



# MBBC

More Bicycling = Better Community!

Mt. Baker Bicycle Club Newsletter, Volume 16: Number 1, Jan 2007

## Special Rides

(Pg 1,3 &4)

**Jan 1: New Years Day Ride**  
**Jan 15: MLK Day ride**  
**Feb ? : President's Day Ride**  
**Feb 24: Chilly Hilly**  
**March 17: McClinchy Mile**

## Events (Pg 1 &3)

**Jan 8: The Sunshine Coast**  
**Feb 12: Crossants Canals and Castles**  
**March 10-11: Bike Expo**  
**March 12: Alaska to Panama**  
**April 21: Whatcom Expo**

## Weekly Rides (Pg 2)

**Tillicum/Chako Series (p1)**  
**Tuesday Social**  
**Tuesday Training**  
**Wednesday Social**  
**Saturday Donut Ride**  
**Saturday Recumbent Ride**  
**Saturday Whimp Ride**  
**The Nooner Ride (Sunday)**

Please notify us of upcoming events for inclusion  
[pagoff@yahoo.com](mailto:pagoff@yahoo.com)  
or mail to:

Editor Newsletter  
Mt. Baker Bicycle Club  
Post Office Box 2702  
Bellingham, Washington  
98227

MBBC listserv--<http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/MtBakerBicycleClub/>

Website: [www.mtbakerbike-club.org](http://www.mtbakerbike-club.org)

## BIKEEVENTS

### Winter slide show series

Come visit exotic places by bicycle through the vivid photographs and personal stories of local bicycle adventurers.

Each month this winter the Club hosts a bicycle travelogue slide show highlighting the where and how and fun of bicycle touring. This winter we are honored to welcome the Bellingham Parks and Recreation Travelogue program as a co-sponsor.

**January 8:** "Biking the Sunshine Coast - Cross Country to Extreme" Maraiiah Raftree

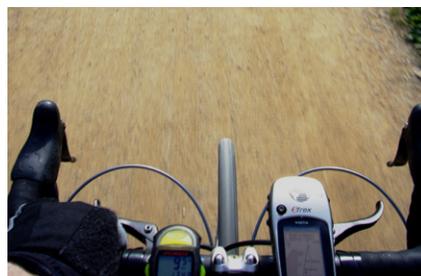
**February 12:** "Croissants, Canals, and Castles: Bicycling Europe with Kids" by Laural, Noah, and Dana Ringler and Tom Caldwell.

**March 12:** "Phase V: 4 Friends, 4 Bikes, 4,000 Miles" - from Alaska to Panama by bike, by Eric Christensen

All shows will be at the Bellingham Public Library meeting room --210 Central Avenue. Tell your friends and plan to attend.

Refreshments will be served!

More BIKEEVENTS pg 3



Keep your Eyes on the Road

Check out the *Writing Riders* columns  
Page 6 and 7

If you've done an interesting ride, write an article about it and send it to [pagoff@yahoo.com](mailto:pagoff@yahoo.com)

## RIDE NEWS

### Only 10 more weeks for the Wednesday Night Trail Ride!!!

FYI, Wed. Night (the week of the snow) we had 13 riders in horrible conditions. There are getting to be quite a few hard cores out there.

Hurry, hurry, hurry, the Wednesday Night Trail Ride is to end soon, only 10 more left in the season provided we go back to the Road on March 14 after Daylight Saving Time starts its new schedule to change on the second Sunday in March. So far the largest group was 23 riders, amazing. Bigger and bigger every year!!!!!!

Not quite sure what the pace is other than slow and hard uphill and rather fast downhill most of the time. Maybe next year a group of truly slower social paced riders will form a group to enjoy this adventure.

### New Year's Day Ride 10 AM Fairhaven Park.

A social ride to Edison's Longhorn Tavern for lunch and return. So far this ride has always happened even in some terrible weather, so dress for the worst. A great (?) way to start the New Year. I think this is the 7th Annual.

Snow and/or ice will likely cancel this ride, so show up for the next ride instead in two weeks, maybe conditions will be better.

### Martin Luther King Day Ride, 10 AM January 15, Fairhaven Park

This really is a repeat of the New Year's Day Ride but not as well attended. In 2006 there were only three riders who braved the cold, cold rain but had a great time anyway.

