



The Squeaky Wheel

Issue No. 25

Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

April 2005

From the President Ron Vicari County's New Coordinator

By Lea Brooks

When Ron Vicari returned to his boyhood home of Carmichael two years ago to work for the Sacramento County Department of Transportation. After being gone for 15 years, he knew exactly where he wanted to live: As close as possible to the American River Parkway.

"I grew up on the Parkway," explained Ron, who moved a few blocks from Arden Pond with his wife, Jane, and their three children, Caitlin, 5½, Amber, 3½, and Ronnie, 1½. Ron, a registered civil engineer, became the county's alternative modes coordinator in March. He succeeded Bob Ireland, who retired last month.

Ron, who pedals to work on the Parkway—a round-trip of 26 miles—brings to the job experience in designing and managing bicycle projects in addition to a passion for bicycling.

Prior to his new position, Ron was the design engineer for a 1.8-mile extension of the Sacramento Northern Bikeway from M Street to Elverta Road in Rio Linda. Bids to construct the ex-

President, page 3

Bike Commute Week & Million Mile Month

By Sue Teranishi

Whether you are an experienced bicycle commuter, a weekend recreational cyclist, a utility cyclist doing errands or someone who is just contemplating that first bike ride, register for 2005 Bike Commute Week and help us collectively log one million miles during the month of May!

All bicyclists in the six-county area served by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)—El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba—are invited to register and log

their cycling miles in May. You can register at www.bikecommuteweek.com beginning April 11 and log your miles beginning May 1.

The first 4,000 cyclists who register and pledge to cycle at least 50 miles

Commute, page 3

Clear Channel Acts

By Walt Seifert

Clear Channel radio, in a gratifyingly fast and decisive fashion, acted to minimize the damage done by local radio host Mark Williams and reporter Jamie Coffee when they made on-the-air comments about threatening cyclists with cars.

Clear Channel

The two were suspended for a week by the

Aftermath...

local Clear Channel stations KSTE and KFBK. KSTE apologized for the comments, aired Share the Road public service announcements, posted bike safety information on its Web site and invited the Bike Hikers to its "Yeah Baby" event at CalExpo. The incident received coverage in the Sacramento Bee in columns by transportation and radio reporters. Jeff Holden, Clear Channel's regional manager, was quoted by The Bee saying, "We don't tolerate advocating violence against cyclists or any other group. And we've taken very quick corrective measures to make sure our staff and the community are educated on bicycle safety."

In 2003, some Clear Channel Radio personalities had made similar threatening remarks about cyclists at stations in Houston, Cleveland and Raleigh.

Clear Channel, 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 you may e-mail FABA at faba@tomatoweb.com.

The Squeaky Wheel

The Squeaky Wheel is published monthly by the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates, 909 12th Street, Suite 110, Sacramento, CA 95814. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to SABA, P.O. Box 1295, Sacramento CA 95812-1295.

SABA Board Members and Officers

Lea Brooks, President
Tony Powers, Vice President
Aron Livingston, Treasurer
John Whelan, Secretary
Skip Amerine

SABA Staff

Executive Director: Walt Seifert (saba@sacbike.org)
Volunteer Coordinator: Larry Robinson
volunteer@sacbike.org

Contacting SABA

Phone: (916) 444-6600
E-mail: saba@sacbike.org
Web Site: <http://www.sacbike.org>



ROSEVILLE

PedalSafe! Presents Roseville Bikefest 2005

Learn about bicycle safety, test your skills and have fun at **Roseville Bikefest 2005**, Roseville's annual bicycle safety event. Bring your bicycle and helmet to Spanger Elementary School, 699 Shasta Street, on May 21, from 9 a.m. to noon for action and entertainment.

This hands-on event is a terrific place to have your helmet inspected for proper fit, have your bicycle inspected for basic safety, test your skills on an obstacle course, see riding demonstrations, and receive free gifts. Best of all, you'll have a great time.

Admission is **FREE**. Simply bring a signed registration form with you or register the day of the event (participants under 18 must have a parent's or guardian's signature). Registration forms are available on line at www.roseville.ca.us/transportation or from the City's Transportation Division, 311 Vernon Street, Roseville.

Roseville Bikefest 2005 is sponsored by PedalSafe!, the City of Roseville's bicycle safety committee; Kaiser Permanente; Roseville Kiwanis; and Placer County SAFE KIDS Coalition. For more information call the Transportation Division at 774-5365. ☘

SABA Pizza Party — Pizza, Soda and Doin' Stuff

The monthly SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party will be Thursday, May 12 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at SABA Smog City HQ, 909 12th Street.

