

Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club

Newsletter

Founded 1888 **July 2001**

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Spring and Summer Trips

From TWBC Members

Glacier Park, Montana August 3 - 18. Carol Davis 857-5396, bicycleguy@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.

Loire Valley Bike Tour

April 27 to May 10, 2001

Jim DeYoung

Bikers do not have to be told that a great way to see the country is by bike. A few years ago, I toured France by car and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. When the opportunity arose for a two-week bike tour of the Loire Valley, it was an easy and quick decision to sign on for the tour.

After flying into Paris, I caught a train to Blois, a small city about 115 miles southwest of Paris, along side the Loire River. I arrived a day early to allow time to explore the chateau, which was the royal residence of Henri IV until 1599 when he moved to Paris. The tour began the following evening at dinner where I met the other 12 cyclists and our guide, who reviewed the trip agenda and answered our questions.

Each day began with a breakfast buffet at our hotel. Biking started at nine with the first stop at a local grocery store to purchase fresh baguettes and other supplies for lunch in a local park or along side the road. Our hotels were in small towns near a river so the ride usually started with a 'healthy' climb up a hill. The rest of the day was through small villages on back roads, riding through gentle rolling countryside or along the banks of the Loire, Cher, or Indre Rivers.

We rode about 30 miles each day and toured at least one chateau (castle) or other points of interest. There were also periodic stops for hot chocolate and sweet rolls (the early May weather was on the cool side most days). We would arrive at our next hotel in the late afternoon where our luggage would be waiting, with enough time to explore or check out a local wine at a sidewalk cafe. The hotels varied in age and services, but were always neat, clean, and comfortable. The leisurely dinners were included as part of the tour and were usually French style with multiple courses, which added to the camaraderie of the group and an appreciation for the excellent cuisine.

The Loire Valley was the summer playground for the aristocracy during the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. The tour included memorable stops at their chateau's, such as the 400-room summer hunting lodge at Montrichard, the Chateau de Chenonceau built over the Cher River, the formal gardens at Chateau de Villandry, the Chateau de Chinon where Joan of Arc challenged Charles VII to defeat the English, and many more.

The tour ended all too soon in Angers, and the next morning the group went their separate ways, many staying for sightseeing elsewhere in France; but most of us back to Paris on a TVG train for the flight home.

As expected, the tour was an ideal way to see a part of France at a leisurely pace, to enjoy excellent food and the hospitality of the French community, and to meet and bike with other cyclists that were enthusiastic about overseas travel.

Bike-Tech

Eddy Johnson

You've probably noticed that the more often you ride, the more money it costs you. Money used for parts to keep your bike on the road, that is. I would like to give out a few pointers to help you save a few of those "fun coupons".

Drive train components are very costly to replace. The single most effective action that you can take to increase the life of your cogs, chain rings and derailleur pulleys is to replace your chain. I buy a chain twice a year. Fall and Spring. I should replace my chain at least 4 times a year. A chain should be renewed about every 1500 miles. Some say 1200. If you want to check your chain for wear, measure it. If you put a ruler up to your chain, you should be able to measure 12 inches from pin center to pin center. Changes in a chain can be very subtle. Measuring it will not always be a true indication of wear.

When in doubt, throw it out. Make sure that you use the right width of chain for however many speeds you have, 7,8 or 9 (a 7 spd. chain works for 5,6 and 7 spd. cogsets). If you put on a new chain and your shifting gets worse or the chain jumps cogs under load, you may have to replace your cogset also. If your chain stays on too long, it imparts it's wear pattern onto the cassette and the 2 become mates. One will not work well without the other.

If you want to add life to your chainrings, rotate them. Unbolt the rings and turn them 180 degrees. Be sure and grease the threads of the bolts before you re-install them. If the teeth are sharp and pointy instead of smooth and slightly rounded, the rings are past their pull date.

The last time I bought tires, I punctured the first day I road them. A chunk of glass left a huge slash in my new tire. Left untreated, that gash will act like a debris magnet. I'm not about to toss a new tire so I patched it with "Shoe Goo". The stuff works great. Leave your tire inflated, fill the gouge with goo, smooth it off, let it dry overnight. I believe it even comes in different colors besides basic black.

Eddy

(eddyj@galaxy-7.net)

From the President's Handlebars

Anne Heller

On Sunday, June 17, members of the Wheelmen lost a friend and cyclists throughout the area lost an advocate. Scott Pierson died just a few blocks from his house while riding home from the grocery store. His death is a loss to his family and to all of us who knew and appreciated his warmth and intelligence and talent.

Scott was a diplomat, working "both sides of the aisle." He was an Urban Planner with the Tacoma Economic Development Department. As such, one of his jobs was to work with the traffic engineers to work out problems related to making the city's streets accessible to all of the citizens of Tacoma, whether in their cars, on their bikes or on foot. Being a bicyclist, he brought a needed perspective to his job and was able to educate others to the needs of cyclists. At the same time, as an urban planner, he came to the bicycling community and explained what was possible and what wasn't. His insights into the practicalities of municipal decision making gave us the ability to concentrate on the efforts most likely to bear fruit.

