

# AMERICAN bicyclist

July-August 2012  
www.bikeleague.org

League of American Bicyclists

Working for a Bicycle-Friendly America

**RIGHT & LEFT AGREE:  
BICYCLING  
MAKES AMERICA  
GREAT!** p. 10

**16**

EVERY BICYCLIST  
COUNTS

**22**

TUCSON'S QUEST  
FOR PLATINUM

**26**

SoCal GOES CYCLE CHIC

SAVE THE DATE

9.13.12

SEPTEMBER 13, 2012  
LONG BEACH, CALIF.



NATIONAL  
WOMEN'S  
BICYCLING SUMMIT

[www.bikeleague.org/conferences/women](http://www.bikeleague.org/conferences/women)

hosted by



Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals  
Expertise for sustainable transportation

In partnership with  
Women on Bikes SoCal  
& Pro Walk Pro Bike

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Cover by Liam Crotty Photography. Models: Kathryn Moore, South Florida Bike Coalition; Mary Jane Mark, Owner, Mack Cycle & Fitness; Dario Gonzalez, Board of Directors, Green Mobility Network and Magic City Bicycle Collective; Guerby Mertel, Community Liaison, Deco Bike and Bike For Life Foundation. Photo Shoot Assistants: Charles Driza and Aaron Roy, Co-owners, Tropical Pedicabs; Rachel Mark, Mack Cycle & Fitness. Bicycles & accessories provided by Mack Cycle & Fitness.

# NUMBERS MATTER



Washington D.C. – and specifically Capitol Hill – has been a challenging place of late. If you follow our blog, get our action alerts, subscribe to the on-line advocacy center or are friends with us on Facebook, you know that, despite all the benefits of bicycling, we’ve had a hard time convincing Congress to preserve even the smallest percentage of transportation funding for bikes.

Fortunately, pretty much every other place you look, bicycling is thriving. The numbers for every event in National Bike Month were headed upwards; Bike to School Day saw more than 700 events in its first year; and the National Bike Challenge secured more than 25,000 riders who logged a staggering 3 million miles — in a single month. (We’re looking forward to

finishing the Challenge with a bang in August, so if you haven’t signed up, it’s not too late even now!)

The Bicycle Friendly Community, University and Business programs are providing a valuable roadmap and blueprint for change for more and more people at the local level, and the Bicycle Friendly State ranking in May has inspired the formation of new state groups, the introduction of pro-bicycling legislation, and new funding initiatives.

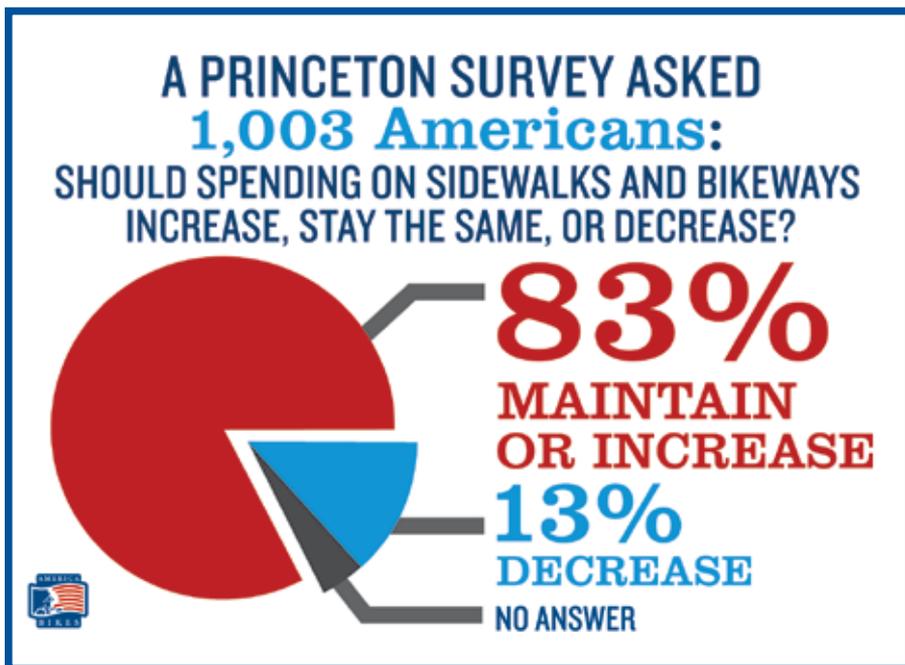
Mayors and top city officials continue to champion bicycling. Six cities have joined in a unique collaboration – the Green Lane Project – to speed the development of cycle tracks and more innovative infrastructure. Meanwhile, the U.S. Conference of Mayors adopted

a powerful endorsement of cycling policy at its annual meeting in June.

As if that weren’t enough of a signal to Congress to do the right thing, a poll commissioned by America Bikes revealed overwhelming bipartisan support for federal funding for biking and walking. Eighty-three percent of adults were in favor: a figure that barely wavered across party lines or any geographic or demographic split. More than eight in 10 adults in the United States want Congress to maintain or increase levels of federal funding for biking and walking; that’s a big and impressive number. Even though the outcome of the transportation bill is a disappointment in the short term, we’re still in the game for the long-haul, and the numbers in support of our cause are compelling. Here at the League, we’re determined to spend the next two years making our case more effectively at the state and local level — and we’ll be back in 2014 to show Congress that bicycling is truly on the move.

As always, thank you for your support and for raising your voice when it matters. Numbers do matter, but only if enough people – and the right people – hear them and see them!

Andy Clarke  
League President



### Life-Saving Hindsight

The letter from Steve Weeks in the May-June issue of *American Bicyclist* reminded me of an organized ride across Wisconsin that I remember vividly. I was watching a car in my rear view mirror as it weaved back and forth across the road behind me. As it drew nearer, I realized I couldn't see a driver and the right front tire of the car was on the white painted line on the edge of the road where I was riding! I pedaled off the road into a ditch, but as the car drove by, I did see that the driver was leaning over looking at something on the passenger side front seat. He never saw me, and probably would have hit and possibly killed me if I hadn't been wearing and using my rear view mirror. Hindsight is essential for bikers, and I never ride without one.

- Ron Retherford, New Berlin, Wis.

**Correction** In the May/June issue of *American Bicyclist*, a gift in the \$1,000-\$4,999 category was mistakenly attributed to Scot Hartle. The gift was in fact from the Florida Freewheelers. We appreciate this donation.

### The Critical Role of Sidewalks

As "Women on a Roll" in the May-June issue of *American Bicyclist* points out, women want to feel safe when riding bicycles for transportation. But it's hard for a cyclist to feel safe on streets that do not accommodate pedestrians. On a street without pedestrian space, there is no margin for error. There is no room to fix a flat tire, walk a

bicycle, consult a map, or take a break. Beginners and people riding dangerous streets worry about things going wrong. They are unlikely to try cycling on streets without sidewalks. I live in Austin, Texas, where three-fourths of the sidewalk system is missing. Although it is the necessary support system for both bicycling and public transit, the sidewalk system is generally ignored by both cycling and rail advocates. Finishing the sidewalk system would get more women on bicycles in Austin than any other conceivable transportation improvement.

- Amy Babich, Austin, Texas

### Safe Seats?

We talk about riding safely and wearing protective equipment. It makes me shiver when I see an adult riding a bicycle with a child in a seat between the adult and the handlebars/stem — as in the picture on page 12 of the May-June issue of *American Bicyclist*. If (heaven forbid) an accident happens, the adult's body will crush the child to the handlebars/stem. Accidents do happen, whether it is losing control on a rough road, a car pulling backwards



Safe seats for baby?

### TWEETED



You can always tell when @BikeLeague is in town.  
- @caitcostello



down a driveway across the sidewalk, or something causing a loss of control on a bike path and "meeting" a nearby tree. A friend once loaned me such a child's seat for me to use with my children. Never once did I use it. The potential consequences made me shudder.

- Rich Delombard, Huron, Ohio

### Facebook



**In response to June 1 blog: Women on a Roll ... and on the cover of *American Bicyclist*!**

Thanks for the coverage of the great work being done by Atlanta Bicycle Coalition!

- Georgia Bikes!



**In response to June 5 blog: Small Decrease in Driving = Huge Decrease in Congestion**

When I commute by bike, I really don't care whether there is traffic congestion or not because I'm not part of the congestion. Plus, I'm having fun on my way to/from work!

- Buzz Feldman

**Thanks for your letters** We eagerly await all of your comments — good and bad — on cycling, the League, our publications, and just about anything else you want to tell us about. E-mail carolyn@bikeleague.org or mail it to us at 1612 K Street NW, Suite 510, Washington, D.C. 20006. Comment on facebook.com/leagueamericanbicyclists or twitter.com/bikeleague. Letters may be edited for style and length.

