

MID-VALLEY BICYCLE CLUB SPOKESMAN

May 2008

Today is Saturday, April 19th. Instead of riding today, I decided to work on this article.

A few sunspots almost seduced me into riding, but I made a good choice as it is cold, and has been alternately raining, hailing, and snowing. This article on changing a flat tire is written with the expert advice of **Rann Millar and Nancy Meitle**.

You may have experienced riding happily along when suddenly it feels like you are going up a 10% grade. **-Flat tire!** Frequently, one hears “oh, *#**!” or something milder. But wait! Nancy can help set the tone for us: “The most important thing about changing a tire is attitude. I have enjoyed changing many tires just because it forced me to stop and enjoy where I was. We don’t bike because we are in a hurry. We don’t need to change a tire in a hurry.”

Nancy continues, “I remember one time in the Redwoods. I could not find a place to get off the road and out of traffic. I spotted a very large Redwood stump just off the road and big enough to lay my bike down on. I sat with my legs hanging over the edge of the stump and looking into the forest. I took a little red book out of my bike bag and read how to change a flat. That was more than 30 years ago!”

Now we are ready for technique. Rann suggests:

- Because rear flats are more difficult to change, this

Up front

by *Jim Gau, President*

will be the focus. For rear flats, put the chain on the smallest gear of the rear cassette and the smallest chain ring of the crankset before removing the wheel from the frame.

- Release the brake. Open the quick release. Give the tire a whack downward to drive it out of the drop-outs.
- With the rear wheel removed, lean the bike upright against a support or have someone hold it until the flat is fixed or lay it down with the dérailleur up. [Some riders will turn the frame upside down.]
- Squeeze as much of the air as possible out of the tube before attempting tire removal. Any residual air will make getting the tire bead over the rim difficult.
- Most rear wheels are dished so that the right side spokes are in greater tension than the left side. So remove or replace tires on cassette side of the wheel.
- Beginning with the nozzle, squeeze the tire and deflated tube into the deepest part of the rim. At the opposite side of the tire, you may be able to work the bead over the rim.
- If you cannot get the bead over the rim, you may have to use a lever or two. Be careful not to insert the levers too far as you may pinch the tube and cause the tube to leak later in another place.
- As you pull the tube out of the tire, do not remove the valve from the rim. This may enable you to locate the leak in the tire and the tube.
- With the tube out of the tire, run your hand around the inside of the tire before inserting a new or patched tube. A glass shard or a tack or even a blackberry thorn may still be in the tire.
- When putting the tube in the tire, put two or three strokes of air in the tube before inserting it in the tire. This helps it fit in better without pinching.

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- Put the logo or other writing of the tire at the stem. This will make it easier to locate the puncture point the next time you get a flat.
- When putting the tire and good tube back on, reverse the above. Beginning with the nozzle, squeeze the tire and deflated tube into the deepest part of the rim. At the opposite side of the tire, you may be able to work the bead over the rim.
- If you cannot get the bead over the rim, you may have to use a lever or two. Be careful not to insert the levers too far as you may pinch the tube.
- Be sure to look for any tube showing under the bead once both tire and tube are back on the rim. If you don't catch this, soon you'll have another flat.
- To seat the tube in the tire, inflate the tire to medium pressure, release the air and re-inflate.
- Once the flat is repaired, put the wheel into the dropouts and gently pull the dérailleur back to allow the cluster to clear as the wheel slips into the dropouts. Sometimes a little downward pressure will pop the axle right into place.
- A couple of other hints: Carry a boot in your repair kit to cover large holes in the tire. A boot is a piece of sidewall from an old tire or inner tube about 1" x 2-3" long. Place the boot over a hole in the tire and insert the tube. This will prevent the tube from working out the hole causing another flat. If a tire has such a hole, you will probably need to replace the tire before long.
- After putting your spare tube in a baggy and sprinkling it with talc, put it with your repair kit. Though tire quality has improved a great deal, you will still get a flat sometime. Hope it isn't due to negligent maintenance. Hope it doesn't happen when it's cold, raining, hailing, or snowing. But then you could get your cell out and call your spouse or a friend.

2nd Annual Willamette Wine and Wheels—June 28

Joe Wright

We invite you to join in the Second Annual Bicycle Tour of Benton County. Several local wineries and businesses are participating in this charity event to mix our appreciation of our Willamette Valley at a bicycle pace with fine local wines and to support a great cause--SALUD! which provides healthcare to Oregon's seasonal vineyard workers and their families.

Two rides are scheduled to leave Belle Vallee Cellars Saturday, June 28th. The 20-mile ride travels down the bike path through Corvallis and into the countryside, resting at Spindrift Cellars, continuing through Bald Hill and the OSU Campus, and finally ending at the original starting point. The 60-mile ride goes down bike path through Corvallis and on to Bellfountain Rd. to the turnaround point at Broadley Vineyards in Monroe. The ride back follows Old River Rd northbound on the east side of Hwy 99 with another stop at Tye Wine Cellars and back to the original starting point.

