



The Squeaky Wheel

Issue No. 42

Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

September 2006

From the President Will Bike Race Inspire Downtown Bike Lanes?

By Lea Brooks

What do the eight-day Amgen Tour of California bicycle race that is scheduled to have a stage finish at the State Capitol in February and the 2000 Olympic Track and Field Trials held at California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) have in common?

The city of Sacramento was so excited about being selected for the trials that it constructed Hornet Crossing, an undercrossing of the Union Pacific railroad tracks for bicyclists and pedestrians that connects Elvas Avenue and East Sacramento to CSUS. This project was completed in a little over a year, an amazing feat.

The short-term goal of the project was to encourage fans, workers and officials to cycle and walk to the trials. The long-term goal was to provide safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access to CSUS.

That brings us to the Tour of California, which had its debut last February. Could this high-profile race that attracted thousands of fans earlier this year trigger the Sacramento City Council to provide bike lanes in downtown Sacramento, a longtime goal of SABA's? Could this race be the impetus for safe and convenient bicycle access in the capital of California?

The 2006 version of the Tour of California began in San Francisco and largely hugged the coastline to finish in Southern California. According to a recent article in the *Sacramento Bee*, the second stage of next year's race is scheduled to start in Santa Rosa and approach Sacramento from the Delta before crossing the Tower Bridge and finishing on

President, page 3

A Great Leap to Forward Thinking Transportation And Energy Prices

By Walt Seifert

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) has published a draft issue paper on transportation energy price and supply. The paper suggests that the next Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) should not implicitly assume, as past plans have, that future energy supplies, namely



Whither gas prices? Photo by Walt Seifert

oil, will be cheap and abundant. The MTP, currently being revised, will address transportation planning through 2030.

The issue paper cites a review of estimates as to when world oil production will start declining. Eleven estimates were presented

Energy Prices, page 3

Three Trail Projects Advance

The city of Sacramento awarded contracts for two significant trails in August and construction is under way. The trails are a portion of the Two Rivers Trail and the first significant phase of a trail in the undeveloped Ueda Parkway.

The Two Rivers Trail will eventually be about four miles in length and go from Tiscornia Park at the confluence of the Sacramento and American Rivers to Sutter Landing Regional Park, next to the Capital City Freeway. The section under construction will be about 1.75 miles long and will go from Jibboom Street (at the foot of the green Jibboom Street Bridge) along the levee top on the south bank of the American River to 16th Street. The trail will be, in effect, an extension of the Sacramento River Trail that now ends at Jibboom Street. There will be additional access points at 5th and 10th streets.

The Ueda Parkway trail section will be more ambitious, about four miles in length. It will run along the west side of Steelhead Creek and extend from El Camino Avenue to Sopnip Road. Trail access is designed into the new Main Avenue Bridge nearby.

Both trails represent concrete progress on major additions to the Sacramento trail network. Still to come are further extensions of both trails and key links that will connect each trail to what is destined to be a future trail hub near the Sacramento Northern Bridge (the "pipe bridge") across the American River. When fully realized, that hub area will serve the Ueda Parkway trail, Sacramento Northern trail, and trails on both north and south banks of the American River.

City officials expect work on both trails to be completed by the end of this year.

The trails will be paved with rubberized asphaltic compound (RAC), the city's first use

Project, page 3

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. on 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_info@sacbike.com.

The Squeaky Wheel

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SABActions

Meetings

SABA members attended these meetings:

- Partnership for Active Communities
- Metropolitan Transportation Plan workshop
- Environmental Council of Sacramento
- Docks development
- Can the Trash! Coalition meeting with Regional Water Quality Control Board staff
- SacBAC to describe Safe Routes to Transit planning study

Letters

SABA sent letters to:

- The Sacramento City Council on the Downtown Railyards development

Testimony

- Before the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors on SacBAC annual report

Valet Bike Parking

- Friday Night Concerts at Cesar Chavez Plaza

Other

- Assisted City of Sacramento with Bicycle Friendly Community application
- Staffed a table at Mercy General Hospital transportation fair