## GIVING

Thank you to the following organizations and individuals who have contributed at least \$100, above and beyond membership dues, from April 1 – May 31, 2012.

### \$1,000-\$4,999

#### Organization

Santa Rosa Cycling Club

#### Individuals

Alison & Jay Graves  
David Madson  
Hans Van Naerssen

### \$100-\$999

#### Bike Shop

Earls Cyclery & Fitness

#### Organizations

Evanston Bicycle Club  
Nashoba Valley Pedalers  
Spring City Spinners Bicycle Club  
Swanson, Thomas, Coon & Newton Attorneys

#### Individuals

Karen Adam & Family  
Robert Aderhold  
Diane Albert

Leslie Arminski  
Katherine Barrett  
Paul Bartlett  
Thomas Bayard  
Rainard Beer  
Diane Bies  
Barry Boyce  
William Branstrup  
Scott Burstein  
Janet & Russ

Buschert  
Louis Carson  
Ann Cavazos Chen  
James Chapman  
Jonathan Childs  
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Michael Flueckiger  
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Tim Greener  
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Rodney Rutherford  
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Suri Bjerga Family  
Swent Family  
Roger Thauland  
Michael Throop  
Carol Tremble  
James Vance  
Steve Walther  
David Warwick  
Steve Watson  
Bill Wolf

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## What has the League done for you lately?

With more than 1,300 of the nation's largest cities represented within its ranks, the U.S. Conference of Mayors (UCSM) is a powerful organization when it comes to sharing best practices and advancing trends in good governance and community development. Just last month, the League worked with Mayor Paul Soglin, from Madison, Wisc., to craft a resolution highlighting the benefits of bicycling and urging Congress to protect federal funding for biking and walking programs — and the measure was passed by the full Conference at its annual meeting. But that wasn't the only talk of bicycling at the important gathering: Along with League staff, Soglin also hosted a Bicycle and Pedestrian Coffee Exchange to discuss mayors' efforts to build more bicycle-friendly infrastructure in their communities and to lay the groundwork for a Mayors' Bicycle Meeting — the first of its kind — next spring.

The League worked with Mayor Paul Soglin, Madison, Wis., to craft a resolution urging Congress to protect federal funding for biking and walking programs.



# taking off the TRAINING WHEELS

By Andy Clarke, League President

Mature may seem like an odd word to use for a 132-year-old organization, but for the League in 2011, it fits. This was the year we took off our training wheels and really started to ride. From showing our power on Capitol Hill to establishing a firm financial footing, this was a year in which the League shone.

## Advocacy Advance

Thanks to a generous grant from SRAM, the Advocacy Advance team launched two new initiatives in 2011. Rapid Response Grants supported immediate action to maintain or increase bicycle funding and implement critical campaigns in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Oregon and New York. Meanwhile, we debuted the first round of Action 2020 workshops in Tucson, Ariz.; Houston, Texas; and Hartford, Conn., providing advocates, officials and engineers the knowledge and data they need to justify and support funding for bicycle projects. Find out more at [www.advocacyadvance.org](http://www.advocacyadvance.org).

## Bicycle Friendly America

The Bicycle Friendly Community program started small in 2003, and there was no

way to predict how it would change the League, and the country, for the better. Offering technical assistance, evaluation and advice for communities, universities, businesses and states, the program continues to exceed expectations with each application cycle. In 2011 alone, we added 26 universities, 56 communities, and 166 businesses to ranks of Bicycle Friendly awardees. The team also held four Bicycle Friendly America Strategy Sessions, asking local and state advocates how the program could improve. What we learned is already informing and improving our work in 2012 and beyond.

## Capitol Hill Hears Bicyclists

From the House appropriations committee to the Senate budget committee, 2011 was the year Capitol Hill tried to stop federal funding for bicycling. Again and again, funding for bicycling investments were labeled as an “unnecessary luxury” or dismissed as “not real transportation” by a handful of Senators and Representatives. The League gave bicyclists the microphone with 17 national alerts that provoked an avalanche of

nearly 30,000 messages to members of Congress telling them, in no-uncertain terms: Bicycling matters! Thanks to your participation, we lived to fight another day.

## Educating Everyone

The League’s new education director dove into the education corner of [www.bikeleague.org](http://www.bikeleague.org) and quickly made it more accessible and useful for all League Cycling Instructors. From writing lesson plans to creating marketing materials for LCIs to sell their classes, the overhaul of the League’s education program started successfully in 2011. The League certified more than 300 instructors last year, adding their names to the roles of more than 1,000 active bike teachers.

## National Bike Summit

Every year, we can’t imagine surpassing the previous year’s Summit. Every year, with your support, we do. In 2011, reeling from the loss of stalwart Congressional supporter Jim Oberstar, members stood up and veritably shouted, “Bicyclists count!” With 767 attendees (a record!) and growing co-

Riders at the 2011  
National Bike Summit



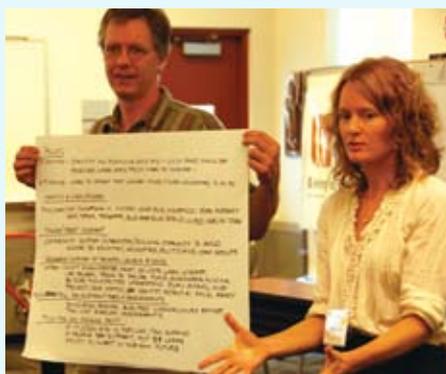
aliation of drivers, transit professionals and more, the 2011 Summit was a huge success. Thanks to our partners at Bikes Belong, and sponsors as varied as AAA and the Federal Highway Administration, this powerful gathering continues to be a vital event for bicyclists to make their presence felt in Washington, D.C.

## State and Local Advocacy

Supporting local advocacy groups and clubs remains a top priority of the League, and we showed that with more than 80 action alerts sent out in 2011 on behalf of local affiliates. In addition to 12 Bicycle Friendly Workshops in cities like Omaha, Neb., and Madison, Wis., we were reminded of how incredible our members are and how fantastic bicycling is by riding with club members in Arkansas and California — just to name two highlights!

## Zealously Counting Our Pennies

The past few years have seen tough economic challenges, as well as political threats — and we successfully weathered the storms again in 2011 thanks to



The first Action 2020 workshop was held in Tucson, Ariz. in 2011.

the continued support of members like you. In 2010, we posted our first loss in several years, mainly due to the timing of grant income and expenditures for a new membership database. In 2011, we were back in surplus for the year and have finally been able to retire a significant debt that was incurred after a terrible financial year in 2004.

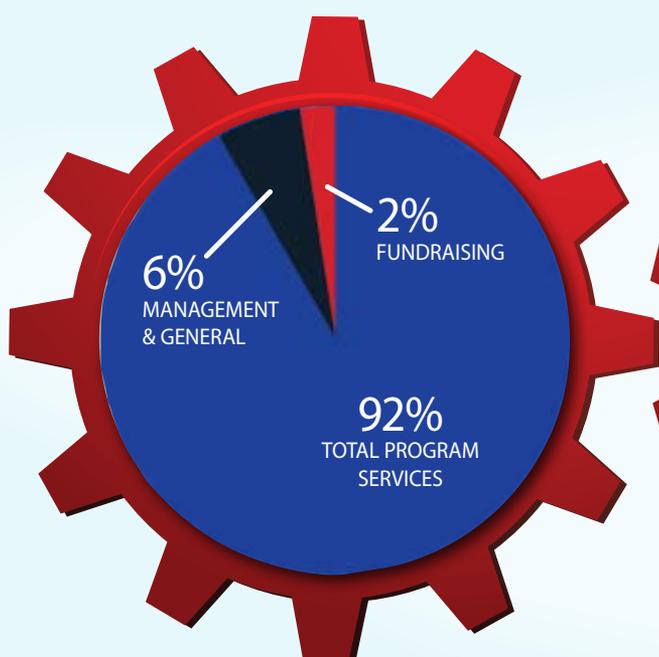
Recovery has been possible because of careful attention to expenses and more successful fundraising. In 2011, we secured several large multi-year gifts and pledges as part of a