Live music, great BBQ and fine wine await at Belle Vallee Cellars and to top it off a TBD cycling movie will be showing @ 5 pm at the Dark-side Cinema--free to all registered riders. See www.willamettewineandwheels.org <<http://www.willamettewineandwheels.org>> for more info. And registration.



Advocacy

Walt Prichard

I sure hope that by the time you get this newsletter the sun has returned. My training has suffered from the cold and rain. Also, I haven't been able to check out all the construction and other interesting things going on in the city. In other words it is pretty boring right now in the wind and wet.

One thing was pretty interesting: I bought a new car in February so I ordered the new Share the Road license plate. Well, it finally got here on April 20. It looks nice and I have had a lot of folks mention it. The letters are not raised so it is flat but much reflectorized. I understand the 1st design was turned down by someone and that this is the resulting design.

Safe Routes to School just got \$600,000 in Portland and several other cities have gotten smaller grants. I am not sure how this all happens but if you are interested the BTA in Portland can help you, and Joe Whinnery (when he gets back) will have some of the details. They are going to change (add) Stop signs and a lot of other signage to define the routes. This should be a fun project and a way to get more kids on bikes.

\$4.00 per gallon gas. It was pretty scary to put gas in the truck last week. I could have gotten a cheap motel room on the coast or ate high on the hog a couple of times. It seems to be out of control but I can do something about it. I can still ride my bike over the hill and around town. In fact all of us can do the same and encourage our neighbors and friends to do the same. Even better we can help folks get going by offering to get their tires pumped up. I firmly believe that flat tires are the biggest reason regular folks don't ride their bikes more. After all it would be great if everyone could ride by the gas stations and exercise their digits (V for victory, Right) and improve their health at the same time.

I have been asked about the riverfront path across the Evanite property. I have heard several rumors but nothing official except it is being delayed. To repeat the rumors is of no advantage to us. Lets cross our fingers and maybe look to the north for a little help.

I would like to take this space to thank the 8 riders who helped clean up Plymouth Road last weekend. It was a wet, cold, miserable day but maybe easier to pick up trash than riding. It took us almost 2 hours and we only had half the garbage as usual. Thanks again, it looks great, and our signs stand proud at each end of the road letting the motoring public that drive on our roads know that bikes do belong and do their share to make a cleaner world. With that thought in mind, **KEEP THE RUBBER SIDE DOWN!**



Max Headwind

Seed Catalogs

When it's icy and stormy in January
I sit on the floor, preferably near a fire
and pore through seed catalogs
deciding which variety of what plant
to grow where

It's not quite the same as being out there,
but it has its own excitement

And in April, rainy and stormy
and having no time to ride
I start getting the emails
and bike store catalogs
and find myself looking at them
not really wanting anything in them
nor even needing anything in them
but imagining where I might ride
and how it might feel

It's not quite the same as being out there,
but it has its own excitement

League of American Bicyclists (LAB) League Cycling Instructors

Susan Christie

Meet Brad Upton and Dan Herford, Corvallis' two newest LAB League Cycling Instructors (LCIs)! Brad and Dan received their certification in February at a LAB seminar sponsored by the City of Eugene.

Brad Upton moved to Corvallis in 1996 from Alabama. He works as a chemical engineer at a small environmental research company, the National Council for Air and Stream Improvement. The company has about 100 employees nationwide, with 16 at its office in Corvallis. A bike commuter since 1997, Brad serves as chair of the Corvallis Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Commission, and is also a member of the Downtown Parking Commission and the Benton County Bicycle Advisory Committee. He recently attended the LAB National Bike Summit (in Washington, D.C.).

Dan Herford, who has worked as a structural engineer for the last 10 years, is in the process of starting Cycle Solutions (www.csbikestowork.com), a bike shop in Corvallis that will specialize in the practical use of bikes, including work bike consulting and mobile repair operations serving employers in the area. A bike commuter himself for 15 years, Dan hopes to provide the infrastructure of resources

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and training to empower people to ride their bikes to work. Becoming an LCI was an important part of Dan's vision for Cycle Solutions. He expects to teach LAB's commuting class as part of the business.

As a prerequisite to the instructor seminar, Brad and Dan had to successfully complete the Road I course (10

taught lesson on how to position correctly at complex intersections and proceed through safely.

As newly certified LCI 3 instructors, Brad and Dan are required to team teach for the first 6 months. They are now formulating a plan for using their training to facilitate safe and effective cycling in Corvallis and the surrounding area.



hours of training: two-thirds in class, one-third on bike). Road I includes the basics of vehicular cycling, emergency maneuvers, and bike maintenance. These two won't soon forget practicing emergency turn maneuvers on a small sloped parking lot, with the rain pouring down!

