



The Squeaky Wheel

www.sacbike.org

Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

October 2002

From The Chair Plea to Sacramento City Council: Convert Downtown Streets Now!

By Lea Brooks

Two recent encounters with road-raging drivers, including a shuttle bus driver for my employer, underscore why I dread riding my bicycle in downtown Sacramento.

The downtown area is dominated by one-way, three-lane streets with parking on both sides that are designed to move large volumes of fast-moving motor vehicles at the expense of neighborhood sanity and bicycle and pedestrian safety. These streets encourage contemptible behavior by motorists who have zero patience and tolerance for anything that gets in their way.

The Sacramento City Council has been considering which of these streets should be converted to two way or reduced to one way with two car lanes and a bike lane on each side. The effort is commendable, but it's time to conclude the prolonged and agonizing study and convert at least some of the streets - to give residents of these neighborhoods some peace and to protect and encourage bicyclists and pedestrians.

City Council members need to listen to Dan Burden, a national expert on walkable communities who they have hired to give them advice. The most applicable pearl of wisdom from Mr. Burden regarding this issue should be heeded: Do not create situations that encourage poor behavior by motorists.

I work for the California Department of Health Services at 714 P Street, a 17-story state office building that is surrounded by these miserable one-way streets. Most of

Rage, page 3

New Exercise Guidelines

By Walt Seifert

The Institute of Medicine, the medical division of the National Academies, announced in early September that everyone should exercise an hour a day. This is a huge change from previous recommendations by the Surgeon General and others that individuals get 30 minutes of exercise most days of the week.

The new goal is going to be monumentally difficult for people in the United States to meet. Though everyone already knows that exercise is good for them, currently 60 percent of Americans aren't active on a regular basis. Twenty-five percent are not active at all.

In my view, the new 60-minute goal is a boon to cycling and walking advocates. I'm convinced that people don't have enough time in their schedules to spend an hour on a treadmill or running around in circles. Only by integrating exercise into daily routine will people be able to get an hour's worth of physical activity. The most practical way to make exercise routine is to walk or bike in order to get somewhere.

By making exercise part of transportation, you are doing two things at the same time.

Exercise, page 7

SABA Adopts Again

At its September meeting, SABA decided to adopt the 20th Street Connector trail segment between C Street and the Union Pacific RR overcrossing. The adoption of this short stretch, if approved by the Sacramento Tree Foundation, means that SABA will be responsible for maintaining the landscaping along the trail. SABA is committing to regular maintenance, including weeding, mulching, planting and watering, over a three-year period. A tentative date of November 9 at 9:30 a.m. has been set for the first planting, as the initial weeding and mulching have been done.

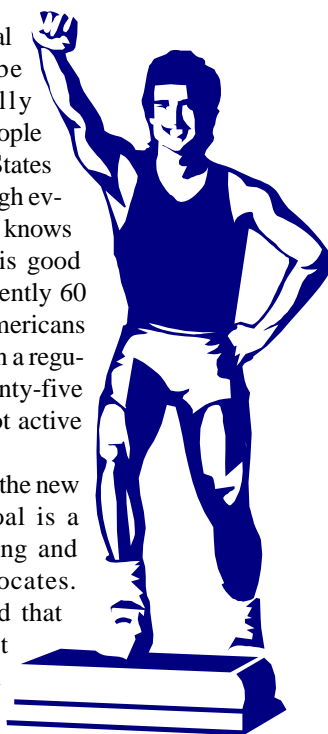
The Tree Foundation, which is administering a Sierra Club grant program, has a small amount of funding for plants, signs, and watering equipment.

SABA member Ed Cox was instrumental in getting the 20th Street Connector built. The Connector hooks up to the Sacramento Northern Bridge over the American River and to the Sacramento Northern and American River bike trails.

SABA has cleaned the area regularly during the annual Great American River Clean-up. When the trail opened in January of 2000 it looked great. However, the city has not done well maintaining the landscaping. Most of the shrubs and many of the trees have died. The irrigation system operated poorly from the start and has not been adequately repaired. The city chose not to heed the advice of its Bicycle Advisory Committee to install cobblestones under the RR overcrossings. As a result, the overcrossings are hangouts for transients and typically are strewn with trash and broken glass.

