



# The Squeaky Wheel

www.sacbike.org

Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

April 2002

## From the Chair American River Parkway Update — Setting the Record Straight

By Lea Brooks

The upcoming update of the American River Parkway Plan represents an opportunity to consider new recreational uses that have emerged since the plan was adopted in 1985 and to reaffirm that the Parkway's natural beauty and open space is worth protecting for future generations.

The Sacramento area's population has exploded during the past 17 years, which means more people are using the Parkway and putting pressure on its unique natural environment. The update process promises to be a lively and contentious debate between Parkway users who want to maintain the status quo and others who want to allow uses currently prohibited by the plan, including cycling off the paved bike trail.

The passion associated with this debate was reflected in a letter to the Editor in the March issue of *The Squeaky Wheel*. The letter implied that SABA is opposed to allowing cycling on the Parkway's dirt trails. It also questioned whether SABA is bicycle friendly.

The fact is that SABA has taken no position on mountain biking in the Parkway or any issue associated with the plan update other than to agree that the plan sorely needs revision. Taking a position on any of the issues that will be addressed and defined during the update process is premature at this point.

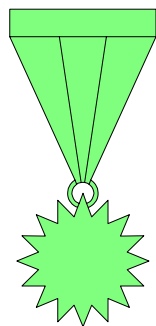
As of early April, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors had not yet appointed the citizen's advisory committee that will work with county staff and the public to iden-

*Parkway, page 3*

## Ed Cox to Receive Clean Air Award

By Walt Seifert

SABA's own Ed Cox will receive the American Lung Association of Sacramento Emigrant Trails' Individual 2002 Clean Air Award at the Clean Air Luncheon on May 7 at the Sheraton Grand in Sacramento.



Ed will be honored for his unflagging efforts in designing, developing, promoting and operating a free valet bicycle parking service. The service is a project of the Sacramento Valley Institute supported by SABA and SABA volunteers. He and his crews parked 6,700 bikes during 144 events in 2001.

The wide range of venues included the California State Fair, the Salmon Festival, Bike to Work Day Bike Fest and Friday Night Concerts at Cesar Chavez Plaza.

"I'm very pleased. I'm excited," Ed said. "It's good to get noticed for what you do."

Ed said that the valet bike parking fills a need that's always been there. What makes it fun is that "it's more than just parking"  
*Ed, page 8*

## Bike to Work (& Everywhere!) Day Update

By Walt Seifert

Bike to Work (& Everywhere!) Day on May 16 is a way to reward existing cyclists and to encourage people to try cycling for transportation.

All SABA members are urged to register themselves, their family members and their household pets for Bike to Work Day and to browbeat their less enlightened friends and acquaintances into participating.

We all know the reasons why. Cycling to work or for a neighborhood errand is doubly healthy: it helps clean the air and integrates exercise into daily life.

It means healthier lungs, especially among the more susceptible young and elderly. Air pollution at the levels we have in Sacramento is closely related to asthma. New studies show links between dirty air and both lung cancer and birth defects as well.

Exercise is great for fitness and disease prevention — it's a virtual panacea. It reduces the risk of obesity, diabetes and coronary heart disease. According to the federal

*Bike to Work, page 5*

SABA  
P.O. Box 1295  
Sacramento, CA 95812-1295

Return Service Requested

Presorted  
Standard  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Sacramento, CA  
Permit NO. 1424

This space reserved for a mailing label with your name on it. Join us. A membership application is available at [www.sacbike.org](http://www.sacbike.org) and most bike shops.

## SABA Mission

To make cycling in the Sacramento area safe, convenient and pleasant. To have more people cycling for transportation so we have healthy air, healthy citizens and healthy communities.

SABA meets the fourth Tuesday of each month, usually at noon, but once every three months at 6:00 p.m. For more information call us at (916) 444-6600, or email us at [bikesaba@pacbell.net](mailto:bikesaba@pacbell.net).

SABA's Folsom Chapter, the Folsom Area Bicycle Advocates (FABA), meets at 7:00 p.m. the third Thursday of the month. For more information call Chapter Chair Tony Powers at (916) 353-1745 or email them [fabat@tomatoweb.com](mailto:fabat@tomatoweb.com).

