



The Squeaky Wheel

Issue No. 10

Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

January 2004

From the President Many Challenges Ahead in 2004

By Lea Brooks

Before we look forward to the many challenges waiting for us in 2004, let's consider the significance of SABA's major achievement in the previous year: incorporation.

As Executive Director Walt Seifert announces in this newsletter (see story on page 3), SABA's long journey to incorporate has been completed. Spearheaded by Walt and accomplished through the generosity of pro bono attorneys, incorporation means that SABA is officially a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization.

With the strong support of the American Lung Association, SABA was formed in 1991 by a group of bicycle enthusiasts who recognized that there was no consistent representation of bicycling interests in the Sacramento area. The intention was always to incorporate, but our informal group kept placing a higher priority on issues facing cyclists. Incorporation stayed on the back burner.

When Walt became SABA's first employee in 1998, there was a renewed push to incorporate. But again, we kept focusing on issues. There was always a meeting to attend, a public hearing where testimony was crucial, another letter to write. Incorporation is indeed an accomplishment.

SABA also owes deep thanks to its new Board of Directors, which is defining how the organization will operate, including administration and planning. This work includes adopting duties and responsibilities for each board member and establishing committees, including Executive and Nominating committees.

President, page 3

Tower Bridge Cost Soars

By Walt Seifert

SABA rarely opposes a project that improves conditions for cyclists, especially when the project tries to fix a longstanding problem. Yet three years ago, SABA opposed the Tower Bridge sidewalk widening because of its extraordinary \$5 million price tag. SABA urged the Sacramento City Council to look for a less expensive way to solve the problem of poor conditions for cyclists and pedestrians on the bridge over the Sacramento River that connects the cities of Sacramento and West Sacramento.

At issue is the historical integrity of the bridge. Now after years of discussions between the federal government and Sacramento and West Sacramento, which are co-sponsoring the Tower Bridge bicycle and pedestrian improvement project, estimated project costs have ballooned to an incredible \$9 million. West Sacramento Mayor Christopher Cabaldon was quoted in a Sacramento Bee article, "This is shaping up to be the most expensive sidewalk in the region."

It's hard to like something at \$9 million when you thought it was too expensive at \$5 million. A lot of bike lane and bike trail miles can be had for \$9 million. We believe there are reasonable alternatives to what is turning into the Tower Bridge sidewalk boondoggle — like simply restriping the lanes on the bridge. We will be making our views known again.

You can read SABA's June 30, 2003, letter suggesting guidelines for the Tower Bridge and our latest advocacy letters at <http://sacbike.org/letters/>. ☉

SABA's 2003 Accomplishments

By Walt Seifert

When I sat down to write about bike-related events in 2003 and SABA's activities and influence, I had the feeling that not much had really happened to help local cyclists. But after thumbing through back issues of *The Squeaky Wheel*, it was clear that a great deal had occurred. While not many "bricks and mortar" bike projects opened or even started construction, significant steps were taken on many fronts — and that includes the Sacramento riverfront.

The Sacramento area and SABA do indeed have a lot to show for a year's worth of effort. In addition to SABA's membership growth and nonprofit incorporation described elsewhere, SABA (and local governments and officials) can be proud of the following achievements:

- Very bike-friendly Sacramento Riverfront Plan approved by cities of Sacramento and West Sacramento
- Sacramento Regional Transit (RT) allows four bikes on single car light rail trains
- RT allows more bikes on last bus or light rail car operated on route for the day
- Quarterly clean ups of SABA's adopted Mile 8 in American River Parkway
- Planting and clean ups of SABA's adopted 20th Street Connector
- Draft of Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) regional bicycle, pedestrian and trails master plan
- Draft guidelines for state office bike facilities and programs
- New and successful Bike to Work Commuter Bike Challenge and Bike to Work Day
- Yolo Short Line right of way purchased by West Sacramento for multiuse trail

