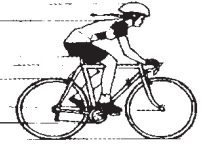


# ChainGuard



Volume 21 No. 4

San Diego County Bicycle Coalition

August–September 2007

On guard for bicyclists throughout the San Diego region.

## Our Mission

We make bicycling better in San Diego County through education, facilities and advocacy.

## Newsletters on the Web

Past issues of the *ChainGuard* are on the web at <[www.sdcbc.org](http://www.sdcbc.org)>. Tired of paper? Switch your newsletters to email only by contacting us at <[execdir@sdcbc.org](mailto:execdir@sdcbc.org)>. You'll be notified by email when a new issue is posted on the web. Your email address will be used exclusively for this purpose.

## Email Listserver

We communicate cycling issues of general interest on an Email Listserver. Subscribe by visiting <[www.bikesandiego.org/mailman/listinfo/sdcbc](http://www.bikesandiego.org/mailman/listinfo/sdcbc)>. You will get postings by email, and can post your own messages to all subscribers.

## Advertisements

The *ChainGuard* accepts advertisements. Circulation is over 1000. Business card size ads cost \$250 per year. For forms and rates send an email to <[execdir@sdcbc.org](mailto:execdir@sdcbc.org)>.

## Free County Bike Map

Order a free copy of the San Diego County Bike Map at our website, [www.sdcbc.org](http://www.sdcbc.org), or call 1-800-COMMUTE.

## Change of Address

Mail change of address notices to SDCBC at P.O. Box 34544, San Diego, CA 92163

## Run a stop, get a ticket

We hear rumors that local police are cracking down and issuing tickets to those who run stop signs or stop lights, including bicyclists.

Oceanside police expect to write more tickets to bicyclists riding the wrong way, riding without lights at night, or running stop signs, especially along Pacific Street, a popular route that parallels Oceanside's Highway 101. The police for the City of San Diego as well as Coronado also plan to step up enforcement.

Some recent Coalition emails discussed why you should obey stop signs. Coalition member John Forester, author of *Effective Cycling*, says:

"The law regarding stop signs carries two duties. The first duty is to stop, the second duty is to yield to approaching traffic that is so close as to constitute a danger. Generally, in urban areas the stop location is behind a crosswalk, but the yield cannot be done from that location because the cyclist cannot see far enough along the cross road. Any driver then has to stop, then creep forward to where he can see to yield. The earlier stop protects pedestrians, the later yield protects all drivers."

Coalition member Jon Isaacs says: "Stopping needs to be the habit. Of course the fact that many cyclists run stop signs mean motorists often expect it, but that does not justify bad riding habits. My goal is foster confidence in the other vehicle operators that bicyclists **can** obey the laws."



Roman Beck photo

The Coalition supports enforcement efforts, especially for bicyclist behaviors that affect their own or others' safety. Bicyclists running stop signs and red lights account for about 10% of the injury crashes between bicyclists and automobiles, causing about 40 injuries and one to two deaths per year in San Diego County. We encourage motorists and bicyclists to follow all the applicable traffic laws, and especially encourage bicyclists to follow laws that protect themselves and others—riding the right way on the street, not riding on the sidewalk in posted locations, obeying stop signs and stop lights, riding with lights at night, and not riding impaired by drugs or alcohol.

Bicyclists who disobey traffic laws make it harder for the Coalition to make the case that bicyclists have the right to use the road. Please be a good bicycling ambassador by obeying traffic laws, and encourage your bicycling friends to do the same.

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One parting thought: the fine for running a stop light in California is \$381 (ouch). For running a stop sign in San Diego County, the fines start at \$124, **and** these will both go on your driving record.

Don't say we didn't warn you.



## Pedal to the Park announces *Vote With Our Bikes* campaign

*Dave White*

PTP Stage 1 earlier this spring brought a new look for bicycles in downtown's East Village. The PTP Bike Parking Pavilion (at the intersection of Park Blvd and Tony Gwynn Drive) supported a group of over 100 cyclists—on tandems and singles—with attended and secure parking for their bikes while enjoying the game. The April 29<sup>th</sup> demonstration was a proud example of the Coalition functioning at its best—the teaming of a cyclist-friendly concept and a member-powered initiative. Together, the Coalition and PTP are on a mission to make a permanent improvement for bicyclists around Petco Park. While negotiations with Padres' management for PTP-style bicycle facilities and services continue, each member of the Coalition is invited to cast their vote for this movement by registering for Pedal to the Park Stage 2. Vote now at [www.pedaltothepark.com](http://www.pedaltothepark.com) and join the fun and excitement in the peloton of change—asking for more support for pedal powered transport in and around

San Diego. Don't miss this ride of purpose !

