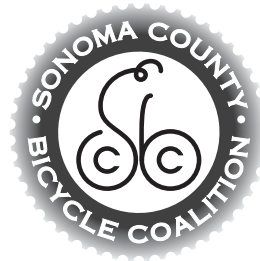


Bikesonoma



Newsletter of the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition

Issue 4

Spring 2002

promoting bicycling for transportation and recreation

Transporting Kids by Bicycle

by Ted White

As "Uncle Teddy" I took many bike trips with kids aboard. A few times with all three of my nieces at one time. Now, as the father of my own one-year old boy, I plan to start riding more with him too. Riding a bike lets you enjoy the process of getting somewhere not just the arrival. You slow down, relax and get some aerobic exercise. Even better, you and the child you're with experience the world together in a whole new way. There are many parents who bike with their kids and they are helping raise a whole new generation of cyclists.

Fund raising consultant Glenn Rubenstein and his wife live in Brooklyn, New York with their two children. Rubenstein has transported his daughter now four, on his bike since she was eight months old. He puts it simply, "to have kids and then start driving them all over the place is like destroying their world". By transporting his kids by bike, he feels that he is teaching them that they don't need to use extensive resources just to get around or to just have fun. Even if you don't think you're biker material, you may surprise yourself.

Oregonian Kathy Purvis admits "five or six years ago if someone had told me I'd be taking a child up hills in the rain on a bike, I wouldn't have believed them. I'm not an outdoorsy person." A few years ago, Purvis and her husband Matt moved from Chicago to Eugene and started riding with their infant daughter Esther to

and from daycare. Whoever takes her in the morning leaves the bike trailer at the preschool. Later they check in with each other and decide who will pick her up since the trailer will easily hook onto either bike.

Philadelphia cyclist and home renovator John Dowlin took both his son and a friend's daughter to preschool (three mile round trip) starting "as soon as they could hold their heads up". He attached two child seats to the bike: one in front, one in back. For those just starting out, he also recommends shorts trips and practicing riding with extra weight strapped to the bike before adding live kids!



Of course, safety is a big issue when you are transporting precious cargo. However, recent statistics show that biking is actually safer than driving. Until you feel comfortable, start with a small step. Do not exceed your own sense of what feels safe, but do find some way to begin—Sunday morning on a quiet street, down to the corner store, or around the park. Take your small step, repeat it and then expand upon it when you're ready.

You will need some equipment to make your debut. If you can borrow from a friend to try out, that's great; otherwise you'll need to visit your local bike shop to check out the options. If possible, bring your child with you and test ride as a team.

The three commonly available options are:

- a) the child seat
- b) the trailer
- c) the trailer-cycle

The trailer cycle is intended for bigger, older kids who want to pedal rather than just sit there; they cost around \$125-\$350.

Child seats range from \$30-\$150, and trailers from \$150 to \$500.

If you live in town the child seat is one of the easiest and safest options. It will not take up any extra space while you're moving or parked. The better ones recline and have a handy quick release mechanism so you can detach them from your bike in seconds. For versatility, trailers can't be beat.

Many will accommodate two kids, plus stuffed animals, extra clothes, sunscreen, snacks, and so forth. When not hauling kids you can use it for getting groceries, etc. The best trailers fold up or partially disassemble and are easily attached or detached from any bike. Some even convert to strollers. Lastly there is the trailer-cycle is a real crowd pleaser and an excellent way to safely

Continued on inside back cover

SCBC CALENDAR

May 5th

Ride the Rodota Trail!

A fun and easy ride from Santa Rosa to Sebastopol and back (90% of this route is on flat, car-free, scenic bike paths!) visit downtown Sebastopol and Farmer's Mkt and celebrate Car-Free Day in Sebastopol where: meet at the Charlie Brown statue in Railroad Square
when: 10am (return to SR by approximately 4pm)

May 8th

"Bike Commuting 1A"

Tips for Bike Commuters dressing for weather and safety, how to carry stuff, finding the right bike, etc.
where: Recreation Center, 415 Steele Lane (near Mendocino, in Santa Rosa)
when: 6:30pm-8:30pm

May 9th

Basic Bike Repair Class at

Dave's Bike Shop (Santa Rosa)
where: Dave's Bike Sport Shop 353 College Ave.
when: 6:30-8:30pm
call for reservations
528-3283