### President's Day Ride 10 AM Cornwall Park (in front of the Parks Dept.)

A nice ride into the County before stopping at Mounts Café in Ferndale (providing Mount's is still in biz as it close to changing hands to become ???). This is a social pace ride.

**Social Meetings** Monthly get together meetings at Boundry Bay on the fourth wednesday of the month--after the wednesday ride.



**Morning Ride Zion National Park**

## Weekly and Group Rides

### Tillicum Series:

Departs 12:30 see article page 1  
For more information or to sign up, call 734-8540 or e-mail president@mtbakerbikeclub.org.

**Tuesday Jekyl and Hyde;** Run in July and August. The rides start at the Jekyl and Hyde Deli and Ale Restaurant on Orchard Street. Meet at 6:00 and depart at 6:15 p.m. Call Kathy for directions at 733-0563 home or 303-6702

**Tuesday Social Ride: 30-40 miles, 13-16 mph,** starts from Pioneer Park in Ferndale, route varies. Contact Robert Parker at rmp4724@az.com or 360-671-6910

**Tuesday Training ride:** 30-40 miles, 18 mph (race pace), self-supporting ride departs from Kulshan Cycles at 6 PM to a practice road race course (summer months)

**Wednesday Fanatik Off road rides:** Weekly group rides on Wednesdays leaving their shop or other sites around town between 5-6pm. contact Kathy Salisbury at Fanatik Bike Shop at (360) 756-0504 or kathy@fanatikbike.com for more information and before attending any ride please call the store to sign up.

**Wednesday Social Ride:** varied distance, varied abilities; departs meet at 5:45 pm leave at 6PM Boundary Bay Brewery at Railroad Avenue, Bellingham. Ride separates into slow, intermediate, fast groups. From Oct-Mar we leave the pavement behind and hit the trails with lights on. Re-group at brewery afterwards (7pm). Contact: mbbcridecoord@prodigy.com 360-733-1402

**Really Social Wednesday Ride--Chako Ride:** Chako Rides are a social paced ride (10 to 13 mph) departing from Boundary Bay every Wednesday evening at about 6 pm.

**Saturday Donut Ride:** 24 – 45 miles, race pace, departs from Kulshan Cycles, 7:30 AM Oct thru Feb and 7 AM March thru Sept. Goes to Ferndale for coffee and return, or if you wish continue to Birch Bay and return. (Runs every week of the year!!)

**Saturday Recumbant Ride:** Once a month at 10 AM. 14 mile intown course. For more miles bike to Kulshan Cycles starting point. Sporadic depending on weather--Contact Robert Parker at rmp4724@az.com or 360-671-6910

**Saturday WHIMP MB Ride** 10:00AM. Meet at the tennis courts at Lake Padden. Intermediate to advanced ride. Contact Darren at Clark's cycle for more information.

## We're Much More Than a Club!

**Recreation** –Mt. Baker Bicycle Club hosts weekly, monthly and a variety of annual recreation rides for members and guests throughout the year. Rides are oriented to all levels of ability including beginners, social riders, commuters, touring and high level race training. Check the newsletter for current rides and come along as our guest!

**Education** – Bicycling safely is a learned skill. The Club offers courses in partnership with the Bellingham Parks Department. We work with local groups to host bike skills rodeos at annual community fairs. Funds raised by club activities help support training of more teachers, training bicycle skills to kids means a lifetime of safer roads.

Encouraging bicycling is an important part of the Club's education work. Our annual Bike to Work and School Day promotion has helped hundreds of commuters "Be part of the solution" launching careers of folks bicycling to work or cycling their kids to school.

**Trails** – In partnership with Whatcom TrailNet and the Whatcom Independent Mountain Pedalers, the Club helps advocate for development of a complete trail and mountain-bike network throughout Whatcom County. The Club works with Bellingham Walks to improve the system of walking paths connecting communities both in cities and rural areas so that our children have safe routes to get to school.

**Race Training** – Weekly club rides offer new and seasoned high-level riders the chance to improve team riding skills. In partnership with the Ken Meyer Memorial Foundation, the Club hosts annual Criterium Bike Race events. Whether training for professional-class races or for endurance events or tours, these weekly training rides give Club members the extra edge to compete and win.

