

Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club

Newsletter

Founded 1888

March 2001

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Other bicycle information

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Spring and Summer Trips

From TWBC Members

California Wine Country April 1 - 7. Carol Davis 857-5396, bicyclguy@aol.com

Yakima Valley Wine Tour Memorial Day Weekend

May 26 -28. Carla, (253) 752-4038.

Tacoma to Spokane Bike Trip Sat., June 23 - Sun., July 1.

Carla, (253) 752-4038.

Glacier Park, Montana August 3 - 18. Carol Davis

857-5396, bicyclguy@aol.com

Kettle Valley Trail Revisited August 25 - Sept. 3.

Carla, (253) 752-4038.

If anyone within TWBC has a group ride planned for the summer, please contact jimtwbceditor@aol.com to advertise your ride here.

Volunteers !

Daffodil Classic Needs You

Dorian Smith

The best ride in the state of Washington, according to Bicycling Magazine, will be staged April 22 by the volunteers of the Tacoma Wheelmen. And, yet, there are still numerous positions still awaiting those who would like to donate a few hours for that happy day when Orting is the epicenter of Pacific Northwest bicycling.

Recent volunteers are Carol Davis, who is this year's volunteer chairperson, Kent Wienker is the Sag Coordinator and Linda Higgins as the food chairperson. The club also is looking for someone to be the Daffodil Ride's chair person for 2002. Their assistance at this year's event will be a valuable apprenticeship. Contact Jan Brame 253-759-6984 if you are interested. More than 60 volunteers from the Tacoma Wheelmen park cars, offer food, register riders and many other tasks. The Daffodil Classic is a major fund raiser for the Tacoma Wheelmen Bicycle Club. Volunteers are rewarded with: Free ride registration, Free t-shirts, free all-you-can-eat pizza party and Lots of fun

Volunteers and potential volunteers are invited to the next planning meeting at 7 p.m. March 12 at the Audubon Society Building, 2917 Morrison Rd. W. in University Place (turn east on W. 27th from Bridgeport Way and then turn right on Morrison Rd.)

The event draws more than 1,000 Pacific Northwest riders to pedal routes that cover 20, 50, 70 or 100 miles over the beautiful rural country roads in the foothills of the Cascades.

This year prices have been adjusted: Advanced (before April 11): registration is \$15 for individuals and \$35 for families (a maximum of two adults per family) and t-shirts are \$12. Day of ride: registration is \$18, families are \$40 and t-shirts are \$15.

A registration form is available on the Wheelmen's website at <http://www.twbc.org/dafforms.htm>.

Last year's popular finish line strawberry shortcake party in-the-park will be renewed. Also from last year will be the free route (pre-registration only) on the 15-mile Rails-to-Trail bike pathway along the river.

Many of the traditions of past seasons also will greet riders before, after and during their journeys, including: the pre-ride pancake breakfast, the Lion's Club hamburger BBQ, and mechanical support in Orting by Spoke and Sprocket.

Bicycle Expo 2001 Update

Peggy Fjetland

The 2001 Subaru Seattle International Bicycle Expo is pleased to announce several new features this year: a new date, March 30, 31, April 1; a new site, the Stadium Exhibition Center across from Safeco Field; and two new major sponsors, Subaru of North America and NewsRadio KIRO 710.

The new location will allow all exhibits, demonstrations, meetings and presentations to be under the same roof in one new space that is larger than the previous combined space at Seattle Center. The new high-profile location at Occidental Avenue South and Royal Brougham Way has parking available in the building as well as nearby. The space is designed for major exhibitions with bigger booths a plus for exhibitors and visitors.

Bike Expo will occupy the south half of the main building while the Pacific Northwest Golf Show will occupy the north half offering some co-promotion opportunities and a larger audience. In 2002, Expo will again be in the Stadium Exhibition Center, but will move to its new permanent date on the first weekend in March.

Tacoma Wheelmen will again promote our club and cycling events in our booth on Friday, March 30 from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; on Saturday, March 31 from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; and on Sunday April 1 (Daylight Savings Time...no fooling!) 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. In exchange for working a two hour shift in our booth, TWBC volunteers will be admitted to Expo free of charge.