A few days after the Great American River Clean-up, the area, which had been left pristine, looked like it hadn't been cleaned at

Adoption, page 4



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.

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.

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, or call evenings at (916) 635-9332 by the third Thursday of each month.

SABA General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, October 22, 6 p.m. Quarterly Potluck, American Lung Association, 909 12th Street, Sacramento

- 6:00 I. Potluck and introductions (Lea Brooks).
- 6:45 II. Executive Director's Report (Walt Seifert).
- 7:00 III. Guest speaker.
- 8:00 IV. Adjourn.

SABA Pizza Party — Pizza, Soda and Doin' Stuff

The monthly SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party will be Thursday, November 14, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the SABA Provincial HQ, 909 12th Street. We'll be writing

letters, stuffing envelopes, eating pizza, and talking about all kinds of thought-provoking and hilarious bike stuff!



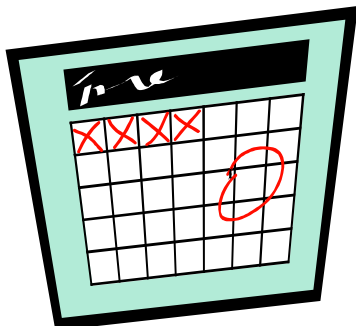
SABA/Community Calendar

October

- 18 Sacramento Area Council of Governments' annual transportation forum "TALL Order"
- 22 SABA General Membership meeting, evening potluck
- 28 RT Board meeting, report on bike policy

November

- 6-7 Dan Burden presents to the County of Sacramento Board of Supervisors on the afternoon of November 6. Site visits in south (November 6) and north (November 7) of the county.
- 26 SABA General Membership meeting, noon



SABActions

Meetings

SABA members attended these meetings:

- ProBike/ProWalk Conference
- Thunderhead Alliance Retreat
- Sacramento Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative plenary and environmental and indicator working group sessions
- Sacramento Transportation Authority Board and Programming Committee
- SACOG Land Use Planners
- SACOG Regional Planning Partnership
- SACOG Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Sacramento River Corridor Floodway Planning Forum plenary and land use sessions.

Letters

SABA sent letters to:

- Sacramento Bee on child safety en route to school
- Governor Gray Davis on SB 1555 (Torlakson) Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety and AB 2521 (La Suer) Signal Detection of Bicyclists. See related article on page 6. ☼

Rage, from page 1

my commute is a joy. The bulk of my route is along the American River Parkway bike trail. The on-street portion through East Sacramento and Midtown are pleasant. But turning onto P Street in the morning is like taking a plunge into hell. I take the middle of the left lane to avoid getting doored by motorists opening their doors without looking or smashed into the parked cars by today's mammoth vehicles.

This defensive posture that is perfectly legal drives some motorists insane. It doesn't matter that they have three lanes and bicyclists have none. They always want to be where you are pedaling and behave like maniacs to make sure you know they are bigger than you. Duh!

Even when traffic is light, they speed and aggressively change lanes in what is basically a residential neighborhood as they race toward the freeway. Some of these drivers are on the verge of road rage at 7 a.m.! It's hard to understand how anyone can be so angry so early in the day.

These bullies usually express themselves with shouts, honks, obscene gestures and aggressive, exaggerated maneuvers. Reasoning with them is not in the cards. They either stare blankly when I cite our respective rights and responsibilities as cyclists and motorists in the California Vehicle Code or can't hear me over their shouts to get out of their way.

These motorists know exactly what they are doing. On the rare occasion when a police cruiser is on the street, they behave like the courteous drivers they should always be.

The intimidating behavior occasionally goes beyond the superficial. On the morning of August 23, I was pedaling west in the left lane on P Street after turning from 15th Street when a parked motorist pulled away from the curb behind me. Even though there was light traffic and he could have used the middle lane, he chose to drive behind me honking and spewing obscenities all the way to 10th street, where the light was red. His behavior continued during the red light.

When the light changed, he pulled up alongside me in the middle lane and screamed more obscenities, told me to get out of the road and then asked me to do something obscene several times. He then turned left on 7th Street and was gone.