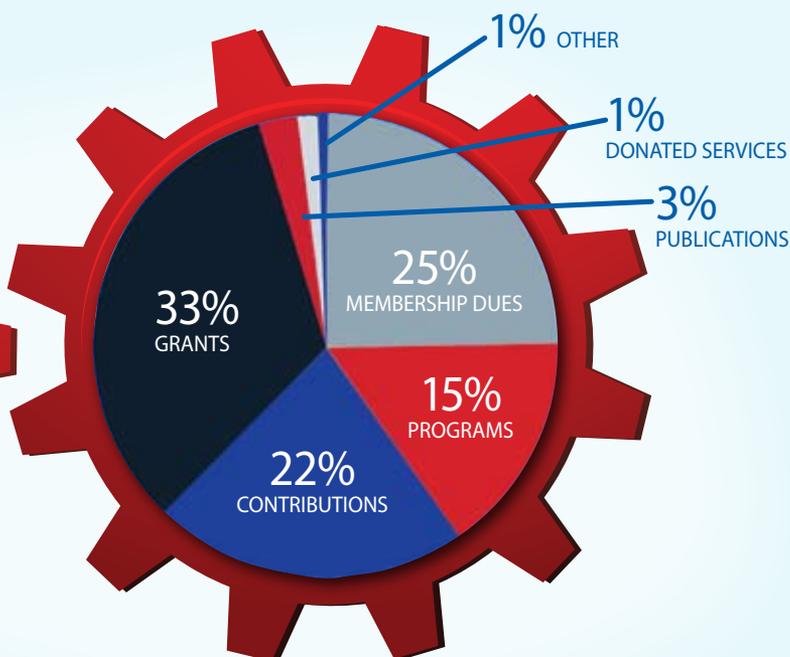
Sprocketman is one reason Stanford University is Bicycle Friendly.

renewed major donor program, and from renewing corporate supporters such as Trek, SRAM and Bikes Belong. The financial support of individual members remains crucial to our work, accounting for some 40 percent of the League's total income.

We know we must earn this income every single year by delivering on our programs and promises, and by creating a more bicycle-friendly America. With members like you behind us, we'll have tailwinds for the entire year.



2011 EXPENSES



2011 REVENUE

# CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

(For the year ended December 31, 2011)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	2011 Total	2010 Total
<b>REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>				
Membership dues	\$ 595,862	—	\$ 595,862	\$ 562,283
Programs and rallies	\$ 373,341	—	\$ 373,341	\$ 350,945
Contributions	\$ 530,866	—	\$ 530,866	\$ 220,436
Grants	\$ 75,725	\$ 721,526	\$ 797,251	\$ 990,222
Publication	\$ 64,224	—	\$ 64,224	\$ 48,298
Donated services	\$ 33,919	—	\$ 33,919	\$ 2,070
Interest and dividends	\$ 12,543	—	\$ 12,543	\$ 13,927
Other	\$ 5,250	—	\$ 5,250	\$ 2,487
Unrealized gain on investment	(\$ 3,526)	—	(\$ 3,526)	\$ 40,166
Realized gains on investment	—	—	\$ 0	\$ 0
<i>Net assets released from restriction:</i>				
Satisfaction of program restrictions	\$ 748,243	(\$ 748,243)	—	—
<b>Total Revenue and Support</b>	<b>\$ 2,436,447</b>	<b>(\$ 26,717)</b>	<b>\$ 2,409,730</b>	<b>\$ 2,230,834</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<i>Program Services:</i>				
• Advocacy	\$ 1,107,252	—	\$ 1,107,252	\$ 1,211,517
• Membership Activities	\$ 336,788	—	\$ 336,788	\$ 370,552
• Promotion	\$ 230,895	—	\$ 230,895	\$ 242,771
• Education	\$ 324,103	—	\$ 324,103	\$ 320,519
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>\$ 1,999,038</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	<b>\$ 1,999,038</b>	<b>\$ 2,145,359</b>
<i>Supporting Services:</i>				
• Management and general	\$ 132,952	—	\$ 132,952	\$ 137,270
• Fundraising	\$ 44,998	—	\$ 44,998	\$ 38,511
<b>Total Supporting Services</b>	<b>\$ 177,950</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	<b>\$ 177,950</b>	<b>\$ 175,781</b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 2,176,988</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	<b>\$ 2,176,988</b>	<b>\$ 2,321,140</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	\$ 259,459	(\$ 26,717)	\$ 232,742	(\$ 90,306)
<b>NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	\$ 211,355	\$ 419,798	\$ 631,153	\$ 721,459
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	\$ 470,814	\$ 393,081	\$ 863,895	\$ 631,153

# URGENCY & ETERNITY

*Consequences of an ethical response to car-centric consumerism*

By Bill Wilson



Growing up in the Washington, D.C. suburbs in the 1950s, I was free to play anywhere in our neighborhood. I soon discovered that biking could get me all over town — and beyond. Boy Scouts taught survival skills that launched many later vagabond trips of 200 to 2,000 miles.

At college in Richmond, Ind., I explored the countryside from Dayton to Indianapolis with a one-speed bike. On one unplanned ride, a strong tailwind blew me to Detroit. Without any identification, I biked unimpeded across the river to the University of Windsor, found our math textbook in the library, dutifully mailed in my homework from Canada, and took a train back to Dayton. Who needs a car, even for international travel?

In 1982, I moved to Houston from Albuquerque, where for a decade I had biked thousands of miles a year. The transition was frightening because of heavy traffic, narrow lanes, and impatient drivers. The many freeways, railroad tracks, and bayous seemed like insurmountable barriers. Gradually adapting to life in this wild

metropolis, I learned how to penetrate the barriers and was soon biking all over town.

In 1990, I stopped driving my car as a moral imperative stemming from my tepid support for the Gulf War as a purely defensive action. However, almost everyone around me clearly supported the war as a means to protect the oil interests critical to our car-centered economy. I gave away my car. As scientific evidence for human-induced climate change became increasingly compelling during the mid 1990s, I dramatically reduced my electricity consumption by totally relinquishing air conditioning and hot water. Further reducing my carbon footprint, I stopped riding in cars altogether.

My mobility thus became highly dependent on biking. Walking, running, or using public transit would be unacceptably slow — turning a 30-minute bike trip into an exhausting two-hour ordeal. The bicycle became my magic carpet. Before 2008 I mostly used neighborhood streets for my daily commute, including stops at

the gym or grocery store. But the recession closed the gym, where for 20 years intense dance workouts to loud music had wiped away all my stress, leaving a clear mind open to scientific insights. The therapeutic zumba and kickboxing workouts moved to distant gyms. Suddenly I was confronted with 5- to 20-mile detours during evening rush hour. New research priorities added yet more trips.

Scary bike lanes that almost no one uses took me part of the way. But time constraints and the need to cross two or three freeways required riding partially on major streets. Slower riders are usually hounded off busy streets, but motorists here are somewhat more tolerant of fast riders. So I decided to ride fast — always on the big chain ring, hands on the drops — with two DiNotte taillights (burning day and night) that give motorists ample warning to change lanes. I try to avoid conflicts by riding far to the right on major streets and by pulling off the road when I see a pack of cars

approaching from behind. A critical safety device is my motorcycle mirror.

My vintage mountain/computer bike has transported computer monitors, 50-pound bags of grain, 40-pound tubs of tahini, and a futon across town. But now the bike more often carries precious research samples at all hours of day and night to a large analytical instrument (NMR) across town. Although this is the best NMR instrument in a city with the largest medical/research complex in the world, I am often the only user — in part because the facility is hard to access by car. Biking there is faster, and parking is much easier. Is bicycling too mundane for scientists immersed in lucrative fantasies of saving the world with the next high-tech breakthrough?

Far from mundane, biking all over Houston constantly showers me with precious memories: carrying NMR samples at 2 a.m. on the bayou bike trail past homeless camps, finding (and returning) a fat undamaged wallet in the middle of a busy street, and jumping my bike out of a left-turn lane onto the median to wave an ambulance through a congested intersection (the driver waved back).

From a historical perspective of human values, it's hard to escape the conclusion that our car-centered consumerism is deeply and broadly wrong. How can we tolerate a society where children cannot walk safely to school or play freely outside? How can we justify oil wars and a transportation system that fosters obesity and heart disease? On a personal level, how will I explain supporting oil wars with my taxes?

For the past decade, my pay rate has been close to minimum wage, and I further reduce taxes by donating half my income to charitable organizations. My top priority for donations

is the mitigation of climate change. However, most environmental organizations promote electric cars and biofuels, which will exacerbate global food shortages, obesity, and other ill effects of our addiction to car-centered consumerism. The League simply promotes bicycling, the most efficient form of transportation known. And cycling often inspires a less-is-more lifestyle, the antithesis of rampant consumerism.

The quality of life has deteriorated markedly during my lifetime. I no longer bike or walk recreationally — it's just too dangerous. No one seems to notice or care that we have sold our souls to affluence and high technology. My hope for any rescue of our lethargic, misguided culture is faint. But after an hour with energetic zumba aficionados at an ethnically diverse gym, this pessimistic outlook vanishes.

