

**A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE ORANGE COUNTY WHEELMEN**



**SUMMERTIME**

# OCW CLUB LINKS

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**HOME PAGE:** [www.ocwheelmen.org](http://www.ocwheelmen.org)

**CALENDAR:** [www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/418357-calendar](http://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/418357-calendar)

**OFFICERS:** [www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419328-officers](http://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419328-officers)

**DIRECTORS:** [www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419332-directors](http://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419332-directors)

**SUPPORTING MEMBERS:** [www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/424483-supporting-memberships](http://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/424483-supporting-memberships)

## MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

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**Held the first Sunday of each month starting 11am at Carl's Jr., Newport Beach. Take the 405 Freeway to the MacArthur exit. Go south 0.8 miles and turn left on Campus. Go 0.3 miles and turn right into Carl's Jr. (at Von Karman). All Officers and Directors are expected to attend to conduct business. Other interested members may also attend.**

## GENERAL MEETINGS

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**Held typically the first Thursday every other month at Irvine Ranch Water District, Sand Canyon Ave. in the city of Irvine. Light dinner starting at 6:30pm with meeting starting at 7pm. Different speaker each meeting.**

## REGISTRATION FOR OCW EVENTS

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**All Registration for OCW events require the registrant to be logged in. Be sure to always check for discount codes. You will only see the discount code if you are a current member of OCW. The discount code if applicable will be located on a separate page in the specific event area. To confirm if you are current, check the membership data base. If you do not see the link for the membership data base, your membership has expired by at least a month or more.**

**The new website, registration code, and discount codes are only visible to current members. The website functions are different and I have learned new ways within this site logic, to apply new and different ways of maintaining privacy for our members from email skimmers and other nefarious internet hacking. I am continually upgrading the website when there are better ways to protect your personal information, but have it available for our members to connect to each other.**

**Thank you for your continued support and membership to OCW.**

[events@ocwheelmen.org](mailto:events@ocwheelmen.org)

## Editors Musings



Michelle Vester

As I write this we are finally starting to see businesses re-open, although with COVID restrictions. I know it sounds crazy but Alan and I actually ate on a restaurant patio for the first time in 3 months! I also placed my coffee order inside a Starbucks for the first time in 3 months! In each situation we had to wear masks to place the food and coffee order, but once we were sitting out on the patio it was such a great feeling to have the masks off while eating and enjoying the weather.

While our club is still under California restrictions for group rides I congratulate Terry Kessler with her awesome idea of virtual rides! It's great seeing all the contributors on the [Friends of OCW](#) Facebook page. Alan and I even did a contribution on our mountain bikes using road and dirt. Check out pages 7 and 13 for more information and how to join in on the action.

Stay safe everyone and let's do our part to stop the spread of COVID-19 while enjoying the great outdoors.

See you on the trail!

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Steve Loughran

# The President

An interesting few months to be sure. Since our last Chain Reaction, all rides have been on hold. However, by the looks of it, from Strava to our Friends of OCW Facebook page, many of us are still riding a lot of miles. While we remain in Phase 2 in Orange County, there is plenty to do, on your own, or in a small group with distancing. There is, at times, very confusing information both in the press, and from the scientific community. There have been papers suggesting that riding through someone's exhaled breathing, as in a pace line, would increase risk of infection, while other studies indicate that being outside is the safest place to be. We each have to decide for ourselves, taking into account our own and our family's health, what is comfortable for each of us.

With that in mind, I am going to suggest that we post a full calendar of rides which would provide route slips to follow should you like to ride these individually or in a small group. These will not, at this time, be official OCW rides with sign-in sheets or mileage credit. However, riding is the point of our group so get out and enjoy. Several members of the board and other members are working on some fun ideas for activities for our organization. I am amazed at the great ideas being suggested and hope we can get these out to the club within the next 2 weeks. Please, if you have any ideas that you think would be fun, don't hesitate to contact a board member with your suggestions.

If you do not have a Facebook account, you may wish to consider creating one. The Friends of

OCW page has become much more active lately, with members posting pictures of recent rides, etc. It is also a valuable place to obtain cycling information such as road conditions and the like. If you don't have an account but would like to share news, pictures, rides, etc., feel free to email Terry Kessler who has been most active in moving this site along. There is a link on our OCW home page. One idea posted was to wear your OCW kit on Saturdays. Try to spot others wearing their kit as you ride. I saw another member on Memorial Day.