## The Squeaky Wheel

The newsletter is produced and distributed once each month. If you have an idea, a compliment, a tale of woe or article for the newsletter, contact Lea Brooks, 2013 Roaring Camp Drive, Gold River 95670, via email at [lea2skip@aol.com](mailto:lea2skip@aol.com), or call evenings at (916) 635-9332 by the third Thursday of each month.

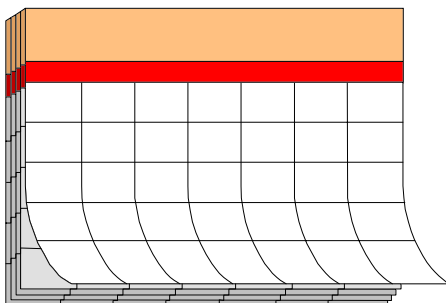
## SABA/Community Calendar

### April

- 20 SABA premier American River Parkway Trail Clean-up, 10:00 a.m., Mile 8
- 20 Earth Day, 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., CSUS
- 25 Sacramento City Council, 2-way conversion, City Hall. Check the city Web site or call city clerk for time
- 23 SABA General Membership meeting , 6:00 p.m., potluck

### May

- 1 Placerville Hwy 50 Workshop, 6:00 to 10:00 p.m., Town Hall
- 7 Clean Air Luncheon, 11:30-1:00, Sheraton Grand
- 16 Bike to Work (& Everywhere!) Day
- 16 SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- 18 Roseville Bikefest, 9:00 a.m. to noon, Woodbridge Elementary School
- 28 SABA General Membership meeting, noon



## April SABA General Membership Meeting is Potluck

### Find Out What's New in Sacramento

Ed Cox, Alternative Modes Coordinator of the city of Sacramento, and recipient of the American Lung Association's Clean Air Award, will be the guest speaker at SABA's April 23 general membership meeting and potluck. He will provide a status report on bicycle projects in Sacramento.

This quarterly evening meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. in the American Lung Association conference room at 909 12th Street. The potluck will be followed by a short business meeting, recognition of SABA volunteers and Ed's presentation.

Guests are welcome, and bikes are allowed in the conference room. Please bring a main dish, salad or dessert to share. SABA will supply plates, napkins and utensils.

- 6:00 I. Potluck and introductions
- 6:45 II. Executive Director's Report and short business meeting (Walt Seifert).
- 7:00 III. Guest speaker Ed Cox, City of Sacramento Alternative Modes Coordinator: Status of bike projects in Sacramento.
- 8:00 IV. Adjourn.

## SABActions

### Meetings

SABA members attended the following meetings:

- Sacramento Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative caucus and plenary sessions
- meetings of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Transportation Roundtable
- the SACOG Regional Planning Partnership
- a California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) meeting on Environmental Justice
- the Davis Bicycle Club's March meeting
- Sacramento Regional Transit's open house to review final designs of the Rancho Cordova and Folsom light rail stations.

### Letters

- SABA sent a letter to the Gold Field District of California Parks and Recreation concerning flooding of the American River bike trail at Folsom Dam Road.
- SABA submitted comments to Caltrans regarding a nine-mile Highway 50 improvement project from El Dorado Hills to Shingle Springs to widen the highway from four to six lanes. Caltrans has concluded that the project "will not significantly affect the quality of the environment within the project limits." SABA expressed deep concern that Caltrans has not addressed the needs of bicyclists, who are prohibited from using Highway 50 and currently have no safe and convenient route from El Dorado Hills to Shingle Springs.

### Testimony

- SABA testified before the Sacramento City Council on the Bikeway Master Plan update. ☉

*Parkway, from page 1*

tify and define the issues. Representatives of the committee will be asked to seek direction from their respective organizations on these issues. In addition, public meetings to provide a status report on the committee's progress and to seek comments will be held. The process is expected to take approximately two years.

The letter to the Editor was submitted by Jim and Cathy Haagen-Smit, longtime SABA members who have been recognized for their dedication to improve conditions for bicyclists, especially in Placer County where they live. They also are active in the Folsom-Auburn Trail Riders Action Coalition (FATRAC) and the International Mountain Biking Association.