What: Pedal to the Park, Stage 2

When: Sunday September 16, 2007; rolling self-start

Routes: 10 through 50 mile route options, for novice to advanced cyclists

Benefits: Therapeutic Recreation Services programs for disabled cyclists, and the Bicycle Coalition

Optional: Padres vs Giants game attendance; first pitch 1:05 PM

Volunteer opportunities (cycling and non-cycling) available

Information at <http://pedaltothepark.com>



## Finding the sweet spot on the loop

Finding the exact spot to stand with your bike when you want to make a traffic light go green, also called finding the "sweet spot," can be confusing.

Here's how to find that sweet spot.

Newer signalized intersections have cameras mounted on a signal light arm overhanging the intersection that sense cars and bikes. Standing in any lane will trigger them. But many older intersections rely instead on loop detectors, and where to stand can be tricky.

If you don't know what a loop detector is, look at the pavement at a signalized intersection. Each lane will usually have a big

## Coalition Board

### San Diego County Bicycle Coalition's Officers

*Chair:* Brian Parent  
*Vice Chair:* Serge Issakov  
*Treasurer:* Julie Hocking  
*Secretary:* Philip Erdelsky

*Membership Chair:* Tony Pietsch

### SDCBC Board Members

Carol Carr – N. County Cycle Club  
Philip Erdelsky – Rainbow Cyclists  
Mike Satterlee – SD Cyclo-Vets  
Ken King – Knickerbikers  
Andrew Lee – GS Adams Ave. Bike Club  
Tony Pietsch – SD Tandem Club  
Tom Yager – Sierra Club Bike Section  
Serge Issakov – SD Bicycle Club  
Greg Zackowski – Triathlon Club of SD  
Mike Berry – SD Century Riders  
Suzanne Behrendt – SD Wheelmen  
Jim Baross  
Roman Beck  
Kerry Kunsman  
Tom Lettington  
Bill Matella  
Judith Talner  
Stephan Vance  
Dave White

Executive Director – Kathy Keehan  
Board meetings are held on Wednesdays once a month at 7:00 PM. Dates and locations noted in Calendar Section.

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circle or a six or eight-sided box cut in the pavement, with an intersecting cut leading toward a light post or box near the curb for the signal mechanism.

The loop is a magnetized metal wire in that circle or box and intersecting line that senses when something metal interrupts

the magnetic field and trips the light.

To find the sweet spot, keep two things in mind: first, the most sensitive place in the loop is where the wire bends. If it's a circle, anywhere on the circle will do. If it's a box, find a corner. Second, put your bike directly over the circle or corner and point one of your crank arms (the bar connecting to your pedal) straight down. You can also stand over the frame and tilt the bike to lean the front chain ring down. You want metal as close as possible to the bend in the wire.

Most metal frames will trip the light, including aluminum, titanium and steel. Carbon fiber frames will not, but almost all bikes have metal crank arms, pedals, or chain rings.

Some cities paint a bicycle symbol over the sweet spot, but there are maintenance issues with painted markers on the pavement, and other problems. A standardized painted marker is in the California Highway Design Manual, but until the other issues are resolved, we must rely on finding that sweet spot ourselves.

## City examines traffic loop detectors

Have you been frustrated by City of San Diego traffic signals that don't work for bicycles?

Yeah, we all have. Traffic loop detectors (described in the previous article), should sense when a bicycle is waiting for the green light. They frequently won't trip for bicyclists, who must wait and wait some more until a car comes along. And bicyclists who give up waiting and run the light may be in imminent danger from cross traffic. It's a serious safety

issue that Coalition member Richard Wood, who rides his bike to work through city streets, has been pursuing.

After an astounding eight years of emails, phone calls, and discussions with his City Councilmember Toni Atkins, Wood is starting to be heard on his request for repair of loop detectors not working for bicyclists.

The problems with loop detectors are myriad and the solutions may be unique to each intersection. The City's Traffic Engineering Department has met twice in recent months with Wood and Coalition representatives and has agreed to take the lead among various city departments to find solutions. They agreed to visit some of Wood's long list of intersections with such loop detectors and determine what's wrong and what options are available to make them work for bicyclists.

City staff believes some 1200-1500 loops may be inoperative at its 39,000 intersections. The budget for such repairs was recently increased, but finding the problem and the best solution for each intersection will take time.