Accomplishments, page 6

SABA Mission

*SABA represents bicyclists.
Our aim is more and safer trips by bike.*

SABA Vision

*Bicycling for everyday transportation is common
because it is safe, convenient and desirable.*

SABA's Folsom Chapter, the Folsom Area Bicycle Advocates (FABA), meets at 7 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

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SABA Web Site

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SABActions

Meetings

SABA members attended these meetings:

- Bridging I-5 Workshop
- Sacramento Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative plenary and environmental group sessions

Letters

SABA sent letters to:

- Sacramento Bee on raising gas taxes
- Councilmember Steve Cohn about bike lanes on H Street
- Sacramento Regional Transit about routing of the Downtown Natomas Airport light rail line
- Freeport Regional Water Authority on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Freeport Project

Other

- Attended workshop on "Measuring Smart Growth" sponsored by Fehr & Peers Associates

Jan. 27 Meeting is a Potluck

SABA's quarterly general membership meeting will feature public service announcements (PSAs) promoting bicycle transportation and safety that were written, filmed, edited, produced and distributed by FABA member Dave Cassel. Truly a labor of love that you should enjoy viewing in case you haven't seen them on Access Sacramento and KVIE. The PSAs, and a Buses & Bikes Sharing the Road video will lead into a general discussion of how SABA can better promote safety on our roadways for all users.

The meeting begins at 6 p.m. in the American Lung Association's large conference room at 909 12th Street. 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.

Agenda

- 6:00 p.m. Potluck and Introductions (Lea Brooks).
6:30 p.m. Executive Director's Report (Walt Seifert).
6:45 p.m. Public Service Announcements that promote bike safety and general discussion of how SABA can better promote safety (Lea and Walt).
8:00 p.m. Adjourn

SABA Pizza Party — Pizza, Soda and Doin' Stuff

The monthly SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party will be Thursday, Feb. 12 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at SABA Sutterville HQ, 909 12th Street. We plan on talking about cool bike stuff, sharing heartwarming bicycle stories, and eating hot pizza. How could you ever stand to miss such a multi-thermal get-together?



SABA/Community Calendar

Wednesday, Jan. 28, 7-9 p.m. City of Sacramento Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update

Belle Cooledge Community Center, 5699 South Land Park Drive. Jointly convened by Citizen's Advisory Committee for Parks & Recreation and Youth Commission. The public can participate by making comments to the conveners. Draft Master Plan is at www.cityofsacramento.org/parksandrecreation/masterplan/

President, from page 1

We are fortunate to have Aron Livingston as one of our directors. Aron was the catalyst behind SABA's first meeting in July 1991. He had recently moved to Sacramento from Washington, D.C., where he was director of the Washington Area Bicyclists Association, and recognized the need for a bicycle advocacy group in California's capital. Thanks for staying involved, Aron! The other board members are Beverly Taylor, John Whelan, Skip Amerine, Ken Murray and Tony Powers.

SABA is in transition. Please be patient as we make the change from an informal group to a formal organization. Members will be informed in the coming months how these changes will affect them.

One very exciting change we can announce now is the hiring of Larry Robinson, who is truly one of Sacramento's most enthusiastic and knowledgeable cyclists, as our volunteer coordinator (see story on page 4). Larry will help us match the talents of our members who want to be actively involved with specific tasks that need to be accomplished to increase the number of individuals who use bicycling for transportation and to make bicycling safer, more convenient and desirable.