### **Mt. Baker Bicycle Club vision:**

*Residents and visitors of all ability levels enjoy frequent and safe cycling throughout the Whatcom County region.*

**Our Mission:** *Encouraging and assisting everyone to experience safe and healthy cycling for recreation, transportation, or racing on roadways and trails in and around Whatcom County.*

### **Mt. Baker Bicycle Club goals:**

1. *Increase the number of people bicycling regularly*
  - *conducting and supporting recreational and educational bicycle events and rides*
  - *helping all types of people enjoy bicycling*
2. *Encourage safe and enjoyable bicycling*
  - *educate the public on safe bicycling skills and sharing the road*
  - *communicate issues of interest to bicyclists*
3. *Advise decision makers on facilities and policies that maintain or improve safe bicycling conditions on roadways and trails*
4. *Promote bikes as environmentally friendly transportation*
  - *partnering to reduce environmental damage of transportation*

### **Mt. Baker Bicycle Club Board of Directors:**

Marie Kimball, Real Estate professional, recreational rider  
Doug Schoonover, rider extraordinaire  
Marc Ambers  
Rodd Pemble  
Mike McCauley  
Pamela Robertson

### **Mt. Baker Bicycle Club officers:**

Ellen Barton--President – Transportation Planner, daily bike commuter-- raleigh3speed@hotmail.com (734-8540)  
Marie Kimball--Membership – Did STP in one day 2005, still truckin bikebham@yahoo.com (752-1236)  
Doug Schoonover--Ride Coordinator - mbbcridecood@prodigy.net (733-1402)  
Paul Goff--Newsletter Editor –slow recreational roadster-- pagoff@yahoo.com

**We are indebted to Sunshine Printing in Bellingham for printing the MBBC newsletter**

BIKEEVENTS continued

## Bike expo

### 2007 Group Health Seattle International Bicycle Expo March 10 - 11, 2007

at Warren G. Magnuson Park A  
Cascade Bicycle Club Event



#### THE NORTHWEST'S FAVORITE WAY TO KICK OFF THE BIKING SEASON!

Bicycle everything!

Group Health Seattle International Bicycle Expo is a complete celebration of cycling, with exhibits and presentations from all aspects of the sport. For the fourth year in a row, we welcome Group Health as title sponsor. Group Health Cooperative continues for the third year as the show's title sponsor. In addition to their involvement in Expo and other Cascade Bicycle Club events as sponsor, Group Health will present a series of health and nutrition seminars at the show.

Presentations: Presentations are being booked for 2007. If you have nominations, please send them to the Event Director. Take a look at the 2006 Features & Presentations page to find out what caliber of presentations you can look forward to at the 2007 show.

Venue: We are pleased to announce that Bike Expo will be held in the historic Hangar 27 at Warren G. Magnuson Park, located at Sand Point in Seattle. Magnuson Park is also home to the producers of Bike Expo: the Cascade Bicycle Club.

**Exhibits:** The 2006 show drew more than 150 exhibits of bikes, gear, travel, health and fitness. Expo is one of the largest collections of bike businesses and organizations in the country under one roof.

**Photo contest:** The popular and fun Photo Contest is back for the ninth year running!

## Bike Month coming soon!

It's cold and dark but February brings hope of spring with the first Bike to Work and School Day planning meeting on Monday, the 5th of February, 2007, at the Bellingham Public Library meeting room. This year we'll make it bigger and better than ever: come share your ideas. Plan to bring a few friends, and tell what works, what doesn't, and what you'd like to help with to make Friday, the 18th of May the best Whatcom County Bike to Work and School Day yet! For information call Ellen or Margaux at 676-6974.



RAMRTD--Mt. Ranier, the pay-off

## Whatcom Outdoor EXPO

Kick-off the Spring season with an action packed Expo featuring dozens of the areas best outdoor recreation companies. It's like a Home Show but for outdoor fun!

Whatever we can do outdoors in the Northwest will be here... Kayaks, Mountain Climbing, Sailing, Scuba Diving, RVs, Sky Diving, Boats, Adventure Tours, and your favorite outdoor clubs and much, much more!

Test paddle kayaks, try out scuba diving in a dry-suit, lay down in that RV, and jump in that fishing boat for a spin! This is an Outdoor, hands-on Expo... held mostly indoors.

**Saturday, April 21st 2007  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

**This Expo will be held indoors at  
Bloedel Donovan Community Building  
Bellingham, WA**

Admission is only \$4 at the door (15 and under are free). Or pick up FREE tickets at any Whatcom County or Skagit County Banner Bank Branch.