The instructor seminar was two weeks later. Preston Tyree, LAB's Director of Education, flew in from Austin, Texas, to lead the seminar. He was assisted by four Oregon LCIs, two from Portland, one from Bend, and one from Eugene (Shane Rhodes, who had taught the Road I class). There were 17 students, including Brad and Dan from Corvallis.

Brad and Dan say that the instructor seminar was much more intense than they expected and focused primarily on how to teach LAB materials and how to help people learn to handle a bike correctly. The 20-hour course included a pre-test based on their performance in Road I, lots of reading, and even special assignments outside of class, which included preparing team and solo lesson plans. For their assignment, Brad and Dan prepared a team-

Brad wants to identify desirable audiences, which might include the Police Department, the City Council, local high schools, LBCC, OSU, and the City of Corvallis, and appropriate venues, for example, Corvallis Parks and Rec. He hopes to promote the importance of bicycle transportation to those who have influence on local transportation policy. He says the LAB instructor training helped him clarify

his objectives.

Dan intends for bike education to be one component of his new business. He hopes that the availability of bike education in Corvallis will encourage and enable more people to put their bikes to practical use. He believes that being able to get around on a bike safely and efficiently will be a valuable asset in the face of increasing costs and declining resources, and that bicycling is often the most sensible form of transportation in an urban environment. Dan's advocacy focus is on helping individuals get on their bikes, but he also believes that educating community leaders about bikes as transportation will encourage more balanced transportation and land-use policies.

Dan has reserved www.bikethevalley.net to set up a new website, which he envisions as a collecting point for everything bike related around the mid-valley area, similar to the popular BikePortland.org website run by Jonathan Maus. To raise awareness about bike transportation in the business community, Brad is thinking of developing a card for cyclists to present to managers when they visit local

businesses. Brad and Dan are both very interested in working with MVBC to develop ways to use their training. All ideas are welcome!

In addition to its instructor seminars and Road I and II courses, LAB offers classes in group riding and bicycle commuting, as well as courses for motorists.



Biking in Tuscany

Kay Semadeni

Tuscany—what does the word bring to mind? Verdant hills, olive trees, grapes, wine, good food? That's what we experienced when we biked there in September of 2006—except that the verdant hills were yellow and brown since it was fall. Lloyd and Grace Swanson wanted to bike with Enrique and me in Italy, and Lloyd began to do some research. At one of our first meetings to decide where, when and other small details, he said that the most important suggestion he'd read so far was that there were three things to remember when planning a trip: 1) don't over plan 2) don't over plan and 3) don't over plan! Enrique and I were very happy to hear that since that's basically the way we always travel: we have a general idea of where we're going, reserve the first couple of nights in the town we arrive in so as not to have to make any decisions while we're jet-lagged, and then go from there.

Lloyd made the basic town-to-town plan for the ride using the book, [Bicycle Touring in Tuscany](#), by David Cleveland. Then I sat down and figured out the mileage. It looked very do-able, and as a matter of fact, we kept to the initial itinerary for the most part. We dropped one small loop for lack of time and had to adjust for a major mistake in getting off route another time, but the 39.5 mile average per day worked well for us.

39.5 miles average per day doesn't seem like much, but by the end of the day, we felt like we'd done many more! Tuscany is still quite rural with small

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MVBC EVENT CALENDAR: May/June 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: . 10 am Ride Leader: Jerry Rooney 752-6588

NOTE: IN THE ABSENCE OF "REAL" RIDE CAPTAINS, NO ONE IS PRINTING THE ROUTE SHEETS FOR THE EARLY SATURDAY RIDE. IF YOU WANT A ROUTE SHEET, PRINT IT FROM THE WEB SITE; "MVBC.COM"

***** Show and go rides (Rollers) start at 9:00 am at Osborn Aquatic Center *****

May 3, Saturday, 9 am: MVBC ROLLING FEAST IS BACK! Skip breakfast, prepare to eat

- Routes for everyone!

***** EARLY SATURDAY RIDES START AT 8AM BEGINNING MAY 10 *****

May 10, Saturday, 8 am A few clouds, tailwind on return

- Long Ride: Shedd to Waterloo back via Tangent. 61 miles (A520)
- Medium Ride: Shedd to Lebanon back via Tangent. 52 miles (A340)
- Short Ride: Shedd to Saddle Butte back via Tangent. 37 miles (A230)

May 17, Saturday, 8 am: Sunny and unusually warm

- Long ride: Marcola via Harrisburg/Coburg back via Brownsville 104 miles (B690)
- Medium ride: Harrisburg via Peoria Rd. 50 miles (A305)
- Short ride: Peoria via Peoria Rd, back via Abraham Drive 27 miles (A070)

May 19, Monday, 7 pm, Osborn Aquatic Center, MVBC GENERAL MEETING

- Loop Tour packet hand-outs by the committee

May 21, Wednesday, Ride of Silence. Gather at Osborn Aquatic Center, 6:30 - 7:00 p.m.