These tasks are considerable. The following is a list of some of the many issues that will keep SABA busy in 2004:

- A stable source of funding for the 23-mile stretch of the American River Parkway between Discovery Park and Hazel Avenue that is under Sacramento County jurisdiction. (The Parkway from Hazel Avenue to Beals Point is under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Parks and Recreation.) This critical issue is not new, but a solution has been elusive. At stake is the Parkway's very existence as we know it today. A chronic Sacramento County funding crunch exacerbated by incorporation of the cities of Citrus Heights, Elk Grove and Rancho Cordova has put funding of our beloved Parkway into great peril. As widely reported in the news media as this newsletter was going to press, the county is considering eliminating the Parkway budget, which would mean no maintenance and security. This option is simply not acceptable. The Parkway is our bicycle freeway that is just as important to the transportation network of Sacramento County as Highways 50 and 80. The Parkway is our quality of life, our reason for living in Sacramento. Stay tuned.
- An education and enforcement effort aimed at both motorists and cyclists to make it safer to bicycle. SABA has long discussed the importance of educating both motorists and cyclists about their respective responsibilities on the road to raise awareness and improve behavior.
- Conversion of downtown Sacramento streets. The city of Sacramento has been studying — for what seems like forever — which downtown streets should be converted to two way or reduced to one way with two car lanes and a bike lane or lanes. In the meantime, cyclists and pedestrians are at the mercy of motorists who are driving bigger and bigger vehicles and exhibiting aggressive behavior even when there is no traffic — and that's when they're actually paying attention rather than talking on the cell phone, eating or being preoccupied with their radios. The City Council created the three-lane, one-way streets that encourage speeding and other poor behavior by motorists. The study phase has

dragged on far too long, especially when the answer to safe and sane streets is obvious: conversion.

- Yard debris in the streets of the city of Sacramento and garbage cans in the bike lanes in both the city and Sacramento County. This longtime practice may be popular among residents, but it's dangerous to cyclists.
- The extension of Sacramento Regional Transit light rail to Sunrise Boulevard. The extension will be completed this summer. (Light rail will be extended to Hazel Avenue and the city of Folsom by 2005). SABA and FABAA have offered numerous suggestions for the design of the light rail stations along the extension to make them convenient and safe to reach by bicycle and by foot. SABA was also very much involved in the construction of two bikeways that provide safe and convenient bicycle access to the Sunrise and Hazel stations: the Sunrise Corridor Bikeway and the Highway 50 bicycle/pedestrian overcrossing at Aerojet Road. We expect to see marked increases in the use of these currently under-utilized bikeways when the light rail stations open.
- Minimum standards for bicycle commuting facilities in state offices. This effort has been on hold for several months due to the recall of Gray Davis and election of Arnold Schwarzenegger. We felt it best to wait until the dust had settled a bit to pursue the goal of requiring minimum standards for all buildings where state employees work that cannot be reduced at the whim of a building manager or tenant. The spark for this effort was the Department of Health Services' embarrassing policies at its new East End Complex in downtown Sacramento that actually discourage bicycle commuting. I'm sorry to report that the lone bicycle parking cage that serves the East End's four separate buildings, each of which occupies a city block, remains way under-utilized, not for lack of interest but because of barriers, excuses and an absence of leadership at Health Services. Minimum standards are needed to prevent departments like Health Services from accepting poorly designed and inconvenient bicycle facilities and adopting policies that discourage state workers from pedaling to work.

These are just a few of the issues that will keep us busy as we strive to make Sacramento a cycling capital. ☸

SABA Makes Grade as Nonprofit Nonpareil

By Walt Seifert

It's been a long time coming, but with the help of a few friends it happened at last. The IRS has determined SABA is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. While SABA has always operated as a nonprofit, the official IRS recognition of SABA as a 501(c)(3) public benefit charitable organization brings with it a number of benefits for the organization and its members.

SABA is now eligible for more grant funding. SABA qualifies for nonprofit postage rates. Contributions to SABA are tax deductible, retroactive to SABA's April 4, 2003, incorporation date.

If your safe deposit box is clogged with appreciated stocks,

Nonprofit, page 6

It's Official: Folsom is Bicycle-Friendly

Congratulations to FABA, whose efforts were rewarded Dec. 9 when the League of American Bicyclists presented the city of Folsom with the silver-level Bicycle-Friendly Community Award. Amanda Jones, transportation coordinator for the city of Palo Alto and a member of the League's Board of Directors, presented the award to the Folsom City Council.



