



It's MCBC's 10th Birthday!

Read our story on page 6

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Cal Park Hill Tunnel Groundbreaking and SMART Rally a Success

Nearly 200 people gathered on Wednesday, September 24 for two events: a rally for the SMART Train and Pathway (Measure Q on the November 4 ballot) and the groundbreaking of the Cal Park Hill Tunnel. The tunnel, which will be open in 15 to 18 months, is being retrofitted for bicycle and pedestrian use and passenger trains.

The crowd gathered at the Larkspur Ferry Terminal, then paraded to the railroad right-of-way carrying signs, banners, and balloons promoting Yes on Q. The hot and sunny day featured energetic and enthusiastic speeches by Assemblyman Jared Huffman, Supervisor Charles McGlashan, MCBC's Deb Hubsmith, and Cynthia Murray, co-chair of the campaign. The speakers discussed the environmental, economic and traffic-relief benefits of SMART, focusing on how the SMART train and pathway will help to create a more sustainable future. The crowd chanted, "Vote SMART yes on Q, we need something NEW!"

SMART will provide 70 miles of passenger train service connecting Cloverdale with Larkspur Landing, and a parallel bicycle and pedestrian route for the full 70 miles, providing safe access to the new rail stations. SMART will remove 31 million pounds of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere each year, and will be up and running in 2014 if two-thirds

of voters approve of the measure in Marin and Sonoma Counties on November 4. See www.smarttrain2008.org for more information, to donate to the campaign, and to volunteer.

Following the SMART rally was the official groundbreaking of the Cal Park Hill Tunnel, which will connect Larkspur Landing and San Rafael. The tunnel is being built to accommodate passenger trains and the bicycle and pedestrian pathway. The vision for creating this link has been alive for more than 30 years, but the process did not move forward until the Marin County Bicycle Coalition made the project its top infrastructure priority, back in 1998. A key





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10 Ways You Can Support Better Biking in Marin

- 1. Join MCBC.** We are the source for bike shop discounts, bike commuting and traffic safety workshops, and bike facility improvements in your town. [Join online at www.marinbike.org](http://www.marinbike.org) or complete the membership form on page 15.
- 2. Send in an additional contribution** during our year-end Annual Fund Campaign.
- 3. Give a Gift Membership.** Buying a friend an annual membership in November and December gives you a 2008 tax deduction, and gets the new member our fabulous benefits. [Sign them up at www.marinbike.org](http://www.marinbike.org).
- 4. Upgrade your membership level** when you renew any time during the year.
- 5. Take advantage of Matching Gift Programs** that your employer offers. Many businesses match their employees' charitable donations to non-profits, so let 'em know MCBC is your favorite local non-profit. Ask them for bike racks at your office too!
- 6. Become a Spoke Society Member** (\$500+ donations) and increase your '08 tax deduction by sending your contribution right now to MCBC at P.O. Box 1115, Fairfax, CA 94978. [See www.marinbike.org](http://www.marinbike.org) for details.
- 7. Volunteer Some Time.** Your assistance with mailings, Safe Routes Rodeos, bike parking, member recruitment, Checkpoints, special events, etc. make our organization more effective and powerful. Contact Jo Ann Richards at 415-456-3469 x 7# with your interests.
- 8. Donate Merchandise** for any of our activities. We can always use incentive prizes, gift certificates, food and drinks to keep our volunteers and participants happy—and what a great way to showcase your service or product!
- 9. Donate In-kind Services.** Your design, editing, marketing, legal, organizational, engineering, writing, customer service, etc., skills can be used in our office and at our many public events. Share the skills you take for granted.
- 10. Donate stocks to MCBC.** We are now able to receive stock donations for immediate resale; you get a tax deduction, MCBC gets instant cash.

A Decade of Bike Parking Success

By Stephen Hesson, MCBC Valet Bicycle Parking Coordinator

As the MCBC celebrates its 10-year anniversary, so does our very popular and widely appreciated valet bike parking service. With the help of hundreds of dedicated volunteers each year, we've had the privilege of protecting thousands of your two-wheeled companions without losing a single one.

Created in 1998 by visionary Jim Jacobsen of the Bicycle Trails Council of Marin with an assist by MCBC founder and first President, Chris Lang, our attended bike-parking service has thrived. We've parked more than 15,000 bicycles in these ten short years. We grew from two events a year in 1998 to 29 in 2008. At last year's Sausalito Art Festival, our 35 volunteers parked over 1,400 bicycles.

We began with loaned equipment—a hodge-podge of supplies borrowed from Trips For Kids and other equally generous agencies. We have since spent a considerable sum of money and time to become one of the West's finest mobile bike parking facilities.

A survey conducted in September 2007 revealed that on average the number of cyclists observed on weekends increased by 33%, compared with a similar count conducted in 1999. We like to think that our bicycle parking corrals had something to do with that!



MCBC Celebrates 10 Years of Advocacy and Achievement!

Come celebrate our 10-year anniversary at the first annual "Bikers Ball" on Saturday, November 15th at Servino Ristorante in Tiburon!

Enjoy dancing to live music by Vinyl, appetizers, wine, beer, cash bar, silent auction, live auction of 10 fantastic items for ten fantastic years, a lounge atmosphere conducive to socializing, and darned little in the way of speeches, presentations or pontificating!

Tickets are limited, so get yours today by visiting our website at www.marinbike.org – \$60 for MCBC members, \$75 for non-members.

A Sampling of Auction Items:

- Four nights in Keystone, Colorado ski condo
- Backroads Bicycle Tours
Yellowstone/Tetons trip
- Dinner for two at world-renowned Manresa Restaurant in Los Gatos
- In-home Thai Dinner for six
- Breezer 'Greenway' Bicycle
- Marin Bikes 'Novato' urban street bike



Tickets are limited, so get yours today by visiting our website at www.marinbike.org \$60 for MCBC members, \$75 for non-members.

ADVOCACY BICYCLE BRIEFS

As this issue of the Pedal Press headed to the printer, many exciting projects were taking place at the state and federal levels. Here are some highlights.

State Legislation

During 2008, the California Bicycle Coalition sponsored two important bills -- AB1358 (Leno) and AB2971 (DeSaulnier) – which were also endorsed by the Marin County Bicycle Coalition. AB1358 was signed by the Governor on September 30 and will require local governments to include complete streets provisions in their general plan updates. Since the County of Marin, Fairfax, San Anselmo, and Novato already have complete streets policies, Marin County jurisdictions are on the way to fulfilling this legislative mandate. MCBC is working with all other Marin jurisdictions to request that they also adopt complete streets policies. AB2971 would have required Caltrans to evaluate how they spend their safety funds with relation to ensuring the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians, but unfortunately, this bill was vetoed on September 30 by Governor Schwarzenegger. See www.calbike.org for details.

Cal Park Hill Tunnel Construction

The Cal Park Hill Tunnel, which will connect San Rafael and Larkspur Landing via a multiuse pathway, is now under construction! The project will make it faster to bicycle between these locations than to drive. MCBC has been working on this project for ten years and thanks the County of Marin and SMART for their leadership.

Pilot Program

From September 22 to 25, Marin County played host to the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program working group, which includes representatives from the other three Pilot communities, the Federal Highway Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. The group attended the Cal Park Hill Tunnel groundbreaking, shared best practices, discussed evaluation procedures, and planned for the final report that will be submitted to Congress in 2011. Staff members from the offices of Senator Boxer and Congresswoman Woolsey also attended parts of the meeting.

