



MID-VALLEY BICYCLE CLUB SPOKESMAN

January 2008

Some riders of tandems profess that riding together increases the pleasure of their marriage, while others fear being able to keep their balance. "They say that tandems can make or break a marriage. Others say that, whichever direction your marriage is headed, a tandem will get you there quicker!" For tandem riding to be a pleasure, as a random club survey shows, tandem riders have reflected on at least three areas: togetherness, the machine, and communication.

Up front
by Jim Gau, President & Maxine Eckes

As reported by several tandem riders, couples often begin riding a tandem because one rider is much stronger than the other and riding a tandem allows them to ride together. For **togetherness** to happen, the couple, given a little time, establishes their riding identity. They agree on the speed and distance they are comfortable with. If the captain wants the stoker to ride, the captain, who is most likely the stronger rider, will mirror the stoker's stroke and they find harmony in working to-

But you'll look sweet, upon the seat, of a bicycle built for two.



gether. They learn to ride at their own pace, regardless of who passes them or whom they pass, unless they choose to slow down and chat or to enjoy landscapes, houses and scenery. Likewise, the captain mirrors the stoker's capacity for distance. If the captain needs to blow off

energy, the captain will have to take care of that at another time and just enjoy the pleasures of being with the stoker.

The machine. Fitting an individual bike to a rider is difficult, but fitting a tandem to two riders is even more difficult. Since the stoker's is the bumpier position, the stoker may have to try many seats. Then choices need to be made about installing a torsion post on the stoker's seat, a flexible rubber cushioned mountain bike post or a cantilevered seat. And pedals—is the stoker more comfortable with platform, clips, or clip-less pedals? The stoker's comfort, not efficiency, is the issue. The riders pay special attention to the size of the chain rings, especially if they have had to walk up some hills. Maybe they change a twenty-eight toothed granny for a twenty-six or twenty-four. This can make their bike seem like a new bike when climbing. Some captains who are bike mechanics, professional or by interest, make other technical changes, which this poor bloke can't understand, even when someone else makes the changes!

Communication. Especially in the beginning, the captain may suggest routes and then with the stoker works out accommodations. The captain indicates turns, road obstacles and birms and is sure to give wide birth

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on turns, as the tandem is a long bike. If the stoker has a suggestion, like whether to increase or decrease pedal rpms or which chain ring to be on, the captain, if possible, changes without discussion. Many tandem riders have gone to a speaker/listener system like "tandem talk" which allows each to hear the other in wind and traffic and enables them to chat easily. Riders learn to be sensitive to their partner through the pedals, and sometimes both know simultaneously when to stand together

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and when to return to the sitting position.

Stokers, for their part, comment on having limited views. They get to know their captain's back and head well, but they soon learn to enjoy the scenery to the right or left. The plus is being able to relax and "leave the driving to the captain." Some even confess to not working to their full capacity. Onlookers often accuse them of that to the Captain! Also the stoker doesn't always have to have both hands (or either hand) on the bars. In cold weather, tucking them in a jacket pocket is a plus. Another minus is not being able to stop when one wants to, especially if the captain doesn't like to stop. A plus, for those with children, is having one's child as stoker. However, one ten-year old figured out how to steer the tandem from the back by leaning. Pretty scary!

Among the funniest or most surprising experiences reported were:

- discovering that most of the other stokers in a tour group were under 12 years old
- going through a lot of water while making a turn and landing on their behinds
- seeing the delighted faces of onlookers who haven't seen a tandem before
- loading the tandem easily onto a train
- learning how to fall together (!)
- leaving the disc brake on going up hill, much to the chagrin of the captain. But, it was proof that it worked

If you haven't tried a tandem, do so when you get a chance. It's a challenge and a joy for a relationship.

Contributors to this article were: Lloyd & Grace Swanson, Rann & Doreen Millar; Bettina Schempff; Vladimer Baicher & Joellen Jarvi; Lori Wilson; Jim Gau & Maxine Eckes.

