

Benicia Bicycle Club

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The Road Marshal: Message from the President

May! Ride safe, smart and know your weaknesses. Your base miles should be in. It is time to enjoy your rides and sign up for the Napa Century before it is too late. We want the whole group to sign up and pick your distance. There is plenty of time to train, so get signed up! Monticello Century is here so sign up now. Last year was a lot of fun!



Prez "Sugar Joe" Marks & wife Juliet

Bob and Laurie's Club Barbecue Ride is in July so be ready. You don't want to miss a great 65-mile ride and even greater, the barbecue. Remember, Benicia Bicycle Club get-togethers are the best.

Order your short sleeve, or sleeveless jerseys and vests as soon as possible. We also have club hats and t-shirts. Hope to see you all out there riding.

Welcome New Members!

- Robert Reber
- Oscar Favela
- Sonny Flores
- Collette Sweeney
- Steve Striepeke
(returnee)



From your Intrepid Editors

It's getting warmer. Repeat after me, it's getting warmer. Maybe if we say it often enough, it will come true...Some of us feel that 'it's never a bad time to ride' and some of us are unabashedly fair-weather riders. Either way, the riding season has opened with a bang, as you can see from the list of available centuries in our Western region. We heartily agree with Joe Marks—time to register! If you are looking for leisurely day rides to interesting places, check out the Valley Spokesmen website www.valleyspokesmen.org. One does not have the chance to converse with a llama every day!

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SOLANO PACIFIC

Newsletter Contributors

Thank you for your articles, photographs and your moral support! Our April 2008 Newsletter is a team effort. Special thanks to Joe Pritchard, George Villareal, Mark Birnbaum, Joe Shami, Mick Wenginger, Sherri Bortolazzo, Barbara Wood, Brian Hattenbach
Sherri and Riva

BBC Members on the Go!

Congratulations to the Cinderella Gang

The Thirty-first Annual Cinderella Tour took place on April 5, and the BBC was well represented, in both the Princess and Prince categories. Kudos to Kimble Goodman, Bob Klosterman and Mick Weninger, who braved the chilly constant wind to provide wonderful food and drink to the hard-working Princesses. Kimble manned the full-service water kiosk while Bob and Mick handled the cookies and oranges.



Bob and Mick (photo by R. Flexer)

This year there was an extra 35-mile loop for those intrepid Princesses (Barbara Wood and Trudy Nye) who required a little more challenge. Although

it didn't rain, and even became sunny in the afternoon, Cora Lo, Riva Flexer and Sherri Bortolazzo found the regular 65-mile route to be a pleasant effort. This year the temperature was a limiting factor. It wasn't even as windy as we feared. The ride of 2006 will always be a memory (need I say more?)

Safety Issues

A note of caution—on the valley Spokesmen ride I had the unenviable position of watching an accident about to happen. Thank goodness it didn't but it was a close call. It happened at the intersection of Cantelow Road and Gibson Canyon Road. We were riding down Cantelow, and turning right at Gibson. Riders did not stop at the stop sign, but coasted right through the right turn onto Gibson Canyon. They failed to see the traffic coming at speed from the left down Gibson Canyon Road. I stopped, and watched the car barreling toward my companions, honking with rage. Moral? Stop before you turn— we CAN turn right on reds, but that stop sign is there for a reason, not to slow us down maliciously, but because there is fast traffic coming.

— Editors

Time Trials

The Club Time Trials have started up again. Same place, same time (Lopes Road, 6 p. m).

This event is an excellent opportunity to give yourself a starting baseline that can be used to gauge your (steady) improvement throughout the year. You don't have to have a fancy bike to do one of these. Just bring your regular cycling stuff and lots of determination.

If you have never done a Time Trial before and would like to participate in a "What I need to know" clinic, just write to

beniciabicycleclub@gbvilla.cnc.net

and we can get one going.

We have also updated the club's Time Trial website page to the best of my knowledge. If you have participated in previous time trials please review it for accuracy and let me know if we need to change anything. If you are also not listed under the "Personal Best" category and want to be included just provide us with the information.

—Joe Pritchard

—George Villarreal

<http://www.gbvilla.cnc.net/Time%20Trials.htm>

Kudos to:

Dana Myers for completing his very first Century!

Joe Shami for riding up Diablo 43 weeks consecutively!

Lisa Villarreal for riding out to Winters and back!

Venue Change Tuesday/Thursday Rides

Effective Tuesday April 8th. Our Tuesday & Thursday Club rides will start at Starbucks at the bottom of First Street.

The rides will start at the same time - 9:30 AM. This new venue has been selected due to its visibility for the club, parking ease and Starbucks' hospitality.

Free and ample parking is available at the Benicia Green parking lot located at First and B Street, one block toward the water.

Solvang 2008—Dana Myers

We drove down to Solvang on Friday afternoon, arriving at our friend's house around 5:30pm. I walked the .3 mile over to the Royal Scandinavian hotel at 6pm to register - and was in a line around the block! It moved quickly, though. I managed to get to bed at a reasonable time; I woke to a foggy but not too chilly morning; my friends from L.A. arrived, we rode down to the start/finish, and rolled on course at 7:26 a.m.

I managed to flat only seven miles out - apparently the result of a twist in my rear tube (dough!). This was the only mechanical problem I'd have this ride (though I would later lose my LED headlight).

We rode out of the fog after 10-15 miles, and I shed the knee/armwarmers at the first SAG/rest stop in Lompoc, twenty-three miles out.

