



# The Squeaky Wheel

Issue No. 59

Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

February 2008

## From the President Fighting NIMBYism in Gold River

By Lea Brooks

The city of Rancho Cordova is proposing a south-only interchange on Highway 50 between Hazel Avenue and Sunrise Boulevard to relieve traffic congestion for existing traffic and to serve new development. The Rancho Cordova Parkway interchange would provide no motor vehicle access to Gold River, but proposes bicycle and pedestrian access over Highway 50.

As a longtime resident of Gold River, I am disappointed, but not surprised at the Gold River Community Association's (GRCA) opposition to this project because of the Association's history of NIMBYism (i.e. not in my backyard).

Although I'm not that thrilled about the half-interchange because it will dump more vehicles on congested Highway 50 from yet more sprawl development south of the highway, I am absolutely in support of the bicycle-pedestrian access. This project would provide convenient access for cyclists on the south side of Highway 50 to the county roads in Gold River and an easy bike ride or walk for Gold River residents to the planned light rail station near Mine Shaft Road on the south side of the highway.

On Jan. 9, *The Sacramento Bee's* Folsom-Rancho Cordova section's online edition ran a story with the headline, "Gold River Fears Invasion of Commuter Bicyclists." The article featured comments from GRCA representatives who said they feared non-Gold River residents would use their network of private bike trails to reach the American River Parkway.

The representatives also claimed that the network of private bike trails really are na-  
*President, page 3*

## Amgen Tour

SABA will be providing valet bike parking for the Amgen Tour of California bicycle race stage finish in Sacramento on Tuesday, Feb. 19. The bike parking compound will be located between the Capitol's West Steps and the Tour's Lifestyle Festival booths on 10<sup>th</sup> Street.

This is the second year of a tour finish in Sacramento. Stage 2 will again begin in Santa Rosa and finish in downtown Sacramento after crossing the Tower Bridge and taking several loops around Capitol Park.

Finishers are expected to arrive in Sacramento around 2 p.m. The Lifestyle Festival will be open from noon to 4 p.m. Valet bike parking hours will be 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. ☺



SABA's Booth was a popular spot at last year's Festival.



Riders and fans at the 2007 thrilling Stage 2 finish.

## SACOG Considers Bike/Ped Projects for Funding

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) has recommended nine bicycle and pedestrian projects for funding. The big-ticket item is a \$6 million overcrossing of Interstate 80 that will connect North and South Natomas. The overcrossing will be just west of the Interstate 5 interchange.

Another freeway crossing, a Highway 99 overcrossing at Elk Grove Creek, is included in the package of projects.

Funding for new bike maps, long overdue, was recommended. Included with the bike maps is an online bike route planning service that will enable users to enter starting points and destinations, and perhaps other criteria, and have a route selected for them — a Mapquest for bikes.

The projects were screened by an advisory committee, SACOG staff and a SACOG committee. A nice development during the review process was that SACOG staff and committee recommendations resulted in additional funding being added to the pot, bringing the total value of the projects to more than \$11 million when \$10 million was the original goal.

A public comment period for the projects is now open. The projects recommended for funding are as follows. (The dollar amount recommended for this funding round may be less than total project cost.)

### City of Sacramento

- I-80 Bike/Pedestrian Bridge at the West Canal, **\$4,527,000**
- **Sacramento Air Quality Management District**
- Bicycle Parking Incentive Project, **\$310,000**

*Projects, page 3*



*President, from page 1*  
 ture trails, not designed for bicyclists, despite evidence that the trails have long been called bike trails, including a Gold River bicycle trail map and promotion of the bike trails on Gold River's Web site.

In a Jan. 24 "Guest Commentary" response to the article, I wrote that liability associated with the use of private bike trails by non-Gold River residents is a valid concern. However, the reality is that bicyclists do not need these trails to access the parkway because they can do so via Gold Country Boulevard, a public road, at the Nimbus Fish Hatchery near Hazel and the county-maintained Sunrise Corridor Bikeway.

