

# Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club

Newsletter

October 1998

Founded 1888

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## Spinning Into The Winter

### Alt-Trans And The Fall Election Our October Meeting

The Tacoma-Pierce County YMCA will be at the October 20th club meeting providing information on the latest indoor bicycle craze called Spinning(r). Also, the Seattle based group called Alt-Trans will provide information on transportation issues being voted on in the November election.

Spinning is indoor bicycling in a classroom situation. Leave the traffic and weather outside while we find out what is spinning at the YMCA. Schwinn has a web site dedicated to Spinnina(r) at

[http://www.schwinn.com/fitness/spinning/spin\\_index.html](http://www.schwinn.com/fitness/spinning/spin_index.html).

Alt-Trans is a non-profit organization promoting alternatives to driving alone. Their goal is to promote a balanced transportation system that offers choices, including the bus, taking the train, walking, bicycling, and carpools, as well as driving alone. Alt-Trans wants a better quality of life for the people of Washington State, including clean air and clean water, more parks, and vibrant and healthy communities. More information is available on their web site at: <http://www.accessone.com/alt-trans>.

Our monthly meetings start at 7:00 p.m., and are located at the South Park Community Center, 4851 S. Tacoma Way, Tacoma, WA. Come out for a good program, food, and door prizes.

For more information on this club meeting or future meetings, call Steve Brown at 253-752-4038.

Next Month: New Products and Gift Ideas.

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## Directors Needed For Club Events

**by Ralph Wessels, TWBC Director of Special Events**

It's time to start planning for next year's club events. By starting early, these events are better organized and much easier to do. These events generate the funds that allow us to accomplish bicycling improvements and programs in our community. We do these events so well that last year, Bicycling Magazine selected the Daffodil Classic as the best ride in Washington. Janice Jensen has already volunteered to head up the Daffodil Classic for her third time. Peggy Fjetland and Mike Romaine will be co-chairing the TWBC booth at Bike Expo for their second year. If you would like to help organize or volunteer for these events, please contact Janice at 566-1822, Peggy at 253-841-4458, or Mike at 537-2330.

Positions are still open for the directors of the Seattle to Portland (STP) rest stop in Spanaway. and the Peninsula Metric Century. With our many volunteers

and expertise in doing the events, serving as a chairperson is not as intimidating as one might think. If you would like to chair or discuss chairing one of these events, please contact me at 857-5658.

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## From the president ernie stephenson

*New To The Club? Check Out The "Getting To Know You Rides" !*

First, I want to make a correction. Last month I mentioned that Mary Kubiszewski had initiated the policy of changing the Ride Line twice weekly. This was actually done earlier by Connie Reitzug, the Touring Captain prior to Mary, and who recently took the helm again.

You may have also heard that there was no Wolfhaven Ride this year. Well, this was not entirely true. There was a "I Can't Believe Its Not A Wolfhaven" ride. Apparently our sister club to the south, the Capital Bicycle Club, met some unexpected resistance this year, causing them to have to cancel the ride. Although unofficial reports have it that there will indeed be another Wolfhaven next year, some of you surely missed doing this ride.

What is interesting is that on the same weekend of the Tour de Kitsap, a number of Capital Club members volunteered their time, put out some surplus food, and printed and handed out maps. There was no sag support, Dan Henry's, fancy rest stops, or, for that matter, an entrance fee. That is right, what there was of this ride was FREE. There was also a fun ride, a bit of a challenge, just like cycling should be, and some dedicated people who did something for no other reason than accepting the responsibility that their ride should go on, one way or another. My helmet goes off to the dedicated members of the Capital Bicycle Club who did this. Well done.

So, what do you think? Would there be enough dedicated TWBC members willing to do this with the Daffodil or PMC if, heaven forbid, something like this befell us? Would the nucleus of members who can always be depended on, feel it is worth doing something like this for the club? I sure would like to think this would be so.

**Editor's Note:** Club members who attended the general meeting on September 15, 1998 approved the club budget as proposed by the Board Members and published in the September, 1998 newsletter on page 9. Please save your copy for future reference.

