



The Squeaky Wheel

Issue No. 58

Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

January 2008

From the President Lots Happening in 2008

By Lea Brooks

The coming year presents many opportunities for SABA to push for better, safer and more convenient bikeways, including the long-awaited update of the Sacramento County portion of the 2010 City-County Bikeway Master Plan adopted in 1992.

Sacramento County has hired the transportation consulting firms of Fehr & Peers and Alta Planning to guide this update, which will include an inventory of existing bicycle facilities in the unincorporated area to identify gaps that need to be filled to complete our bikeway network.

A preliminary outline of goals, policies and implementation measures has already been prepared that will become the backbone of the updated plan. To find out more about the master plan update, I encourage you to attend the SABA quarterly general membership meeting and potluck on Jan. 30 (see details on page 5). A representative from Fehr & Peers will attend.

The other good news is that data from the county inventory will be incorporated into what is hoped to be a countywide bicycle map. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments has agreed to take the lead in developing this much-requested and much-needed bikeway network map.

Also on the good news front is the very real possibility that two projects in the city of Sacramento for which SABA has been advocating for years may finally happen. Both projects will require political

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Second Year for Light On!

For a second year, SABA's Light On! program gave unlit cyclists free headlights and taillights. SABA volunteers set up distribution points in downtown, midtown and East Sacramento on five different December



SABA volunteer Maggie O'Mara (L) and a Light On! recipient at 48th and M site. Photo by Walt Seifert



A Light On! recipient at the Tower Bridge. Photo by Natalie Morris

evenings. Passing cyclists were hailed and the volunteers installed the lights on the spot. In exchange for receiving the lights, SABA asked recipients to pledge to read a

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Year in Review

By Walt Seifert

Something that struck me as I reviewed the list of SABA's accomplishments for 2007 was how many years SABA was involved in some of these efforts. A frustrating part of advocacy is how much time it takes for work to bear fruit. Getting involved early and having the tenacity to stay involved is essential for an advocacy organization. That same staying power is often very difficult for an individual to maintain.

There are a number of examples of SABA and others setting the stage some time ago for things that happened in 2007. We've written extensively about the addition of bike lanes on 19th and 21st streets in midtown. Work on the "two-way conversion" projects in midtown started back in 2001, six years ago.

In 2003, we claimed "complete and utter victory" on the separate two-way conversions of Freeport Boulevard and 21st Street south of Broadway. This year, four years later, conversion work got under way. It is scheduled to be completed this spring.

Also in 2003, The Squeaky Wheel featured articles by SABA President Lea Brooks and then County Supervisor Illa Collin with complaints about piles of green waste in the streets of Sacramento. Those complaints and others led to SABA creating the Can the Trash! Coalition. The Coalition in turn led to a city of Sacramento/Coalition voluntary task force that made recommendations this fall on containerizing green waste. Sacramento may be voting on mandatory containerization in 2008. Meanwhile, Woodland instituted a hybrid

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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:

- Neighbors Advocating Sustainable Transportation
- Bike facilities at Caltrans' buildings

Letters

SABA sent letters to:

- SACOG on the Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Kimco Reality on bike ban at Cable Park Shopping center
- *Sacramento Business Journal* on automobile parking

Testimony

- To Sacramento City Council on Sustainability Master Plan
- To SACOG board on Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Other Actions

- Installed free bike headlights and taillights for Light On! program
- Wrote "Reflections" piece for *The Sacramento Bee* editorial page
- Weeded and planted at Sacramento Northern Trailhead
- Had SABA table at SMUD's Green Zone at California International Marathon
- Made presentation at Bureau of Reclamation waterway conference
- Reviewed bike/pedestrian grant applications as part of SACOG committee
- Interviewed by *The Sacramento Bee* on bike lights and downtown streets

County Updating Master Plan

The County of Sacramento is currently updating its Bicycle Master Plan, which will be used to guide future improvements to the county's bicycle network. The Web site for information on the details and progress of the Plan is: <http://saccountybikeplan.webexone.com/> (click "Enter as Guest" on the left).☎

Chico Advocate Injured in Crash

On Dec. 21, Ed McLaughlin, long-time advocate and cycling coordinator for Chico Velo, was riding with a group through Bidwell Park in Chico. He ran into a bollard and was thrown from his bike. Ed was wearing his helmet, but suffered a severe spinal cord injury.