Welcome New Members

Doug Baker	Welcome back
William Bate	Donald Black
Donald Bybee	Greg Brott
Michael Ellis	Barbara Kronick
James Grieshop	Jerry Plummer
Mats Jamsson	Ann Stevens
Benjamin Perez	Mark
Elizabeth Schwarzwald	Vickland
Doniel Soto	
Diane Wolfe	
Nicole Woolle	



SABA Pizza Party —Pizza, Soda and Doin' Stuff

The monthly SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party will be Thursday, Oct. 12 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at SABA Pacific Coast HQ, 909 12th Street. Join us! You've been riding enough to justify carbo-load.



President, page 1
Capitol Mall.

On the down side, the reigning champion of the Tour of California is American Floyd Landis, whose Tour de France victory in July is very much in jeopardy due to allegations that he used performance-enhancing drugs. In late August, Landis was still fighting the allegations and the issue of whether he will keep the yellow jersey or be banned from the sport remained unresolved.

Regardless of Landis' fate and the shadow the allegations cast on the sport of bicycle racing, the Tour of California will put a bright spotlight on Sacramento. If the February 2006 event was any indication, cycling fans will flock to see George Hincapie, Levi Leipheimer and other riders who have good reputations.

In the coming months, the Sacramento-area bicycle community will be asked to volunteer for a number of tasks associated with the race, including crowd and traffic control. We can expect thousands of visitors to our community, who will be wowed by our world-class American River Parkway bike trail. We can only hope that Discovery Park will not be flooded when the race comes through town!

As the Tour of California competitors pedal across the Tower Bridge, they probably will not notice the four-foot shoulders that were added almost a year ago after years of advocacy.

Spectators who are bicycle enthusiasts will. They will also notice that Sacramento has inadequate bike routes in its downtown grid. Instead, they will find a vehicle-dominated, hostile environment consisting of one-way, three-lane streets with vehicle parking on both sides – UNLESS the City Council finally takes action.

The City Council previously took action to improve conditions for cyclists by reducing L, N, P and Q streets between 15th and 29th streets from three one-way lanes to two one-way lanes with bicycle lanes and parking. These improvements made in late 2004 were a great start; now the council needs to extend these improvements into the downtown grid.

This article puts the City Council on notice that the Central City, Two-Way Conversion study that has been under way for years must conclude with improvements for cyclists. As I've said before in this column, Sacramento is the capital of California and should be setting an example as a livable community for the rest of the state and nation.

Sacramento's bid to have a Tour of California stage finish here was successful. The race will shine a spotlight on us. That momentum needs to culminate with a Central City that is safe and pleasant for bicyclists long after the race heads south. ☸

Project, page 1

of the material. The paving material has pluses for cyclists as a riding surface, including smoothness, quick-drying capability and durability. Sacramento County used RAC to repave the American River Parkway bike trail. Made in part from recycled tires, it's an environmentally friendly material.

In addition, the city received \$335,000 in state Bicycle Transportation Account funding for another north-area trail, this one in the Ninos Parkway. This trail will be 2/3 of a mile long and run between Strauch Park and West El Camino. Construction is expected to start in 2008. ☸

Energy Prices, page 1

at a Southern California Association of Governments energy forum. Nine of the 11 expert estimates were for peak production to occur within the next 10 years. Six of the estimates said the peak would occur within the next five years. When oil production peaks, it's likely that gasoline prices will increase substantially unless major and immediate efforts are made to conserve or use alternative energy sources.

The paper quotes Robert Kaufmann, professor at the Center for Energy and Environmental Studies at Boston University:

We know that oil production will peak within our lifetime ... and we know that not having alternatives in place at the time of the peak will have tremendous economic and social consequences. So if society does too much now to stimulate alternative energies, as opposed to later, there will be some loss of economic efficiency. But if society does too little now, as opposed to later, the effects could be disastrous. Under these conditions, doing too little now in the name of economic efficiency will appear in hindsight as rearranging decks chairs on the Titanic.

