

Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club

Newsletter

October 1999

Founded 1888

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Climbing the North Cascades

RF Patrick

On Saturday, August 7 four TWBC members — Carla Gramlich, our Tour Leader (AKA The First Lady); Steve Brown (AKA The Prez); Bob Myrick (AKA Side Roads Bob) and myself (AKA That Idiot who trained with 40 pounds of gravel in his panniers).

We started in cool and overcast Start Up, WA to do a 9-day loaded tour of the Cascades Loop. The 462-mile loop took us west on Highway 2, north to Highway 20, East on Highway 20 to Chelan, south on Highway 97 to Wenatchee, west on Highway 2 through Leavenworth, Lake Wenatchee, and back to Start Up.

On this tour we experienced three days of major hills. We climbed Rainy and Washington passes (4,856 feet and 5,477 feet), Leavenworth to Plain, and Stevens Pass (4,856 feet). The longest day was 66 miles and the shortest was 37 miles. We spent nine days of riding, seven days of tent camping, and one day of "motel-ing." The ride ended Sunday, Aug. 15.

We had rain (bad enough to be soaked) on the first day and last day of the ride. The fourth day through the North Cascades National Park complex on Highway 20 we experienced especially beautiful scenery with sunny weather but not too hot, and very low traffic.

The highways and side roads were either very low traffic or nicely paved with wide shoulder, except for the last 25 miles of Highway 2 between Start Up and Barring.

The worst part of the ride was in Snohomish County where a large number of motorists displayed "bicyclist rage" and we were honked at. These aggressive folks repeated their chant to us, "GET OFF THE ROAD, AS!%&*#S".

The four of us were able to stay together and ride as a group. We shared many nice camp stove breakfasts and dinners together and ate out in good and bad restaurants. I ate and ate.

I think that I had dessert 12 times in nine days. We encountered a bike club from Atlanta SAG-touring the same route, a family riding back to Chicago, a couple of guys cycling from Alaska, and lots of cyclists we did not talk to.

We enjoyed the beautiful scenery of the North Cascades, the Methow Valley, and the Columbia River between Pateros and Wenatchee.

Note: This story is a modified condensed "Readers Digest" version of the original story I wrote of my experiences on this tour. It could not be published in the TWBC Newsletter because it is too long. If you'd like to read the original 3,400-word tome, then e-mail me and I will reply back to you with the story.

If you do not have Word 97, let me know and I'll send it as a text file. My e-mail address is rpatrick@telisphere.com.

Or download the file from TWBC's [website](#).

'Tacoma Wheelers'?

Open letter to the membership, I would like to propose the name of the club be changed to the Tacoma WHEELERS Bicycle Club. The name needs to be more inclusive and reflective of its membership. I put off joining TWBC for over 4 years due to my perception of the name "wheelmen" as sexist and exclusionary. I have, on many occasions, been approached by other women questioning why I was a 'WheelMEN'.

Recently, a new rider to the club expressed she had been hesitant to call the rideline because the club name led her to believe it was male only riders. She came from an area where they have all male clubs. Other members have also expressed their desire to have the name changed. We might increase membership by appealing to those who are put off by the name. The logo and recognition would continue as we would still be the TWBC.

Heck- the old jerseys could become collectors items. Of course, there are those of us who would just have to wear a new Tacoma Wheelers Bicycle Club jersey.

Perhaps we could enter the new millennium with a new name. I challenge the membership to give this consideration and to express your ideas and opinions on this topic.

Barb Root

American ‘Wheelmen’ now ‘Bicyclists’

Abandoning “Wheelmen” name is not unique among bicycle clubs. The League of American Bicyclists was founded in 1880 as the League of American Wheelmen. Today it promotes cycling for fun, fitness and transportation and works through advocacy and education for a more bicycle-friendly America. Membership nationwide includes 35,000 individuals, 450 recreational clubs, and 45 state and local advocacy organizations. Including the Tacoma Wheelmen.

TWBC helps first Tacoma Bike Fair

Steve Brown

The first-ever Bike Fair in downtown Tacoma was held Aug. 19 at the Thursday Farmer’s Market. Many TWBC members participated in the free drawings and bicycle safety check. A special thanks to TWBC members Lisa Quinn, Peggy Fjetland and Carla Gramlich who helped staff the booth.

This event was sponsored by Pierce County, the City of Tacoma, Pierce Transit, Tacoma Bicycles, TWBC and several downtown businesses.