Ed had no feeling or movement from his chest down or in his arms, according to Chico Councilwoman and bike shop owner Ann Schwab. Schwab was at Enloe Hospital in Chico with Ed before he was airlifted to Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, which specializes in spinal injuries.

More than 300 people showed up for a healing celebration for Ed on Christmas Eve at Chico's Downtown Plaza Park.

Ed's condition is being updated on the Chico Velo Web site, <http://www.chicovelo.org/>. Cards and notes can be sent to:

Ed McLaughlin
c/o Customer Service Department
Santa Clara Valley Medical Center
751 South Bascom Ave.
San Jose, CA 95128

President, from page 1

will by the City Council, which has already shown leadership by transforming previously hostile, car-dominated thoroughfares in midtown to “complete streets” that accommodate bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists.

The first project is the H Street railroad undercrossing between 57th Street and Carlson, a key east-west route between downtown and California State University, Sacramento. This project would convert the existing two westbound, one eastbound lane configuration to two one-way lanes with bicycle lanes. A consultant hired by the city has already concluded that this change would have no significant effect on traffic.

The other project is conversion of 9th and 10th streets in downtown from three one-way lanes for motorists to two one-way lanes, with bicycle lanes on both sides. While much more needs to be done to make downtown bicycle-friendly, converting 9th and 10th to “complete streets” would be a giant step forward.

Also on the list of opportunities is the third annual Amgen Tour of California pro bike race, which will have a stage finish in Sacramento for a second consecutive year. According to *The Sacramento Bee*, Stage 2 of the eight-day race will be identical to the 2007 version – approximately 115 miles from Santa Rosa to Sacramento. The Feb. 19 stage will enter Sacramento via the Tower Bridge.

We look forward to SABA volunteers helping out again for this race. SABA will provide bike valet parking. There will be other volunteer opportunities as well. Please mark Feb. 19 on your calendar now. ☸

Light On!, from page 1

booklet on bike safety called *Street Smarts*.

Recipients ranged from people who couldn't afford lights to those whose previous lights had been stolen to those who simply had never bothered to get lights. A few were suspicious of our motives (“Is this some kind of telemarketing scheme?”), but they all seemed uniformly grateful.

SABA handed out 125 light sets at 21st and K, Peet's Coffee on 19th, 48th and M, the Tower Bridge and the 16th Street light rail station. In addition, we went mobile and installed lights on light rail.

Volunteers: Ken Alvey, Kevin Beile, Ed Cox, Mike Ellis, Perry Fletcher, Tom Harrington, Ilsa Hess, Jason Holder, Dale Johnson, Dennis King, Nancy Louie, Chris Morfas, Wayne Muller, Maggie O'Mara, Bert Pierroz, Dave Potter, Ivan Rarick, Larry Robinson, Yvonne Robinson, Marie Schelling, Gerald Shupe, Sue Teranishi and William Walby. ☸

Year, from page 1

container program and Davis committed to a pilot container program for green waste.

SABA has attempted for a number of years to get better bike facilities at state office buildings. Many of our members are state employees and would directly benefit from better bike parking, showers and clothing lockers. After crafting facility guidelines, SABA had several false starts trying to get the guidelines adopted. SABA elected to go the legislative route in 2007. While the legislation failed, all was not lost. One agency, Caltrans, committed to do something on its own for its bike

SABA Pizza Party — Pizza, Soda and Doin' Stuff

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

Whether it's in China, Switzerland, or the Buckeye state, you can have a great time with your fellow cyclists at the monthly work party.



commuters and visitors. In addition, the legislative effort may be continued by the California Bicycle Coalition in 2008.

SABA evaluated bike access to the Los Rios Community College District campuses: American River, Cosumnes River, Folsom Lake and Sacramento City colleges. SABA's report made scores of recommendations designed to make cycling to the campuses safer, more convenient and desirable. The report included model campus guidelines applicable to any college.

In 2007, SABA volunteers parked, safeguarded and retrieved 4,500 bikes — all at no cost to customers. SABA annually parks thousands of bikes through its valet bike parking service. SABA's services make it easier for people to bike to events such as the Amgen Tour of California, Friday Night Concerts, the California Capital Airshow and the Salmon Festival.

SABA commented on many transportation and land-use projects, supported Bike Commute Month, helped with the successful Rex Cycles Support the Parkway Ride, supported state legislation, met with Caltrans Director Will Kempton, had President Lea Brooks recognized as Advocate of the Year and much more.