What does this all mean for cycling? Here is what SACOG's paper says:

The current MTP invests significantly in transportation modes that don't rely on oil; the possibility of higher prices or supply limits may lead to an even greater emphasis on these modes in the next MTP.

Guess what transportation modes don't rely on oil? Bicycling consumes no oil except for an infinitesimal bit in production and maintenance. Walking is oil-free too, but it's tough to make trips of more than a mile by walking, simply because of the time needed. Mass transit has substantial energy requirements, although some energy needs can be met by alternatives to oil (such as natural gas, which has its own supply issues).

The SACOG Issue Paper for 2030 MTP Transportation Energy Price and Supply is one of a series of papers, including one on bicycling and walking, produced by SACOG. The issue papers can be found at <http://www.sacog.org/mtp/2030/mediacenter/issues.cfm> ☸

UCD Bike Auction October 14

More than 400 bicycles will be available for sale to the highest bidder at the biannual University of California, Davis, Bicycle Auction on Saturday, Oct. 14. The bicycles may be viewed from 8 to 9 a.m., with bidding getting under way at 9 a.m. and lasting until all items are sold. The auction is open to the public.

New location! The auction takes place in the new West Entry Parking Structure at the intersection of Hutchison Drive and Dairy Road. Take Interstate 80 toward Davis, exit Highway 113 North, exit Hutchison Drive UC Davis. Follow "Bike Auction" signs to parking structure.

Bicycles of many sizes, types and conditions are available for sale. Most are "fixer-uppers." Purchases may be made with cash or check. For further information, call the UC Davis Transportation & Parking Services Bicycle Program Coordinator at (530) 752-BIKE (752-2453) or visit www.taps.ucdavis.edu/bicycle/general/auction.html ☸.

Salmon Festival October 14-15

We'll need lots of volunteers to help with SABA's free valet bike parking at the Salmon Festival on Saturday, Oct. 14 and Sunday, Oct. 15. The festival, held on both sides of Hazel Avenue at the Nimbus Fish Hatchery and Lake Natoma runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day.

The Festival offers a variety of family-centered activities including visits to the fish hatchery, cruises on Lake Natoma, food booths, puppetry, story telling, games, and environmental education.

Because there is a vehicle parking charge for the festival, the location is on the American River Parkway bike trail, and many attendees are environmentally conscious, lots of people go by bike. We've parked nearly 1,000 bikes over the two-day event in previous years. It keeps volunteers hopping.

Please contact SABA volunteer coordinator Larry Robinson at 444-6600 or volunteer@sacbike.org if you can help out. More information about the Salmon Festival is available at www.salmonfestival.net. ☸



We Bike Shops

Support your local bike shops. In a time of impersonal, big box stores, most bike shops offer a refreshing change. Most are typically mom-and-pop operations struggling to get by in a highly competitive marketplace. Most have owners who are in the business because of a love of bicycling. Please consider all the implications of where you make your purchases before you place that mail order or head off to the discount megastore. Think of what it would be like without a neighborhood bike shop.

We thank our local bike shop owners. Bike shops are good for bicycling. They generally carry higher quality bikes and accessories than the "big boxes." The bikes are assembled by knowledgeable mechanics. The owners and employees provide valuable personalized advice. Their service goes beyond fixing bikes. They are partners in bicycle advocacy. Our successes are linked.

We owe special thanks to The Rest Stop and City Bicycle Works. Over the years, these shops and owners Greg Archer and Jess Polakoff have donated hundreds and hundreds of \$5

Benchmarking Project Gets Healthy Boost from the CDC

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has approved a one-year contract toward the Thunderhead Alliance's first full Benchmarking Report. This report will build on Thunderhead's previous Benchmarking work, comparing bicycling, walking, health and underserved population data in all 50 states and at least the 50 largest U.S. cities to reveal the total impact of the built environment on the health and safety of Americans. This project is the only one of its type to rely entirely on government-endorsed data sets that are uniform across all states, thus avoiding the pitfalls of opinion-based surveys as the project unveils needed improvements in data collection for bicycling and walking.