May 10th

Basic Bike Repair Class at

Bike Factory (Sebastopol)
where: The Bicycle Factory 195 Main St. Sebastopol
when: 6:30-8-30pm
call for reservations
829-1880

Continued on inside back cover

100 YEARS OF FIGHTING FOR GOOD ROADS

Bikesonoma

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May is National Bike Month and we are doing great things to celebrate. In May we offer a whole series of free cycling events to educate, inspire and help you get more biking into your lifestyle. If you've just picked this up after riding on Bike to Work Day and this is your first time reading BikeSonoma, then welcome! The Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition is a local, community-supported organization here to improve conditions for cycling and we operate on several levels. We work with local governments to improve facilities for bikes. We also help raise awareness about the health and environmental benefits of cycling and the potential for biking as transport. We also offer education, services and resources for both beginning and experienced riders.

Over a century ago bicycling was tremendously popular. That first golden age of cycling changed peoples lives and saw Victorian women trading in their corsets and dresses for "bloomers" so that they could get out and ride. The booming bicycle manufacturing industry helped spawn the industrial revolution. And just like today, cyclists in the 1890's also had to push governments for better road conditions, since at that time many roads were not even paved. They called their cause the "Good Roads Movement".

The spirit of the Good Roads Movement is still alive today. We cyclists still want safe access to existing roads, and we want new roadways to accommodate bikes. We want improved bike parking. We want the freedom to be able to bike down to the store and to venture far out into the countryside too. We want our kids to have safe bike routes to schools. Our Coalition is helping make these dreams a reality and this newsletter will let you know more about some of our specific goals and accomplishments, so read on.

At one of our recent board meetings, we had the privilege of meeting one of the newest activists of this Good Roads Movement legacy: Benjamin Zahniser, a 15-year old who cycles to school in Santa Rosa. Zahniser wrote an article published in the Press Democrat titled "Bicycle paths? We need more bicycle lanes" in it he states: "When our resources get depleted, we will need a back-up plan. I am not propping that bikes are the full answer but they are a great start, and we must start somewhere. Why wait until we are required to act on this matter? Why don't we move now?"

Benjamin, I couldn't agree more.

So, please if you haven't already, become a member today-- get involved, share your ideas, and help us with our important efforts. Most of our budget comes from cyclists like you so please join (you'll find a membership form on the back of this newsletter). For a great future for cycling in Sonoma County we need you. Let's move now!

Ted White
Executive Director



Thanks to:

Bike Friday (folding bikes)

Camel Back (hydration systems)

Timbuk2 (stylish bike bags)

Marmot Mtn (Outdoor Clothing)

Voler (Cycling Jerseys)

Disney Co. (Disneyland)

All the above contributed to the Wine Country Century Raffle--proceeds of over \$1,700 went to the SCBC!!

Thanks also to Janice and Mike Eunice, Doug Simon, Chris Culver, Sharon Bates and the Santa Rosa Cycling Club for continuing, to support our Coalition so generously!

And to:

Dave's Bike Sport: for contributing hundreds of water bottles to Bike to Work Day participants and Phil is teaching our free repair class May 9th

The Bike Peddler: they paid for one of their staff, Karyl the "wrenchwench" to help the SCBC one day a week

The Bike Factory: Dave Abbott is teaching our free bike repair class May 10th

Transporting Kids by Bicycle

Continued from front page

wean older kids from tricycles and onto bikes. Sitting behind you and connected to your bike your child will learn from your movements, hand signals and street judgment.

All trailer cycles allow kids to either assist you in pedaling or sit there coasting, getting a free ride from you.

Spring is here, it's a great time to be outside with kids, and biking with them can be a real bonding and rewarding experience. My sister, a mother of three and a proponent of reducing car use summed it up like this. "What should a child's map of daily life look like? Should it be all stop-lights and parking spaces or can it include knowledge of where the squirrel lives, where along the sidewalk the anise grows, where the friendly dogs are and which shop has the strangest windows?" Getting around should be more than here-to-there; it should be in between too. If you're presently feeling like an enslaved chauffeur, take heart, there's hope: the bicycle!

A previous version of this article was published in *Mothering* magazine in 1997 Issue No 83. A new article on biking with kids written by Paul Cooley was also published by *Mothering* in their March/April 2002 issue.

