

The Spokesman

T R I - C I T Y B I C Y C L E C L U B

SAVE A TREE!

If you request, the Spokesman will be emailed to those TCBC members who want to opt out of receiving the paper version. Send a message to the webmaster (info@tricitybicycleclub.org) to state your preference for an electronic version.

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TAKING THE LANE

Several recent incidents involving cyclists, including several club members, point to a frequent habit that gets cyclists in trouble. This ineffective approach to negotiating streets and roads impairs a cyclist's ability to maintain the intended course and avoid situations where a motorist tries to occupy the space needed by the cyclist.

The poor habit is hugging the curb. A cyclist riding close to the edge of the road has nowhere to go when a drastic maneuver is needed. This is especially bad on curbed streets, where impacting the curb could throw the cyclist back into traffic. The practice has the undesired effect of

"inviting" motorists to pass when there is really no room to do so safely. The law in Washington (RCW 46.61.770) states that "Every person operating a bicycle upon a roadway at a rate of speed less than the normal flow of traffic at the particular time and place shall ride as near to the right side of the right through lane as is safe except as may be appropriate while preparing to make or while making turning movements, or while overtaking and passing another bicycle or vehicle proceeding

in the same direction..."

The phrase "as is safe" is the most important part of the cited statute. Contrary to the notions of many cyclists and most motorists, it is not safe to ride on the edge of the road or close to the curb. There are many reasons that this practice is not safe. The farther away from the traffic lane, the more the road is cluttered with debris, gravel, broken glass, etc., any of which could cause loss of control of the bike.



"It is not safe to ride on the edge of the road or close to the curb"

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NEW OFFICERS NEEDED

The terms of the officers comprising the Board of the TCBC expire at the end of January. Two of the positions, President and Treasurer, have been filled by the same people for four years or more. Ed would like to become a Past-President and John would like to focus on other club duties

instead of Treasurer/Membership. The Tri-Cities Bicycle Club is a Washington State corporation and must have a President, Secretary, and Treasurer in order to function legally. Further, incorporation is required for the club to be insured by the carrier, American Specialty Insurance,

who provides low-cost liability and accident insurance for clubs affiliated with the League of American Bicyclists.

Help keep TCBC viable and strong. Step up and become an important part of keeping a 21-year tradition alive.

BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

Started by George Kyriazis, Carl Berkowitz, and John Ittner over a year ago, the campaign to gain Bicycle Friendly Community recognition for the Tri-Cities is gaining momentum thanks to a local service club and some noted Tri-City figures. Because the group is not fully formed and the supporting groups have not yet inked any agreements, the details are being kept under wraps. Expect an announcement in the coming months.

Bicycle Friendly Communities is a program started over ten years ago by the League of American Bicyclists to provide recognition to communities that incorporate features and

programs that make bicycling a better choice for commuters, school children, and recreational cyclists. So far, the City of Richland has completed its application to League of American Bicyclists and the submission is under review. The details provided by Richland, when compared to other cities awarded Bicycle Friendly Communities status, showed a possible. Unfortunately, Richland did not make the first-round cut and will need to re-apply next year. Higher levels are Silver, Gold and Platinum. Current Washington communities that have received Bicycle Friendly Community awards include Bainbridge, Liberty Lake, Port Townsend, Redmond and Vancouver

in the Bronze category, Bellingham and Olympia in the Silver category, and Seattle has Gold status. Currently there are no Platinum communities in Washington though neighboring Portland, OR is ranked Platinum.

Officials in Kennewick, Pasco, and West Richland have also been contacted and provided with the materials for making the Bicycle Friendly Community application. The formation of a community-wide group to press for recognition for all four incorporated cities enhances the probability that the entire Tri-Cities will become a Bicycle Friendly Community.

TAKING THE LANE CONT.

Riding too close to parked cars is a special danger considering what could happen when a door is swung open in front of a cyclist. Also as mentioned above, riding too far to the right limits the cyclist's choices when a sharp maneuver is needed, either to avoid an obstruction or to quickly move away from an inattentive motorist attempting to pass too close. Finally, riding close to the edge means that the cyclist may be unable to make turns in the manner allowed by the law and worse, may be forced into an unwanted turn by a car turning right alongside a cyclist intending to proceed straight ahead.

All of these situations can be avoided by taking the lane. This requires the cyclist to be diligently scanning for motor vehicles approaching from the rear, which is the case no matter your

lane position. In practice, cyclists who take the lane will notice that the majority of motorists will provide decent passing room, even when the cyclist is riding on a wide shoulder or bike lane. In a narrow lane, take the center of the lane or no closer to the right than one-third of the lane. In a wide lane, ride just to the right of the car lane but not in the "door zone". When approaching an intersection it is imperative to take the lane to avoid allowing a motorist to make a right turn while a bicycle is alongside. When stopping at intersections, stop in the traffic lane, not on the right edge, to make clear your intention to proceed straight ahead and not turn right. It is also courteous but not required to stop a bit to the left of a through lane, especially at a stoplight, to

allow room for cars to make a right turn. In any case, never stop in a right turn only lane if you intend to go straight ahead.