## Lake Forest Park City Council Passes Anti-Burke-Gilman Trail Ordinance

*Law would make improving the corridor "impracticable"*

*ed note: thought this was an unbelievable development in Seattle. Understand that this can happen here as well. We need to push the politicians to maintain our rights.*

Despite the opposition of most residents, three professional engineering reports, the Burke-Gilman Trail Citizens' Advisory Group, the Lake Forest Park Transportation Commission, King County, and the Cascade Bicycle Club, on November 9 2006 the Lake Forest Park City Council voted 6 to 1 to pass Ordinance 951. Ordinance 951 is a law that in effect prevents the County from upgrading the Burke-Gilman Trail in Lake Forest Park to improve its safety (see the letters from Ron Sims, Pam Bissonnette, and Kevin Brown below).

In its effort to prioritize private driveways over the rights of trail users, the ordinance departs from Federal, State, and County traffic safety standards. It is also contradicts three professional engineering reports that suggest ways to improve the trail. According to King County Executive Ron Sims the ordinance would make it "impracticable for the County to improve the trail to meet current and future demand." Kevin Brown, Director of King County's Parks and Recreation Division, writes that should 951 pass, "King County will need to take a close look at the viability of this project -- i.e. whether to allocate funds elsewhere...".

Cascade Bicycle Club is meeting with our legal counsel to determine our next steps.

We count on your financial support to represent your interests in the community and the courtroom. Please support the rights of cyclists by contributing to the Burke-Gilman Legal Defense Fund. To contribute, make out your check to "Cascade Bicycle Club", write "Burke-Gilman Legal Defense" in the memo field and mail to:

Cascade Bicycle Club  
attn: Burke-Gilman Legal Defense Fund  
PO Box 15165  
Seattle, WA 98115

# Chilly Hilly February 25, 2007

With Chilly February weather and 2,675 feet of Hilly climbing, the name says it all!

Chilly Hilly has been kicking off the cycling season in the Northwest for the past 34 years. The 33-mile route around Bainbridge Island starts with an early morning ferry ride across Puget Sound from Seattle or you can join the crowd directly on Bainbridge Island.

Join us Sunday, February 26 on the ride *Bicycling Magazine* named "One of Four Classic Rides" in the nation! Guaranteed to be hilly, chilly and a heck of a lot of fun.

Enjoy a scenic cruise on a Washington State Ferry  
Free baked goods & hot cider at the Hot Cider Food Stop supporting 10 local Bainbridge Island charities

Chilly Hilly reminds you that winter is no excuse to stop riding because spring is just around the corner.

### Who Rode in 2006:

- \* Chilly Hilly had 4,200 riders in 2006 - not a record but close!
- \* Riders came from 19 states (including New York, Alaska, Arizona, and North Carolina), plus British Columbia and Australia!
- \* The oldest registered rider was 90 years old! The youngest was a year and a half. (We're not sure, however, how old the youngest rider who actually rode on their own was.)

REGISTER ONLINE NOW! (Opens Jan. 1, 2007)  
<http://www.cascade.org/EandR/chilly/index.cfm>

# McClinchy Mile March 17, 2007



Snohomish County BIKES Club invites you to explore the peaceful river valleys, rolling hills and picturesque farms of Snohomish County.

3 Loops: 4 foodstops, a flat 34, a 20 with some hills, or a challenging 47 which finishes off on the expanded Centennial Trail.

Come join us and ride as many of the loops as you fancy. This ride supports the Bicycle Alliance of Washington, recreational cycling and bike safety in Snohomish County.

Three loops offer miles of easy riding on the newly expanded Centennial Trail or challenging hills and fast flatlands for distances from 25 to 47 miles, or combine loops for a metric or a McClinchy century.

**WHEN:** Saturday, March 17, 2007

**WHERE:** Haller Middle School  
600 East First St.  
Arlington, WA.

**TIME:** Registration open 8-11am

Check back later for more information!