Recommended Reading:
Bicycling with Children: A Complete How-To Guide by Trudy and Roxana Bell, Mountaineers Books, 1999

Bicyclists Meet with Caltrans and Rail Representatives to Discuss New Bikeway along Novato Narrows Section of 101

On April 24th, cyclists from both the Marin and Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition met with representatives of Caltrans and SMART (Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit) to discuss what a new bikeway along the Novato Narrows might look like. This section covers about 7 miles from southern Petaluma to northern Novato.

Lillian Hames from SMART said she hoped that the long anticipated commuter railroad would be completed by 2007. Caltrans representatives explained that their project of widening of Hwy 101 will take place more or less concurrently.

All parties agreed that these two new transportation projects have created a unique opportunity to also construct a much needed bike route through the area. The questions were: who would build it and what would it look like? Caltrans presented draft plans for the highway widening which include a network of new bike paths and bike lanes on frontage roads. SMART also presented a concept for new bike route consisting of a separated bike path parallel to the new rail line. While cyclists were reluctant to give up the option of having Caltrans build new bike facilities, they generally agreed that the route parallel to the rail line would be preferred. Why? Because it will be flatter, quieter, safer, more scenic and more contiguous. The Caltrans bikeway would be close to the Hwy, and therefore generally less pleasant and safe.

The meeting ended with the hope that the new bikeway would be built along the rail line by SMART and that Caltrans would

develop and construct key crossings of Hwy 101 so that cyclists could get from the rail-side bike path (which will be on the East side of 101) to San Antonio Rd. and to Olompali State Park (which are on the West side). Cyclists felt encouraged that this meeting allowed them to voice their deepest concerns and preferences to the two most important agencies involved in this exciting new bike way. The group plans to meet again for follow up this Summer.

SCBC CALENDAR

Continued

May 11th

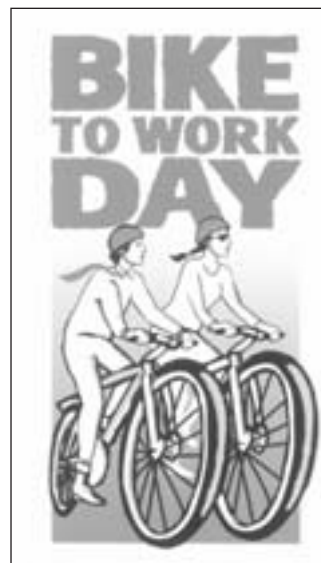
2nd Annual Mayor's Ride
Ride w/ SR Mayor Martini, and visit points of interest to cyclists
where: meet at City Hall Parking Lot
when: 9am

May 12th

Bike Expo in Petaluma
(We are not presenting this event but we'll be participating) Free Bike Tune-ups, Bike Safety for Kids, Prizes, Music, etc.
where: Walnut Park, Downtown Petaluma, Petaluma Blvd
when: 9am-noon

May 16th

Bike to Work Day
Energizer stations throughout the County will offer free food and gifts to bike commuters!
where: locations throughout the county, for a list of stations go to:
www.bikesonoma.org or
www.ci.santarosa.ca.us/tp/
when: morning / times vary



SCBC to Provide Free Valet Bicycle Parking at Wednesday Night Market in Santa Rosa



We are happy to announce that we will be offering free valet bicycle parking throughout the entire season of the Santa Rosa Wednesday Night Market this year.

Valet Bike Parking is like a coat check for bikes. You drop your bike off, get a claim check and then pick it up again when you're ready to leave. In the past, the SCBC has offered this service at the Windsor Town Green Opening Celebration and at the Alternative Energy Fair at Sonoma State University. This year, at the Wed Nite Mkt we'll be a regular fixture and in addition to providing a safe haven for bikes we will have an information booth w/ free bike maps, newsletters, and other resources.



To encourage more people to use their bikes as transportation, we plan to offer Valet Bike Parking at several other public events this summer and being at the Wed Nite Mkt. is a great chance for us to promote the service. The City of Santa Rosa will be providing us w/ racks and fencing to make our area extra secure; the Wed Nite Mkt will provide us with extra staff. Thanks to Ken Wells, Chris Culver and Doug Simons of the SCBC and to Tracy Pugh of Wed Nite Mkt for making this happen.