Advocacy

Walt Prichard

I hope you have all had a good holiday and have eaten way too much. We should all start out the New Year equal. I may be a little too equal if you know what I mean. The New Year looks a whole lot like the last one. The 2nd of January planning commission meeting will look at a variance for 3-foot sidewalks instead of the 5 ft required by code. Yes, I already testified on that one but it almost slipped by. I, or we, just need to be vigilant in watching new development proposals. This may seem pretty minor but remember it is a permanent structure we have to live with. Try pushing a wheelchair past a stroller or jogger or kids learning to ride their bicycle on a 3 ft sidewalk. I am sure that most of this stuff comes up from folks that are couch potatoes and don't walk or jog or bike. They only go outside to get the newspaper.

In recent months I have seen little sayings about picking up a piece of trash and putting it in a container on your next ride. If everyone did that this would be a much cleaner place to live in. If one person does this in front of a group it generally gets everyone in the act. Try it! It makes you feel good.

I seldom make resolutions but try to do better all the time. So this next year I am going give it a name. RAN-DOM ACTS OF KINDNESS -- I know it isn't very original but my goal is to pump up someone's flat tires every week as a means of getting them to ride their bike. I have put a tire pump in my truck and hope you will help me find victims of flat tires. Just point them out and I will provide the (hot) air.

For the new year try to "keep the rubber side **down**" and a "warm wind at your back".

Eat Too Much?

"Dieticians tell us that preventing weight gain is far easier than weight loss."—American Dietetic Association

Thanks to Our Contributors

Lloyd Swanson, Editor

A grateful thanks to all who have contributed articles this past year. First the regular contributors – our President Jim Gau (previously, Larry Thurber); our Advocate, Walt Prichard; our poet, Charles Kuttner, aka Max Headwind; our Secretary, Becky Steinmetz (previously Rick Riper); and our Ride Captains, Lyle Dalton and Henry McCarthy.

Then all of you who send in notices about upcoming events. And lastly, those who have written up their biking adventures and other articles of interest. This year they have included Joellen Jarvi, Nancy Meitle, Ann Asbell, Jerry Rooney, George Shaw, Denny Hedges, Ken Ash, Becky Steinmetz, Enrique Semadeni, Bill Ferry and Jimmy Falkner. These 11 people contributed 15 articles. Thank you.

Now I realize that several others have sent me articles that haven't been published yet. I'm simply waiting for the right space at the right time (BTW, my stash is running low—I need some more!). I think all of these articles, as well as the regular contributors, are the lifeblood of the newsletter; without them it would simply be a ride sheet.

Bikes & The Law: Accident Insurance For Bicyclists

Ray Thomas

Oregon bicyclists who are also car owners pay for insurance coverage on their automobiles that also covers their families while riding bicycles. A few bicyclists realize that automobile insurance also covers bicyclists and pedestrians and that, when an accident happens, all available resources must be used to pay for the consequences. Previous articles have discussed the various types of Oregon automobile insurance; see "Accidents and Insurance" on the Swanson, Thomas & Coon website under "Bicycle and Skate Law." The purpose of this article is to discuss insurance options for bicyclists under Oregon law that will pay for a potentially catastrophic accident involving collision with a motor vehicle.

The Car-free Life Some bicyclists have sworn off motor vehicles entirely and use bicycles as their sole means of transportation. While this decision is commendable in making a lifestyle choice that eases traffic congestion and pollution while promoting physical vitality, the carless life does eliminate many insurance options. When a car-free bicyclist, who has no family household member or house-mate listing the bicyclist as a named insured on an automobile insurance policy, is involved in an accident on a bicycle, then the injured rider must make any claim for damages against the insurance of the other person involved in the collision. It is an unfortunate fact that many drivers who cause the most serious accidents have no liability insurance whatsoever. While driving without insurance is illegal under Oregon law, and is legal cause for a drivers license suspension, if a bicyclist is hurt by a negligent driver without insurance, then