Since our last newsletter, we did cancel Breathless Agony, again due to health concerns for our volunteers and riders. This definitely left a hole in our major activities for the year. I would like to thank all of the volunteers who were ready to staff this ride. We hope to bring it back next year once we see what life will be like on the other side of this pandemic. Additionally, our June general meeting has been cancelled due to room reservation cancellation by Irvine Water District.

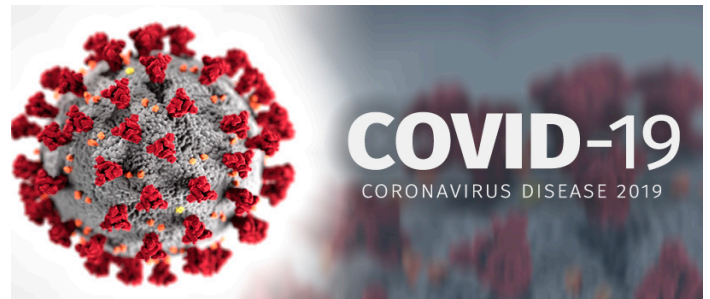
In the last newsletter, I did mention that we were working on designing a new club kit. While we are not riding at this time, I did ask Harry Gunther to proceed with that new design. There is also a neck gaiter that can act as a mask while riding, available from Voler. We hope to have our club logo put on this and made available to the membership. We hope to have the store open soon and that members will be excited with the new design.

While I continue to work, I have reduced my work schedule and I too am riding more than I have in a long time. It has been fun to look at others' rides and follow them to roads I have not ridden before. One of my newest rides was up from San Clemente via La Pata to Antonio up to O'Neill Park. La Pata is a long slog, but nice to see a lot of undeveloped areas in South Orange County. Lately I just head out and decide where to go once I pick a general direction. I'm sure many of you do the same. I have not had a difficult time planning my day, so I feel very fortunate.

I also belong to several hiking groups and have missed my hiking family as well. Many of us have discovered Zoom and have done all sorts of activities to stay in touch. One member posts Zoom dance parties with themes such as, 1960s or 1970s, Beatles, R&B, country, etc. Those have been a blast. My wife Anne and I have hosted Pictionary and Trivial Pursuit games on many occasions via Zoom; great times had by all. So, I feel very blessed to have my health and activities that get me outside (which to me is the safest place to be) and enjoying the great place we live.

While there is less traffic, I have noticed the speed of vehicles seems to have increased. Take care at intersections and look both ways before crossing. Please, follow all traffic rules. One, it is how we stay safe and two, drivers see us running lights or stop signs and they become angry at us. We need all the friends we can get.

To me, riding has always been important but not nearly as important as the relationships we develop and nurture. At this time of being separate, we all have much to be grateful for and our group is working hard to keep the interest of the club going. Again, we welcome your ideas for new and different ways to interact and keep riding. Be safe out there.



**Given the recent Covid-19 virus outbreak and concern for the health of our members, all club rides have been cancelled**

**Given the recent Covid-19 virus outbreak and concern for the health of our members, Pacific Coast 100 has been postponed until 2021**





# the *VICE* President's Message

**By Bruce Campbell, Vice President**

Hope you are all keeping active in this challenging time based on the Covid-19 virus and staying safe at the same time. Not much to report on OCW Club activities (with the exception of a planned July 9th General Meeting) so I decided to let our President Steve Loughran tell you about that in his message and supply more of a personal perspective with my experience adapting to the “New Normal”.

I found it hard at first to come to grips with the Stay at Home policy and all the restrictions with regard to group rides, visiting with friends and family etc...I also found myself feeling down about cancelled/postponed trips, concerts, and no dining out.