To the Haagen-Smits and other proponents of mountain biking on the Parkway, I urge patience. These are the facts:

- The Parkway Plan adopted in 1985 was developed to ensure preservation of the natural environment, while providing limited development to facilitate human enjoyment of the Parkway. Seventeen years ago, the plan identified users of the trails as equestrians, pedestrians and bicyclists. The goal was to prevent conflict among users by providing parallel trails. The following descriptions are lifted directly from the plan:

**Equestrian Trails:** Equestrians prefer narrow, scenic trails, with a dirt surface, on varied terrain for day outings. These trails should be six feet wide and kept separate from pedestrian and bicycle trails to avoid conflicts between horses and other modes of locomotion.

**Pedestrian Trails:** The pedestrian trail must meet a wide range of needs, including nature hiking, noon-hour jogging loops and long-distance jogging. At the writing of the plan, there are few designated pedestrian trails on the Parkway. Hikers and joggers generally use the bicycle trail or the equestrian trail and conflicts arise between these different modes of locomotion as increasing numbers of people use the trails. Separate pedestrian trails should not be paved; instead they should have a natural surface. They can be used aesthetically to serve a dual purpose of trail and fire break. New trail sections should avoid heavily vegetated areas and low spots. Because of the existing congestion on the bicycle trails, the pedestrian trail should be a high priority.

**Bicycle Trails:** The bicycle trail is a corridor for non-Parkway destinations, providing access for bicyclists between downtown Sacramento and points east. Bicyclists require wide trails and a smooth surface to accommodate a large number of users, a wide range of speeds and, often, long distances. An all-weather surface should be provided.

- The plan has not been updated since 1985 because Sacramento County lacked funding to do so. New recreational uses are not the only issues that need to be addressed. For example, the 1985 plan barely touches on natural resource and floodway management.

The update was prompted by the recent preparation of the River Corridor Management Plan for the Lower American River. This document is a non-binding agreement between agencies with jurisdiction in the Parkway, including the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Game and the Sacramento County Department of Parks and Open Space.

The River Corridor Management Plan also is the foundation for the update of the Parkway Master Plan. In contrast to the River Corridor Management Plan, the Parkway Master Plan provides guidelines for preservation, recreational use, development and administration of the Parkway, and is legally binding by its inclusion in the County General Plan.

I represented SABA on the 24-member Recreation Working Group, a subcommittee of the Lower American River Task Force that represented a broad spectrum of stakeholders interested in providing and protecting recreational use in the Parkway. Other working groups focused on floodway management, bank protection and aquatic habitat.

The Recreation Working Group compiled a list of policy issues for consideration as part of the Parkway Plan update. This list includes whether bicyclists should be allowed to ride off the paved trail, whether dogs should be allowed off leash, whether any motorized vehicles such as wheelchairs and small scooters should be allowed and whether playground equipment should be installed.

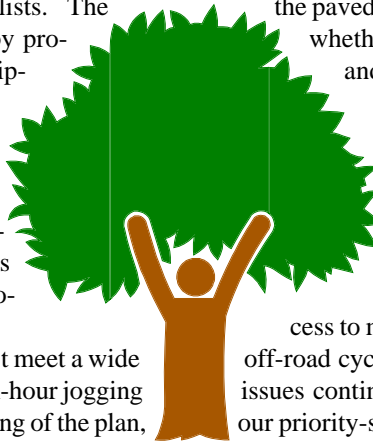
- If you ask 10 SABA members how they feel about mountain biking in the Parkway, you probably will receive 10 different opinions. Individual opinions from SABA members are not SABA's position. When SABA was established in 1991, members specifically decided that access to mountain biking trails and other issues related to off-road cycling were not a high priority. Mountain biking issues continue to be a low priority for SABA members at our priority-setting sessions.

That said, maintaining the American River Parkway Bike Trail is one of SABA's highest priorities. The trail, which serves as the Sacramento region's bicycle freeway, is open to all bicyclists, including mountain bikers. The Parkway Plan currently prohibits bicyclists from the dirt trails; it does not prohibit them from the Parkway.