- Helmets Required! NOTE: Not an official club ride. Information only for your calendars.

May 24, Saturday, 8 am: It's a great day for a ride!

- Long ride: Alsea to Alsea Falls back via Bellfountain Road. 69 miles (C590)
- Medium ride: Philomath/Decker to Greenberry Store back via Bellfountain Road. 42 miles (B260)
- Short ride: Philomath to Decker Road back via Bellfountain Road. 33 miles (B170)

May 31, Saturday, 8 am: Bonus 5th Saturday... get those miles up!

- Long ride: Buena Vista Ferry to Independence via Soap Creek. 55 miles (B385)
- Medium ride: Independence to Buena Vista Park back via Albany. 42 miles (B250)
- Short ride: Independence to Helmick Park back via Hwy 99. 34 miles (B200)

June 7, Saturday Ride, 8 am: Hot today, drink lots of water

- Long Ride: Roaring River Fish Hatchery. 80 Miles (B650)
- Medium Ride: Waterloo. 61.3 Miles (A520)
- Short Ride: Albany. 34 Miles (A160)

June 14, Saturday, 8 am: Not summer-like, but it's not summer yet.

- Long Ride: Alsea Falls. 69 Miles (C590)
- Medium Ride: Kings Valley, return via Airlie. 45.6 Miles (B280)
- Short Ride: Decker 33 Miles (B170)

June 21, Saturday, 8 am: Partly cloudy

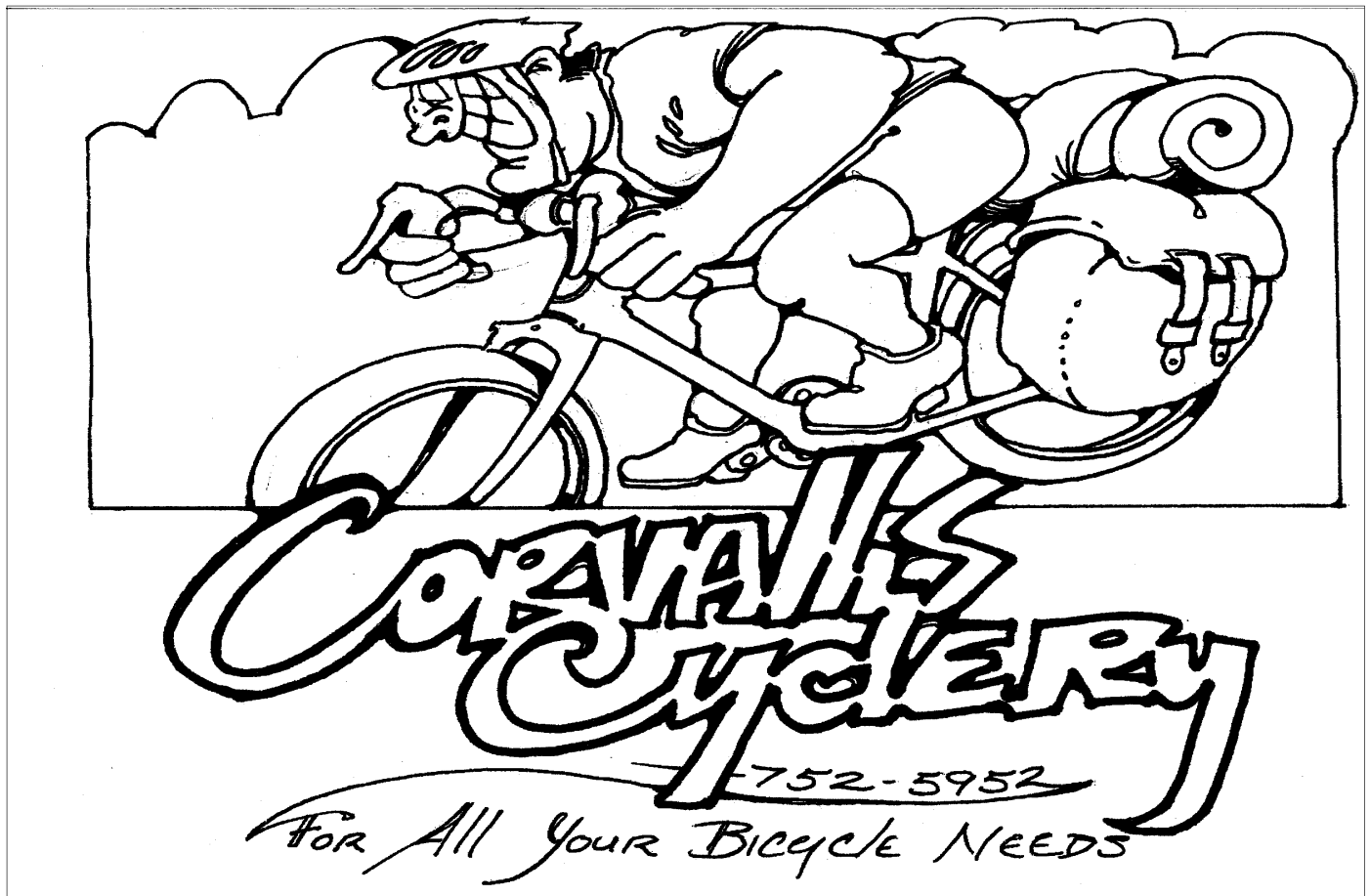
- Long Ride: Salem via Buena Vista Ferry. 83 Miles (B660)
- Medium Ride: Sunnyside via Buena Vista Ferry 59.6 Miles (B460)
- Short Ride: Albany via Palestine. 34 Miles (B100)