Contact: 360-658-2462

Email: [mcclinchymile@bikesclub.org](mailto:mcclinchymile@bikesclub.org)

## MBBC Membership Form

New Member     Renewing Member     This is a change of address

Last name: \_\_\_\_\_ First name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Associate member: \_\_\_\_\_

*(An associate member can be any person living at the same address as the individual member)*

Would you like to help? Volunteers are our most valuable resource. Please check any of the boxes that appeal to you and we will be in touch:

- Ride Leader       Newsletter       Mailings or Data
- Bike to Work and School Day       Chuckanut Century
- Special events       Website Maintenance       Education
- I can provide discounts on \_\_\_\_\_

## Membership type:

Individual: \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

Family/Associate: \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

*to support bike safety education*

Total enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please enclose a check payable to Mt. Baker Bicycle Club  
*(There will be a \$20 fee for all returned checks.)*

Mail to:

**Mt. Baker Bicycle Club  
Post Office Box 2702  
Bellingham, Washington 98227**

### Questions?

Check out our web site: [www.mtbakerbikeclub.org](http://www.mtbakerbikeclub.org)  
or email us at [bikebham@yahoo.com](mailto:bikebham@yahoo.com)  
or call at 7521236

## What ails you--Medical advice for cyclists

Dr. Robert Curtis is an avid road and mountain cyclist, completing his first Mt. Baker Hill Climb this year. Dr. Curtis provides sports, injury and wellness chiropractic care along with soft tissue treatments related to acute and chronic injuries. He can be contacted at [drrecurtis@yahoo.com](mailto:drrecurtis@yahoo.com) with questions or topics of interest.

### Muscle Cramps

#### Do muscle cramps slow you down? Let's fix it.

Most cyclists have experienced muscle cramping during their favorite rides, and they may ruin a race, group ride or training plans. This article gives an overview of the common causes of muscle cramps, their specifics and how best to avoid them.

**What they are:** Muscle cramps are involuntary and often painful contractions (movements) of muscles, which are common in endurance sports, such as long distance running and cycling. Most often, the cramping can be alleviated by gentle stretching of the affected muscle(s). Muscle cramps occur most often in the calf muscles, quadriceps and hamstring muscles during endurance sports.

**What causes muscle cramps?** Muscle cramps can be caused by many things, but the most common causes for cyclists include: muscle fatigue, heavy exercise, and dehydration.

First and foremost is **muscle fatigue**. Let's say you have been training diligently for riding 50 miles as your longest ride, and one of your riding buddies says he is doing a century in two weeks. He says you are more than ready, and since you have nothing planned, have been feeling good on and off the bike, and haven't done a century in 4 years, you say, "why not?" At mile 68 however, you notice that you have less power, and then a hill comes up. Seated climbing is difficult, so you stand and your left calf cramps slightly on every pedal stroke. You get to the top of the hill, shift into a harder gear for the flats, and the left calf cramps up much worse with increased efforts. This continues for the remainder of the ride.

This is a case of muscle fatigue due to **under-training**. It is important to remember that you can only ride as fast or as far as you have trained. If you have not ridden a century, training up to and beyond 100 miles is necessary for your muscles ability to adapt to the increased stress of the ride. It won't matter how many bananas you eat, your muscle fibers cannot sustain the work you are asking them to do!

Heavy exercise is generally equated to lifting weights or doing something, well, HEAVY! That is not the case. Switching the type of exercise you do on your bike, such as time trialing to hill climbing, or century rides to criterium races, can cause cramping unless you train appropriately. This follows the same principle as fatigue, as the muscle fibers cannot sustain the load (i.e: heavy) you are asking of them. Training for all cycling disciplines (climbing, time trails, flats, sprints, etc) will help reduce the cramping.



Lunch on the Costa Brava

**Dehydration** is the loss of fluids in the body measured as a loss of greater than 1 % of body weight. Dehydration can be caused by reduced fluid intake, heat and/or exercise, vomiting and diarrhea. If you are cycling and not drinking water or a sport's drink consistently, you stand the chance of having dehydration-induced muscle cramps. When you lose 3% or more of body weight, heat regulation and muscle contractions significantly decrease in function. What this comes down to is a body fluid loss of 2-6 liters per hour (depending on conditions). If you are good about hydrating while riding, you should be drinking between 1-2 quarts per hour (2-4, 16 ounce water bottles). If your rides go longer than 2-3 hours, consider a sport's drink, as the carbohydrates in the drink can get to the depleted muscles in 10 to 15 minutes. This should aid in reducing muscle cramps associated with dehydration.

There are other reasons for muscle cramps, which include low magnesium and calcium levels in the body, other electrolyte depletion, hypothyroidism, and underlying genetic, metabolic or pathologic conditions. If cramping does not improve with changes made to your training, or the same cramping migrates to your non-active portion of your life, you should seek medical attention.