Max Headwind

Consumerism

In the long dark days, the catalogs arrive
with shiny new bikes that tempt the eye
and the wallet, the body feeling feet
on new pedals on a new chain

But in reality, going up hills
it's the same old body
or really, an older one
and what I really need
and miss and want

is to find and make the time I used to
to ride those same roads
with my same friends
or even new roads and new friends

there may be no insurance coverage whatsoever to pay for medical costs and other damages. Of course, individual health insurance policies or health maintenance organization programs may be available to pay medical expenses separate and apart from some type of accident coverage. However, these policies, like stand-alone disability policies, provide coverage regardless of the cause of injury or disability and cannot be used to reimburse for damages for pain and suffering, impairment of earning capacity and property damage. While a bicyclist can piece together a patchwork of health and disability insurance to cover some accident related costs, only a policy associated with paying damages for bodily injury claims will fully compensate a bicyclist seriously injured due to the fault of a motorist.

Insurance for Bicyclists Without Cars It has been frustrating for bicyclists without cars to attempt to obtain coverage for potential injuries. No companies presently offer bodily insurance for bicyclists without automobile policies. Bicyclist's advocates have attempted to fill this void in a number of ways. The most recent effort has been undertaken by the League of American Bicyclists in order to provide insurance benefits to members.

Non-traditional insurance brokers have explored these potential products, but it has been difficult to quantify the numbers of potential purchasers and the scope of the costs on the risks. Jeff Lang of Gale's Creek Insurance in Portland has met with the national leadership of the League of American Bicyclists to explore alternative coverages. He

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reports that obtaining accurate data on how many bicyclists ride who do not also have applicable car insurance is difficult and that there is little information available to the public about the damages level associated with the types of accidents that would be covered under "bicycle only" insurance. While he has been successful in creating non-traditional insurance products that have been turned into viable offerings (such as coverage for participants in golf tournaments), so far he has not been successful in assembling a package for bicyclists.

The League of American Bicyclists has recently offered a type of bicycle insurance coverage that is a step in the right direction, but is limited to roadside service for members with bicycle break-downs. They do this through the Better World Bicycle Club, which acts as a broker for auto insurance for League of American Bicyclists members but it still only sells the same insurance products traditionally available to motorists.

How to Obtain Bicycle Insurance Coverage At the present time in Oregon, one way to obtain accident insurance for a bicyclist is to obtain a drivers license and buy an inexpensive car. If a person were to buy a 1972 Chevrolet Nova for \$350 (in other words, buying a very cheap car, as long as the car is not a "performance" muscle-car), then the Oregon mandatory insurance amount for liability coverage is \$25,000, which carries a corresponding coverage for Under-Insured Motorist coverage (UIM) and Uninsured Motorist coverage (UM) of \$25,000. Since a person cannot buy UM/UIM coverage in an amount greater than his or her liability coverage, the person who wants to obtain a higher level of protection must pay to increase both coverages. Fortunately, higher levels of insurance for persons with a safe driving record is usually not expensive, particularly where the underlying automobile is considered a low-risk vehicle. If a person wants to use the medical benefits and wage-loss provision of

Personal Injury Protection, which is no-fault, then higher coverage can also be obtained at a reasonable cost in Oregon.

While it may seem to be a bizarre solution and a gigantic step backwards for a bicycle zealot to have to buy a car in order to protect themselves from a catastrophic accident caused by a uninsured motorist, it is a possible solution. Fortunately, the costs associated with higher levels of coverage is quite reasonable relative to the cost of the first \$25,000 of insurance. For example, one of the staffers at Gale's Creek Insurance (which also serves as the broker for the League Of American Bicyclists Better World Club car insurance offerings) related that a \$250,000 automobile policy coupled with 250,000 UM/UIM policy on a low-risk car would cost approximately \$500 per year, a relatively modest cost for the ability to make a claim against one's own insurance policy for damage if a serious accident is caused by an uninsured motorist.