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## Ride Reports

### RSVP

#### **Steve Brown**

In 1980, when Mount Saint Helens erupted, the Seattle to Portland (STP) bicycle ride was cancelled. Fear of future disruption created the need for a bicycle ride outside of SW Washington. Thus, the Ride from Seattle to Vancouver, B.C. and Party (RSVP) was created. The 17th RSVP was on August 14-15, 1998. Prior to 1990 a third day, with Vancouver Island and a ferry trip back to Seattle, was included.

This ride is more hill laden than STP. The first day, from Seattle to Bellingham, is about 85 miles. The second day takes you to downtown Vancouver, another 74 miles. The final event is the party. There was a great band, and everyone was given a free drink coupon. Additional drinks were \$3.00 for sodas and \$6.00 for a can of beer. I guess this is how the band was being paid-and these were Canadian dollars.

We chose to take an additional day to ride to the Tsawwassen Ferry Terminal and cross to Vancouver Island. This included taking a shuttle under the Fraser River. The shuttle driver was asleep when we approached, but awoke from his cot in the back of his van just in time to take us under the Fraser.

After a night in Victoria we returned to Seattle the following day on the slow boat (over four hours). There is a long-term parking lot east of the University of Washington. The fee is a reasonable \$1.50 per day. but bring lots of quarters to

plug the meter.

Overall, this was a great trip, and I would highly encourage folks to consider participating in 1999.

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## My Wimprod Ride

### **Mary Neukom**

On August 15-16, 1998 I was invited to complete a Wimprod ride sponsored by the Redmond Cycling Club, after volunteering 12 hours on July 30th for RAMROD.

Wimprod was wonderful! The group consisted of three "official" sags, along with another rider provided sag. Six gals rode both Saturday and Sunday, along with about ten guys. All had single bikes, except for one new tandem. The sags transported our luggage and assured that everyone was safe and on the correct route. As sags were mostly small private vehicles carrying food and luggage, they were not for transporting riders.

The first day we rode from Crystal Mountain beginning after 10:00 a.m., up Cayuse Pass, down to the Mt. Rainier entrance, up and down another pass to Box Canyon, up Steven's Canyon, and down to Alexander's Manor at Ashford. Total miles, according to my odometer, were 62.

The next day we began after 8:30 a.m. riding down, then up and down Skate Creek, over to Packwood, up and down to the Mt. Rainier entrance, up and down Cayuse Pass and up 5 miles on the Crystal Mountain road. Total miles were 65.

The route was hilly, covering over 13,000 feet of elevation gain-even more than RAMROD, requiring lower gears and lots of pedaling. The group stopped only about every 25-30 miles, once for lunch on the first day, and three times on the second day for extra clothes and lunch. It rained a bit and was cold coming down to Packwood and Cayuse Pass, so folks put on rain gear. As we started each day rather late, the pace was steady all day to finish as quickly as

possible.

Overall, it wasn't really a "wimpee" ride, though those that rode RAMROD probably think so. Wimprod was very well organized, well sagged, and accommodations and food were excellent.

Would I do it again? Thanks to the Redmond Cycling Club group that sponsored both RAMROD and Wimprod, YOU BET!

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## **Hills Are Our Friends: The Courage Classic**

### **Robert Deehan**

This year I was the team captain for the TWBC team in the Courage Classic. A total of eight people, Tony and Ruth Thomas, Mike and Chris Romaine, Kelly Odegaard, Joe Bolling, Dave Tison, and I, formed the team.

Those of you in TWBC who know me are no doubt aware of my love of hills. So last year, when Peggy Fjetland told me about a supported three-day ride that goes over Snoqualmie, Blewett, and Stevens Pass, I just knew that I had to do this ride. One does have to raise pledge money, which goes to Mary Bridge Children's Hospital.

Day one was about 59 miles from Snoqualmie to Cle Elum. I had ridden to Snoqualmie summit twice on club rides, so I knew this was not a very challenging climb. I saw Mike Romaine and his son Chris on a tandem on the way up. I met Tony and Ruth Thomas, for the first time, at the first rest stop. They were doing this ride on a tandem as well. Doing this ride on a tandem has got to be tough, but they seemed to be having no trouble.