What about bike lanes? Aren't you required to use them? The answer is an emphatic NO! Most bike lanes are positioned either in the "door zone" or are just as rough and debris-covered as any other road shoulder. If the bike lane is safely wide enough, use it but stay close to the left stripe and take the traffic lane when proceeding through an intersection.

For further information on safe cycling practices, consult one of the certified League Cycling Instructors listed on the resources page on the club website.



**R A G B R A I
L E E S C O T T**

Iowa lies like a ruffled green bed-spread between the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. Any notion that Iowa is flat should be immediately abandoned. The ride climbs out of the Missouri River drainage then drops to the Mississippi River with each hill generally getting higher than the last until the divide is crossed. It is a leg-powered roller coaster. This year's ride had 23,111 feet of elevation gain (rank-9).

Every year for the past 37 years, the Des Moines Register has sponsored a bicycle rally that crosses the state from west to east, taking seven days for the crossing. Rides have ranged from 379 to 550 miles. Each ride route is unique. It is the largest bicycle rally in the United States. The number of registered riders for the complete ride is now limited to 8500 with additional "day" riders that bring the daily total to around 10,000. Registration is determined by lottery and does not count the "unofficial" riders who may ride one or more days. The ride can be thought of as a kind of rolling fair, with some riders in costumes. Towns and cities compete unofficially to be on the route. The business brought in by the ride is a welcome source of revenue for various church, civic and similar groups. State, county and local police carefully control motorized traffic on the ride route although no roads are closed. That said, I saw no accidents between motor

vehicles and bicycles, although there were several instances of ambulance evacuations for riders down due to excessive speed or interactions with other bicycles. It is considered good manners to thank police guarding the intersections.

Riders need to consume 4000-5000 calories a day. Opportunities to meet that need are provided by a cadre of "regular" vendors who pack up and relocate along the route each night. In addition, there are local groups hoping to raise some needed money. It's like a serial food court with everything from burritos and pork chops to ice cream. There are also bicycle repair shops (I needed them twice) and vendors of knick-knacks. Some places are so crowded that most riders just get off and push their bikes. There are lines for everything and a rider must always be on the lookout for portable toilets or (better) actual flush toilets with short lines. A promising food stop may be passed up if there is no toilet. In a pinch there is a corn-field-privy for urgent needs away from settlements.

There are several ways to do the ride. The purists self support the entire ride, hauling their stuff in panniers or on trailers from place to place, camping each night. Registration permits a rider to use the support trucks to haul their gear to the next campsite. Other riders form teams that self-support

with a vehicle to move their things to the next overnight. Sometimes the teams still camp, but most scour the overnight towns for friends, friends-of-friends, or people you remember from a bar 3 years ago, for places to bed down indoors with toilets and showers. This is a much more civilized way to do the ride, but somewhat more expensive and you miss out on the community of the campgrounds. There were teams from every branch of the military, various social groups (mine was the TROLLS [Temperamental Riders On Limp Legs]) and other whimsically or scatologically named groups whose names I wouldn't like to define. Some riders haul their small children on the ride (youngest I encountered was four), usually in trailers or on tagalong outfits where the child could help peddle to tandems with auxiliary pedals hooked up to the stoker chain-ring. Some of those parents were really strong and hauled their trailers up steep hills faster than the rest of us could ride.

"Take away" visuals include: topping a hill and looking ahead at what looked like a variegated "caterpillar" of riders as many as 6-8 abreast, streaming over the near and far hills; an Amish family sitting in their field along with their horses watching the riders pass by; the "greeters" in many of the towns cheering; miles of corn and soybeans; the seemingly endless supply of hills. It's great fun!

Tuesday and Thursday morning rides start at 9:30 a.m. until April 15, when they will change to 8:30 a.m. Meet at Richland Community Center. Destination is chosen by group. For more information, contact Bill Painter, 946-1076.

Saturday rides start from their scheduled locations and times as specified in the ride calendar.

Ride Codes: Green * less than 15 miles with nearly level terrain; Blue * 15 - 40 miles with moderate terrain; Black * greater than 40 miles with moderate terrain, or fewer than 40 with asphalt moguls.

Riders: No need to call ahead unless otherwise indicated. Just show up at the start. Feel free to call the ride leader for more information.

And two more Very Important Notes: First, WEAR YOUR HELMET! Second, please obey the Rules of the Road at all times. The Club is active in community affairs, which helps us promote legislation that could provide better facilities for cyclists. Don't ruin it by blowing through stop signs, tailgating left turns, or riding against traffic. If you wouldn't do it in a car, don't do it on a bike!