Hopefully this will become an annual event!

Newsletter Deadlines

November 1999

Copy and photos: Oct. 12

Ride calendar: Oct. 19

December 1999

Copy and photos: Nov. 9

Ride calendar: Nov. 16

January 2000

Copy and photos: Dec. 14

Ride calendar: Dec. 21

February 2000

Copy and photos: Jan. 11

Ride calendar: Jan. 18

A wonderful French cycling trip, just north of the border in Quebec

Carol Davis

A bicycle adventure into a uniquely different culture on our own North American continent in the cool North — all the ingredients necessary to entice me. Roz (my husband) usually goes along without too much kicking and screaming!

It would be an excursion into a romantic past, where early explorers tried to find a sea route to Asia, where the French Acadians were banished and eventually allowed to resettle, the "forest primeval" of Evangeline, the Northumberland Straits of the early seamen. This was a trip that captured my imagination. It was all of this plus all of the things you can't plan for.

An early trip by train and car to Montreal and Quebec City had wet my appetite for cycling in this region. The countryside along the St. Lawrence is reminiscent of France: lush green farms with French farm houses, quaint villages surrounding French-style cathedrals, quiet country roads rolling along the river with the wind at your back. A cyclist's dream!

The dream actually lasted for three whole days (about 200 miles) when the freeway running parallel a few miles away ran out, and the freeway traffic merged onto Route

132 which is too narrow to handle it all. We realized that this would continue the rest of the way along the St. Lawrence, so we decided to head toward New Brunswick a few days sooner.

The way to the coast of New Brunswick is south through the Appalachians. The rolling, ungraded ascent took us through more farm country villages where few American cyclists have ever been. People were so friendly and patient with my four years of high school French. I was even starting to think in French.

Cabano was the first place we saw many cyclists. A gravel rails-to-trail attracts many Quebecois cyclists on mountain bikes. We went through four tires the day we were on the trail. Luckily there are bike shops in that area.

We were surprised that New Brunswick has so many French-speaking communities. Most of the English-speaking Canadians are in the cities. We spent most of our time along the Acadian coast. Most of our trip was through areas where few if any tourists venture.

A section of the New Brunswick coast is a cultural Mecca for French Acadians. Quebecers were flooding the area during their two week summer holiday. We were still the only Americans to sign in at the bed and breakfasts.

The culture and people left an enduring impression. They strive to preserve their culture, life style, and language with tenacity. They are friendly and patient. They give cyclists plenty of room. There is no glass on the road. All dogs are tied up, and every bathroom got a five star rating.

Two cycling guides recommended traveling from north to south, but we learned that if you really want to know which way the winds blow, consult a sailor!

Bike paths news

*The following are reports on the development of bike pathways in the Northwest. **Lacey bike tunnel.** By this time next year, construction is expected to begin on the I-5 Bike Path tunnel under Sleater-Kinney Road in Lacey. Funding for the project was approved by the state Legislature. The project is expected to help recreation and commuting cyclists who use the bicycle network between Lacey and downtown Olympia.*

-- Capital Bicycle Club Newsletter

Trail opening delayed. The spring opening of the East Lake Sammamish Trail was delayed after a new city council sided with opposing property owners. The trail will connect the Burke Gilman and Sammamish River Trails with the Mountains-to Sound Greenway. This will create a continuous trail from downtown Seattle to the crest of the Cascade Range. King County Council is still the controlling body. For updated information contact the project web page at <http://www.metrokc.gov/parks>.

-- Foothills Rails-to-Trails newsletter

Buckley connection: King County was still in extended contract negotiation with a property owner over its planned trail connection with Buckley. Due to a faulty property deed, the property owner built a structure in the middle of the trail right of way. King County sued and was awarded a 100-foot-wide corridor within the 400-foot former railroad right-of-way. However, the alignment remains unsettled.

-- Foothills Rails-to-Trails newsletter

For sale

WANTED: for Cannondale Tandem, child crankset. Lew Jones, 253-564-5784.

TWBC E-mail list developed

TWBC is building its e-mail list as another means to better inform club members of club activities. E-mail also can provide a quick way for club officials to hear back from members.

New e-mail addresses can be added to the club roster by sending them to newsletter@twbc.org. In the past few years e-mail has become a very effective means of communication through the use of computers. For TWBC it could be a way to inform members of last-minute rides or even ask for volunteers for the club's several community projects.