I filed a report with the Sacramento Police Department with a description of the driver, his behavior and the vehicle: An older white Volkswagen transporter van, license No. 4TXLZ82. I'm not sure if anything happened to the driver, but he has not bothered me since. His vehicle is usually parked on the street when I ride by in the morning.

The second encounter had a more satisfactory conclusion. The Department of Health Services contracts for shuttle bus service among its many worksites in Sacramento. On September 23, I left my office at 5:50 p.m. and was pedaling north on 8th Street to make a right on N street. Again, there was little to no traffic.

I took the middle of the right lane as a defensive measure because of large garbage bins that protrude into the street on 8th Street at N Street. These bins are associated with the remodel-

ing of the historic Stanford mansion and have been there for months.

I had just crossed the light rail tracks at a slight angle to make sure my wheels didn't fall into the cracks when I heard honking. I looked back and saw a shuttle bus behind me. The driver followed closely behind me honking the entire length of the block even though there was no traffic and he could have easily gone around me. At N Street, I stopped behind the garbage bins for protection and to get a good look at the driver, who stopped, opened the door and yelled at me to get out of the road. I yelled back and told him I thought he was going to run over me. I noticed that there were no passengers in the bus.

A couple of pedestrians approached me as the driver closed his door and drove off. They expressed concern for the bus driver's behavior and agreed that it was my right to take the middle of the lane to protect myself from getting slammed into the garbage bins by the bus. One of the individuals gave me his business card in case I needed a witness.

While I was talking to the pedestrians, the bus driver drove one block north on 8th Street, parked his vehicle and walked back to where I was talking to yet another pedestrian who had approached me about the incident. The bus driver was very confrontational and tried to convince me that he was not trying to run over me. Again, he complained that I was riding in the middle of the lane. He expressed the same thing to the pedestrian.

I actually called 911 on my cell phone because of concern that the driver was on the edge of losing control. This guy actually left his bus parked a block away so he could come back to confront me. The operator suggested that I just pedal away, which was excellent advice.

I filed a complaint with my department the following morning. The contract administrator for the shuttle bus service asked that the driver be immediately removed for cause. He described the driver's behavior as "reprehensible."

If only the City Council would take the situation unfolding daily on its downtown streets as seriously as the contract administrator. Conclude the study and take action now! Provide conditions that encourage good driver behavior and protect the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians. ☹

These [one way] streets encourage contemptible behavior by motorists who have zero patience and tolerance for anything that gets in their way.

Welcome new members!

Michael & Jennifer Eckert
Timothy Jordan
Colette Newman
Warren Truitt
Walt Wiley



Great American River Clean-Up

By Walt Seifert and Chad Muilenburg

Ignoring their own backyards for the day, 20 extremely hard-working volunteers showed up to pick up trash and tidy the landscape at the 20th Street Connector on September 21, during the Great American River Clean-up.

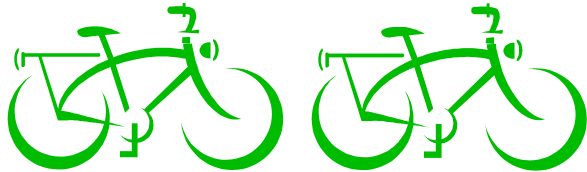
Despite the heat and dust, volunteers picked up many bags of trash and recyclables, which were promptly whisked away by an accommodating city of Sacramento Solid Waste Department. Others toiled removing several years' weed growth while carefully preserving the handful of scraggly plants remaining from the original landscape planting. (See related story on 20th Street Connector adoption on page 1.)

Thanks to SABA members Tom and Glenda Higgins, Greg and Judy Boers, Sue Teranishi, Dwight Oda, Skip Amerine, Lea Brooks, Bill Dean, Jim Miller, Beverly Taylor and Marie Schelling. Marie also recruited a number of CalEPA employees by enticing them with a ride/work outing.

