

Benicia Bicycle Club

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The Road Marshal: Message from the President

January 2009 - It's time to start training again and the BBC likes to start its year with Barbara's New Year's Day ride and breakfast at Pappas' Restaurant. Family and friends are invited to ride with us or just join us for breakfast. Shortly after that, we will have Bob's Spring Moxie (along with the Fall Moxie), Tall Joe's time trials the first Wednesday of every month, Bob and Laurie's BBO Ride and the Cytomax Benicia Town Race, along with a club Halloween party (last year put on by Craig and Lee Snider) and last but not least, Lisa and George Villareal's five-star Christmas Party.



Prez "Sugar Joe" Marks & wife Juliet

I would like to thank the Board and all of our club members for making my job easy.

If you need club jerseys or jackets, we have what you need and if not, we will order it so you look good while riding. If you need any Cytomax products, please feel free to contact Frank. Let's get out there and start training. We have lots of rides out there this year. Happy New Year to All!

Joe Marks, President

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Barbara's New Year's Day Ride

New Year's Breakfast at Pappas' Restaurant

Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday rides

Spin Class anyone???

From your Intrepid Editors



The Christmas Party has come and gone, with lots of food and drink consumed, presents opened and snatched (BMC, BMC!!). Riding is becoming even more of an adventure as the weather cools and the fog comes in. Spin class is beginning to look more appealing...this weather brings back memories of the Shami Shack ride through the West County, and Riva is still chilled after a foggy ride up Cummings Skyway to Martinez and beyond. Visibility was about ten feet, and the cars loomed out of the fog and slid back into it. Thankfully REI was nearby, and open for business. This issue has accounts of rides from warmer times, as well as a cautionary tale about adventures on our very own Mount Diablo, which is sure to get a dusting of the white stuff in the next few months, if not days. With the untimely demise of Mark Pendleton of Martinez, we are all conscious of the road and our relationship with the other users. Stay warm and ride safe!

Welcome
New Members!

Dan Masdeo

Bob Colby

Steve Calvert (returnee)

Printing Compliments of



SOLANO PACIFIC

Newsletter Contributors

Thank you for your articles, photographs and your moral support! Our December Newsletter is a team effort, as always. Thanks to Joe Shami, Barbara Wood, George Villareal, Peter Rathman of the Valley Spokesmen, Mick Wenginger, and Mark Birnbaum.

Sherri and Riva

BBC Members on the Go!

Time Trials October 2008

Following are the results from the October time trial. The wind did not let us down and was blowing 15-20 and the temperature was a nice 65 degrees. But it did feel chilly after the ride. The sun was setting low on the horizon and created a nice fall effect with long shadows being cast. There was the usual excitement at the start with everyone jockeying for their best starting order.

Many riders had problems with the lateral gusts which interfered with their pace. But despite the wind, several riders were able to break the thirty-minute barrier. There were some personal bests too, but no one broke any age group records.

This time trial concludes the 2008 series. Our next series will begin in April 2009.

Thank you and good night.

Wind: 15-20 mph, Temperature: 65F

Timed by Mick W and Nancy Lund

Thanks for the Giving Ride - Mick W.

We did the ride. It went to the junction. Short enough? OK. So we met at REI. Seems like about 20 of us. Rode over by Monument BLVD on the bike trail and split up. One group went to Peets in Danville (24 total miles) and the other group went up North Gate to the Summit and down South Gate to Peets in Alamo (38 total miles). The ride was pretty foggy and cold but still a great ride with friends.

The Birthday Ride- Peter Rathman

Valley Spokesmen bike club ride led by Barbara Wood. Starting in Benicia we headed past the mothball fleet and then up Lake Herman Rd. to Columbus Pkwy. Then



Along the Vallejo bikepath near Ascot Drive (Photo by Peter Rathman, VS)

up the bike trail alongside I-80 and through American Canyon before returning through Vallejo. Beautiful ride topped off by some of Barbara's homemade pear cobbler. Happy Birthday Barbara!

Start Order	Last Name	First Name	Age Group	Time		Avg. Speed
				Min	Sec	
10	Salvador	Steve	40-44	27	34	22.20
11	Snyder	Craig	50-54	28	18	21.63
6	Prichard	Joe	60-64	28	45	21.29
4	Villarreal	George	50-54	29	51	20.50
7	Fenech	Laurie	50-54	30	21	20.16
3	Bahr	Steve	50-54	30	29	20.08
5	Hansen	Jake	20-24	31	9	19.65
9	Martinelli	Brian	55-59	31	15	19.58
12	Klosterman	Bob	60-64	32	31	18.82
2	White	David	50-54	33	27	18.30
1	Villarreal	Lisa	45-49	39	16	15.59
	Recumbent					
1	Chrisp	Bruce	40-44	28	4	21.81

Whidbey Island Ride – Joe Pritchard

Whidbey Island is located in the Puget Sound approximately 25 miles north of Seattle. On September 27, 2008, a beautiful sunny day, I rode the Seventh annual Tour De Whidbey. The ride started & ended in the tiny town of Greenbank. The 100 mile figure-eight route covered both the north & south ends of the island. We rode on sparsely traveled country roads past inland farms as well as on coastal roads with beautiful views of the water. There was approximately 8000 feet of climbing. The day started with a pancake breakfast & ended with a delicious chili dinner.

Member News

Nancy Lund has the OK to start riding her bike on the road as of December 17. Way to go! See you on the road...

Ed Brennan is back in the saddle again!

Kevin Kelley is out of commission. Hope to see you back out soon.

Rob Lo is healing from a tumble, and was able to participate in the Diablo Challenge.

Many thanks to George and Lisa Villarreal, who opened their home to the Club for the Christmas Party. Seems there are pans and such still waiting to be picked up (a good time was had by all!)