For those who seek more detailed data regarding muscle cramps or cycling related information, check out these websites and books.

<http://www.cptips.com/index.htm>  
<http://www.pponline.co.uk/encyc/cycling.htm>  
<http://www.webmd.com/>  
Complete Medical Guide for Cyclists, by Andy Pruitt, Ed.D

.....Robert Curtis



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## Writing Riders--narratives of recent rides by our members

### On the road to Vancouver

*Summer of 2006, I took a month off and rode my bicycle from Bellingham to Santa Barbara, CA. Came back on Amtrak. I also went a few places around here, such as Vancouver, BC. Details and photos of my various trips are on my web site [www.theslowlane.com](http://www.theslowlane.com)*

**Vancouver** is a bicycle friendly city. Ironically, large cities are often better than rural areas if the cities provide bike paths. Rather than riding along a highway with lots of traffic, one can be on a bike path in much of the city.

Going to Vancouver is a combination of roads and trails. Details of my favorite route from Bellingham to Vancouver at [www.theslowlane.com/paths/route.html](http://www.theslowlane.com/paths/route.html)

Here in Whatcom County, I avoid the north part of Portal Way. It's shoulder is lousy. East of the Freeway there are some back roads such as Valleyview and Haynie Roads that I use instead.

One can go to the front of the car line at the border. An advantage of bicycling. I usually cross at Peace Arch crossing. Bicycles are treated like pedestrians.

Folks will travel all over the world, but still wonder how I get to Vancouver. In their own backyards, they don't know any other route besides the freeway. They ask, "how can you bike in the Massey Tunnel?" The answer is, I don't bike in that tunnel. There are other ways to go besides the freeway. For good reason, the Massey Tunnel is illegal, but there are alternatives.

I go a different way entirely. King George Highway to Surrey and then I use the sidewalk on Pattullo Bridge across the Fraser River.

Downtown New Westminster isn't bad and I soon cross over to the paths of the New Westminster waterfront. Then I cross over some rail yards again and find a bike path under the Skytrain. This goes all the way to Vancouver, but it has a lot of confusing intersections once one gets to Burnaby.

I prefer bypassing Burnaby by using the shoulder of Marine Way. Not Marine Drive which has no shoulder, but Marine Way. This is down in the tidelands. Bike logos are stenciled on the shoulder.

At Vancouver city line, I jog south a few feet and find Kent Avenue. This follows the north arm of the Fraser River.

Just after going under the Knight Street Bridge, I find Ontario Street. Helps to have a map as it isn't obvious. Ontario is a great route across the city to almost downtown. There are many other routes, but Ontario is best. I often miss Ontario, but the other routes are okay. Ontario has buttons for activating stoplights that are placed at the bike lane. One passes Queen Elizabeth Park which has bike sculptures in it's south east corner.

From Queen Elizabeth Park, it is downhill and then a jog over to the left, on 6th or one of those streets. Soon one is crossing the Cambie Street Bridge. It has a bike path. The view of downtown skyscrapers is fabulous.

Vancouver is an all weekend trip so I get a hotel room. I park my bike in the room. People who drive to Vancouver often struggle to find parking downtown. Outdoor parking for bikes can be problematic as well since the downtown is a "high bike theft area."

One can also take city transit buses with bike racks most of

the way to downtown Vancouver. WTA goes to Blaine from Bellingham for 75 cents. Remember that the Blaine route doesn't run on Sundays. From Whiterock, one can take the 351 bus to downtown Vancouver for about 2 to 4 dollars Canadian.

Another way to go is the Skytrain. Yes, that allows bikes when it isn't too crowded. The Skytrain can be an exhilarating ride from King George Station, in Surrey, to downtown Vancouver. Hang onto your bike as the train whisks around corners.

Whether one is biking or riding something like the Skytrain, the scenery is glorious and Vancouver offers many exciting things to do.

.....Robert Ashworth

### Biking the parks

*Cycling tourist meccas is a challenge. Last summer while camping through the SW we found nice, relatively easy rides at Grand Canyon and Zion National Parks. In addition with friends I did a three day trip around Mount Ranier—a more touristic and, from my point of view, rational version of RAMROD.*

#### Grand Canyon South Rim

The south rim of the Grand Canyon has become increasingly congested and difficult to do anything, particularly in season. We were fortunate to be there in early September, just after high season. My experience however, is probably applicable any time.