When I got to the summit the Rotary people (all the rest stops are run by Rotary Clubs) were serving spaghetti for lunch. Lunch was wonderful, but it did seem a little strange to have "real food" on a supported ride. Believe me, I got used to it. All of the rest stops were frequent and well stocked. At the last stop on this day

we had ice cream. This ride was living up to its reputation as being well supported.

After the summit most of the ride was downhill, except for a great hill right before Cle Elum. The one and only part of the day that I did not like was spending so much time on I-90. But there are no paved roads off the freeway that will take one over the pass, so I-90 is the only choice. That evening the Courage Classic people provided a hypnotist for our entertainment during dinner. I had expected this to be somewhat less than entertaining, but the hypnotist put on a great show, and we were all entertained.

Day two was 54 miles from Cle Elum to Leavenworth. This was a bit more challenging than the previous day. The early part of the ride goes through the beautiful Teanaway prairie. After Teanaway there were some wonderful rolling hills before one gets to the climb up Blewett pass. It was drizzling most of the way up the pass, which was probably a good thing because it kept us from overheating on the climb. This climb was a little bit more difficult than the previous day's climb.

At lunch I saw Gus Fant again. I saw Gus at almost every rest stop on all three days. This was getting eerie. Did Ernie send him on the ride to keep tabs on me? After the summit we had a nice downhill run with some fun curves. I camped in Leavenworth that night.

Day three was 60 miles from Leavenworth to Skykomish. This day was a lot of fun and definitely the most challenging of the three days. The scenery was the most breathtaking (literally) of the three days. Before one gets to Stevens Pass there is a great climb of about one mile or so. At one point on the climb one can view the entire valley just ridden through.

The descent on the other side of this climb was great. There were a lot of sharp corners, and even a hairpin turn to negotiate. At the rest stop before Stevens Pass I saw Peggy, Kelly, Mike and Chris. We all still had smiles on our faces, so we must have trained well.

We compared notes on the ride so far. Stevens pass started out pretty easy. but

the last few miles were definitely hard. Going up the pass I passed a tandem with a man and his daughter, who could not have been older than ten. I had passed him and his daughter and said "hello" on all three days. On day one he was very jovial. On day two he said "hello", but on the last day when I passed him he did not even respond to my greeting. He was definitely not having fun. His daughter, who was doing no work at all, seemed really happy though. When I got to the summit I definitely appreciated the Rotarians clapping for me this day. I was tired but happy when I got to the summit. Lunch was baked potatoes with chili. My digestive system was glad that the rest of the day was mainly downhill. The beginning of the downhill on highway 2 was a bit intimidating. I could see most of the way down the mountain when I looked over my right shoulder. I could tell how high I was, in elevation, that is. Getting on old highway 2 was fun. It is not a very steep downhill, but there were a lot of nice corners. I went as fast as I could and had a great time. When I got to the end in Skykomish almost all of the team members were there, which made for a nice finish to the ride. Everyone on the team was in good spirits. It was obvious that we had enjoyed this ride very much. This was most certainly one of the best cycling experiences I have ever had. There is a strong sense of community on this ride, because everybody eats breakfast and dinner at about the same time. Also, camping is available every night. Everyone camps in the same area, which contributes to creating a village like atmosphere. Jeff Randall, the director, did a good job of creating a community spirit when he spoke to the group at dinner every night. One of the amazing things about the ride is that I never had a flat tire, and experienced no mechanical problems. However, a lot of support vehicles were on the route.

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## **My First Code 3 Ride**

**Dorian Smith**

Are you ready for a Code 3 ride?



Many Tacoma Wheelmen probably ask themselves this question when they start to feel too comfortable riding on Code 2 or long Code 1 rides.

They have enjoyed the majestic views, feasted on lunches at pasta bars, and smacked lips at gourmet bakeries. And the camaraderie of fellow cyclists is a bond as strong as blood kinship.