*Folsom Mayor Steve Miklos accepts LAB award from Amanda Jones
Photo by Dave Cassel*

A League news release about the award noted that Folsom was honored because of its longstanding commitment to providing safe accommodations and facilities for bicyclists, and its efforts to encourage bicycle travel for transportation and recreation. Through policy and design, Folsom has focused on increasing opportunities for physical activity and is a model in America's efforts to reduce obesity. Folsom was granted the silver-level award for its evident dedication to making bicycling safer and more enjoyable for its residents, and for promoting bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation. A remarkable 95 percent of Folsom's arterial streets have bike lanes or paved shoulders.

Each quarter, city staff and bicycle advocates come together for a bike ride through an area of Folsom to take note of problems and potential improvements for cyclists. The city's well attended annual Bike-to-Work Day fosters steady improvement in the bike facilities and policies provided by local employers, who seek to be designated the most bicycle-friendly employer of the year. Children in Folsom sign a bicycle contract stating they understand and will follow all safety rules and municipal laws related to bicycling. Law enforcement officers help to reinforce this safety effort by paying special attention to bicyclists' behavior at the start of the school year.

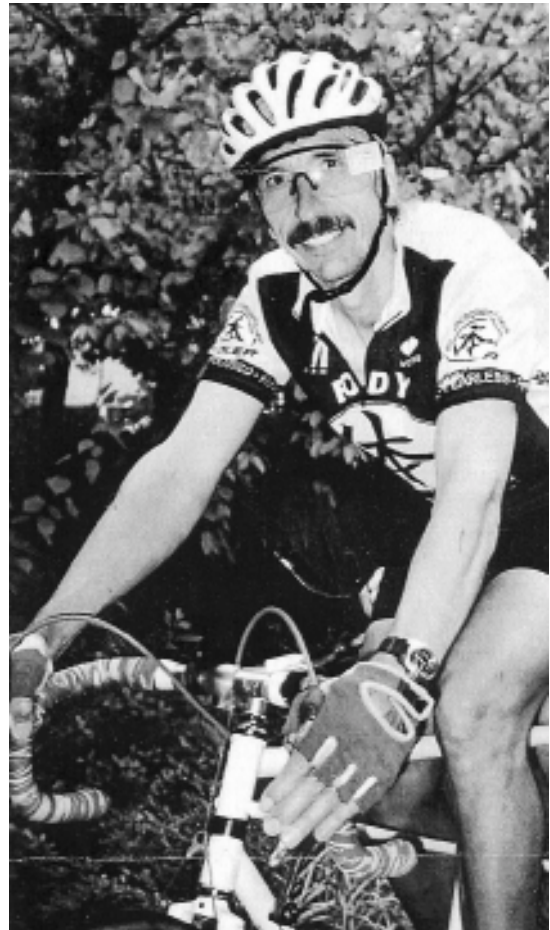
The silver-level award is the third highest prize in the League's national awards program. A total of seven American communities have earned the silver designation. Just three

Folsom, page 5

SABA Adds to Staff

SABA welcomes Larry Robinson as its new volunteer coordinator. Larry is familiar to many for his longtime dedication to cycling and involvement with the Sacramento Bike Hikers and Sacramento Wheelmen, the American Lung Association-Sacramento Emigrant Trails Bike Trek, dozens of completions of the Davis Double Century and former ownership of The Rest Stop.

We're extremely grateful to have Larry with us. Larry's position is part-time, but SABA will be sure to make better use of the advocacy interests and talents of its members with Larry on the job. ☼



*SABA's newest employee, Larry Robinson.
Photo by Yvone Romero*

Landmark Trailhead Sign Assured

SABA members responded generously to the year-end appeal for designing and constructing a landmark, arched sign at the 20th Street Connector/Sacramento Northern trailhead near the Blue Diamond Almond factory. Members contributed more than \$5,000. Thanks to all of you who contributed.