Youthful enthusiasm, scientific knowledge, efficient technology, philosophical wisdom, and bicycles: What global disaster might assemble these parts into a sustainable civilization that can endure on our damaged planet? Meanwhile, confronting death every day on the roadways imbues my life with a blend of urgency and eternity.

*Bill Wilson recently identified the League as a beneficiary of his estate — a gift that will ensure we can continue to speak up for all cyclists in the future, as we do today.*

## LEAVE THE LEAGUE A LEGACY

The League has formed a new recognition society, the Legacy Circle, to honor individuals who include us in their estate plans. Members of the new society include several League board members, as well as long-term supporters.

If you have included the League in your estate plans, we encourage you to add your name to the growing roster of members of the Legacy Circle. Please send an e-mail to [elizabeth@bikeleague.org](mailto:elizabeth@bikeleague.org) to let us know your plans. We don't need the details, just your indication that the League will be remembered in your estate.

For most donors, a simple bequest in your will is the easiest way to make an estate gift. You can also name the League as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. Please use the League's tax identification number in any documents. That number is 36-6206225.



American Bicyclist is printed with soy ink on 30% post-consumer recycled paper certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

CONGRESS IS  
BEHIND THE CURVE,  
BUT BICYCLING  
IS GAINING WIDE  
SUPPORT FROM SEA  
TO SHINING SEA



photo by Liam Crotty

# RIGHT & LEFT AGREE: BICYCLING MAKES AMERICA GREAT

WE ARE A NATION DIVIDED, EXCEPT WHEN IT COMES TO CYCLING

The debate in Congress about the next federal transportation bill was long ... and frustrating. For months and months, you got our e-mails with "Urgent: Take Action Today!" in the subject line. You lit up the switchboards on Capitol Hill with your calls and flooded the inboxes of your members of Congress urging them to preserve critical federal funding for biking and walking in your community. Unfortunately, at the end of June, Congress cut many of the popular programs that have built the foundation of a more Bicycle Friendly America. But there's good news. The battle over the transportation bill clearly revealed the wide bipartisan support for biking in communities from coast to coast. Mayors and governors, Republicans and Democrats, more than 70 national organizations united behind bicycling as a means to make America great. Here are just two perspectives ... from both sides of the aisle.



## TAX CUTS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH:

**The Conservative Perspective**  
*By Tom Bowden*

In 2010, Ted Johnson invited me to write an article. In my comments on his site — Commute By Bike — I referenced my generally conservative inclination, and Ted thought I might have something more extensive to say about conservatives and cycling. What followed was totally unexpected.

The article, *How to Talk about Cycling to a Conservative*, touched a nerve. The piece went viral and most of the reaction was positive. Overwhelmingly, the responses were along the lines of "Yeah, I'm conservative, too, and I ride a bike!" Turns out conservatives — 80 percent or more according to a recent poll — support cycling. And why not? After all, there are more than enough reasons for a good conservative to support cycling, even if they choose not to ride themselves. Let's start with the economics of cycling.

First off, cycling infrastructure is flat out cheaper than building more

roads. The more cyclists, the more room for cars on existing roads. The more cyclists, the less concrete we need to pour. The less concrete, the more money for deficit reduction, tax cuts — or for bike projects in the home districts of conservative and liberal representatives.

Cycling represents \$133 billion of our annual gross domestic product (GDP) of roughly \$15 trillion. That's a little less than 1 percent — but that also means that if every cyclist could get just one friend to start riding with them in the next 12 months, we could (in theory) instantly add a almost a full percentage point to our GDP growth. Given the relatively low participation rate for cycling, that seems very doable — much more likely than getting the same effect in other sectors where participation rates are already very high.

Properties located near bike paths are valued up to 14 percent more than similar properties without such facilities. Wouldn't it be great to boost home values instead of bailing out banks?

The bicycling industry also supports 1.1 million jobs and generates \$17.7 billion in tax revenues each year, and there is lots of room for growth. Double cycling and create a million jobs? Sounds like a plan to me!

Most cyclists need no financial incentive to ride, but even if every existing bicycle commuter received the commuter tax credit the total annual cost to the treasury would be only about \$175 million. In contrast, subsidies to drivers and transit users: total roughly \$84.4 billion. Tax cuts anyone?

Each year, we incur \$166 billion on health care costs associated with traffic injuries and deaths — caused by cars. Replacing short vehicle trips with “utility cycling” can cut into the \$56 billion per year in health care costs associated with asthma and air pollution. And you don't have to race to reap the fitness benefits of cycling. A few miles a day can take you a long way.

Cycling can make a serious dent in our dependence on foreign oil, too. A huge portion of all petroleum fuels go to automobile transportation. Only 15 per-

cent is related to getting to work, while 90 percent of all trips are less than two miles. Enabling just 10 percent of even those short trips to be on a bike or on foot can make a real reduction in demand for oil imports. Let's Move! (Oh wait, that's Michelle's slogan! Sorry Mitt!)



photo by Allan Crawford

## BIKES HELP MAKE AMERICA GREAT by Rep. Tom Petri (R-WI)

**W**e all know that far too many Americans are far too heavy. In fact, more than one-third of U.S. adults (35.7 percent!) are overweight. We all know that obesity-related conditions include heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancer — some of the leading causes of death. And we

also know that a necessary part of any plan to get and stay fit involves getting out there and moving around.

Bike riding is a great way to exercise, to increase stamina, to lose fat and to tone muscles. It's a great way to lower your doctor's bills and the nation's health care costs by avoiding chronic disease. In terms

of health, bikes help make America great.

We all know that many of our highways are clogged with traffic — with cars and trucks pumping out exhaust as they inch forward. And we also know that when bike lanes and other reasonable accommodations are made, kids will bike to school, adults will bike to work, and many will



photo by Allan Crawford

It seems that when “cycling infrastructure” is up for debate as part of “national transportation policy” there is often a backlash born of misinformed fiscal conservatism. Businesses don’t like being told by D.C. bureaucrats that their streets will be modified, or that parking places will have to give way for bike racks and bike lanes. But let one business install a free, locally made bike rack, or start providing cargo bikes for its employees to use, and suddenly everyone

fun — and real conservatives, despite what some might think, love to have fun. Really, we do!

*Liberals speak up >>>*



*Tom Bowden is Chairman of Bike Virginia, a board member of the Virginia Bicycling Federation, counsel to Richmond 2015 (organizing committee for the 2015 World Road Cycling Championships) and a daily bike commuter in Richmond, Va. Tom practices law in Richmond where he counsels business owners and management on a wide variety of legal issues including finance, regulatory compliance and legal strategy.*



photo by Allan Crawford

wants in on the act. Before you know it, you’ve got a Bicycle Friendly Business District with people on bikes spending more locally, and businesses outdoing one another to be bike friendly. No wonder then that small business owners, who tend toward a conservative point of view, can be some of the strongest supporters of cycling.

There are lots more good reasons for conservatives of all stripes to support cycling, but maybe the most important reason is the simplest — cycling is just good old All-American

bike to get around. But unfortunately, safe and convenient accommodations for bicycle riders are a long way away from reaching their potential. In terms of providing affordable transportation options, bike friendly policies help make America great.

Ultimately, as we work to improve bike facilities and encourage

more people to ride for exercise and transportation, it’s also important to note that bikes are fun. When we can help people to be happier while also being healthier and providing more transportation options, that’s something we should act on because a high quality of life helps to make America great.

Rep. Tom Petri





## A CLEANER, SAFER, MORE EQUITABLE AMERICA:

### A Liberal Perspective

By Kathryn Reid Moore

It's hard to think of something more all-American than bicycling. What other activity inspires feelings of freedom, can-do spirit and unity, like going for a bike ride?

Ask any group of people — young or old, rich or poor, urban or suburban — what bicycling means to them and you'll hear a single chorus: "Freedom." (I'm serious; try it!) There's something about self-propelled, people-powered movement that fills you with a sense of confidence, a rush that races up your spine and blossoms into a smile. Whatever your political persuasion, fundamentally, we ride because it's fun. And that's great news for America, because bicycling can make this country cleaner, safer, and more equitable.

It's also why so many Democrats, liberals and progressives have embraced two wheels — or should.

Prime example? Me! Despite a real wariness of bikes ("Biking? On the street? Are you crazy!?" ), I learned how to adjust a bike seat just a couple of years ago. I was working in the



photo by Allan Crawford

mayor's office promoting sustainable initiatives and, before I knew it, I had acquired an old mountain bike, some road riding training and a passion for Critical Mass. I found pro-bicycling policies had positive impacts across the spectrum, from reducing greenhouse gas emissions to promoting local business, from reducing crime to boosting community health.