If you haven't renewed your membership for 2009, now's the time to do it. Talk to Bob Klosterman.

Season's Greetings and Happy New Year to all!

Stranded on Mt. Diablo in Snow and Rain – Joe Shami

It had become important to me to cycle to the top of Mt. Diablo every week. Don't ask me why. I think that doing so became a measure of my fitness. I had started the custom 78 weeks earlier and had never missed a week for 50 consecutive weeks until I was knocked down by an automobile whose driver didn't see me. That happened near my home, not on the mountain. It took me 11 weeks to recover completely but on the sixth week I was back on the mountain, cycling to the summit again, and the latest streak had continued for 22 consecutive weeks. My goal was to exceed 50 weeks, but as winter approached it was getting tougher every week.

It was on the 23rd week that I had my most unusual experiences on the mountain – bad and good. The weather changed so abruptly at the top from above freezing to below freezing that it started to snow, and all the wet spots on Summit Road changed almost instantaneously to ice. But worst of all, as I was descending, the hub of my front wheel cracked under the strain of the freezing temperature. The wheel started to wobble against a brake pad on every revolution. This happened after I had descended one mile down the 11-mile mountain. I was still 22 miles from home, where I had begun my ride. The crack was at one end of the hub at the point where the spokes connect. The bike was almost un-moveable, except on a steep downhill.

The wheel was five years old and had carried me 36,000 miles. It was one of the very few things on my bike that had never been replaced. In fact, within the previous week, I had talked to the owner of my bike shop about the possibility of replacing it soon, but I had no thought that my life could be in jeopardy from a fatigue failure.

It was Sunday, December 14th, 2008. A cold spell of arctic air had reached the Bay Area overnight, and the forecast was for the possibility of scattered showers that morning, with snow as low as 1,500 ft. The forecast for the ensuing week was grimmer with the likelihood of snow and/or rain all week. If there were fresh snow on the 3,849-ft mountain, the road would be closed, and my streak would be over.

At 6 a.m. on Sunday morning, I called the Mt. Diablo weather hot-line, which is updated every minute (925-838-9225). It was 28 degrees atop the mountain with the wind at 15 mph. Though it was still dark, I made a decision to gamble that I could cycle the 12 miles to the mountain, climb it, and get home before the snow came. If I could accomplish that, I would have up to 13 more days before I had to climb again, and perhaps the weather would be better.

Dressed warmly in layers, I cycled to the southern entrance at Diablo/Danville, congratulating myself on my good judgment as daylight blossomed pleasantly with only a few scattered dark clouds. The pavement was dry.

It was a lovely routine ride all the way up to the Junction at 2200 feet. The only difference from other Sunday mornings was that it was exceptionally quiet with almost no bicycle or auto activity. I attributed that to preparations for the upcoming holidays, as well as the threatening weather forecast.

As I reached the Junction, I could see that the terrain above was shrouded in fog. In fact, the fog started at 3,000 ft, just above the parking lot for Juniper Campground. This was in contrast to what had been the case in the previous weeks. Then, the fog was below 3,000 ft, and when one got above it, the warm sun was out all the way to the summit, and the view was similar to what's seen from an airplane, looking down at the clouds below.

On this particular Sunday, the visibility was about 50 ft in the fog – better than in previous weeks. There were wet patches on the road under every large pine tree, as though ice had been on the tree overnight, and when the temperature warmed at daylight, the ice dropped as water. Not a single cyclist had passed me in the entire 11-mile climb until I was within 30 yards of the top. Then a young guy zoomed by me as I labored up the final, 17-percent slope. There was only one car at the summit (probably that of the ranger on duty in the museum, because I heard a TV set inside). The fast cyclist descended immediately. So I was left alone in my wet clothes.

It took me less than ten minutes to reshuffle my clothing. Next to my skin, I put on a dry polyester jersey from my saddlebag. Atop that I put my waterproof windbreaker. And atop that, I put the three layers of wet clothing. On my head was a skull cap under a balaclava, and of course my helmet. On my legs were unpadded shorts, covered by waterproof pants. On my frozen toes were extra-thick Smartwool socks and booties over the shoes. I had thick gloves. In short, I was well prepared for a normal descent.

I noticed white spots on my clothing. It wasn't dandruff; it was snow! I had better get out of here fast, I said to myself. But not as fast as usual! All the wet spots on the road that were there ten minutes ago had disappeared. The snow was coming down harder but wasn't yet settling. I became much more cautious as I felt my wheels slipping a bit on the ice.

Suddenly I heard a very loud metallic clunk, as though a big rock had hit my front wheel. There was no rock in sight. The bike began a jerking motion as the now-wobbly wheel rubbed hard against the brake pad on each

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Cycling the Erie Canal October 7-21, 2008 – Barbara Wood

It sounded intriguing... The Erie Canal (Buffalo to Albany, NY) and the Hudson Valley (Albany to New York City)? Fall colors, as well? This sounded like a deal not to be refused. At least, not by this displaced New Yorker. It was two trips in one. First the canal trail, with some rural roads and then the back roads of the historic Hudson Valley. Since I rode (and wrote about) the Hudson Valley portion in 2007, I will focus on the Erie Canal.



The Erie Canal

We started in Buffalo. We had options. Our illustrious trip leaders, Bonnie and Bob, provided us with route sheets for drivers, since vehicles were not allowed on the bike trail. These were helpful to find the route to the bike path and from the bike path to the motel at the end of the day. They also included many points of interest to be found along the way. We were also provided with the official guide to Bicycling the Erie Canal (NY Parks and Trails) and the official NYS Bike Route #5 map. Some used their GPS. I relied on the Erie Canal Guide. As a consequence, many of us had completely unique trips. All, however, were treated to one of nature's splendors, the fall colors.

