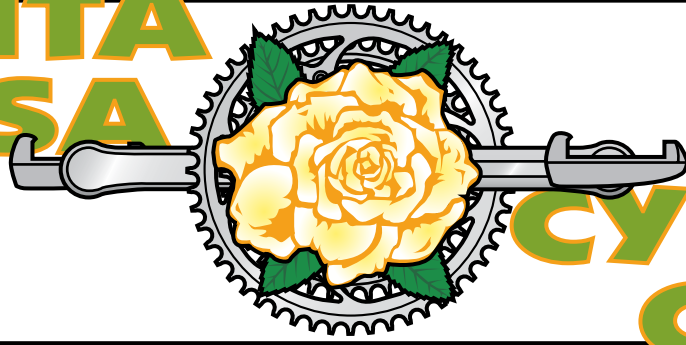


SANTA ROSA



CYCLING CLUB

MARCH 2011 NEWSLETTER

WCC registration breaks its own record

At midnight on February 1, Wine Country Century Registrar Gordon Stewart opened up our on-line reg process for the popular event. 38 hours later, all 2500 slots in the field were full. We thought things were a little crazy last year, when the field filled in about four days. But last year's registrants were a bunch of lazy slackers compared to this year's eager beavers.

In spite of the instantaneous flood of entries that poured in as soon as we opened for business, the process ran smoothly and efficiently, with nary a glitch to be seen.

No question, cycling events in Sonoma County are now just about the hottest tickets around. This region has become a world-renowned cycling mecca, with marketing magnetism to match anything Tuscany or Provence has to offer. Event promoters and community groups have not been slow to figure this out, and bike events of one sort or another are popping up locally like mushrooms after a spring rain on most mid-season weekends (mid-season being any time between May and October).

As SRCC President Donn King says in his column on page 2, you would think our market share would be eroded by the competition from so many other events, but it never seems to happen. To the contrary, the pull of the WCC appears stronger every year. So if all the other events have access to the same great Sonoma County roads and scenery, what is it that make the Wine Country Century such a compelling draw for cyclists?

A bit of the attraction is our great date on the first Saturday in May (May 7 this year). But the biggest thing that distinguishes this event from the others is our great support, and the engine that drives that support is our wonderful crew of experienced and energetic workers, 400 strong. Are you a part of that crew?

Veteran WCC volunteers know the drill (and have probably already done this): go to the roster of committee chairs on page 8 and find your niche. If you're new to the WCC, talk to the Volunteer Coordinator, who can point you to a fun assignment. Being a part of the WCC team is one of the best deals around. In addition to the satisfaction of contributing to such a crackerjack event, workers walk away with an attractive commemorative t-shirt, and, best of all, they get to ride in the WCC Workers's Century on the following Saturday (for free) and enjoy the catered party afterward. What's not to like? Don't miss out. Help out with the big show on May 7, then ride and party with your club mates on May 14.

MARCH MAGIC MILEAGE CHALLENGE TURNS TEN!

The smiling face of Spring and ever-increasing daylight beckon us to spend more time on our favorite steeds, and we have just the program to heed those calls.



March Magic was modeled after a nearby club's more formal and ambitious program, but built on a simple premise: set a lofty goal for cycling mileage during the month, then see if you can achieve it. This is not just for the higher mileage folks who want to try for 1500 miles or more in the month, as we have mileage categories that start as low as 150 miles, with several levels in between.

We have a ride calendar almost every day of the week, and some weekend days even have multiple pace and distance options.

As you ride the remainder of your "winter coat" off, post your results on our March Magic website. With a little help from Mother Nature, you'll have a stellar month of riding, a svelte new body, and newfound endurance to launch you onward to make good on your other cycling goals for the year, such as your first century or double century, or even Paris-Brest-Paris, if you are a *randonneur*. Chances are you'll also make some new friends along the way and strengthen the bonds with your current ones.

As is the case with our annual Century Challenge and April Alpina programs, the rewards are not material recognition, but the satisfaction of having a goal and a plan...and making it happen.

We've had MM participation as high as 75 riders in past years. Now, with membership and enthusiasm growing, we should see bigger numbers this year. So make a commitment...and remember:

"The only person you need to compare yourself to is who you have been. And the only person you need be better than is who you are now."