Celebrate your mileage during April and pray for continued dry weather with your fellow bicycling enthusiasts at a pizza party.

It's a chance to meet fellow enthusiasts and carbo-load for that long ride on the weekend.



Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates Membership

Do you want to be a part of an organization that is doing things for cyclists and the community? Come to our web site: www.sacbike.org, download an application, and mail to:

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

President page 1

tension are scheduled to be opened on May 19, Bike to Work Day, and the project will be completed this summer.

He was also project manager of the widening of Elkhorn Boulevard from Watt Avenue to Don Julio Boulevard, which will maintain the class 2 bicycle lanes, and the County-wide Sidewalk Continuity Project. That project completes sidewalks in neighborhoods that were largely built before sidewalks were required.

As alternative modes coordinator, he manages implementation of the City-County Bicycle Master Plan in the county's jurisdiction and serves as staff to the City-County Bicycle Advisory Committee along with City Alternative Modes Coordinator Ed Cox. He also



works on some transit projects and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Pedestrian Master Plans with his supervisor, senior civil engineer Dave Franke. The ADA plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in January 2005 and a draft version of the pedestrian plan will be available for public comment this spring.

Ron, who earned his degree from Chico State University and worked as a consultant in Redding before returning to Sacramento, is excited about his new position. "Being a cyclist, I see the benefits of proper planning and safe streets for bicycle commuting. Living off Watt Avenue, I also see the need to shift people to alternative modes of transportation to ease the traffic congestion."

He is looking forward to overseeing two major projects: an update of the Bikeway Master Plan and development of a new map of Sacramento County bikeways.

Ron said he was inspired about the possibilities of his new job by the speakers and exhibits at a bicycle and pedestrian conference in late March in South Lake Tahoe sponsored by the Nevada Department of Transportation.

"Sacramento County is at the forefront with develop-

President, page 6

Traffic Calming is Focus Of April 27 Potluck

The main topic of discussion at SABA's quarterly general membership meeting on April 27 is traffic-calming devices. Our guest speakers will be Kate Binning, program specialist for the city of Sacramento who will give a PowerPoint presentation, and Lupe Rodriguez, a project engineer for Sacramento County.

The meeting begins at 6 p.m. in the American Lung Association's large conference room at 909 12th Street. Guests are welcome and bicycles are allowed in the conference room.

SABActions

Meetings

SABA members attended these meetings:

- Sacramento Bike Hikers membership
- Sacramento Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative Working Group, Environmental Group and Plenary
- American River Parkway Plan Update Committee meeting and public workshop
- Bike Commute Week Planning
- SACOG Bike/Ped Subcommittee on trail rules
- Rancho Cordova bikeway workshop
- Sacramento County consultants on street lighting
- Riverfront plan consultant on funding

Letters

SABA sent letters to:

- Clear Channel Radio

Other

- 20th Street/Sacramento Northern trail cleanup
- Smart Cycling clinics at Paratransit and Cal/EPA

Commute, page 1

during May will be eligible to pick up a free Bike Commute Week T-shirt at selected local bike shops. Bicycling to work/school, for errands and for recreation all count toward the million mile goal!

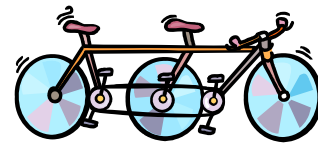
Many events will be taking place throughout the region during Bike Commute Week May 16-22, including:

Wednesday, May 18: A rally in Davis.

Thursday, May 19: Sacramento BikeFest on the north steps of the State Capitol.

Friday, May 20: 50 Corridor Rally in Folsom.

See the Web site for more details about these events and pedal pools, groups of cyclists who ride together.☘



Please bring a main dish, salad or dessert to share. SABA will supply plates, napkins and utensils.

April Potluck Agenda

- 6:00 p.m. Potluck.
- 6:30 p.m. Introductions (Lea Brooks, President).
- 6:45 p.m. Guest speakers Kate Binning and Lupe Rodriguez, followed by question and answer session.
- 7:45 p.m. Executive Director's Report (Walt Seifert).
- 8:00 p.m. Adjourn

Upset with Traffic Calming?

By Chris Halm

Here are a few problems with the way the city of Sacramento has implemented traffic calming and my thoughts on what needs to be done to make it safer for cyclists.