For more information on the Pilot Program, see the County's website, www.walkbikemarin.org.

For more information please contact Deb Hubsmith, MCBC Advocacy Director at deb@marinbike.org or 415-454-7430.

A study by the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program showed that bicycle commuting in Marin increased 66% from 1999 to 2007!

Bicyclists and pedestrians already comprise 13.6% of trips in Marin, way above the national average of 9.5%.

Biketoberfest Returns to Fairfax, Saturday, Oct 18



WHEN:

The Festival – 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, October 18, 2008

Group Rides – 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, October 18, 2008

LOCATION:

Fair-Anselm Plaza Parking lots, 765 Center Blvd (next to Iron Springs Pub), downtown Fairfax

COST:

FREE – Includes bike expo, live music and kid activities

\$20 for beer tasting (includes commemorative beer glass) and group rides

WEB SITE:

www.biketoberfest2008.org or
www.access4bikes.com



Twelve Northern California bike companies, 15 beers, live music featuring the MONOPHONICS, a vintage bike show and group rides lead by Marin's biggest road and mountain bike personalities – Plus great local food and activities for the whole family!

The Marin County Bicycle Coalition, Access4Bikes and the Fairfax Chamber Of Commerce present Biketoberfest 2008 on Saturday, October 18 from 11 am to 6 pm at Fair-Anselm Plaza (next to Iron Springs Pub), 765 Center Blvd, Fairfax.

A celebration of the bicycle, Biketoberfest 2008 is an event for all cyclists of all ages, combined with a brewfest of over a dozen handcrafted beers from premier Northern California brewers. Biketoberfest 2008 features a market expo with bike builders, manufacturers, merchants, bicycle teams, clubs, and representatives from land management and environmental groups.

You'll have an opportunity to check out the latest bikes and components from *Soulcraft, Kish, Inglis & Retrotec, Breezer, Steelman, WTB, White Industries, Castellano, Para-*

gon, Ahrens Bicycles and Calfee. There will be over 40 demo bikes to try from *Ventana* and *Yeti*, so bring your shoes and pedals! You can speak to representatives from the *Bay Area Ridge Trail, California State Parks, and IMBA California.* Brewers include *Lagunitas Brewing, Iron Springs Brewery, Broken Drum, Anchor Brewing, Bear Republic, Moonlight, Eel River, North Coast Brewing, New Belgium and Sierra Nevada.*

Biketoberfest 2008 activities include guided group road and mountain bike rides finishing at the festival, a vintage-bicycle exhibit, kid activities and a raffle, with a Cannondale Rize 5 as the grand prize. Plus - live music featuring *MONOPHONICS* and the *Mad Maggies!*

Proceeds from Biketoberfest 2008 benefit bicycle advocacy in Marin County—the Bay Area's premier cycling destination. from Biketoberfest 2008 benefit bicycle advocacy in Marin County—the Bay Area's premier cycling destination.

Blinky Light Giveaway on the Tiburon Bike Path



As the darkening skies of fall approached, MCBC got into the spirit of "safety through lights," courtesy of four generous MCBC sponsors: Ghilotti Bros., Sunshine Bicycle Center, Paradigm Cycles, and Bolds Insurance.

Hundreds of cyclists and walkers picked up free blinky lights at our Sunday morning Share the Road Checkpoint on September 14 at Blackie's Pasture in Tiburon. As the path was swarming with families and individuals out for a bike ride or walk along the beautiful waterfront path – or heading to a soccer game – MCBC was there giving away

safety lights to help cyclists, pedestrians and their pets be more visible at night along roads and paths.

Our sociable volunteers had a great time chatting with those who stopped and providing information about MCBC's work. "These lights are a great idea!" exclaimed several light recipients. Many interested individuals signed up to receive MCBC's weekly email bulletin and a few joined on the spot. Two City of Belvedere police officers assisted with the giveaway, dispensing public safety outreach in a friendly manner. We have more lights to give away, so be sure to ask for one at the next MCBC event you attend!

SAFE ROUTES ACTIVITIES

Christmas in June for Spring Contest Winners

Everybody was smiling on June 21, as the winners of the grand prizes from the spring Safe Routes to School contests picked up their bikes on Saturday at Vallecito School in Terra Linda.

The bikes had been assembled by Marin Bikes employee volunteers. Safe Routes to Schools assistant instructor Tommy Bensko was on hand to ensure that each winner was properly fitted to his or her bike. At 2 p.m., families began arriving, with the children eagerly searching for the name tags on the bikes. "The anticipation is like Christmas," said Brendan Corr, age 7, a student at Lower Brookside School in San Anselmo.

Agil Bassa, of Hall Middle School in Larkspur, is serious about riding to school. Agil was about to become a freshman at Redwood High School and planned to ride his new bike to school.

Gina Vaziri's daughter, Natalie, was giddy with delight at riding her new bike. Gina, a former team leader from Glenwood School in San Rafael, said the contest really worked at her school. "A swarm of 5th graders started biking to school and it became the thing to do as more and more kids starting joining the pack," she said.

Safe Routes to Schools offered two options for the contests. The Frequent Rider Mile Contest has each student



keep track of the times they walk, bike, take the bus or carpool to school. When they reach 20 times they get an instant reward and their name entered into the raffle.

In the Pollution Punch Card contest, each student receives a card to clip to their backpack. Once or twice a week, if the student has chosen a green way to travel to school, a carbon gremlin is "punched" out of their card. Each time a student fills up a punchcard, they also receive an instant reward and an entry into the raffle.

Each school participating in the spring contests had a final raffle, with the grand prize being a new Marin Bike. Thirty-five schools participated in the contest this year, an all-time record. The bikes were provided at cost by Marin Bikes and paid for by a grant from Kaiser Permanente.



Left: Kevin Lapine, 6, Manor School winner with SR2S staff Tommy Bensko

Right: Natlie Vaziri, 10, Glenwood School winner tries out her new bike. Photos by Peter Oppenheimer.

Meet the Bike Blender

You can save money on gas by not driving, but did you know you can pedal to save electricity as well? Students from various high schools and middle schools found out first-hand as they pedal-powered the blending of their own fruit smoothies.

Safe Routes to Schools purchased a Bike Blender from the Juice Peddler last spring and made the rounds of local middle and high schools. The blender attaches to the back of a regular bicycle. The bike can then be put on a stationary stand so that students can cycle in place to blend their own juices. The Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) partnered with Safe Routes to Schools in providing demonstrations at the schools. YLI has been promoting healthy food choices, and the Bicycle Blender is a perfect blend for promoting good nutrition and physical activity.

The Bike Blender was a big hit wherever it went. Kids loved taking turns using their own power to create great blended juices. The teens also got the message that biking is cool and not just for little kids.

The Bike Blender made an appearance at the Marin County Fair this summer as part of the Play Fair Marin Fun Fest booth, sponsored by the Healthy Marin Partnership. YLI and SR2S joined up with Generation Chefs on Wednesday, July 2, to provide tasty, healthy smoothie samples as kids took turns trying out the blender. The theme was Rethink Your Drink, and more than 1000 samples were given away during a three-hour period. The Bike Blender returned to the Fair



on Saturday, July 5, as part of a transportation-themed segment put on by Marin Link. During that session, another 500 samples were blended and distributed.