MINUTE MIX

Highlights from the General Membership and Executive Board meetings for February

- 1. Call to Order:** President Donn King called the general meeting to order at the Round Table on Occidental Road on Wednesday, February 9. 70 members and friends were present.
- 2. Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Greg Durbin announced the club's bank account balances, as of January 31.
- 3. Membership:** Registrar Gordon Stewart reported membership of 1182 (combining individual and family memberships). Steve Sbragia acted as host at the New Member Table, with several new members on hand. Steve has created a very classy new sign for the new members table...a real work of art.
- 4. Tours:** Doug Simon announced that he is going to stage a second club-sponsored tour in August: a reprise of the Wild Rivers Tour from a few years back. (See item on page 7.)
- 5. Free Lunch:** Bill Oetinger reminded members about the free lunch at El Sombrero Taqueria after the Free Lunch Ride on March 12. All who attended the January meeting and voted in our annual election are entitled to a free lunch after the rides. (See ride listing on page 5 and separate item on page 6.)
- 6. First Aid:** Don Graham raised the subject (at the Board meeting) of offering first aid classes through the club. He will follow up with instructor Eric Peterson and get back to the Board with more information.
- 7. Warehouse:** Warehouse Committee members Rose Mello and Doug Simon reported to the Board on further improvements to shelving and storage systems within the warehouse, including better apparel storage, better bike rack storage, and general pest control measures. Funds spent on the work fall within the 2011 budget allocation for such matters.
- 8. Donations:** The Board finalized the procedure for identifying a list of grant recipients for this fiscal cycle. The list of nominees was posted to the club website in a format that allows members to vote for their favorite charities. (The web [page](#) for voting will be open until February 28. If you haven't voted yet, there may still be time.) Selected recipients will be announced at the March meeting, subject to a final voice vote of approval of the members. In advance of that voting process, and at the request of the Board, the membership approved a \$2000 donation to the Sonoma County Radio Amateurs. This is included in the 2010 donations fund, but was handled on its own because of the important role the SCRA has in assisting with the WCC and TT.
- 9. WCC:** Wine Country Century Chair Bruce Hopfengardner reported to the Board on assorted preparations for the event. Volunteer Coordinator Kimberly Hoffman appealed for workers at the general membership meeting.
- 10. TT:** Outgoing Terrible Two Chair Craig Gaevart noted that Bill Ellis is taking over the reins on the TT, but that he (Craig) and former TT Chair Bill Oetinger will continue to work closely with Bill Ellis on event management in the months ahead. Bill Oetinger noted that the new batch of TT jerseys and vests was due to arrive soon (and did arrive on February 15).
- 11. Featured presentation:** Orthopedist (and racer) Dr. Briant Smith made an informative presentation on collarbone breaks and on general bone health for cyclists.

Letter from the President

— Donn King —

All of a sudden it's march, and the Wine Country Century is bearing down on us like a Huffy mountain bike in free fall. This year our popular century sold out even faster than before: within two days the 2500 slots were full. With all of the cycling and outdoor events offered in northern California, you would think that our market share would eventually become dilute, but it just never happens. It's amazing how popular the WCC is.

Each year, we try to make the WCC better. Last year, emergency medical services were added and the number of CHP officers on the course was increased. This year, Bruce Hopfengardner, the WCC chairperson, is increasing the CHP coverage, continuing the emergency medical services, and centralizing communications and information access at the Wells Fargo Center. We have also brought back souvenir photography services, with two companies set to take pictures of riders on the course. As always, we will have the Sonoma County Radio Amateur club providing full communication services for the event.

Kimberly Hoffman, the WCC Volunteer Coordinator, says that upwards of 400 people are required to put on the WCC. If you have never volunteered, it might be hard to believe, but it's actually more fun to volunteer for the main event and then ride the fully-supported Workers' Ride the following Saturday, than it is to ride the actual WCC. Sharron Bates and Rene Concalves put on a nicely catered and supported ride for the WCC workers. For many, it's the premier club event of the year.

Lots of WCC volunteer opportunities are available: moving equipment and materials, food preparation, cleaning, course marshaling, and my favorite, bicycle-mounted course marshaling, to name just a few. Whatever you do for the WCC, come out and enjoy the day, the spectacle, and the friendship of the ride. It's great to be a part of such a huge operation and to bask in the praise that is annually heaped on the Wine Country Century.

WCC/warehouse work days coming up

Not all WCC volunteer assignments happen on May 7. There is a good deal of prep work that precedes the actual century, and much of that happens at the club warehouse, beginning this month.

Sunday, March 20: we need ten volunteers (in two shifts) to help clean tarps. 8:00 am to noon and noon to 4:00 pm.

Sunday, March 27: we need six helpers for cleaning utensils and plastic containers. We will start at 1:00 pm after the club ride.

Sunday, April 10: we need ten volunteers for cleaning tables and plastic chairs, and for checking and fixing canopies, signs, and sand bags. Starting time: 10:00 am.

Saturday, April 23: we need 12 volunteers to help clean water jugs, ice chests, and buckets. Starting time: 10:00 am.

Sunday, April 24: we need six volunteers to help clean all the water hoses and portable water dispensers. Starting time: 1:00 pm.

Warehouse work days are a relaxed and enjoyable way to be of service to the WCC effort and to the club in general. For more information, please call the coordinator for these projects...

Rose Mello, 543-5889

BACKROADS & BREAKAWAYS

B&B is a column for and about local club rides, news, gossip, anecdotes, odds and ends. If you have a story to share about a ride you led, your race results, a cycling vacation, whatever...call Bill Oettinger @ 823-9807 or send e-mail to: srccride@sonic.net.

With a rare, notable exception, which we'll get to later, the latter half of January and early February were exceedingly kind to us in the matter of good bike-riding weather. It's not uncommon to have a late January thaw—a hiatus from what should be a cold and wet winter—and we've enjoyed these little time-outs before, in other years. No one is going to seriously propose that Spring has really arrived, for although we've already had close to 120% of our annual rainfall for the season, there is certainly more of the damp and drizzly stuff out there in the Pacific, heading our way. But for the moment, most of the time, it's pretty darn nice outside, and any cyclist worthy of the name has been out in that nice weather, beavering away at the pedals as if it were indeed springtime, with nothing between now and the big rides of mid-season except loads of sunny miles.