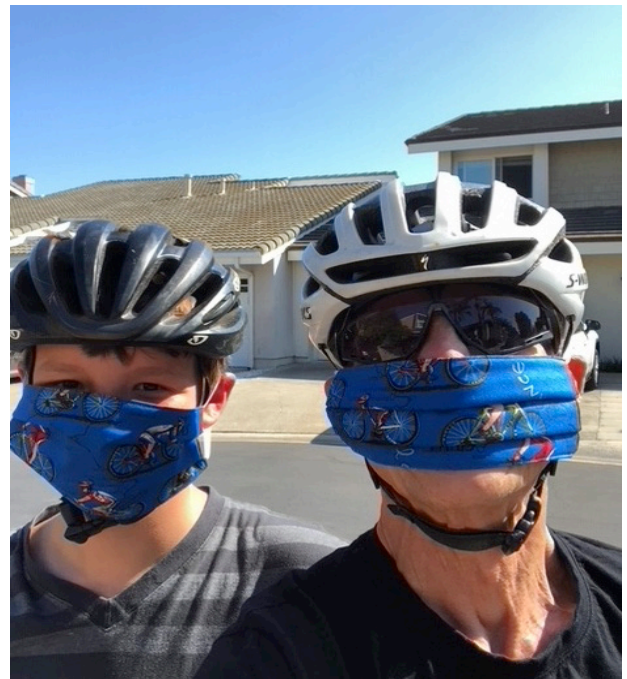
However, it did not take long to realize that everyone was in the same boat and many people were facing much more serious consequences than my minor inconveniences. I thought how lucky I was to be retired and not face the difficulties of today's workers either trying to continue in their jobs or worse suffering after being laid off or furloughed.

Like most of you, I adjusted to the “New Normal” coupled with a self-imposed positive mental adjustment and found ways to occupy my time constructively. My wife and I also got a big boost in our attitudes when my daughter and 3 grandkids ages 11,13 and 15 plus two large dogs (boxers) decided to join us for an extended stay at our home in Irvine this April.

They have resided in Sacramento since August 2019, but have also lived in Hawaii, North Carolina and Kodiak Island, Alaska due to her husband's career in the US Coast Guard Air Wing on C-130s. So we usually have seen them only on vacations or Christmas time.

Her husband who plans to retire, after serving 20 years, this July from the USCG has plenty of Personal Time Off (PTO) to use for visits to Sacramento but cannot fly commercially. The USCG has a corps-wide edict prohibiting commercial flights for PTO during the Covid-19 pandemic. So, he is restricted on Kodiak thru the end of June and unsure what happens after that date!

For the past few weeks I got a chance to finally have some quality time with the grandkids playing cards, board games, daily walks and family dinners.



I also witnessed in real time how “distance learning” worked (sort of) with each morning the 3 grandkids getting on their computers. I did not see the 12-year-old for hours during the day and later learned from her 15-year-old sister that she was “doing homework” in her bedroom while at the same time binge watching Riverdale. I also heard the frustration in my daughter's voice at-

tempting to help the (not so engaged) 11-year-old grandson with his class exercises.

The 15-year-old is motivated and on autopilot with regard to school. Her short-term focus is on gaining a driving learner's permit but DMV is closed and she cannot take the needed written test for the permit. So she persuaded Gramps into illegally letting her chauffeur me around Irvine for minor shopping excursions.

Turns out they only have 4 days of "remote learning" with Mondays reserved as "make up" days giving the students a chance to catch up. I felt bad for one of the teachers as she told a class on Tuesday that homework assignments should be turned in daily. Turns out she had spent about 12 hours reviewing homework on Monday as most students waited until "Make up Day Monday" to turn in a week's worth of assignments.

The 11-year-old grandson is pretty large (5' 8" tall) for his age and he seemed eager to ride with me. So, I give him a kit, spare set of shoes and helmet along with my SWORKS Roubaix and we were off to the Irvine bike trails. He forgot to clip out a couple of times and fell at slow speed. He had one fall reaching for the water bottle and not handling the bike well with one hand but never complained. Our longest ride so far is 22 miles, Irvine to Balboa Island where he switched at the last minute from choosing a Frozen Chocolate-covered banana for a donut.

So my wife and I are happy to see the grandkids but at the same time I wish it was under better circumstances.

Hopefully our July 9th General Meeting will not be cancelled because we have an excellent evening planned. The speaker is Claudia Wasko, VP and General Manager of Bosch eBike Systems. Her team will provide E-Bike test rides prior to the meeting start and also give a talk on the latest technology contained in Bosch eBikes. See you on the road and at the next General Meeting July 9th at IRWD.



# ORANGE COUNTY WHEELMEN MEMBERS

Hello to our bicycling family and friends! We miss you! It has been a challenging couple of months, but OCW is gearing up and working toward a better bicycling season soon! We have a progressive plan to be able to do this, with your support.

We hope that you are getting out there to ride, even though it might be mostly by yourself or with a riding partner. As soon as we are able, OCW will post calendar group rides again with all the appropriate precautions.

Although we can't ride as a group yet, we can stay connected on our Friends of OCW Facebook page. This interactive club forum is a positive site for motivation, connections and other important bicycling news or humor. (This is not a political forum!)