Day 1 was a special diversion to Niagara Falls. There were 24 of us in all, 18 of us were on Bike Fridays, including two tandems. We posed for pictures and were soon on our way. The first section was along the Niagara River which is the boundary between the US and Canada. We continued north

through the industrial areas of Tonawanda and the city of Niagara Falls. Day 2 was a "rest day" allowing us time to spend viewing the falls and surrounding area. What can I say about Niagara Falls? Magnificent hardly describes them. The sound of unending thunder – the mist in our faces – and yes, a rainbow – all for our pleasure!

Day 3 – we headed east toward Albany. Our destination that day was Medina, NY. Some of the canal trail was paved. Much of it was "hardpack". I was glad I had "chubby" tires on my Bike Friday which handled the non-paved portion easily. Visiting the locks at Lockport had to be the highlight of the day. Originally, there was a set of five locks to handle the 70' drop in elevation of the Niagara Escarpment. Today, we saw a group of four pleasure boats pass through a set of double locks on their way to Fairport, a resort town further along the way. We also chatted with the crew of a catamaran which was heading for Florida. The importance of the canal to the development of New York State and the opening of the west has been well documented. That it was a great engineering feat, with many innovations created on the spot is also well documented. It is currently used for both commercial and recreational purposes but closes during the winter months when much of the canal is frozen.

Day 4 took us through many beautiful small towns to the city of Rochester. Several of us stopped at the college town of Brockport for lunch. There were beautiful old cobblestone buildings, churches with ever so tall steeples, and well maintained parks along the water. Some visited the home of women suffrage leader, Susan B. Anthony, in downtown Rochester. The weather was warm and sunny. More trees were showing their fall colors. It was a good day.

Day 5 continued along the canal trail to our overnight in Newark, NY. Along the way, we were able to spend time in Fairport, a town that has done much to develop itself as a waterfront stop for boats traveling the canal. This effort, and the effort of other canal towns, is beginning to pay off as the state continues to promote canal tourism. We also passed through Palmyra, the birthplace of the Mormon Church. My own personal highlight was visiting Terry Bicycles in Macedon. They are strictly a warehouse. No signs, no outward appearance of anything but a warehouse building as they have neither a retail outlet nor the staff to handle visitors. (We had hoped to have a VS tour but since it was Columbus Day, they were short staffed.) Anyway, after asking several locals where they were, I found the site. I had only intended to take a picture of the building but someone was standing outside and invited me in. I didn't stay very long. I just said "hi" and left.



Barbara Wood and her trusty Bike Friday

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Double Header Part 1: Condor Classic Oct. 11 2008 - Mark Birnbaum

Participants: Norm B. and Mark

This was the first running of this ride; a benefit for a group raising money for the Pinnacles Park. Start/finish was at San Juan Oaks Golf Resort, SW of Hollister. I had ridden out of the Hollister area only twice that I could recall. In 1977, I rode the Earthquake Century, put on by the San Benito Wheelmen. That ride was discontinued shortly thereafter. In 2002 Norm and I did a revived version of the Earthquake, with a totally different route, sponsored by the local Red Cross. Today's ride promised to be interesting. We spent the night before in Gilroy, which has a better selection of motels than Hollister, and in the tradition of "night before" meals went out for Italian pasta dinner.

We arrived at the San Juan Oaks at 6:10. It was dark and cold. A surprisingly large number of cyclists were arriving at the same time. In short order we got our maps, wristbands and were on our way at 6:45. The club is located on a private road 1.9 miles off of Union Rd. We figured it would be light more or less by the time we hit the main road. At about the halfway point on the private road, is a short bridge over a small creek. For some unexplained reason, the bridge is made of planks of wood, instead of being paved. There are cracks about an inch wide between the planks. Just the right width to catch a bike tire. Norm's rear wheel went into one of these cracks. He was able to disengage one leg just in time to avoid falling over, but he wrenched his knee in the process and it bothered him for the duration of the ride.

Within a half hour, we had worked our way east along Union Road and turned south on Cienega. During that time we witnessed a truly spectacular sunrise over the eastern mountains. It pays to start early. It got colder and was now in the 30s. My fingers went numb and stayed that way for quite a while. We entered the Hollister hills and spent the next 15 miles or so rolling south over some of the most beautiful foothill country I've seen in a while. Lots of oaks, shrubs, vineyards from time to time, very little traffic and decent pavement. What one thinks of when one thinks of "typical" California. We finally left the hills and came out at the south end of a small valley with fields of some kind of vegetable. The road turned north and we soon arrived at rest stop #1 at 21.4 miles.

What a disappointment! Whole apples, totally useless to a cyclist, especially at a morning rest stop. Several kinds of energy bars, which brought back bad memories of the Mulholland Double, packets of disgusting mass produced cookies, and not a banana in sight. My fingers were still frozen, so I got out my knife and had one of the workers to open it for me, so I could cut the wrappers off some energy bars. The workers were nice folks, but like everyone else running the event were totally clueless. Luckily, there were pretzels. Between three energy bars and pretzels, there would be enough calories to take me to the next rest stop. Our stay here was short. Two miles later, we were on Hwy. 25, going south towards the Pinnacles. 25 rolled through more scenic dry foothill country. Traffic was light, pavement was good and there was no wind. Other 100 mile and some 100k folks were now catching up to us and passing us. After 15 ½ miles including a mile climb, we turned SW onto Hwy 146 and entered Pinnacles park. At mile 38 we pulled into the second rest stop, which was buzzing with other riders.