The sign still needs to be designed, be approved by the city, get permitted and built — minor details all — so we're not yet making any promises on when it will appear. ☼

Welcome new members!

Nancy Arkelian
 Donald Black
 Cycle California!
 Bob Chan
 Kent Didion
 Ellen Dillinger
 Ronald Hall
 David A. Herbert
 Eric J. Herboth
 Dean Hunt
 Andrew Kincaid
 Ken McKowen
 Robert McVicker
 Elsa Nervik
 Lisa Noling & Hill Snellings
 Ronald E. Reafs
 Wayne Riley
 Ken Rothaus
 Warren D. Smith
 Mackenzie Tysell
 Dan Wilkinson
 Anne Williams

Folsom Area Bicycle Advocates (FABA) News

El Dorado Hills Group Works on Bikeway Plan

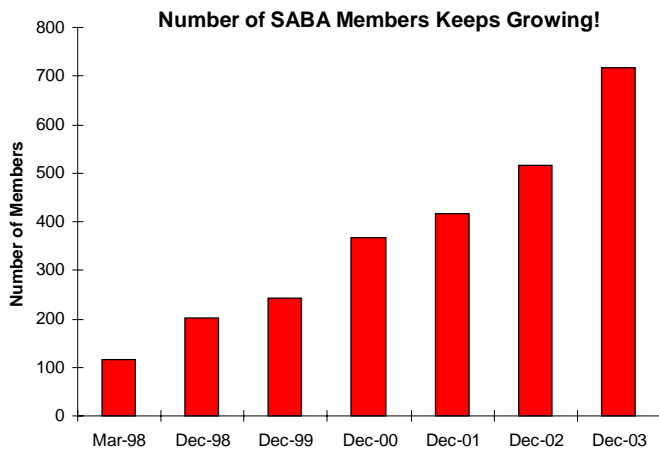
By Lee Weigand

El Dorado Hills has formed a local committee of individuals interested in developing a community-wide bikeway and trail master plan. This group is headed up by Dianna Hillyer, director of planning for the El Dorado Hills Community Services District. The group held two planning meetings in 2003 with the help and input of guest Jerry Barton (of the El Dorado County Transportation Commission) and individuals from various parts of the community interested in promoting multiuse trails and bikeways.

The group decided that an initial inventory of existing trails, bike lanes, bike paths and current street conditions needed to be cataloged. The local area was divided up among the team members to fill out current street condition survey sheets along with any accompanying photographs possible. The initial findings were shared with team members in December and will continue to be updated and shared when they meet again this month.

The goal of the committee is to come up with the existing trails, bike paths and street conditions to build upon a master community plan for future connections, enhancements and development of bike paths/lanes and trails connecting major activity centers throughout the area. Once the master plan for El Dorado Hills is developed, it will be submitted to the county for inclusion in its overall county bikeway master plan which was last updated in 1976 and is currently being revised.

Historically, residents in El Dorado Hills have expressed a strong desire for hiking trails and open space. This desire was most recently reasserted in a community survey that was conducted in Fall 2002 and found that 45 percent of the respondents supported more trails and open space and 51 percent supported reducing traffic congestion. With the help of a concrete master plan for bikeways and trails, we hope to fulfill these community desires in the form of funding for future enhancements and developments that promote hiking and biking in El Dorado Hills and the surrounding area as well as increasing the quality of life for the local residents. ☼



Membership Milestone

SABA marked another membership milestone in 2003, gaining 200 members during the year and reaching a total of more than 700 members. With our bike club and family members, it's no exaggeration to say that SABA now directly represents thousands of area cyclists. It is the literal truth. And, of course, whether they know it or not, SABA represents the hundreds of thousands of area residents who ride a bike.

There are a number of bike advocacy groups across the country that are much larger than SABA. But most, including the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition and the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, are located in much larger cities or represent entire states, such as the California Bicycle Coalition and Texas Bicycle Coalition.