Parents and children alike were delighted with the Bike Blender, and many were eager to tell us how they walk and bike to school already as part of the Safe Routes to Schools program.

To bring the Bike Blender to your middle school or high school, contact Peggy at 456-3469 ext. 6# or peggy@marinbike.org.

White Hill Students wait their turn at the Bike Blender. Photo by Peter Oppenheimer

MCBC – We’ve Come a Long Way



TEN YEARS AGO, road projects included no bike routes or route signs, no Share the Road signs, and no real bike lanes. The tunnels were being ignored. The North-South Bikeway was on the shelf. “Before MCBC” there was no Safe Routes to Schools program. Bicycles were looked at as a problem, especially on the mountain. You didn’t see droves of moms on their bikes doing errands with their kids. You didn’t see the level of respect for bicycles on the road that you see now. There were fewer bike lanes and less awareness, and hostility toward cyclists was common.

Before MCBC, there was not a cohesive citizen voice for pedestrians and cyclists. Now, MCBC is at the table at decision-making meetings, and bicycle criteria are part of the public-works planning. In the words of MCBC Board Advisor, Patrick Seidler, “Seeing MCBC getting involved was like seeing the cavalry come over the hill.”

Marin County has seen a profound change since MCBC was formed. The North-South Bikeway is now on the ballot with SMART. The county has more bicycle facilities, and there are hundreds more people on bicycles. MCBC has been able to improve the conditions for cyclists, and they’ll continue to benefit from our work in a huge way. MCBC has been doing the work, so you can take the ride.

How did it all begin?

In the winter of 1997-98, Jim Jacobsen and Chris Lang had an idea to do a bike map with money that was available through Marin County Open Space. Chris read in the Marin Cyclists’ newsletter about a “gaping hole” – lack of bicycle advocacy groups – in the North Bay. He called people together from several Marin organizations such as Bicycle Trails Council of Marin, Trips for Kids, North Bay Institute, and Velo Club Fairfax. Each group had its own fundraising projects, and they all agreed to support each other’s projects. Thus, the Marin County Bicycle Coalition was formed.

The organization has grown over the years from all volunteers, to a paid full time Executive Director who manages 13 staff. MCBC has continually outgrown its offices and meeting spaces. Early meetings were held at Bikadelic in Fairfax (now Bookbeat), then at the Fairfax Library, and now at the San Rafael Corporate Center meeting rooms.

We talked with ten people who have seen MCBC’s progress over the years. We asked them to share their insights and memories about MCBC’s work and successes.



Chris Lang, MCBC Founder

Chris Lang has been all over the county riding his bike. “MCBC has had impact on my life because I’ve spent so many hours working for it. MCBC has had impact on the county as it has raised the consciousness of the public regarding bike issues and bike safety. MCBC is now a regional and national leader thanks to people like Patrick Seidler [Board Advisor] and Deb Hubsmith [Advocacy Director], and because of the ideas thought of during the ‘90s.”

Originally MCBC was a 100% volunteer group; it took several meetings to become a member-based organization. Chris recalled that the group’s early days involved making the first Marin Bicycle Map and writing the newsletter. Jim Jacobsen and Chris contributed the seed money for the map with the goal to have it ready by Christmas 1998. It was unveiled in December as planned.

Chris has worked on innumerable MCBC projects, first and foremost being the founding of MCBC itself. He helped develop the map, worked on the Share the Road signage, helped create the Pedal Press and the Big Bike Bash member appreciation party. He was also the secondary organizer of MCBC’s first Netherlands trip (designed to inspire participants to replicate the Netherlands’ fantastic bicycle infrastructure in Marin), securing funding from the Resource Renewal Institute.

He has been an environmentalist since 1970 and a bike promoter since 1972. He co-founded Velo Club Tamalpais in 1972, also co-founded Friends of Tamarancho, and has put on many bike races over the years. He is currently working on the second phase of bike-rack installations in Fairfax. With all this, he says that “MCBC is the most successful thing I’ve ever supported.”

Steve Kinsey, County of Marin Supervisor

Supervisor Steve Kinsey believes that the Marin County Bicycle Coalition “has led the way to establish a national leadership role on bike/ped issues. These issues take an alignment of a variety of forces, with the core energy being from MCBC.” His work and advocacy has been inspired by MCBC. His lifestyle has been affected too—he uses his bike more.



In 1998 Kinsey went on the Netherlands trip, or as he calls it, “the ‘seeing is believing’ trip.” He saw what is possible for Marin. He saw the combination of determination and playfulness of the early MCBC characters.

Supervisor Kinsey has “watched MCBC

grow from a few dedicated volunteers to a highly effective nonprofit in our community. The future for MCBC holds more promise than the first decade. MCBC dusted off a vision from the 1970s and gave it renewed life. It brought a combination of focus and accountability to the public agencies regarding bicycle and pedestrian programs.”

Supervisor Kinsey was associated with some of the MCBC founders from the beginning. He was impressed with how they channeled their passion into a combination of education, advocacy, and managing projects.

Supervisor Kinsey is a loyal devotee to bike/ped issues, and has worked on virtually every project over this period, from getting bikes on buses to the Cal Park Hill Tunnel. He worked on the development of the Bicycle Master Plan. He was involved with the implementation of the Safe Routes to Schools program in Marin and with the funding for the original bicycle map. Throughout all of his involvement, he has always acknowledged that the vision and creativity come from MCBC.



Carsten Andersen, MCBC member and former president of Marin Cyclists

Carsten Andersen recalls that in MCBC’s early days, it was unclear to him what we were doing. Some thought that MCBC was mostly about mountain biking at first. But when Safe Routes to Schools was formed, the Marin Cyclists began to see that MCBC was doing something important, and officially supported that program. “The education process and working with teachers, schools, and parents is enormous. Getting back on bikes or walking has many benefits. Getting exercise is important. With Safe Routes to Schools, we can get to the kids and make biking to school fun.”

Anderson is pleased with MCBC’s ongoing education and promotion of bicycling. He feels that MCBC’s ability to “put pressure on cities to do bike lanes is massive.” MCBC’s “community-based work that you do every day is very important; it’s very commendable.”

Anderson believes that MCBC Executive Director Kim Baenisch has helped raise the profile of MCBC. She’s well organized and easy to work with. Carsten admires what she’s doing and what MCBC is doing. He says that “MCBC’s role in securing the Pilot Program designation is ‘mind-boggling good.’ Getting that grant for the county is huge.”

He feels that it’s good that we’ve developed relationships with the various county and city agencies, as we can’t get anywhere without investing time and energy in that. Carsten knows that Sir Francis Drake Blvd. through Samuel P. Taylor State Park will get worked on, but he’s grateful that MCBC is pushing for it. Such efforts look invisible because they take so long before completion.

Carsten got MCBC involved with the Marin Century, the “best century in California.” He’s very happy that we staff the rest stop at Nicasio School. He feels good about where MCBC and the Marin Cyclists are now, and says that there are “more things we can do together.” He hopes that the Marin Cyclists will sustain their high level of activity and fundraising so that they can donate more to organizations like MCBC.

Carsten is indeed a good friend of MCBC. While we were chatting, he promoted MCBC to his neighbor who happened to walk by Marin Coffee Roasters (another good friend of MCBC) where we were sitting. Who knows, we may get a new member.

Eric Anderson, former MCBC Director of Planning

“MCBC has made a huge impact on Marin County as a whole. By supporting efforts like the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program, the SMART rail-with-trail project and Measure A, the Coalition has supported the County’s climate-change responses and increased opportunities for active living.