I also expressed concern over the Gold River representatives' implication that bicycle commuters are bad. SABA knows better.

Also on Jan. 24, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments' (SACOG) Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee voted to support including bicycle and pedestrian access in the half-interchange and recommended that the SACOG board support the access as well.

SABA has also requested support from Sacramento Regional Transit, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, Breathe California and WALKSacramento for keeping the bicycle/pedestrian access in the project.

The Sacramento City/County Bicycle Advisory Committee was scheduled to consider supporting the project in early February.

This project's Environmental Impact Report is scheduled to be released for public review and comment in late February and at least one public hearing will be held.

My hope is that the GRCA will reconsider its position and choose to be a partner in the Sacramento region's solution to traffic congestion, poor air quality, global warming and the obesity epidemic rather than part of the problem.

But if Gold River remains opposed to bicycle-pedestrian access, my hope is that the decision-makers will consider Gold River's concerns, but approve the project because it's the right thing to do to provide a balanced transportation system and choice.⊗



*SABA and WALKSacramento share SACOG Salutes! award for complete streets effort. From left, SACOG past chair Rusty Dupray, WALKSacramento's Anne Geraghty and Trinh Hartney, SABA's Walt Seifert, SACOG Chair Tom Cosgrove. Photo courtesy SACOG*

*Projects, from page 1*

#### **SACOG**

- Regional Bicycle Trip Planner and Regional Bicycle Routes Map Set, **\$251,000**

#### **City of Folsom**

- Bikestation and "BikeLink" On-Demand Long-Term Class 1 Bike Parking at Transit Stations, **\$158,000**

- Folsom Lake Trail Bike/Pedestrian Overcrossing, **\$575,000**

#### **City of Elk Grove**

- Elk Grove Creek Bike/Pedestrian Bridge Crossing at SR-99, **\$2,500,000**

#### **Yolo County Transportation District**

- Retrofit YOLOBUS Bus Fleet with Higher Capacity Bike Racks, **\$25,000**

#### **Sacramento County Department of Public Works**

- Arden Way Improvement Project (Eastern Ave. to Fair Oaks Blvd.), **\$1,530,000**

#### **City of Galt**

- Pedestrian Safety Improvements at UPRR crossings, **\$325,000**⊗

## **SABA Pizza Party — Pizza, Soda and Doin' Stuff**

The monthly SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party will be Thursday, March 13<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at SABA Provincial HQ, 909 12<sup>th</sup> Street.

Come and meet everyone and enjoy some pizza.



## Workshops Set for County Bikeway Plan Update

The Sacramento County Department of Transportation is updating the *2010 Sacramento City/County Bikeway Master Plan (1993)* for the unincorporated portion of Sacramento County and invites the public to participate in a series of workshops in February and March. Four public workshops will be held to provide residents with a project overview and the opportunity to comment on bicycle improvements they feel



Participants in SABA's 2007 Kick-Off/Show-Off Ride celebrate Sacramento bikeways, a major result of planning and advocacy over the years. Photo by Dave Cassel should be made in their communities.

This planning document will be used to guide future improvements to Sacramento County's bicycle network. Fehr & Peers, Alta Planning + Design, and Mark Thomas & Company are assisting the county in this effort through extensive data collection to inventory existing bikeway facilities, policy recommendations and plan implementation outlining priority projects. The process will also include extensive public outreach through these workshops, a Web page and a user survey.

The workshops will be held at the following locations:

### North Highlands

Thursday, Feb. 14, 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
North Highlands Recreation & Park District  
6040 Watt Ave., North Highlands

### Arden Arcade/ Carmichael

Wednesday, Feb. 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
Department of Human Assistance Building  
2700 Fulton Ave., Sacramento

### Rosemont

Thursday, Feb. 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
Rosemont High School, Multi-Purpose Room  
9594 Kiefer Blvd., Rosemont

### Orangevale

Tuesday, March 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
Orangevale Community Center  
6826 Hazel Ave., Orangevale

The public workshops will include a presentation by the project's consulting team, showcasing existing bicycle facilities in the county. The Project Team will also provide opportu-

## Foolish Freeway Frolic Fun

Plan to attend a unique fundraising event on Friday, Feb. 22 from 7 to 10 p.m. at Revolution Wines, Sacramento's only urban winery. There will be food and drink, music, socializing and a silent auction with many potential bargains.