We left off last month with the great weekend weather of January 15-16, with the 200-K brevet and other swell club rides, all well attended and all enjoying more-or-less warm and sunny conditions, at least after the morning fog burned off. One week later and it was *deja vu* all over again, beginning with Megan Arnold's first-ever ride lead: the Sweetwater Century on January 22 (with the climbs of Harrison Grade, Coleman Valley, Sweetwater Springs, and Chalk Hill on the dance card). Megan reports over 20 riders at the start for this challenging century, but the group of 20 wouldn't stay a group for long. The first big climb on Harrison Grade sorted things out pretty well, but that was just the beginning (of the sorting out).

When we rolled into our first regroup in Occidental, we found ourselves in the midst of about 250 cyclists, all gearing up for the first Grasshopper 'cross race of the year, with Levi on hand to lend some star power to the proceedings. We arrived on the scene a few minutes before their start time, and as we were all heading out (uphill) along Coleman Valley, the question was: dash out of town and get past their turning at Willow Creek ahead of them? Or wait until they leave and follow along behind? The faster half of our ride elected to dash off right away (and they did beat the race peloton to that corner), while the back group, including the ride leader and this reporter, rode partway up the first climb, then pulled off when we heard the starter's cannon down in town. We became roadside spectators for a few minutes as they went by. We waved to several of our club mates who were in the field, then remounted and continued along Coleman out to the coast.

So anyway...by the time the back group had waited out the racers, the front group was long gone, and from that point on, it was essentially two rides on the same route, separated by a good chunk of time and distance. But no matter. From what we read on the chat list, the folks up front had just as much fun as we did in the back, except maybe slightly faster fun. The Sonoma Coast was looking spectacular under those sunny skies, with next to no wind and huge, glassy sets rolling ashore to delight the surfers. Our group enjoyed two long, leisurely rest stops in Duncans Mills and Jimtown, and in between, we kept chipping away at the miles and the hills, whenever they loomed up in front of us. Sweetwater was especially tough, and we didn't get to do a damn thing with

the descent off the shady north face, as it was cold and damp and even slick with moss all over the pavement, and the lower section, down along the creek, was a total minefield of potholes. Then it was up and around the wine country: Dry Creek Valley and Alexander Valley and finally Chalk Hill, back into town. The overall challenge began to show near the end, with a few riders popping off the backs of the pace lines and limping in alone. But even these walking wounded would—I think—agree it was a good day to be out on the bikes.

While we were capering about on our century route, those 250 or so racers were hammering down the steep gravel on Willow Creek, then up and down (and up and down) Old Caz, etc. As we noted, there were several SRCCers in the field, and the ones we spoke to later all claimed to have had a grand time of it. In particular, we should mention our reigning Gearhead, Marc Moons, finishing tied for eighth place, just 14 minutes behind Levi.

On that same day, over on the other side of the county, Dave Batt had a short B ride doing the classic Franz Valley-Knights Valley-Chalk Hill loop. He sent in a report as short as the ride: "Fifteen riders started. Heading for Franz Valley Road up Mark West Springs, the ride split in half. The front group of seven disappeared, never to be seen again. Had a couple of first timers for Franz Valley and Knights Valley. Of course, beautiful spring weather in January was a bonus."

There was just one club ride on the calendar for Sunday of this weekend: Ride Leader Ken Russeff checks in: "With the only club ride scheduled for the day we had a large turnout for the Mid-County Meandering A-pace ride from Esposti to Healdsburg. The mixed group of 48 riders quickly spread out on a clear, crisp, cool morning. A break at the Oakville Grocery, three known flats, and about 30 miles. A nice January, Sunday ride."

One week later—a week of lovely, sunny days—we were expecting more nice weather for my Winter Century out of Sebastopol on January 29. In fact, AccuWeather promised us a fine day, with the fog burning off by mid-morning and nothing but sunshine for the duration. So much for promises! In Sebastopol, it rained all day, sometimes hard. Fortunately for us, we didn't spend the whole day at our start site. We were headed down to the outskirts of Petaluma, then up Chileno Valley and out to Tomales, further north to Freestone and Occidental and Monte Rio, and finally inland along the river to Healdsburg before dropping south again to Sebastopol. You would have thought, heading out to near the coast, that we would have had worse weather than at the start. Not so. Our weather wasn't great, but at least it didn't pour. Rather than burning off, that morning fog turned into heavy mist, which occasionally condensed into drizzle. Not quite rain, but close. We never really got soaked to the skin, but we were damp all day, and the spray off the wet roads had us all thoroughly bespattered with grime by the end. Every so often we'd ride out of the damp, the sky would lighten, and maybe we'd even see a few vagrant patches of blue sky off in the distance. Once or twice, we even saw our shadows. But every time it started to brighten up and dry out, we'd ride right back into the soup around the next bend.