Friends of OCW Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/253156728156693/>  
Log in today and contribute to the page. Here are a couple of ideas:

Post a picture of you, your bike or your route wherever you have been getting out and away on the Friends of OCW FB page! This is to remind us all that there are many options to stay safe (aka social distancing) and sane (aka riding).

Whether you are riding one mile or 100, Saturdays are the new OCW Jersey Days! It can be a club jersey or a club event jersey (or any day of the week). Post a picture on the Friends of OCW page to show that we are "Riding alone, together in Solidarity!"

Stay healthy, positive and patient! OCW will have some very exciting events again as soon as possible. Some of these are:

- themed rides
- peak challenges
- special events for vintage bikes, touring bikes, ebikes, and more
- brewery rides with new and exciting routes
- ...and more!

Questions and ideas? Not on Facebook, but have a picture/topic to share?  
Email Terry Kessler at [tkessler@rocketmail.com](mailto:tkessler@rocketmail.com)

Other links:

- OCW STRAVA <https://www.strava.com/clubs/orange-county-wheelmen>
- OCW Website: <https://www.ocwheelmen.org/>
- OCW Calendar: <https://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/418357-calendar>
- Click on Like or Follow to see important announcements on the OCW official Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ocwheelmen/>



# The Hungry Eyelist



## Healthy Banana Bread

### Ingredients

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup melted coconut oil or extra-virgin olive oil or high quality vegetable oil

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup honey or maple syrup

2 eggs

1 cup mashed ripe bananas (about 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  medium or 2 large bananas)

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup milk of choice or water

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground cinnamon, plus more to swirl on top

1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups white whole wheat flour or regular whole wheat flour

### Instructions

Preheat oven to 325 degrees Fahrenheit and grease a 9×5-inch loaf pan.

In a large bowl, beat the oil and honey together with a whisk. Add the eggs and beat well, then whisk in the mashed bananas and milk.

Add the baking soda, vanilla, salt and cinnamon, and whisk to blend. Lastly, switch to a big spoon and stir in the flour, just until combined. Some lumps are ok.

Pour the batter into your greased loaf pan and sprinkle lightly with cinnamon. If you'd like a pretty swirled effect, run the tip of a knife across the batter in a zig-zag pattern.

Bake for 55 to 60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let the bread cool in the loaf pan for at least 10 minutes.

Carefully transfer the loaf to a wire rack to cool before slicing.