“When I first started working at MCBC in 2003, we were still in the offices on Bolinas Road. Bob Trigg and I used to bump chairs, our office was so small! While I worked for it, the organization grew into new offices, expanding staff and growing programs such as Safe Routes to Schools and Share the Road. MCBC staff put the organization on the national map with funding efforts that are transforming the county. I’m very proud to have been part of this growth.

“When I first came to Marin to visit I fell in love with the easy access to nature and the relaxing, small-town feel. After spending years working with cyclists I developed a huge amount of respect for the local advocates in each town. MCBC really helped to bring people together.

“I remember the first time I met with a County Supervisor and Deb Hubsmith. I showed up on time but dressed in khakis and a polo shirt since I had biked from Fairfax. Deb was there early, dressed in a suit, sweatless and professional.



MCBC is the most successful thing I’ve ever supported.

– Chris Lang

The future for MCBC holds more promise than the first decade.

– Steve Kinsey

MCBC’s community-based work that you do every day is very important; it’s very commendable.

– Carsten Anderson

MCBC really helped to bring people together.

– Eric Anderson

MCBC is working to get the simple truth out that bicycling is a good way to get around. MCBC is doing a good service for Marin County.

– Joe Breeze

Very impressive. Needless to say I dressed up a bit more for meetings after that!

“My main projects were participating in big infrastructure, design, and construction projects and organizing MCBC’s local chapters in every city and town. I worked on the Countywide bike-route signage, the Lincoln Hill Pathway, the Measure A campaign, the SMART rail-with-trail, improving bicycle access to transit and countless small local bike-improvement projects. I also researched pilot communities in Europe for the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program and helped develop part of the Share the Road program.”



Joe Breeze, MCBC Board Advisor

Bicycle builder and mountain biking pioneer Joe Breeze says that “MCBC is spearheading a movement to give the citizens of Marin a better way to get around in our daily lives, a way that gives us health while we get where we go. Bikes are healthy—they increase personal, environmental, and fiscal health. They are the most efficient vehicle ever devised for personal transport. As popular as biking is today in America, I see it as still essentially a secret. I see it growing to be ten times bigger over the coming years. While \$20 billion a year is spent on car advertising, MCBC is working to get the simple truth out that bicycling is a good way to get around. MCBC is doing a good service for Marin County.”

Joe grew up in Marin County and has been riding his bike to get around Marin since he was in third grade. When he was a fifth grader, he and his friends rode from Mill Valley to the Greenbrae Lanes; they were so proud of their adventure. They would go on to ride on Mt. Tam. Joe didn’t get his driver’s license until the age of 26, because he rode his bike everywhere. Bicycle transportation has long been Joe’s focus, and he has had a serious interest in how roads are built. He was drawing bike-path scenarios at age 17, and went to Holland in 1971.

Cycling interest grew in the 1970s—a “bike boom” as Joe called it—but many people were still intimidated about riding on the roadways. By then, people were thinking about the need for bike paths. Joe pointed out that MCBC member Gerry Coles was instrumental in getting the Tiburon bike path installed. Mike Howe, who was at the first MCBC meeting in 1998, tried to get the Cross Marin Trail built, said Joe— and it’s now built through Samuel P. Taylor State Park.

Joe was also involved with Velo Club Tamalpais (VCT) in the 1970s. One of its interests was to improve everyday

bicycling. VCT members visited schools to teach bike safety. Another club goal was to develop a bicycle map – this effort was headed up by Joe. This map idea planted the seed for the MCBC’s Marin Bicycle Map.

A big change, says Joe, came in 1991 when Congressman Oberstar got \$1 billion for walking and biking for the following six years through the ISTEA-1991 Transportation Bill. Only \$40 million had been spent on bike/ped issues for the 20 years before that. The bill also said that all states had to have a bike/ped coordinator. Bicycle coalitions began springing up all over the country.

Critical Mass resurged in San Francisco and this had some positive repercussions. It encouraged camaraderie among cyclists; a few rides were held in Marin, and eventually led to the birth of MCBC.

Joe was a founding MCBC member and he has always been a member of the MCBC Advisory Board. He attended MCBC’s first meeting at Bikadelic on April 1, 1998. Later, Joe helped craft the MCBC mission statement – “Promoting Safe Bicycling for Everyday Transportation and Recreation.” He saw that transportation was the biggest growth area of bicycling. Bicycle infrastructure, he said, would give the “biggest bang for the buck”; it would be a fiscally responsible way to help people get around.

The list of MCBC projects that Joe Breeze has been involved with is incredible. He has worked on the “nuts and bolts” of suitable ways to get around the county by bike. He did extensive research, planning, drawings and mapping for prospective county bike routes, always as an unpaid advisor.

Joe has spent about 2500 hours in designing and revising MCBC’s Marin Bicycle Map (all volunteer hours, although he himself did not mention that fact). The first edition was unveiled in December 1998 at Bikadelic. Joe remembers that it snowed that day in Fairfax. He recalls Michael Jones and Kristen Drumm, who helped with the map, being there too.

Joe also developed the schematic map for the county’s bike-route-signage project. He feels that these route signs are very helpful for wayfaring through the county.

Joe was part of the initial group that went to Washington, DC in the year 2000 and essentially secured the Safe Routes pilot program for Marin. He remembers carrying large graphics for key projects in Marin. They met with Congressman Oberstar, and Joe has visited Oberstar’s office two or three more times over the years. That initial trip, recalls Joe, “started the ball rolling toward Marin being awarded the \$25 million Pilot Program grant. Incidentally, Joe’s son, Tommy (now in high school), was part of the “first graduating class” that came through the Safe Routes program.

As if all that wasn’t enough, Joe headed up the bicycle exhibit at the 2000 Marin County Fair, designing the show and making most of its structures. He designed and built the MCBC tunnel float. He used to staff the Fairfax Bike to Work Day Energizer Station each year. He designed the Marin Bike to Work Day banners still used today. And the beautiful mural with the Breeze signature that has hung in the MCBC offices since its days in Bolinas Plaza? That’s by Joe’s nephew Greg Breeze. Joe donated it to the MCBC.

Cindy Winter, MCBC's bicycle ambassador 'extraordinaire'...

"In the early 1990s I cycled three times a week from my condo on South Eliseo to College of Marin and back again, taking the path along Corte Madera Creek. It was rare to see another rider, and only a few bikes were parked at the college.



"I was taking art classes there, and bungee-recorded all my materials, even large sketch boards, to the rear rack. When it rained, double plastic trash bags, what else?

I sensed that my fellow art students, who tended to fancy themselves a bit eccentric, thought I was downright weird. My other friends and acquaintances hinted the same, though usually they were too polite to say much of anything.

"Today, when I cycle out of my driveway, I have to watch not only for cars, but for other riders, too. I believe MCBC has been a prime mover behind this change. Younger and stronger cyclists regularly pass me on the same route, and I nod to as many more who pedal in the opposite direction. The number of bicycles parked at the college has greatly increased.

"Because I'm retired, when I'm cycling on daily errands I can take the time to stop and chat with some of the many, many riders I now meet all up and down the Ross Valley. So many enthusiasts, such a desire for safe and convenient bike routes! My friends are beginning to ride, or if not, at least to start to talk about buying a bike. Even inveterate drivers voice more support for bikeways, more acceptance of cycling as alternate transportation.