In the future e-mail will be more frequently used to ask members to submit information or articles for the club's newsletters or to participate in surveys on bicycling.

Membership benefits

Tacoma Wheelmen are entitled to the following benefits:

Rides: Attendance on guided rides throughout the year

Bicycle boxes: Suitable for hauling bicycles on plane flights. Greg Torfin 253-752-1822

Bob trailer: Easy gear hauling. Greg Torfin 253-752-1822

Camping fees: For club rides (check for stipulations)

Ferry fees: paid for all riders in the Rilly Hilly ride on Vashon Island as an alternative to the Chilly Hilly Ride on Bainbridge Island

Picnic: All you can eat catered picnic at the middle or end of summer

Banquet: Subsidized annual awards and social event

Newsletter: monthly publication mailed to each member with updates on rides and information about bicycling in Tacoma and Pierce County.

. . . and remember these important bicycle dates

Effective Cycling Nov. 13

An Effective Cycling class will be held at 9:30 a.m. Nov. 13. This class will be excellent instruction for riders of any skill level. The morning will be classroom, followed in the afternoon by on the rode portion. TWBC club member Lisa Quinn will teach the class. She traveled down to Salem for her training. To sign up call Carla Gramlich at (253) 752-4038. Space is limited.

Foothills auction Oct. 23

The Foothills Rails to Trails Coalition will hold its fund-raising annual auction at Oct. 23. The dinner and auction will be held in Tacoma at the Slovenian Hall, 2306 N. 30th. Tickets are \$15. Let's get a group of Wheelmen and women bicyclists to share a table. Call Carla Gramlich at (253) 752-4038 for tickets or to donate an item to the auction.

Foothills at the movies Dec. 8

The Grand Cinema was recently voted the best Movie Theater by a local newspaper. Here is your opportunity to see a good movie and support the trail. Time and movie title will be determined later Call Carla Gramlich 253-752-4038 for tickets.

If fall is here, the Daffodil cannot be far away

Karen Forbush and Jan Brame are calling on all interested Wheelmen to attend the first planning meeting for the 25th Anniversary Daffodil Classic. The meeting will be held at Karen's house at 7 p.m. Monday, Oct. 11 at 1301 No. Proctor.

Jan and Karen want the Year 2000 Daffodil to be the ride of the next Millenium. Help is needed in the preliminary stages of planning. All club members and their ideas and enthusiasm will be welcome. Call Karen at 752-0764 or Jan at 759-6984 for more information.

Ride notes

October is the traditional end of the bicycle season in the Northwest. The days are getting shorter and the weather more unpredictable (if that is possible). There are two end-of-season organized bicycle rides — the Manastash Metric in Ellensburg Oct. 2 and the Kitsap Color Classic in Kingston Oct 3. "I did both of these rides last year for the first time," said Steve

Brown, TWBC president. “Both rides are in beautiful parts of Washington State and well supported. Bob Myrick has repeatedly said how nice the weather is in Ellensburg in early October. But be prepared for driving in snow. “And don't forget the tire chains.”

It's time to haunt 1320 N. Cedar again. Wear a costume for the ride at noon Oct. 31 (see Ride Calendar). Be sure you can ride safely and wear a helmet with your costume. The ride will be around town to look at Halloween decorations.

The potluck will be at 3 p.m. at 1320 N. Cedar. Bring your favorite dish to share with everyone. You may come for all or part of the festivities.

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 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 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.

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.

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.

Jack Woods elected VP

Jack Woods almost didn't know what hit him when he attended his first meeting of the Tacoma Wheelmen Sept. 21.

He was elected vice president.

By a unanimous vote, Jack was elected to fill the empty board position whose major responsibility is arranging the club's monthly meetings.

After several calls for candidates went unanswered the board voted to reduce traditional attendance requirements at board meetings and the traditional ascendancy to the club's presidency. Jack work frequently takes him out of town.

The new vice president lives in Federal Way and works for the Port of Tacoma's Trade and Development Department. He frequently joins Code 2 and 3 club rides. This year he has ridden his Raleigh Technium on the Chilly Hilly, Daffodil Classic, Peninsula Metric Century, Courage Classic, Tour de Lac and the League of American Bicyclists ride in Sonoma Calif.

The Ride Captain wants to know

Do you want a T-shirt for riding 2,000 miles?

Connie Reitzug

As the 1998-99 TWBC riding season comes an end, it's time to start determining the nearness of our goals: Do we need to sprint to reach that 2,000-mile mark?