- Almost any change in the Parkway is contentious. The Parkway has a broad cross-section of stakeholders dedicated to protecting the natural resources and wildlife, as well as limiting recreational uses to those that are normally not provided by other county recreational facilities, and minimizing the effect on the environment. Reaching consensus among these passionate stakeholders will require skillful facilitation.

The citizen's committee will define the issues, including mountain biking. Should mountain bikes be allowed? Should they be allowed everywhere or on a few select trails? Should new dirt trails be constructed only for mountain bikes or should mountain bikes share the existing trails with horses and pedestrians? Who will maintain and patrol the dirt trails? Will there be so many mountain bikers that horse enthusiasts will be crowded out of the Parkway? Should horses be phased out?

These are some of the many questions that will be raised and discussed by the citizen's committee. SABA hopefully will have a seat at the table, which will enable us to bring the issues to the full membership for a thoughtful and open discussion. ☼



## Regional Transit on Track

By Walt Seifert

Sacramento Regional Transit (RT) is on track to continue progress toward better bike access. About five years ago, RT dropped requirements for bike permits and liberalized peak hour restrictions. In 1999, RT added bike carriers to its bus fleet.

Now RT is considering increasing the number of bikes allowed on light rail cars from two to four. In addition, RT may drop the peak hour restrictions on light rail — a restriction that prevents most bike commuters from taking bikes on board when they need to the most.

The RT Board will consider these changes at its April 8 and April 29 meetings. While no implementation date has been set, the changes, if approved, might take effect as early as Bike to Work (& Everywhere!) Day, May 16. ☼



photo by 50corridor.com

## Placerville Trail Link Meeting

The proposed expansion of Highway 50 through Placerville and its impact on the trail corridor through town will be the subject of a public workshop sponsored by the Placerville City Council and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) on May 1 from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, 549 Main Street in Placerville.

If the Highway 50 expansion continues as planned and a new eastbound lane is added, a critical link in the proposed trail from Sacramento to Lake Tahoe will be seriously affected. Josh Hart from the Rails to Trails Conservancy will be one of the speakers. The agenda had not been published when we went to press. Contact Bob Smart at (530) 622-6340 (rsmart@jps.net) if you have questions. ☼

## MTP Nears the End

By Walt Seifert

The Transportation Roundtable, a 55-member advisory group to the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), ended its two-plus years of work on the Metropolitan Transportation Master Plan March 21 with a whimper. In my view, the Roundtable could not agree on a significant shift in transportation planning or on major regional transportation projects such as a new bridge across the American River and beltways in north and south Sacramento.

The Roundtable, after spending considerable time developing admirable goals, was not given sufficient time to develop and review actual projects. Instead, a hodgepodge of projects was thrown into a preliminary draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) that no one could love.

Tellingly though, the draft plan is supported by interests such as the Building Industry Association and the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce. These groups have chosen to align themselves with those favoring road building and other motor vehicle capacity-increasing projects as the way to solve transportation problems.

The semi-good news is that the draft plan now includes \$500 million, including \$300 million in a “regional” fund set aside for bicycle and pedestrian projects — a \$100 million increase over initially proposed levels. To a large extent, this increase is due to the high level of support for cycling reflected in letters and emails from the public, including many SABA members. Another \$480,000 remains set aside for “community design” projects which likely will also provide funding for bike/pedestrian needs.

With the same deliberation of a customer at a fast food restaurant supersizing a meal, the Roundtable chose to toss the extra \$100 million into the bike/pedestrian pot. While this action is a victory, it falls far short of funding requirements identified by cities and counties and is certainly less than what is needed for a visionary plan. One could easily argue that \$4 billion, about a 20 percent share of the \$21 billion plan, should have been devoted to bike/pedestrian projects.

The community design funding does represent a shift in thinking and can, perhaps, be built upon in the future. The existence of the Roundtable, giving groups such as SABA and other public stakeholders seats at the table, is also certainly an advance.