In addition, additional coverage can be obtained for a relatively modest price if a bicyclist is interested in insuring both car and home with the same company because this creates the opportunity for purchase of an excess personal umbrella/liability policy for coverage amounts up to \$1,000,000 or more. These excess coverage policies include the typical liability insurance coverage included in many homeowners policies and also contain an option for purchase of an UM/UIM policy that "stacks", or is excess above the auto policy. In the situation described above the excess UM/UIM policy could be placed on top of the car policy for \$200 more per year for total coverage of \$1,000,000. Gale's Creek Insurance reports that excess umbrella policies can also be purchased in conjunction with renters insurance so that home ownership is not necessary so long as associated autos are covered through the same company.

Why Have Insurance? While auto insurance companies have done a fair job (out of economic self-interest)

in calculating the accident frequency for automobile usage, there are no accurate figures for bicyclists. One rule of thumb frequently mentioned is that a high-mileage bicyclist is likely to get into an accident about every seven years which involves some personal injury. While most cases probably only involve a scraped knee or elbow, when motor vehicles are added to the traffic equation on the street, experienced riders know that collisions with cars can have catastrophic consequences. Though none of us in the bicycle advocacy community like to dwell on risks associated with transporting ourselves without a protective steel exoskeleton, nevertheless it is important to think about the burden placed upon our family and friends if we were to get in a serious accident caused by some idiot driver who cannot pay for our damages. If we can buy insurance which covers us and our family members on their bicycles, as well as any owned automobiles (including liability for our own driving mistakes and homeowners liability), for a cost of less than \$1000 per year, then it begins to sound like a pretty good investment.

Sometimes, in bike safety classes I tell people that the reason increasingly large amounts of coverage are a better deal than minimal amounts of coverage is that people who buy a lot of insurance never seem to be the ones to get hurt. If large insurance limits are indeed a talisman against a bad accident, so be it. As a bike lawyer, it is one of the worst experiences imaginable to investigate a client's serious accident, learn the bicyclist was doing everything right, but then the motorist who caused the accident has no insurance, and the bicyclist, because he or she does not own a car, has no coverage whatsoever to pay for medical bills and damages.

What Does the Future Hold? Jeff Lang at Gale's Creek Insurance is determined to work with the League of American Bicyclists to devise a collection of figures to provide accurate risk and cost information to insurance un-

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MVBC EVENT CALENDAR: January/February 2008

Saturday rides meet at Circle Blvd. **BEANERY**. Sign up roster is available until ten minutes past the hour. Rides begin at fifteen minutes past the hour. An ANSI/SNELL approved helmet is required. Recommended equipment: Frame pump, spare inner tube, patch kit, minor adjustment tools, full water bottle, and clothing to fit the climate because we ride rain, or shine. Because of the range of abilities, rides usually break into groups riding at different paces. Group sizes and abilities vary depending on who shows up. Ride Captain: Mark Newsome. 10 am Ride Leader: Jerry Rooney 752-6588

Show and go rides start at 10:00 am at Osborn Aquatic Center

January 1, 2008, Thursday, 9 am: Long Ride Meet at OAC: Annual News Year's Day Ride to Breakfast in Albany

- via Independence Hwy, 32 miles (B110)E

January 5, Saturday, 9 am: Monmouth or Suver Wet and windy! It's that time of year!