Beginning riders and those who want a shorter ride: Show up at the longer rides and let the ride Sweep or Leader know you'd like a less strenuous ride. They can help you with a shorter route and try to match you up with someone to ride with. We won't leave you dangling.

Nov 14 - Badger Canyon Loop - Leave from Some Bagels in Richland at 9:30 am. Columbia Park Trail to Leslie to Badger Canyon, down Webber to Kiona. Food stop in Benton City. Return via Rupert Rd to DeMoss Rd and Van Giesen. Blue, approx. 40 miles.

Nov 21 – Sagemoor Loop – Leave Some Bagels in Richland at 9:30 AM. Rd 100 to Harris to Dent to Rd 68 at Douglas Fruit. Rd 68 to Sagemoor. Return on Taylor Flats Rd. Black, approx. 35 miles.

Nov 26—Happy Thanksgiving!

Nov 28 – Benton City – Leave from Some Bagels in Richland at 9:30 AM. Ride to B.C. via Rupert and Demoss. Lunch in Benton City. Return via Kennedy and Bombing Range Rd. Blue, approx. 40 miles.

Dec 5 – Loop the Parks – Leave from Some Bagels in Richland at 9:30 AM. Ride through Chiawana Park. Return via Cable Bridge and Columbia Drive through Columbia Park. Blue, approx. 25 miles.

Dec 12 – Pick a ride – Leave from Some Bagels in Richland at 9:30 AM. After careful negotiations over a bagel, the leader will lead the ride. Leaderless Ride

Dec 19 – Wannawish Dam – Leave from Some Bagels in Richland at 9:30 AM. Bike path and Haines to Van Giesen. Van Giesen to Grosscup and Harrington. Follow Harrington to the pavement end beyond the Wannawish Dam. Return same route. Blue, approx. 25 miles.

Dec 25—Merry Christmas!

Dec 26 – Zintel Dam – Leave Espresso World in Kennewick at 9:30 AM. Take Kellogg to 10th, then Union to 27th. Ride up to Dam. Continue through Canyon Lakes to Ely. Left on 27th and retrace back to Kellogg. Black approx. 25 miles. For those wanting a slightly longer ride, start at Some Bagels at 9 AM.

Jan 2 – Happy New Year! Polar Bear Ride – Ride a mile for each degree (whatever that means). Meet at the Some Bagels in Richland at 9:30 AM. ~20 miles. Leaderless ride

Jan 9 – Rachael – Leave from Some Bagels in Richland at 9:30 AM. Go up Rachael and down cottonwood and back to Leslie, stop at Subway and return home. Blue, approx. 30 miles.

Jan 16 – Free Ride – Leave Some Bagels in Richland at 9:30 AM. Take a few turns ride for a while and come back. Leaderless ride

Jan 23 – Benton City – Leave from Some Bagels in Richland at 9:30 AM. Ride to B.C. via I- 182, Kennedy, Dallas and Badger. Lunch in BC. Return via DeMoss, Ruppert and Van Giesen. Blue, approx. 30 miles. Leaderless ride

Jan 30 – Queensgate/Wannawish – Meet at Some Bagels in Richland at 9:30 AM. Out Queensgate and up to Bombing Range to Wannawish Dam and back to Golf Course Café. Blue/Black, 35 miles.



**TRI-CITY BICYCLE
CLUB**

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**Serving Richland, Kenewick, Pasco and
surrounding areas**

The Tri-City Bicycle club (TCBC) attracts adult riders of various ages and riding abilities. We are a “touring” club, meaning the emphasis is on the joy and adventure of cycling, not competition. Organized weekend rides are scheduled year-round and are open to any rider wearing a bicycle helmet. It is our policy never to leave anyone behind or stranded.

The club encourages bicycle riding for recreation, better health, and transportation. It supports its members and the community by holding recreational rides and social events. The club is an active advocate for the safety and interests of bicyclists and conducts bicycle safety programs for adults and children.

THANK YOU TCBC SUPPORTERS!

The following businesses support cycling in the Tri-Cities by offering discounts to club members or simply by existing. Please let them know you are a member. Special offers are specific to each business and may change from time to time.

Some Bagels - 1317 George Washington Way, Richland (509)946-3185

REI - Recreational Equipment Inc. - 129 N Ely, Kennewick (509)734-8989

Scott's Cycle & Sports - 704 S Ely St, Kennewick (509)374-8424

Markee's Cycling Center - 723 W Clearwater Ave, Kennewick (509)783-2870

Kennewick Cycles & Fitness - 131 Vista Way, Kennewick (509)736-7500

Greenies - 701 George Washington Way, Richland (509)946-3787