Coalition Presents Speaker on Safe Routes to Schools Program

Wendi Kallins of Marin County will speak about the Safe Routes to Schools program on May 30th at 7pm at The Cypress Room at Finley Center in Santa Rosa. Safe Routes to Schools is a national program to encourage and enable more kids to safely bike and walk to school. This program brings forth opportunities for kids to get more exercise and self-confidence and free parents from the constant grind of driving children to and from school. Kallins heads the Safe Routes to School program in Marin County, and will tell us how we can start similar programs here. Marin leads the nation in pioneering effective and creative methods for getting more kids to school without cars so this should be an exciting evening of ideas, resources and inspiration. The event is free. All parents, teachers, aunts, uncles, and grandparents are welcome and encouraged to come.

For information on SCBC events and activities go to www.bikesonoma.org

Questions or comments? e-mail us at info@bikesonoma.org.

More Interbike Product Reviews...

by Christine Culver

There is a wonderful feeling of freedom when you know that you can carry whatever you want on your bike. The next two products enable the extremes of taking just enough, to Whoa!...do I really need to take the kitchen sink?

One of the truly fun and utilitarian things that I saw at Interbike, the annual bike industry trade show, was the Xtracycle, "A bike that hauls." Besides having a really cool product, they have some great slogans: "Friends don't let friends DRIVE," "God, grant me the courage to sell my CAR," "I lost 3500 lbs in one day, ask me how! 1.800.sell car," "Trucks are Sissy," to name a few. The Xtracycle mission statement reads: "Our mission is to introduce the Sport Utility Bicycle (S.U.B.) to the world, thereby making cycling a more viable and desirable transportation option." I like that.



Xtracycle has designed the world's first Sport Utility Bicycle (S.U.B.). The FreeRadical retrofit attachment converts any standard 26-inch wheeled bicycle (700C model coming soon) into an Xtracycle Sport Utility Bicycle: a load-bearing off-road vehicle that can carry up to 200 pounds of cargo without sacrificing performance or maneuverability.

While the FreeRadical's TIG-welded cro-moly steel frame adds a little weight to your ride, its versatility more than makes up for it. It turns your bike into a taxi

for your best friend, a trailer to haul bags of groceries, cases of wine, or perhaps compost for your yard. With the modular rack system, you can haul long items like surfboards or lumber, without interfering with the rider or the ride!

The MSRP of the FreeRadical is \$299. For more information or to get some of their stickers visit www.xtracycle.com or call 888-537-1401.



If you just want to carry a small load, Deuter makes several great backpacks. I checked out their bike specific "Super Bike L," MSRP \$85. Having commuted with a backpack for over eight years, I appreciate the many cool features on this lightweight (11lb. 2oz.) aerodynamic bag that I would be glad to own:

- Built-in rain cover for those sneak-attack rainstorms.
- Windshield (Nylon vest), for those sneak-attack cool days.
- Stabilizing mesh wings on the hip belt to keep the bag in the center of your back
- Adjustable helmet holder (for when you are off the bike, of course)
- Interior valuables pocket (spare tubes, energy bars, and the like!)
- 3M reflectors
- Attachment loop for safety light (blinkie, blinkie, blinkie)
- Hydration system compatible
- 1500 cubic inches

Those who have experienced the sweaty feeling that can result from a backpack will love the advanced Airstripes-System. The Airstripes-System is designed so that only five percent of its breathable mesh surface comes in contact with your back. These AIR channels create a "chimney" effect that enhances ventilation during riding.

For more information see www.deuter.com or phone 303-652-3102.

SCBC's Share the Road Campaign Gains More Ground

Those striking yellow bumper stickers are showing up in more and more places. In addition to the Windsor police cars, Share the Road (STR) bumper stickers are now appearing on Sonoma County Transit Buses, Santa Rosa City Vehicles and City Buses on Sebastopol Police cars, and coming soon to Petaluma Police cars. It's almost like a virus spreading or "triffids" popping up everywhere.

Especially satisfying is riding up behind a bus and seeing one of these on the bumper, and knowing that the STR message is a good influence on cyclists, motorists and on making more bus drivers courteous to cyclists too!