The SACOG Board is scheduled to adopt the final draft MTP at its April 18 meeting and adopt the plan in June. The next major update to the plan will occur in three years. ☼

### SABA members Pizza Party — Pizza, Soda and Doin' Stuff

The monthly SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party will be Thursday, May 16 (Bike to Work Day) from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the SABA Global HQ, 909 12th Street. We'll be writing letters, stuffing envelopes, and talking bike stuff!



## Welcome new members!

Laurel Beck  
 Ralph J. Bert  
 Barry Bolden  
 John Gunderson  
 Kirk Guthrie  
 Myron Heinlein  
 John Hettinger  
 Harry T. Jones  
 Alison Kent & Allan Hollander  
 Ronald E. Koetzsch  
 Lloyd A. Lagerstrom  
 Albert E. Lemke  
 Robert M. Murphey  
 John M. Platt  
 Richard Resch  
 Cindy Roberts  
 George Vanderhave

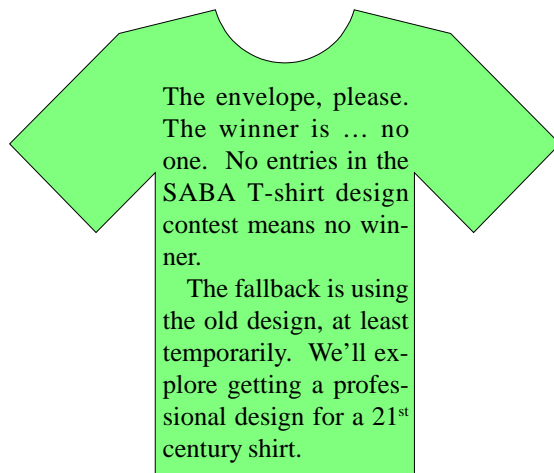


## Bush Endorses Cycling

According to an article in the March 27th issue of *BikeLeague News*, "President Bush's appointment of Dr. Richard Carmona as Surgeon General of the United States, and his announcement that one of Dr. Carmona's three key missions will be to encourage Americans to exercise and improve their diets, have great implications for the future of bicycling and fitness in the United States. The Surgeon General's job is to educate Americans on how to improve their health and reduce the risk of disease."

In announcing Carmona's appointment, Bush said, "The doc and I are going to encourage all our country to either run or walk or swim or bicycle for the good of their families, for the good of their own health, and for the good of the health of the nation." ☼

## T-shirt Contest Fizzles



*Bike to Work, from page 1*

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, exercise reduces the risk of premature mortality, hypertension and colon cancer. "Regular participation in physical activity also appears to reduce depression and anxiety, improve mood and enhance ability to perform daily tasks throughout the life span."

There are lots of other excellent reasons to bike to work and everywhere else (at least everywhere close by) as well. Cycling is cheaper than driving. It cuts traffic congestion. Cycling is good for the environment in ways besides keeping the air clean, such as helping preserve open space and preventing water pollution. Since cycling relies on human power instead of being dependent on oil or another fossil fuel, it doesn't contribute to global warming. Cycling is quiet, not noisy. Maybe best of all, it's fun!

On Bike to Work (& Everywhere!) Day, there will be a lot going on. Join in!

Sacramento Regional Transit will be offering free rides for cyclists with their bikes. Please remember that bus bike carriers and each light rail car are limited to a maximum of two bikes. In addition to offering cyclists free rides on light rail, Sacramento RT is removing the usual peak hour bike ban for the day. Please log on to [www.sacrt.com](http://www.sacrt.com) or call 321-BUSS (2877) for more information regarding RT's bike rules.

At morning "pit stops" hosted by area Transportation Management Associations (TMAs), cyclists can get re-energized and refreshed with free food and drink. Locations are:

South Natomas TMA  
 Café Colonnade patio area  
 2495 Natomas Park Drive  
 6:30 to 9:00 a.m.

North Natomas TMA  
 The Club at North Natomas Park  
 2101 Club Center Drive  
 6:30 to 9:00 a.m.

A number of employers will be providing free breakfasts for bike commuters. Check with your employee transportation coordinator.

Ride your bike to Manhattan Bagel, 4701 H St., and get a free bagel with cream cheese. Or stop at a participating La Bou and receive a free cup of coffee, iced tea or soda. The Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op at 1900 Alhambra Blvd will be offering a free snack and beverage. Cyclists need a bike helmet to claim the freebies.