# Join or Renew Your Membership

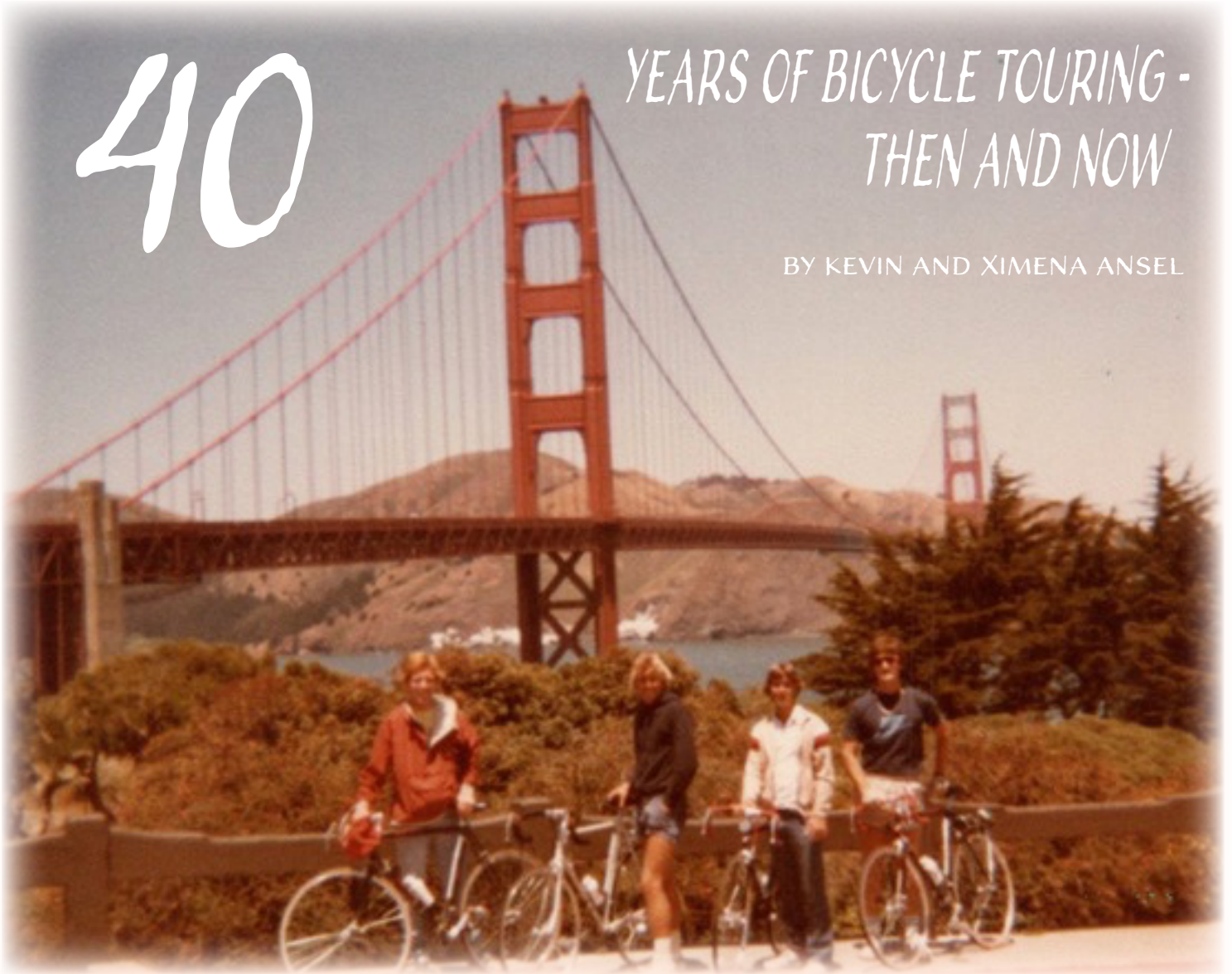


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# 40

## YEARS OF BICYCLE TOURING - THEN AND NOW

BY KEVIN AND XIMENA ANSEL



My first bicycle tour was in the summer of 1980. Three friends from college and I were looking for something different to do and for a little adventure. I had been cycling for a couple of years since graduating high school but I did not know anything about bicycle touring. I bought a Univega Sport Tour 12-speed road bike, put a rear rack on it, and I was ready to go. I had a sleeping bag, a cheap tent, and a few changes of clothes all stuffed into a small backpack and strapped on the rack. An agent at AAA prepared a Trip-Tic bicycle map for us from San Francisco back to Orange County. The four of us did the trip and that was when I knew I was hooked. Two years later, my friend Joe Polance, who you may know from OCW, and I rode from Huntington Beach to New York City.

On this trip I rode the same bike but this time I had panniers, sometimes referred to as saddlebags. Joe and I rode to New York making up the route along the way. We acquired maps at gas stations and Highway Patrol Offices and planned about 400 miles at a time, figuring we could just connect the dots. After 3500 miles and averaging 80 miles a day we arrived in New York City. I learned a lot about life and what was important on that trip.

As I continue touring, mostly with my wife Ximena, I keep learning about myself and the world I live in. The biggest takeaway is that people are good. The United States isn't like what you see on the local news channel. People are generally friendly and kind. We have had strangers offer us a place to stay for the night,

they have offered meals, water, or just wanted to talk to us. A few folks have also wanted to pray for our safety. When you are riding a touring bike loaded with panniers people are typically curious about what you are doing. You are not very threatening. We enjoy eating in small family-owned restaurants and diners because the locals want to talk to you and find out where you are going and where you are from.



Another lesson learned is to not pass up a landmark or point of interest. When Joe and I rode cross country, we rode through Philadelphia and were only a couple of blocks away from the Liberty Bell. We could see it down the street but we didn't stop. We were in too much of a hurry. Now, 38 years later, we still regret not stopping. I also learned to take advantage of the resources available. Almost every small town in America has a convenience store. They stock everything from auto parts to socks. They are fantastic for any essentials you may need. Because of this knowledge I have learned to travel light. You can always find disposable razors, travel shampoo, camp fuel, snacks, dinner, postcards, and even bike parts in some cases. Also, Walmart, Dollar Tree, Dollar General, and other discount stores are common across the country. I've seen Polo shirts at Dollar General for \$3.00. When it comes to traveling light I usually only carry a few changes of bike clothes and a set of street clothes. If I need anything along the way I just buy it.