Proceeds will defray the cost of the Neighbors Advocating Sustainable Transportation (NAST)/Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS) lawsuit that was necessary to get Caltrans to identify and mitigate all of the environmental consequences of its plan to expand Highway 50. SABA is a member of NAST and ECOS.

Revolution Wines is at 2116 P Street (behind 2114 P Street). Tickets will be available at the door for \$25 or in advance for \$20. Please make checks payable to Friends of ECOS and mail to NAST, c/o SPNA, PO Box 1421, Sacramento CA 95812. Tickets will be held at the door.

Bring your checkbook for the silent auction. There will be lots of special items available, some bike-related. ☼

## Federal Energy Bill

The federal energy bill passed late last year contained a Complete Streets provision that potentially affects cyclists. The bill says that "It is the sense of Congress that in constructing new roadways or rehabilitating existing facilities, state and local governments should consider policies designed to accommodate all users, including motorists, pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and people of all ages and abilities, in order to—

- (1) Serve all surface transportation users by creating a more interconnected and intermodal system.
- (2) Create more viable transportation options.
- (3) Facilitate the use of environmentally friendly options, such as public transportation, walking and bicycling."

Another provision in the bill that would have had a more direct impact on cycling was dropped by the Senate after having been approved in the House. A tax benefit would have expanded existing transportation fringe benefits to include bike commuters.

The bike commuter provision was based on Rep. Earl Blumenauer's (D-OR) Bicycle Commuter Act and would have given \$20 per month to employees who biked to work "for the purchase, storage or repair" of their bicycles. It would have brought bike commuters in line with transit users' and car drivers' existing tax benefits.

The Senate also removed Blumenauer's effort to close the "Hummer tax loophole," which sought to end the additional tax incentive for business purchases of luxury SUVs weighing more than 6,000 lbs. ☼

ities for the public to make bicycle improvement suggestions.

Those not able to attend a public workshop are encouraged to visit the Sacramento County Bicycle Master Plan Web site at <http://saccountybikeplan.webexone.com> to learn about upcoming events and the progress of the Plan. Furthermore, the County wishes to receive feedback from the public regarding bicycling conditions in Sacramento County. To contribute input, or to be added to an informational e-mail listserv, please send email to: [comments@saccountybikeplan.com](mailto:comments@saccountybikeplan.com). ☼

## Member Profile

### Ralph Propper

By Bill Welty

**B**icyclists get no respect! But Ralph Propper is working to change that.

Ralph grew up in New York City. He was a regular bike commuter to junior high school because the school provided bike racks, but not to high school because there was no bike parking. Years later, Ralph became a regular bike commuter again when his office moved to a new location that charges for vehicle parking.

Ralph is a chemist who works as an air pollution research specialist at the California Air Resources Board (ARB). His branch addresses global climate change. He hopes that higher gasoline prices will encourage more people to ride bikes. Ralph



Ralph shows his bright reflective clothing for good night visibility. Photo by Bill Welty

is a regular bicycle commuter from his home in Curtis Park to his office downtown in the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) building. Because he rides for exercise, Ralph sees no reason to have a light-weight bike so rides a heavier, inexpensive bike.

Before he became a single father of two kids, Ralph had more time to volunteer. He was a board member of the Air & Waste Management Association, the Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS) and president of his state union section (Professional Engineers in California Government). Ralph is currently

treasurer of Breathe California of Sacramento-Emigrant Trails (formerly an American Lung Association affiliate) and a board member of Friends of ECOS. He is a longtime rider in the Emigrant Trails Bike Trek, a fundraiser for Breathe California. Ralph has also been a SABA “bike valet” at the Chavez Park Friday concert series every summer since its inception.