Meanwhile, at Mile 8, a small but hardy band showed up to clean our regular adopted mile. It appears that our efforts at Mile 8 have been successful over the past few months, as our volunteers found a fairly modest amount of trash to pick up. A new homeless person's camp had appeared, but even that was reported to be remarkably neatly kept. Thanks to Barrett Alexander, Kathleen Farren, Jennifer Kerr, Dwight Freund, and John Whelan for making the effort.

Our next work day on Mile 8 is scheduled for January 11, 2003. We look forward to seeing you there for a little post-holiday exercise!

For those who participated but didn't get their Great American River Clean-up T-shirt, please contact Walt Seifert. ☼



Jury Finds Transient Guilty of Illegal Camping on Parkway

By Lea Brooks

On September 27 a transient was found guilty by a Sacramento County jury for illegally camping on the American River Parkway. This case has enormous implications for the ability of local law enforcement agencies to control illegal camping.

In this closely-watched case that was personally prosecuted by City Attorney Sam Jackson, the jury found William McManus guilty of two misdemeanor counts of violating the county's anti-camping ordinance. Dave Lydick, chief ranger of the Sacramento County Department of Parks, Recreation and Open Space, said that McManus' attorney Kelly Tanalepy indicated she will appeal the verdict. Sacramento County Superior Court Judge Gail Ohanesian stayed the sentence of three years probation and 30 days on the sheriff's work detail until a hearing is held, probably in March.

According to the Sacramento Bee, the defendant was found guilty twice last year of illegal camping and had two prior drug convictions. He was also featured in an article last March about homeless camps on the Parkway. McManus was pictured in his camp by Camp Pollock surrounded by garbage.

In August, another jury acquitted McManus of one misdemeanor charge of illegal camping and was hung on two remaining misdemeanor illegal-camping counts. His defense was that he had no place else to sleep because no shelter would accept his three dogs.

McManus, who now has five dogs, according to park rangers, was not allowed to use that defense during his retrial.

SABA is a strong supporter of the crackdown on illegal camping on the Parkway. We have received numerous complaints from SABA members and others who are afraid to use the bike trail because they are intimidated by illegal campers and their dogs. SABA members also have picked up dozens and dozens of bags of trash, including booze bottles, syringes, human waste and other garbage left behind by the illegal campers. ☼

Adoption, from page 1

all. SABA's adoption will address at least some of the neglect.

SABA previously adopted Mile 8 of the American River Parkway through a program of the American River Parkway Foundation.

Anyone interested in being the site coordinator or alternate coordinator for this project, or who wants to participate in the November 9 planting, please contact Walt Seifert at bikesaba@pacbell.net or call 444-6600. ☼



SABA cleans up 20th Street Connector

Watt Bridge Dedication

By Walt Seifert

On a beautiful September 8th Sunday morning, hundreds of people turned out for a parade, speeches, T-shirts and other goodies to dedicate the widened Watt Avenue Bridge. It's likely the bridge will never again have as many cyclists and pedestrians on it at the same time. More than 100,000 motor vehicles a day have already replaced the folks strolling and cycling across the bridge deck, which was closed to traffic for a few hours.

The bridge project features vastly improved access to the American River Parkway bike trail and wider sidewalks, with solid barriers, to accommodate cyclists and pedestrians. The former access trails were steep, had sharp turns and physical barriers blocking the way. The old sidewalks were not wide enough for cyclists to pass each other or pedestrians safely.

All is not perfect now for cyclists on Watt. The Highway 50 interchange remains a dangerous and scary place for cyclists. Few people know about the out-of-the-way alternative to this interchange, the poorly designed and unmarked Salmon Falls Road bike/pedestrian crossing located about a quarter mile east of Watt. Cyclists using the sidewalk paths on the bridge will face dangerous crossings of the ramps at American River and La Riviera drives.