Weather at this point had become sunny with just a touch of coastal haze, and I stowed the sleeveless shell at the second SAG stop, 39 miles out. We'd been fighting an annoying wind from the north/northwest until we turned inland in Santa Maria - now we had a pleasant tailwind and perfect air temperatures.

The single largest climb of the ride started around 80-mile point, first at a sedate 3-4% grade, but eventually getting tough at 85 miles, around 7%, and peaking above 10% (they call this Heartbreak Hill). This was the only place where I had any difficulty - my legs took

turns getting a little crampy; I stopped and stretched for a couple of minutes and had no further problem.

After the final SAG stop at 92-mile point, the approximately 3/4-mile climb up "The Wall" was easier than it looked, and the ride down The Wall was worth the grind up (I hit 50 mph for a while). Note - the pavement was fairly rough there, and my brand-new LED headlight vibrated apart and I lost it :-)

I rolled into the Royal Scandinavian about 7h 10m wall time, total riding time of just under 6h, feeling great. I made an effort to eat around 400-500 kcal at each SAG, and never had a problem with energy.

Since I was wearing the BBC colors, I did have a few riders say "Hey Benicia!", so I figured I'd pass the greeting on :-)

According to the newspaper the next day, no major incidents were reported during the event. It was mildly amazing to ride 102 miles and never be out of eye contact with large groups of cyclists, but I'm sure the novelty will wear off.

This was my first Century ride, and I would not have been there if not for the encouragement of my fellow Benicia Bicycle Club members, especially the hardy "winter" riders that gave me a reason to get up and go at 7am on some pretty cold mornings. You know who you are - thanks!

Mount Tamalpais Century Feb 23 2008—Mark Birnbaum

Riding to and up Mt. Tam has become a birthday ritual over the last several years. Weather is not hot, scenery is great, and it's a good way to begin the process of getting in shape for the upcoming cycling season. This year, with the prediction of a big storm for Saturday afternoon, I took extra precautions. To (hopefully) beat the rain, I'd leave home at 6:00, when it was still dark. By the time we hit the first road with any significant amount of traffic, it would be fully light, and the rear flasher would take care of me until then. Just in case it started raining earlier than predicted, I'd take Jake, the commute bike, instead of the usual long distance bike. This would be the most climbing I'd ever done on Jake. At close to 30 lbs, fully loaded with water bottle, spare tire, front fender and rear rack, Jake is no lightweight, but if things got wet and nasty out there, Jake would get me home. Mentally, I noted various bailout points along the route, just in case things got weird.

A bit before 6:00, with flasher on, we pulled out and headed west. Traffic on Novato Blvd. was light, and there was enough moonlight coming thru the clouds to make out where the road was. With skullcap, tights, gloves and long sleeve wool jersey, most of my body was comfortably warm. My toes and the front portions of my feet went numb from the cold, inside of a few miles. They would stay that way until well after the ride was over.

As planned, we hit Pt. Reyes Petaluma Road just after it became fully light. The next miles, along that road, Nicasio Valley Road, and Sir Francis Drake, into Fairfax, were a delight of lush green hills, redwoods and neat cloud formations. West of Fairfax,

coming in the other direction were several small groups of cyclists, each one with heavy duty headlights blazing. Perhaps they were doing a long distance randanneour ride of some sort. At Fairfax, we pulled into the Fairfax Roastery, for a pit stop and food. Their apricot bars are fantastic, and an oatmeal-raisin cookie would help get me up the hill, a few miles later. So far so good.

We began the climb out of Fairfax, heading towards Alpine lake and Mt. Tam. It was a long, slow climb to the hump, and a quick descent to the ride along Alpine lake. The trees were lush, the grass was green, and there was no traffic. I hadn't been up Tam since doing the Mt. Double, in Aug. In the intervening 6 months plus, the road had deteriorated slightly, with a few more cracks and potholes. While doing this climb, the oatmeal raisin cookie and a bagel with almond butter provided the fuel to keep going. After going over the Alpine Lake dam, the real climb began. This is one of those "this is why I ride" roads. Every tree and plant seems to be a different shade of green, moss is growing, water is flowing, and there are no cars. Several riders came down the road, as we were going up. You are under trees the whole way, and sheltered from the wind. It just doesn't get any better than this.

We finally got to Ridgecrest and turned left. Shortly thereafter, we were in the open, riding along the spine of Mt. Tam, right under the thick, low clouds. Aside from views down, to the Bolinas Lagoon and Stinson Beach area, there was not much to see. The headwind was picking up and it was getting

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Tour of the Unknown Valley—Mark Birnbaum

Participants: Mark and Jake, the commuter bike on March 2, 2008.

The Tour of the Unknown Valley has been put on by Chico Velo for many years. It is traditionally one of the first, if not the first, true organized century in Northern California, each year, always coming on the first weekend of March. This is a minimalist ride, with 3 rest stops, few road markings, map, but no route sheet, no patch or giveaways, and not a lot of variety in the food, although the quantities are more than adequate. Because the weather is pretty iffy this time of year, most people do not pre-register. They wait to see what the weather will be like as the day of the ride approaches.

This year promised clear skies and good views of the outstanding scenery that the ride passes through and within sight of. We were at the start/finish, the Willows Fire Department, by 6:35, joining 10 or so other people who were already there. In the next 10 minutes or so, another 10 to 15 showed up. This ride is not exactly a mass event. I ran into Jesse Smith, whom I hadn't seen since the Grand Tour Double Century in Malibu the previous June. We had a pleasant chat, got caught up on news and compared rides that we'd both be doing this year.