- Long Ride: Independence Hwy to Monmouth back via Hwy 99. 44 miles (B270)A
- Short Ride: Independence Hwy to Suver back via Hwy 99. 31 miles (B120)A

January 12, Saturday, 9 am: Harrisburg or Decker to Philomath

- Long Ride: Bellfountain Road to Harrisburg back via Peoria Rd 61 miles (B480)C
- Short Ride: Bellfountain Road to Decker Road back via Philomath 35 miles (B220)C

January 19, Saturday, 9 am: Tour of Plainville or Saddle Butte

- Long Ride: Shedd to Lebanon back via Tangent. 59 miles (A420)D
- Short Ride: Shedd to Saddle Butte back via 7-Mile/Tangent. 37 miles (A230)D

January 26, Saturday, 9 am: Kings Valley Store or Decker Road

- Long Ride: Philomath to Kings Valley back via Airlie/99W. 46 Miles (B280)B
- Short Ride: Philomath to Decker Road back via Bellfountain Road. 33 miles (B170)B

February 2, Saturday, 9 am: Think of Spring as you battle those headwinds!

- Long Ride: Shedd to Lebanon back via Tangent. 52 miles (A-340)
- Short Ride: Harvest Drive to Shedd back via Tangent. 34 miles (A-210)

February 9, Saturday, 9 am: Might be wet, will be cold.

- Long Ride: Bellfountain Road to Bellfountain back the same route. 40 miles (B-240)
- Short Ride: Bellfountain Road to Peterson Road back via Philomath (bakery stop optional). 29 miles (B-090)

February 16, Saturday, 9 am: Might be cold, will be wet.

- Long Ride: Independence Hwy to Monmouth back via Hwy 99. 44 miles (B-270)
- Short Ride: Independence Hwy to Suver back via Hwy 99. 31 miles (B-120)

February 23, Saturday, 9 am: Big winds today, you guess from where.

- Long Ride: Philomath to Kings Valley back via Airlie. 46 Miles (B280)
- Short Ride: Philomath to Decker Road back via Bellfountain Road. 33 miles (B170)

Announcements: (Note that the rides below are "Show & Go" style.)

- No host goodies and banter at Circle Blvd. Beanery half an hour before the Saturday rides. Please, only go inside if you plan to buy something.
- Every Tuesday/Thursday at 5:15 pm: Meet at the Aquatic Center for a moderate to fast-paced hammerfest. Bring your own body bag.
- Every Wednesday at 9:30 am: Meet near Camp Adair Road -- first gravel parking lot east of Hwy 99W. Ride to Independence/Monmouth at an easy to moderate pace. Weekly except when nobody shows up. Walt Prichard 752-6231. Counts for club mileage if somebody remembers to record it.

It has been a pleasure taking care of your bicycle needs. We really appreciate your continued support. We wish you a relaxed Christmas season and a meaningful year 2008 !! Thank you again !

Enrique Semadeni for Corvallis Cyclery



"Cycling" by Frank Patterson. June 1920

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derwriters in order to provide insurance for folks who depend exclusively on the bicycle for transportation. In Oregon alone, there would be many potential customers for such an insurance product. However, in the meantime, we are aware of no coverage currently available that affords the equivalent of UM/UIM motorist coverage for bicyclists who have no motor vehicle. The League of American Bicyclists

is keen to offer its members some type of accident coverage, but to date the market has not been tapped. In the meantime, the only practical alternative is to become a named insured on a motor vehicle and then raise the insurance limits to provide a reasonable level of coverage. While it is ironic that safety minded and risk averse bicyclists who have weaned themselves from car ownership may go back to owning a car just to be insured against idiot drivers, until we find an insurance com-

pany willing to underwrite this type of coverage, there are few alternatives for bicyclists. Health insurance coverage and disability coverage do provide some protection for folks without automobiles to take the sting out of an accident, but the coverage is limited to medical costs and wage loss.

Finally, for careful bicyclists who already own cars, it is important to remember that existing automobile coverage in Oregon includes PIP and UM/UIM insurance while on their bicycles and that it is probably a wise investment to substantially increase coverage amounts "just in case."