Ralph was a passive bike rider before several visits to Amsterdam opened his eyes. Biking in Amsterdam – A dream come true! Bike paths are separate from sidewalks (pedestrians) and from roads (cars). Red lights marked “bicycles accepted!” Parking lots for bikes only! Half of the traffic is on bicycles. If a car strikes a bicyclist, the assumption is the car driver is at fault. The bicycle-riding public is a political force!

#### Ralph’s Strange Cycling Experiences:

Bicycling in the United States – “I got hit by a car that witnesses said was speeding. The police give me a ticket for failing to yield the right-of-way.”

Bicycling at the Cal/EPA building – “I walked my bike slowly through the lobby, with a foot on a pedal – my bike was confiscated and I was threatened with disciplinary action.”

Land-use planning in his neighborhood – “Access to a proposed large development project would be allowed for cars and pedestrians, but not bicyclists.”

His residential street – “I lobbied the mayor to get traffic calming on my street. The response was to change a “yield” sign to a “stop” sign. So I waved to a policeman waiting at the corner as I slowly rode through. He gave me a ticket for not stopping, even though nobody else was around. Paying the fine would give me a point on my driver’s license, so I asked for traffic school – but this was denied because I was riding my bike!”

Bottom line, Ralph said we all need to be active with SABA to get the respect and the rights we deserve. We can help the world deal with global warming and the obesity crisis!⊗

## SABA Arranges DuPont Gift for City

**C**ourtesy of SABA “goathead” Gerry Miller and chemical maker DuPont, the city of Sacramento received two pounds of DuPont’s Telar XP for use near bike trails. The chemical is part of an ongoing, multiyear effort to eradicate goathead weeds. SABA’s team of “goathead” eradicators has been helping keep bike trails, especially the Sacramento River trail and American River Parkway trail, free of the spiky goatheads and other noxious weeds. Goatheads, also known as puncture vine and more scientifically as *Tribulus terrestris*, are notorious for causing flats in bike tires.⊗



The infamous goathead thorn, creator of bike flats. Source USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

**SABA**

909 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 116  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Address Service Requested**

<p><b>Nonprofit Organization</b> U.S. Postage Paid Sacramento, CA Permit No. 1424</p>
---

Bike projects slated for funding  
See page 1

## SABA Business and Organization Members

We thank these businesses and organizations that support SABA! Please support them. These organizations are listed on SABA's Web site, with a link where available.

- Air Resources Board
- Colin B. Arnold, MD
- The Bicycle Business
- Bicycle Chef Bicycles
- Bicycles Plus\*
- BikingRoseville
- Bob's Cycle Center
- Body Concepts
- Breathe California Sacramento-Emigrant Trails
- Gary Brustin, Cycling Attorney
- Centerline Striping Company, Inc.
- City Bicycle Works\*
- Cycle California! magazine
- Davis Bike Club
- Fehr & Peers Transportation Consultants
- Leslie Fong, DDS
- Franchise Tax Board
- Great Clips for Hair
- Hangtown Electric, Inc.
- Hannan Specialties
- Heritage Park Bicycling Club
- HDR The Hoyt Co.
- Inside Publications
- M & E Enterprises
- Matt Kuzins & Kumpany
- McClellan Park Transportation Management Assoc.
- Mercy General Hospital
- Natomas Bike Shop\*
- North Natomas TMA
- REI
- Resources Law Group, LLP
- Rex Cycles
- Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)
- Sacramento Bike Hikers
- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD)
- Sacramento Metropolitan Utility District (SMUD)
- Sacramento State University Transportation & Parking Services
- Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op
- Sacramento TMA
- Sacramento Wheelmen
- Sierra Engineering
- South Natomas TMA
- Henry B. Starkes, MD
- Total Body Fitness
- Kelvin A. Tse, DDS
- UC Davis Transportation & Parking Services
- The Waterboy Restaurant

*Business members with an \* offer SABA members a discount*