At 6:50, registration completed, we set off towards the south. It quickly became apparent that the howling wind that I had heard since getting up in the morning was actually at our back. The first 20 plus miles of the ride are straight shot south, to and thru Maxwell, on a frontage road near I-5. This boring stretch was made much more bearable by the great tailwind, the great views of the Sutter Buttes, and the snow capped Coast Ranges. As we went thru Maxwell, the start/finish for the 65 mile version of the ride, we passed riders checking in and getting ready to head out.

A few miles beyond Maxwell, we made the first turn of the ride and headed west on Fairview. Unlike previous years, when many people, myself included, had missed the turn, there was actually a street sign there now. Wonders never cease. Immediately after making the turn, our speed was cut in half by what was now a very strong side wind. Progress was slow until we made a left turn a few miles later and headed south again. At this point, the road deteriorated to gravel. The many sections of horrible surfaced roads on the ride were the reason I was riding my commute bike. If it got dirty, dusty, or the paint got chipped by flying gravel, no big deal. The only disadvantage of Jake was that he was only set up to carry one water bottle.

On the second westward jog was the first rest stop, consisting of a porta potty and a table with food. Joining the other cyclists already there, I stuffed pockets and face as quickly as possible, used the facilities and headed back out into the cold wind. After some quite marginal gravel over the next few miles, we hit pavement again and made

a right turn, heading north. This was the southernmost point of the ride, and we'd now be heading basically north for close to 40 miles, all the way to Elk Creek. We now left the Central Valley and entered the foothills of the Coast Ranges.

Aside from the exceedingly slow progress caused by the wind and the unending roar of the wind in my ears, drowning out all other sounds, the riding was fairly pleasant. There was no vehicle traffic to speak of, and the scenery seemed to get better and better. The pavement was rough, but at least it was pavement, sort of, or had been once upon a time.

After several miles of being beaten up by the wind and pavement, we hit the start of the only significant climb of the ride, the bottom of Windy Point Summit. The next few miles, as we climbed to 1,700 feet were quite pleasant. Most of the road was sheltered from the wind, and the views were truly breathtaking. We even managed to pass a few other riders on the climb. Upon reaching the top, we immediately headed down the other side at a slow pace, held back by the rough pavement and the headwind. A mile or two after hitting the valley floor, we pulled into the lunch stop. We were now somewhere around 43 miles into the ride. About 10 other riders were already there. The truck and trailer carrying the supplies, chairs, tables, and food had just arrived a few minutes before, and they were just starting to unload it all and get set up. Since there was nothing to eat yet, we all sat down and waited. After 10 minutes or so, lunch was set up, so I got a Swiss-cheese sandwich and stuffed a few cookies in my pocket for later. By 10:30, we were back on the road, such as it was, heading once again into the wind.

The next three hours were some of the longest hours I'd spent on the bike in a long time. Progress was steady, but agonizingly slow. The road surface eventually went from gravel to poor pavement to better pavement. The scenery continued to be fantastic, a picture of green grass, both green and bare trees, flowing streams, and snow capped mountains. The cold, whistling wind was unending, insuring that very little coasting took place and drowning out all sounds of birds and approaching traffic, of which there was not much. It was over 30 miles from lunch to Elk Creek, so I had to ration water, to make the one bottle last the whole way. As we finally got to within a mile or two of Elk Creek, I felt movement on my left wrist. All the jarring of the roads had snapped a pin on my watch band, and I looked down just in time to see the watch fall off my wrist onto the pavement. I quickly retrieved it and continued towards Elk Creek (mile 77). At 1:30, we pulled into the Elk Creek rest stop. People who had passed me 20 minutes or more ago were still there. A few more riders pulled in after I did. Everyone looked

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Cinderella Challenge Route—Barbara Wood

The 32nd Annual Cinderella Classic, sponsored by our friends at Valley Spokesmen, is now a pleasant memory! The princes' charming did a wonderful job keeping us fed, safe, and protected. It was great to see our own special princes – Mick, Bob K., and Kimball – helping out at the rest stops.

The early morning air was crisp and the wind was picking up its pace. My riding buddy (Trudy) and I had decided to do "the challenge", wind and all. ("The challenge" is a 30 mile loop, out Patterson Pass, back Grant Line Road, Altamont Pass, with a nasty little climb up Carrol Road, North and South Flynn Roads, returning to the classic route on Patterson Pass Road.

The tailwinds made the Patterson Pass climb seem easy. Even the 10% grade at the top was conquered with just a little extra effort. The steep, winding downhill was a bit tricky but the headwind on Grant Line road make forward motion almost impossible. Just keep pedaling – one, two, three, etc. By the time I reached the rest stop I was exhausted. But..After a bite to eat, and lots of encouragement from the princes, I felt better. We were pleasantly surprised to receive a special "challenge pin" in honor of our achievement. (1x1 bright red, with a gold bike)

The lunch stop was almost deserted but there was plenty of food left for the few of us still on the road.

Back on the bike, it was headwinds and crosswinds as we wound our way across the valley to Highland Road. Sure enough, the "lemon drop prince" had not abandoned us. He was there to greet "his princesses" with words of encouragement and, of course, a lemon drop.

We skipped the last rest stop. After all, the next six miles were downhill. Then the route was mostly flat, a few short climbs, and we would be protected from the wind. (Well, sort of..)

We finished the ride with some others from "the challenge". Next was receiving our Cinderella patch, soup, and shopping, of course. I can't wait to see Sherri and Riva in their "hot" Sheila Moon bike shirts.

A great day for all the BBC princesses!



L-R Sherri B, Barbara W, Trudy N and Riva F (Photo from R. Flexer)

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exhausted. I didn't even feel the urge to eat.