Come to the Bike Fest at Cesar Chavez Plaza from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., May 16. The Bike Fest will feature live music, food, bike shop representatives, clubs and information about cycling. There will be Bike Friendly Awards at noon, followed by a relaxed-pace Clean Air Ride Around the Capitol. Free valet bike parking will be available.

If distance is a problem or you need a riding partner, Rideshare can help you find a Bike Buddy or help you figure out how to combine your bike trip with transit. Call 1-800-COMMUTE or visit [www.1800commute.org](http://www.1800commute.org).

Folsom, Roseville and Davis will all be having special events as well.

*Bike to Work, page 8*

## Portland, Oregon, Hosts Bike Summer 2002

It's getting to be the time of year to start thinking about a big summer vacation. Nothing beats two weeks of cycling in the Tuscan countryside or a mountain bike adventure through Hawaii's volcano country. If either of these are a bit beyond your price range and you're looking for a bike vacation closer to home, here are two words for you: Bike Summer. This year, the fourth-annual event is in Portland, Oregon, and bike advocates from around the country are all invited.

Bike Summer began in 1999 in San Francisco. The name is a play on 1963's "Mississippi Summer," when civil rights activists (mostly college students from the Northeast) went to rural counties of Mississippi to register black voters. It may be unfair to compare the bicyclists' fight against our auto-dominated culture to the struggle for justice and equality that African-Americans faced in the 1950s and 1960s. However, the premise of Bike Summer is similar: invite advocates from around the region and the country to the host city for a summer month to promote bicycling as the logical transportation choice for a sustainable future.

While it is difficult to ignore the political dimensions of bicycling, Bike Summer is not just a political event. Throughout August, there will be whimsical, thought provoking, educational and fun events on a daily basis. Besides hosting events for bike activists and enthusiasts, one of the primary goals of Bike Summer is to promote bicycling to those in the Portland region and encourage them to get out of their cars. Most events will be free and range from bike camping trips, polo matches, historical tours, races, workshops, lectures and presentations. Highlights include:

**The Annual Bridge Pedal Ride** - A 28-mile, traffic-free tour of Portland's nine Willamette River bridges (including two interstate freeway bridges!) that draws more than 15,000 riders.

**The Midsummer Night's Bike Tour** - A midnight-to-4:00 a.m. ride through the city beginning and ending with food and drink, and attended by more than 2,000 riders last summer.

**Bike Summer Lecture Series** - Numerous slide shows and presentations showing the state of bicycling and bike advocacy in Portland and cities throughout the country (let them know if you would like to make a presentation on your home city).

**August Critical Mass** - Part protest, part bike parade, Portland's Critical Mass slowly winds its way through the streets of downtown, a monthly event since 1993.

**Bike Summer Film and Video Festival** - On the last night of August, bike-related films and videos will be shown al-fresco, "drive-in" style in one of Portland's beautiful parks.

Portland has staked its reputation on the city's livability and its embrace of environmental issues. Recently named North America's most bike-friendly city by

Bicycling magazine, bicycle transportation is gradually becoming more institutionalized and overall bicycle trip numbers have increased dramatically in the last five years. There are currently 228 miles of bike lanes,

paths and bike boulevards in Portland, all public transit is fully bike accessible, and the city government's adopted policies are very supportive of bicycling, ensuring continuing growth of overall ridership in the years to come. While Portland is no Amsterdam or Copenhagen by any stretch of the imagination, it is a place where bike advocates can share ideas, and learn about new activist strategies and bike-friendly street design. It is also where, for an entire month, the bicycle will be placed on a pedestal to be celebrated for its ability to provide inexpensive, pollution-free transportation and enjoyment for people of all ages.

Check out the Bike Summer 2002 Web site at [www.bikesummer.org](http://www.bikesummer.org) for more information and to look at the continually evolving calendar, or call the hotline number at (503) 542-6900. ☎



## Roseville Bikefest 2002

Keep your calendar clear for Roseville Bikefest 2002 on Saturday, May 18 from 9:00 a.m. to noon at Woodbridge Elementary School, 515 Niles Ave. in Roseville.

