



# The Squeaky Wheel

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Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

September 2002

## From The Chair When Motorists Don't Pay Attention, the Consequences for Cyclists are Dire

By Lea Brooks

Two recent accidents in the Sacramento area underscore the tragic consequences to bicyclists of motorists who do not pay attention.

On June 30, Blair Robertson was participating in a time trial in Elk Grove sponsored by the Sacramento Wheelmen. Astride his brand new Steve Rex bicycle and wearing a bright yellow helmet, Blair was pedaling on Eschinger Road just 2.7 miles into the 10-mile course when he was hit head on by a motorist who was passing another vehicle on a bend in the road.

Blair, a Sacramento Bee reporter, was taken by helicopter to the UCD Medical Center with serious injuries, including a broken neck. He is lucky to be alive and expects to fully recover.

The motorist, 29-year-old Brian Wayne Lent, was driving a Chevy Cavalier. Blair, 38, doesn't remember the collision. But photographs show that the impact did major damage to the front center of the vehicle from the license plate to the windshield.

A full two months passed before Blair found the courage to examine his helmet. The foam insert was cracked all the way through in eight different places. "Your head can't take that kind of impact," he said. "My helmet is the reason I'm still coherent and don't have brain damage. I'm convinced of that."

Less than a month later, Wayne Kincannon, who was also wearing a helmet,

*Consequences, page 3*

## Off-Leash Dog Park Rejected

By Walt Seifert

On August 6, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors voted 4-1 (Muriel Johnson opposed) to support its staff's recommendation against a pilot program for off-leash dogs at Paradise Beach in the River Park area.

In a second action, the board unanimously directed the county executive to contact the city of Sacramento regarding having an off-leash area in Sutter's Landing Regional Park. In addition, the county executive was directed to make a recommendation on whether or not to create a task force charged to investigate other areas for off-leash dog parks. Two supervisors expressed opposition to considering any areas within the American River Parkway; two supervisors were open to such a use in the parkway.

The votes followed several hours of emotional public testimony and board discussion both supporting and opposing the pilot program.

Supporters argued that off-leash dogs are a legitimate recreational use and cited the success of programs elsewhere, inadequacy of existing dog parks and lack of documented problems with the current informal use of the area as an off-leash area.

Those opposed, including SABA, the Sacramento Wheelmen, Sacramento Bike Hikers and Save the American River Association, provided anecdotes of dog attacks, menacing behavior by dogs, callous and irresponsible owners, impacts to water quality from dog waste and threats to wildlife. Skip Amerine testified on behalf of SABA.

The county Recreation and Parks Commission and Parkway Advisory Committee had recommended against establishing an off-leash area. ☼

## Sacramento River Corridor Floodway Planning Forum

By Mike Savino

Numerous public and private agencies and development interests have come to realize that development along the Sacramento River and its floodway needs to be more predictable and rational. To help this come about, a public planning forum has been established. SABA is participating in this effort, known as the Sacramento River Corridor Floodway Planning Forum.

The forum is an interagency body representing Sacramento, Yolo, and Sutter counties, the cities of Sacramento and West Sacramento, and various state and federal agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA). Other agencies and organizations may be added to the forum.

The forum is considering a broad and complex set of issues, all of which relate to land use in the floodway. It appears that the primary purpose for the forum is to "achieve greater certainty and predictability in the permitting process relating to encroachments in the flood control system." The forum hopes to do this by producing a River Corridor Floodway Management Plan that will include broadly-accepted decision criteria, including habitat restoration, public recreation and levee protection.

Public recreation is where SABA comes in. We hope to influence the guidelines for decisions on development proposals in respect to the general issues of public recreation, especially bicycling for both recreation and commuting. If you have any questions about either the forum or SABA's role, we encourage you to contact Mike Savino at [yogoombah@yahoo.com](mailto:yogoombah@yahoo.com). ☼

## 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 e-mail 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 e-mail them at [faba@tomatoweb.com](mailto:faba@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 an article for the newsletter, contact Lea Brooks, 2013 Roaring Camp Drive, Gold River 95670, via e-mail at [lea2skip@aol.com](mailto:lea2skip@aol.com), or call evenings at (916) 635-9332 by the third Thursday of each month.