Perhaps because of that delusional AccuWeather forecast—the one with all the sunshine in it—we had over 40 riders show up for this relatively easy century. In spite of the BC listing, at least half the crowd fell into the C+ to D range...no surprise there. While there were no Sweetwater or Coleman sorts of climbs, there were jumbo

—Continued on page 6

RIDE SCHEDULE

PDF route slips available at www.srcc.com...go to Calendar of Rides

The following system is used in our ride schedule so that riders can estimate the relative difficulty of each ride.

TERRAIN

- 1: Mostly flat (River Road, Dry Creek)
 - 2: Rolling, easy grades (Westside Road)
 - 3: Moderate grades (Graton Road)
 - 4: Hilly; a few steep climbs (Coleman Valley Road, Franz Valley Road)
 - 5: Very hilly; lots of long climbs (Trinity Grade, The Geysers, Skaggs Springs Road)
- (If available, elevation gain may be listed.)

TEMPO

Actual ride speed may vary, depending on terrain, distance, weather, and group dynamics. Tempo listing is only a ballpark estimate.

A: relaxed pace; frequent regroupings; waits for all riders. Over 26 minutes*

B: touring pace; regroupings every 30-60 minutes; waits for all riders. 23-26 minutes*

C: brisk pace; pacelines likely; regroupings every 45-90 minutes. 19-22 minutes*

D: aggressive pace; pacelines; slower riders may miss regroupings. Under 19 minutes*

*Times are for official SRCC speed trap: 4.4 mostly uphill miles on Graton Road from Ross Road in Graton to summit at Tanuda/Facendini junction. If you want to know where you fit in on club rides, time yourself on this section (at your normal riding tempo) and compare your time to the list above.

DISTANCE

The last figure in the formula, stated in approximate miles. (If in doubt, leader should overestimate mileage slightly.)

• RSVP WITH RIDE LEADER •

Ride leaders should provide maps and/or route instructions. Riders should carry I.D., cash, tube(s), flat repair kit, water bottle(s), and have their own map in case they get lost.

HELMETS ARE MANDATORY ON ALL CLUB RIDES!

Non-members are welcome on club rides! (Non-members must sign a liability waiver provided by the ride leader.) If the course seems too long or difficult, the ride leader can generally suggest an alternate starting place or bail-out route.

RAIN CANCELS ALL RIDES,
UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

RIDES LEAVE PROMPTLY AT TEN
MINUTES AFTER THE LISTED TIME.

SATURDAY • MARCH 5

Cotati Circulator

2/AB/BC/24/48/72

8:00/10:00/Noon • Cotati Vets

The traditional kick-off to our March Magic mileage marathon. Riders circulate around a moderate, rolling, 24-mile loop in the hills west of Cotati, returning to the start after each lap. How many laps you choose to do may depend on how crazy you plan to get about MM. Join in early or late.

Steve Drucker—538-5256

Skaggs Century

3-5/C/105 • 10,000'

8:00 AM • Guerneville Park-n-Ride

A big, simple (but challenging) loop: up the valley to Skaggs Springs, out to the coast, south all the way down the coast to Jenner, and back in along the river to Guerneville. Beers and burritos afterward at La Tapatia.

C: Karen Thompson—479-1864

D: Matt Wilson—495-3980

SUNDAY • MARCH 6

Cotati-Occidental-Valley Ford

3/AB/46

9:00 AM • HP Park, Cotati

A moderately hilly run out to Occidental, using many familiar roads—Canfield, Bloomfield, Burnside, Sexton, Furlong—but linked together in some less familiar ways. After the downhill out of Occi, a rest stop at Wildflower and an easy, rolling run back to Cotati.

Anne Graver—829-0686

Thoughts & Wheels

Turning to Spring

3+/BC/64

9:00 AM • Oliver's Market, SR
(Montecito @ Middle Rincon)

Over the ridge on St Helena-Spring Mtn and down into Napa County, then up the valley to Calistoga for a break at Calistoga Roastery. After the coffee, Franz Valley School, Franz Valley, then 128 north through Knights Valley to Chalk Hill, Faught, etc. Back to the start along Rielbi, Wallace, and Brush Creek.

Rick Sawyer - 933-0760

SATURDAY • MARCH 12

Free Lunch Rides

2/A/25 • 2/B/30 • 2-3/C/40
9:30 AM • Healdsburg City Hall

Classic wine country loops, with a few extra miles for the faster riders, so that everyone ends up finishing together...in theory, anyway. All those who attended the January meeting (and voted in the Board election) are entitled to a free lunch at El Sombrero Taqueria after the rides. All others welcome on rides, but must pay for their own lunches. Need more March Magic miles? Join your friends in riding up from SR or other southern start points. See article on Free Lunch Rides on next page.

A: David Abramo—650-533-2330

Sunny Mawson—838-3138

B: Donna Norrell—292-0565

C: Bill Oetinger—823-9807

SUNDAY • MARCH 13

SRCC Welcome Wagon Ride

1/A/10-15

10:00 AM • Howarth Park, SR

An introductory ride for novice cyclists (but veteran riders are welcome too). Easy, social pace. Plenty of opportunities for learning bike skills with supportive, experienced mentors. Instruction in working on bikes on request.