The city installed a traffic circle at Capitol Avenue and 26th Street. Many cyclists think this has made this intersection more dangerous because cars tend to veer into the path of cyclists and even try to beat cyclists to the circle so they don't have to share the road. Here are two changes that could make this intersection safer for everyone:

- Convert the traffic circle to a roundabout. A roundabout requires all traffic to yield to traffic already in the circle. Currently, motorists feel free to breeze right through the circle at high speeds without regard to others (there are stop signs posted on 26th Street). If motorists must yield to cross traffic and cars coming from the opposite direction making a left turn, speeds will be greatly reduced and cyclists will feel much more comfortable sharing the road. *"Add signs...re-stripe"*
- If there isn't room for a bike lane through the intersection, add signs to the circle that say "SLOW—yield to bicyclists and pedestrians." The bike lanes that were removed should be restriped right up to the circle to delineate the travel path for motorists so they don't veer into cyclists before they actually get to the roundabout. Without striping, cars don't have to slow down and crashes will happen.

The city has also installed many pedestrian islands (and removed bike lanes) near intersections in Midtown. The city suggests that cyclists could "take the lane" when traveling through these intersections if there is not room for a car, a bike and a parked car near the pedestrian island. Here are two suggestions that the city should consider:

- If the intersection is so dangerous that a pedestrian island was necessary, add SLOW signs and better crosswalk markings.
- Remove two parallel parking spots on both sides of the intersection and re-stripe bike lanes so that there is space for both motorists and cyclists.

The city is removing newly installed cement bulb-outs on 28th Street and adding new smaller ones on 21st Street. The ones being removed have hampered left turns for large trucks/buses, create dangerous obstacles for cyclists and should never have been installed. The smaller bulb-outs currently being installed are being added adjacent to existing bulb-outs and are an attempt by the city to transition motorists and bicyclists away from the curb (like a choker) to slow vehicle speeds. The previous design was extremely dangerous for cyclists because the bulb-out was perpendicular to the cyclists' direction of travel. The "new" design is angled to more

"...only install integrated bulb-outs..."

The Benefits of Traffic Calming

By Walt Seifert

The goals of traffic calming are to reduce traffic speeds and volumes. If these goals are realized, they offer tremendous benefits for cyclists. Unfortunately, there's no question that some traffic calming devices may have only marginal effects on traffic speed, yet create additional hazards for cyclists—particularly when the devices aren't well-designed. You can check out Chris Halm's column on some calming culprits.

But I'm here to talk about traffic calming benefits. First and foremost is speed reduction. One of the great problems associated with cycling is the speed differential between bikes and cars. When cyclists operate on roadways with traffic speeds over 35 mph, comfort levels tend to go down dramatically, and with good reason.

At higher traffic speeds, motorists have less reaction time and crash impacts are much greater. According to transportation researcher Todd Litman, "Each 1 mph traffic speed reduction typically reduces vehicle collisions by 5 percent, and fatalities by an even greater amount. Traveling at 40 mph, the average driver who sights a pedestrian in the road 100 feet ahead will still be traveling 38 mph on impact: driving at 25 mph, the driver will have stopped before the pedestrian is struck."

According to a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study, it was estimated that only 5 percent of pedestrians would die when struck by a vehicle traveling at 20 mph or less. This compares with fatality rates of 40, 80 and nearly 100 percent for striking speeds of 30, 40 and 50 mph or more, respectively. (By the way, bike helmets don't offer much protection at those higher speeds.)

A study of 119 residential traffic circles installed in

Benefits, page 5

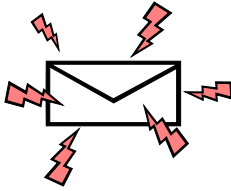
gradually direct cyclists away from the curb (and into the travel lane). Here is what the city should do:

- Stop installing "temporary" stopgap measures to calm traffic. Only install *integrated* bulb-outs that are built into the sidewalk. These are much easier for cyclists to see and avoid, and are preferred by pedestrians. No amount of education or signs makes the temporary bulb-outs workable. The city should never consider installing a traffic-calming device that makes cycling more dangerous.

The city has a difficult job – to decrease motor vehicle speeds without impacting adjacent neighborhoods and other road users. Cyclists are stuck in the middle and must help the city come up with better plans for traffic calming.