The more I learned about Scott, the more impressed I was with him. For instance, he had his own elaborate system of keeping track of his brainstorming and commitments. At the last Government Affairs meeting we attended, I asked him about all the 3" x 5" cards he carried in his pocket, which he was constantly writing on in a minuscule script. He explained that he recorded all his ideas and information about projects he was working on on the cards. Judging by the number of 3" x 5" cards in his pocket, Scott was never short of ideas or projects. Scott was also a frugal, innovative cyclist. Several years ago he gave a presentation to the club on the advantages of bicycle commuting. He had all the flip-charts with all the statistics showing that a bicycle commuter could save thousands of dollars each year by forgoing driving to work. His enthusiasm was part of the reason I started commuting by bike three years ago. Scott didn't just talk a good talk. He peddled the bike. He biked to work regularly on either his old

bike with the solid rubber tires and the homemade wooden box on the bike rack or on his Bike Friday.

Whenever I went to Queen Anne Thriftway and saw a bike with a wooden box on the rack, I knew Scott was inside doing his shopping.

And, lest you think that Scott was all about work and biking, he was also a gifted potter, earning a master's degree in pottery from UPS. He dreamed of retiring and spending his time with the two kinds of wheels that were most important to him, the potter's wheel and the bicycle. We are all poorer because of that dream was cut short.

Wantads

FOR SALE Ziegler-Lam Mountain Bike. Mega 2000. Full suspension bike. Scram 9.0 components throughout. Like new. Rear rack included. Too much bike for me. \$1400 value. Will let go for \$800. Must see. Call Nancy Block-Olexick at 360-893-6649. 06/01

For Sale TREK 2120, 47 cm carbon fiber frame, 24 spd, Shimano 105, low miles and great shape, \$600, contact Dena at 857-5658 06/01

Want Ad: Ortlieb rear panniers Rhode Gear fronts and rack \$150 857-5396. Roswell Davis. bicyclguy@aol.com. 07/01

Want Ad: Burley Limbo Recumbent almost new extras fits all \$1200, Bianci Project 7 56-Touring \$350, Lightspeed Appalachian \$1500 857-5396. Roswell Davis. bicyclguy@aol.com. 07/01

Want Ad: Used for 2 seasons. Brand new condition. 26" aluminum frame, Shimano RSX components, Shimano recessed toe clips, 700 x 23C tires, and San Marco anatomical saddle. Lynda Beaumont. lbeaumont9@msn.com. 07/01

Want Ad: 2001 Motobecane 56cm bright red, STI triple Sora gear, aluminum Kenesis frame. Fast and only \$525! Available after the STP. Call Tom at 759-1333, e-mail t_ripley@hotmail.com. 07/01

Bicycles From Heaven

Roger Laybourn

(In the April 2001 Issue of the Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club Newsletter, this article was published. However, due to an oversight, the article was not completely published).

The Kiwanis Club of Clover Park started the Bicycles from Heaven Project about 10 years ago and it has grown from very humble beginnings to a substantial project. We distributed over 850 bikes and helmets to kids (and a few adults) who would not otherwise be able to afford a bike.

The bikes that we "recycle" come to us from a variety of sources. Some are donated by individuals whose kids are no longer using them or are just cleaning out garages, some come from Good Will Industries in downtown Tacoma, some are from the Puyallup Police Department and others from surprising sources. The latest large donation came from a family in Rainier whose son was going to fix up bikes for fun and profit. He then got so busy with school activities that he didn't have time so they called us. They had gotten the bikes from the Lacey Police Department—all 80+ of them. Needless to say, they were a welcome sight.

The next step in the process is to send the "unwanted" bikes to McNeil Island where a crew of 4-6 inmates work miracles and refurbish them completely so that we have almost new bikes to give to kids at our regular give aways. Until recently, officer Mike Thomas supervised the crew but, after major knee surgery and 4 months off work, he was reassigned upon his return to the island.

The administration of the institution is committed to keeping the project going and is currently looking at options. Meanwhile, the crew is still hard at work and we have a good supply of bikes to give to kids this month. (March 24th at the Puget Sound Pet Pavillion)

We work with a variety of agencies to identify kids who need bikes; Boys & Girls Clubs of Pierce County, Associated Ministries, churches and schools to name a few. We also work with the Caring for Kids Project providing bikes to kids at the Ready to Learn Fair in August and the Pre-Holiday Fair in December. Either we provide helmets or have either the Fire Department or Mary Bridge staff available to sell and fit the helmets. This is an area for which we are always seeking

financial assistance and the Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club has been a source of support for our project over the past three years or so. We appreciate the club's involvement and continued support.

We look forward to continuing the Bicycles from Heaven Project for many years to come and to a closer relationship with the Wheelmen's Club, as well.