June 28, Saturday, 8 am: Unseasonably cool, but dry.

- Long Ride: Peoria, Armitage, Marcola, Brownsville. 103.6 Miles (B690)
- Medium Ride: Armitage Park. 79 Miles (A640)
- Short Ride: Saddle Butte. 37.4 Miles (A230)

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. Counts for club mileage if somebody remembers to record it.



(Tuscany, continued from page 4)

roads, little traffic, lovely scenery---and LOTS of steep hills! We rode several 15% grades and one 25%. Almost every town is on the top of a hill—including the one we had to reach every afternoon to spend the night! If I remember right, we only rode downhill into a town a couple of times at the end of the day.

Enrique and I went to Spain to pick up our bikes and visit with friends and family before going to Italy. We flew to Italy via Easy Jet (20 Euros each and 25 Euros each for our bikes). We had made our reservations at a small hostel in Florence recommended by Rick Steves. Enrique and I arrived at 9:30 pm—but Lloyd and Grace arrived at almost 1:00 am—without their bike! Lloyd had seen it going around the carousel but couldn't reach it, and then it disappeared.

The next day we set out to see some of Florence which, though it has a large population, is very accessible by foot. We visited the Campanile Tower first thing to get a good view of the city. We were amazed that in September there were still so many tourists—mostly European and Japanese. The weather was HOT, so we took our time and enjoyed ourselves. Our cute little hostel owner, Signora Marcella, called us that afternoon on our cell phone to tell us that the Swanson's tandem had arrive. We spent 3 days in Florence, and besides the towers, (which Enrique and I always like to climb), my favorite place was the Accademia, where Michel-

angelo's David is on display as well as several of his unfinished statues. Thankfully, Lloyd and Grace are like us in that they can only take museums up to a point. Then sitting down for coffee or gelato is a very acceptable alternative!

On our last morning in Florence, Signora Marcella invited us out for breakfast. She was a fun, accommodating hostess and we enjoyed her very much. She even called us later on in our trip to see how we were doing! We headed out over the Ponte Vecchio, which is the one you see in all of the pictures, and in just a few short blocks, we were out of town on a small, rural road—going uphill, of course! The first day of cycling was hard, because we had a few problems getting our breaks timed right, so we ended up having lunch quite late and I was wiped out. It felt like we'd never get to San Gimignano! We had not (over)planned, so we had no idea where we'd be spending the night. Our first stop was at the tourist office where Enrique asked for the cheapest place available. The town had gobs of tourists and we were wondering if we'd even find a place, but we did. Claudia came to meet us and take us to her family's small house that had been turned into an affittacamere (rent-a-room). It had a lovely view over the valley, a nice garden in which to park our bikes and hang our laundry, and was right in town. San Gimignano is the town of many towers which make the skyline very unique. Unfortunately, we weren't

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able to climb any!

One can't speak of Tuscany without talking about food. This area is very agricultural and olive trees and grapes are among the main crops. This means lots of olive oil and wine, both of which are staples in the area. We usually had a lunch of bread and cheese and then went out for dinner. We started out by getting a full meal, which usually included a first course, second course and sometimes dessert or coffee. Even with all of our cycling, this was generally way too much for us, especially after we started having appetizers of bread, olives, prosciutto, cheese and wine before dinner! It was comical to see the discomfort of the waiter as one or two of us would ask for a first course, someone else would ask for a second course, and we'd all want salad—and would he please bring it to the table all at the same time? We enjoyed many different meals and in the whole 3 weeks we were in Tuscany, I only remember one that was less than excellent. We also enjoyed biscotti, gelato, prosciutto, pizza, gnocchi, formaggio (especially Picorino)...