What do you think? Send an email to us at saba@sacbike.org with your ideas. We'll compile the comments and work with the city to make cycling safer. ☘

Letters to the Editor



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.

Editor: Bicyclists who blithely blast through stop signs on the American River Parkway should note that visibility is very limited at several of the signs, for example at the Sunrise Avenue lot. Bicyclists blasting through these stops could cause deadly bicycle-vehicle collisions.

Riding through four-way stops on the Parkway after vehicles have arrived at the intersection first and stopped also does not enhance the public image of bicyclists.

John Moore

Editor: Can anything be done about making cycling safer on Freeport Boulevard between Meadowview Road and the Freeport Bridge? Like a bike lane or signing or converting the railroad tracks into a bike trail?

Ray Poff

Editor's note: The city of Sacramento will be working on adding bike lanes on Freeport Boulevard between Meadowview Road and the city limits within the next year. City Alternate Modes Coordinator Ed Cox advises the city is consulting with Caltrans on the project and that heritage oaks along the route complicate adding the lanes.

The location has been suggested for Share the Road signs. Also, a "Del Rio" bike trail might be possible in the old rail right of way from just north of Sutterville Road to where I-5 crosses Freeport Blvd. In addition, a bike trail extension is planned along the Sacramento River to the Freeport Shores Youth Sports Complex. The railroad corridor to the south is owned by State Parks and is planned for use by excursion trains.



State Legislation Update

Last month, we reported that SABA supported SB 523 by State Sen. Tom Torlakson, which would maintain or increase funding for the Bicycle Transportation Account, the main California state funding source for bike projects. SABA members are encouraged to send letters of support for this bill, which was scheduled to be heard by the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee this month.

For more information on SB 523 and other California Bicycle Coalition legislative priorities this year, go to www.calbike.org. Sample letters and fact sheets are posted on the site. Just download the letter and insert your name, print it and fax it.

In other state legislation, Assemblywoman Lois Wolk introduced Assembly Bill 56, which ensures that the bicycle signal lights in Davis (and proposed in several cities around the state) can still be installed and properly enforced.

Wolk is also introducing a bill that would prohibit any toll bridge or road in California from charging a toll for bicyclists and pedestrians. Though no current tolls exist, the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway, and Transportation District has raised the idea of introducing tolls on cyclists several times. ☹

President, page 3

ment programs to enhance bicycling, walking and accessibility for persons with disabilities," he said. "We were interested in methods other jurisdictions are using to enhance our programs. It's so important to make it safe for recreational and commuting cyclists."

He encourages cyclists to contact him with suggestions and to report unsafe conditions and maintenance issues on bike routes under county jurisdictionat:

Vicarir@saccounty.net or 874-5164. Welcome and good luck, Ron! ☹

Clear Channel, from page 1

CEO John Hogan had said then, "I do not support or condone the anti-cyclists messages and have taken steps to insure they do not occur again."

Ironically, Jeff Holden and Jamie Coffee are cyclists themselves. Jeff has been a member of Eppie's Great Team, setting the pace for participants in Eppie's Great Race.

Clear Channel detailed its actions in a letter from Omar Thompson, vice president of Marketing & Communications, Clear Channel Radio, to the League of American Bicyclists. The letter is available on the League's Web site.

SABA met with Clear Channel's Jeff Holden and intends to work with him and the local Clear Channel stations in a number of ways that can create additional positives out of the incident. SABA will be developing and providing more safety tips for motorists on sharing the road for the KSTE Web site. SABA will also be afforded the opportunity to be involved in a half-hour public service program and will be invited to participate in Clear Channel events. Clear Channel will be promoting Bike Commute Week and Clear Channel personalities will be participating in the Million Mile Month Celebrity Challenge. ☹

Pork for Sacramento?

Congress is working on the much-delayed federal transportation bill. The bill version passed by the House contains a lot of pork, "earmarks" is the polite term. California has 479 earmarked projects with a value of a whopping \$1.4 billion.

Local bacon includes:

- Sacramento \$8 million. Design and construct access improvements in North Central Business District
- Folsom \$1.8 million. Construct interchange US50 and Empire Ranch Road
- Rancho Cordova \$7 million Folsom Boulevard Transportation enhancements
- Citrus Heights \$550,000 Auburn Boulevard improvements
- Sacramento County \$4 million Watt Avenue multi-modal improvements, Kiefer to Fair Oaks Boulevard
- Sacramento \$2 million Bus enhancement and improvement — construct maintenance facility and purchase clean fuel buses to improve transit service

While the goals of these projects may be worthwhile, there are at least a couple of problems. As is often the case, cycling is not a priority. There are no specific projects for bikes, although accommodation of bikes will certainly be a component of some of the projects. It is congressional members who plant these projects in the bill, based on who has their ear.