After forcing down some crumb cake and rice chips and refilling the water bottle, we set off to tackle the climb out of Elk Creek. This is a fairly gradual climb and actually goes NW to SE, so we had the wind at our backs as we went up. After hitting the top, the road follows the valley, going SE, so we had more tailwind. My mood returned to positive and upbeat, as we sailed thru the valley. With a tailwind and decent pavement once again, life was good. The scenery zipped by and soon we were leaving the hills and were entering the Central Valley. We were greeted by great views of Mt. Shasta, Mt. Lassen, and the Sutter Buttes, as well as other snow capped mountains in the N. Sierra Nevada.

As we entered the Valley, we once more had a strong side wind. It was not quite as strong as it had been in the morning, and at this point, it wasn't a big deal, as we were within sight of town. We approached and passed

over I-5, did another mile plus thru Willows, and arrived back at the fire station at 3:00. The whole ride had taken about 8:10.

After stashing Jake in the car and replacing cycling shoes with sandals, it was time to enjoy the Willows Fire Department bean feed, which is always part of the ride. The Fire department puts the fire trucks outside, sets of tables, and has a bake sale, as well as a fund raiser dinner for whoever wants to come. After loading up my plate, I spotted several members of the Benicia Bicycle Club, including Steve Bahr, Mike Dunn, Bob Klosterman, Joe Pritchard, and Mick Weninger, who had all done the 65 miler, so I joined them. It was a pleasant way to end the ride. I later learned that Mike Kunz did the full century that I did.

It had been a more difficult day than anticipated, but the scenery had made up for most of that, and the feeling of accomplishment was a nice warm fuzzy as well. The 2008 season had begun.

Cinderella Training Ride - Barbara Wood

On Saturday, March 1, over 50 women, along with their bicycles, met at the Benicia First Street Green parking lot to begin a 60-mile ride through the BBC's territory. This ride was being held as part of a training program leading up to the women-only Cinderella Classic, to be held on April 5 in Pleasanton.

Several members of the Benicia Bicycle Club acted as "hosts" there to help with directions and to answer questions, as well as pointing out "potential" hazards to avoid along the way. The route covered familiar territory, out to Rockville, down to the Jellybelly Factory, back to Mankas Corners and home.

The first of the 32 Cinderella Classics was organized in 1976 as a way for the "Prince Charmings" of the Valley Spokesmen Bicycle Club to thank the "Princesses" for their support throughout the year. 200 women rode this first year. Many were in "Cinderella" costume. The tradition continues. Unfortunately, the club has had to limit the number of participants to 2200 due to permitting processes and insurance requirements. What was once rural countryside is now suburbia.

In 2007, a 35-mile loop, with 2000' of climbing, was added to provide the stronger riders with more challenge. All turns are well marked with the distinctive "pink" arrows. There are also plenty of "Prince Charmings" along to help any "damsel in distress". It is truly a wonderful event.



Eager Princesses-in-training and a couple of Princes at the First Street Green in Benicia

(Continued from page 3)

a bit cooler, but so far, aside from a few brief bouts of sprinkling, it was dry. There was another rider about ¼ mile ahead, but we couldn't catch him. The ride along the ridge went on until we got to the Rock Springs parking lot, at the junction of Ridgecrest and Pan Toll Roads. This is where many hikes start out, and on a Sat. morning, there are usually 20 to 50 cars parked here. Today there were 2. It was still dry, so we continued on, up the last 3 mile stretch to East Peak. At 9:45, we pulled into the parking lot there.

Normally, I spend 15-20 minutes at the top, eating, enjoying the view etc... but not today. It was getting seriously windy and colder at the same time. After a quick banana, water bottle refill and pit stop, we were on our way back to Rock Springs, eating bagel #2, as the scenery went by. Descending to Panoramic Hwy, junction, we were now at a bailout point. We could go left, down the front face of Tam into Mill Valley, and ride home or take the bus, or we could go right, as per original plan, to Stinson Beach, and Hwy. 1 and head north. Luck seemed to be with us, so we headed towards Hwy. 1. As we descended, it got a bit warmer, and the trees provided shelter from the wind. Traffic on the road was lighter than usual, which was a nice treat.

Hitting Stinson Beach, we headed north on Hwy. 1. We were now well over 50 miles into the ride. The next 16 miles, to Pt. Reyes Station were quite pleasant, as we climbed to and thru the Olema Valley, under the trees and thru the grasslands. It seemed like we even picked up a weak tailwind. At 11:45, we rolled into Pt. Reyes Station, for the last pit/food stop. It was less crowded than usual, probably due to the weather. A banana and two treats from the Bovine Bakery were most wel-

come. We were now about 70 miles into the ride and at the last bailout point. We could take the direct route home, about 20 miles, or return home via Hwy. 1 and the Marshall wall, about 30 miles. The weather didn't seem to be changing: heavy clouds, intermittent wind, and occasional sprinkles. We headed north on Hwy. 1.

The 9 miles to Marshall were pleasant, as usual, with Tomales Bay on the left, grassy hills on the right, and few cars. A large group of female riders, spread out over several miles passed going in the other direction, as we headed north. At Marshall, we turned right and began the ascent of the wall, a long slow grind. From here it was more or less a straight shot east; about 21 miles back to Novato. After a few miles of climbing, it began to sprinkle, and a serious headwind materialized. Our luck had finally run out. Having done this climb numerous times, I knew where we were in relation to the top, a big psychological advantage. We finally summited, and headed down the other side. It was raining a bit harder now, and the water soon began soaking thru my tights, shoes and gloves.