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A Multi-Modal Trip to Portland

An Easy and Inexpensive Mini-Vacation

Becky Steinmetz

When the wintry gray and wet days arrive, I find my vacation planning ideas begin to take form. Just a little bit of time and access to the internet is all it takes to plan a *unique* trip to....Portland! Now if you love bicycles, trains, and meeting folks from all over the world, well read on and see how you too can do it AND for not much money.

Our trip began with the desire to go to the Portland Art Museum and see the Egyptian exhibit, **The Quest for Immortality: Treasures of Ancient Egypt**. With the exhibit only running for a short limited time meant either just driving our auto up to Portland for the day OR*What about taking the train?* With the Oregon winter days, you have a 50% chance that it will be *dry* so..... *Why not pedal to the train station?* Lastly*Where should we stay?* Let's try to keep it on the financial skinny side of things, as this leaves a few more dollars to spend eating at several of the many wonderful Portland cafes. *Did you know that Portland has a very nice downtown hostel with easy access to*

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the train station? It is called the NW Portland International Hostel and Guesthouse. If we stay at the hostel, we are close to the MAX light rail and buses around the downtown Pearl District and they are FREE. Gosh darn, let's book this trip and do it now!

Thursday morning, February 28th found the two of us pedaling to the Albany train station with overcast, but dry skies. We arrived in plenty of time for the 9:43 am train north to Portland, arriving at 11:35 am; it is approximately a one hour pedal to the train station from Corvallis. The newly remodeled Albany depot is sure beautiful and quite an improvement from the old station face it used to have. Check-in to pick up our tickets was easy and quick, which left us with plenty of time to fold our Bike Fridays up and put them in their bags, wander around taking some pictures of the depot, and enjoy the use of the remodeled facilities. *When you go to the depot make sure and check out the large photo in the lobby of the Albany Bicycle Club, c.1888!*

Once one finds their seat on the train and looks out the window at the

We arrived at the Portland train station with plenty of time to get off, set up the bikes with panniers for the easy 12-block pedal to the hostel. The International Hostel is located on the corner of NW 18th and NW Glisan. This hostel is a newly remodeled Victorian home that has both dorm rooms and private rooms for rent. We opted for a private room that was clean, simply furnished, quiet, and right next to the loo located in the hallway. *When was the last time you were able to chat with folks from South Africa, Australia, Japan and Canada while cooking and socializing in the kitchen area?* Hostels give one the opportunity to meet a wide range of friendly travelers from distant places... and of all ages; ages of folks we met at the hostel ranged from in their 20's to 70's!

It rained steadily all day Friday, which worked out okay as we had plans to walk and use the MAX all day without having to pedal around all the torn up streets and/or deal with heavy auto traffic. The MAX is quick and easy to use and stops are frequent. It was a kick for us rural folks to realize how the big city life of Portland that seems so chaotic to the outsider is really very organized and friendly. When you go to Portland make sure and head to NW 21st and NW 23rd Streets in the evening. The streets are lined with twinkling lights and offer an incredible number of international cuisine cafes and diners to pick and choose from. *Just thinking about these cafes still makes my mouth water.*

Saturday, March 3 was our return day and there was a cool and heavy mist falling when we loaded our panniers on the bikes. With the southbound train departing at 2:25 pm, we had plenty of time to pedal the Riverwalk loop, crossing the Willamette River twice via the Steel and Hawthorne Bridges. This loop definitely rates high on my list of loops one has

to pedal and experience! (For families with kids, please consider the bicycle friendliness of the Riverwalk as it allows for easy access to OMSI. *I can only begin to imagine a child sharing his/her train and Portland adventure with other kids at school.*) There was so much more we wanted to explore on our bicycles around Portland, but with the cool and damp weather of the morning we both agreed that we will just have to come back another time and explore the plethora of bicycle friendly roadways and pathways that Portland is known for.