Please enter SEC at the southeast corner near the garage through the exhibitors' and volunteers' entrance. There are still a few volunteer positions, so please contact Peggy Fjetland (253) 841-4458.

From The President's Handlebars

Anne Heller

If you have biked, walked or driven in University Place recently you noticed the "traffic calming" efforts that have resulted in a more people oriented city.

Installations of bike lanes, roundabouts and strategically placed plantings have

resulted in traffic patterns that are friendly to both cyclists and pedestrians while passively slowing auto traffic. The result is a city that is both more livable and safer for its citizens. University Place serves as an example to other municipalities.

Unfortunately, not all cities are as progressive and concerned as the officials and planners of University Place. For instance: Tacoma. While the city has made some efforts to be more accommodating to non-motorized transportation, Tacoma seems not to have a philosophy about what it is doing and why on transportation issues.

Some improvements have occurred in the past few years. Bike lanes were added to N. Stevens St., N. Union Ave. and a short section of N. Alder St. At the same time, angle parking replaced parallel parking on sections of N. Proctor St., Tacoma Ave. S. and Yakima Ave. N.

Angle parking results in a few more parking spaces (in the case of Yakima Ave., just three to four additional spaces) while at the same time creating a dangerous situation for both bicyclists and pedestrians.

Some of the problem may lie with the “squeaky wheel” theory of what gets attention. Generally, cyclists don’t generate a lot of “squeak,” maybe because of all the lubricant we apply to our chains. We do have some activists such as Carla Gramlich and Bob Myrick who regularly talk with decision makers about bicycle issues. Most of us, however, are fairly passive. A jurisdiction makes a change in traffic patterns or ignores a dangerous situation and we adjust to the situation rather than trying to change it.

I would suggest that we take a more activist approach. No, I do not think we should barricade the streets with our bikes. But we should let our government leaders know about our needs and safety concerns. We can do this by calling and writing to our city and county councils when we encounter potentially dangerous traffic patterns. We can also suggest ways to make all of our cities more bike and pedestrian friendly.

While one letter to a council member may be ignored, if we make ourselves known as a group, perhaps they will pay attention. If you want information about who to contact in your city or if you want the club to work on a particularly egregious traffic situation, email me at aheller @foxinternet.net Perhaps as a group we can effect some positive changes in local transportation planning.

Government Report

Steve Brown

Our Committee met on Tuesday, February 6th. Seven members were in attendance. Our normal venue, Shakabrah Java, was closed because of "increased operating cost" which I assume is related to the increase in electric rates. We were able to reconvene at Planet Burrito just down the street.

Issues discussed:

- * Diagonal parking is making bi-cycling more hazardous in Tacoma.
- * Bike Lids are now available at Swasey & Kobetich libraries. Soon at Moore library and the Tacoma Dome.
- * Follow up on grants for improving RR crossings on Hwy 507 near Roy.
- * Annual count of cyclists. Cascade Bicycle Club does an annual count of bicyclists to show usage over time. Counts are also done on the Foothills Rail Trail. Nothing formal is done in Tacoma.
- * Bicycle Lobby Day February 22nd. At least two members, Duncan Parks and Chuck Morrison were planning to attend. This is sponsored by the statewide Bicycle Alliance of Washington.
- * Bill HB5790 related to vehicular assault is still alive at the Washington state legislature as of this writing
- * Bicycling Advisory Committee met in Vancouver in January. Next meeting is May 12th. * Work began on the 38th street overpass of I-5. We will be monitoring for agreed upon pedestrian/bicycle amenities.

* Comments were submitted on the draft General Management Plan for Mount Rainier National Park

* Washington Environmental Council meet with statewide bicycle groups regarding environmental issues

* Doc Weathers/Tacoma Narrows Park was recently acquired by Pierce County Parks. This park is located just south of the west end of the Narrows Bridge

* Puyallup River Levee Trail, Water Ditch Trail, Cushman Trail and SR 167

planning continues * Citizen forum at the Tacoma City Council meeting - discussion continued on a city-wide transportation committee

Our full-time bicycle advocate/lobbyist Bob Myrick is on a well deserved rest bit in New Zealand. We look forward to his return. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 6th. Our NEW location is Planet Burrito, 2602 6th Ave in Tacoma. Come early if you want to get something to eat. The meeting will start promptly at 7PM and we need to be done at 8:30PM.