Weather and terrain can be a big factor during a bike tour. I can think of days when the riding was either mentally or physically hard. There have been many windy days, rainy days, hot days, cold days, or days with long steep climbs. Ximena and I were touring in Wyoming and had a 17-mile climb up Togwatee Pass. It is a 6% grade at almost 9,700 feet of elevation and on top of that there were horseflies biting us and the air was smokey from a local forest fire. It took us about 3 hours to get to the summit of the climb. But the ride down the back side was outstanding. We ended up in a town with no available camping or hotel rooms. The local Episcopal Church took us in and let us sleep in their conference room. That is a day I will never forget. My point is, in most cases the challenging days make the best memories.

Over the years we have met countless numbers of touring cyclists. Some have remained good friends and we have done additional tours with them. If there is one thing that bicycle tourists have in common, it is that nobody tours the same way. What does that mean? People carry different camping gear, tools, cooking gear, clothing, and food. Ximena and I usually ride with about 70 pounds of gear that includes our bikes, food, and water. We met a gentleman from the Netherlands who had 109 pounds of



gear. He had all kinds of camera equipment, books, clothing, and extra bags. I would never want to carry that much gear but it worked for him. Our friend, Sam, rides with about 60 pounds but he doesn't carry any cooking gear. He likes to buy sandwiches to eat in camp or dine in a restaurant. As you become more experienced you figure out what gear you need and don't need. Over the years my gear list has shrunk quite a bit and I am always looking

the fun outweigh the bad. If you are thinking about touring and are not sure how to start I would suggest an overnight "credit card tour" riding down to Oceanside or Carlsbad, getting a hotel, a nice meal, and ride home the next day. It just might get you hooked like it did for me 40 years ago. If you are interested in seeing some of Ximena's and my tours, check our blog at [www.anseladventures.com](http://www.anseladventures.com).



for the next improvement. Some examples of these changes are a lighter tent, a lighter and warmer sleeping bag, and a more comfortable and lighter sleeping pad.

The amount of miles we ride per day has also changed. When Joe and I rode cross country we had 12 days of 100 miles or more including one day at 140 miles. I would not do it that way today. Now a typical day is about 50 miles long. That leaves us time to explore, enjoy the local towns, meet and visit with people, and relax. That is what bicycle touring means to me. It's the overall enjoyment of riding my bike to a different place every day.

People often ask if it's hard touring by bike. Some days it is but like many things in life, if it was easy everyone would do it. The good and





## OCW Peak Challenge 2020!!

*How many peaks can you bag?*

Choose your own challenge and enjoy the climbs!  
Road bike, MTB, ebike? Just do it!!

**Platinum** – 30 peaks  
**Gold** – 20 peaks  
**Silver** – 15 peaks  
**Bronze** – 10 peaks  
**Tin** – 5 peaks

### You may record your peaks in a variety of ways:

- Post on the Friends of OCW Facebook Page (with a picture if possible)  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/253156728156693/>
- Title your OCW Club Strava Ride: My OCW Peak Challenge #4-6  
<https://www.strava.com/clubs/orange-county-wheelmen>
- Keep your own record of peaks/dates to be submitted later

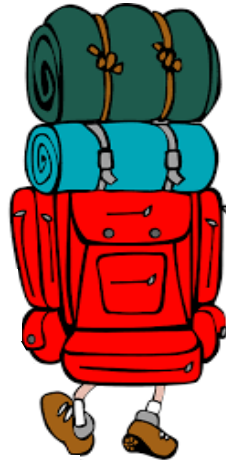
This challenge starts June 2020 until though the end of the year. Here are a variety of peaks (road and off road) that you may be familiar with, or will be soon! As you bag (and post) other peaks, we will add them to our list.

Alton/Paloma, Bake/Rue De Fortuna, Black Star, Calle del Cerro, Cannon, Carbon Cyn, Casino Ridge, Cove Rd. Crest, Crystal Lake, East Fork, Fernleaf, Glenn Ranch, GMR, GRR, Hidden Hills, Highland, Keller Peak, Kodiak Mtn, La Pata, Live Oak, Marguerite, Meats, Modjeska Grade, Mt. Baldy Ski Lifts, Newport Coast, Nyes, Oak Glen, Onyx Summit, Pacific Island Dr, Palomar, Park, Pelican Hill, Portola/241, Ridgeline, Ridge Park, Robinson Ranch, Saddleback Ranch, San Joaquin, Santiago Peak, Santiago Canyon, Sea Island Dr, Signal Hill, Silverado Cyn, Skyline, Spyglass, Star Crest, Suicide Rock, Tahquitz Peak, Temple Hills, Thomas Mountain, Top of the World, Turnball Cyn, Vista del Lago, Vista Ridge, ...