Special thanks are again due to Matt Kuzins of Kuzins & Kumpany for his great help in the direct mail campaigns that made the membership growth possible. ☼

Folsom, continued from page 4

cities — Portland and Corvallis, Oregon, and Palo Alto — have received the second highest gold-level award. The League has not yet bestowed the highest-level platinum award on any community. The League's Bicycle-Friendly Community Campaign is a national grassroots effort to increase the number of trips made by bike, promote physical fitness and help make communities more livable. The campaign works in the most effective way possible — town by town, city by city — to encourage bicycling and achieve a bicycle-friendly America.

Visit www.bicyclefriendlycommunity.org to view the entire list of award-winning communities and learn more about the program. The League of American Bicyclists promotes bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation, and works through advocacy and education for a bicycle-friendly America on behalf of its 300,000 members and affiliates. ☼

Accomplishments, from page 1

- Putah Creek Union Pacific Railroad bike undercrossing in Davis
- Pavement markings at American River bike trail access points
- Dry Creek Parkway Plan approved by Sacramento County
- H Street Bridge (west end) bike undercrossing started
- City of Sacramento adopts bike-friendly street standards
- Bike/pedestrian overcrossing of I-80 (west of I-5) design started
- Folsom receives League of American Bicyclists' Bike Friendly Community Silver Award
- FABA helps build East Bidwell rail-trail bridge
- El Dorado County approves Southern Pacific rail corridor plan between Placerville and Sacramento County
- Progress made on two-way conversion in Midtown Sacramento and on 21st Street and Freeport Boulevard, as well as the three-lane to two-lane conversions of P and Q streets
- SABA adopts new mission and vision statements

There were many other projects and plans, too numerous to list, completed in the region.

Sometimes "progress" is not moving backward — not losing what was already there or not making things worse. Unfortunately, some of SABA's work had to be defensive in nature. SABA reacted several times to poor project decisions or proposals, or to poor work. Avoiding negatives can be just as important as promoting more positive projects.

SABA's prodding helped make the new Arena Boulevard interchange less dangerous for cyclists.

SABA was instrumental in saving bike lanes on an Elkhorn Boulevard widening project.

El Dorado County responded to SABA's and others' complaints about the poorly executed and dangerous repaving of Green Valley Road. The county fixed the problem.

SABA once again received recognition from an outside organization. The League of Women Voters graciously presented SABA with its Civic Contribution Award.

SABA doesn't operate in a vacuum. And, since we don't call the shots, we rely on the kindness of friends and colleagues and, sometimes, strangers. We need to be thankful to the RT board and staff; to SABA's dedicated volunteers; to Supervisor Roger Dickinson for Elkhorn Boulevard; to SACOG staff for Bike to Work support, work on the regional bike plan and bike funding opportunities; to city of Sacramento Alternate Modes Coordinator Ed Cox, Caltrans and the city of Sacramento for the Arena Boulevard interchange modifications and to Cox for great progress on Natomas and south city bikeway planning; to Sacramento County Alternate Modes Coordinator Bob Ireland; to the city of Folsom for pursuing top notch trail projects; and to many others who make the decisions and control the purse strings.

Also, it's gratifying that SABA is consulted as a matter of course by many government agencies and its sage advice generally respected, even when it isn't always agreed with. Among others, we can thank Sacramento County Public Works and Parks and Recreation, Caltrans, SACOG, the city of Sacramento, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA), California Department of Parks and Recreation, and others for including

SABA in such major efforts as:

- City of Sacramento central city two-way restoration study
- Sacramento River Corridor Floodway Planning Forum
- Sacramento County Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative
- Caltrans Highway 50 HOV Lane Corridor Advisory Committee
- SACOG Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- American River Parkway Plan Update
- Measure A Advisory Committee
- Folsom Lake General Plan Update
- Mobility Strategies for County Corridors Technical Advisory Committee

Finally, it has to be noted that SABA was unsuccessful on occasion. The Haggin Oaks Golf Course bike trail, the No. 1 off-street bike project in the city of Sacramento, was stopped by the City Council because of poorly-founded objections by a few golfers — even though the council had previously approved the project and the federal government had funded it. Whether this "suspended" project ever is reopened again remains to be seen.