Traffic Safety Legislation

Ralph Wessels

Traffic-safety legislation designed to close gaps in the State's Vehicular Assault statute and make it easier to prosecute motorists whose driving seriously injures others was introduced last week by Sen. Adam Kline, D-Seattle, and several co-sponsors.

The legislation, Senate Bill (SB) 5790, is supported by and was developed with input from the Bicycle Alliance; the measure meets some of the goals of the legislative traffic-safety proposal developed by the legislative committee and approved last fall by the B.A.W. board.

SB 5790 would amend the current Vehicular Assault statute in three technical but important ways: first, it would allow a Vehicular Assault conviction based upon relatively less serious injuries than under the present statute. Under the present law, a defendant cannot be convicted unless the victim suffers "serious bodily

injury,” which is defined to involve “a substantial risk of death, serious permanent disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any part or organ of the body.”

Under the proposed law, the defendant could be convicted if the victim suffered “substantial bodily harm.” This is defined as “bodily injury which involves a temporary but substantial disfigurement, or which causes a temporary but substantial loss or impairment of the function of any bodily part or organ, or which causes a fracture of any bodily part.”

Second, it would modify the statute’s “causation” requirement, so that the prosecutor no longer would have to prove that the defendant’s reckless conduct was the “proximate cause” of the victim’s injuries. Under the proposal, as long as the defendant drove either recklessly or with “disregard for the safety of others” and caused the injuries, the prosecutor’s burden would be met.

Third, it would allow conviction of a defendant even if his or her driving was not “reckless” within the legal definition of that word. Specifically, the bill would create a new crime of “Second-Degree Vehicular Assault,” involving driving “with disregard for the safety of others.” The new crime would be a Class C felony, carrying a maximum 5-year prison sentence.

Beginner Rides

Joy Roelofs

For beginning riders who would like to do fairly short, 15.5 mile bike rides over flat terrain, mostly bike paths, in company with others so you aren’t out there “on your own”, might I suggest the following two rides in March.

On March 3-4 there is a Volkbike starting at the Lions Club at 832 Ocean Shores Blvd. NW in Ocean Shores. This ride is 16.8 miles. You ride on paved surfaces and road shoulders with little elevation gain or traffic through the residential North Bay area to the Pacific Ocean. Start time is 8:00 am to 1:00 pm. There are two walks associated with this ride. I am planning to stay over and do the ride twice

and one of the walks each day. [Roelofsz, Joy NWS] I have rented a house at Pacific City. It is 3 bedroom, with queen size beds in two of the bedrooms and 2 twins in the third. A roll away bed and the couch are also available. Supposed to sleep 8. Cost is \$70 per night. This house will be on the east side of the complex, so not an ocean view, but all one has to do is walk a few feet and you have the ocean view.

I am also on the list for any ocean view cancellations. The more hardy TWBC riders might want to create a longer, more difficult ride starting at the Pacific City House.

On March 24, Saturday, there is a Volksbike starting at the City Hall in Dupont. This ride is 15.5 miles and there is a 9.0 mile option. The ride is on city streets and marked bike lanes and is level with little traffic. Start time is 8:00 am to 1:00 pm. There are two walks along with this bike ride.

All of these events the finish time is 4:00 pm so if you are a really slow rider, and there is absolutely nothing wrong with taking your time, this is a totally no-competitive event. These are lots of fun and you can meet a lot of nice people and get your bicycling feet wet (well hopefully not, let's hope for nice weather.) I plan to be doing all of these events, barring unforeseen developments. If you have any questions at all, please fill free to call at 253-847-1843.