Riding on the open roads around the south rim can be dangerous because of the intensity of traffic and the large number of outsized camping vehicles, many with inexperienced operators. What you can do safely, however, is ride the few trails that are open to bicycles—the one right along the rim is closed anything but walkers. And also you can ride the roads that are limited to the shuttle buses. So if you can figure out the bicycle paths that take you to the limited access roads you are in business.

In our case we were camping near the market area and took what is called the Greenway trail about 2 -3 miles to the Hermit's rest road area and then biked along the rim of the canyon, with many stops for beautiful views out to hermit's rest (about 8 miles one way). I did this ride every day just after sunrise and enjoyed both the exercise and the magnificence of the canyon each time.

You are cycling at about 7000 feet with a gentle up hill for about half the ride in each direction. So take your time and your bicycles and enjoy.

#### Zion National Park

Our next stop was Zion National Park. Once again you don't want to ride the open two lane highways because of the lack of shoulders, traffic, camping vehicles and inexperienced drivers. At least I didn't want to.

So from our campground I rode the Pa'rus trail about 3 miles to the Zion Canyon scenic drive. Then on the limited access road (shuttles and bicyclists only) for the 6.2 mile relatively flat ride to the end of the road at the Temple of Sinawava. Lots of places to stop, bring you lock as you will want to walk some of the trails, perhaps stop for lunch at the beautiful Zion lodge.

I rode this every morning, finding a few kindred souls along the way and enjoyed the shadows of the rising sun on the colorful varied walls of the canyon. Like the Grand Canyon the views change dramatically with the light.

Riding Writers continued

## **RAMRTD—Ride around Mount Ranier in three days**

This is a terrific opportunity in our own backyard.

In October, I joined a few friends in a rather leisurely (by RAMROD standards) ride around Mount Ranier. There were five of us and we took turns driving the sag vehicle that carried our clothing and assorted equipment. Our oldest rider was 75 the youngest 40.

Starting at the fairgrounds in Enumclaw on a misty day we rode the 70 or so miles to Ashford. This was a relatively easy ride, with a few mild ups, and reasonably good shoulders when there was traffic. We passed Orting, Eatonville, Elbe and overnighted in Ashford at the Nisqually Lodge. The next morning we rode the 4 miles to the National Park entrance and started the gentle 6 mile climb to Longmire and then the more challenging 12 miles to Paradise. The day slowly cleared and we were rewarded with wonderful views of the mountains, waterfalls, and the nearby valleys.

After lunch at Paradise we enjoyed the cold but beautiful downhill on Stevens Canyon Road with the 3 mile Backbone ridge climb to the east part entrance. After leaving the park we rode another 8 or 9 miles into Packwood where we stayed the night. There was a mild earthquake that evening only half of us realized what happened.

The next morning we retraced our steps to the park exit and did the 9 mile climb over Cayuse pass once again in the mist of our Washington non tropical rain forest. After cresting the pass we enjoyed the long downhill past Crystal Mountain resort stopping for lunch along the way. This downhill was quite cold and I used every layer I had to stay comfortable. After lunch we cycled the rest of the way to our start in Enumclaw. We had a fabulous time. I think however, we were pushing the envelope a little by going the second weekend in October—we got away with it however. Our total distance including the excursion to Packwood was about 170 miles.

.....Paul Goff

## **Business and Bicycling, November 2006**

How many business trips have you been on where you wished you had brought along your bicycle and could just ride into the sunset, away from the work environment?

Too many for me, so this time, when headed to a software conference in Barcelona, I brought along my bicycle in two suitcases and enough gear to enjoy two weeks of touring as well as a week of commuting and exploring Barcelona. My plan was to tour the week before my conference, stay on the bike and live in one of the Barcelona youth hostels during the conference, and to take off after the conference for another week of exploration. I was encouraged in spite of the advice I got from people here who suggested that Spaniards didn't bicycle on the roads like they do in England and France. I have learned not to be influenced by people who are in the least bit fearful of the unknown.

Well, the three weeks were almost too fascinating and stimulating to be possible with such minimal planning, but minimal planning might have been one of the reasons for the success.

Some limited Internet planning led me to make reservations at a youth hostel, find several pro-bicycling organizations and roughly plot a cycling route from the Pyrenees mountains to the Mediterranean coast. The rest was just discovered along the way, with much learned from people at the youth hostel, bicycling groups and tourist offices.