More than 125 SABA volunteers contribute more than 3,600 hours annually to further SABA's mission of “more and safer trips by bike” and in providing services to the public.

SABA continues to lay the groundwork for future improvements for cyclists. We're working on having more government staffing for bicycle projects and programs, getting more Bicycle Friendly Communities designated, better signs on trails and leading to trails.

For this article, we asked bike coordinators to report on significant accomplishments in their jurisdictions.

The city of Rancho Cordova initiated its Bicycle Master Plan effort in 2007. The primary goal of the plan is to make good connections to the regional trail system for city residents and to improve opportunities for residents to choose the bicycle as an alternate mode of travel for work and recreational trips within the city and to the light rail system. These goals will be accomplished through the identification of a citywide network of off- and on-street bikeways, improving access to the Folsom South Canal trail and coordinating the development of trail plans in newly developing areas south of Highway 50 and east of Sunrise Boulevard. ☸

Used Gear

By Scott Yates

Let's admit it. Cycling can be an expensive habit. When I worked as a retail specialist in the cycling department at REI, I was often asked to recommend resources for buying used bicycles and equipment. My answer was always the same: "Before I tell you where to find used equipment, let me make you aware of a few things."

Buying used cycling gear is easier than ever. Web sites like craigslist.com and eBay.com allow cyclists to peruse used gear online in a virtual swap meet. By now, we all know about eBay: find something you like, place a bid and, if your bid proves to be the winner, you become the new owner of the item. Simple enough, but you could be bidding on a bicycle from a seller in North Dakota because eBay.com allows anybody with a computer to sell merchandise.

The simple rule of thumb: ask lots of questions, such as: Why are you selling the bike? Has the bike ever been raced? Has the bike ever been crashed? How often was the bike seen by a mechanic? The theory here is the more information the better. If a seller is on the up-and-up, he or she will understand your caution and be willing to answer all of your questions. eBay.com has a rating system for sellers based on feedback from other buyers. Be sure to read the feedback before posting your winning bid. And make sure you understand the shipping costs before you buy.

Have you experienced the wonder that is craigslist.com? Craigslist, or CL as those in the know call it, is an online classified site with postings ranging from real estate to used cycling gear. I like CL because the postings are local. If you find something you like, simply e-mail the seller and arrange a time to see the merchandise. Remember, it's just as important to ask lots of questions face-to-face as it is via e-mail.

And, Sacramento has been recently blessed by the Bicycle Kitchen. The Bicycle Kitchen is a friendly place with lots of used bike equipment. For the time being, you're more likely to find an old Schwinn perfect for a fixed gear project than a carbon set-up ready for the spring racing season. If you like looking for parts you didn't even know you needed, the Bicycle Kitchen is the place for you. For more information, check them out at: www.sacbikekitchen.org.

Other resources are garage sales, estate sales and an annual trip to Denio's Flea Market in Roseville.

However, the best place to find used gear is your local bike shop. Sounds crazy, right? Doesn't my local bike shop specialize in new gear? Yes and no. Your LBS specializes in catering to your needs. If you're looking for a mid-level road bike and only have the budget for a tested ride with a few thousand miles on it, go to your LBS and talk to them about it. More often than not, someone there rides or races with someone looking to upgrade before next season. And, most shops have a bulletin board for posting used gear.

What you need to remember about purchasing used cycling equipment:

Never buy a used helmet from anyone other than family. Helmets are important safety equipment. A helmet that has been in a crash or abused by the owner (thrown into the trunk of the car, dropped from the handlebars, etc.) might be compromised.

Spend the extra money and buy new a helmet.

If you are thinking about buying used clothing, you have to ask yourself, "Would I buy used underwear?" Because that's essentially what you're doing.

Always consult with your LBS if you have questions. Be honest about your intentions and they'll give you honest advice.

When planning a budget for a used bicycle, include \$50-\$100 for a basic tune-up. Safety is serious business. Unless you're a competent mechanic, you need to take your bike to your LBS for a basic tune-up.

There are lots of resources out there. If you are patient, you may find the deal of a lifetime. But remember, your local bike shop is your best resource for all things cycling. ☸

SABA Comments on Regional Transportation Plan

SABA Executive Director Walt Seifert took the opportunity when accepting the SACOG Salutes! Award to make comments on the draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) to the SACOG Board — and other award recipients and guests. The MTP2035 sets regional transportation priorities, names specific transportation projects and allocates \$42 billion in funds over the next quarter century. The SACOG board will vote on the plan in February.