But, like Mark McGwire swinging for number 62, most cyclists eventually eschew the pleasantries and pursue an athletic objective. Like riding more than 50 miles in one trip, or pushing a day's average speed beyond 15 miles per hour. Or, spending a day where hills are frequent.

In my three years with the club, I've learned that Code 1s are often billed as family events or afternoon rides for cyclists who prefer a leisurely pace with frequent stops. Code 2s are for beginners and intermediates who are more confident. These rides can stretch up to 50 miles. You may sweat, but rarely breathe heavily.

This summer I thought I was ready to depart the security of Code 2 rides. I had ample proof of my bicycling progress-I had completed three Seattle to Portland events. I honestly seemed to enjoy hills. And I have ten bicycles in my garage. My first experience on a Code 3 ride confirms what many suspect-a Code 3 is more than just a slight increase in effort. Code 3s, and their advanced brethren Code 4s, are different worlds.

For my initiation to the higher level, I selected Cynthia Hammer's ride from Bremerton to Kingston in August. During the ride in Dave Parker's pickup to the starting point, I confessed that I was attending my first Code 3, and he gave me a brief description of his years of advanced riding.

"We considered 100 miles a good average day," he said of the riders whom he shared Code 3 and Code 4 rides. He recalled fondly annual Memorial Day weekend trips with Bob Myrick. They would ride from South Tacoma to Packwood. Then they would pass through Randle for a side trip to Mount St. Helens before returning to Tacoma. Sometimes the trips would veer up to Ohanapakosh.

I was in awe. Just to utter Packwood and Mount St. Helens in one breath was fatiguing. But it was a goal worth pursuing.

About ten of us started from a small park in Bremerton. Several club members I had never seen before were present. More proof that those who engage in Code 3 and Code 4 trips interact on a different plane.

From the start I knew this was not a Code 2 ride. Within the first 2.5 miles I had reached greater extremes than on any Code 2 ride. My computer's maximum speed was already pegged at just under 30 miles an hour, and I had climbed a hill so steep that half the riders got off their bikes to walk.

On Code 2 rides I was used to encountering challenging hills a few times. But on that Code 3 ride, the hills were a constant feature. According to a rider with an altimeter watch, our accumulated ascendant tally was 3,500 feet! My average speed for the day was only 12.5 miles an hour—a testament to the hilly route.

Mercifully, the 75 mile ride was overestimated. By the time we returned to the little park in Bremerton we had traveled only 65 miles. But I was far more exhausted than after any 100 mile day during the STP.

The Bremerton to Kingston trip probably includes some of the most beautiful scenery in Puget Sound. The sunny day offered grand views of the Olympics and saltwater beaches. We rode through evergreen forests, Poulsbo's narrow village streets and neighborhoods of luxury homes.

But, despite the bucolic beauty around us, we were always aware of the rigors of the trip. I noticed that my fellow Code 3 riders winced just like Code 2 riders. But Code 2 riders only wince a couple times a day, while Code 3 riders wince every few miles.

Adding insult to exertion, I had a double flat (my replacement tube also leaked).

With help from Louis Boitano I finally glued on a patch and got rolling again.

Then, sometime after mile 50, I started to run out of gas. For most of the day Louis rode in the tail position, but on a long hill he passed me, and I watched his image grow smaller and smaller. My beginner bicyclist's resentment of hills

returned.

Back at the starting point, I talked very little as we loaded the bikes in Dave's pickup. Finally, on the freeway back to Tacoma, I started to open my mouth to confess to Dave my aching thighs from the long uphill, and aching forearms from grabbing brakes on long downhill. I wanted to tell him that it was the most exhausting trip I had ever taken.

"That was a nice Code 3 ride," he said with a broad grin before I could comment. "Not real long, but a good ride."

I looked out the window at the late afternoon sun and realized I had spent a warm summer day in one of the best areas in Washington to spend a warm summer day. It truly was memorable.

So, I vowed that one of these days I'll be able to say nice things about a Code 3, just like Dave. With a grin, too.