Fundamentally, bicycling supports the kind of positive, unified community that any person would want.

First of all, bikes offer a safe and sustainable alternative to cars. Too many automobiles pollute our public spaces with global-warming gases,

and across America, people die in car crashes at an astonishing rate. Core to the Democratic Party platform is health care for everyone. Bicycling is a great first step. Even for those who drive to work, biking to the grocery store, the movies, or to meet up with friends is a big boost to body and mind. We can prevent a lot of trips to the hospital for heart attacks and complications from diabetes with a simple diagnosis: More bicycling!

Democrats are not a one-issue party, of course. Fundamental to their support for health care, I believe, is a deeply rooted motivation to create a more equitable country. More than 10

## HOW BICYCLING BENEFITS COMMUNITIES by Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR)

Communities across the country are realizing the importance of biking for the health of their citizens, the environment, and the economic strength of the community itself. Since half of the trips taken in the United States today are within a 20-minute bicycle ride, there are plenty of opportunities to incorpo-

rate biking into Americans' daily lives.

Even many of those who primarily drive now will often make the switch to cycling if it is safe and convenient. Investing in bikeable communities is a great way to grow jobs and increase transportation choices, encouraging people take their feet off the gas pedal and put them on the

bike pedals. In my hometown of Portland, Oregon, for the cost of one mile of freeway, we created 274 miles of bike lanes, more than doubled the amount of people who commute by bike, and provided well over 1,000 jobs.

Portland is not an isolated example, but simply part of a sea change in how we live, play, work, and travel.



photo by Leslie Bloom

Currently, I'm the assistant administrator of a small non-profit retirement home, and when Democrats talk about what they can do for small business, I tell them they would be wise to incorporate investment in bicycling infrastructure, education and incentives. It's not just the liberal or the cyclist in me — I know that this makes our streets safer for me, my co-workers and the elderly (pedestrians) we serve.

percent of households in the largest 100 U.S. cities do not have access to a private vehicle. Not everyone can afford to own or keep a car running, but nearly everyone can ride a bike (or a tricycle!). Generally speaking, folks of all ages, abilities and economic backgrounds can pump up their tires, tighten their brakes and get rolling with little more than an old bike and very basic skills.

After all, bicycling intuitively a simple feeling of safe, carefree living. It's why our bikes are so often used as props in advertising for everything from banks to furniture stores. The image of a bicycle conjures fond memories for most of us — regardless of where we grew up or what tax bracket we're in.

What if more Americans did ride their bikes to work or school? Studies in the Netherlands show that these people would be happier, more productive, and less likely to call in sick. It makes sense when you think about it, especially if you suffer from the average American car commute. One study, by the Dutch economic think tank TNO, demonstrated that increasing commuting to work by bicycle by just 1 percent could save their country's employers approximately \$34 million in lost productivity from absenteeism. That's assuming a workforce of 7.1 million people. The U.S. has more than 154 million people in its workforce.

In my experience as a part-time bicycling advocate, I have found self-

described liberals or Democrats the most inclined to embrace the need for national support of bicycling for transportation. However, more and more conservatives and Republicans are getting involved in this movement and that can only be a good thing.

Whatever your political persuasion, when Americans take care of our greatest assets — our people, our land and our free spirits — there are no limits to this country's greatness. Bicycling is great for America ... and America is better by bike. |||



*Kathryn Reid Moore lives in Miami and volunteers as board director of the South Florida Bike Coalition, a non-profit that aims to increase bicycling by promoting collaboration among individuals, policymakers, clubs and non-bicycling groups, too.*

As we transition to this new way of thinking about how we get around, and start burning calories instead of fossil fuel, we are going to see enormous tangible improvements in the health, livability, and sustainability of our communities. This, in turn, will make the country as a whole stronger and greener as we head into the future.

People everywhere I travel are clamoring for more bike lanes, more bike-sharing programs, and greater commitment from local, state, and federal governments to meet those needs. It is far past time that elected officials answered those calls and made the necessary investments to create a truly bikeable future.

Rep. Earl Blumenauer





## EVERY BICYCLIST COUNTS

A NEW LEAGUE EFFORT TO REDUCE CYCLING FATALITIES

By Elizabeth Kiker

There are many reasons to ride your bike across the country. In 2006, mine was to escape my life for a bit. Aided by a boss willing to give me unpaid leave and a new Adventure Cycling tour that promised a short (seven-week) journey coupled with full-service assistance, I and 40 others set out from Seattle, Wash.

It didn't go as planned.

On the fifth day of our trip, June 25, 2006, Philip Smith was killed. As many cycling tragedies are, it was completely without explanation: A bright, cloudless day; a wide shoulder; little to no traffic on the road; and he was wearing a helmet and a reflective triangle. Quoting from the legal case (still pending in court) available online: “[the driver’s] attention had been diverted from the road to her three-

year-old child in a rear child safety seat. [She] admitted fault: braking only after impact, she never saw the cyclists.”

Several cyclists on the ride were gathered at a sunny gazebo chatting and eating lunch. A car pulled up and asked if we were with a group. Leery of talking to strangers, we sent our most outgoing member, a church pastor, to see what they wanted. And thus he heard the news first, that they had seen a body next to a bike by the side of the road. That the body was covered by a sheet. That it was probably someone on our tour.

The rest of us, after some discussion, decided to ride on. Not even knowing who had been killed, we decided we didn't really have any other options. The rest of the ride, ride leaders were ferrying between all the

cyclists, filling us in on the tragedy and picking up cyclists who were too heart-broken to continue riding.

Bill Cook, a fellow rider, talked to his wife that night and he recorded part of their conversation on his blog: “My wonderfully sensible wife told me on the phone that some activities we really want to do merit taking clear risks. Otherwise, she said, ‘life’s not worth living.’”

I felt especially impotent as a League employee. I work in bicycle advocacy; this is my job. If I can't prevent cyclists deaths, at the very least there should be something I could do to honor Mr. Smith, to note how tragic and useless his passing was. At the time, there wasn't.

In the years since that 2006 crash, the League has continued to support the Ride of Silence. We've saluted the volunteers who put up Ghost Bikes. We've had a small memorial site on our web site. What we haven't had is a way to track the fatalities, to uncover the reasons behind the death, and to compile the data into a useful format.



The riders on my cross country trip before we pedaled out of Seattle: Smith is in the front row center (aqua shorts).

Now we do. With the launch of Every Bicyclist Counts ([www.everybicyclistcounts.org](http://www.everybicyclistcounts.org)), the League is harnessing our staff resources to capture a real-time, in-depth picture of cyclist deaths in the U.S. Starting from January 1, 2012, League staff is entering every single death into an online database. Staff analysts are working behind the scenes to decipher patterns.

We are doing this to decrease cyclist deaths from crashes. From a map showing precisely where each death occurs to data on how each crash is occurring, this Web site is going to be a deep resource for cycling advocates and traffic engineers across the United States.

In addition to data collection, the site serves as an online memorial to cyclists who have died on their bikes.

With photos, obituaries, and comments from friends and relatives, this memorial gives mourners a place to turn while also providing concrete numbers and statistics.

You and I know that every single bicyclist counts. This Web site is going to help educate everyone else of this vital fact.

The creation of this site was supported with generous donations from Sonya Marsden, wife of Dave Marsden, who died in a crash in Vienna, Va. in 2005 and from George Esahak-Gage of the Gage Safer Streets Foundation.

Learn more about Every Bicyclist Counts on the League blog at [blog.bikeleague.org](http://blog.bikeleague.org) or e-mail me ([elizabeth@bikeleague.org](mailto:elizabeth@bikeleague.org)) with any questions. |||



Marilyn Chimes (L), Norm Kokol (R) and me moments before the crash.

## HONORING FALLEN CYCLISTS

The Every Bicyclist Counts Web site is joined in memorializing cyclists by two established organizations—the Ride of Silence and the Ghost Bike Project.

### RIDE OF SILENCE

The first-ever Ride of Silence at White Rock Lake in Dallas in 2003 drew 1,000 cyclists through word of mouth and e-mail communication in just 10 days. There was no registration and no fees. Chris Phelan, the organizer, had just lost a dear friend to a horrific crash, and launched this as a one-time event. However, as word got out other cyclists began to contact him with a desire to do the same thing in their own communities. In the nine years since, the Ride of Silence has grown to a worldwide event held every year on the third Wednesday in May. In 2012, there were 318 events held worldwide. For more information, visit [rideofsilence.org](http://rideofsilence.org).