## SABA General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, September 24, noon, American Lung Association, 909 12th Street, Sacramento

- 11:45 I. Pre-meeting mingle, chat and eat.
- 12:00 II. Introductions (Lea Brooks).
- 12:05 III. Executive Director's Report (Walt Seifert).
- 12:20 IV. Central City Streets Project Status Report (Walt, Chris Morfas and/or Doug Thompson).
- 12:35 V. Other business and announcements.
- 1:05 VI. Adjourn.

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

The monthly SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party will be Thursday, Oct. 10 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the SABA Central Valley HQ, 909 12th Street. We'll be writing letters, stuffing envelopes, eating pizza, and talking about all kinds of wonderfully ethereal bike stuff!



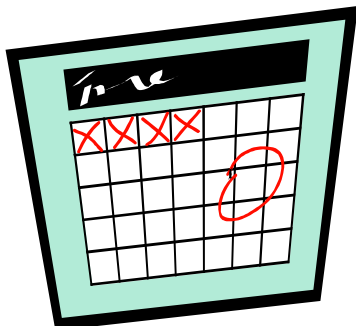
## SABA/Community Calendar

### September

- 21 Great American River Clean-up. Two locations: Mile 8 at 10 a.m. and 20th and C Streets at 9:30 a.m.
- 24 SABA General Membership meeting, noon

### October

- 8 Sacramento City Council, evening session regarding Haggin Oaks Golf Course trail
- 10 SABA Volunteer Work & Pizza party, 5:30-7:30 p.m., SABA HQ
- 18 Sacramento Area Council of Governments' annual transportation forum "TALL Order"



## SABActions

### Meetings

SABA members attended these meetings:

- Caltrans District 3 on Tower Bridge detour
- Sacramento Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative plenary, environmental group and indicator working group sessions
- Sacramento Transportation Authority Programming Committee
- SACOG land use planners
- SACOG Regional Planning Partnership
- Sacramento River Corridor Floodway Planning Forum plenary and land use sessions
- American Lung Association Clean Air Agenda advisory committee.

### Letters

SABA sent letters to:

- Sacramento Bee on Measure A
- Sacramento Regional Transit on the light rail South Line, Phase 2
- Sacramento County on Silver Meadows Park Initial Study
- Sacramento County Board of Supervisors on American River Parkway budget cuts
- SACOG on responses to MTP Environmental Impact Report responses
- Assembly member Darrell Steinberg on SB1555 (Torlakson) Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety. ☺

*Consequences, from page 1*

was fatally injured by a motorist while participating in a Bike Hikers ride. Wayne, 78, was ahead of the other cyclists on Eureka Road in Granite Bay when he was hit from behind about 9 a.m. by a motorist driving a 1999 Dodge Intrepid. According to the Sacramento Bee, the driver told investigators that he passed the main group of cyclists and did not see Wayne. As I write this, there was no information as to whether action will be taken against the driver who killed Wayne.

This calls to mind my friend Eva Ueltzen, who suffered fatal head injuries in May 1999 when a then 24-year-old Jody Guerrero swerved into Eva's bike on Green Valley Road in El Dorado County. The motorist, who sped away after hitting Eva from behind in a bike lane, had a blood-alcohol level of 0.15 percent, nearly twice the legal limit. She was sentenced to three years in state prison, but was released early. Eva's family, including three young children, and her friends, still grieve their loss.

All cyclists have had close encounters with motorists who are not paying attention. Whether they are gabbing on their cell phones, eating, fiddling with their stereos, disciplining children in the back seat or simply impatient, these individuals are not taking seriously their responsibility to follow the rules of the road.

In Blair's case, the California Highway Patrol found the motorist at fault, but recommended against criminal action. Blair has asked the CHP to reconsider its decision. "Why should a motorist be allowed to almost kill someone?" he asked.

Good question. Many cyclists are convinced that law enforcement agencies are biased against bicyclists and avoid going after inattentive motorists. Drunken drivers are taken somewhat more seriously, although the pain and suffering they cause is no different than that inflicted by an irresponsible motorist driving on the wrong side of the road or using the excuse, "I didn't see the cyclist."

All cyclists should be angry about what happened to Blair. SABA supports his decision to ask the CHP to reconsider its decision not to take action against an irresponsible motorist. The accident was 100 percent preventable.

Following the crash, Blair spent a total of three weeks in the hospital, including three days in the intensive care unit. His fifth and sixth cervical vertebrae were fused using a graft from his right hip. He suffered broken ribs, a separated shoulder, a gouge in his toe that was so deep he almost lost it and severe road rash. Both ankles were badly sprained and his knees were swollen and sore. Blair's zest for cycling has only increased since the crash. He was in the best condition of his adult life when he was hit. He played hockey while growing up and was a serious golfer, so serious that he played college golf on a scholarship and golfed as a professional for a year.