This was more like it. Bagels with peanut butter, bananas,

higher grade store bought cookies and more pretzels. It had warmed up some and Norm took off and put on various articles of clothing. He must pack close to 3-4 lbs of outer wear on these rides. After stuffing ourselves, we headed back out Hwy. 146 to begin to retrace our tracks northward. When we hit Hwy 25 we discovered that a stiff headwind had come up. We fought the wind all the way up Hwy 25, past where we had gotten on, through the former town of Paicines and then past the park which we both recognized as the starting point for the Earthquake ride we'd done in 2002. At mile 61 we arrived at lunch at a park on Hwy 25.

We had a choice of turkey or American cheese/lettuce half sandwiches, bagels and peanut butter as well as bananas, more of those horrible cookies and energy bars. I had two cheese/lettuce sandwiches half a bagel and a banana and called it good. Within 25 minutes of arriving, we were back on the road, still heading north into the headwind.

After 2 ½ miles, at Tres Pinos, we turned W to do a 10 mile oval through a small side valley. This is what is known as "garbage miles", sections of route put in just to give the riders the total advertised number of miles for the ride. Scenery was OK but not spectacular, but traffic was quite light. Coming back onto Hwy 25, we backtracked south 4 miles then turned E onto aptly named Quien Sabe road. The name of the road (translation: who knows) is the obvious answer to the question "why is this road here?" The scenery was now dry rolling hills, no houses cars or signs of civilization for the next 5 or 6 miles. Most pleasant riding, but not seeming to lead anywhere. Quien Sabe T'd into Santa Ana Valley road and we headed N. By going through these hills, we enjoyed nice quiet riding and avoided going through Hollister. Part way along Santa Ana Valley, Norm hit a pothole and blew out his rear tire. In 10 minutes we were back on the road. The highlight of the next few miles was spotting a giant tarantula walking across the pavement. It must have been at least 4" across. The wind had died down somewhat once we hit the hills, providing an opportunity to rest as we rode along. Temperatures were now in the 60s, making it even more pleasant.

All good things come to an end, and at mile 84 we turned onto Fairview, to continue our journey around the perimeter of Hollister. Here was a road that had it all; no shoulder, no scenery, poor pavement and heavy traffic to boot. The headwind returned as well. The next 7.5 miles seemed to take a long time. In the middle of this stretch was the last rest stop, at a fruit packaging plant. Food selection included ½ lb bags of apricots, pretzels, ½ lb bags of trail mix, more whole apples and yet more of those horrible cookies and energy bars. Not a banana in sight. I had a bag of apricots, a few pretzels and was ready to go on.

We finished up Fairview and turned onto Hwy 156 to head back to the Country Club. Between the wind and the heavy car and truck traffic, the next 5 ½ miles seemed like a long haul. Luckily Hwy. 156 has a wide, well paved and clean shoulder. It took us to Union Road, which got us to the road to the Country Club in less than a quarter mile. Norm had complained to one of the workers about the wheel-catching bridge at lunch. When we came through now, there were two workers, stationed just before the bridge, warning riders of

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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 REAR END.

The Rear End - Part 1

You innocently move a little to the left to go around a parked car or some other obstruction in the road, and you get nailed by a car coming up from behind.



How to avoid this collision:

1. **Never, ever move left without looking behind you first.** Some motorists like to pass cyclists within mere inches, so moving even a tiny bit to the left unexpectedly could put you in the path of a car. Practice holding a straight line while looking over your shoulder until you can do it perfectly. Most new cyclists tend to move left when they look behind them, which of course can be disastrous.
2. **Don't swerve in and out of the parking lane if it contains any parked cars.** You might be tempted to ride in the parking lane where there are no parked cars, dipping back into the traffic lane when you encounter a parked car. This puts you at risk for getting nailed from behind. Instead, ride a steady, straight line in the traffic lane.
3. **Use a mirror.** If you don't have one, go to a bike shop and get one now. There are models that fit on your handlebars, helmet, or glasses, as you prefer. You should always physically look back over your shoulder before moving left, but having a mirror still helps you monitor traffic without constantly having to look behind you.

Foxy's Fall Century - Riva Flexer

It's been five years, but I did it again. Confidence is a wonderful thing. 'Hey! I could do 75 miles back-to-back, so I can surely ride 100 miles on a Saturday'. That was my thinking when I signed up for Foxy's Fall Century. I'd ridden it before in 2003 (when I was 5 years younger). But I'm more experienced now in pacing myself over long distances. Fresh from the MS ride, I was ready to tackle a longer distance.



Riva and Adrienne of Hammerin' Wheels on her first century! Photo from Hammerin' Wheels

Turned out, I did it mostly on my own. Periodically I met up with members of the Hammerin' Wheels of Sacramento www.meetup.com/hammerinwheels/ and we slogged up to the dam together.

I would not recommend Foxy's as a 'first' century. Granted it is pretty flat (except for the Berryessa section and that inexorable climb up to the Mount George- Berryessa Junction). But like all one hundred-mile distances, it's long! A long time to be pedaling. At the last rest stop I made the fatal error of staying too long (and lying down to check my phone calls) My left knee began to ache, tender to the touch, and I rode the last 20 miles in pain, even pedalling on one leg. But I'm glad I did it. It was worth the discomfort.

(Continued from page 5) Condor Classic

the hazard. A mile later, we pulled into the start/finish and checked in. It was 3:00 p.m. It felt good to finally be out of the wind.

The post-ride meal was served in the large opulent club house. A rock band was playing quite loudly in the large dining hall. Most inappropriate and too damn loud in any event. Luckily, there were outdoor tables as well, where it was fairly quiet. The food was good, but the ride staff had neglected to provide silverware and the country club was not replenishing what silverware was on the tables, after it had been used. We were lucky and grabbed some of the last forks around.