### GHOST BIKES

*By New York City Ghost Bike Project*

Ghost Bikes are dignified and somber memorials for bicyclists killed on the streets. A bicycle painted all white is locked near the crash site accompanied by a small plaque. Each installation is meant to be a reminder of a tragedy that occurred on an otherwise anonymous street corner and a quiet statement in support of cyclists' right to safe travel. The first bike memorials were created in St. Louis, Missouri in 2003, and the idea has since spread to over 180 locations throughout the world. For more information, visit [ghostbikes.org](http://ghostbikes.org).





LIVING  
AND  
RIDING  
SECOND  
BY  
SECOND

## How my bike carried me through cancer to an unexpected win and treasured year

By Emily Gresh

During a 50-performance run of *The Nutcracker*, Boston's snow-covered Beacon Hill held a timeless quiet within its cobblestone streets. As I rode home on my bicycle each night after those performances, the streets took me in, unnoticed and anonymously, after performing on stage in front of an audience of 3,000 people. The neighborhood offered brick and grey colors, muted tones, and a glow of lighted windows, while my life at the theater for those holiday weeks was a blur of bright confections: tutus, stage makeup, and sparkling tiaras.

It wasn't only during December that I biked home through the streets of Beacon Hill. Throughout the year, my days as a professional ballet dancer were awash in hours of rehearsals and performances with other dancers. We faced the daily rigor of class. We pushed our bodies to their limits. We kept formality within every inch of our movement. But, as intense as dancing was, every time I threw my leg over my bike at the end of a long day, I was reminded of the permeability between work, life, and art. Bicycling kept things real in a world built on imagery and illusion.

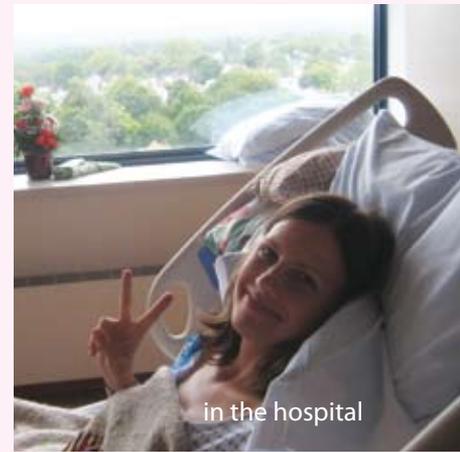
One night, toward the end of my first year as a professional dancer, after a performance of *Swan Lake* in which I danced in the corps de ballet, I rode my bike home through Boston Common and stopped at midnight to watch the actual swans in Frog Pond. Their presence at that hour, late in May and in the middle of a busy city, brought me face to face with a simpler beauty, removed from pointe shoes and the next day's performance. The contrast

settled gently, a swan's nest within me was ready to hold the two parts of the evening warmly in my mind.

Perhaps it was that night that bicycling began setting down words within me. Dancing was always a first language; cycling became a second. The body is the pen and paper with which we originally write our memories. Laughter, tears, sweat: These are all first inscribed in physical text. We are always writing, much of the time unaware. We carry our bodies with us throughout our lives, whether we like them or not, whether we love and care for them or don't, whether or not others tell us what wonderful instruments they are. Our bodies are marked by time and are nearly perfect keepers of time. The clocks within them tick on independent of the stories we think we have written for ourselves. Little did I know then that the connections and interpreting being done between my body, self, and bicycle would provide me with a pathway out of an excruciating time.

Clock ticking, eighteen days after my 39th birthday, I was diagnosed with breast cancer.

I thought that the way I knew and pushed my body would be gone forever. I was sure that my body's way of speaking within me would be permanently silenced. Under the threat of cancer, I realized just how much I loved the body I had, how dear it was, and how I did not want it changed or damaged by any hand.



in the hospital



cycling friends

Yet living, surviving, would require change.

I started looking for a soft landing, a refuge that would bring down the deafening clamor of illness, and take me to some semblance of a neighborhood in which I could find respite again. At the hospital, I thought of Beacon Hill and swans, as pen marks were drawn on my skin to line the path surgeons would follow. I said an inner good-bye to my body as I had known it. It didn't answer me back. A sad silence went pulsing through my

veins. A few minutes later, I was on the operating table and then unconscious for seven hours.

That surgery was followed by a second ... which was followed by many minor procedures and months of rest. As I recovered, I told my friend James that I wanted to ride in a charity ride for young survivors of breast cancer — the Young Survival Coalition's Tour de Pink. I told him the ride would take me 200 miles in three days and I'd have to start training. He replied simply: "You can do it." Despite my doubts, I knew he was right.

James introduced me to Cedric, Brian, Jeff, Steve, Adam, Paul, Bill, and Jason. They all helped me train. They gave me a nickname, occasionally calling me "Swan," and I felt my body run its pen over that name and underscore it. I heard from them that cyclists carry their shoes on the airplane when they travel to big races. It sounded like dancers who are sure to keep two pairs of pointe shoes with them when they are touring.

From these new friends, I learned about handmade bicycles and legends Dario Pegoretti and Richard Sachs, and the differences between those bikes and

mass-produced ones. As they spoke about custom bike frames, I thought about tutus that had been built for me, how bodices had been shaped and costumes fit exactly to me, just as bikes are fit to riders. I thought of dancers' shoes, Capezio's, which come from a factory, and Freed's, which are marked with a maker's stamp. Translations between body, bicycle and dancing began to tear across pages again. Being around the friends I met through cycling felt like Beacon Hill or that midnight stop by the Frog Pond—a familiar place that I always wanted to ride through, even in the dark, even in winter, even at the twelfth hour.

Except for James, these riding friends had no idea that I was recovering from cancer. As I took longer and longer rides with them and learned more about their generosity — and the fact that my first road bike was heavy and had the rear brake dragging — I could put aside for awhile that cancer had ever happened to me. I found myself laughing again, even as my rides began to stretch over 50 and 60 miles. As the Tour de Pink closed in, my friends made sure that the trip would go smoothly. They assured me that I could ride 200 miles in three days, that such a thing was no problem for me. And then I did.

With that big ride of my first Tour de Pink behind me, I kept on biking, listening, and discovering the daily strengths of my body, alongside these new friends. I took rides on my own, as well, watching the colors of late September give way to early October. As the year took a deeper curve into October, I set my sights on a new challenge: a design contest

Emily won a bicycle design contest open to cancer survivors, sponsored by Giant Bicycles and the Young Survival Coalition.



**"For every Avail Inspire bike out there, there are thousands of stories of hardship, great love, and recovery. Mine is but one, among many."**

open to cancer survivors, sponsored by Giant Bicycles and the Young Survival Coalition.

With the contest in mind, I sat in a coffee shop near Yale-New Haven Hospital, where I had been treated, and began to sketch out ideas. I used colored pencils to shade in a drawing and carefully wrote the word "inspire" in deliberate text on the bicycle's down tube. For all of the writing-on-the-wall details about my body, I decided to put language on my bicycle. Inspire comes from the phrase "to breathe in." This notion of inspire includes breathing in the most difficult, along with the most satisfying, to truly take in all that life brings, down to the depths of every



ticking part of you.

The design I created subsequently won the contest and today I ride that bicycle. When I received the call from Giant about winning the contest, I felt the richness of neighborhoods I love and the corner of York and Elm Streets where I was standing. I was bathed in a tremendous sense of humility and appreciation for the struggles of others. Every time I ride my bike I find myself thinking about the difficult year behind me and the intensely grateful living that I have done in the year that followed.

For every Avail Inspire bike out there, there are thousands of stories of hardship, great love, and recovery. Mine is but one, among many.

I found the respite I was seeking when I was first diagnosed with cancer. My bicycle has become a place where cycling and dancing can settle in like lifelong swan mates; where cancer can lead to a greater willingness to trust in and enjoy one's strength; where friendship is built on toughness as well as laughter; and where the good and the challenging find their way in.

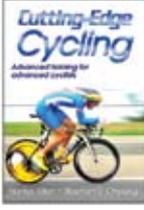
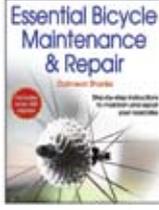
I may have left Beacon Hill long

ago and the quiet anonymity that I craved and found on those December nights. But, recovering from cancer I discovered that soft landing is still there for me on my bike: one ticking second to the next, body being pushed, pen madly scribbling away within me.

|||



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# TUCSON GOES THE DISTANCE

## Overcoming auto-driven growth to become a Gold Bicycle Friendly Community

By Ann Chanecka

When you look at the list of Gold Bicycle Friendly Communities, Tucson stands out.

After all, the Tucson-East Pima County Region isn't a compact, mountain town like Breckenridge, or Fort Collins, Colo. We're not a dense, urban metropolis like Minneapolis, Minn., or San Francisco, Calif.