"We sincerely hope that the MTP can become a model for transportation planning across the nation, just as the Blueprint was for land-use planning," Walt said. "Having more funding in the MTP for bicycle and pedestrian projects and including the idea of Complete Streets are very welcome.

"The MTP is moving in the right direction, but it's a baby step at a time when we need a leap. We face crises in global warming, energy supplies and obesity. People must have a choice to travel by walking and cycling. The MTP must provide the funding and SACOG members must provide the staffing to make those choices a reality.

"We urge SACOG to make a leap to a fundamentally changed MTP. Not a leap without looking, but a leap based on facts and compelled by reason and prudence. We need to change, not only for our flicker of a generation but for generations to come."

SABA provided detailed comments on the MTP in a letter to SACOG. Chief criticisms were the plan's failure to deal adequately with three fundamental crises: global warming, energy supply/costs and obesity. The plan also glosses over traffic safety, which is perhaps the main reason more people don't bike.

SABA noted that while funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects was up in the plan, it still is only a tenth as much as proposed transit funding. This huge funding disparity exists despite the fact that twice as many trips are made by cycling and walking than are made by transit. Good cycling and walking conditions are essential for transit success. Cycling and walking are more cost-effective, better for the environment and better for public health than any other forms of transportation.

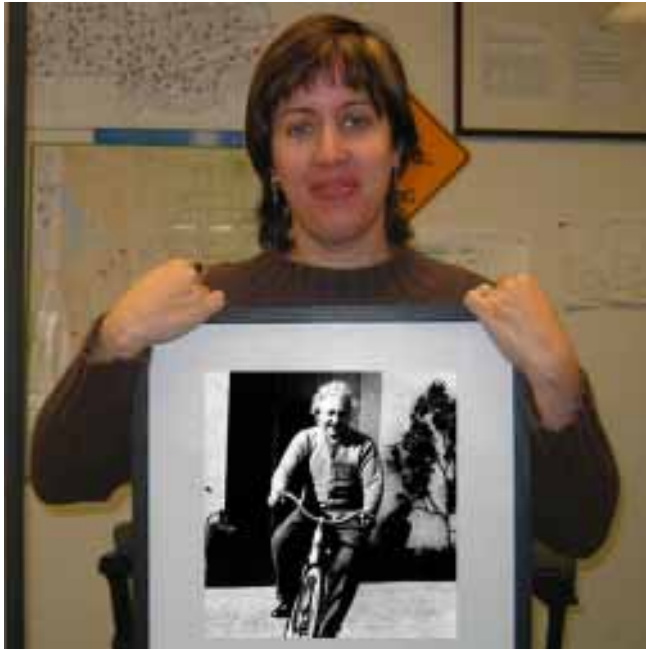
SABA's complete comments on the MTP (and all its advocacy letters) are on the SABA Web site, www.sacbike.org. ☸

Meet Tara Goddard: Davis' New Bicycle Coordinator

By Lea Brooks

Tara Goddard has been cycling most of her life, initially to and from school and on the spectacular Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's Bizz Johnson Trail that begins in her hometown of Susanville in Lassen County. She chose to attend colleges where bicycling is the primary mode of transportation — the Universities of California at Santa Barbara and Davis.

Tara's love for bicycling and passion for environmental engi-



Tara Goddard, Davis' new bicycle coordinator

neering and transportation planning make her an excellent fit for the city of Davis' new bicycle and pedestrian coordinator.

In October, Davis was recognized by the League of American Bicyclists with a second Bicycle Friendly Community platinum designation, the only community in the entire country to achieve this level. Davis received its initial platinum award in October 2005.

What's it like to be the bicycle coordinator for the only city in the United States that has a platinum Bicycle Friendly designation? "The up sides are pretty obvious - an engaged community and supportive elected officials and staff," she said. "But since the city achieved platinum status before my time, there is a lot of pressure not to let things slide on my watch!"

Tara described her duties as "varied." For example, the last week of December she wrote policy for the city's bicycle plan update; answered information requests on bike programs, bike routes and bike racks; prepared for the next Bicycle Advisory Commission meeting; reviewed development plans; and met with local cycling advocates/experts.