**Disclaimer:** Not all of these are peaks, but they might feel like it to you! Anything 6% or more with a steady, steep or long climb (for you) may count as a peak!!

# HIKING CORNER

BY ALAN DAUGER



Like most OCW members, I need to get outside a few times a week despite the stay-at-home orders. Exercise is an essential activity. Besides bike riding two or three times a week, I like to drive my zero-emission car to the mountains and go on a hike. Due to physical distancing rules, I must do it alone without hiking or carpool companions as in normal times. Hiking solo in the semi-wilderness is not recommended for safety reasons, but I do it anyway. I could fall off the trail into the bush, and no one would find me for days or weeks, but I walk carefully and am willing to take that risk.

My first hike this year was the Register trail to Mt. Baldy, on March 22. The trailhead, at Manker Flats on Mt. Baldy Road, was busier than expected, and it was cold. I was prepared for that, but not for the icy trail conditions, so I didn't get very far. I should have brought my micro spikes.

On March 29 I hiked Mt. Sally, a place most people don't know about, which is alongside the Angeles Crest Highway. There were lots of racing motorcycles on the highway, but nobody

else on the trail. It was fun.

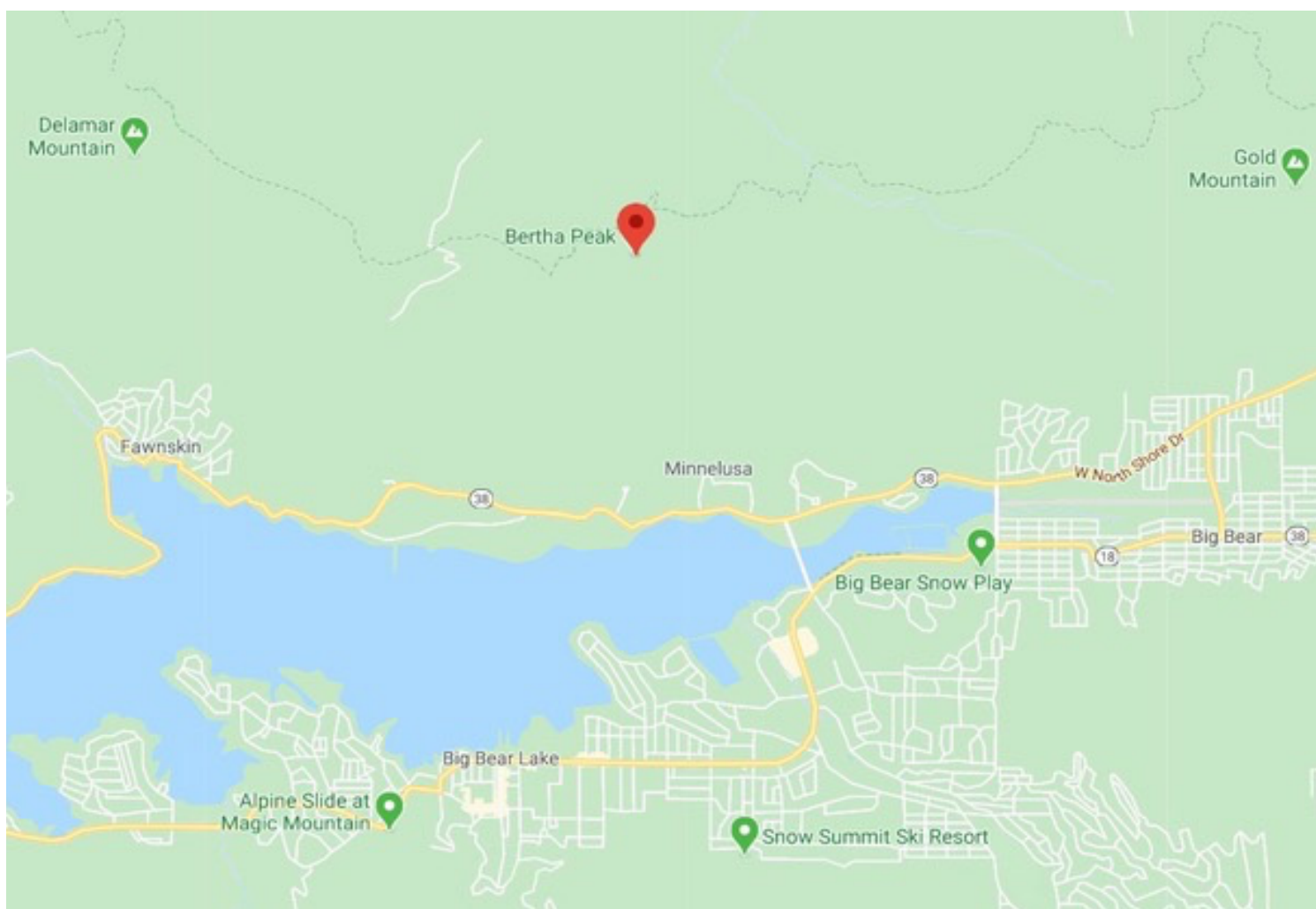
I chose on April 12 another obscure trail, to Circle Mountain near Wrightwood. Nobody else was there, but to my surprise the snow depth was greater than expected. Even with my micro spikes, I had to turn around. Should've brought snowshoes. The drive there via Lone Pine Canyon Road is very scenic, so I returned the following week. Eureka! All the snow was gone and snowshoes were not necessary. I made it to the top, altitude 6880 feet.