He started cycling last fall because he wanted a more vigorous sport, and soon worked his way up to 1,200 miles a month. "I really discovered the joy of cycling and found myself riding for hours, rain or shine," he said. He rode the Davis Double Century in May and was training for the Death Ride when the accident occurred.

Still wearing a neck brace, Blair recently purchased a fixed-gear bike for the trainer to help him regain his conditioning.

His immediate goal is to ride the Foxy Fall Century in October, perhaps on the back of a tandem with girlfriend Anne Williams so he can sit up straight. He wants to ride the Davis Double Century next year on the fixed-gear bike.

We wish Blair a continued speedy recovery and look forward to seeing him back on the bike. In the meantime, SABA and other bicycle advocates need to push for better enforcement and tougher penalties against irresponsible motorists. ☸



## Welcome new members!

Richard Haggstrom  
Richard D. Jones  
Ken & Leslie Lake  
Nancy Miller  
Bill Perry  
Eric Potter  
Terrence Savage  
Greg Schroeder  
Gerry Townsend



## Welcome back to these returning members:

Margarita Altamirano  
American Warp Drive  
Ken's Bike & Ski

## Ueda Parkway Needs to get Back on Track

By Walt Seifert

Remember the city of Sacramento's bike and recreation trail in the Ueda Parkway?

Strongly supported by SABA, this project was approved as a Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21) project back in 1999. More than \$2.1 million was authorized for the trail's construction. The parkway is a significant project, running from the American River Parkway at Del Paso Boulevard all the way north to Elkhorn Boulevard.

The trail will be mostly on the Steelhead Creek levee, formerly known as the Natomas East Main Drainage Canal. It will offer a connection to a future trail in the Dry Creek Parkway and become part of a regional trail system.

Though the project was approved three years ago, construction has yet to begin. In fact, the city of Sacramento is now seeking an additional \$1.5 million to cover increased costs, primarily associated with property acquisition.

Unfortunately, the Ueda Parkway is another example of a bike project on the books with available funding that simply has not happened for various reasons. Other examples are the H Street Bridge undercrossing between the California State University, Sacramento campus and the River Park neighborhood, the Sacramento River trail north of Miller Park, the Haggin Oaks Golf Course and the R Street overcrossing of Interstate 5. Reasons for the delays may be legitimate, but we would prefer action. ☹

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## Physical Activity and the Community Environment

The National Center for Bicycling & Walking (NCBW) has published a new guide, *Increasing Physical Activity Through Community Design*. This 48-page guide focuses on how to make communities more bicycle-friendly and walkable.

Current research and data show troubling trends in physical activity and health: children are becoming more sedentary and the general population is becoming increasingly obese. Today, many of our communities are less conducive to walking than they were 50 years ago, and fewer of our nation's children, adults and seniors have the option of walking out their front door and being active participants in their community.

The new *Increasing Physical Activity* guide is designed to provide public health practitioners and others with an introduction to increasing physical activity through better community design, specifically by making it easier and safer to bicycle and walk. It presents an introduction to community design issues, and describes seven kinds of projects that can help create more bicycle-friendly and walkable communities. It also discusses how such projects get funded, and presents an array of resources to help with implementation.

To request a free copy (or download in .pdf format), go to <http://www.bikefed.org/PubHealth.htm> or call the National Center for Bicycling & Walking at (202) 463-6622. ☹

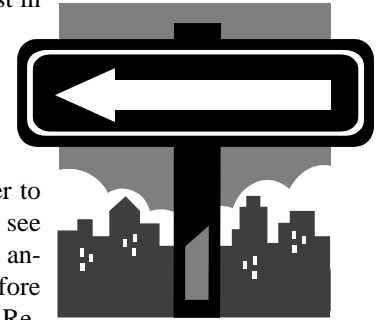
## Tip of the Month So You Want to Go Left

By Liz Strauss

Good enough. Not everything is to the right, after all. You ride your bike for transportation and fun and occasionally you find yourself wondering exactly how to go left without getting squashed. Here's a brief tutorial:

Start by preparing to turn left. Begin looking over your shoulder to indicate your interest in a left-ish motion. Put your left hand out to signal a lane change. Wait for an opening and move laterally across the roadway. Keep looking over your shoulder to make sure that the drivers see you. You might still have another lane to negotiate before you hit the left turn lane! Repeat your actions to move into the left turn lane. If the lane carrying left turning traffic also carries through traffic, ride at its left side. If it's a left turn only lane, ride at its right side.