Our second day found us biking to Siena where we spent an extra day to explore. Siena is one of my favorite places because it is pretty, unique, has good food and as far as I'm concerned, has the most interesting and beautiful cathedral of all the places we saw because of the mosaic floors. We were arriving at Siena by way of a smaller, quieter road recommended by a café owner and enjoying it very much. However, it was getting a bit late, so Lloyd and Grace suggested that Enrique and I ride ahead to the tourist office before it closed to get a room. Good idea! We got there in the nick of time after having ridden almost the entire circumference of the town (a trick they use to keep cars on the outskirts, but which is a really bad idea on a bike!) However, almost everything was full because it was Saturday night. We ended up spending more than we would have liked for a very modern hotel outside of

the town—which we arrived at after doing a mega downhill—but breakfast was included and it was a new experience, which is what travel is all about, right? We used the bus to get into town, but one night after planning on taking a taxi back to the hotel, we couldn't find one and had to walk the big downhill for about a mile or so in the dark. We visited many of the traditional sights: the Campo where they run the Palio, the tower and so on. We also saw one of the Contradas doing their flag and drum thing throughout the town. One afternoon we went just outside of the town walls to a show on the disappearing art of falconry. We also got to see St. Catherine's mummified head and finger, a new and unexpected experience!

Tuscany has as dearth of IH hostels, so we used the tourist information office (TI) to find most of our lodging. However, the TI wasn't always open and on one occasion, wasn't very helpful, so we also had to ask people or walk down the streets and look for signs on doors advertising rooms for rent and then make a phone call. Our Italian certainly was put to good use! We stayed in a different kind of place every night. One was a vacation apartment decorated with gobs of pillows, hats, and other various and sundry frilly items. One night there were only two rooms for rent in the entire town (and none in the nearby towns), so Lloyd and Grace rode up one hill to theirs, and we rode down a gravel road to ours and met later for dinner. The next night we were all sharing one room. There was a small hotel with a pool, a huge old building that reminded us of Napoleon's palace on Isola d'Elba Island and in Como we stayed at our only IH hostel, which was excellent. During our last week in Switzerland we also stayed in another very old building full of the smell of incense and Indian cooking, whose owners asked that patrons not use alcohol or eat meat while there. A new twist on tourism in Tuscany were the working farms that also rent rooms and serve meals to overnight guests

(Agriturismo). We never stayed in one because they were generally well outside of the nearest town, and, in September most weren't serving food unless they were notified in advance. Another time we met a couple who had stayed in a convent and we were sorry not to have had that experience.

The weather in September was sunny and warm—I think Lloyd and Grace would say it was almost too hot some of the time, especially on the hills. We did have one afternoon and the following day of a torrential downpour. It was a day that the route was hard to find and we had to stop and ask several people, and then the "short, steep hills" turned out to be so steep and so long we had to walk—not only up but down (!) due to wet brakes on the tandem. We had been out in the hills with no place to get a hot coffee, so when we saw a restaurant we stopped for lunch. It was absolutely divine to walk into a warm, good smelling eatery, get out of our wet rain clothes and enjoy a piping hot bowl of soup. One of the worst days weather-wise has one of the best memories!

After a ferry ride to Isola d'Elba, the next day was sunny and clear and we had a very enjoyable ride around the west end of the island. Enrique really wanted to go swimming, so Lloyd and Grace very graciously consented to the long, windy road down to the beach—knowing that we would have to bike it back up on the way out. At the end of the day we managed to get to Napoleon's palace which was large, rather stark and not at all a comfortable or pretty place to live (except for the view). Enrique also visited two bike shops to get some brake pads and ask to use the tool to check to see if his derailleur was in alignment. They told him that they don't need a tool like that because they can tell by eyeballing it! Enrique thought that was pretty funny.

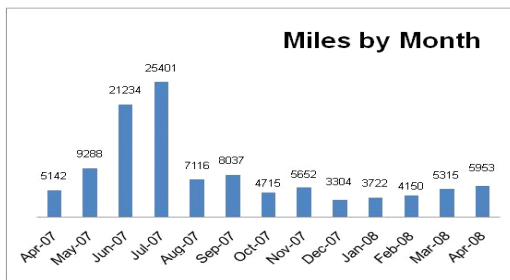
Biking north near the coast after Isola d'Elba Island, we were in a greener area with lots of trees and riding on roads that reminded us of Hwy

(Tuscany, continued on page 9)