(Meanwhile, golfers would probably be interested in learning that a project under consideration by the county Mobility Strategies Study is a "trench and cover" extension of Fulton Avenue down the middle of the Haggin Oaks golf course complex. This would require excavation of right of way for a four-lane road that later would be covered over. Maybe golfers would find construction of a 100-foot wide trench to be less disruptive and objectionable than having a bike trail.)

SABA also urged the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to reopen the closed Folsom Dam Road for limited use by cyclists and pedestrians, but so far our request has lost out to national security concerns.

Overall, 2003 was a good year for cycling. We look forward to 2004 being even better. ☺

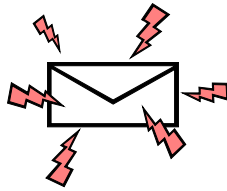
Nonprofit, from page 3

littered with unclipped bonds or saturated with other securities, SABA now presents a wise way to do some financial house-keeping and contribute to an organization working for your safety and to a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable future.

Special thanks go to Michelle Hallsten and Thomas Morton of law firm Pillsbury Winthrop LLP. Their generous pro bono assistance and guidance got SABA through the thickets of the IRS and Franchise Tax Board tax-exempt applications. The work originally started when Hallsten was employed by Gray Cary Ware & Freidenrich LLP, and while there, Chad Muilenburg ably assisted with SABA's incorporation.

Some of SABA's membership response forms indicated that dues are not tax deductible. That statement is no longer true. Generally dues, like contributions, are tax deductible. According to IRS Publication 526, membership dues are deductible "in the amount that is more than the value of the benefits you receive." If dues are \$75 or less annually, benefits such as discounts on the purchase of goods can be disregarded. As with other tax matters, you might want to check IRS publications yourself or talk with a tax adviser for complete details. ☺

Letters to the Editor



Editor:

I greatly appreciated the Tip of the Month in the November issue. I too have felt patronized by motorists waving at me to give me an inappropriate "right of way." This happens most frequently at four-way stops. My guess is that the motorist expected me to blast through the intersection, so when I stopped, it caught the driver off-guard. Unfortunately of course, all of us have observed guerrilla cyclists who do zoom through intersections without regard for legality or courtesy, so there could be some basis for the driver's uncertainty about my intentions. Anyway, as David suggests, I look away, or perhaps look down while I grab the water bottle for a quick gulp.

Another pet peeve has to do with motorists making right turns in front of me. As I am riding along, a motorist passes me, then comes to a stop at the corner, then waits for me to pass (on the right, usually), then turns. I find this behavior nerve-wracking because if I pass on the right, I know that I am putting myself in danger. Sometimes I anticipate the maneuver and go around on the vehicle's left side, or I can stop behind the vehicle. I don't understand why motorists do this because they are not saving themselves any time. All I can figure is that they underestimate my speed and want to make sure they don't hit me by mistake. I wish that instead, they would just slow down, follow me to the corner and make a safe right turn.

Bill Dean

We want to hear from you!

Preferably e-mail your letter to: saba@sacbike.org

or mail it to: **SABA**

P.O. Box 1295

Sacramento, CA 95812-1295

Letters may be edited for length or clarity.

Nominate Clean Air Champions



The American Lung Association of Sacramento-Emigrant Trails requests your help in identifying Clean Air Champions for its 2004 Clean Air Awards. If you know an individual, business, public agency or community group who goes above and beyond to help clean the air in this region, nominate them today. Winners will be recognized at the 28th Annual Clean Air Awards Luncheon on May 18. Nominations are due Jan. 30. For a nomination form, call (916) 444-5864 or visit <http://www.saclung.org/>. ☼

Tip of the Month Don't Get "Burned" by a "Hot" Bike!