"I'm delighted and proud to be an MCBC member."

Charles McGlashan, County of Marin Supervisor

Supervisor Charles McGlashan believes that "MCBC has impacted the community in ways that are still subtle to see, but very soon will become obvious." He is so happy to be here to see the fruition of MCBC's work. Both of the hills on his route to the Civic Center will be easier to ride, thanks to MCBC.

McGlashan can see the difference in the size of the MCBC constituency as measured by the size of its parties. He remembers early parties and meetings held at the WTB office in Mill Valley. MCBC is too big for that now.

Since MCBC's formation, Supervisor McGlashan now sees massive momentum to a healthier lifestyle. "Affordable housing will be easier when more people are able to ride their bikes more. Good values are blocked by car gridlock, but towns get quieter with more sidewalks and markets. We wouldn't have to worry about in-fill development with increased bicycling because we'd get rid of the traffic. The



first boogeyman to any project is cars. There is poor use of space due to cars." He feels that MCBC "is a critical partner to getting cars off the roads"—we could then do "good" in-fill. "We need to talk traffic relief before we talk development."

He recalls sitting in his office looking at the site plan for the Gap Closure project with the Transportation Authority of Marin director; they were looking at why the bike path couldn't be built. He gained a serious understanding of the series of roadblocks that MCBC has had to knock down over the years. He has seen "the fortitude and patience of MCBC and their smart thinking" when it comes to dealing with roadblocks. For example, the "freight guys" just threw another roadblock at the SMART project; MCBC was McGlashan's right arm for fighting that roadblock. The MCBC staff is "bright, hopeful, and pleasant."

McGlashan says that politicians can often help bring a fresh perspective to an issue, but a critical factor for success has been the long-lived personalities of the organization knowing what it's doing.

In the summer of 2005, the supervisor flew the red-eye from San Francisco to the Netherlands, arriving at his hotel at 8:00 AM. He was confronted by Patrick Seidler and Deb Hubsmith. The three were together for eight or nine hours. In that time, they showed McGlashan "the vision" and he "ended up flying high because he saw the vision; they brightened his day."

When Marin was designated as a Pilot Program community, McGlashan recalls the "hurry-up offense" that he and Deb did one week in 2005 when they visited a series of Washington, DC, Congressional offices. That intense effort leap-frogged to the local efforts. Deb's single focus was essential to Marin's designation.

The day of McGlashan's interview for this article, he was going to be doing a site walk for a Tennessee Valley pathway and Manzanita connection. He said that that would not have happened without the federal designation of Marin as a Pilot Program community.

Steve Wyrostock, former MCBC Board member

Steve Wyrostock has lived in Marin County for 15 years. Early on, he started to see the possibilities for bicycling in Marin. He saw what wasn't and what could be. He realized that the streets were ride-able and that bike commuting was do-able. There were already people riding bikes, but organizing took a while to get going. Cyclists got organized to a certain level, and then got more organized. Steve began to realize the real possibility of making bikes the widespread tool of

It's hard to keep a marriage going for ten years. MCBC has managed to keep a ten-year marriage going with staff, Board, and policymakers. Happy Anniversary, MCBC!

— Charles McGlashan

I'm delighted and proud to be an MCBC member.

— Cindy Winter

MCBC has long been around raising awareness.

– Steve Wyrostock



members when everyone “was starting to get on the same page.” The group needed to understand its limitations; they had many big ideas but couldn’t do all of them. They went “from disorganization to focused unified vision.” MCBC, he says, went from a group that worked on issues from the outside to a working with the agencies. It went from a short-range planning perspective to a long-range planning perspective.

Wyrostock commented that MCBC was first perceived as a mountain-biking group because it was going to work on both road and mountain bike issues. It decided to concentrate on road issues and focus on recreation/transportation advocacy. It didn’t want to appear too controversial and it didn’t want to be a bike club. An early grant application drove the decision to focus on infrastructure and education. The first year was about focusing. Steve says that the level of the organization’s sophistication has increased with that of all bike-advocacy groups. Effectiveness has increased, and that gets more people involved.

Of MCBC’s Executive Director, he notes that “Kim Baenisch is calm and level-headed and she’s good at bringing everyone together. She’s a good listener and is good at working with different personality types. She provides a good balance to the staff.”

Steve was one of the MCBC’s founding Board members. He was the secretary at first, then the vice president. He was there when the first meeting was held in his Fairfax Bikadelic store and when the meetings moved to the Fairfax Library.

Steve designed the original Pedal Press newsletter. He was its first editor. He developed the original MCBC web site. He helped with the original logo design. He worked on the “before/after” graphics tiles for the Cal Park Hill Tunnel, the Corte Madera Creek Trestle, and SMART rail-with-trail project.

Steve recalls many unique individuals at the Board, Advisory Board, and member meetings. He says that it was great to have a wide range of people with a wide range of viewpoints. Everyone seemed to have their specialties. MCBC was full of characters who were experts about certain things and were also passionate cyclists.

Steve told me that everyone “wanted to bottle Debbie” for her unbridled energy in the early years. They wanted to spray that energy on others. He fondly remembers a skit they did for her 30th birthday celebration at China Camp. He played former staff member Chris Davis. Deb loved it.

Steve was impressed with Joe Breeze’s diligence about crafting the words for the MCBC slogan. What they meant

transportation and recreation.

Steve says, “MCBC changed from an individual effort to a grassroots group effort to a larger advocacy organization. The organization has definitely morphed over the ten years.” He remembers

was influenced by the order of the words. Joe considered the perception from the outside.

Steve gave the following examples of projects (not all official MCBC projects), to show the type of people who were involved with MCBC in the early years. He pointed out that they’re still involved:

WTB/TAM was really instrumental in projects and fact-finding Netherlands trips to help people learn the possibilities.

- Supervisor Kinsey was the first Supervisor to understand what MCBC was about and to support us on the county level. He helped give MCBC credibility at the county level.
- Joe Breeze single-handedly did the map.
- Ken Eichstaedt single-handedly drove the process for the bike lanes on Bridgeway in Sausalito. He also did the plan for restriping the Larkspur Ferry Terminal parking lot so that they would keep the bike path.
- Deb Hubsmith was instrumental in getting bike racks on the buses.

Wyrostock sees that MCBC has long been raising awareness; fortunately it was in place when the gas prices started skyrocketing. It’s becoming “cool” to ride a bike, as it is to own a Prius. We’re seeing Xtra-cycles becoming more popular as they’re purpose-built utility vehicles. He says that there is a new generation of transportation cyclists; he sees it with newer commute and hybrid bikes.

With the growth of Safe Routes to Schools, Steve says, it’s natural now to do errands on a bike while the kids are at school. People have figured out how to have their bikes ready at a moment’s notice. Like an umbrella, a bike can be ready to go. Habits have been changed. Safe Routes has spawned more transportation trips than before.

Steve lives on Lansdale Avenue, which is the main bike route between Fairfax and San Anselmo. He has seen the number of riders change in just the last five years. “It’s pretty amazing... now there’s 300 or 400 a day during the week and about 1500 over the weekend. It’s all starting to come together.”

Stephen Hesson, MCBC Board member

“The MCBC has brought to the community’s cumulative attention that bicycling is a viable means of transportation, not simply a tool for recreation, and that we’re serious about our goals and ambitions. All of the improvements that MCBC has brought to the County through funding sources—pathways and streets—benefit cyclists.