It's my opinion that it's too easy today to schedule one's self out of adventure, so I did not try to plan any more than that. I planned as I went, talked to people everywhere and changed my direction as I got new ideas. Other than a three-hour organized commercial bike tour in Barcelona, which was great, I stayed away from being told where to go and what to do by tour operators. Besides, in November, you won't find many tour operators doing any cycling.

The bicycle containers (even if you have to pay to ship your bike, it is a very small expense in exchange for the freedom you have to travel) stayed in the youth hostel's storage during the three weeks. I used their storeroom to assemble and disassemble the bike.

Using the handlebar-mounted GPS with uploaded maps, I never was lost and never bought a map. I used the free maps from the tourist offices for most purposes anyway. Cycling with traffic in Barcelona was no problem when waypoints were set. All I

looked for periodically was a directional arrow and my distance remaining to the destination waypoint.

In November, it seems, there were no American tourists except me, which was the greatest surprise and made for the best company. Not that I dislike my own kind, but how much richer the experience when there's nobody around who can speak English!

On the bicycle, I could smell the cooking and see where people were stopping to have lunch or dinner, so I just followed my nose during the bicycling daylight hours, and the same while walking at night. Even in the winter, dinner in Spain doesn't start before 8 PM. Spain and France have the most delicious wines, cheese and food in general. One can't go hungry even during non-tourist season where many coastal restaurants and hotels were closed.

I stopped at the many Tourist Information offices in small towns where I wanted to stay the night. Where the tourist offices were closed, much the same information could be found at a hotel with a friendly receptionist. Accommodations were no more costly, and often much cheaper, than locally. The best part is that everybody seemed to think that I as a bicyclist was a fellow traveler, and I never once felt myself to be considered as second-class citizen, on the road or walking the bike.

So, after about five hundred miles of exploring urban and rural Spain, and Catalonian France, I will not leave the trusted bike at home ever again, and will jump at making the most of any future foreign business trips by planning on sandwiching them with self-discovered bicycle touring!

.....Mark Wheatley, December 2006



**Mark Wheatley, On the Road in Spain**

# BELLINGHAM BICYCLE-PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting summary— October 24, 2006

## Updates:

1. Whatcom Community College Issue of the Year Committee contacted her about alternative transportation. WCC is difficult to get to via bicycle or walking and has abundant free parking, so alternative transportation other than carpooling or transit is difficult.
2. Silver Beach Neighborhood Association contacted her about concerns for Silver Beach Elementary student safety during drop-off and pick-up times. BPAC recommended working with the school community to increase the number of students walking, biking, carpooling, or riding the bus to school.

## Public Works:

1. The City published a new brochure about controlling vegetation. Of interest to the BPAC are the sections about preventing vegetation from limiting sight distance or infringing on sidewalks or curbs.
2. It was reported there is sidewalk misalignment in front of Eclipse Bookstore in Fairhaven. The City offered to correct the sidewalk at the City's expense. The owner of Eclipse Bookstore refused the City's offer and filed an injunction to prevent the City from fixing the sidewalk.
3. The City is reviewing design plans for the Northwest Avenue Pedestrian and Bike Improvement Project
4. Ian Lockwood, P.E., Senior Transportation Engineer with Glatting Jackson (Dan Burden is part of this firm as well), will be in Bellingham November 7th through 9th to work with City and Port staff on designing streets for multi-modal transportation.

## Safe Routes to School:

The City partnered with Whatcom County Health Department to apply for a Safe Routes to School grant for Birchwood Elementary and Shuksan Middle schools. The project would include engineering improvements at the intersection of McLeod and Northwest Avenue, pedestrian and bicycle safety education, community school zone safety awareness campaign, and increased school zone enforcement.

**Greenways Advisory Committee:** There will be three public outreach presentations planned for Greenways III funding.

## Arts District and Flora Street PlaceMaking Project:

Tara Sundin, Project Manager for the Arts District & Flora Street - Making Places for People project, made a presentation and requested BPAC input for design considerations. The project will provide improvements to the publicly owned property (sidewalks, streets, and related areas) within the Arts District of downtown Bellingham. BPAC recommended covered bicycle parking along Flora and Grand Streets. The BPAC also recommended that Flora and Commercial Streets have narrow lanes (i.e., no separate bike lanes) to promote slower traffic and wider sidewalks.