By David Takemoto-Weerts

The high cost of bikes these days tempts many of us to consider the "pre-owned" market for our next set of wheels. The Internet, yard sales, flea markets and bike swap meets are all good sources of a wide range of machines. However, there is always the threat that a bike of uncertain ancestry may actually be stolen. Purchasing a "hot" bike (in the negative sense of the term) is clearly an act to avoid. Being in possession of stolen property, even if done out of ignorance, puts you at risk of being convicted of a felony.

To prevent such legal faux pas, follow these steps:

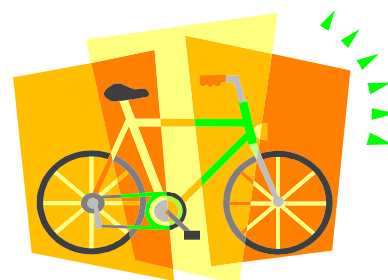
- Be wary of any bike being offered at an "unbelievable" price. Some bike thieves are addicts looking for a quick 50 bucks to score their next fix.
- Look for telltale signs of a stolen bike: repainted, often poorly; all labels, decals and identifying stickers removed; a lock still on the bike; swapped-out components; and most importantly a filed-off or otherwise illegible serial number. Serial numbers are often on the bottom bracket. If you find no serial number on a frame, but instead find obvious file marks or other evidence of number removal, don't buy the bike. Inform local police.

If you *do* decide to purchase the used bike, be sure to take these precautions:

- Ask the seller for a receipt. It can be a simple hand-written document, but be sure to include the bike description and serial number. Most importantly, ask to see the seller's ID and address and record that information, such as a driver's license number, on the form. If the seller balks at any of this, cancel the sale.
- Once you take possession of the bike, take it to your local police station and ask them to check it in the California Law Enforcement Tracking System (CLETS). Be aware that if it's on the stolen bike list, it will be confiscated and the police will ask a lot of questions. That's when the receipt can provide evidence of your innocence, and will be essential in getting your money back!

While all this may sound like a lot of work, it's certainly better than being caught with stolen goods. Many of us have been victims of bike theft, and your actions just might bring one of those miscreants to justice. ☼

David Takemoto-Weerts is the University of California, Davis, bike coordinator and a League of American Bicyclists' cycling instructor.



SABA
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- Air Resources Board
- American Lung Association
- American River Bicycle* (Marconi Ave.)
- American River Bicycle* (Riverside Blvd.)
- American Warp Drive
- The Bicycle Business
- Bicycles Plus*
- Bob's Cycle Center
- Body Concepts
- Chaney Chiropractic
- City Bicycle Works*
- Cycle California! magazine
- Davis Bike Club
- Fehr & Peers Associates
- 50 Corridor TMA
- Franchise Tax Board
- Gary Brustin, LLP
- Gregorini & Associates
- Hannan Specialties
- The Hoyt Co.
- Hull & Honeycutt Marketing and Design
- Inside Publications
- Ken's Bike & Ski
- Kuzins & Kumpany
- Law Offices of K. Greg Petersen
- LambertWebWorks.com*
- Natomas Bike Shop*
- North Natomas TMA
- Power Inn BTA
- REI
- The Rest Stop*
- Rex Cycles
- Sacramento Air Quality Management District
- Sacramento Area Council of Governments
- Sacramento Bike Hikers
- Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op
- Sacramento TMA
- Sacramento Wheelmen
- Savoyard Bed & Breakfast*
- Sierra Engineering
- SMUD
- South Natomas TMA
- Sun City Roseville Cycling Club
- UC Davis Transportation & Parking Services

Electronic Newsletters, Anyone?

Save a tree and save SABA printing and mailing costs! To sign up, send a message, subject: "Electronic newsletter" with name and preferred e-mail address to saba@sacbike.org. You will then receive a monthly email message with links to various articles of interest.