Once we hit the bottom of the grade, the valley seemed to protect us from much of the wind. It was relatively flat to rolling, which was good, because my energy level was decreasing. The remaining miles on Marshall-Petaluma Road, and the final miles on Pt. Reyes-Petaluma Road and Novato Blvd. were cold and unpleasant, as I got colder, wetter and more tired. This was the price paid for the fantastic miles that had preceded this stretch.

At 2:20, we pulled into the driveway. Home hadn't looked that good in a while. The birthday was now over, and the new year had begun.

Greetings from the Steel City—Brian Hattenbach

I've been in Pittsburgh for about 2 ½ weeks now, and while I'm still settling into my new home, neighborhood, and job, I'm definitely enjoying myself. Unfortunately, I've found it difficult so far to hook up with a cycling club for regular group rides. The local clubs either don't post their rides on the internet regularly, or the rides begin far outside of Pittsburgh in small towns around western Pennsylvania. So in meantime, I've been riding solo, exploring the streets and neighborhoods of my new city, and slowly expanding my area of familiarity.

Given that today, April 12th, is the day of the annual Little 500 bike race in Bloomington, Indiana (for those of you who don't know, I'm a graduate of Indiana University), I wanted to go out for a special challenge. I recently learned that Pittsburgh is the home of Canton Avenue, which is according to some sources the steepest street in the United States. Canton Ave. is located in the Southside neighborhood of Beechview, and has a grade of 37%. I decided to ride down to Beechview and attempt to climb it.

After about 8 miles of riding, including 3 very steep warm up climbs of various lengths and some fantastic views of the city from the top of the Mt. Washington neighborhood, I arrived at the bottom of Canton Ave. It actually didn't look quite as impossible as I imagined it would. Still, I decided to walk up the steps next to the road to scout it out before giving it a try. About 1/5th of the way up the pavement ends and the cobbles begin. There were many uneven patches of cobbles up the center of the road, so I discarded the idea of zig-zagging my way up. The right side looked the smoothest, so I decided to hug the right side and go straight up.



I walked back down to the bottom, psyched myself up, and went for it – and made it. Because the hill was so short (the 37% section is I think about 100 meters long), I wouldn't rank it as the toughest climb I've ever done. But what made it very difficult was simultaneously pedaling standing up and leaning far enough forward so that my front wheel stayed on the ground. Coasting back down was actually almost as difficult. In order to keep my back wheel on the ground and avoid flipping over my handlebars, I had to shift my weight so far backwards that I was actually squatting behind my saddle (try reaching your brakes from back there sometime).

Unfortunately, there was nobody else around to take a picture of me on the hill in my BBC colors, so you'll just have to believe me. After I made it down I rode around the city for about another hour to finish off a short, but hilly, 25-mile ride. The cold spring weather and the moving process has limited my time on the bike recently, but I'm eagerly looking forward to riding in the hilly countryside and the Appalachian Mountains in the coming months.

Ride Reports

Mount Diablo Ride—Sherri Bortolazzo

The Benicia Bicycle Club ride organized and led by Bob Klosterman, up Mt. Diablo on Sunday, April 13th was a great success. We gathered at the State Park at 8:00 and started our usual ride to Martinez. When we reached the bottom of Franklin Canyon, however, we wound our way to the south gate of Mt. Diablo, stopping for coffee at Pete's in downtown Danville. We then rode up the south gate to the Junction Ranger's Station and stopped for a few minutes to rest and cool down, as it was particularly warm that day.

Joe Shami continued all the way to the summit, even though it was so hot. He wanted to continue his weekly ascent of Mt. Diablo, which he has been doing for 43 weeks now. Absolutely remarkable that the winter weather didn't stop his weekly trips!! Bob Hyde continued part way up to the summit, and then turned around and caught up with us in the descent.

We then went to the Sweet Affair Bakery in Walnut Creek to get a bite to eat, rest, and hydrate. Then it was time to ride back to Benicia. Mick W. found us on his commute home from work and rode with us the rest of the way home. Some of the group rode home via Franklin Canyon, and others rode the Carquinez Scenic Highway.

Only Dana Myers had an issue with his bike, and had to leave it at REI to have his cable repaired. Bob Klosterman had a tire blowout in Vallejo on the way home, and had to be picked up. Other than that it was a very smooth and safe ride.

We had twelve to fifteen riders at any given time, as some would join us and some would leave us. We rode approximately 80 miles, depending on which way you went home. It was such a great day to be riding, and I know everyone appreciated the weather and great company. Thank you Bob, for leading this fabulous ride!

Edith Norby's Valley Spokesmen Ride—Sherri Bortolazzo

On Wednesday, April 16, 2008, Edith Norby led a Valley Spokesmen ride from Vacaville to Winters. Twelve riders participated, eight of which were Benicia Bicycle Club members.

We started at Lagoon Valley Regional Park in Vacaville (pena Adobe exit off 80E), and rode along the country roads to Winters, up Pleasants Valley Road, a right turn at Putah Creek Road and coasted into Winters, admiring the wild flowers. The weather was cool to start, but then warmed up nicely. The wind was not as powerful as the forecast predicted.

In Winters, we stopped for lunch at a little restaurant called Ficelle. It was a delightful place and we enjoyed it very much. Bob K. had stopped right before we reached town and bought some fresh strawberries, which he shared with everyone. They were delicious!