“Over ten years as a grassroots organization, MCBC has helped secure \$65 million for Marin County and about \$650 million on the national level,” says Hesson. It’s given him great pleasure to see MCBC’s successes. It’s made him a better citizen. He sees himself as an ambassador, making him more courteous and a better driver. He sees his “Share the Road” sign in his truck every time he drives.

Stephen is MCBC’s longest-serving Board member. He joined MCBC in 2000 and was elected to the Board in 2001. His previous public service work had been during college. MCBC has taught him to work better with people



and bureaucracies, and how to go through the maze of government paperwork and mindsets.

Stephen watched as Wendi Kallins created Safe Routes to Schools under MCBC's umbrella. It was a valuable program to bring into the fold. Congressman Oberstar came out to see Safe Routes and now it's a national program.

The biggest change, Stephen recalls, was when Kim Bae-nisch took over as Executive Director. The Board became more engaged and active in its direction of the organization. Stephen also remembers the changes in offices. He noted that the first office on Bolinas Road was so small "you had to go outside to change your mind."

Stephen noted that MCBC's efforts to make buses and ferries more bike-friendly has increased multi-modal transportation. Many tourists can be seen riding bikes that they've rented in San Francisco. They'll often ride the ferry to Sausalito, cycle to Tiburon, and take the ferry back to San Francisco.

Stephen met Chris Lang at one of the first "Cece" rides. He gives Chris kudos for his vision in the early days, getting MCBC started and for getting Deb as the first executive director.

Stephen recalls that Heidi Adler had a lot of energy and enthusiasm. He says that "Deb had an unbridled enthusiasm that got us to where we are today. MCBC wouldn't have gotten halfway to where it is without her."

Stephen enjoyed Steve Wyrostock as a Board member. He also has the highest regard for former Board member Nancy Weninger. He liked the way she did things. She taught him how to work with people.

In 2001, Stephen took over as Marin's Bike to Work Day Coordinator, and acted in that role for five years. He remembers loading his truck with all the giveaways for the musette bags and the energizer stations.

He worked on the Share the Road campaign with Malcolm Foster. He was a member of the Share the Road poster distribution committee; the eye-catching poster with Lance Armstrong was the brain child of a task force. Stephen also worked on the Share the Road sign program.

A short-lived program that Stephen was involved with was the American Red Cross Cycle Corps, an organization of emergency/disaster response teams on bikes that could be activated in the case of a local disaster.

Stephen has been the Valet Bicycle Parking Coordinator since 2001, and will be retiring from that position at the end of the 2008 bike-parking season. MCBC's bike parking program was started by Jim Jacobson and Chris Lang. It expanded from two or three events in the beginning, to 27 events currently. MCBC now has one of the finest mobile

bike parking facilities on the West Coast, in demand by many event organizers.

Stephen has donated his skills as a cabinetmaker at the MCBC office, from shelf installation to minor remodeling projects. He even built the group's first tunnel float, using PVC pipe, a tarp, and freshly cut greenery.

Patrick Seidler, MCBC Board Advisor

For Patrick and TAM (Transportation Alternatives for Marin), MCBC has had "an extremely positive" impact through the last 10 years. "It's been a tremendously rewarding experience to work with MCBC on a multitude of bicycle and pedestrian projects throughout the county; to work with people who have common vision, values and aspiration—to provide a place for our children to recreate, for people to get back and forth to work and to do errands."

MCBC has also raised the community consciousness level, according to Seidler. "If the infrastructure projects get built that are being planned, there will be another evolution of consciousness



shift, created by the success of the projects. An example of MCBC's success that's changed consciousness has been Safe Routes to School—the most successful pedestrian/bicycle program in the history of the United States."

Patrick commented that "Chris Lang did an extremely effective job at getting MCBC initiated and identifying its need. He galvanized people together to pull the MCBC together.

Before MCBC, there was not a cohesive citizen voice for pedestrians and cyclists. TAM had started its work on pedestrian and bicycle transportation in 1993 and worked solo for several years. "Seeing MCBC getting involved was like seeing the cavalry come over the hill because TAM felt like they were the 'lone soldier' out there fighting a lot of battles on a lot of fronts."

Working with the current advocacy staff is another key change that he has seen. "MCBC really has it right" with David Hoffman, Andy Peri, and Deb Hubsmith. It's a great core group reaching out to other advocates in local communities. The MCBC advocacy staff and Patrick work on a diverse range of projects. "They include the Miller Avenue plan in Mill Valley; SMART rail with trail; the North-South Bikeway through San Rafael and Las Gallinas; and the North-South Greenway project from Mission Ave. to Mahon Creek Path; and more projects than you can imagine throughout the county. The only thing that's scary is that there are a lot more projects that we should be involved with and there's more staff time that's needed."

Patrick believes that once some of these projects are done, the community will see the added value of having non-motorized safe passage through key areas of the county.

next few years will be extremely successful. He's looking forward to enjoying it all with his young daughter.

I think MCBC is making the world a better place, starting here in our own backyard. I think it's important that we acknowledge and understand the 3 C's: Courtesy, Communication, and Cooperation.

– Stephen Hesson

It's been rewarding to be part of the scene of making our community a better place.

– Patrick Seidler

MCBC Cheers Marin Century Riders



It's so much fun helping with the Marin Century that MCBC once again hosted the rest stop at Nicasio School for the 2008 event, on August 2nd. The day flew by as approximately 2700 cyclists made brief visits to the station, where they enjoyed good food—including brie cheese—good drink, and plenty of encouraging words from the cheerful volunteers throughout the day.

The MCBC provided bike racks to more than one rest stop at the Century, and cyclists were grateful to avoid having to lay their bikes on the ground. More than 20 hard-working volunteers helped out in Nicasio with setup, food prepara-

tion, tabling, breakdown, and cheerleading. They must have made 500 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches!

Many of the cyclists visited the Marin County Bicycle Coalition's table, where they were able to learn more about MCBC's work and enter a raffle to win a new WTB Silverado saddle (thanks, WTB!). Through Century registrations and tabling at the event, MCBC gained 66 new members.

As always, it was a great experience partnering with the Marin Cyclists. We plan to take our rest station up a level next year. Be sure to register early next year, as it's sure to sell out.



MCBC Learns about Innovative Facilities at ProWalk/ProBike



By David Hoffman, MCBC Director of Planning

More than 800 bicycle and pedestrian professionals, including planners, advocates and government officials, recently met in Seattle for the 2008 ProWalk/ProBike Conference. Every two years, ProWalk/ProBike brings people together to learn about and share the latest developments in bicycle and pedestrian facility design, safety improvements, laws, and industry trends and developments. MCBC staff brought back great information regarding new and innovative facilities and treatments for bicyclists and pedestrians—facilities that we hope to be able to implement in new projects here in Marin County.

Marin County was well represented at this year's ProWalk/ProBike. The Marin County Bicycle Coalition sent four

staff members: Kim Baenisch, Deb Hubsmith, Wendi Kalins, and David Hoffman. Dan Dawson, Principal Transportation Planner for the County of Marin, also attended; Dan gave an update on Marin's Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program (NTPP).

Marin County received special mention from Congressman Jim Oberstar (D-MN) during his closing plenary speech. Congressman Oberstar is Chairman of the House Transportation Committee, which has overseen the 1991 Federal Transportation Bill and subsequent reauthorizations. Congressman Oberstar highlighted the pioneering work done in Marin County for bicyclists and pedestrians through Safe Routes to School and the NTPP. He noted that these programs are helping to inform and shape the future of transportation funding in the country.