If you are turning out of a left-or-straight lane, and you are positioned to the left side of the lane to let forward moving vehicles pass you, do not let cars pass you to turn left! Although this may sound contradictory, try to stay to the "middle" of the left side of the lane or make a "slow" sign with your right hand. If you don't make it to the left turn lane while negotiating the roadway, carry on through the intersection. Turn at the next intersection, or make a U-turn somewhere safe and come back. And, of course, it's OK to become a pedestrian and walk your bike across the crosswalk in a particularly trying situation. ☹




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## Regional Transportation Grants

By Walt Seifert

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is proposing to create a 20-plus member task force to recommend criteria for bicycle and pedestrian, community design, air quality and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) grants. Two of the members will probably come from the SACOG bicycle/pedestrian committee. Others will represent transit, public works agencies, planners, business, environmental and other special interest groups.

The group will meet over the next half year and make recommendations to the SACOG board by next March. SACOG will call for project proposals by July. In October 2003, it is expected that federal transportation funds will be available for the grants.

The community design and TDM grants will receive highest priority. SACOG will choose \$8 million in bicycle/pedestrian projects from the first round of "TEA-3" federal funds. These projects have already been nominated. A planned regional bicycle and pedestrian master plan is expected to guide subsequent funding rounds. ☹

## Measure A Needs to be more Bicycle-Friendly

By Walt Seifert

Measure A is the ½ cent sales tax that is earmarked for transportation in Sacramento County. The bulk of the money goes toward road projects and transit operations. A minuscule, but important amount has been used for bike projects, primarily to provide a local match for federal funds.

The 20-year measure expires in 2009. Planning is under way to renew the measure, an effort that will be formidable since voters must pass it by a two-thirds majority — a very high hurdle. That means the renewal measure can't have any significant opposition and must appeal strongly to voters in order to pass.

The structure and wording of the renewal measure have yet to be drafted. However, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) was approved based on the assumption that not only would the renewal be approved, but that the amount of the tax would increase from 1/2 cent to 2/3 cent. The additional 1/6 cent would be devoted to transit.

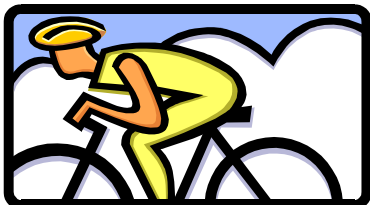
SABA is working toward having a specific set-aside in the Measure A renewal for bike projects. This is not only fair from an equity standpoint, but it will also help Sacramento County and the cities in the county meet their obligation for local funding of bike projects called for in the MTP.

Alameda County recently passed Measure B, its transportation sales tax measure, with a 5 percent set aside for bike and pedestrian projects. Since the current bike/pedestrian mode share in Sacramento is about 6 percent and virtually all players agree that trips made by bike and foot need to be increased, a 10 percent set-aside seems reasonable. To be fair, we should note there is some undercounting of bike/pedestrian allocations since many "road" projects include bike and pedestrian components. But it is equally true that, by their nature, bike/pedestrian projects tend to be less expensive than road or transit projects and have a great many benefits that road and transit projects do not.

SABA is gathering a list of possible bike projects that should have strong voter appeal, such as a trail network connecting parks and open space, improvements for the American River Parkway, Safe Routes to School for children and parents and Safe Routes to Transit for everyone. Ideally, SABA itself would be able to poll the public in some fashion (something we have never done) and determine how voters feel about various options before SABA makes proposals on Measure A provisions. It is inevitable that all aspects of the renewal measure will have to perform well in surveys, which will be done in the near future by professional pollsters.

If you have ideas for additional bike projects that will receive widespread support, opinions on the fair share for cycling or an interest in participating in creating or administering a survey, please contact Walt Seifert at [bikesaba@pacbell.net](mailto:bikesaba@pacbell.net).

⊗



## Transportation Academy

The nonprofit group Odyssey will be holding a Transportation Academy to connect and educate individuals, organizations and communities involved with transportation. Training provides organizations and community members with information on transportation issues and how they can affect decisions about transportation in their own community.

The Transportation Academy works with participants on effectiveness strategies and skills related to transportation issues.