Or is the sheer ecstasy of riding our bikes all that really matters?

The 2,000-mile mark is a benchmark of pride in the Tacoma Wheelmen. It is the accumulated "fiscal" mileage (October to October) of a club member's attendance on club rides exceeding 2,000 miles.

From a ride captain's perspective, I'm looking forward to our Y2K celebration, the annual banquet in January. Some folks have sights focused on that symbol of a 2,000-mile season, the "2,000 mile club shirt."

Others are more cavalier and view this shirt as just another in a collection of T-shirts that sit unused in the drawer. Either way, our club will accommodate all club members' wishes. But as the manager of the touring budget, I would prefer not to order and print up shirts for those who don't want one.

Therefore, this year the newsletter and website will feature a response form which will ask you:

- What is the tally of all your club and commuter miles?

- Is a verbal acknowledgment at the banquet adequate?
- Will you attend this year's banquet?
- If you want one, what is your shirt size?

Remember, this information must be submitted by Nov. 15. The response form must be returned to me with your Ride Log or shirts cannot be ordered.

Happy trails and I hope you all reach your goals.

Auction, fairs, conferences among several BAW events

Ralph Wessels

In the next couple months The Bicycle Alliance of Washington will sponsor or co-sponsor several exciting bicycling-related events in the next couple months.

- The Footprints and Biketracks Conference will be held at the Seattle Center on 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Oct. 7 and 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Oct. 8. The conference — held every two years — has been national recognized for the quality of the topics. TWBC

is offering up to two scholarships for members to attend. For information contact Steve Brown at 253-752-4038 .

- The Livable Communities Fair follows the Footprints and Biketracks Conference. It will be held on Saturday, Oct. 9, also at the Seattle Center. The conference will focus on ways to improve the quality of neighborhoods. There is no cost to attend the fair. For information on both events call 206-441-7878 or on the Internet at www.livablecommunities.org.

- The Bicycle Alliance's Legislative Committee will meet 1 to 3:30 p.m. Oct. 9 at the REI store in Seattle in the upstairs conference room. This meeting will focus on statewide bicycling issues.

Topics will include changes to several laws and next year's legislative strategy. The meeting is open and is a good opportunity to meet bicycle advocates from around the state.

- The Bicycle Alliance will hold the Ride Schedule Meeting at 4 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9, at the REI store in Seattle. Organized Northwest rides will be coordinated at the meeting so they aren't scheduled on same days.

TWBC's events will be represented also.

- The Bicycle Alliance Auction will be held on Saturday, November 6, in Seattle. TWBC has reserved two tables and will pay half (\$17.50) of the \$35 admittance for a great night of fun! Besides meeting other bicycle enthusiasts, attendees enjoy a dinner with refreshments and get to bid on some great items. To reserve a spot call 253-857-5658 by October 19th.

Also, please call 253-857-5658 or the Bicycle Alliance at (206) 224-9252 to donate items.

Members

New Members: Mark A. Horst, Brenden and Julie Anderson and Familiy, Naomi Creel, Patricia Dougherty, Steve Grasser, Marcus Walker.

Renewing members: Mark, Debbie, Jila and Pete Bozanich; Paul Buckmaster; Heinz Haskins; Dianne Koch and Family; Mr and Mrs Michael Springer; Elaine Sumeey; Karen Comer and Charles Wolf; Jane Brame; Carla Gramlich and Steve Brown; John Campbell; Robert Deehan; Pat B. Guira; William Horn; Barbara Lee; Deborah Ottow; Dave Parker; Tonya and Walt Richardson; Dorothy Schedvin; Ernie and Karin Stephenson; Karen Forbush and Kent Wienker; Sue Yerian.

Government report
bob myrick

Last month, the TWBC Government Affairs Committee meeting included Ralph Wessels, Steve Brown, Scott Pierson and myself.

City Water Ditch Trail: Tacoma City Water is preparing a property appraisal for the southerly 600 feet of our historic trail which dates from the 1890s. An adjacent landowner wants to purchase this parcel for a development.

It saddens me that the utility appears to be so insensitive to the recreational and environmental needs of our community. On another front, the proposal to put up "Tacoma Cares" signage identifying and adopting the trail seems to have been dropped by the "Tacoma Cares" administrator due to the continued controversy.