Riding Your Bike Instead of Paying for Gas?



Thousands Visited MCBC's Checkpoints for Road-Sharing Tips

All summer, MCBC saw a steady increase in bicycle riders of all kinds, and now school is back in session. Bicycle riders will continue to increase in response to high gas prices. Are you dusting off your garaged steed to start using it again? In May and July, approximately 2200 motorists and 600 cyclists were provided with Share the Road materials at four Checkpoints. We hosted three more Checkpoints in September for back-to-school awareness raising, reaching another 600 motorists and 235 cyclists. Each year, MCBC's goal is to continue reaching more people. Our slogan for the Checkpoints: Get educated; don't get ticketed!

The Checkpoints provide educational literature in a friendly atmosphere, sharing the word about the ways everyone can safely and conscientiously share the roads. Uniformed officers and MCBC volunteers provide Share the Road flyers to

motorists and cyclists that pass through each Checkpoint. The flyers contain California Vehicle Code information, Codes of Conduct for bicyclists and motorists to foster respect for each other, plus safety and courtesy tips.

MCBC Executive Director Kim Baenisch said, "MCBC has seen an increase in all kinds of bicycle riders this year. The high cost of gas, along with public awareness of transportation's role as a primary greenhouse-gas contributor, is fueling this shift. To ensure the public's safety as more vehicles and bicycles use the roads, we're providing safety tips through our Checkpoints. It's a friendly way to communicate life-saving messages."

Learn more about safe cycling and driving at www.marin-bike.org; click on "Share the Road."

Robert Vallas Featured Bike Rider



Robert Vallas's story is inspirational. In 2006, three months after having heart surgery, Robert was bike commuting to work from San Anselmo to San Francisco, a 29-mile round trip on the bike, even with the ferry ride in the morning. Robert credits his quick recovery mostly to the fact that he was already in good shape from cycling; he had been bicycle commuting since 1998.

Born with a bicuspid aortic valve, Robert was diagnosed with an aortic aneurysm in December of 2005. A 12-hour

operation the next April (a "valve-sparing aortic root replacement") repaired the tissue. Robert began bike commuting again on July 1, and by August he was on his bike for every commute day. (He commutes three days a week and works at home two days.)

Robert commutes by bike for many reasons. At the top of the list is the environment: "The best gas mileage is when the car's sitting in the driveway." It's also good exercise, and getting his exercise on his commute allows him to spend more time with his family. He has twin 6-year-old daughters. Cycling can relieve the frustrations of a long day at work; he likens it to therapy. Plus, it gives him a sense of accomplishment.

Preparation is the key for Robert's commute. He rides to Larkspur to catch the 5:50 AM ferry; much needs to be made ready the night before. He's always prepared for weather conditions. "I'm a weather junkie," he says. "The Weather Service is my friend." Even though, as he says, the weather here is never too extreme, he uses layers based on the temperature marks. He also has strap-on fenders and a Gore-Tex jacket in case of rain. He prepares himself mentally for wind on the ride home. It's less windy in the fall and winter, he says—"my favorite time of the year."

Most important is to just do it. "I tell myself, 'once you get out there it'll be fine.' If I don't do it one day, I feel guilty." Robert says that "anyone can do it: maybe not all the time, maybe not as fast." At the beginning, "Make a plan: start with small goals... and do it all the time. If you stick with it, it becomes a part of your lifestyle, and then it becomes easy."

The best gas mileage is when the car's sitting in the driveway.

– Robert Vallas

CAL PARK TUNNEL & SMART RALLY [CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

component of the North-South Greenway, the Cal Park Hill Tunnel will provide a safe and flat route to get people out of their cars, making it faster to bike between San Rafael and Larkspur Landing than to drive.

Speakers at the groundbreaking included Supervisor Charles McGlashan, Supervisor Steve Kinsey, SMART Director Lillian Hames, MCBC's Deb Hubsmith, and County Engineer Craig Tackabery. Deb Hubsmith said, "The Cal Park Hill Tunnel represents a vision of the future we are working to build, where people will be able to get around on feet, through bikes, and by public transit, leaving the automobile at home. This project creates the opportunity for us to do something healthy for ourselves, our community, and the planet."

Following the speeches, the presenters and Marin County Public Works Director Farhad Mansourian all moved shovels of dirt, representing the start of this historic project.

The Cal Park Hill Tunnel event was attended not only by locals, but by residents of the three other communities selected by Congress to serve (along with Marin) in the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program. This federal demonstration project is intended to show how walking and bicycling can improve mobility, safety, health and

the environment. Also in attendance were representatives from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Marin County Bicycle Coalition thanks the County of Marin, Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit and all of the other agency partners, elected officials, engineers and volunteers that have been involved in holding the vision of re-opening the Cal Park Hill Tunnel and working to make it a reality.



VOLUNTEERS ARE THE BACKBONE OF MCBC.

A list of who's been helping MCBC is available at: www.marinbike.org/Volunteer/Thanks.shtml

BIKE HEROES

Part two of our thumbnail sketches of local nominees for “Bike Commuter of the Year.” We hope you’ll be inspired to Decide to Ride!

FREDDIE BLOOM



I feel better when I get to work; I feel very invigorated.

– Freddie Bloom

Freddie Bloom isn't a hardcore cyclist. On her commute from Fairfax to the Marin County Civic Center, she avoids the steep Fawn Drive and chooses to ride through downtown San Rafael and past Dominican College. She says she's "not nuts about speed," but with dedication and perseverance she's become a committed bike commuter.

She's been bike commuting 20 years on her converted Univega mountain bike, purchased secondhand at the Re-Cyclery. She started bike commuting during the winter months just last year; when she's not up to riding home in the dark, she straps her bike onto a bus for the trip home. Surprisingly, even going the long way through San Rafael, the time to bike is about the same as driving in rush hour traffic.

"[Bike commuting] gives me some time to think," Freddie says. "If I'm nervous about work, crawling up the hills is really good. I feel better when I get to work; I feel very

invigorated. [It's] the one consistent exercise that I get. I'm a very energy-conscious person; I feel very smug about it." She also participates in the County's Green Commute Program, which rewards employees who don't use single-occupant motor vehicles to get to work with a \$4-per-day stipend.

For those considering getting started with bike commuting, Freddie recommends that they find somebody in their neighborhood they can cycle with, and start small. The ride home is a better bet, since you can take breaks like stopping for coffee on the way.

Freddie also recommends two unusual equipment choices. On hot days, she soaks a chambray shirt to wear on the way home. "Floating down Lincoln I feel like I'm air conditioned." She's also a proponent of a "rat trap" spring-loaded clip on her cargo rack, so she can easily and safely attach cargo without needing a backpack.

JOHN SCHLAG



Drive or take a bus partway to help get up to speed, and do a pilot run.

– John Schlag

John Schlag bike-commutes eight miles from downtown Novato to Hamilton Landing every day. His commitment to bicycling goes beyond his commute. Besides bike commuting and volunteering regularly with MCBC—going to public meetings and helping with Valet Bike Parking events—he led a family team in this year's Team Bike Challenge, and they placed 5th in Marin County.