Share the Road campaigns have been launched in many cities around the country with many cities producing their own special STR graphic. Our graphic was created by Sebastopol cyclist/designer Sally Homs, who designs and does layout for this newsletter. Kudos to her, for her bold and simple design which seems to be extremely popular. And that's not all! The Share the Road road signs saga is looking more and more like the sequel to the suc-

cessful bumper sticker campaign now that the County Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) which includes SCBC members recently approved the placement of 70 Share the Road street signs for locations throughout the county. If that weren't just dandy, Caltrans is likely to add approximately 30 more signs bringing the total to 100. Remember now that bureaucracy time estimates are kind of like "dog years" so don't expect to see the signs installed right away. However, some BPAC members guessed that the signs might be up within a year. Hey, that's not bad; these signs will be fantastic and worth the wait. We'll keep you posted on this project's progress.

Victory! Santa Rosa Council Votes for a more Bike-Friendly Calistoga Road

A unanimous vote by the Santa Rosa City Council marks the start of a newly designed and redeveloped section of Calistoga Road.

The four lane road will be changed to a two lane road. Instead of two lanes in each direction, the new design will provide one lane in each direction plus a center turn lane and striped bike lanes in each direction. This will be a huge improvement for cyclists and may set a precedent for other road redesign projects..

Several Bike Coalition members spoke out and helped influence this decision at the Council meeting. Afterwards, Coalition board members made an effort to let those council members know how much we appreciated their support for this forward thinking pro-bike project.

Hopefully this project will set a precedent for other local road redesign projects in the future.

Hwy 116 Bike Lanes Project gets Two Thumbs Up, Still Needs Caltrans Approval

Caltrans is going to be doing highway improvements along 116 West between Sebastopol and Cotati. This is an excellent opportunity to get bike lanes onto portions of a roadway which at present feels a little dicey to ride on.

Both the Cotati and Sebastopol City Councils recently voted to approve new bike lanes along portions of Hwy 116. What happens next? Caltrans must now decide whether to include the bike lanes in their improvements along this section. And if they do put in bike lanes how generous will they be? The Coalition has encouraged them to provide extra wide 6-8' bike lanes rather than the minimum 4'. Stay tuned for more details on this one.

This just in from
Sacramento...

New Bike/Ped Bill Clears First Hurdle at Capitol

An amended version of Senate Bill 1555 passed the Senate Public Safety Committee by a 4-0 vote on Tuesday, April 30th. If successful, SB1555 will launch a new era of government support for bicycling and walking by providing the state health department with \$10,000,000 annually to promote bike- and walk-friendly environments and to modify behaviors. The funds would be generated by tacking a \$5 penalty onto the driver's license renewal fee of motorists with two or more points on their record.

Next up is the Senate Appropriations Committee later in May. Keep those letters to state senators coming! (Thanks to our friend Chris Morfas, Director of the California Bicycle Coalition for this update) For more on what you can do, e-mail info@bikesonoma.org

Come Ride with Us on the Two Rock and Roll Bike Trek!

The American Lung Association and the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition are co-presenting this year's 5th Annual Two Rock and Roll Bike Trek June 1st. This is a wonderful ride for bicyclists of all sorts. The ride goes through scenic West County and there are three routes to choose from: 10, 30, and 65 mile rides. The 10 -miler is a flat course designed to "introduce beginners to Sonoma County roads". This is a great route for families. The 35- miler includes some climbing but mostly along beautiful gently sloping hills. The challenging 65-miler features 4,000 feet of climb, tranquil back-roads and spectacular scenery through Tomales, Bloomfield and Two Rock! (FYI- The ride will have rest stops, providing food and water.)

All proceeds of the event go to the American Lung Association and to the Bike Coalition so you'll know your entry fee is contributing to two very worthy causes.

This ride will not just be fun but will contribute vital funding for our programs and campaigns to improve conditions for all cyclists in the county. Tell your friends and come out and ride with us. This ride will be a blast!

Also, some volunteers are still needed for this ride as course marshals, bike mechanics, etc.

please contact Doug Simons
of the Bike Coalition. ph 577-0113 e-mail: DSimon@ci.santa-rosa.ca.us

For more info on the ride contact: Jenny Bard of the Lung Association. ph: 527-5864
email: jbard@alac.org or visit www.lungusa.org/redwoodempire

5th ANNUAL



SATURDAY JUNE 1, 2002