Prior to accepting the Davis position, Tara was an associate transportation planner for the city of Sacramento for a couple of years, her first job after graduating from UC Davis. "All of my projects included bicycle and pedestrian issues - from planning for more bicycle and pedestrian facilities in a small, underserved neighborhood in North Sacramento to a study of the busiest

transit station and future transit-oriented development at the 65th Street/University Avenue light rail station," she explained.

Tara applied for the Davis position because, "It was a fantastic opportunity, especially for someone like me, fairly early in my career," she said. "The coolness factor of being able to do this job, in this town, can pretty much go without saying. In addition, managing a bicycle program and creating a pedestrian program from the ground up was too good to miss!"

Her goals as Davis' bike coordinator "will be dynamic, changing to meet future needs and wants of the community," she said. "In the short term, I want to get the updated bicycle plan adopted and start working on the implementation strategy. I'm also hoping to continue to meet all the amazing cycling and pedestrian advocates in the area, since I can learn from everyone. This is definitely not a job that gets done in a vacuum."

Tara's undergraduate degree from UC Santa Barbara is in mechanical and environmental engineering; her graduate degree from UC Davis is in civil and environmental engineering, with an emphasis on transportation planning and policy. The experience she gained during summer breaks was eclectic: One summer at Lawrence Berkeley Lab for a Department of Energy fellowship, one summer at the University of Maine for a National Science Foundation fellowship and one summer in Washington, D.C., working for the National Association of Regional Councils funded by a University of California, Washington D.C., grant. During her second year at UC Davis, she worked for the University of California Office of the President as the Sustainable Transportation Intern.

She also took time off to do an executive fellowship through the California State University, Sacramento's State and Governor's Office, and spent that year at the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

Tara was delighted to return to Davis, where she lives a half-mile from work, three quarters of a mile from her favorite yoga studio and six blocks from the food co-op.

Her wheels include a Specialized Allez Sport road bike, a Kona mountain bike she got from the Sacramento Bicycle Kitchen that she calls her "trusty commute bike," and a vintage Schwinn racer, complete with two-tone seat, sparkly handlebar grips and curved top tube.

Tara has not forgotten her roots in Susanville even though her parents moved to Woodland after she left for college. She goes back every summer to camp on the shore of nearby Eagle Lake, where the fun includes "kayaking in the morning, swimming at midday and windsurfing in the afternoon."☼

SABA Meeting January 30

The update of the Sacramento County portion of the City-County Bikeway Master Plan will be the focus of SABA's first 2008 quarterly general membership meeting and potluck on Wednesday, Jan. 30. A representative from Fehr & Peers, the consultant hired by the county to update the plan, will outline the process and ask for comments.

The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. in Breathe California'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☼.

Member Profile: Jess Polakoff

By Eric Norris

It's three days before Christmas and Jess Polakoff is a busy man. The sales and service staff at City Bicycle Works, one of Jess' two Sacramento-area stores, is busy helping customers and assembling bicycles, many of which are destined to be found under Christmas trees in just a few days.



Jess Polakoff at City Bicycle works. Photo by Eric Norris

Jess is busy as well. "I can give you 12 minutes," he joked as he assisted another customer before sitting down to talk about his 26 years as a bicycle dealer in Sacramento. Ever the gracious host, Jess eventually gave SABA's interviewer more than 12 minutes — but he did step out several times to talk with customers and staff.

City Bicycle Works, Jess' first shop in Sacramento, opened in 1981 on J Street, moving five years later to its current location at 2419 K, nestled between a clothing store and a laundromat. Fueled by Greg Lemond's successes in the Tour de France, cycling in the 1980s was dominated by road cycling. Mountain biking was in its infancy, riders still used cleated shoes and toeclips and the days of carbon fiber bikes and aero wheels were still far in the future.

Since then, bicycling has gone through good times and bad — rising recently during the Armstrong era and then declining again when Lance retired. Despite the changes in the cycling industry, Jess has thrived in a highly competitive business that sees far more failures than successes. In 1986, he opened a second store in Citrus Heights (7885 Greenback Lane) and his K Street location remains a mainstay of the local cycling scene.

Jess' success can in large part be attributed to his hands-on business style and his love of not only bicycling, but the retail

Planting at Sacramento Northern Bikeway

Stalwart Steve Schweigerdt led a small crew of SABA volunteers as they cleared weeds and planted new grasses at the Sacramento Northern Bikeway trailhead on C Street in Sacramento. SABA planted 30 native grasses of three varieties: blue-eyed, blue grama and buckwheat.