On the ride home we had a nice tailwind part of the way. The country roads were great and very lightly traveled. Winters Road to Allendale Road, left on Timms, right at Peaceful Glen, left on English Hills to Cantelow. We had one stop on the way home to feed and enjoy a llama, who seemed to be very friendly. A few of us deviated from the actual route, and rode up Cantelow Road, for a little extra challenge.

It was a very relaxed ride, approximately 40 miles. Kudos to Lisa Villarreal, as this was her first large group ride and she did an excellent job. Lisa has been training with George (her husband), building her strength and endurance so she can join in more club rides.

If you ever have an opportunity to ride one of Edith's rides, they are always fun. We also loved the lemon cake she baked when we returned to the cars. The cranberry juice washed it down nicely. Thank you Edith, for leading that great ride, enjoyed by all!

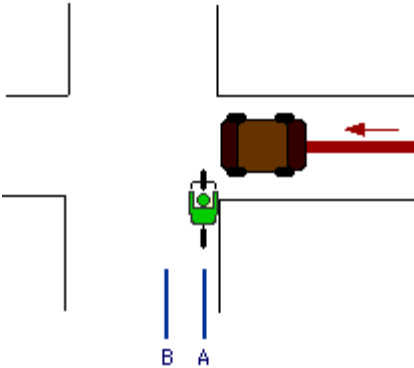


Safety Tips

Since we cyclists are always looking for ways to ride safely, and since accidents are always waiting to happen, we've decided to bring you safety tips from www.bicyclesafe.com. Set up by Michael Bluejay, this website is full of tips and suggestions, and well worth a read. Thanks to Mick Weninger for bringing it to our attention. This month we are looking at the Right Cross.

Right Cross, AKA Collision Type #1 and How to Avoid it

This is one of the most common ways to get hit (or almost get hit). A car is pulling out of a side street, parking lot, or driveway on the right. Notice that there are actually two possible kinds of collisions here: Either you're in front of the car and the car hits you, or the car pulls out in front of you and you slam into it.



How to avoid this collision:

1. **Get a headlight.** If you're riding at night, you should absolutely use a front headlight. It's required by law, anyway. Even for daytime riding, a bright white light that has a flashing mode can make you more visible to motorists who might otherwise Right Cross you. Look for the new LED headlights which last ten times as long on a set of batteries as old-style lights. And helmet- or head-mounted lights are the best, because then you can look directly at the driver to make *sure* they see your light.

2. **Honk.** Get a loud horn and USE IT whenever you see a car approaching (or waiting) ahead of you and to the right. If you don't have a horn, then yell "Hey!" You may feel awkward honking or yelling, but it's better to be embarrassed than to get hit. Incidentally, [the UK requires bells on bicycles](#).

3. **Slow down.** If you can't make eye contact with the driver (especially at night), slow down so much that you're able to completely stop if you have to. Sure, it's inconvenient, but it beats getting hit. *Doing this has saved my life on too many occasions to count.*

4. **Ride further left.** Notice the two blue lines "A" and "B" in the diagram. You're probably used to riding in "A", very close to the curb, because you're worried about being hit from behind. But take a look at the car. When that motorist is looking down the road for traffic, he's not looking in the bike lane or the area closest to the curb; he's looking in the MIDDLE of the lane, for other cars. The farther left you are (such as in "B"), the more likely the driver will see you. There's an added bonus here: if the motorist doesn't see you and starts pulling out, you may be able to go even FARTHER left, or may be able to speed up and get out of the way before impact, or roll onto their hood as they slam on their brakes. In short, it gives you some options. Because if you stay all the way to the right and they pull out, your only "option" may be to run right into the driver's side door. *Using this method has saved me on three occasions in which a motorist ran into me and I wasn't hurt, and in which I definitely would have slammed into the driver's side door had I not moved left.*

Of course, there's a tradeoff. Riding to the far right makes you invisible to the motorists ahead of you at intersections, but riding to the left makes you more vulnerable to the cars behind you. Your actual lane position may vary depending on how wide the street is, how many cars there are, how fast and how close they pass you, and how far you are from the next intersection. On fast roadways with few cross streets, you'll ride farther to the right, and on slow roads with many cross streets, you'll ride farther left.

Minutes of the BBC Board March 11, 2008

Meeting was called to order by President Joe Marks at 7:05. Those in attendance were Marwin R., George V., Manuel O., Joe M., Ed B., Kimble G., Carol D., Bob K., Nancy L., Sarah G., Mick W., Joe P., Pete VS., Mike K., Mike D., Sherri B., Barbara W. and Dave.

Bob K. gave the Treasurer's Report. Dues for 2008 are in. Nine people have not responded, two have said they are going to re-join, but we haven't received their dues, and four said they are not rejoining. The roster will be updated.

The Moxie ride on Saturday was a success. Robert, a young man from Hercules, rode with us. He enjoyed it, and said he was going to join the club. Joe M. thanked Bob K. for leading the ride. He also thanked Ed B. and Kimble G. for being our SAG drivers. Discussion.

We discussed socks. We would have to order 10 dozen to begin with. Sarah G. will work on the design for the socks, and give her ideas to Riva at the next meeting. Joe M. is still working on club t-shirts.

Barbara W. told us about the Benicia Herald newspaper article regarding the Cinderella Classic Training ride. Bob K. brought the article and it was passed around. Barbara submitted the article and picture for the paper. The Cinderella Classic is 4/5, and princes are needed as volunteers.

Barbara W. spoke about the East Bay Bike Coalition website on Safety. Very good information.

Nancy L. requested that we change our start place on Tuesday and Thursday from Rags Coffee Shop, due to the congestion in the parking lot. Possible start places suggested were the Senior Citizens Center, the State Park, or Starbucks down on First Street. Nancy L. and Kimble G. will research the places and talk about them at the next meeting.