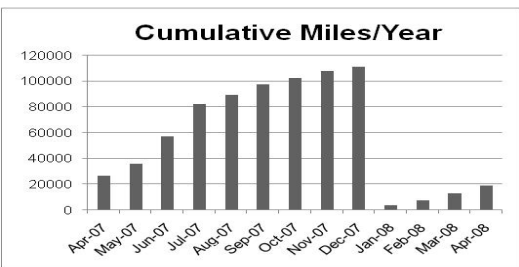
OUR RIDE CAPTAIN REPORTS

LARRY THURBER

April 2008 was an unusually strange weather month as springtime continued its struggle to show up in Oregon. Nevertheless, 71 separate riders braved rain, sleet, snow and hail to contribute 5953 total miles for the month. I say at least, because due to newsletter timing, not all mileage is in for the month. It will be caught up by next month. It would be interesting to chart rider miles against daily temperature, but that's a job for someone with more time and curiosity than me. Total club miles to date are 19,140, which is about 7,400 miles lower than last year at the same time. April had a number of unusual data



points. For example, the mileage between the early and late Saturday rides has been approximately the same for the first three months of the year. However, this month the difference was quite large as more early riders showed up for longer, farther rides. The early group posted 3087 total miles and the late group (Rollers) posted 1728 miles. It was also obvious that cyclists are taking every opportunity to dodge the rain bullets as mileage on the Wednesday rides nearly doubled from 581 miles in March to 1020 in April. Tuesday/Thursday numbers began during April as daylight savings time afforded the light needed to do these late



afternoon rides. The top five riders for April are: Mark Newsome, 264; Lloyd and Grace Swanson, 234; Terry Dibble, 219; and Vladimir Baicher, 199. The top mileage leaders' year-to-date are: Dan Youngberg, 810; Terry Dibble, 782; Jim Gau, 684; Tim Corbett, 655, and Shirley Schoberg, 596. Twenty-three riders posted 100+ miles during the month. And last, but not

least, we welcomed three new riders during the month; Mark Hammer, Kara Smith, and Signe Wright.

As always, if there is anything else you would like to see in the ride report, or if you have other comments or suggestions, please send an e-mail to the address shown on the inside of the newsletter.

MIDGE CRAMER RIDE 2008

Ann Asbell

Fourteen MVBC members and groupies showed up for pancakes to start the 2008 Midge Cramer Ride. Twenty-one riders left the Beanery at 9:00 and twelve riders joined the ride at 10:00 from the Aquatic Center. Midge tested our dedication. Lindy was ordered to stay home with a nasty cough; Richard took over the Fig Newton duties. George drove back home before he even got to the pancakes in order to change bikes after he got a flat and discovered that his pump (that he had loaned to somebody in New Zealand) did not work. Larry struggled to change his flat tire; it took all the strength of Larry and Rick to overcome a pesky rim. The rain got heavier as we headed towards Decker Road, but a lighter sky to the southeast gave promise of improved weather. The promise was fulfilled on the downside of Decker Mountain! Timing was perfect as riders from all three routes merged at the start of the coasting contest. Cyclist after cyclist coasted single file down Bellfountain with nice tailwind gusts. The record for the overall longest coast for a male on an upright bike was broken by Rick Ripper who found the perfect balance between the tuck position and sitting up to catch the wind. His distance of 0.817 mile was the longest coast of the day, and it crushed the upright record set by Jim Munford in 2005 (0.750). Dave Wallace established the record of 0.657 in the new category for tricycles. Other category winners were: Lloyd and Grace Swanson, coed tandem, 0.714 mile; Lyle Dalton, male recumbent, 0.716 mile; Susan Christie, female recumbent, 0.694 mile; Melissa Boyd, female upright, 0.666 mile. These records were retained: Overall champion and longest tandem (male or coed), 0.85 mile, Charlie and Becky Steinmetz (2005); male recumbent, 0.810 mile, Walt Prichard (2004); female recumbent, Shirley Schoberg/Susan Christie, 0.78 mile, (2004 & 20205); female upright, Yvonne Hilton, 0.7 mile, (2006); female tandem, Nancy Meitle

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Join the MVBC

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. To join the club, go to the website at <www.mvbc.com> and click on the Join link at the top of the page. Or you may contact the membership secretary (Shirley Schoberg, 979-1120) to obtain a sign-up form.

(Tuscany, continued from page 7)

34 to Waldport. There were many Americans on group rides with colorful jerseys and no gear. One of their leaders told us he thought it was the most beautiful area in Tuscany to bike, but we didn't agree. There were so many trees we couldn't see the view! In the previous week or so we had ridden many times right on the ridges and could see lovely sight for great distances and we enjoyed that more.

We rode through and stayed at numerous very small towns, all with their unique buildings, piazzas, restaurants and sights. We visited Volterra with a town gate from the 4th Century BC and a Roman amphitheater. This town had artisans making statues and other art from alabaster. Another town had famous hot springs—which closed shortly before we arrived—and besides were so expensive that we decided not to wait around in the morning for them to re-open. And then there was Pisa with the famous leaning tower. It was quite an experience to be one of a group of about 30 people going round and round inside the tower and feeling way off balance because of how much it actually leans. From Pisa north the scenery changes from rolling hills to green mountains. We were supposed to have ridden a short 21 mile day from Pisa to Lucca, but that day Enrique and I arrived back to the Italy that we were used to: few signs to guide and lots of garbage along the roads. The rest of Tuscany had surprised us because it was so clean and well marked, as they are really making an effort to be attractive to tourists. In short, I was leading and ended up on a completely wrong road. We were finally able to get off of it and in talking to a young man, Enrique found a way to get back on route on another hilly, quiet road, but skipping Lucca and going directly to Barga for a total of—oops!—54 miles.