AmeriCorps volunteers and the city of Sacramento assisted the SABA crew. The city provided tools and purchased the plants.

SABA adopted the trailhead area between C Street and the Union Pacific Railroad overcrossing five years ago. SABA volunteers completely cleared the area, have planted more than 100 plants and done periodic grounds maintenance including trash pickup, weeding and mulching. Three years ago, SABA donated the landmark steel gateway arch at the site to the city.

Steve says we'll be back on Feb. 9 at 9 a.m. If you would like to help, please contact SABA volunteer coordinator Larry Robinson. Volunteers in December in addition to Steve were Bruce and Debra Hagel, Tom Schefflin and his son, and Walt Seifert. ☼

business as well. Even with a qualified staff on hand to manage the operation and keep everything running, Jess still puts in upwards of 40 hours a week in his shops (although that's down recently from the 50 to 60 hours he put in for several decades). Even today, you're as likely to find Jess on the floor as any of his sales staff. The day we visited, aside from helping several customers (many of whom he knew by name), he was straightening up a display of children's bikes, putting away empty clothes hangers and fielding phone calls.

There's a reason for this, Jess said. As the person in charge of deciding which bikes and accessories his customers will want to buy in the coming year, Jess finds his time working with the public to be invaluable, helping him track consumer desires and to know months ahead of time what will sell.

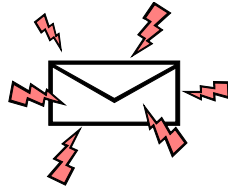
The biggest new market Jess has seen recently is the commuter/city bike category. Road bikes remain a mainstay of his business, but the spike in fuel prices in 2007 led to a surge in the sale of hybrid (flat bar) bicycles, mostly to riders who planned to use them for their three- to five-mile daily commutes.

The success of City Bicycle Works has allowed Jess to engage in cycling-related philanthropy. Every year, 100 to 200 new SABA members are welcomed to the organization with a package that includes a \$5 gift certificate from City Bicycle Works. Several local clubs, including Team City, Rio Strada and Ophir (the latter a women's racing club) are sponsored by the shop, and riders for more than 27 years have gathered at Jess' shop for weekly training rides.

As SABA's interview was winding down, Jess spoke of a bright future for cycling in Sacramento, particularly if gasoline prices remain high. Key to getting more people out of cars and onto bikes, he said, will be a combination of adding more safe cycling routes in the region and a continuing program to teach riders the basics of safe riding and commuting.

And with that, Jess was off to help yet another customer. ☼

Letters to the Editor



Editor:

As a bus/bike commuter, I often have the problem of being “bumped” off the bus when the bike racks in front are full. This is inconvenient, and for those who are less committed, a reason to drive instead of biking. However, I’ve seen a solution. On a recent business trip to San Luis Obispo, I spied its regional transit buses which have triple racks on the front AND the back. Is this something that SABA could pursue with the bus companies? I’m sending a letter to YoloBus about this (since this is what I ride). As the warmer months draw near, more people are inclined to use the racks and subsequently be disappointed/inconvenienced when the racks are full. This would be proactive and encouraging people to use mass transit and their bikes instead of their cars.

Mark Cameron

Editor’s note: This a long-delayed letter. In December, YoloBus applied to SACOG for funding for triple racks for its buses.

Editor’s note: Following is a copy of a letter sent to a Sacramento city council member.

I was glad to see the Tower Bridge open well ahead of schedule. I cross the Tower Bridge more often by bicycle than I do by car, and I do it quite often. I don’t give a rip about the widening of the sidewalk because I do not, and will not, use it. Sidewalks are for pedestrians, not bicycles. Now I read from the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates (thank goodness we have SABA to protect bicyclists) that the shoulders (bike lanes) on the bridge are in jeopardy as a streetcar lane is being proposed. **Not good.** A streetcar bridge should be a separate structure. I will continue to use the street, shoulder or no shoulder.

The city/county has a bicycle advisory group. It should be consulted on proposals such as these.

James Cook

Editor’s note: The north sidewalk on the Tower Bridge is now open. The bicycle access to the sidewalk is poor, requiring a 180 degree turn and several 90 degree turns within a short distance.