Pete VS. spoke about the Criterium. There will also be a road race on Saturday, 9/6. Synergy Race Team will handle the road race. The road race will be a 21-mile loop in the industrial park. The start and finish of the road race will be in front of Cytosport. We are trying to make the weekend event more of an exposition, and bring in more of the public. Pete VS. has met with Mayor Patterson and is working with Main Street. The Crit will be the same route as last year. Discussion.

Joe P. announced that time trials will start on Wed., April 2nd at 6:00. Discussion.

We have hats for sale at \$13.00 each.

Joe M. asked if we wanted to have the Barbecue Ride at Bob & Laurie's one week after the Death Ride. Everyone was in favor.

Barbara W. asked if we, as a club, should be a member of a bicycle coalition. Discussion. No action was taken.

Joe M. said we should start planning training rides on Saturdays, to get in shape for upcoming centuries. Discussion.

Bob K. announced some upcoming rides:

3/22 – Mark Birnbaum is leading the Two Bakeries North Ride. 85 Miles; 3/23 – American River Bike Path; 3/30 – Tour of the Unknown Valley; 4/5 – Cinderella Classic; 4/19 – Bike the Buttes; 4/20 – Sea Otter Classic; 4/20 – Primavera; 4/26 – Chico

Wildflower; 5/18 – Monticello Century

Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Sherri Bortolazzo

Minutes of the BBC Board April 1 2008

The meeting was called to order by Joe M. at 7:10. Those in attendance were Joe M., Kimble G., Ed B., Mick W., Carol D., George V., Laurie F., Manuel O., Dana M., Joe P., Bob K., Sherri B., Riva F., Marwin R., Nancy L., Barbara W.

Bob K. gave the treasurer's report. Bob K. gave out copies of the club roster to those members who requested them. Bob K. suggested that we should put our clothing inventory on the website, so members know what is available. Joe M. suggested putting in an order of short sleeve jerseys to have on hand for new members. Discussion. We decided to request orders from the club to supplement the order, since some new members are requesting club jerseys. George to put out an email to club.

Bob K. reported that the Cinderella Classic ride is this Sat. on 4/5. Discussion about the men volunteering.

Riva F. wondered what is happening with the sock order, as she has been out of town. We told her that Sarah G. is working on a design. Joe M. gave us a suggested sample. Discussion on color and design. We will hopefully have samples to vote on at next meeting.

Club t-shirts cost \$9.00 each, and will look like our jerseys. Discussed how many to order and what sizes. George V. to do an email poll to get pre-orders. Discussion.

Joe M. brought up the Tues. and Thurs. start place. Nancy reported that Starbucks on First Street would welcome us. Discussed starting at the State Park or at 9th Street Park. Discussion. A vote was taken and the Tues. and Thurs. rides will start at Starbucks on First Street starting Tues. 4/8. George V. will put out an email.

Discussed Bike to Work Day. Our club is going to work a station. More information to follow, as we are more than a month away.

Pete VS. isn't present regarding the Crit and Road Race, so Kimble G. reported that there will be a meeting this week with the City regarding routes. The city is very positive. The City wants us to engage Main Street, to include businesses. Everyone seems enthusiastic. The Road Race will be on Saturday, and the Crit will be on Sunday. Discussion.

Joe P. reported that time trials will start tomorrow night at 6:00. He still needs a volunteer timer. Joe P. asked that if you drive, part at the vista point parking lot.

Nancy L. reported that the Great Western Bike Rally is coming up Memorial Day weekend. There is a women's only century. The rally is very fun for families. Valley Spokesmen have a 3 day ride down to Paso Robles to the rally. Discussion.

Upcoming rides mentioned:

Tierra Bella – 4/19; Sea Otter Classic – weekend of 4/19; Primavera – 4/20; Chico Wildflower – 4/27; Wine Country – 5/3; Delta Century – 5/4; Grizzly Peak – 5/4; Shasta – 5/4; Sunrise Century – 5/17; Monticello Century – 5/18; Registration is open for the Tour of Napa Valley in August.

It was reported that we have plenty of hats for sale, and that we have a membership of 96.

(Continued on page 11)

Regular Club Rides

Tuesdays and Thursdays @ 9:30 AM: Meet at Starbucks at the bottom of First Street. Tuesday rides go to Martinez via the Zampa Bridge, and Thursday rides go to the Valley Café in Fairfield. Both have optional distance rides. These are no-drop rides.

Saturday @ 8:00 AM: Meet at Benicia St. Park, at the end of Military East. The ride goes through Benicia to Lake Herman Rd and then to Fairfield ending at the Valley Café. There are alternate longer routes and routes for the recreational rider as well. This is a no-drop ride.

Sunday @ 8:00 AM: Meet at Benicia St. Park, at the end of Military East. This is a 40 mile ride to Martinez with 2,000 ft. of climbing, stopping at Starbuck's to refuel before returning. This is a no -drop ride.

Slower riders: If you are feeling intimidated and prefer a slower pace, Sunday morning rides often have slower riders. For info, contact Riva at riva.flexer@mail.mcgill.ca

Mt Diablo Ride: Wednesdays: Meet at Heather Farms Park (Ygnacio & San Carlos Dr.) @ 2:30 p.m. & ride at 3:00 p.m. . We park in the first parking lot on your left past the swimming pool alongside the lake. Back 6:30-7:00PM. Bring something warm to wear for the descent. Up Southgate and down Northgate and back is 38+ miles, ~4,000 ft of climbing.

