Portland lunch stop in Spanaway. Cascade broke off the discussions when a compensation package (money and volunteer gifts) were not reached by mid-June.

Cascade representatives had indirectly inquired about use of Wheelmen's equipment. The board voted to not rent TWBC's equipment for STP.

The board discussed several points:

- Compensation to the Wheelmen and 60 volunteers
- The need to support of TWBC's negotiation position
- The tradition of the Wheelmen's involvement in STP
- TWBC's traditional support for all bicycle events in Pierce County
- Cascade's firm declaration that it could manage the Spanaway lunch stop

Club budget: Jan Brame and newly elected treasurer Karin Stephenson reported that the club had \$25,997 in cash and \$26,159.58 in a certificate of deposit for a total of \$52,156.

The Peninsula Metric Century generated \$6,405 in revenue and required \$3,576 in expenses for a profit of \$2,828. Final figures for the Daffodil Classic indicate TWBC earned \$20,738 and spent \$9,867 for a profit of \$10,871.

Sprocketman position filled: The county's bicycle advocate position has been filled by an employee of the Pierce County Parks Department.

University Place bike trail: The city held a hearing July 7 regarding the third phase of the bike trail on Grandview Ave, reported Bob Myrick, TWBC's government liaison. The phase will include an extension of the trail and a buffer along Chambers Creek Canyon. Federal Transportation Enhancement funding has been received by the city for the project.

Downtown Tacoma housing: The city held a town hall meeting to discuss creation of 2,000 housing units downtown. Bob said the housing units are an effort to support the \$50 million transit system which will be built as part of Sound Transit System.

New Rideline voice: Connie Reitzug, ride captain, announced, Noel Higgins volunteered to help with the Rideline chore.

Club Jerseys: The Club already has sold 21 of 100 new club jerseys which are offered at \$52 each.

Ride calendar: Ride leaders are encouraged to call Connie through the Rideline (253-759-2800) or by e-mail (randrew@seanet.com) to schedule future rides for the calendar. She is considering enlisting people to round up ride leaders to concentrate on Code 1 and Code 2 rides.

Special events: Coordinators have already been named for TWBC's main events next year: Peggy Fjetland and Mike Romaine for the Bike Expo; Roz and Carol Davis for the Peninsula Metric Century and Jan Brame and Karen Forbush for the Daffodil Classic.

Revival of Headwaters Century: Special Events coordinator Ralph Wessels suggested the club consider sponsoring the Green River Headwaters Century Ride which was previously organized by the defunct Green River Cycling Club. He suggested the ride be scheduled in the second weekend in September 2000.

The ride is within easy traveling distance from large populations of bicyclists in King and Pierce counties. He expects at least 500 riders would attend. Ernie Stephenson

and Ralph volunteered to co-chair efforts to look into the feasibility of taking on the ride.

More than 750 helmets provided at Child Safety Fair

Carla Gramlich

On June 12, some really dedicated people spent most of the day fitting over 750 bicycle helmets. I would like to thank a great group that put aside the bicycle and didn't run or walk in Sound to Narrows on this sunny Saturday. The line was long but the people we served were grateful for getting a nice helmet for only \$5 plus a correct fit by our trained volunteers.

Volunteers are asked to please try to attend next year. This day is a major event that helps to provide helmets to many families. We are hoping that a different day will be selected.

The volunteers went home exhausted but rewarded with the fact that more kids now have helmets to have a safe summer. At this huge event bicyclists can show that they support bicycle safety and are willing to sacrifice to help their community.

Volunteers included:

Steve Brown, Bob Myrick (who helped for several hours before heading off on vacation) Karen Forbush, Jan Brame, John Campbell, Pat Wingerter, Shelia Pudists, Joan Sanders, Stan Sanders, Dave Parker (who helped before he had to attend a wedding), Robert Deehan, Janice Jensen, Jan Wieser, Reggie Tison (who had problems with allergies, but pitched in as cashier), Kamala-devi Roldain, Susan Blanchett-Larson and Joyce Clifford.

Ride notes

North Cascades Highway: Led by Carla Gramlich. Camping trip Aug. 7-15. Limited to 10. \$25 deposit requested. Campgrounds include Lake Chelan, Lake Wenatchee State Park. 35-65 miles per day. Two mountain passes. Call 253-752-4038.