Our region's auto-driven growth pattern has expanded the city into residential areas of more than 2,000 square miles. Like many U.S. cities, suburban sprawl and corresponding disinvestment in Tucson's downtown core make for longer trip distances and higher speed roads. Despite these limitations, though, Tucson's bicycle commute rate is five times the national average, and it has become a major destination for national and international cyclists. We've achieved the Gold standard — and we're aiming for Platinum.

How did we do it? Unfortunately, there isn't a clear recipe for success. There isn't one particular person, investment or policy that propelled the region to where it is today. But Tucson's commitment to bicycling can serve as inspiration for cities with similar land use challenges.

The first secret to Tucson's success: We started early. In the 1970s, the regional planning agency, now Pima Association of Governments (PAG), took a lead role in bike planning. The first Regional Bicycle Plan was adopted in 1975, and in 1977 PAG released a Bike Route Network Plan that identified the backbone of the current network. In the early '80s, the Tucson-Pima County Bike Advisory Committee (BAC) was



*Kiddical Mass*



*Protected bike lanes*

established to counsel the city and county on bicycle issues.

Around the same time, the Greater Arizona Bicycling Association (GABA) riding club gained momentum, and, when Richard DeBernardis became the organization's president in 1983, El Tour de Tucson was born. El Tour quickly gained national attention and became a catalyst for many of the region's bicycle friendly investments. "As El Tour brought in more participants and more money," DeBernardis says, "it helped make bike improvements a priority."

Another asset came from the academic research and student population of the University of Arizona (UA). In the mid-'80s, two UA architects and planners worked with local governments to create more multi-modal

elements in urban transportation projects. Today, the UA Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is guiding new projects in Tucson's urban core.

The combination of these critical factors resulted in two key decisions that institutionalized bicycle planning in the region: the Mayor and Council of Tucson requiring bike lane installation in roadway construction projects (1986) and the creation of a city staff position dedicated to bicycle and pedestrian planning (1989). That groundwork set the stage for greater expansion. The region began routinely installing bicycle lanes and routes throughout the community.

The bicycle program received a boost from federal funding, too. In the

early '90s, Tucson was found in violation of federal ozone standards and the region created programs to reduce driving through promoting alternate modes of transportation. The clean air program sparked the region's Bike Fest, an annual celebration of bicycling transportation. Similarly, the off-street river path system was developed as part of a project to reduce flooding through riverbank protection.

Of course, as the bike system and encouragement programs expanded, so did safety concerns, especially on major arterial streets. The need for safe crossings at key locations inspired the installation of major underpasses to the university and two iconic Tucson bridges: Snake Bridge and Basket Bridge. The high cost of those facilities sparked an innovative Tucson engineer, Richard Nassi, to design and build signalized crossings for bicycles and pedestrians.

In more recent years, bikeway mileage has dramatically increased and additional signals have been installed through the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). The region's bike network mileage is nearly 1,000 miles with more bike lanes than any other city in the U.S. Those facilities are enhanced by model education programs. In 2011, more than 3,000 students in 32 schools were taught cycling skills through the region's Safe Routes to School program. In 2010-11, the Bicycle Ambassador program, which pays League Certified Instructors to teach cycling skills and do outreach in the community, taught 216 classes to nearly 2,000 adults, including diversion classes for ticketed bicyclists.

When the League rolled out its Bicycle Friendly Community program in 2004, the City of Tucson was given a Silver rating. Determined to guide the entire Tucson region to a top rating, cycling advocates immediately initiated a Platinum Task Force. PAG coordinates the 21-member Task Force that is made up of both government staff and interested citizens, who consider League feedback, identify goals, and help influence regional leaders to support the bicycle friendly efforts. The region was first awarded a Gold rating in 2006.

The League award program has been a strong motivating factor to continually improve bicycling conditions. In 2008, our assessment stated: "Perhaps the biggest single thing to focus on is to increase bicycle use in the region." While Tucson has long had a relatively high commute rate compared to the rest of the country, it still lags behind the Platinum-rated cities. And while bike lane mileage increased dramatically over the past decade, the commute rate stayed static. In an effort to attract new riders, we recently launched a major initiative to build 180-miles of bicycle boulevards. The county's top bike facility focus is also a lower-stress type of facility, a 52-mile shared-use path known as "The Loop."

Over the past few years, several non-government initiatives have also provided the bicycle culture a huge boost. Mike McKisson began reporting daily on bicycle issues on his blog, TucsonVelo, adding a new level of transparency and accountability. Cyclovia Tucson, an event that temporarily closes the streets to cars, is growing in

popularity and organizers plan on expanding to two events in 2013. An active and effective new advocacy group, Living Streets Alliance (LSA), rallied for stronger bicycle parking standards, organized Bike Fest and launched several campaigns that promote bicycling as a viable transportation option — in just its first year.

For more than 40 years, Tucson has made significant progress as a bicycle friendly community. To join the Platinum ranks, we know we need to build on the current efforts to increase ridership and improve safety. We know this will take even more passionate and committed individuals. But, based on the dynamic history of Tucson's bicycle friendliness, we know we'll make it happen. |||

*Ann Chanecka is a senior transportation planner for the Pima Association of Governments.*



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**"In 2004 when the League rolled out the Bicycle Friendly Community Program, Tucson was awarded a silver-level. Determined to guide the entire Tucson region to a top rating, cycling advocates immediately initiated a Platinum Task Force ... the 21-member Task Force is made up of both government staff and interested citizens."**

# SAFETY IN ANY LANGUAGE

Advocates in Los Angeles engage day laborers to produce Spanish-language PSA campaign

By Andy Rodriguez and JJ Hoffman

In Los Angeles, many Latino cyclists, especially day labor cyclists, use a bicycle as their sole means of transportation. But while there is a large share of Spanish-speaking cyclists who use their bicycles as a necessity, there has been a lack of Spanish-language public education around bicycling. The City of Lights program and its day labor volunteers were motivated to create a Spanish-language public service announcement campaign to remedy that.

City of Lights is a program that empowers, educates, and advocates low-income cyclists in Los Ange-

les. The Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition created City of Lights in 2008 to provide needed resources to low-income cyclists and build bridges between the bicycle, immigrant rights, and social justice movements. Through these efforts, we have empowered Latino cyclists to build community in a fun and relevant way.

For the PSA campaign, it was important for us to have day laborers themselves develop the messages, since they are usually the most marginalized cyclists who lack adequate bilingual safety resources and bicycle infrastruc-

ture. Working with cyclists from Instituto de Educación Popular del Sur de California (IDEPSCA) and CARECEN day labor centers, we facilitated a round table discussion with day laborer cyclists on how to shape and develop messages that would resonate with the Latino population.

Over the course of 8 months, we met seven times to come up with the message and refine the final design. We were intentional about not inhibiting anyone's ideas, and creating an atmosphere in which everyone felt comfortable speaking freely. It was great

to see some of the day laborers take leadership in developing and shaping the slogans, despite the fact that none of them had any previous experience doing this type of work. We were all moved by their creativity and ingenuity, and some of the most challenging aspects of the process were narrowing down the messages — from 50 possibilities to five finalists — since the workers generated so many great ideas.

We resolved this by asking the workers: What message is most important to the Latino community: the environment, safety, or health? Does this message target both cyclists and motorists? With those questions in mind, we worked and reworded some of the slogans to make them clear and concise — perfect to feature on posters around the city.

“Overall, the process was fun, creative, and engaging,” said Guillermo Areola, a day laborer and participant. “This was our first time making slogans for a bus ad and we felt really honored to have been part of City of Lights’ campaign.”

In the end, the advertisement communicated the need for motorist to be alert and slow down. It emphasized that bicyclists are people you know — people of all ages and genders, who could be your own family. Hence, the slogan: “Precaución: Tu Familia También Usa La Bicicleta.” In English: “Be



“[This poster] was our favorite because it was catchy and beautifully designed. The colors were very in touch with the Latino community and we were very proud of that, too,” said Rafael Guerrero, a day laborer who participated in the process.

Careful, Your Family Rides a Bicycle, too.” The bus ad is currently in 1,000 bus kiosks throughout Los Angeles County and will enhance cyclist safety by helping motorists to develop more considerate driving behaviors and to share the road safely.

“Some great minds came together in creating and shaping the slogans,” said Rafael Guerrero, another day laborer who participated in the process. “The slogan ‘PRECAUCIÓN: Tu Familia También Usa La Bicicleta’ was our favorite because it was catchy and beautifully designed. The colors were very in touch with the Latino community and we were very proud of that, too!”