CDC is Thunderhead's most recent partner for the project, offering invaluable health expertise and analysis of the report to ensure it will resonate with health practitioners. "We are thrilled and honored to have the CDC join our Benchmarking team," said Sue Knaup, Thunderhead's executive director. "Their participation will lift this project to new heights and bring its findings to health practitioners across the country and around the world."

Another important partner for the project is the Institute of Transportation Engineers who will offer peer review from the traffic engineer's perspective. The bicycle industry has also taken a valuable role, initially through seed funding from Planet Bike, the National Bicycle Dealers Association and the Bikes Belong Coalition. Now that the report is under way, they will offer their expertise for bicycle industry data.

This project is also the first to compare bicycling, walking, health and underserved population data through comprehensive analysis. Bicycle and pedestrian facility miles, funding, mode share and crash data will be analyzed with obesity and diabetes data as well as age, income and immigration data to show the success or needed improvements of bicycling and walking programs across the country. Anyone working to increase bicycling and walking and decrease crashes will be able to use the report to show clearly the needed changes for their communities. As the national coalition of state and local bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations, the Thunderhead Alliance will use the report to increase the effectiveness of its programs and assist its member organizations in their work. Please visit www.thunderheadalliance.org for more information on Thunderhead and the Benchmarking Project. ☸



gift certificates for our new members. Bicycles Plus, The Bicycle Chef and Natomas Cyclery all deserve special recognition as well, for going above and beyond the call of duty with their help. But every shop is unique and has done something unique for cycling.

Please support them all and be thankful they are around. ☸



A speed table is a section of raised roadway which is a traffic calming measure. Source: Pedestrian and Bicycling Information Center

Sacramento Northern Bikeway Extension Set to Open

Way up north, north Sacramento County that is, the county has completed paving a 1.8-mile extension of the Sacramento Northern Trail.

The extension is from M Street in Rio Linda to Elverta Road and continues to follow the right-of-way of the former Sacramento Northern Railway. The trail parallels the Ueda Parkway further to the east. With the extension, the trail runs a total length of about nine miles, making for a nice recreational ride and useful transportation route.

The new trail section actually has curves! Not a lot, but the gradual curves north of M Street add some variety to the otherwise relentlessly linear rail trail.

The trail extension comes with lots of access points and lots of landscaping (not yet planted when this review was made, but the holes were dug). Let's hope the trees survive and don't get looted as they did further south after landscaping was installed.

In a nice touch, the existing trailhead south of M Street has been modified to split and go around a planting area, thereby eliminating the need for bollards and their danger to cyclists.

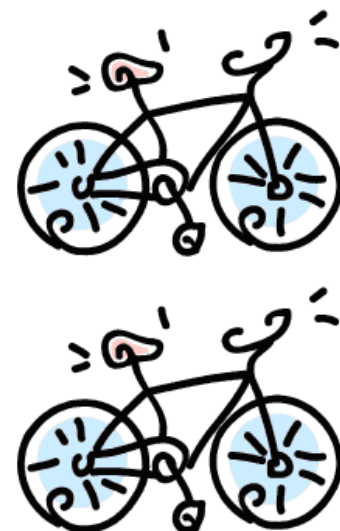
The trail is not all idyllic. Watch for broken glass and bollards on the older sections of the trail where it goes through some struggling neighborhoods. Unlike the American River Parkway bike trail, the trail crosses quite a few streets. The existing street crossings highlight the need for improved safety and convenience. Speed tables at crossings would slow motor vehicle traffic, increase cyclists' comfort and might actually decrease trail construction costs by eliminating the need for curb cuts.⊗



Sacramento Northern Bikeway at Elverta Road staging area. Photo by Walt Seifert



Split trail allows bollard-free entry to the Sacramento Northern Bikeway. Photo by Walt Seifert



Member Profile

Marcy Barnett

By Albert Balingit

After graduating from high school in Connecticut, Marcy Barnett chose a college that was furthest away from home—San Diego State University. There she lived on the beach near a long bicycle path. She rode that path endlessly, extending her undergraduate career.