More Bike Lids invade Tacoma

The Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club applied and received a grant to install twelve bicycle lids at various locations around Tacoma. When we finally went to make the purchase the vendor had changed his product. No longer could we purchase a plain old bicycle lid. The company was going to acquire advertisement and install them for free. Trouble was that the Tacoma area was way down on the list of markets that they wanted. They were going to New York and San Francisco first. Someday they might do Seattle. Scott Pierson helped and located the last seven bicycle lids in Idaho and we found a place to deliver them to. I found a hardy group of volunteers to support the installation. Bob Cook, concrete expert, Peggy Fjetland and her grandson Andrew, transportation crew, Greg Torfin, electrician. I did all the fun calling and

arrangements to do the first installation. Finally a date and time for the Swasey Library in the West End of Tacoma was established.

Our first obstacle was the size of the bike lids. Peggy drove her super massive truck, everyone should have a friend with a big red truck, but the first sets of bike lids were on a pallet standing on their noses. The truck would accommodate the set but the height was rather intimidating. We secured the lids on the truck and had a convoy drive city streets from the tide flats up to the Swasey Library.

Andrew, 18 months, was in charge of keeping an eye on the bike lids. I never saw so many people do a double take of this load. I was not afraid that the lids would tumble back on to my truck but I did worry when anyone pulled up beside this towering cargo.

Bob Cook was all set up and ready to drill the bike lids in place when we arrived. We carefully got the lids off the truck and went to work to secure the lids. This took about a 1 ½ hours to complete the whole project. Besides new bicycle parking we had several scrape knuckles to show for our labor. The following week we did a single lid at Kobetich Library. Two more are planned for the Tacoma Dome and Moore Library.

Bob Myrick mentioned to me, before he left for two months in New Zealand, that he had some bike racks that needed to be installed. Our Team is ready. That task should be a nothing compared to the task of moving and installing some bike lids.

Cycling Trips and Events

Carla Gramlich

Bicycling 101-Foothills Trail Ride and Work Party

March 10

On March 10, 2001 drive to Orting and spend some time on the Foothills Trail. Bike Mechanic Chuck Morrison and Carla Gramlich will meet at the Orting Bell Tower at 9:30. Anyone can get a safety check of their bicycle. For this ride

bicycle helmets with a custom fit will be available for \$5.00. At 10:00, after we know that our bikes and our person are safe, we will the trail. This is a flat route and not quite 15 miles this is a 1A but all levels are welcomed.

Following Bicycling 101, have lunch in Orting and then help with cleaning the trail. We will meet at Orting Bell Tower at 1 PM and then start walking towards McMillin picking trash. Bring work clothes and gloves, I will have trash bags and my truck to carry garbage.

Annual Children's Safety Fair April 28

On April 28 is the Annual Children's Safety Fair. For the last couple of years TWBC members have been helping to fit children with helmets that are sold at a low price of \$5.00. Your help is needed. We will provide training and pizza on Thursday April 5th. Any help from a couple of hours to all day is greatly appreciated. In past years we have helped to provide 1000 helmets at this one event.

Memorial Day Weekend May 26 -28,

Yakima Valley Wine Tour

Spend the holiday weekend on what I hope will be the sunny side of the state. Plan to drive to Yakima Valley and base out of a motel in Zillah, WA. I will reserve a block of rooms at the Comfort Inn. 911 Vintage Valley Pkwy, Zillah, WA 98953. Phone (509) 829-3399. Individuals must make their own reservations. I will have information on options for bicycling around the area. Each day I hope to have a short and long route available. So dust off the bike and pack the corkscrew, and hope for sun.

Tacoma to Spokane Bike Trip

June 23 - July 1

Pack up your panniers and load up the B.O.B. trailer, we are heading east to Spokane. A group of TWBC members will ride from Tacoma to Spokane the last week of June. Trip is self-supported, meaning you carry everything you need, and we will be camping. Mileage is between 40 and 70 miles each day. Total for the week is approximately 450 miles.

The trip will be limited to 12 people. To reserve a spot, a \$25 deposit is needed. Camping fees will be split among the group. You will also need to make your own Amtrak reservations. You are on your own for food and beverages. Some people may decide to form cooking groups.