After a nice extra day in Barga, we took the train to La Spezia, found a place to leave our bikes and spent two days walking the path along the coast to the Cinque Terre (Five Towns). The path snakes along the edge of the hills above the Mediterranean with numerous stairs. It is so narrow we had to step off the trail to let large school groups of unhappy looking German teenagers trudge past us. The villages are colorful (pink and blue come to mind) and hug the cliffs by the sea. It was a beautiful walk. From there we took the train to Como—and went through the very stressful, fast and challenging task of getting our bikes up into the baggage car, tying them up and running back to the door of the passenger car to find our seats. Then going through the

same process backwards when we arrived in Como! One of the passengers called it a 'Chinese Fire Drill.'

The rain stopped and our first day of cycling around the lakes in northern Italy was sunny and clear with lovely blue skies. We rode to Bellagio, where Lloyd and Grace took in the sights while Enrique and I rode uphill to the small chapel of the Madonna del Ghisallo, the patron saint of cyclists. Then two ferry trips to visit Varenna and later Menaggio where we headed up yet another hill with hairpin switch-backs on our way to Lugano. This day was our longest yet at 57 miles, which doesn't seem like much, but after the narrow roads, tunnels and constant traffic on the last part of the ride, we were whupped! We got to our friend's house, showered and then went to another friend's house for dinner, which she had kept waiting till 8:30 pm!

Cycling around the lakes in southern Switzerland was like being in our own backyard, since Enrique and I had lived there for 13 years and done a lot of cycling. This was the last week in September and the weather was beginning to get that feel of fall. We had a couple of cloudy days and cool weather, but finished the trip with no more rain while we were on the road. Switzerland has a different feel from Italy but it is also very beautiful and offers good food. The signs were now in Italian and German instead of in Italian and English as in Tuscany. It was fun to revisit old rides and see some of the new bike routes that have been established. There were absolutely none when we lived there, so that was a bonus. We also got to visit friends as well as Enrique's brother, Ermo, who owns a bike-moped-motorcycle shop near Lugano.

On the morning of October 3rd, after a month traveling together in Tuscany and the lake region of northern Italy and southern Switzerland, Lloyd and Grace left for Sweden. They were great traveling companions because they are very good sports—in the face of long and tiring hills, rain, missed turn-offs and other inconveniences, they don't complain! They are willing to go with the flow, and on bike touring trips, that's a good way to be. It was a very lovely, challenging trip and was well worth the energy we all expended on our bikes!



(Midge Cramer, continued from page 8)

& Jan Prah, 0.64 mile, (2003); Cramer Family, Rich Cramer, 0.59 mile, (2007). Many plaid shirts were displayed and lots of laughter could be heard throughout the day, in spite of a less-than-perfect performance by the weather gods. So there, Midge! Thanks to all who participated.

MID-VALLEY BICYCLE CLUB
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Address Service Requested

Meetings & Announcements

Future Events

May 3 - Rolling Feast, MVBC
May 21 - Ride of Silence, 6:30 pm, Osborn Aquatic
June 14 - Strawberry Century, Santiam Spokes
June 14 - Gorge Ride, www.hcrh.org
June 21-29 - MVBC Loop Tour I
June 22-28 - Bicycle Tour of Colorado,
www.bicycletourcolorado.com
June 28 - 2nd Annual Willamette Wine & Wheels
June 22 - Watermelon Ride, Salem Bicycle Club
July 3-6 - NWTR, McMinnville,
www.nwtr.org/2008/
July 12-13 - STP, Cascade Bicycle Club
July 26-August 3 - MVBC Loop Tour II
August 1-3 - Cycle Oregon Weekend
August 10 - Covered Bridge Bicycle Tour, MVBC
August 15-16 - STP, Cascade Bicycle Club
August 22-24 - Crater Lake Rim Ride, MVBC
Sept 6-13 - Cycle Oregon, www.cycleoregon.com/
Sept 28 - Peach of a Century, salembicycleclub.org

GENERAL MEETING--LOOP TOUR

Monday 7 pm May 19, 2008, Aquatic Center

If you are going on Loop Tour, please come to pick up your Loop Tour Route Maps And Personal Information Packets which will be handed out.

We will review the information together. Also we will have Slides of Past Loop Tours. Several loaded bikes to view. Alternative Route in case of heavy snow on First Loop.

Discussion on packing and what to bring, or not. Sag Drivers will be present for questions.

IMPORTANT SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Submit articles, stories and photos for the June MVBC Spokesman no later than May 30. Please send this material to the editor in Word format:

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