*Temporarily crowded sidewalks, uncrowded road on Watt Avenue Bridge
Photo by Walt Seifert*

SABA members had mixed feelings about the bridge project during its genesis. Many hours were spent on influencing the design so that the final project was better than the miserable conditions that existed before. Because of that, some members welcomed the project and the improvements it promised. Others felt that the widening would simply induce more and faster motor vehicle traffic in the already extremely busy Watt Avenue corridor, which in the long run would be to the detriment of cyclists. ☸



*Wider sidewalk/path on Watt Avenue Bridge
Photo by Walt Seifert*

Haggin Oaks Golf Course Trail

By Walt Seifert

The Sacramento City Council will be deciding the fate of a trail through the Haggin Oaks Golf Course on December 3. (The Council delayed hearing the matter from a scheduled October 8 date.) Construction of the trail, ranked the number one priority in the city for off-street bikeways, has been blocked by the city's golf staff.

SABA has fought for the trail and opposed the golf staff's position. SABA has gathered more than 600 signatures in support of a direct trail through the course. The City/County Bicycle Advisory Committee (SacBAC) unanimously supported the direct route. Other supporters included Sacramento Regional Transit, County Supervisor Roger Dickinson whose district is immediately to the north, and WalkSacramento.

At a Sept. 12 meeting at the golf course, about 20 members of the golfing public, four golf staff members, John Burton from SacBAC and I heard a presentation on the trail alignment possibilities and asked and answered questions.

Generally, comments by the public and staff concerning the possibility of a trail directly through the course were negative. They raised the following objections:

Aesthetics: Fencing to protect cyclists would be unattractive and detract from the beautiful and historic course. If the course isn't beautiful, people will not play there anymore. (No mention was made of the fact that noisy Interstate 80 parallels the course and that the existing buildings, including the infamous cart barn, are somewhat less than attractive, and that there is a shooting range next to the course.)

Safety and liability: The safety concerns raised were that cyclists might get hit by a golf ball, by a truck or front loader at the course's mini-corporate yard or by a vehicle on the access road to the parking lot.

Criminal activity and other misdemeanors: The homeless might use the trail, kids and others might use the trail to party, cyclists would leave the trail and ride on the golf cart paths, cyclists might steal golf balls or others might do something bad at night.

Free ride for cyclists: Why should golfers have to pay when cyclists don't? Cyclists already have plenty of other places to ride.

Other nonsense: The trail doesn't make sense because it is too short. (They thought cyclists would be congesting the parking lot by driving there, unloading their bikes and then taking a two-minute bike ride.) People wouldn't use the trail because they don't use the existing trail between the course and Interstate 80 (this trail does not connect anything.) If part of the trail is covered to protect cyclists, "I wonder what they will do in there."

SABA members are encouraged to contact Mayor Fargo, even if they don't live in the City of Sacramento, and their Council member, if they are city residents, to support the direct route of the golf course trail. Check out SABA's letter on this topic at www.sacbike.org (the Website also has Council e-mail addresses). Contact Walt Seifert at bikesaba@pacbell.net for more information. ☼

Notes from the September 26 SACOG Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee Meeting

By Walt Seifert

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is creating subcommittees to develop criteria for a \$350 million bicycle/pedestrian grant program and to establish the scope of a regional pedestrian, bicycle and trails plan.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 3 has a new bike coordinator and is working on a bike map. The map will start up north in Glenn and Sierra Counties and move south. It may not be published, but may instead be used to identify gaps.

The city of Davis is starting work on the last phase of the Putah Creek undercrossing, which is a trail under the Union Pacific railroad tracks. To improve the bike commute between Davis to Sacramento, there are plans to add paved shoulders to County Road 32A and resurface the trail between Mace and County Road 105.

East of Placerville, another three miles of trail will be added to Camino.

El Dorado County is working on a bike map and plans to be involved with Walk and Bike to School next year.

Placer County and the city of Roseville have adopted bikeway master plans. Roseville is working on an online bike map.

Folsom Lake State Recreation Area is revising its master plan, including a review of trail designations and allowed uses. Invitations have been sent to stakeholder meetings which start this month.

The city of Folsom will be starting construction of 2.5 miles of trail along the Humbug-Willow Creek Parkway corridor in the next couple of months and a bike/pedestrian overcrossing of East Bidwell Street at Humbug Creek. A developer (Elliot Homes) will be building one mile of bike trail along the Folsom/Placerville rail trail corridor. The city is also updating its bikeway master plan and bikeway map.