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Past pedaling

anne heller

*Historical highlights of TWBC's 110 years*

**(Editor's note: This is a first installment of a story with a Tacoma connection. Anne's source for this story is a 1902 edition of "Overland Monthly," a magazine published in San Francisco.)**

## A 3 Month's Outing In 3 States For 33 Dollars

In June of 1902, J. Edgar Ross, a young man from San Francisco, decided he would like to travel through the Cascades on a lengthy vacation. Unfortunately, his bank account was near zero.

While he was trying to decide how to manage it without going into debt, a friend suggested that he make the trip "a-wheel." Mr. Ross replied that the "roads and trails in the Cascade Mountains were not like the bicycle paths in Golden Gate

Park." To which the friend answered, "Well, what of that? Where you can't ride your wheel you can walk beside it."

At this point most of us would have re-assessed our choice of friends. Mr. Ross came from sturdier stock. He began planning the trip. He had experience camping in the mountains, so when planning what to carry along he "knew just about what he would want, and, what was of far more importance, what he could get along without."

The problem of what to carry weighed heavily on him. What he carried weighed heavily on his bike. He was an avowed "camera fiend" and decided he must take his camera, which, with a long-focus lens, weighed 15 pounds. He also believed in using plates instead of film. Three boxes of plates weighed an additional 13 pounds. In addition to his camera equipment he brought along: a sleeping bag, 9.5 lbs.; an axe, 12 oz.; cooking utensils, 1.25 lbs.; repair tools, 1 lb.; and food, 15 lbs.

He didn't plan to be away from civilization for more than ten days at a time, so he did not carry much food with him. The food he took consisted of beans, peas, dried fruit and bread. Not being happy with hardtack, he decided to bake his own bread, "a modified form of hardtack that just met my idea of what camping bread ought to be." He made up 50 pounds of it, shipping most of it ahead to points along his route.

For those of you who would like to try his recipe, I will give it to you. For each six quarts of whole-wheat flour add either a pound of butter or 1.5 cups cottonseed oil. Add water and knead thoroughly. Roll it out, cut it into strips and bake for about 40 minutes. The result is bread that is "light and crisp with a delicious creamy flavor, which, though hard, is never tough."

He assembled all of his gear and food in a pine box suspended between the handlebars and the front wheel. The bike with gear weighed 95-100 pounds. Mr. Ross weighed 140 pounds.

The itinerary he chose was not an easy one. It sounds daunting even today with good roads and high tech gear. His route would take him from San Francisco to

Crater Lake in Oregon and Mt. Rainier in Washington. He would ride most of the way, walking and pushing his bike when the roads or flat tires made riding impossible. Occasionally he took the train when roads were impassable. In upcoming issues I will tell you about his trip.

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## New and renewing members

TWBC welcomes and thanks the following new and renewing members for the month of August, 1998:

**New Members:** Karen Campbell; Sandy DenHerder; Mary LaTourelle; Sue Matthews; Linda Neshyba; Robert C. O'Hara; Joan Rodriguez; Dave Sinclair; and Gary Solomonson.

**Renewing Members:** Susan Blanchett-Larson; Steve Brown; Bob Burton; Karen Comer; Ron & Liz Cooper; Robert Deehan; Carla Gramlich; Mike Hassur; Sally McHugh; Deborah Ottow; Mike Pfannenstiel; Jerry Pischel; Dorothy Schedvin; Michael and Jackie Springer; Jan Wieser; and Charles Wolf.

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## From The Touring Captain

**Connie Reitzug**

**Ride Line Updates:** Updates will be done on Thursdays and Sundays, except holidays.

**Ride Leaders:** If you would like to add a last minute ride to the ride line, in order to have your ride make the Sunday update, call it in by Sunday afternoon by 4:00 p.m. For the Thursday update, contact me by Thursday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. Exceptions: Thanksgiving deadline: Wednesday, 11/25/98 by 4:00 p.m. Christmas deadline: Wednesday, 12/23/98 by 4:00 p.m. New Years: Wednesday, 12/30/98 by 4:00 p.m.