It had been a strange ride. Most of the morning and some of the afternoon featured incredibly beautiful scenery, quiet roads and for the most part, decent pavement. Fairview stood out as a total disaster, route wise. Most of the food was totally inappropriate for a bike ride and really detracted from the total experience. The map was good, but the route sheet was not well done, had not been proofed, and in fact never even mentioned the last rest stop. If these guys can get it together food wise, eliminate Fairview, and bring the route sheet up to par, they will have a good ride. Otherwise, this ride deserves to be a one shot deal.

[Editors' Note: Food is really an important component of a distance ride. The MS Waves to Wine could have served edible cookies and bars, but they did not, neither was there enough to go around. Nor was it a new ride - the 25th season. Disorganization or sloppiness (or both?) Hopefully the Condor Class organizers will get it together.]

Double Header Part 2: Cheese and Wine Century Oct. 12 2008- Mark Birnbaum

Participants: Mark and Norm B.

Sometimes happiness arrives unexpectedly. This was the 32nd running of this ride, put on by the Stanislaus County Bicycle club. This is a meat and potatoes ride as familiar as an old shoe. Nothing spectacular, but well run, well marked, with a decent route sheet and map, appropriate food, well spaced rest stops and about 4,500 feet of climbing. A reliable century. I'd done it previously in 2002, solo, in 2004 with Shirley and in 2007 with Norm. This time, I'd be doing it with Norm again as the second half of a double header. We drove over from Hollister the afternoon before after doing the Condor Classic, checked into the Oakdale Quality Inn and had dinner at the great Italian restaurant in Oakdale that I'd eaten at the three previous times I'd done the ride. There is nothing like a good Italian pasta meal before a century, complete with a glass of wine and canolli for desert.

The morning was cold, in the 30s. Check in went smoothly, and we were off at 6:55. Pavement was good, car traffic was fairly light and my fingers were totally numb after 4 or 5 miles. Luckily the first 23 miles, to rest stop #1, were flat, and did not require any shifting or braking. Scenery was orchards, homes of various sizes, and a bit of in-town riding. We arrived at the first rest stop in exactly 1 ½ hours. It was warming up a bit, but was still quite cool. After the last two rides, which had been run by amateurs, it was great to arrive at a rest stop with bananas, Costco muffins, good cookies and pretzels, among

other things. These guys knew what they were doing. After a leisurely stop, we headed out. Traffic was light, the weather was cool, and the scenery was pleasant. Road surfaces were fair to good, and all turns were well marked.

We were now entering the foothills. Homes became scarcer, scenery turned to oaks and brown grass. As we approached Don Pedro Reservoir, the route changed from the traditional route and we went up several small fairly steep hills. The new route however was traffic free, on brand new pavement so it was an improvement as far as I was concerned. We worked our way further east, along Hwy. 132 and Bonds Flat Road, and soon were at rest stop #2, (mile 46), at Don Pedro Market. It had warmed up a bit now and everyone was taking off layers. Norm performed his usual metamorphosis and I took off my jacket. After the usual food routine, it was time to tackle the hills.

We headed out Hwy. 132, climbed for a bit over a mile, then turned left to get to Marshes Flat road, the jewel of the ride. This road climbs into and through a canyon with lots of oaks, cattle and a stream, on a 1 ½ lane road with 9 cattle guards and no traffic. For the next 8 miles, we climbed through the canyon, admiring the rock formations, the oaks, the cattle, and the occasional non-oak trees that were bright green. It was getting a bit warmer but was still cool. After topping out at the end of the canyon, we did the steep descent to Hwy 49 and then the short ride to Moccasin, which was the lunch stop (mile 59).

In the past, the lunch was served inside the administration bldg of the SF Hetch Hetchy water project. This year, for the second year in a row, lunch was served outside, under the shade of some large trees. Perhaps we were perceived as a terrorist threat. It was quite pleasant to sit and eat, while watching other cyclists come and go. After at least a half hour of stuffing our faces, it was time to head out.

Back onto Hwy 49, we rode the shoulder for 8 miles, first level, then down hill to a bridge over an arm of Don Pedro reservoir, then a long uphill to Chinese Camp, where we turned west. After a short downhill, the road became up and down, through a canyon. The road surface was better and the traffic less than I remembered it being in previous years. A few miles later, we got onto the shoulder of Hwy. 120 for a 9 mile stretch. After a few miles of gradual uphill, we were treated to a great downhill for several miles. The shoulder was wide and well-paved, so even with the vehicle traffic, this was quite pleasant. At Knights Ferry, we got off Hwy. 120 and went through town, to rest stop #4 (mile 85); in the same hall it had been in the three previous times I'd done the ride. At this point, it was probably around 65 degrees, as warm as it was going to get that day.

Replenished once again, we climbed up the steep Cemetery Road out of town and headed W/NW some more. Now we were going by orchards of walnuts and almonds. Terrain was low foothills, with occasional short mild downhills. The area was interspersed with new, grossly large homes. After a few miles, we hit about 5 miles of brand new pavement. This is what makes riding worth while. Silky smooth pavement, no big headwind, and light car traffic. A real joy. Many of the homes we passed had to be well over 4,000 sq. feet. As we got closer to Oakdale, we saw more and more of these monsters. The one that took the cake was a white castle (literally) on top of a hill, set about ¼ mile off the road, complete with turrets. At mile 98, we hit Hwy. 120 again, just

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(Continued from page 3) Snow on Diablo

revolution. I immediately assumed that a spoke had snapped, but as I looked over the wheel while still riding, I couldn't find any broken or missing spoke. Puzzled as to what had happened, I kept my front brake permanently squeezed, so as to minimize the wobble. I was able to descend at about 5 mph with one foot out of the pedal clip in case I were to fall. As my hand tired from the continuous squeezing, I had to stop at each campground on the way down to give it a rest. As I descended, the snow turned to rain, which became heavier. A few cyclists were climbing the mountain now. I warned them of the snow at the top and of my broken hub. They were undeterred. A few autos were climbing the mountain too, but actually, there were more descending than climbing. Some people had apparently camped out overnight to test their cold-weather gear.