Eventually, Marcy received a degree in environmental studies in 1988, which she parlayed into a multi-year position as an environmental specialist with El Dorado County in its South Lake Tahoe office. In South Lake Tahoe, she discovered and fell in love with mountain biking, a different breed from her flat beach rides, with its surges in speeds and heights. She commuted to Reno to attend the University of Nevada and obtained a master's degree in hydrology. She also has a number of certificates dealing with environmental protection.

In 2000, Marcy moved to Sacramento to work with Sacramento County's Business Environmental Resource Center (BERC). Her job included assisting property owners to determine the extent of contamination of their properties so their properties could be developed, with financial assistance from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

As an example of her work, Marcy described an individual who inherited 1.7 acres on Franklin Boulevard from his mother, which she had purchased in 1976. The property was used as a truck stop from prior to the building of Highway 99 until the mid-1970s. The property owner wished to fulfill his late mother's dream of developing the property into a Spanish-style commercial complex with a funeral home to serve Hispanic customers. However, the uncertainty of contamination delayed the development of the former industrial site.

With BERC and Marcy's assistance, an environmental consultant (paid by BERC with grant funds from the EPA) assessed the extent of contamination. The results should be known sometime this month. Marcy's work will help to revitalize this section of Franklin Boulevard.

Marcy also runs the Sacramento Area Green Business Program, which she described as her "baby." This program certifies businesses that have adopted a set of environmental practices. Those who are certified as Green Businesses observe environmental laws, adopt conservation measures and allow Marcy to verify these practices. One of the criteria is the reduction of air pollution. As part of the air pollution component, Marcy not only encourages businesses to motivate their employees to bicycle commute, but to build the infrastructure for commuting such as showers and bicycle lockers. Those on the list include all Sacramento-area REI stores, Paratransit, Café Bernardo and Mogavero Notestine Associates. You can view the list of Green Businesses at www.Sacgreenbiz.org.

When Marcy moved to Sacramento, she and her husband, Dr. Brian Hausback, bought a house near Rio Americano High School, one block away from the American River Parkway bike trail. She said the trail is "Sacramento's premier asset" which she frequents as many as five times per week on walks with her dogs or her penchant for long bicycle rides. "What other city has 30 or more miles of bicycle trails running through its heart?"



Marcy and her "baby," the Sacramento Area Green Business Program. Photo by Natalie Morris

she asked. Marcy and her husband, a professor of geology at California State University, Sacramento, ride the trail often, either the 10-mile loop to CSUS or east toward Sunrise.

When BERC was located in Rancho Cardova at the old Mather Field, Marcy was able to commute by bicycle, riding the short mileage from her home. That all changed this year when her office was relocated to North Highlands. The move made bicycle commuting longer and somewhat dangerous. Marcy described her trepidation of riding on Watt Avenue in North Highlands, having to cross the exits and entrances of both Interstate 80 and Business 80 with their cars filled with drivers possessing the speed mentality of freeway drivers.

UPDATE: Marcy called me after I wrote this profile to announce that she will be able to commute to work again soon. She has accepted a new job as a contract employee with the California Department of Health Services, a job dealing with helping local governments prepare for disasters, including bioterrorism, and a job with an office across the street from the Capital. ☺

Electronic Squeaky Wheel

Get the *Squeaky Wheel* electronically. Simply send an email, subject, "Electronic newsletter" to saba@sacbike.org.

Tip of the Month Why Courtesy Counts

By Walt Seifert

There's a difference between being a courteous bicyclist and following the rules. Part of being courteous IS knowing the rules of the road and then following them — both on the street and on the trail.

It's not hard to find cyclists who are clueless about basic legal requirements or choose to ignore them. They speed on the trail or pass when it isn't safe. They stop in the middle of the trail. On the road, they ride the wrong way, run red lights or don't bother to have lights or reflectors at night. They ride on the sidewalk. Cyclists in large groups seem to find it especially hard to risk breaking up their group for a second by stopping at signals or signs or making it easier for overtaking traffic to pass.

Knowing the rules and obeying them makes it much easier to get along with all our fellow travelers.