"We believe that every signal in the city can and should detect bicyclists," says Kathy Keehan,

Coalition Executive Director.

You can help us by calling 619-527-7500 the next time you encounter such a loop detector in the City of San Diego. (Your *Thomas Bros. Guide* shows city limits.) Or check the Coalition's website at [www.sdcbc.org](http://www.sdcbc.org) for contact information and email addresses for street repairs in all the cities in San Diego County. Be as factual as you can, and call or copy the Coalition on your email so we know too. Let's all tell them we want a solution.

And kudos to Richard Wood for finally getting our voices heard.

## Coalition opens new offices

On July 28<sup>th</sup>, the Coalition moved into its new offices at 710 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 220, San Diego 92101. The three year lease for office, meeting and classroom space will be shared with *Walk*

*Next page*

### Accident ?

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Stephan Vance photo

*The moving crew*

*San Diego*, a group with similar interests.

Executive Director Kathy Keehan likes being closer to downtown, where the financial action is, and also hopes the new offices will become a place for bicyclists to come, volunteer, and interact with other like-minded individuals. To tour the offices, join us for the Board meeting on September 26<sup>th</sup>.

## Election Results

The Coalition welcomes Julie Hocking and Dave White, who joined our Board of Directors as at-large members, and Suzanne Behrendt, who joined as the Wheelmen representative.

Special thanks go to Hocking who has taken on the job of Treasurer, and to outgoing Treasurer Kerry Kunsman for all his work over the past two years. Also, we want to thank Tony Pietsch for taking over the membership data base, to let our long-serving Board Member and Spokesman Jim Baross concentrate on all the other fine work he does for the Coalition.

See page 2 for a complete list of our hard-working and loyal volunteers. We truly appreciate all our volunteers!

## Biketown comes to San Diego

*Bicycling Magazine's* Biketown project came to San Diego on June 9<sup>th</sup> to give away 50 new Trek bikes to the lucky winners of an essay contest, asking "how a new bike will set you free."

Hundreds turned out to watch the winners claim their prizes. Here's what one San Diegan said on his blog:

"It was a pretty neat thing to see. Fifty brand new bicycles, all lined up in formation, ribbons bearing the new owners names taped to the handlebars. 25 identical shiny black ones, 25 identical gleaming white ones. The Biketown people were from all over the USA, and they seemed determined not to take any of these bikes back with them. I just felt like I should stand next to it for a while."



*Bicycling Magazine* began the program with a bike giveaway in Africa, then went to Portland, Maine, and with the help of Trek, offered 50 people a Trek 7200

hybrid bike. More than 200 people submitted essays.

San Diego is the fifth city visited in three years. So far, donations from Trek, Electra, Fuji, Schwinn and Giant have totaled 1300 bikes.

You can read more blogs from Biketown's newly converted cycling enthusiasts, and read about the program, at *Bicycling Magazine's* website at [www.bicycling.com/biketown](http://www.bicycling.com/biketown). Here's another fun link: [www.coasting.com](http://www.coasting.com).

## Victory at new housing facility

*John Stump*

Coalition Executive Director Kathy Keehan wrote a letter requesting bicycle facilities at a 252-unit housing facility and shopping center at 52<sup>nd</sup> and El Cajon Blvd, and the City Council agreed.

Scott Peters and Donna Frye identified that the developer was trying to claim an exemption because seniors do not ride bikes. They stuck up for bicyclists, making sure the developer included bicycle parking in their project. It was a victory for a well-written letter. Thanks, Ms. Keehan, you are the greatest!



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>NEW WEBSITE!<

# Bike Shorts!



## Coalition fund-raiser at Midnight Madness

The annual *Midnight Madness* bike ride on August 18<sup>th</sup> will offer the Coalition a fund-raising opportunity. If you come to the 8:00 PM party before the ride, look for the Coalition booth selling glow-sticks you can wear as a bracelet. At night every little light helps, and you'll help us at the same time! You can learn more at [www.sandiegomidnightmadness.org](http://www.sandiegomidnightmadness.org).

## San Diego Senior Olympics

The *San Diego Senior Olympics* will offer five separate races at four venues during the weekend of Sept. 28–30. There will be a

## SDCBC Calendar

**Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup> – Midnight Madness.** (See *Bike Shorts*).

**Wednesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> – Coalition Board Meeting.** 7:00–8:30 pm, Standley Recreation Center, 3585 Governor Drive, San Diego.

**Wednesday, September 12<sup>th</sup> – Volunteer night.** 6:30–8:30 pm, location TBD. Envelope stuffing, free munchies and drinks, and story sharing. Please join us!