Mike & Janice Eunice—575-9439

Saving Daylight Century

3-5/C/101 • 8000'

8:00 AM • Howarth Park

A very challenging century, including climbs of Cavedale, Ink Grade, and—late in the ride—Spring Mtn. Visits the Valley of the Moon, Napa Valley, and Pope Valley. A truly epic, scenic, and entertaining ride...if you're up for it.

Sarah Schroer—364-7560

SATURDAY • MARCH 19

18th Annual Apple Cider Century

3-5/BC or CD /100 • 6000'

3/BC/100 K

8:30 AM • Ragle Park

By now, just about an institution. If the weather is good, the crowd will be big, with lots of out-of-towners. Both routes together through the west county hills—Green Valley, Pocket Canyon, Old Monte Rio—to the first regroup in Monte Rio. At MR, the 100 K heads south on Boho, through Occi and down to Valley Ford, Whitacker Bluff, and Tomales. Meanwhile, the full century heads out to Caz and then climbs Fort Ross Road to Meyers Grade before returning to Monte Rio and picking up the 100-K course. A fairly challenging century, but not brutal, with some of the best scenery on any ride, anywhere.

100 m (BC): Bill Oetinger—823-9807
100 m (CD): John Olson—332-9305

SRCC-RUSA 300-K Brevet

6:00 AM • Healdsburg
\$25.00 registration fee

A wonderful but potentially challenging brevet on our classic route: from Healdsburg down the river to the coast, then down the coast to Point Reyes Station and out onto the Point Reyes land mass. Then turn around and ride back. Not too terrible...unless the wind is blowing (which it usually is). For more information and registration form, visit the SRCC Brevet [page](#).

Bob Redmond—799-0764

SUNDAY • MARCH 20

Wine Country Loop

3/C/65
9:00 AM • Piner HS

Essentially the Wine Country Century 100-K route with a slightly different start venue. Everything else is exactly the same.

Nikola Farats—535-0399

Chileno Valley Ramblin'

2.5/A/30-35
9:00 AM • Cotati Dog Park

Out into the Two Rock area, then past the Coast Guard base and south on Chileno Valley into Petaluma for a break at the creamery. Then back to Cotati through the hen house belt north of Petaluma and west of Penngrove.

Ken Russeff—953-1804

SATURDAY • MARCH 26

Morgan Territory-Mount Diablo

3-5/C/66
9:00 AM • Arbolado Park,
Walnut Creek

A great East Bay loop and mostly part of the route of the Devil Mountain Double (a good training ride). First a swing out to beautiful, remote Morgan Territory, then a loop back to the giant climb of Mount Diablo (up the south road), and then the glorious descent on the north road.

Linda Fluhrer—925-689-3056
sid_linda_fluhrer@sbcglobal.net

Double County • Double Metric

2/BC/126
7:30 AM • Howarth Park

If Walnut Creek is too far to drive but you still want a big ride, consider this traditional wrap-up to our March Magic month of miles: a relatively painless way to rack up 120 or so (miles) on this long run over into Napa Valley

and all the way south down that valley...and back. Quality miles without monster hills. Minimal stops at Jimtown, Calistoga, Browns Valley, and Glen Ellen. Reload for Sunday if rained out.

Steve Drucker—538-5256

Special Wine Country Loop.1

3/AB/49
9:00 AM • Healdsburg City Hall

A fairly typical wine country loop, but with a difference. The usual run up West Dry Creek and over Dutcher Creek to a coffee stop in Cloverdale, then back south through Geyserville. The difference is that we are hooking up with another club for this ride (and for Sunday's similar ride). A group from the Procrastinating Pedalers of Lake Tahoe will be spending the weekend in Healdsburg, and we are coordinating with them to ride together. We're hoping for a good turn-out for both rides, to show our visitors what a lively club we have here.

David Abramo—650-533-2330
Sunny Mawson—838-3138

SUNDAY • MARCH 27

Special Wine Country Loop.2

3/AB/25
9:00 AM • Healdsburg City Hall

Another co-listing with the group from Tahoe. This time, we're heading south around the basic Westside-Eastside loop, with a slight detour into Windsor for a coffee break at Cafe Noto. If you couldn't make the Saturday ride, try this one and meet some nice riders from Tahoe on a nice cruise around the river.