We boarded the train south for home--it was only 10 minutes late--and after quickly grabbing a couple seats, headed to the dining car for a late lunch before arriving in Albany on time at 4:10 pm. The skies were clear and warm when we departed the train. We both found the late afternoon quiet pedal home on rural roads to be very relaxing and gave us each personal time to reminisce about what we had experienced and seen over the last few days. To arrive home without having the post-long drive letdown, left us both feeling refreshed and relaxed as if we had been gone much longer than just three days.

Now some information for planning YOUR bike/train trip to Portland: As many of you know, Amtrak makes it easy to reserve your trip online, just go to www.amtrak.com. After reserving your passage for the train, one just has to arrive 30 minutes before departure to pick up your tickets. The train is fun, easy and cheap....cost for two of us roundtrip, \$54. There is no cost to carry folding bikes on board. Regular upright bikes cost \$5/bike to have them hung on a hook in the baggage car (Unfortunately recumbents and tandems have to be boxed). The NW Portland International Hostel and Guesthouse, www.2oregonhostels.com, is located at 425 NW 18th/NW Glisan. For two people/two nights in a private room was \$100 (this included the 12.5% lodging tax + \$3/person/night

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scenery, you quickly get lulled by the rocking of the train into a relaxed and carefree attitude of travel without the worry of busy and sometimes tense highway driving. Of course it is always entertaining to people-watch on the train and to start up conversations with folks that you might never meet at any other time.

OUR RIDE CAPTAIN REPORTS

LARRY THURBER

Saturday total for December was 1,737 miles. Adding the Wednesday ride total of 855 miles gives us a grand total of 2,592 miles ridden by 74 riders for this month. We have year to date total of 110,544 miles.

Mileage leaders for December (includes Wednesday) were **Lloyd Swanson**, 180; **Jim Gau**, 133; **Vladimir Baicher**, 130; **Joellen Jarvi**, 130; **Walt Prichard**, 123.

We had 1 new rider this month, welcome to **Pablo Feliz**.

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nonmember hostel fee). It has a fully stocked kitchen to cook and store food in, and the front office has an abundance of brochures and *personal* suggestions of local sights to see and activities to check out. AAA offers a great [Portland About Town/Downtown Portland Map](#) and make sure to pick up a free [Portland Visitor's Map](#) at the train station, hostel or Powell's Books. For cycling information/maps, contact the Portland Parks and Recreation, www.PortlandParks.org, and they will send you a [Portland By Bicycle](#) map and the Springwater Corridor brochure/map...all for FREE. Also consider contacting City of Portland, Office of Transportation, www.gettingaroundportland.org, (a great web site for cycling and public transportation route information) for a small and great fold-out bicycle map, along with brochures...all of these are also FREE!

I hope you will step out of the norm and give this kind of trip a try. You won't regret it, cost is minimal, it is an easy do-it-yourself kind of vacation, and you will feel good knowing that you traveled both easily and comfortably without the use of an automobile or plane. *Oh, BTW, the art exhibit at the Portland Art Museum was exquisite and I hope you got to see it before it left!*

Mike's Tip of the Month

Mike Viles

On a recent ride I noticed a number of riders shaking their hands out while riding which gave me the idea for some tips on hand comfort. I didn't used to

have problems with numb hands until I got Shimano brake lever/shifters. Those levers have a different shape than the Campy Ergo levers that I have not had much problem with. I think I made over 20 adjustments until I found an acceptable position.