Kettle Valley Trail Revisited

August 25 - Sept. 3

After the exciting mountain bike trip on the Kettle Valley Trail, we have decided to do some more. Plan to drive to Penticton, B.C. and spend a few days going up to Chute Lake and Myra Canyon. This area was socked in last year with fog and rain. The area has great views, numerous trestles and tunnels and some history of the railroad. Then we will drive over to Princeton and take a few days to ride to Coalmount, Brookmere and Merritt.

The trail is packed gravel and dirt with some washouts. A mountain bike is the preferred option but a sturdy touring or hybrid could be used. A rack and at least two panniers will be needed. I will have a list of lodging for each night. There could be some camping options but that would be in addition to options to stay inside. Mileage will range from 20 to 60 miles.

This is some very rugged area so you need to be prepared with clothing, food, water and emergency supplies. I promise some great scenery and a couple of B.C. wineries. Ride will be limited by space available at some of lodges that we are planning on staying at. You need to make reservations to guarantee a spot on this ride.

If you have an interest for any of these events call Carla, (253) 752-4038, for more information and reservations.

Where Are Our Signs?

All of our "REST STOP" signs have disappeared. Hopefully, one of our members is keeping them warm and dry for the upcoming Daffodil Classic. Please reveal yourself so we don't have to worry they might not show up. These signs are white painted plywood, about two feet high with black letters and a movable direction arrow. Three were missing after Daffodil last year and the fourth was missing after the PMC. These signs also have

our rideline number on them. Please call Greg Torfin if you have seen them, (253) 752-1822.

Headed for the Future

TWBC did a detailed survey of its members in 1990. Next month a similar survey will be included in the April newsletter. Please take the time to let us know what you think about different facets of the club. It will be interesting to compare this new information to what was revealed in 1990.

A few changes were made to the 2000 survey because things like the rideline and the internet did not exist back then. Look for it in the next issue!

Bike-Tech

Eddy Johnson

Spring is on it's way and I'll bet you're dying to put a set of new tires on your ride. In the winter I've ridden the same brand of tire for about 5 years. It's a great workhorse for loaded commuting and bad weather. This is the time of year when I start searching for that Summer tire. Light, quick and responsive.

Tires are a very personal thing. I wouldn't dream of telling you what tire to buy because it's so subjective. Here are a few pointers to help you choose. I'm only going to talk about clinchers because I'll bet that's what 99.9% of us ride.

If you weigh over 180 lbs. I would suggest a tire no smaller than a 25mm width. That number is relative though, because there is no official standard and it varies greatly between manufactures. Just stay away from the real "skinny" tires. I prefer a tire with no tread, bald, that is. A treaded tire has greater rolling resistance and doesn't corner as well as a bald tire. If you're concerned about wet weather, fear not. There have been numerous studies on the topic of treaded versus smooth tires in the wet and the findings favor a bald tire.

A bicycle tire is very narrow compared to a car tire and does not have to displace nearly as much surface water. A smooth tire has more surface contacting the pavement than a treaded tire, which is a major benefit on wet surfaces. This is

one instance where I would say “do what racers do” and ride a smooth tire. The rubber compound has a much more profound affect on traction then the tread style. Today’s rubber compounds are a lot better and adhere well in wet weather. Of course, that’s not to say you’re able to corner just as fast on dry pavement as wet.

Folding tires are very popular these days and they have 2 advantages over wire beads. A folding tire is lighter then a wire bead and is much cheaper for the manufacturer to ship. A lighter tire also has less rubber on it and will not last as long. I would say that most tires under 250 grams will go about 1500 miles, if you can avoid cuts from punctures. If you want your tires to last longer, rotate them, just like you do with your car. The rear tire wears much quicker then your front and that’s where most of your punctures occur.

Besides a pressure rating, you may have noticed a TPI number on a spec sheet or on a tire. That stands for “threads per inch”. Most high quality, low weight, high pressure (100 + PSIG) road clinchers have 127 TPI casings. The higher the number, the better. The term “supple ride” is a way of describing a tire with a high thread count. The fabric used for a tire casing also affects the tire’s feel. Most clinchers use a form of nylon of some sort.

Tubular tires (the kind you glue on) can come in cotton, silk or nylon. There have been and still are, I believe, a few brands of clinchers made with silk or cotton casings in the quest for that “ride like a sew-up” feeling.