The 50 Corridor Bicycle Advisory Group is working with multiple organizations to identify a bike route from El Dorado Hills to the Hazel light rail station. ☼

State Legislation

On Sunday, September 29, 2002, Governor Gray Davis vetoed Senate Bill 1555 (Torlakson), sponsored by the California Bicycle Coalition. This bill would have created the Pedestrian and Bicyclist Mobility and Safety Fund to provide grants to local governments, state agencies, and non-profit organizations to fund bicycle and pedestrian safety programs. Davis' veto message said, given the state budget, it was not a good time to start a new program and that use of the driver's license renewal fee may have violated the state Constitution which does not allow vehicle taxes to be used for safety purposes.

Earlier, Governor Davis vetoed Assembly Bill 2521 (La Suer), which would have required localities to use traffic-actuated signal devices that detect bicycles. Davis cited concerns about possible state costs related to reimbursing local governments. ☼

Transportation Plan Shorts Cyclists

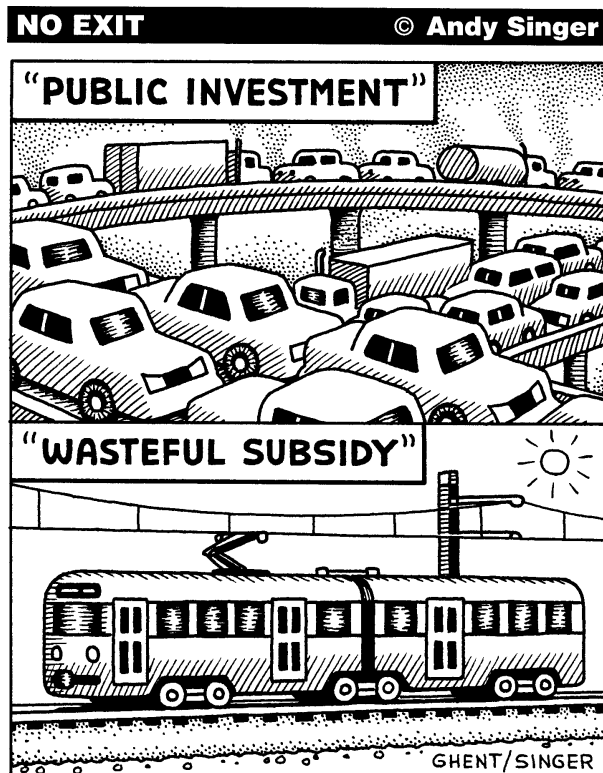
By Walt Seifert

The Sacramento Transportation Authority (STA) board snubbed cyclists as it approved projects for the next round of federal transportation funding. The STA board did not include a single bicycle project in the short-range, \$43 million Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program proposal it forwarded to the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG).

While SACOG staff had recommended that the MTIP mirror the funding allocations in the long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan approved this summer, the STA board decided to concentrate on “regional” projects (light rail and studies of beltways) and road rehabilitation, to the complete exclusion of bike/pedestrian projects.

The whole process is exceedingly fishy. The federal money being programmed does not yet exist and won't exist until a new federal transportation bill is passed next year. The earliest it will happen is the Fall of 2003. In addition, the only reason the phantom money is being programmed now instead of when funds will actually be available is the pending “lockdown” of transportation funding, effective January 1, 2003. The lockdown is the result of our region's air quality woes.

Once the lockdown is in place, only “exempt” transportation projects (projects that don't increase air pollution, like road maintenance, studies, and pedestrian and bicycle projects) can be approved or modified. The bottom line is that because our air quality stinks, the STA used the MTIP as a last minute opportunity to get additional polluting projects approved. Logic was turned on its head. ☼



ProBike/ProWalk Conference

By Walt Seifert

Sacramento was very well represented at the biennial ProBike/ProWalk Conference in September in St Paul, Minnesota. About a dozen Sacramentans, including cycling and walking advocates and representatives of state and local governments, were part of the 500 attendees from across the United States and Canada. Showing a distinct and promising trend, public health officials showed up in greater numbers than ever before.

Participants had the chance to attend nine different presentations out of nearly a one hundred offered, plus a number of plenary sessions. The conference was a great way to learn what others are doing and make connections with others who can help.