Tip of the Month Rain Riding

By David Takemoto-Weerts

In California, we cyclists are blessed with some of the best riding weather in the United States. Most of us live in areas with moderate temperatures and a middling amount of precipitation. The modest amount of rainfall we experience annually is a mixed blessing. Because rain is the one atmospheric phenomenon most likely to persuade us to forego the two-wheeler for another mode of commuting or recreation, the less “liquid sunshine” we get the better. On the other hand, an extended lack of wet stuff reminds us that many Californians live in regions not well suited for the massive population centers that have grown around the state over the past century.

As I write this, there is light rainfall outside, but not much in the forecast and water resource managers are fretting over the likelihood of another “below normal” year – a condition likely to redefine “normal” as global warming advances. Ironically, continuing to pedal even in inclement weather is one of the more effective measures we as individuals can take to combat climate change. With that in mind, here are a few tips to consider that will make your rainy day ride safer and more comfortable:

- Avoid slipping on wet pavement by taking turns slowly without sudden movements—and be wary of painted pavement markings, metal utility covers, and railroad tracks.
- Take heed: roadway oil is “resurrected” during the first few minutes of rainfall making for very slippery surfaces.
- Puddles may hide potholes – be wary.
- Braking will be compromised. Apply brakes lightly to whisk off excess water.
- If you have a “vintage” bike with steel rims, don’t use it in the rain or consider

investing in aluminum rims.

- You will be less visible to other road users. Maximize your conspicuity with bright clothing, proper lane positioning and multiple lights – and use those lights even during the day.
- Good fenders and rainwear are a must.
- If you wear a hooded jacket or rain cape, be sure your vision, especially of a peripheral nature, isn’t obscured.
- Carry a few plastic bags or disposable shower caps to cover your saddle.
- Your chain will need more frequent lubing. Keep cables and other lubrication points oiled as well.
- Be sure your frame tubing is sealed against any water intrusion – seal any vent holes or other openings with tape, silicone cement or other water-resistant materials.

Now welcome the needed rain and get out and ride!☀

David Takemoto-Weerts is the University of California, Davis, bike coordinator and a League of American Bicyclists’ League Cycling Instructor.



SABA

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What's up for cycling in 2008?
Accomplishments of 2007
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**SACOG Salutes SABA**

At its Dec. 20 Board meeting, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) presented SABA with the SACOG Salutes! 2007 Blueprint Excellence Award. SABA shared the award with WALKS Sacramento for both organizations' "collaboration with the community for Complete Streets."

SABA and WALKS Sacramento have pushed the idea of Complete Streets into the consciousness of local officials and the media. Complete Streets is the notion that streets ought to be safe and accessible for all users: cyclists, pedestrians, motorists, transit users, the young, the old, and those with disabilities. There is certainly much more to be done, but the Sacramento region is among the leaders in the nation that recognize the value and equity of the Complete Streets concept.

Other SACOG Salutes! 2007 award winners include:

Agency of the Year: Placer County Transportation Planning Agency

For Leadership and Advocacy for Transportation Solutions

Citizen of the Year: Brooks Truitt

For Continuing Civic Engagement

Project of the Year: Caltrans Division of Rail

Foolish Freeway Frolic

On Feb. 22, Neighbors Advocating Sustainable Transportation (NAST) will hold the Foolish Freeway Frolic fundraising party at Sacramento's own Revolution Wine winery.

There will be food and drink, music and socializing in an attractive setting — oak wine casks and all. It does sound like a party, doesn't it? Plus there will be an opportunity to pick up a bargain at a silent auction. Tickets will be available at the door for \$20 or at the door for \$25.

Revolution Wines is the only urban winery in Sacramento, and yes, they make wine on the site. It's a little difficult to locate, but find the iron gate to 2116 P Street (behind 2114 P Street) and you're there. Find out more at: <http://www.revolution-wines.com/> Come on out and see this unique spot, have some fun and help a good cause.

Proceeds will help defray the cost of the NAST/Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS) lawsuit that was filed to get Caltrans to identify all of the environmental consequences of its plan to widen Highway 50. The widening will increase Highway 50 capacity by adding High Occupancy Vehicle lanes, which means there will be more automobile traffic and fewer transportation dollars available for bicycle, pedestrian and transit projects. SABA is a member of both NAST and ECOS.

Items, gift certificates and services are needed for the silent auction that will be held in conjunction with the party. If you can donate something, please contact Walt Seifert at 444-6600 or saba@sacbike.org. To buy tickets in advance, make checks payable to "Friends of ECOS" and send to PO Box 1421, Sacramento, CA 95812.