When I reached the Junction 3-1/2 miles later, I called to a young fellow in a park uniform who was descending the stairs to the bathroom. I told him of my plight. It turned out that he wasn't a ranger, that he was an aide who was about to clean the bathroom and who wasn't able to help me, either by contacting anyone on his radio or by giving me a ride in his truck. Although he was sympathetic, which I appreciated, he told me I would have to find a ranger and gave instructions on how to reach the maintenance facility, where there would be one, because there was none at the Junction now.

I began to shiver. The rain was falling harder. As I descended down Southgate, I considered my alternatives. This was one time where it would have been useful to carry a standard cellphone. Mine would only call 911. I wasn't that desperate just yet. If I could get down the mountain under my own steam, I could perhaps get someone to call me a taxi to take me home. Or perhaps I could get to a bike shop in Danville, where I could buy a new wheel? Even so, bike shops don't open till noon on Sunday. I was ashamed to call a friend or club member because I had gotten myself into trouble due to my own foolishness. There was no excuse for it. Even if I had wanted to call my next-door neighbor, this was the day he was flying to Japan.

A ranger's vehicle was approaching me rapidly from below. Help is coming, I said to myself; the young fellow at the Junction must have summoned a ranger for me. But to my dismay, the ranger continued at speed up the mountain, only returning my nod. I chastised myself for not trying to stop him. I had descended past the maintenance facility, and now there was a bit of climbing to do as I approached Rock City. My bike could move only while descending, because there was too much friction against the brake for it to roll when climbing or on flat ground. If I hadn't loosened the hub's quick-release, the wheel wouldn't turn at all. (This was one

time where I was glad I hadn't filed off the ends of the frame, as some friends had recommended, to allow the wheel to be removed more easily.) My speed had slowed to just two or three miles per hour. A cyclist passed me on the downhill, as well as a few cars and pickup trucks. I was too embarrassed to flag down anyone.

Suddenly, a large SUV slowed down while passing me, and a friendly lady passenger rolled down her window and congratulated me on reaching the summit on such a day. I blurted out that I had a broken wheel. She asked if I needed help. I nodded. Immediately, the driver (her brother) pulled over, and they both got out in the rain to talk to me. I asked if they could fit my bike in their SUV and take me to a place where I could call a taxi.

Mike Murphy immediately rearranged enough of their camping equipment in the SUV so that room could be made for my bike. He removed my front wheel and lifted the bike into the vehicle, getting some chain grease on or near his nice clothing, I'm afraid, while his sister Melissa offered me the front seat, ready to sit in the back herself. Shyly, I chose to sit in the rear. I was so grateful for their kindness and also for the heater but couldn't stop shivering. Mike and Melissa had camped overnight on the mountain. They had seen me ascending as the first one up and were puzzled as to why I was proceeding so slowly on the downhill. They said they could take me to a bike shop but then insisted on driving me home all the way to Lafayette, even though they lived in Danville. I offered to pay them what it would have cost me for a taxi, but they wouldn't accept anything. Mike said that I should just help a person in need and thus "pass it on."

There are some really nice people in this world, and I was very thankful to have met two of them! Fortunately, Mike gave me his business card, so I hope to remain in touch.

When we reached my house, Mike took a photo of my cracked wheel to show just how cold it had been. The camera was working again. Melissa said that it had frozen when she had tried to use it earlier on the mountain.

The moral of this story: 74-year-olds shouldn't be climbing Mt. Diablo alone in snow and rain!

Editors' Note:

Joe was very fortunate on this trip. He was well-equipped, and very conscious of the weather requirements. Had his wheel not failed, he would have probably had a routine trip down the mountain.

It just goes to show you that accidents can happen when you least expect them, and if you need help, there's no shame in asking.

(Continued from page 4) Erie Canal

Day 6 took us off the canal trail to the village of Seneca Falls, the birthplace of the women's rights movement. Many of us toured the museum and visited the home of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, one of the original suffragists. We took the canal trail to Lyons which was once known for producing a peppermint oil of high quality. At Lyons, we headed south to Waterloo, which has a wonderful diner, and on to Seneca Falls. This was as close as we got to the Finger Lakes.

The overall highlight of the tour continued to be the fall colors. Each day was more spectacular than the previous. I remember one particular morning I was riding alone. The air was crispy with wisps of fog. It was quiet except for the migrating geese honking overhead. Leaves had fallen on the pathway in such a way that created a carpet of color. A patch of red was followed by a patch of yellow, then back to red with some orange mixed in. The tree branches with remaining leaves created a canopy of color above, as well. A couple walked by, hand in hand. I smiled to myself and took a picture.



The destination of Day 7 was Syracuse. Sections of the trail were not in good shape and many opted to follow the driver's route along the road. A stop at the Erie Canal Store, Camillus, NY was a highlight for me since my great-grandparents shopped at the original store not far from this site. Some of the later arrivals were served lunch. Then the route took us through downtown Syracuse. I left the route to ride down Erie Boulevard since it appeared to have less traffic. Erie Boulevard was once the canal. It was filled in and is now a main route through the city. A visit to the canal museum is a must.