When I look for a new tire, I try to stay away from the “Big 3”. Continental, Michelin, and Vittoria. They make great tires, no doubt, but I just like to look under every rock. Ask at your favorite shop if you can see one of their wholesale catalogs. Most distributors provide counter copies for bike shops, without prices in them, and you’ll get a better idea of what’s available. Have you tried Hutchinson, Clement, Pariba or Panaracer?

When it comes time to mount your new rubber, try these few simple tips. Use a tube slightly smaller then your tire. If you ride a 23mm tire, use a tube that is rated for a 20mm-23mm instead of a 23mm-25mm. It will be easier to install and

you'll avoid pinching it against the rim. Inflate the tube slightly before installation and coat it, lightly, with talcum powder. When you put your new tire on the rim, match the manufacturer's label with the valve hole. This will give you a reference point when looking for the source of punctures. Inflate the tire, once you've got it all together, to about 60% of it's rated pressure and then deflate it.

This will help reduce creases and twisting in the tube. Reinflate to rated max pressure. You can get away with 10% over rated working pressure. If you have presta valves, discard the circular nut that screws onto the valve stem or save it for a rustproof spacer when you need one. Most riders over tighten that nut and if you flat, the movement of the tube can rip the valve out, making your tube unrepairable (besides, think of all that rotating weight you'll save). Eddy (eddyj@galaxy-7.net)

Past pedaling

anne heller

Historical highlights of TWBC's 110 years

Flat tires, 1895

Last month I passed on some hints from an 1895 New York Times article about dealing with flat tires; if any of you has tried fixing a flat by filling it with straw or sand, please let me know. The article also had suggestions for dealing with broken spokes, chains, saddles and bent frames. The writer didn't see broken spokes and chains as much of a problem, his advice was as follows:

"A broken spoke or two is not serious, and any wheel that will not stand riding a few miles with that much damage is of little account. If the rider is not far from home, the easiest way is to wrap the broken spoke about its neighbor, so that it will not do any mischief. If the rider has some distance to travel, he can improvise a spoke as follows: Take the broken ends of the spoke and bend them to make a hook on each. Join the ends so hooked with a piece of wire, putting a noose in

the wire about a stick, and using it as a stretcher for twisting the wire up to tension. Pull the spoke together as much as may be safely done and leave the stick resting against it.” It sounds like the tourniquet system of spoke repair. For a broken chain, the best method was to carry an extra link to insert in the chain. Barring that, a piece of wire would get one to the nearest blacksmith or machine shop.

A broken saddle was one of the worst things that could happen to the cyclist. As the author said, “A broken saddle is as mean a thing to deal with as can be found. If the frame of the saddle is broken in the rear, it should be braced with wood and lashed up to a level position, as serious injuries may result from riding on it misshapen. If the steel supports of the saddle or the post in the frame break, it is best to take the train home.”

Damage to the frame or handlebars could generally be dealt with by twisting or pounding back into shape. “Twisted handlebars may be safely bent back into place by main strength, but unless the rider is judicious and exercises great care, he is liable to bend the frame.” A bent frame was a serious matter, the author advised not using a stone or hammer to straighten it out. Rather, the rider should “take a block of wood, and putting it against the frame, pound on that, not forgetting to hold a piece of wood on the opposite side to localize the shock.” Of course, then as now, the best advice was to check out your bike thoroughly before taking it out on the road and doing preventative maintenance. If you need further advise on making roadside repairs, consult with your local bike shop for tips or classes.

Mark Your Calendar

Government Affairs

7 p.m. March 6
Shakabrah Java
2618 6th Ave.

Special Events Meeting

7 p.m. March 12

Audobon Society
2917 Morrison Rd. W., UP

TWBC Board Meeting

7 p.m. March 13
Main Branch Tacoma Public Library
1102 Tacoma Ave. South

General Membership Meeting

7 p.m. March 20
South Park Community Center
4851 South Tacoma Way

Bike Expo

March 30 - April 1, 2001

Daffodil Classic

April 22
Orting, Washinton

Peninsula Metric Century

June 3
Gig Harbor, Washiington

Headwaters Century

September 9