Craig Gaevert—545-4133

REGULAR RIDES

Wednesday Wanna-B's

B • 30-50 miles • 9:00 AM

First Wednesday: Howarth Park, Santa Rosa
Beth Anderson—874-3685
Vin Hoagland—584-8607

Second Wednesday: Healdsburg City Hall
Chris Jones—938-2669

Third Wednesday: Finley Park, Santa Rosa
Lowell Antze—237-7014

Fourth Wednesday: Finley Park, Santa Rosa
Alfred Mascy—484-5885

Fifth Wednesday: Esposti Park, Windsor
Alfred Mascy—484-5885

C • 30-50 miles • 9:00 AM

First Wednesday: Howarth Park, Santa Rosa
Second Wednesday: Healdsburg City Hall

Eric Peterson—433-7737

Third Wednesday: Ragle Park, Sebastopol
Fourth Wednesday: Ragle Park, Sebastopol

Johann Heinzl—539-7991
Fifth Wednesday: Howarth Park, SR
(All other, leaderless C rides are decide-&-ride)

Friendly Fridays

A • 25-30 • 9:00 AM

Same schedule as other Friday rides
Janice Eunice—575-9439

Fifth Friday: Ken Russeff—953-1804

B & C • 30-50 • 9:00 AM

First Friday: Cotati Dog Park
B: Greg Stone—527-6116
Second Friday: Howarth Park, Santa Rosa
B: Martin Clinton—569-0126

Third Friday: Ragle Park, Sebastopol
B: Kim Nelson—573-6882

Fourth Friday: City Hall lot, H'burg
B: Buck Hall—537-1946

C: Nabeel Al-Shamma—479-6246
Fifth Friday (B group only): Esposti Park
B: Gary Grayson—538-9262

Who says there ain't no free lunch?

The Free Lunch Ride format began in 1993 as a sort of counterpoint to the club's annual end-of-summer picnic: another fun event for the members, about half a year away from the picnic. It was our first serious attempt at a multi-tempo ride, with routes of varying lengths, all coordinated to mingle and then finish at approximately the same time. And then the club would pick up the tab for lunch at El Sombrero Taqueria in Healdsburg.

Over the years, the reasons for having the ride have changed. At first, it was just a straight out freebie...no strings attached. Then we decided to use it as a "thank you" for folks who came to the February meeting to help with putting stamps and address labels on all the WCC and TT fliers we used to send out (back when the WCC didn't sell out in three days). If you helped out at the sticking bee, you received a voucher for lunch in return.

When we stopped doing the sticking bees, we looked around for another *quid pro quo* to which we could apply the free lunch voucher. We settled on rewarding folks who came to the January meeting and voted in our annual election. It used to be that the January meeting also offered free food, as it was our end-of-year awards banquet. But when the banquet moved to its own date in December, the January date was left with no freebie, so the Free Lunch voucher became the vehicle for keeping alive the tradition of free food on the club's tab.

Regardless of the historical context or the rationale behind it, the bottom line is this: do the rides and then join us for lunch at El Sombrero afterward. Ride leader Bill Oetinger will have a list of all who attended the January meeting. If you were at that meeting, find him before the ride or at the lunch, and he will hand over a \$10 bill to cover your lunch.

rollers and long, lazy grades all day long, and these served to sort out the 40+ riders into smaller pods. We all regrouped in Helen Putnam Park and—briefly—at Wildflour Bakery in Freestone. But by the time the back groups arrived at the final stop at Memorial Beach in Healdsburg, the front runners had already been in and out and were headed for the barn. Several riders had implemented bail-out plans from as early as the Freestone stop, taking any of a number of nice roads peeling off toward Ragle Park. With those bailouts, it's hard to say how many finally did the full century. I rode in with a group of six, and I suspect that was fairly typical of how it went for folks out there: a series of little clusters, strung out along the route like beads on a necklace, all slogging along through that dismal drizzle, eager to get done and home to hot showers and dry clothes.

The next day, the weather was quite a bit better, or at least turned out that way. But it looked just as gloomy in the morning, with no expectation that it would improve, so David Abramo and Sunny Mawson sent a note to the chat list calling off their AB ride out of Esposti Park. However, not everyone got the message. (Not everyone subscribes to the chat list.) Steve Drucker reports that eight people showed up and decided to ride anyway. They ran into one small shower early on, but then it cleared up and was very pleasant for the rest of the 40-mile ride. After trying to squeeze in their ride last month and getting drenched, David and Sunny can be forgiven for pulling the plug on this one. But in fact, this is the one they should have hung in there with. But that's the way it is with winter weather. You look at the forecast; you look out the window; you roll the dice and hope for the best. Sometimes you win and sometimes you lose. Sometimes you try to ride when you should have stayed home; sometimes you stay home when you could have been out on the bike.

On the following weekend, we had two century-length rides, one on each day. On Saturday, Nikola Farats offered a route we've done before, leaving from Howarth Park and heading up past Cloverdale and back...essentially a 50-mile out-&-back along the length of the valley. Nick reports: "The ride went very well. We even had a Levi sighting. He was heading up the Geysers. I guess he could not wait until Sunday. We had 22 riders and about 18 finishers." Okay. That doesn't tell us too much, but at least we know the ride happened. And we also know that the weather was perfect for a bike ride. You can't have been awake and out of doors in Sonoma County on this weekend without being aware of the weather. After the chilly, dreary mists of the previous weekend, we were treated to an almost unreal hot spell on this weekend—the first weekend in February, remember—with a couple of days so warm and sunny they broke records over a hundred years old.