Team XYXXX (representing four "x" and one "y" chromosome and pronounced "ZIZ-icks") consisted of John, his girlfriend Jennifer, and her three daughters, Susan, Maggie, and Sarah. Biking is a family affair for them. Their team finished fifth even though the daughters could bike only half the time (the other days being spent with their father). John contributed by finding excuses to bicycle every day. Some days he'd run errands such as going to the store on his bike. When traveling on business, he'd ride his bike to

the Airporter. And on one trip, he rented a bike in Portland to make sure he logged his miles!

John says he has commuted by bike "all my life." He's used a bike since his college days, and "on every job I could." He cites exercise as the main reason he bike commutes, and the time he saves by not having to otherwise work out. To keep his ride fresh, he uses several different routes to get to work. He also rides very defensively: "I look out for the cars, because they're not looking for me."

He recommends that prospective bike commuters "get a bike that fits you, and get the equipment you need for it: panniers, backpack. Take a good look at your route. Don't try to do it all the first day. Drive or take a bus partway to help get up to speed, and do a pilot run. Also, have a strategy for cleaning up. A shower at work helps."

MAGGIE NELSON



"It makes you go faster."

– Maggie Nelson

When I arrived at Maggie Nelson's house in San Anselmo, her neighbor asked me why I had ridden my bike there from Fairfax. Maggie answered for me. She said that it was because when you drive a car, it melts the ice for the polar bears. While the finer points of global warming are over the head of any five-year-old, it was encouraging to hear this one begin to identify the correlation between her bicycle riding and the world environment.

Maggie started bike commuting last year on a tandem extension, when she was in pre-school. It was a short ride—only a few miles—but a long way for five-year-old legs, even on a tandem extension. But Maggie was very enthusiastic. As her father writes, "There are no bike paths... and we go during the main morning commute, so things can be a little scary. But she never flinches. In fact, her favorite part of the ride is crossing Sir Francis Drake (the busiest street),

where she gets to hop off the bike and press the crosswalk button."

This year's commute to Brookside Lower is shorter, but Maggie hasn't lost her enthusiasm. She's graduated to a Trail-a-Bike, and she's looking forward to getting fenders installed so she can ride in wet weather.

Maggie prefers riding because "it makes you go faster" than walking. And she loves to tell people how great transportation bicycling is. She often has insisted on riding, even on days when her parents are less enthusiastic. And she asks her friends to ride, too. In fact, she won a new bicycle last year in a contest at her school for her commitment to riding. She's looking forward to the day when she can graduate from the Trail-a-Bike to riding her own bike to school, so she can get there entirely under her own power, every day.

Featured Bike Shop: Bikes and Beans

China Camp Bikes and Beans, which opened in April 2008, is the newest bike shop in Marin. One mile from the entrance to the China Camp State Park, the shop is the perfect stop on the way to or from a ride. Owner Justin Schwartz spent 16 years in the cycling industry and nine years racing on the NORBA circuit before finding the ideal location to fulfill his lifelong dream of opening his own bike shop.

Bikes and Beans is a full-service shop with rentals. It also features an espresso bar, so you can fuel up on a killer cup of organic, locally roasted coffee whether or not you need a quick repair on your bike. Their product lines include Surley, Salsa, Black Market, On One, Fox, Shimano, Sombrio and, of course, De La Paz organic coffee.

This winter Justin plans on presenting a wheel-building class. Call the shop at (415) 507-1992 for details.

Justin coaches the Terra Linda High School Mountain Bike Team. The shop supports many of the local schools with China Camp Bikes and Beans, which opened in April 2008, is the newest bike shop in Marin. One mile from the entrance to the China Camp State Park, the shop is the perfect stop on the way to or from a ride. Owner Justin Schwartz spent 16 years in the cycling industry and nine years racing on the NORBA circuit before finding the ideal location to fulfill his lifelong dream of opening his own bike shop.

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This winter Justin plans on presenting a wheel-building class. Call the shop at (415) 507-1992 for details. Justin coaches the Terra Linda High School Mountain Bike Team. The shop supports many of the local schools with donations and services, and participates in yearly fundraising auctions. Justin also makes bicycle art: check out the shop's pedicab when you're in the neighborhood.

Visit the store in person at 292 San Pedro Road, or online at <http://www.chinacampbikesandbeans.com>.



JOIN US

MCBC Membership Form

OR JOIN ONLINE:
www.marinbike.org

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Street / PO Box _____

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\$40 Regular \$250 Tour de France \$2,500 Titanium Spoke
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For Century members and above select your t-shirt size: S ___ M ___ L ___

Do not share my name with other organizations

Make checks payable to: Marin County Bicycle Coalition, P.O. Box 1115, Fairfax, CA 94978

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I want to volunteer!

Attending public meetings
 Advocacy in your town
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 Events
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 Safe Routes to Schools
 Share the Road
 Staffing an information table
 Valet bicycle parking
 Other _____

MCBC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER

- 11*** 9 AM – 4 PM Oktoberfest, Brookside Lower School, San Anselmo
- 15** 1:30 – 3:30 PM SMART Board Meeting, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors' Chambers, 575 Administration Dr, Room 100A, Santa Rosa
- 18*** 11 AM – 6 PM Biketoberfest, Fair-Anselm Plaza parking lots, 765 Center Blvd, Fairfax
- 23** 7:00 PM TAM Meeting, Board of Supervisors/Planning Chambers, Marin County Civic Center, Room 329, 3501 Civic Center Dr, San Rafael

NOVEMBER

- 6** 6:30 - 9 PM Bicycle Trails Council General Meeting, Iron Springs Brewpub, 765a Center Blvd., Fairfax
- 10** 6 – 9 PM MCBC Board Meeting, Boro Room, San Rafael Corporate Center, 750 Lindaro St., San Rafael
- 19** 1:30 – 3:30 PM SMART Board Meeting, San Rafael City Council Chambers, City Hall, 1400 Fifth St., San Rafael, CA
- 20** 6:30 – 8:30 PM Basic Street Skills Class, Marin General Hospital Conference Center, 250 Bon Air Road, Greenbrae
- 20** 7:00 PM TAM Meeting, Board of Supervisors/Planning Chambers, Marin County Civic Center, Room 329, 3501 Civic Center Dr, San Rafael
- 22*** 10 AM – 5 PM Manor School Winter Faire, Manor School, 150 Oak Manor Dr, Fairfax
- 28** Day after Thanksgiving: Ride off that turkey dinner!

DECEMBER

- 4** 6:30 - 9 PM Bicycle Trails Council General Meeting, Iron Springs Brewpub, 765a Center Blvd., Fairfax
- 7** 2 – 6 PM Brews, Bikes, and Bucks: Trips for Kids fundraiser. Broken Drum Brewery, 1132 Fourth Street, San Rafael
- 17** 1:30 – 3:30 PM SMART Board Meeting, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors' Chambers, 575 Administration Dr, Room 100A, Santa Rosa
- 18** 7:00 PM TAM Meeting, Board of Supervisors/Planning Chambers, Marin County Civic Center, Room 329, 3501 Civic Center Dr, San Rafael
- 22** Hannukah begins: Work off the latkes with a bike ride!
- 25** Christmas Day: Hope you get lots of gear and accessories!



**SAFE ROUTES
TO SCHOOLS**
MARIN COUNTY

**Bike Blender
Gets more
Kids on Bikes**

[see page 5](#)

Program implemented by the
Marin County Bicycle Coalition and administered by the
Transportation Authority of Marin.

* MCBC Valet Bike Parking event

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