Our second "rest day" was rainy. Our motel was in East Syracuse but there were buses downtown. Several of us boarded a bus and headed for the museum. Since the bus dropped us off at city hall, we decided to stop for a short visit. As we were admiring the historic murals and talking with the guards, a member of the city staff asked if we could wait 10 minutes for a tour of the building. Yes, of course! While we were waiting for her, the mayor happened to be there en route to a meeting. He shook hands with us and officially welcomed us to Syracuse.

Day 9 found us heading for Rome, NY. The rain had stopped. More country villages and small family farms dotted the landscape. These towns have not prospered in the way of their western counterparts as the current canal is farther north. Still, the essence of autumn was in the air and the color on the hillsides continued to impress us. Yes, it was beginning to get hilly. Nothing serious, but if you left the canal trail, you had hills along Route 5. The anticipated visit to Rome's canal village was disappointing. It was closed. Evidently it is a summertime activity.

Day 10 – Off to Canajoharie, a town best known for Beechnut Gum. We had left the canal and were now traveling along the Mohawk River. Many stopped in Herkimer to visit the Remington Firearms Museum. We were now in Revolutionary War country. There were many forts and battlefield sites for us to visit along the way. Because Bonnie had to leave the trip for a family emergency, I rode stoker on the Powers' tandem. About 5 miles into the ride, I wondered what on earth I was thinking! Then as I learned to relax, it became fun. After all, Bob had been riding as Captain for several years!!

Day 11 – I continued riding stoker to Schenectady. This part of New York State, as well as the Hudson Valley, was settled by the Dutch. Dutch names such as Amsterdam and Rotterdam, and names beginning with "van", or ending with "kill", (meaning stream or creek) are strongly evident.

Day 12 – our final day into Albany. A friend met me in Schenectady to join our ride to Albany. He helped some find the way to the local trailhead and then escorted me to the Union College campus. (This is an old eastern college attended by several of my cousins. I had to have a picture.) Back on the trail, we had great views of the Mohawk River and then of the Hudson River as we rode to along the trail to our hotel in Albany. It was a great day which I enjoyed sharing both with old friends and new.

The next day was a day to explore Albany. I joined a group to tour the capital building. Many rented cars and headed to Cooperstown to visit the Baseball Hall of Fame. Each of us had our own special journey.

Mornings were cold. Temperatures were in the low 30's. The colors were disappearing as the trees dropped their leaves. It was all part of this marvelous adventure. The Hudson Valley is generally warmer. Perhaps we will again see the autumn splendor.

Note: For those unable to make this trip, New York Parks and Trails sponsor an Erie Canal trip annually in July and the Great Hudson Valley Pedal in August. www.ptny.org Well organized and well marked route.

Minutes October 7, 2008

Present: Bob Klosterman, Ed Brennan, Steve Bahr, Mike Dunn, Mick Weninger, Bruce Crisp, Ed Craft, Danilo Dauz, Joe Marks, Riva Flexer, Carol Day, George Villarreal

President Joe Marks opened the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

Treasurer's Report: We are in the black. We did pay some expenses from the race and are awaiting reimbursement. We will finish in the black regarding the race. There was discussion about the race as a whole, regarding the effort expended by club members. Four-hour shifts are better than eight-hour shifts. People were exhausted, and it was difficult to fill the shifts. People felt that they were being pressured to participate. There was also discussion about how to use the money earned, such as clothing orders for club inventory. The money is a three-way split, but it was expressed that we put out disproportionately more effort than our partners. Recognition of those who put out the effort was also discussed. The club seems to be putting out more effort than we get recognition for.

Clothing orders:

Socks – send a design and a credit card number. We are waiting for hearing back about giving a deposit. We have the design and the vendor.

Long-sleeve shirt order – the price has gone up a few dollars per garment SS Jersey - \$78. LS Jersey not known yet.

Longsleeve garments – wind jacket, thermal jacket, arm-warmers and long sleeve jersey.

Time trial: will be held at 6 p.m. at the usual location

Meeting – high school traffic signal on October 22 at the BHS Hayley Horn Auditorium– Barbara Wood cannot attend. Can anyone else be there?

Mark Birnbaum would like to talk about the Bay in a Day rides – he will organize it with Joe Marks.

Upcoming rides: On Saturday, October 11 - Barbecue ride route with Roland T. Bruce and Meredith Crisp are playing in the Vallejo Symphony Orchestra at Hogan High School and are offering half-price tickets to whom-ever. Sunday October 12 is the Riverbank Century. Oct. 18 is Foxy's. On October 23 there is a Bicycle Safety meeting at the Sports Basement in Walnut Creek from 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. This is the classroom session. Saturday, October 25 will be the Moxie. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Valley Café. Ed will SAG. Thank you Ed!

Sea Otter Classic: they would like to have bike clubs come down and hang out. April 16-19 2009. We need to have a minimum of 6 members participating in at least 1 event apiece.

Third Thursday of the month – flat tire changing classes at Wheels in Motion in Benicia.

Rob Lowe had an accident while out training. He was at the back and when someone slowed down he ran into him. Cracked ribs, dislocated shoulder. He did, how-

ever, ride in the Mt Diablo challenge, as did Joe Shami.

REI wants to have a booth to promote cycling, and have the BBC man it – next year – April/ May.

A Thanksgiving ride for the older members to thank them – the day after Thanksgiving - 3 rides, 30-50 miles, starting from REI – on Friday November 28.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Submitted by Riva Flexer for Sherri Bortolazzo

Minutes November 4, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 by President Joe Marks. We had a guest, Dave, from Concord. He saw our newsletter at the Sports Basement, so thought he'd attend the meeting.

Treasurer report from Bob K. Still waiting for Crit accounting. Discussion. 'Tis the season for dues collection. Discussion.