The last thing I knew was Tacoma City Water was agreeable if they could get a letter of support from the local Neighborhood Council. Now, I hear that Skip Vaughn, the

head of the Neighborhood Council, doesn't like "Tacoma Cares" signs and the city's own attorneys can't agree on liability issues.

I will call Skip Vaughn and try to enlist his support. Meanwhile, the city hasn't done much with their \$50,000 enhancements grant for some preliminary engineering on the trail.

Pipeline Trail: Ernie Bay and I toured Seattle's Tolt River Pipeline Trail and worked on a video showing the open gates, the cleanliness of the trail, and the happy users. Now we plan to visit Tacoma's Pipeline Trail and show the closed gates, the rubbish, and the unhappy potential users.

We want to present the video to Tacoma City Water and continue our push to open this trail running from about Portland Avenue out to 128th and Meridian in South Hill Puyallup. We have applied for a neighborhood grant to help open the trail.

Bike Route Signs: We continue our quest for signs that show safe bicycling routes. The brand new national guide book for bicycle facilities includes bike route signs with directional arrows and destinations listed like "downtown" and "Mt. Rainier", etc.

I was recently told that Pierce County is becoming more amenable to the idea of installing signs. Hopefully, the matter will continue to be pursued by the Bicycle Alliance of Washington at the state level.

TEA-21 Enhancements Projects: I reviewed the project applications with the group. Ernie Bay and I will attend a Seattle meeting to begin ranking the projects and lobbying for the best projects in Pierce County and the region.

Bicycle Alliance Legislative Committee: Ralph reminded us of the meeting on October 9 at the REI meeting room in Seattle. I contacted Janice Jensen and in a weak moment, she agreed to represent the TWBC. Ralph will again facilitate the meeting.

Tule Lake Road Pedestrian Safety: On Sept. 17, I toured this area with Bob Vogel, the County's Nonmotorized Coordinator, and the County's Traffic Engineer. There is a serious problem on a blind corner where pedestrians are at risk from motorists migrating past the fog line. There is a wide shoulder along this road. We agreed the county could install "rumble" bars for about 400 feet along the road. The bars will be offset one foot from the edge of the fog line and spaced about 10 feet. This placement will allow a cyclist to ride the edge of the fog line in the clean area of the road and also the cyclist can pull off the clean area when a big truck approaches.

This particular site has night lights to provide some safety to cyclists after dark. We agreed that at least three feet of shoulder should be available past the "rumble" bars if other areas require this treatment. The county would only apply this treatment in particularly dangerous locations.

Sound Transit Bicycle Accommodation Program: On Sept. 30 we were invited to the meeting at the Seattle Mountaineers Clubhouse. Sound Transit staff wanted to discuss their plans and receive comment regarding the accommodation of bicycles on their three forms of service: rail, light rail and bus.

ABITIBI Railroad Crossing: Ralph and I attended a meeting with the paper company regarding the hazardous railroad crossing near Steilacoom. The town was also represented. Rather than pursue a grant, ABITIBI wants to first look at possible maintenance solutions to fix the track crossing.

A grant for a construction fix would probably trigger the need for a biological assessment regarding Chinook Salmon and a grant requires quite a lot of overhead costs. For a small project, the overhead becomes prohibitive. We will meet with ABITIBI again on Friday, October 1.

Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation: Some time ago, Gov. Gary Locke appointed this commission to look at the state's transportation system and needs. This commission is separate from the Washington State Dept. of Transportation. Last

month, I attended their special meeting and gave testimony regarding the needs of cyclists for both commuting and recreating purposes.

Cushman Powerline Trail: We are concerned that this trail has not yet been constructed. Jan Wolcott on other county staff will be contacted regarding our concerns.

Puyallup River Levy Trail: In a phone call, Craig Francis with the Tacoma government this trail has bogged down while waiting for the completion of biological assessment.

The next meeting of the TWBC Government Affairs Committee will be held at 7 p.m., Oct. 12, at Planet Burrito on Sixth Avenue. All are invited to come out and join in the fun. I will be out of town visiting in St. Louis and spending a week hiking on the Ozark Trail. We will try to have regular monthly meetings now that the summer season is winding down.

Lost and found

While riding on Anderson Island on 21 Aug 99, I found a nice lightweight jacket and cap that belonged to a female bicyclist I had just spoken with.

It apparently had dropped off her bike as she rode off.

I unfortunately didn't see her again on the island or the ferry. I'm sure she'd like to get this back. She should call (253) 584-7284.