One good idea I'd like to use in Sacramento is the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation's (CBF) “Bike to Shop” program. Using volunteers, CBF took photos of the bike racks at all the area grocery stores. Many of the racks were hidden behind shopping carts, installed four inches from a wall, out back by the dumpsters, or of poor design. The CBF put together a cover letter for each store and attached the photo of the store's rack and guidelines for good bicycle parking. Many of the stores responded by making improvements. ☼

Letter, from page 8

pose them would be when they clearly affect cyclists, not before.

Let's try to be supportive of other advocacy groups when they speak for their membership. We may find we need their support in the future on areas of common concern.

Marian Ashe

Editor's note: SABA's position is in its July 24, 2002, letter posted on our Web site (www.sacbike.org). One of SABA's goals is to have a network of bike trails. There is a potential for a bike trail on the south bank of the American River, from downtown to Rancho Cordova. The south bank includes the area proposed for the off-leash park. We believe off-leash dog parks are incompatible with bike trails.

Exercise, from page 1

As a result, you save time. Of course, we've got a long way to go to make our communities better places to bike and walk. As the director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation said at the ProBike/ProWalk Conference, we need to be making our cities and neighborhoods not just walking-friendly, but “walking-seductive.”

Do we have a “cycling-seductive” environment in Sacramento? Hardly. In too many places, conditions aren't even adequate. I've opined that we shouldn't settle for adequacy for cycling programs and projects, but strive for excellence — make conditions “cycling-seductive.”

It's pretty clear from public health trends that we need to be much more visionary as we design our communities. As advocates, we need to ask for more, not settle for less. ☼

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
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- LambertWebWorks.com*
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- Power Inn BTA
- Regional Transit
- REI
- The Rest Stop*
- Rex Cycles
- Sacramento Air Quality Management District
- Sacramento Bike Hikers
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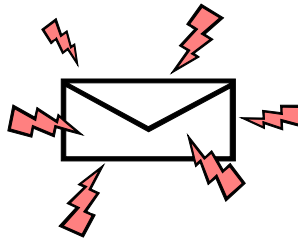
bikesaba@pacbell.net

or put it in an envelope to:

SABA

P.O. Box 1295

Sacramento, CA 95812-1295



Re: Off-leash dogs

As a member of SABA, I'm writing to express my disappointment in the position taken regarding an off-leash area for dogs at Paradise Beach. Being an advocacy group for cyclists, I think we should restrict our involvement to bicycle-related issues. Surely there are enough of those to keep us busy. Your position against the off-leash proposal was unnecessary, or possibly just uninformed. The area under consideration for the off-leash park was across the river from the bike trail. There would have been NO impact on cyclists. Any argument that 'this was just the beginning' and that there would be attempts to make additional off-leash areas elsewhere in the park, was specious.

If such proposals are presented in the future, the time to op-

Letter, page 7

Re: Motorists Who Don't Pay Attention

Thank you for describing the two unfortunate accidents involving motor vehicles and bicyclists in the September issue of The Squeaky Wheel. I believe the more information that is published and written about this issue, the better the chances for overall improving the safety of cyclists. In my opinion, a number of initiatives are important in this regard, including:

1. More emphasis needs to be placed on driver's education at the high school level regarding awareness of bicyclists and safe driving around cyclists.
 2. Legislation is needed to increase penalties against motorists who injure cyclists.
 3. Additional bike trails are needed. Eighty percent of my commute to work is on the bike trail and most of the 6,000 miles I ride each year are on the bike trail, which is probably one of the safest spots a bicyclist can be.
 4. Speeding and reckless driving need to be addressed. I've noticed that over the past few years more people speed and drive recklessly. This is really a sad statement on our society and is further reflected by my experience as an emergency room doctor where each day I see many people injured as a result of either speeding or alcohol intoxication. Some cyclists involved in motor vehicle accidents are now crippled for life.
 5. On-street conditions for cyclists need to be improved.
- The letter to the editor by Jim Coviello in the September newsletter summarizes this issue well. Many government planners appear to ignore bicyclists when considering transportation master plans.

Bob Derlet