Ed B. will email long sleeve order form. Ed is still working on sock order with Defeat.

Joe M. reported about the party last week at the Sports Basement. It was a nice party. Approx. 41 people showed up.

Discussed safety, possibly putting something in the newsletter. Looking into some sort of seminar for the club. Riva F. and Bob K. both attended different safety seminars and thought they were very worthwhile. Discussion.

Barb W. will put together the New Years Day ride. She will check with Pappas to see if they will be open for brunch.

George V. reported that the Club Christmas party will be Sat., December 13th at his house.

George V. (on behalf of Lisa V.) that we purchase plastic wallets for the membership. Lisa V. will research it.

George V. proposed spinning website off onto its own domain address in 2009. Discussion.

Carlos S. discussed the Crit. Tentative dates are June 26, 27 and 28. Meeting with the City in December for approval. Discussion.

Riva F. reported that there is a new bike club in Sacramento. Riva met them at the Foxy Falls. They're called Hammer & Wheels.

Discussed Thanksgiving club ride, and various other club rides.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherri Bortolazzo

Regular Club Rides

Tuesdays and Thursdays @ 9:30 AM: Meet at the former 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 Starbucks 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

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/

Upcoming Rides December 08— April 09

12/27/2008 Borrego Springs Century R&B Bicycle Club
1/17/2009 Stagecoach Century, Winter Shadow Tour LLC
2/14/2009 Camino Real Double Century Planet Ultra
2/14/2009 Tour de Palm Springs GTE Directories
2/21/2009 CORPScamp Death Valley: Five Day Cycling Camp AdventureCORPS, Inc.
2/28/2009 Death Valley Century and Double Century - Spring Adventure Corps, Inc.
3/1/2009 Cactus to Ghost Towns
3/1/2009 Moss Beach 200k Brevet Santa Cruz Randonneurs
3/1/2009 Tour of the Unknown Valley-South Chico Velo Cycling Club
3/7/2009 Kings River Blossom Bike Ride Reedley Lions Club
3/8/2009 100 km Populaire Seattle International Randonneurs
3/14/2009 Solvang Century & Half Century SCOR
3/14/2009 Tour of Borrego R&B Bicycle Club
3/14/2009 Tour of Death Valley
3/15/2009 Solvang Spring Tour Planet Ultra
3/17/2009 Speed and Power Clinic Santiago Cycling
3/21/2009 Greenfield 300k Brevet Santa Cruz Randonneurs

3/21/2009 Tour de Sewer Bell Gardens Lions Club
3/28/2009 Redlands Rotary Ride Redlands Rotary Club
3/28/2009 Solvang Double Century (Spring) Planet Ultra
3/28/2009 Spring Metric Century Orange County Wheelmen
3/28/2009 Tour of Solvang Wine Country
4/4/2009 300 km Brevet Seattle International Randonneurs
4/4/2009 Cinderella Classic and Challenge Valley Spokesmen
4/4/2009 El Tour De Phoenix Perimeter Bicycling Ass. of Am.
4/4/2009 Party Pardee Century Sacramento Bike Hikers
4/4/2009 Stagecoach Century, Spring Shadow Tour LLC
4/5/2009 Tour of Big Sur & CA Coast
4/11/2009 Joshua Tree Double Century Anny Beck
4/11/2009 Katy Ram Challenge Ram Band Boosters
4/11/2009 Monterey Bay 400k Brevet Santa Cruz Randonneurs
4/11/2009 Mulholland Challenge Planet Ultra
4/11/2009 Mulholland Double Planet Ultra
4/12/2009 Tour of Arches and Canyonlands
4/16/2009 Fleche Northwest Seattle International Randonneurs
4/16/2009 Sea Otter Classic Cypress Group
4/18/2009 Cycle for Sight Rotary Club of Napa
4/18/2009 Devil Mountain Double Century Quackcyclists
4/18/2009 Hemet Double and Single Century Watrous Cycling Enterprises
4/18/2009 Primavera Century Fremont Freewheelers
4/18/2009 Tierra Bella Century Almaden Cycle Touring Club
4/22/2009 City of Angels Fun Ride Southern California Bicycle Expo
4/25/2009 The Alpine Challenge Alpine Kiwanis Foundation
4/25/2009 Tour De Orange County Abused Children Charities
4/25/2009 Wildflower Century San Luis Obispo Bicycle Club
4/26/2009 Monster Cookie Metric Century Salem Bicycle Club
4/26/2009 The Wildflower Chico Velo Cycling Club
4/26/2009 Tour of the Tucson Mountains Perimeter Bicycling

Continued from page 7) Cheese and Wine Century

N. of Oakdale, and took it into town, for a mile or so. After turning off, we arrived at the last rest stop, at mile 99. We were feeling good, so we blew right through it without stopping.

Going through Oakdale, we had to be alert, since there were 10 turns in the next 4 miles. Luckily, the route sheet was good, and all turns were well marked on the pavement, so this was not a problem. At mile 103, having worked our way to the SW corner of Oakdale, we headed south on Crane for 1.2 miles, before doing a final 2.2 mile leg, heading west on Patterson Road, which we'd come out on in the morning.

At 4:00, 8 hours and 5 minutes after we'd left, we pulled back into the start/finish, for a well-deserved post-ride meal. It had been a very pleasant, low-key ride, with excellent markings, great staff support, decent road surfaces, good scenery, and no close calls. Norm and I have been riding together for at least 25 years and we figured this had been the first double header we had done together. It was a very pleasant warm, fuzzy feeling. We agreed that the ride had been one of the most pleasant rides we'd done in a while. Nothing spectacular, just a good, solid, competent ride. We were happy.



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

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.

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

DATE _____ AGE _____
 SIGNATURE _____

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