- The first thing I would try is riding without bike gloves. No matter how much adjusting you do, hand numbness can be related to poorly placed padding in a glove. The gloves that work best for me on Shimano brake levers have minimal padding. Since Shimano levers are wider, padding puts more pressure on sensitive parts of my hands. If your hands feel better without gloves, you should try a different glove with less padding.
- The second thing to do is to make sure your saddle isn't tilted down in the front such that you are constantly pushing yourself back on your saddle. This can cause a lot of pressure on your hands. I usually try to adjust my saddle so the nose is relatively flat. If that doesn't solve the problem, try raising your stem. Sometimes a shorter stem or higher stem is the only way to get the hand relief you need. If you have a threadless headset you may be able to flip the stem to raise your handlebars.
- If those don't work, try rotating your handlebars up to lessen the angle of the top of your bars. I try to make sure my hands are in a natural position on the top of the brake levers. Try to keep your wrist from cocking up or down from its natural position. This will help spread out the pressure on your hand and reduce pressure concentrated on the front or rear of your hand.
- If these adjustments don't work experiment with moving your brake levers up or down on the bend of your handlebar. If both hands are going numb, experiment with moving the brake lever on one side up and the other side down a few millimeters to see if one works better than the other. If only one hand goes numb adjust only that side. If you have one arm longer than another you may need to position the brake lever differently on one side of your handlebars than the other.
- Often times it only takes a very small adjustment to make a huge difference in comfort. A large adjustment is a couple of millimeters for me. Be patient. Make only one adjustment at a time so you

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- Club Information -

The Mid-Valley Bicycle Club is a recreational touring club for cyclists of all ages. We ride rain or shine! Helmets are required for all riders. Social and educational meetings are held regularly. Check this Newsletter or our website at www.mvbc.com for current information.

I (We) want to join the Mid-Valley Bicycle Club. Enclosed are annual dues as checked below.

Membership: \$20.00 Individual or \$25.00 Family

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Family member names: _____ Email: _____

Please check here if you wish to be added to the MVBC-announce list (MVBC-announce is a monitored email list which screens for spam.)

In consideration of my application, I hereby, for myself, my executors and administrators, waive and release any and all rights and claims for damages I may have against the Mid-Valley Bicycle Club, its officers, and members, prior to, during, and after my membership or association with the club or any event. I agree to accept all rules and regulations of the club.

Signature(s): _____

Date: _____ Signature of parent or guardian if under 18: _____

Send to: MID-VALLEY BICYCLE CLUB, P.O. Box 1373, Corvallis, OR 97339-1373

Classified—For Sale

Kreitler Challenger Rollers for indoor cycling \$375 includes 4.5" rollers, headwind, and forkstand (Value is \$600 new). Fantastic condition, Located in Corvallis

Please call Melora 753-1819

Trek 5000—Red All Carbon Fiber Road Bike

Bought new in July 2001 and lovingly cared for by Judy at home and Danny at Corvallis Cyclery. Ridden just under 5000 miles. Smaller frame. \$600. Would consider a mountain bike in trade.

Judy Rooney; 752-6588; jeroon@peak.org

(Continued from page 8)

know which ones are good and which are not. Always mark your starting point with tape or a marking pen so you have a reference point to compare to. This may seem like a lot of information to digest but finding your sweet spots are the key to a comfortable ride.

From The Wheel Truth, November 2007



Benton County Courthouse at Christmas—photo by Henry McCarthy

MID-VALLEY BICYCLE CLUB
P.O. Box 1373
CORVALLIS, OR 97339-1373

Address Service Requested

Meetings & Announcements

Future Events

June 21-29 - MVBC Loop Tour I
July 3-6 - NWTR, McMinnville,
www.nwtr.org/2008/
July 26-August 3 - MVBC Loop Tour II
August 1-3 - Cycle Oregon Weekend
Sept 6-13 - Cycle Oregon, www.cycleoregon.com/

General Meeting

Monday, January 21, 7 pm at Osborn Aquatic Center
Dave Miller will share his pictures and experiences of his cross-country bike ride to Iowa and then his ride in RAGBRAI.

License Plates

Beginning January 2, for an extra \$10 bucks (for 2 years) you can get a 'Share the Road' license plate for passenger cars. Proceeds go to BTA and Cycle Oregon. Go to <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/DMV/vehicle/platenonprof.shtml#share>



IMPORTANT SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Submit articles, stories and photos for the February MVBC Spokesman no later than January 28.
Please send this material to the editor in Word format:

Lloydvswanson@comcast.net