On Super Bowl Sunday, Karen Thompson led a ride that provided a good alternative to sitting on the couch all day, hoovering up Doritos and beer. It was a century loop with the Geysers as the marquee attraction. Karen filed one of her amusing accounts of the ride at the chat list, too long to reproduce here. She said there were 15 at the start in Geyserville and they picked up a few more as the route looped south toward Santa Rosa before curling back north on Franz Valley and 128. So maybe 18 total. But then quite a few people decided to skip the big Geysers climbs and descents and to head on in from the rest stop in Jimtown. So in the end,

only ten did the whole package, as drawn up. And of those ten, six hung around at Diavolo in Geyserville for pizza. The ride was run off at a spanking pace, so even with the big elevation gain, it was still over early enough that anyone who wanted to watch the big football game could have been home in time to do so. The weather on this day was, if possible, even warmer than on Saturday, with a high well up into the 80's.

Also on this day, Sue Bennett listed an AB loop from SR up to Windsor, skirting the airport. She sent in this note about it: "A large group of riders (38) came out to ride on a day that was absolutely gorgeous, with record-breaking temps for February. The ride went smoothly and smiles abounded. We had four first-time riders. I had many comments from folks about how wonderful and scenic the route was. That is why it's called 'One of Sue's Favorites.'"

One week later and the good weather was still with us, although not even close to flirting with the 80's anymore. There were two good rides on Saturday to take advantage of the blue skies and (mostly) dry roads. Steve and Jessie Kroeck had their annual Valentine Sweetheart Ride, which, in spite of its warm and fuzzy title, has a notorious reputation for intensity: high speeds and constant attacking. I don't think anyone got an accurate head count at the Analy HS start, but more than 40 and less than 50 would be a fair estimate...so a good-sized crowd, and a more-or-less sedate and well-behaved one for the first few miles of flats. But as soon as the uphill arrived—Lone Pine for a teaser and then the Bloomfield-Burnside bump—things heated up. After a brief regroup at the summit, the up-and-down run along Barnett Valley, Jonive, and Occidental kept things jumping, right into the second regroup in Occi. Then the real fun began, with the slithery downhill dance through Camp Meeker. One more brief regroup in Monte Rio, and it was paceline time along the flats of River Road, where the big group eventually broke into two: one paceline averaging about 25 mph and another about 21 mph. I started in the front group, but along around Korbelt, my legs suggested to me that they might be happier in the second group, and that's where we—my legs and I—stayed for the duration. This ride has always served as a sort of Rite of Spring, our own little *primavera* to open the season and say goodbye to winter. It has been rained on and rained out for about half its installments, but on this day, it was as spring-like and perfect as it could be, with plums and acacias in full bloom... about as nice as it ever gets around here.

Meanwhile, on the same day, Donna Norrell had a BC ride out of SR that headed down to Petaluma and then out toward the coast. She reports: "It was a weather-perfect day for a ride to the coastal range. We had 20 riders with a wide range of pace abilities. The ride was basically flat to the first rest stop at Tomales Bakery, so the group didn't get too spread out. After that, the faster riders took off towards Dillon Beach and we saw them only briefly at the next bakery in Freestone. There was more traffic than expected for February, as folks were heading to the beach to enjoy the fine weather. The sun felt good at the Freestone break, and then we continued, with the ride splitting up into smaller groups as we headed up to Occidental, then descended back to town through Graton. No mishaps that I know of."

There were two rides on Sunday—the last day we can cover this month—and both were for the AB crowd. Mike and Janice Eunice had another edition of their Welcome Wagon rides, so named for their target audience of entry-level riders. Janice sent in this report on the day: "Mike and I had a great time, with 20 people showing



Letter FROM the Editor

— Bill Oettinger —

Elsewhere in this issue, I reported on my misty century that included a run along Chileno Valley. Midway along that rural road is a dairy where the cows frequently cross the road, and when it's wet, as it was this day, their leavings turn to a gloppy film on the pavement, which the bikes kick up as icky tire spray. You don't want to be in a tight paceline at that point! As we rode that section, I was remembering that the very first item in the very first one of these *Backroads & Breakaways* columns had to do with riding through the wet glop at that same dairy on another ride, many years ago. How many years? When I got home, I pulled out the newsletter archives to check, and I discovered that it was exactly 20 years ago this month that I wrote that first column.

Can it really have been that long? I guess so. Where have the years gone? At that time, the club had about a third as many members as it has now, perhaps a bit less. The Terrible Two that year had 44 entrants and 22 finishers. The entry fee was \$12 and the entire after-ride festivities consisted of one ice chest full of sodas on the sidewalk in front of the old Dave's Bike Sport on Yulupa. Just over 1500 riders participated in the Wine Country Century. But we only know that because of a reference to the '92 event one year later, in the report on the '93 edition. Amazingly, there was no report at all on the WCC in 1992. A small appeal for workers in the May issue and a thank-you to those workers in the June issue...and that was it. Rather low key!