We knew ahead of time that the bus ad would generate a lot of publicity, so we developed a video PSA, too. We felt it was important to have a video version because the Latino community tends to get their news through television and radio, rather than web media. The video was made to target the Spanish-speaking population, but designed to be flexible enough to be shown in English language media, as well. Currently, City of Lights and the LACBC are working to get it showcased on major Spanish and English television networks.

But the campaign is making a mark already.

“Knowing that I was part of the process makes me really proud and happy every time I see the ‘Tu Familia’ bus ads,” said City of Light volunteer, Miguel Ramos. “Motorists are seeing

these ads everywhere and it is satisfying to know that they are taking into consideration that cyclists are also part of traffic and that they should be friendly and courteous to those who are making the air cleaner, reducing congestion, and making it more live-able in our communities.”

In addition to the day laborers, the success of the PSA was built on the support of critical partners, like REI, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), and Melograna Productions. For example, without the support of the LADOT, we wouldn’t have been able to cover the high printing costs for the bus ads. Without the passion and pro-bono services of filmmaker Jordan Melograna and artist Aaron Kuehn the PSA video wouldn’t have been possible either. Working together created strong, new relationships between the groups and agencies, and set the stage for future grassroots Spanish-language projects.

By highlighting the need for Spanish-language programming and engaging the community as well as government agencies, City of Lights is creating an entirely new model for community-driven bicycle safety education. Learn more at [www.ciudadeluces.wordpress.com/](http://www.ciudadeluces.wordpress.com/) |||

*Andy Rodriguez is the former Bilingual Bicycle Safety Coordinator at LACBC and JJ Hoffman is LACBC’s Development and Events Director.*



Participants who worked on the campaign.

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# SoCal goes cycle chic

| A Q&A with Melissa Balmer of Women on Bikes SoCal |

By Carolyn Szczepanski

The May-June issue of *American Bicyclist* highlighted how women are on a roll in the bicycle movement. No place is that progress more evident than in Long Beach, Calif. — thanks, in part, to the energy and inspiration of Melissa Balmer. The founder of Women on Bikes SoCal, Balmer isn't just working to double the number of women and girls who ride in her community through education and awareness campaigns. She's also partnering with the League on the National Women's Bicycling Summit at the Pro Walk Pro Bike conference this September and hosting the city's first Cycle Chic Fashion Show.

**Q** When and why did you adopt a cycling lifestyle?

**A** I decided to give up my car five years ago for financial, health and no-parking-in-my-neighborhood reasons. I began to really notice Long Beach's blooming bike culture gazing out of the bus window. I was intrigued and thought it looked like fun. But I hadn't been on a bike for over 20 years

so I was worried I just wasn't in good enough shape. In 2009, I met Charlie Gandy when he moved here to become Mobility Coordinator. During the holidays that year he invited me to ride in our local historic Belmont Shore Christmas parade and I had the time of my life. It was such a joy I've been riding again ever since.

**Q** What inspired you to start Women on Bikes SoCal?

**A** I have a background in art and fashion and know they are powerful tools. I had always been so impressed with both Andréa White-Kjoss the President and COO of Bikestation and Long Beach Vice Mayor Suja Lowenthal and their ability to be both very professional as business women and bicycle advocates, and yet also fashion savvy. To be honest, I realized that two of the most stylish and compelling women in bicycle advocacy were right under my nose. Andréa had already created a local Long Beach Women On Bikes bicycle safety and bike scholar-



Georgia Case and  
Melissa Balmer  
(photo: Charlie Gandy)

ship program a few years earlier and recommended that I take the idea and run with it. It was important to me that the new Women On Bikes SoCal initiative marries both advocacy for those who truly need safe and healthy mobility options with fun and fashion.



**Join us in Long Beach!** On September 13, 2012, the League and the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals will host the first **National Women's Bicycling Summit** in Long Beach, Calif. In partnership with Women on Bikes SoCal and Pro Walk Pro Bike, the half-day event will provide a unique opportunity for everyday cyclists and bicycle professionals to network, share knowledge and develop action steps to close the gender gap. It will feature targeted breakout sessions, a keynote address and plenary discussion, and, of course the Cycle Chic Fashion Show. Learn more at [bikeleague.org/conferences/women](http://bikeleague.org/conferences/women). Pictured: Long Beach Council Member Robert Garcia and Vice Mayor Suja Lowenthal in Long Beach's separated bike lanes. (photo: Allan Crawford)

**Q** You've established an ambitious campaign to "Double the Number of Women and Girls Who Ride Bikes" in Southern California; how do you hope to get there?

**A** With the diabetes and obesity epidemic we are faced with, we have to do this. This is where my background in marketing and media relations comes in. I feel we can double the number of women — even quadruple the number of women — by harnessing the power of fashion and lifestyle media. Imagine what would happen if next May five well known women and five well known men appeared on the covers of ten top magazines all at once. Imagine being at the grocery store and seeing Oprah on a bike on the cover of her magazine with Ellen Degeneres. Imagine going to the newsstand and noticing that George Clooney, the First Lady, Gwen Stefani, Chris Rock, Martha Stewart and Cameron Diaz were all riding bikes on the covers of magazines? What if bicycling became a cover story on *Time* and *Newsweek*? If we work together, we can make this happen.

**Q** Tell us about the Cycle Chic Fashion Show: How did it come about and what's your vision for this event?

**A** I found Mikael Colville-Andersen's Copenhagenize.com via Twitter two years ago and became totally enchanted with his images and philosophy. During the first steering committee for the Pro Walk Pro Bike conference I piped up and said I'd love to have him come as a keynote — and Andy Clarke thought the same thing and decided the League would make it happen. From there it felt like a natural progression to do a Cycle Chic show here and ask Mikael to be our special

guest. As for my vision: I'd like this to be one of the hottest fashion events of the Southern California fall season! I want it to be fun and celebratory and an event not to be missed!

**Q** How do style and advocacy intersect when it comes to cycling?

**A** If used wisely I see them as a very powerful combination. Bikes are hot right now. They are style and design darlings. Right now bikes are showing up in all kinds of lifestyle and fashion media as "must have" items to buy, or props in ads and editorial fashion. We in bicycle advocacy need to place stories that will move and motivate people. When I began to create the website for Women On Bikes SoCal, I asked Long Beach's Bicycle Coordinator and fellow Bikeable Communities member Allan Crawford to go on an adventure with me. He's a passionate road cyclist and excellent sports photographer. I asked him if he was up for trying his hand at a more fashion look and he jumped in with amazing enthusiasm. I couldn't have asked for a better creative partner. We are a labor of love, but these beautiful images are making connections and opening doors for us that wouldn't have happened so quickly otherwise. That is the power of fashion and style to connect. |||



Joseph Bradley and Nicole Maltz will model in the Cycle Chic fashion show. (photo: Allan Crawford)

#### THE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN BICYCLISTS

The League of American Bicyclists, founded in 1880 as the League of American Wheelmen, promotes bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation, and works through advocacy and education for a bicycle-friendly America. The League represents the interests of the nation's 57 million bicyclists. With a current membership of 300,000 affiliated cyclists, including 25,000 individuals and 700 organizations, the League works to bring better bicycling to your community. Contact League officers, directors or staff at League of American Bicyclists, 1612 K Street, NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20006-2850, 202-822-1333; bikeleague@bikeleague.org, fax: 202-822-1334.

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In honor of National Bike Month, the League collected a series of personal reflections and inspirations from a diverse collection of bicyclists from coast to coast. Read all 31 of the engaging Why I Ride posts at [blog.bikeleague.org](http://blog.bikeleague.org).

# WHY I RIDE

Parry Burnap shares the joys of the best job ever ... bike share! ▶

Inga Ramsland takes a ride in her mom's time machine. ▼



▼ Dave Bennick (far left) doesn't need a rental car for his consulting trips ... a bike is better.



▲ After many miles in Kenya, Winnie learns to ride the streets of Minneapolis. (photo by Angela Lundberg)



▲ Delaware DOT Director Shailen Bhatt rides for transportation choices ... and Amish apple pie. (photo by DeIDOT)



▲ Advocate and visionary Ellen Fletcher reflects on a lifetime of cycling. (photo by Richard Masoner)



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educational materials to help you gear up for your next ride.

Next time you go for a ride, show your support for the League of American Bicyclists  
with the cool new League jersey.

There is lots of other merchandise for sale in the store, from our BikeEd  
video to water bottles, hats, t-shirts and more.



HAT



BIKE ED VIDEO



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- Jennifer Fox, San Francisco, Calif.



"I became a life member because I believe in the League's work. Education programs; the Bicycle Friendly America program; and the National Bike Summit make a difference in my life and in the lives of bicyclists across the country!"  
- Buzz Feldman, Longmont, Colo.

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