Cycle Vermont: 400-miles (advanced-intermediate) in Vermont's Green Mountains Aug. 21-27. Catered. \$550 includes support. 1-800-755-2453 or Connie and Mat Reitzug at 253-460-1533

Cross Country 2000: If you are interested in riding across the United States or part of it in the year 2000, call Bob Myrick 253-473-7455 or Noreen Light at 253-952-8812. Noreen's e-mail address is nlight.@ctc.ctc.edu. Noreen is interested in leaving around July 1 and crossing on the Northern Tier route. Bob is interested in bearing south to Colorado and picking up the old Santa Fe trail to Sedalia, Mo. Then, Bob would ride on the KATY rail trail across Missouri to St. Louis. He could also take Noreen's route and then turn south to Missouri. Several club members have already expressed interest in this self-contained tour. Please feel free to leave your thoughts regarding departure times and routes.

Packwood Hotel Ride: This wimpy, code 2C, overnite ride stops at the infamous Packwood Hotel Aug. 28. The rooms are cheap and clean, like \$28 for two in a room with separate beds even. The baths are down the hall and the hot tub is low class. Why is the ride Wimpy? Well, Steve and Phyllis used to go there before the spur road to Packwood was paved and before the "1912"-era hotel was remodeled. So, if you want to go on a wimpy overnite to one of the finest, forested roads in this State, call Bob Myrick at 253-473-7455.

Last minute rides: If you would like to add a last-minute ride for a weekday, contact Connie Reitzug at 460-1533 by Sunday afternoon. For a weekend call Thursday afternoon. Also e-mail twbc@excite.com so the web page can be updated. The web page and rideline are updated late Sunday and Thursday evenings.

Riders' essentials: All bicycle riders are urged to wear a helmet, carry repair items -- such as spare inner tubes -- and first aid supplies on every ride. **Ride leaders:** Cue sheets or maps are recommended for rides longer than 35 miles. Also turn in your ride sheets if you are a ride leader. Or else the club won't know how many rides you led through the year by the annual banquet in January. New TWBC jerseys: In small, medium, large and extra large. 2XL and 3XL. Some sizes are limited so get yours before they are gone. Price is \$53 and still a bargain when you compare to similar quality from retail outlets. Features 15-inch zipper with reflective strip on back pocket and arm bands. Highly visible colors.

Bicycle-friendly Holland

Hans Perenboom, who is a member of the Vancouver Bicycle Club, noted several ways that Holland promotes bicycling. These points are excerpted from the article he wrote in the VBC newsletter:

- Mothers often take kids on bike seats
- Most kids bike to school (no Dutch school bus system)
- Local police present school bicycle safety classes. Students take written and riding tests afterwards.
- Workers often commute by bike.
- Most companies have large covered bike storage areas
- Shopping malls have secured bicycle parking
- Government is pro-bike and anti-car (gas is more than \$4 per gallon). Separate divided bike paths are everywhere with traffic lights and bike symbols. Motorists are ticketed for parking on bike lanes.
- Bicyclists can make free rights turn, motorists can't.
- Bikes can be ridden both ways on one-way streets
- Safety is stressed: Dutch bikes must be equipped with a working bell and front and rear lights. Tires must have reflecting sides
- In a bike-car accident, the motorist is presumed guilty, unless proven innocent.

- Ironically, Dutch bicyclists are more aggressive in traffic, ignore red lights and shun helmets.
 - The typical Dutch bike is heavy duty, stable and comfortable with large handlebars. Components include coaster brakes and only one to three gears. Often they are equipped with saddlebags over the fender and packages are held with bungee cords.
 - Perenboom concluded that his 91-year-old grandmother still rides her bike in The Hague and warns “Don’t get in her way.”
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Government report
bob myrick

Last month, the TWBC Government Affairs Committee meeting included Ralph Wessels, Steve Brown, Scott Pierson and myself. Several others were recovering from the STP.

Bicycle Accomodation: Scott read a letter from the Federal Highway Administration's Kenneth Wykle to the states and others. The letter indicated bikes should be accomodated throughout the transportation system and should always be considered when developing a new project.

Scott will pass the letter to the TWBC webmanager for posting.

New Freeway, SR 167: Scott and I attended a public meeting on July 13 regarding the proposed freeway extension between the Port of Tacoma and Puyallup. Scott represented the City of Tacoma. A letter from Pierce County requested a separated trail for the project. The trail would link to the other planned trails in the area including the Interurban Trail through Pierce County and the Puyallup River Levy Trail. We will continue to push for facilities on the freeway project and try to minimize interference with the other non-motorized routes.