PedalSafe!, the city of Roseville's bicycle safety committee, will present a family-oriented event to promote safe cycling. The hands-on, action-oriented event is a terrific place to learn bicycle safety, test your skills on an obstacle course, make sure your helmet is properly fitted and your bike is in safe working order. You will also receive a bicycle-related gift and be entered into a drawing for a new bicycle. Admission is free!

Register in advance or at the event (participants under 18 must have a parent's or guardian's signature). Registration forms will be available in May from the city of Roseville Transportation Division. For more information call Sue Schooley or Lisa Ferrari in the Roseville Transportation Division at (916) 774-5365. ☎



## Member Profile: Don Levy

By Ed Hensley

Don Levy is an independent video producer. He began his career in broadcasting 25 years ago before graduating from California State University, Chico, with a degree in mass communication.

His freelance work includes being behind a camera for home broadcasts of the Kings games.

Despite growing up in Davis, Don got serious about cycling only about 10 years ago to give his knees a break from running. He began commuting seriously six years ago when the American River Parkway Bike Trail gave him the perfect link between his home in central Natomas and a teaching gig at California State University, Sacramento (CSUS).

He's tallied some impressive cycling-related numbers. How about 4,000 miles? No, not on his bike. Those are the total miles he drove his car and truck combined last year. "I love having to change the oil only once a year," he said.

Don commutes by bike as much as he can to work in the Arco Arena and downtown Sacramento areas, as well as CSUS and Raley Field. He'd ride his Novara city bike more often if there were a safe way to cross the American River at night.

Besides the transportation benefits, he enjoys the countryside, the air, the calorie-burning, ease of parking and lack of frustration. "And it's almost as fast as driving," he noted.

Don's favorite road ride? "Out around the airport and Garden Highway — but I have to ride farther and farther to get out

into country north of Natomas" because of development.

His top cycling wish? "More acceptance — and leeway — from automobiles!"

Don's not just sitting and wishing. He joined the Natomas Community Association "to see if I could improve bicycle/pedestrian safety." As a result of his activity, he was recently appointed to the Sacramento City-County Bicycle Advisory Committee (SacBAC).

You can tell he's passionate about intelligent planning before it's too late. He's the first Natomas resident on the committee. "This is a chance for a bicycle commitment before we finish growing," he said. "It's important to do something now."

In fact, the committee's recommendations were incorporated into an update of the City-County Bikeway Master Plan presented to the Sacramento City Council at the end of March. Don said that the committee was "overall very impressed with the plan, especially the connectivity of bike trails for an area already divided by freeways and rivers."

Don's also passionate about educating. Natomas has become a bedroom community. Most people drive everywhere. "They don't relate to pedestrians, cyclists and the disabled. I want them to know that these are their neighbors and maybe if they get out of the car, they might enjoy walking and cycling too," he said. "We can't

let people be pacified by sitting in their cars." ☹



photo by Walt Seifert

### SABA Business and Organization members

Business members with an \* offer SABA members a discount.

- Air Resources Board
- American Lung Association
- American River Bicycles\* (Folsom Blvd.)
- American River Bicycles\* (Riverside Blvd.)
- The Bicycle Business
- Bicycles Plus\*
- Bob's Cycle Center
- Body Concepts
- City Bicycle Works
- Downtown Sacramento Partnership
- Franchise Tax Board
- Gary Brustin, LLP
- Gregorini & Associates
- Hannan Specialties
- The Hoyt Co.
- Inside Publications
- JHME Advertising
- Judith Lamare, PHD
- Lambertwebworks.com\*
- Natomas Bike Shop\*
- North Natomas TMA
- Power Inn BTA
- Regional Transit
- REI
- The Rest Stop\*
- Rex Cycles
- Sacramento Air Quality Management District
- Sacramento Bike Hikers
- Sacramento TMA
- Sacramento Wheelmen
- Savoyard Bed & Breakfast\*
- Sierra Engineering
- SMUD
- South Natomas TMA
- UC Davis Transportation & Parking Services

## “Safe Routes to School” Kicks Off in Natomas

May 17 marks the start of a “Safe Routes to School” project at Jefferson Elementary School in Sacramento’s Natomas Unified School District. The project encourages children and their parents to leave the car in the garage and try biking or walking to school.