But courteous cyclists do more than obey the rules. They offer help to others. When they see bad behavior, their criticism is constructive and not harsh. These things aren't easy to do, especially when time is short and cyclists' safety is so often threatened by the unthinking actions of motorists, other cyclists and, sometimes, pedestrians and pet owners. But courteous cyclists follow the golden rule of "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

I've been on the receiving end of rudeness and discourtesy from cyclists, but not often. I remember being mocked and scolded by Saturday morning riders as SABA volunteers sweated and cleaned the Sacramento Northern bikeway. I remember riding abreast with my son on the American River trail when he was about 10. Two hotshot riders complained about the space we were occupying as they sped past and one said nastily, "I guess that mirror doesn't work." The criticism and mockery still sting years later.

I also remember, one autumn dawn, a passing rider who suggested, without any name-calling, "About time for lights" when I was riding without and the days were getting shorter. On another occasion I had a flat and no pump. A rider, whom I didn't know, stopped, left his pump with me, continued his ride and picked up his pump on his way back. The gentle reminder and the kindness of the pump-bearing stranger are still appreciated.

Courteous riders don't have to remain silent when they see behavior that endangers them, but their admonishments should be appropriate and, if possible, gentle. That's tough when there may be only seconds of interaction possible — for example, when meeting a wrong-way rider head on. But I always say something to a wrong-way rider because he or she is a threat to me, to every other rider and to themselves. I say, "Wrong side." (What I *think* is something else.)

Courteous riders recognize human frailty and the existence of kids, inexperienced riders and all kinds of people on mixed-use trails like the American River Parkway and on the streets. They adjust their own behavior accordingly to minimize the friction and danger. Maybe they even slow down and lighten up.

Cyclists don't have to wave or say hi to every other rider or

Letters to the Editor



We want to hear from you!

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

or mail it to: **SABA**

909 12th Street, Suite 114

Sacramento, CA 95814

Editor:

Perhaps SABA could begin its image makeover efforts by trying to improve cyclist behavior on a path dedicated to bicycles, the American River Parkway. There are a significant number of fast cyclists who refuse to slow down for any reason whatsoever. They pass on curves and in other locations where forward visibility is insufficient. They pass when bicycles in the other lane are very close and have to brake to avoid colliding. They even pass between bicycles traveling in opposite directions as these bicycles are passing each other. Did this kind of behavior contribute to the "horrendous head-on bicycle crash" reported in the most recent newsletter?

Very likely attempts to improve the behavior of these arrogant obnoxious cyclists would be futile, but SABA could improve its image by trying.

John Moore

UNLOAD THAT SMOG BELCHER!

Help SABA and claim a charitable deduction
all at the same time!

If you would like to donate a car, truck, boat or RV,
give us a call at 444-6600.

Cars and trucks do not have to be drivable, but they
should be complete — no missing engines or wheels, please.

even say "on your left" every time they pass (an announcement often misinterpreted). We're not the tiny clique that we once were — and we pass a lot more people than pedestrians do in the same amount of time. If SABA continues its success, we'd tire of the repetition. But there's nothing wrong with being friendly. A great part of cycling is the fun, camaraderie and the opportunity for positive social contact. Why not add cheer, good humor and thoughtfulness in a world with too much rudeness, irritability and me-first attitude?

As one SABA member recommended after reading last month's President's Column, "Do Bicyclists Need an Image Makeover": Look in the mirror. What can you do to be a nicer and more cooperative cyclist to your fellow cyclist? That is the starting point.⊗

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Sacramento, CA 95814**

I want to be a part of an organization that is doing things for cyclists and the community.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (home): (____) _____ - _____

Phone (work): (____) _____ - _____

E-mail address: _____

Membership level:

- \$325 Life* (individuals only)
- \$100 Century*
- \$75 Business/Group
- \$50 Sustaining*
- \$35 Sponsoring
- \$25 Family
- \$20 Individual

* Free T-shirt – indicate size below

Money's not enough! Contact me about volunteering.

I must have a SABA T-shirt! Shirts are \$12 each.

Size: S M L XL

Members, please share with a friend or acquaintance.