Bicycle Design Manual: Ralph showed a copy of the new AASHTO (American Association of State Highways and Transportation Officials) Bicycle Facilities Design Manual. This manual is used by all levels of government engineers to build uniform facilities. Ralph will order at least one copy for the club for reviewing projects.

Grandview Blvd. Phase III: I attended the recent public meeting to review the plans for extending the bicycle lanes and sidewalks on Grandview Drive Blvd. in University Place. The first part of a separated trail in Pierce County's Chambers Creek park development also will be built. The roundabout intersections will be continued. Thanks to all the club members who have helped including Janice Jensen and Jocko Burks.

SR 16 Trail Proposal: I attended the recent Tacoma Citizen's Transportation Committee meeting last week and viewed the preliminary route selection for a separated trail extending from the Narrow's Bridge to the existing trail at Union Avenue. This trail is part of the HOV lane construction and has been pursued hard by the City of Tacoma and interested groups.

Hopefully, the trail alignment will be presented to the club at the September meeting.

Downtown Tacoma Plan: I was able to review the city's ideas for promoting transit-oriented development in the downtown area. This plan is important to reduce congestion and urban sprawl. It will allow housing to be developed within walking range of the new light link rail system in the downtown area.

Sprocketwoman: A new sprocketwoman has been hired by Pierce County Parks. She is Cheryl Evans and she rode in the Tour de Pierce. She already presents safety programs for kids using a clown motif. I will contact her this fall.

Sound Transit Stations: Lisa Wolterink requested TWBC's support of several Sound Transit grant applications to provide improvements for bikes and pedestrians at the new and existing transit stations.

Bike Lanes: We will continue to look for opportunities to extend bike lanes in the city, particularly on Tyler Street.

The next meeting of the TWBC Government Affairs Committee will be held at 7 p.m., Aug. 17, at Planet Burrito on Sixth Avenue. You are invited to come out and join in the fun. This meeting will be on the third Tuesday since some of us being on Carla's Cascade Challenge camping trip.

Letter to Sound Transit

Mr. Bob White, Executive Director
Sound Transit

The Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club (TWBC) is pleased to support Sound Transit's grant request for FY 2000 Transportation and Community and System Preservation(TCSP) funding.

We understand the Transit Station Communities Implementation Project will support the station area enhancements that will help successfully implement our regional transit system and improve the link between transit and surrounding communities of users.

TWBC is particularly interested in working with Sound Transit and our local communities to improve bicycle access and pedestrian access to stations. This project offers an excellent opportunity to encourage multimodal, pedestrian friendly, land use development within station area communities.

We believe this is vital to encourage transit use, reduce congestion, and reduce urban sprawl. It may even help in our efforts to restore the endangered salmon populations in the Puget Sound region.

Sincerely, Bob Myrick, P.E.

TWBC

Director of Community and Government Affairs

New and Renewing Members

New Members: Gail Grill, Charles and Tammy Piatok

Renewing members: Ralph and Dena Wessels; Charles Roberts; James Powell; Jerry Pischel; Dom, Robin, Dan and Alex Partington; Dan, Leslie, Anna, Laura and Sarah Niebrugge; Dale and JoAnne Longfellow; William D. Hill; Martha A. Hartley; Mike Flodin; Bob and Betty Flemming-Jones; Bruce Carpenter; Sara Blakeslee; Scott and Sue Biles; Tom Barocan; Mike, Debbie, Chris and Cassidy Romaine.

Past pedaling

anne heller

Historical highlights of TWBC's 110 years

This year a group of Wheelmen took a fantastic trip through Oregon. Blessed with beautiful weather and unbelievable scenery, we traveled on good roads with courteous drivers. In 1901 a young man from San Francisco bicycled to Tacoma, following the present day route of I-5 for most of his journey.

He took several side trips to sites of interest along the way. On one side trip he visited Crater Lake from Fort Klamath, taking roughly the same route as the

Wheelmen. While the routes were similar, the riding experiences were markedly different.

The Wheelmen had a support wagon that carried tents and sleeping bags. J. Edgar Ross carried everything he needed. The weight of his loaded bike was 90 pounds.

While the Wheelmen had a tough day prior to ascending to Crater Lake (climbing 5,500 feet over 70-miles in warm weather), J. Edgar had a worse time. First he walked his bike 56 miles for several days to Klamath Falls, because he had a flat tire and no tube.