I had begun organizing the ride list a few months before that first *B&B* column, and I took over full editorial duties a few months later. With well over 200 newsletters laid to rest since then, I can still say what I've been saying all along: I'll stop doing it when it stops being fun...or more realistically, when I get too old and creaky to enjoy the club rides anymore, or too addle-pated to report on them. Janice Eunice often finishes her ride reports with the gracious line, "Thanks for letting us do this." It would seem more appropriate for us to be thanking *her*. But I think I understand what she's saying. It's a pleasure to be involved in this club; to take a busy role in its activities. So I echo Janice's sentiment: "Thanks for letting me do this."

up for the ride, including Greg Durbin and friends. Imagine C and D riders giving a day to ride 10 miles in the Windsor plain! There were four new members to the club: Mary and Mike, Keith and Jennifer, and other SRCC members, such as Greg and Jan Conklin, Martin Clinton and Billy. We had several riders, such as Jennifer and Ann, who have signed up for the WCC and needed to start riding their bikes before the event. Mike and I never know who is going to show up for these rides, and we are always pleasantly surprised, especially when the sun is shining, with daffodils and mustard in bloom. Thanks for letting us lead these rides."

Finally, Susan Hester had a fairly hilly AB ride (including the first part of Sonoma Mountain and Pressley), from Howarth Park out to Cotati and Sebastopol...40 miles. We asked her how it went and she said: "Great! Thirtyfive riders, including a new member from El Salvador. The sun broke through the fog as we left Howarth. I heard from BC riders how much they enjoyed the relaxed pace. Shout-outs to Steve D. for leading us out and to Ken C. for waiting for me on Sonoma Mountain."

SRCC Randonneurs' 2011 Season

Randonneuring is long-distance, unsupported, endurance cycling. This style of riding is non-competitive in nature, and self-sufficiency is paramount. When riders participate in a *randonnée*, or long ramble in the countryside, they are part of a long tradition that goes back to the beginning of the sport of cycling in France and Italy. Friendly camaraderie, not competition, is the hallmark of randonneuring.

Brevets become progressively longer during the season, beginning at 200-km, then 300-km, 400-km, 600-km. These are timed events and are based upon an 11 to 21-mph average run, rain or shine. There are *controles* spaced about two hours apart, typically at a convenience store, for the riders to refuel and obtain a receipt as proof that they were on course and on time. (The Santa Rosa Cycling Club likes to pamper its riders with staffed *controles* and social receptions at the finish.) Completing this challenging series entitles the rider to enter even longer events such as the quadrennial Paris-Brest-Paris or Davis' Gold Rush Randonnée. 2011 is a PBP year, so the level of excitement and commitment hits its peak this year, as all riders point toward Paris in August.

2011 SRCC brevet schedule:

January 15: 200-km; Healdsburg to Napa (a record 120 riders)

February 19: 200-km; Healdsburg to Boonville & Ukiah

March 19: 300-km; Healdsburg to Point Reyes

April 16: 400-km; Santa Rosa to Clearlake

May 21: 600-km; Santa Rosa to Winters

Riding such long events can seem daunting, and the first attempt may be a struggle, as you learn about yourself and your gear. But these rides are so rewarding, as you travel from town to town at a pace that allows you to take in the scenery and enjoy the companionship of your fellow riders. A 200-km is a long century and the 300-km or 400-km are about like double centuries. But the 600-km is truly a humbling experience, riding under the stars and into a welcoming sunrise. I struggle to find enough words of praise for the organizers and riders as they share their wisdom and support you in reaching your goals.

— Robert Redmond

For more information on our randonneur season, visit this [page](#) at the club website. Or visit www.RUSA.org.

Wild Rivers Tour Two

Sunday, July 31 to Saturday, August 6

Six stages • 340 miles • 28,000'

The club's second tour for 2011 is a rerun of the popular 2006 Wild Rivers Tour, with a few new tweaks. It's an exploration of the State of Jefferson (the far northwest corner of California).

True to its name, the tour travels along the Klamath, Trinity, Salmon, Scott, Illinois, Smith, and Mad Rivers...all wild and beautiful. In addition to slithering along those river canyons, it climbs over a number of high ridges, visits unspoiled sections of coastal cliffs, and meanders through miles of quiet, primitive forest.

A longer tour description is available [here](#) at the club website.

On-line registration will open at 9:00 AM on March 15th. The tour is limited to 40 participants, including staff, and is only open to club members. Tour cost will be \$350 per person, with a deposit of \$50 due at sign-up.

SANTA ROSA CYCLING CLUB

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Santa Rosa, CA 95406

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René Goncalves.....570-6653

To join the club or renew membership, please go to
<http://www.srcc.com>
srccride@sonic.net (Bill Oetinger, club e-wrangler)



The Santa Rosa Cycling Club is a social/recreational organization comprised of cycling enthusiasts with a wide range of abilities and interests. Our purpose is to promote the safe and efficient use of bicycles through club rides and events, and by maintaining an active presence in the local community. We encourage a large and vital membership and try to provide rides for all abilities. We publish a membership roster and a monthly newsletter and ride calendar. We hold a general membership meeting and an Executive Board meeting once each month.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Wednesday, March 9 • 6:30 PM

Round Table Pizza
(Occidental Road, west of Stony Point)

**Featured Presentation: Carmen Sinigiani, coordinator of
Steven Cozza's Giro Bello Classic**

Wednesday, April 13

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

(Open to all interested members)

Thursday, March 3 • 6:00 PM

Gaslight Apts group room, 3637 Sonoma Ave, SR

Thursday, April 7

• Directory of WCC Committee Chairs •

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