But the major problem with pork is local control is taken away — even when local governments are the ones suggesting the projects. There is little scrutiny of project need. Less worthy projects may get funded while better projects go begging. It's a pretty capricious way to spend billions of dollars. ☹



Recognition for Cyclists

SACOG is looking for worthy cyclists who deserve recognition. All areas of the region need Bicycle Friendly Awards nominations by May 8 in the following categories: Cyclist of the Year, Cycling Advocate, Bike-Friendly Employer and Elected Official of the Year. Nominate your deserving friends, colleagues and companies. Nominations may be submitted by going to www.bikecommuteweek.com. Self-nominations are also encouraged. Local winners will be submitted for the regional competition. Winners of the regional awards will be recognized at the SACOG Board meeting on May 19. ☹

European Drivers Liable In Bike-Car Crashes?

From Bicycle Retailer and Industry News

FEBRUARY 21, 2005—BRUSSELS, Belgium (BRAIN)—The European Union, now 25 nations strong, may be on the verge of shaking motorists out of the unconscious fog some seem to be in when driving into cyclists and pedestrians. The method: slap 'em in their pocketbooks, where it may actually hurt.

The European Two-Wheel Retailers' Association (ETRA) reports that a bill making motorists automatically liable in an accident with cyclists and pedestrians has passed the European Parliament and will soon be before the European Council, the union's main decision-making body. If the council adopts it, all member nations will within the next two years have to pass similar laws that guarantee cyclists compensation if they are involved in a crash with a motorized vehicle.

"In ETRA's view, assuring non-motorized road users of damages is making a clear signal to motorized users. Many accidents happen because of the dominant attitude of motorized users, as a result of which they seriously lack attention for non-motorized users. This attitude needs to change in order to get priorities right," said Annick Roetynck, the association's secretary general.

Holland, Belgium and several other countries already have similar legislation in place, and, ETRA observed, it "proves to considerably improve the relation between cyclists and motorists." Those countries' legislation has not sent insurance rates skyrocketing or resulted in outlandish claims, Roetynck said.

ETRA and many of its 6,000 retail store members lobbied for the legislation, arguing that cyclists and pedestrians are more exposed to injury and suffer fatality rates five to six times higher than motorists'. ☹



Welcome new members!

Chris Gist
Richard Henry
Katherine & John Hess
Marilyn Jasper
Yanet Lopez
Stephanie McDonald
Ben Orlove
Lisa Radspinner
Ralph Ramirez
James Roxburgh
Regina Shaw
Douglas Yee

Welcome back

Daniel Pollak
Bartow Riggs

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

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Sacramento, CA
Permit No. 1424

Clear Channel Aftermath page 1

SABA Picnic in July—Save the Date

Join SABA for an afternoon of picnicking and socializing, July 23, from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Location will be Hagan Community Park, near Mile 16 on the American River bike trail. More details to follow.

SABA Business and Organization Members

Business members with an * offer SABA members a discount.

- Air Resources Board
- American Lung Association of Sacramento-Emigrant Trails
- American River Bicycle* (Marconi Ave.)
- American River Bicycle* (Florin Rd.)
- American Warp Drive
- The Bicycle Business
- Bicycle Chef Bicycles
- Bicycles Plus*
- Bob's Cycle Center
- Body Concepts
- City Bicycle Works*
- Cycle California! magazine
- Davis Bike Club
- Fehr & Peers Associates
- 50 Corridor TMA
- Leslie T. Fong, DDS
- Franchise Tax Board
- Gary Brustin, Cycling Accident Attorney
- Great Clips for Hair
- Gregorini & Associates
- Hannan Specialties
- Henry B. Starkes, MD
- The Hoyt Co.
- Hull & Honeycutt Marketing and Design
- Inside Publications
- Ken's Bike & Ski
- Kuzins & Kumpany
- Law Offices of K. Greg Petersen
- Mad Cat Bicycles*
- Natomas Bike Shop*
- Norcal AIDS Challenge
- North Natomas TMA
- 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
- Sierra Engineering
- SMUD
- South Natomas TMA
- Sports Rack
- Two Rivers Cider Company