**Sunday, September 16<sup>th</sup> – Pedal to the Park.** (see article).

**Wednesday, September 26<sup>th</sup> – Coalition Board Meeting.** 7:00–8:30 pm, **new** offices, 710 13th St., Ste. 220, San Diego, 92101, near G St. downtown. Open to everyone.

**Friday, September 28<sup>th</sup> – San Diego Senior Olympics begins.** (see *Bike Shorts*).

**Sunday, October 7<sup>th</sup> – Tour de Poway.** (see *Bike Shorts*).

**Wednesday, October 10<sup>th</sup> – Volunteer night.** 6:30–8:30 pm, location TBD. Newsletter folding, free munchies and drinks, and story sharing. Everyone welcome!

10-mile time trial, a sprint and a pursuit at the Velodrome, a 10-mile Category One hill climb, and a criterium. Racing is for Masters, men and women aged 50 and above, separated into five year age categories. Registration deadline is August 25<sup>th</sup>. Go to their website to learn more: [www.sdseniorgames.org](http://www.sdseniorgames.org).

## Coalition benefits from Tour de Poway

Here's another date for your calendar: the annual *Tour de Poway* is coming October 7<sup>th</sup>. Each year the Coalition staffs one of the aid stations along the route, and organizer and former Coalition chair KC Butler donates a portion of the ride proceeds to the Coalition. See [www.bikelink.com](http://www.bikelink.com) for more information on the ride.

## Membership Registration Form

Regular individual annual membership is only \$25.00 to help support SDCBC and to bring you the *ChainGuard* for a year. Or join for "A Buck A Week" (\$52 per year) and receive a SDCBC bumper sticker and a copy of *Street Smarts*. Join for \$100 a year and you'll also get our SDCBC bike sox—please specify size—to show your "Velorevolutionary" spirit!

Other levels of membership, tax-deductible donations, and bicycle club member discounted memberships are available. Call 858-487-6063, email to [execdir@sdcbc.org](mailto:execdir@sdcbc.org), or visit our web site at [www.sdcbc.org](http://www.sdcbc.org) for more information and registration.

Or just send your (large) check and this registration form to: SDCBC, P.O. Box 34544, San Diego CA 92163

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add my e-mail address to the SDCBC email list-server.

I want to save trees; send my *ChainGuard* newsletters by email notification only.

please do not share my name with other organizations.

Membership Level/Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# Road Safety: Taking the Lane on Descents

Roman Beck

In previous issues we discussed controlling speed while descending past stopped vehicular traffic. Let's now discuss riding downhill with the flow of traffic.

Depending on the number of lanes, the speed limit, and the attainable downhill speed, a cyclist should consider taking the rightmost lane. This may require moving out of a bike lane or to the left of the edge stripe.

Taking the lane has many advantages:

1. The cyclist's sight lines are improved, for identifying potential hazards ahead

2. Conspicuity is improved. Motorists ahead are more likely to notice you and not cut in front of you; likewise the motorists behind will notice you and can adjust sooner, by slowing or changing lanes

3. The bigger safety buffer to the right means more maneuvering room for the motorist who fails to see you and pulls out in front of you

4. By controlling the lane, you won't get squeezed in between a car passing you in your lane, or right next to you (if you're in the bike lane) and the curb

5. The pavement is usually cleaner and may be in better shape

Let's consider a single lane road such as the winding sections of SR-67 east of Ramona. A cyclist will be most conspicuous by taking the lane; in straighter sections, such as near Santa Ysabel, a cyclist is better off riding near the edge stripe. The posted speed limit is fast, 55 mph.

In a slower single lane road, such as westbound Nautilus Street in La Jolla, with a posted speed limit of 40 mph, on-street parking, and cross streets, a cyclist flowing with traffic

may be better off taking the lane and disregarding the bike lane. On northbound Texas Street between Madison and Camino del Rio, a cyclist can easily travel with the flow of traffic, even though there is a bike lane.

However, when the roadway has few cross-street conflicts and no on-street parking, a marked bike lane may be adequate, such as eastbound Leucadia Boulevard between Quail Gardens Drive and Calle Barcelona. The main hazards here are same-direction motorists, who often exceed the posted speed limit of 50 mph.

Keep in mind the cyclist should feel comfortable with taking the lane on a downhill. As a general rule, the more cross-conflicts (intersections, driveways, parked cars, etc.), the more you should consider taking the lane.

*Has your SDCBC membership expired?  
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