At the same time, it provides a place for community-based advocates and other supporters to network, realize their common goals and jointly

plan action. Trainings include such topics as "Transportation Policy and Funding: Navigating the Maze" and "Membership Development: People Power, Creating an Effective Membership Development Campaign" as well as basic capacity-building skills such as coalition-building, community outreach and meeting facilitation.



A Sacramento training session will be held December 6 (full day) and December 7 (half day). Registration deadline is November 15.

Odyssey seeks to make public transportation and other transportation choices more competitive through marketplace improvement and policy reform. Through its programs, Odyssey improves people's daily lives and the communities in which they live by making a positive change in transportation and quality of life issues such as public health.

Registration is free and limited at each seminar to 40 participants. You may register with Academy staff member Elizabeth Murphy by e-mail at [Elizabeth@odyssey.org](mailto:Elizabeth@odyssey.org), phone at (916) 448-1687 ext. 5, fax at (916) 448-1479 or mail to Odyssey at 1414 K Street, Suite 660, Sacramento, CA 95814. A confirmation packet will be sent to participants shortly after registering. ⊗

## TALL Order

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments and Valley Vision will host the fourth annual transportation forum, "TALL Order: Balancing the Region's Needs," on October 18.

TALL is an acronym for transportation, air quality, land use and leadership. TALL Order will be an all day affair from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Sacramento Convention Center. The cost is \$75. For more information please visit the 2002 Regional Forum Web site at [www.sacog.org/forum2002](http://www.sacog.org/forum2002). ⊗

**SABA Business and Organization Members**

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

- Air Resources Board
- American Lung Association
- American River Bicycle\* (Folsom Blvd.)
- American River Bicycle (Marconi Ave.)
- American River Bicycle\* (Riverside Blvd.)
- American Warp Drive
- The Bicycle Business
- Bicycles Plus\*
- Bob's Cycle Center
- Body Concepts
- City Bicycle Works
- Davis Bike Club
- Downtown Sacramento Partnership
- Fehr & Peers Associates
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- Inside Publications
- Judith Lamare, PHD
- Ken's Bike & Ski
- LambertWebWorks.com\*
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- 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\*
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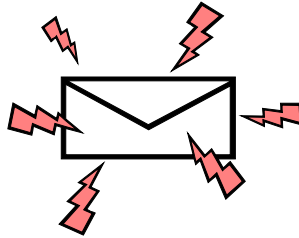
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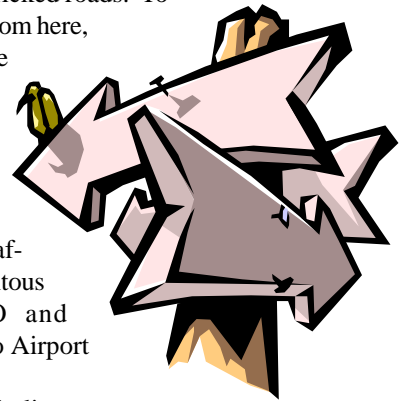
**SABA**

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**Sacramento, CA 95812-1295**



combination of Del Paso, Truxel, Northgate and Elkhorn. All of these are heavily trafficked roads. To ride to Discovery Park from here, one must cross Interstate 80 either at Truxel or Northgate, or go west on Del Paso (crossing Interstate 5) to El Centro (another narrow road with increasing traffic) or make a very circuitous route around ARCO and through a subdivision to Airport and San Juan roads.



**Re: Arena interchange**

Dear Editor:

Here's is the full picture, as I confront it, of biking in North Natomas. It's even more gruesome than described in the article in the August, SABA newsletter. (By the way, I hadn't seen anything about the proposed interchange until the newsletter showed up.)

I lived in South Natomas for 20 years, right off Truxel Road. It was a convenient ride to Discovery Park and the American River Parkway bike trail from there, with relatively easy opportunities to cross Truxel and the Garden Highway. Now, I live in North Natomas, just northeast of the Truxel/Del Paso Road intersection. There is absolutely no way to get to any bike trail going either north or south without traveling on some

Needless to say, I'm feeling pretty isolated out here now. The only relatively safe way to get to the American River Parkway bike trail from my house is to first load bike(s) on my pickup and drive four miles to street parking someplace south of Interstate 80. The situation will not be made better for us by a new interchange, and it's already so bad that I've just about stopped riding anyplace except the local residential streets or a one-mile stretch of trail in our development.

Please use this input in any discussions you may have regarding the biking situation out here, which is increasingly grim.

Jim Coviello