**Jersev Update:** Several members have expressed interest in purchasing a

second, or in some cases a first TWBC Club Jersey. At our October general Club meeting, I will have some sample Voler products such as vests, shells, and jerseys. Some changes have been made in the elastic in the vests for a more relaxed and realistic body size. Come to the meeting and see if you may be interested in ordering any of these products with our Club emblems emblazoned upon them. I will decide by the interest shown whether it is worthwhile to make another order.

**For Your Information:** A King County Bicycling Guide is now available at REI locations and other outlets in King County. City of Seattle bicycle maps are available by calling 206-684-7583. Redmond Bicycling Maps: 425-556-2416. Bike Bellevue Map: 425-452-2894.

**Special Thanks:** This past month has been great for biking, and has been greatly enhanced by the efforts of those who have led rides. I would like to thank the following people for helping to optimize the already beautiful September: Phil Blenkush; Louis Boitano; Steve Brown; Joyce Clifford; Ann Dahl; Roz and Carol Davis; Peggy Fjetland; Steve and Phyllis Lay; Gary Moore; Barbara Root; and Mat Reitzug. (Contact: Connie Reitzug 460-1533)

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## **Bicycle Alliance of Washington Auction**

**by Ralph Wessels, TWBC Director of Special Events**

The 6th annual Bicycle Alliance of Washington (formerly called NowBike) auction will be held this year on the evening of Saturday, November 7. The location will be in the beautiful and historic Dome Room in downtown Seattle's Arctic Building. A pasta dinner, dessert, and refreshments are served in addition to the auction. The auction draws more than 200 people. Having attended the auction for several years, I can attest that it is a real enjoyable event. It is also an opportunity to go home with some great items.

The items for the auction include more than just biking items. Other BAW board members and I are actively seeking donations in order to make the auction a

financial success. Please contact me at 857-5658 if you have items you would like to donate. Any item would be appreciated. The use of a cabin or services are particularly attractive.

TWBC has again purchased a table for ten, and will be subsidizing half of a TWBC member's ticket. This is limited to the first ten people to contact me (five did at the club meeting!) so give me a call and plan to attend at this low \$17.50 cost. Additional tickets are available for \$35.00 by contacting BAW at 206-224-9252, or P.O. Box 2904, Seattle, WA 98111. This auction is for a great cause, bicycle advocacy. So come, eat, drink, be merry, spend a bit, and help support bicycling.

The Livable Community Fair is also occurring earlier in the day at the Seattle Center. They have a very good program and some great speakers. The fair begins runs from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday and 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and has tours of livable communities on Sunday for a nominal fee. Check out <http://livablecommunities.org>, or call Shirley Tomassi at 206-296-0355.

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## **Foothills Trails Update**

**by Carla Gramlich**

During September the Foothills Rails to Trails Coalition spends a couple of weeks at the Puyallup Fair bragging about the Trail. This year there is plenty to talk about. The volunteers for the trail have been very busy this summer.

Volunteers spent several weekends renovating a trestle. The bridge is located on the trail between SR 162 and Old Pioneer Way, south of South Prairie.

Volunteers spent hundreds of hours at this backbreaking project. Their reward is a beautiful bridge and a saving to the trail of approximately \$100,000.00.

During the trestle construction volunteers took time out to dedicate "Bernie's Place." This picnic area was built in memory of TWBC and long time Foothills member Bernie Dixon. The spot is near the Carbon River. with a wonderful view

of Mt. Rainier.

The trail is heading towards South Prairie. Construction workers are currently on the trail preparing to pave another three miles. Once completed, the trail will be seven miles from the McMillin Trail Head to the end of the pavement.

You have a chance to support the trail. On October 9th the Foothills Coalition will hold their annual Dinner and Auction in Tacoma at the Scottish Rites Hall. Tickets are \$15.00 each. The Coalition is once again selling Entertainment Books. Two editions are availableC South Puget Sound and Seattle. The books have some fabulous coupons, and profits benefit the trail. Call me at 253-752-4038 to buy tickets or books.