BBC Monthly Meeting: Held on the first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at Farnsworth Cycles, located at 976 Lincoln in the Benicia Arsenal Industrial Park.

Looking for more rides? More company?

Valley Spokesmen www.valleyspokesmen.org
Diablo Cycling Club www.diablocyclists.com/
Eagle Cycling Club www.eaglecyclingclub.org/

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Discussed the Moxie Ride again.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherri Bortolazzo

Upcoming Rides April — May 2008

4/20/2008 Primavera Century Fremont Freewheelers
4/22/2008 Katy Ram Challenge Ram Band Boosters
4/26/2008 Devil Mountain Double Century Quack-cyclists
4/26/2008 The Alpine Challenge Alpine Kiwanis Foundation
4/26/2008 Wildflower Century San Luis Obispo Bi-

cycle Club

4/27/2008 Monster Cookie Metric Century Salem Bicycle Club
4/27/2008 The Wildflower Chico Velo Cycling Club
4/27/2008 Tour of the Tucson Mtns. Perimeter Bicycl. Ass.of Am.
5/3/2008 Breathless Agony Ride Santiago Cycling
5/3/2008 Fiesta 150 Orange County Wheelmen
5/3/2008 Wine Country Century Santa Rosa Cycling Club
5/4/2008 Delta Century Stockton Bike Club
5/4/2008 Grizzly Peak Century Grizzly Peak Cyclists, Inc.
5/4/2008 Shasta Wheelmen Jamboree Shasta Wheelmen
5/4/2008 The X Rides TGFT Productions / Bike the West
5/10/2008 Bicycle Tour of Utah Cycling Escapes
5/10/2008 Central Coast Double BMS Cycling Ride Big Bro.& Sis. Nevada Cty CA
5/10/2008 Cruisin the Conejo Conejo Valley Cyclists
5/10/2008 Fresno Cycling Festival Central Valley Cycling
5/10/2008 Pine Valley Mtn 300k Brevet Color Country C C
5/10/2008 Tour of the Unknown Coast
5/16/2008 The Lung Ride American Lung, Kern County Branch
5/17/2008 Buena Vista Bike Fest Colorado Springs Cycl. Club
5/17/2008 Cycle Salt Lake Century
5/17/2008 Davis Double Davis Bicycle Club
5/17/2008 Moonlight Magic Planet Ultra
5/17/2008 Mulholland Highway Century Different Spokes of California
5/17/2008 Nevada City Mountain Bike Endurance Ride Big Brothers and Sisters of Nevada County,CA
5/17/2008 Sunrise Century Lodi Sunrise Rotary Club
5/18/2008 Foothill Century SPHDS
5/18/2008 Strawberry Fields Forever Cyclists for Cultural Exchange
5/23/2008 Great Western Bicycle Rally
5/24/2008 Heartbreak Double Century Planet Ultra
5/24/2008 Heartbreak Hundred Planet Ultra
5/31/2008 Ojai Valley Century Ojai Valley Rides, Inc.
6/1/2008 AIDS/LifeCycle San Francisco AIDS Foundation
6/1/2008 Americas Most Beautiful Bike Ride - Lake Tahoe TGFT Productions / Bike the West
6/1/2008 Sequoia Century Western Wheelers Bicycle Club
6/1/2008 The Elephant Rock Cycling Adventure - Mountain & R Elephant Rock Cycling



FROM:
Benicia Bicycle Club
P. O. Box 141
Benicia, CA 94510

President: Joe Marks
Treasurer: Bob Klosterman
Editors: Riva Flexer/ Sherri Bortolazzo
Publisher: Bill Schmidt
Web Master: George Villarreal

TO:

The Road

ANYBODY WANNA RIDE?

JOIN THE BENICIA BICYCLE CLUB!

BENICIA BICYCLE CLUB
 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership Dues - \$15.00 for individuals or families. Membership runs for 12 months. Please Complete and Mail to:

Benicia Bicycle Club
P. O. Box 141, Benicia, Ca. 94510

Please accept my application for membership in the
BENICIA BICYCLE CLUB

Enclosed is: \$15.00 for membership. Make your check payable to:
BENICIA BICYCLE CLUB.

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ ZIP _____
 PHONE _____ E-Mail _____
 E Mail Address _____

RENEWAL Yes No-New Application

Do you want the club to restrict access to this information? Yes
 No

If this application is for family membership, please indicate names and ages of all family members, including minors.

In consideration of the acceptance of my application I, for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns, wave, release and discharge all claims for damages resulting from death, personal injury or property damage which I may have, or which may hereafter accrue to me as a result of my participation with this organization. I understand this release is intended to discharge and release in advance, the BENICIA BICYCLE CLUB, its members and their respective agents, officers, officials, servants and representatives, and any involved municipalities and their respective agents and employees from and against any and all liability arising out of or connected in any way with my participation with this organization even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the persons or entities mentioned above.

I further understand that serious accidents occasionally occur during bicycle rides and that participants in such events occasionally sustain serious personal injury, death and/or property damage as a consequence of that participation. Nevertheless, knowing the risks of bicycling, I, for myself, my heirs executors, administrators, successors and assigns hereby agree to assume those risks and to release and hold harmless all of the persons or entities mentioned above who, through their negligence or carelessness, might otherwise be liable for damages.

I ALSO AGREE TO WEAR A BICYCLE HELMET ON ALL CLUB RIDES.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE BENICIA BICYCLE CLUB AND SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

DATE _____ AGE _____
 SIGNATURE _____

NAME:	SIGNATURE:	AGE:
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____