In our auto-dependent culture, people don’t think twice about hopping in the car even for a quick trip down the street or around the block - trips that could easily be made on foot or on a bike. As evidence of this orientation, a recent survey of parents at Jefferson revealed that about 75% of respondents regularly DRIVE their children to school. What was remarkable was that two-thirds of that group live within ½ mile of school.

According to the survey, the main impediment to children biking or walking to school is parents’ safety concerns, primarily traffic hazards and “stranger danger.” Riding past Jefferson 15 minutes before the start of school offers a clear illustration of at least one of these obstacles. Dozens of cars line the street waiting to turn into the parking lot. Other drivers, unwilling to wait, double- and triple-park, forcing children to dart between the cars to the sidewalk. Some even drive onto the sidewalk to avoid the congestion. Such a scenario clearly is hazardous for pedestrians and bicyclists. Yet ironically, it is hardly safer for the kids being dropped off.

Sadly, this scene is not unique to Jefferson. Parents in many places drive because they don’t believe biking or walking is safe. However, in doing so they simply exacerbate the problem by adding to the traffic congestion. But “Safe Routes to School” seeks to challenge the community to a different vision, one in which most kids (and their parents) bicycle or walk to school. By getting daily exercise, kids’ overall health will improve and they will arrive more alert and ready to learn. Fewer car trips will mean improved air quality, and reduced traffic around the school will improve everyone’s safety. In addition, an increased presence of pedestrians and bicyclists will enhance the overall security of the neighborhood.

To help people begin to experience this vision, the Jefferson project will be built around regular “Bike or Walk to School Days,” the first of which will be Friday May 17. The project will also involve contests to encourage biking and walking (with prizes donated by local businesses) as well as pedestrian/bicycle safety education programs. And a task force will be formed to partner with city public works staff and law enforcement to improve infrastructure, safety and security around the school.

While Jefferson’s is not the first “Safe Routes” project to be launched by a Sacramento school - at least five others have been launched in the past 18 months - it is significant because

of the level of “buy-in” from the greater community. In addition to parents, teachers, and school district officials, the program has strong participation from the Natomas Community Association, both Natomas transportation management associations and District 1 City Councilmember Ray Tretheway. (It is being developed with the strong involvement of Liz Strauss of the California Bicycle Coalition and coordinator of “Safe Routes to School Sacramento.”) If successful, this project may become a model not only for Natomas, but also for other communities in Sacramento. For more information, to get involved, or to make a donation, please contact Ted Link-Oberstar at (916) 641-7072 or [tjlinko@yahoo.com](mailto:tjlinko@yahoo.com) ☼

*Bike to Work, from page 5*

For more information and to register easily online (registration makes you eligible for many great prizes), go to [www.sacbike.org](http://www.sacbike.org). You’ll also find cycling tips and maps. Registration forms will also be available at most bike shops.

Many thanks to local sponsors of California Bike Commute Week:

- American Lung Association of Sacramento Emigrant Trails
- Sacramento Area Council of Governments
- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District
- The Hoyt Company
- Regional Transit
- Inside Publications
- SMUD
- the city of Sacramento
- Sacramento County
- La Bou
- Manhattan Bagel
- Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op
- CH2M HILL
- Fehr & Peers Associates Inc.

*Ed, from page 1*

bikes. It’s meeting like-minded people. It’s like a bike culture center.”

Other 2002 award winners are the California Department of Transportation, Cummins West, Yolo County Supervisor Tom Stallard and retiring Regional Transit General Manager Pilka Robinson.

SABA received a Citizen Group Clean Air Award in 1999.

---

## Letters to the Editor

---

We want to hear from you! Letters may be edited for length or clarity.

*Preferably* email it to:

**[bikesaba@pacbell.net](mailto:bikesaba@pacbell.net)**

or put it in an envelope to:

**SABA**

**P.O. Box 1295**

**Sacramento, CA 95812-1295**