In Klamath Falls he found a tube that he adapted to fit his bike. As he wrote later, "It was the only one in the store, the only one in town, perhaps the only one available within a radius of 100 miles, so I took it."

The Wheelmen camped the night before Crater Lake along the Wood River, a half mile from the historic marker for Fort Klamath. J. Edgar pedaled to Fort Klamath where he "camped that night near the old deserted fort."

The Wheelmen stopped in the town of Fort Klamath for a generously portioned breakfast. In the village of Fort Klamath, Mr. Ross bought additional supplies because "I knew it would be my last chance for a week or 10 days to replenish my larder."

The Wheelmen packed everything in the sag wagon not needed for the ride. Mr. Ross' bike weighed 98 pounds loaded with supplies.

The road leaving Fort Klamath was smooth and wide for the Wheelmen, with a gradual grade until nearly the top. For J. Edgar the road was so sandy it was "more work than sport to push that load along. I managed to keep in the saddle, however, until I was eight miles from the Fort.

During the remainder of the day I had to walk through sand that grew deeper and deeper, up a grade that became steeper and steeper at every step."

Both the present day Wheelmen and Mr. Ross followed Annie Creek up the mountain. The Wheelmen reached the Visitor Information Center at about noon and proceeded the last few, very steep miles to the top where we had a good lunch, bought souvenirs and took photos of ourselves standing in the snow. The Wheelmen stayed just a few hours.

When Mr. Ross reached what is now the Visitor Center in darkness, he camped for the night. He reached the top the following morning and stayed a week.

Crater Lake inspired a final bond between J. Edgar Ross and the Wheelmen: We shared an awe of the lake's beauty. As Mr. Ross said, "Not less than a season would be sufficient to visit all the points of interest and really see Crater Lake; yet it would require a volume to describe all that I saw during that week."

Novice Juan Duran tells Wheelmen of Miami-to-Tacoma trip

Juan Duran who had just finished a cross country trip from Miami, was greeted by Tacoma Wheelmen at this year's club picnic. Juan's journey was in honor of his late wife Renate who died after a 2-year struggle with bone cancer and to raise funds and awareness about hospices. Details of his trip are available on his website at www.rideforhope.com. At the picnic he confessed that he had only ridden four months before starting his journey on May 15.

a non-cyclist's perspective

It's easy to pick out future cyclists among infants

Karin Stephenson

Of all the addictions one can have, cycling can put a whole new "spin" on things. I have determined, through my own research, that the cycling addiction is one that the true cyclist is born with.

Take, for example, a new infant. This future roadie is already expressing him/herself by kicking his legs in true cycling motions; the little hands are clenched onto an imaginary handlebar, and the facial expressions mimic those of a rider who has hit the endorphin euphoria stage.

As this person grows, the next stage in this insidious malady occurs around the age of two. Now able to walk and express himself freely, this "tire-less" bundle of energy realizes he needs to get around with a bit more fun.

First tricycle

Then comes the first introduction to the addiction: the parents with a shiny, new tricycle to ride. It isn't long before this little tyke realizes he can go fast (well, "fast" for a two-year-old) and is able to terrorize the neighborhood dogs by pedaling after them.

A little later on in childhood, the addiction progresses to the "two-wheeler with training wheels". Tricycles, suddenly are not enough to give that challenge of speed and endurance. This future Pantani must be able to "look like a cyclist." Parents, again make sure he is well-protected with knee pads and a sturdy helmet. As he gets used to the idea of "two wheels", the child realizes that the "trainers" are a hindrance and need to come off — because only sissies use them.

Riding in packs

Then comes the phase when the boys resemble packs of dogs as they ride everywhere together and pay as much attention to the road traffic. (All of a sudden, the girls are not quite so prevalent on bicycles...)

You see them everywhere — performing Kamikaze maneuvers on main arterials and laughing themselves silly when cars screech to avoid a collision. The "cycling high" becomes so overwhelming, that it even takes the young rider well into the shadows of the night. Without any lights.

Screaming muscles

Finally comes the "seasoned veteran" rider. These are the folks who have gained wisdom and knowledge- and a keen sense of masochism. Every weekend must include some kind of grueling metric century, to be known as a "real cycling experience".

They are not truly happy, unless every muscle screams, "Boy, what a killer! Can't wait to do the 4.35K Rainier 2 the Summit" ride, tomorrow!"

(Writer's note: 4.35K, is the distance from valley to tip of Mount Rainier- straight UP...)