On May 10, I decided to go further and high-



*The view from the top, altitude 8201 feet, was really beautiful.*

er, so I chose what I thought was a lesser known destination, Bertha Peak on the north side of Big Bear Lake. The weather was beautiful and inviting, but the COVID rules were not. Several big signs along the 91/215 declared, "AVOID TRAVEL - STAY HOME." I guess I am not very obedient. I chose the 3 ½-mile hiking route instead of the 7-mile one that I had done back in 2015 with two friends, but doing so required 4 miles of driving on a dirt road. There was no one else on my route, but I did see almost 20 other hikers who took the longer route with the more accessible trailhead.





# MountainBike Dude

By Alan Vester

**Mountain Biking  
Geared Toward  
the 50+ Rider**

## To eBike or Not to eBike? - That's The Question

I was thinking it was time to take on the topic of the ever-popular latest genre of mountain bikes that are known as eBikes or electrical pedal assist bikes. They are becoming more popular on the trails and one thing is for certain; they are not going away.

**What exactly is an eBike?** I will give you my definition instead of the dictionary definition. These are battery-powered mountain bikes with an electrical motor that assists the rider while he or she is pedaling. It is not a push the button and see how fast it will go without rider interaction mountain bike. EBikes come in three different classes:

**Class 1:** Pedal-assist only with no throttle and have a maximum assisted speed of 20 mph. (This is the most commonly made eBike by most bicycle manufacturers.)

**Class 2:** eBikes that are throttle assisted and have a maximum assisted speed of 20 mph.

**Class 3:** Pedal-assist only with no throttle and have a maximum assisted speed of 28 mph. This bike is not very common as it is more of a motor vehicle than a mountain bike.

All the major and smaller mountain bike manufacturers are offering at least one eBike in their line-up, so they are not left behind in sales. Ok, so what is the big appeal of these bikes? One huge market are the older riders who have

injuries, bad knees or joints who still want to be out on the trails but are physically limited how fast and far they can ride on a conventional pedal mountain bike. I do understand this. I have also seen younger mountain bikers riding eBikes because they are just too lazy to pedal uphill and like the fun of electrical pedal assist.



EBikes are also a polarizing topic among riders and land/park managers. EBikes are still banned in many of OCParks. They are legal in some State of California State Parks. Always check with the State Park you want to ride in first before taking your eBike there.

I do not allow eBikes on Goat Hill mountain bike rides.

**So, what is my opinion on eBikes?** I do not have a strong opinion either way. I don't really like them because it seems to have created this

sub-class of marginal riders who like to pass everyone uphill because they can and often buzz equestrians and other slower riders as they are very quiet when pedaling by. I also realize they are growing in numbers and are not going away. I see so many eBikes in OCParks, even though they are not allowed.



Riders will tell you how much fun the eBikes are because they can go so fast with almost no pedal effort. I get it, but I still like to earn my downhill and heck, if I wanted to have a motor, I would just buy an off-road motorcycle and call it a day.

Ebikes are heavy, 45-55 lbs. and they still take some muscle and finesse to ride them. It is still a workout to ride an eBike.

I do get why people purchase and ride them off road. I do not see myself getting one anytime soon, but I suppose when I turn 107 years old, I might just pull the trigger and join the pedal assist riders.

**What is YOUR opinion on eBikes?** I would like to know. Email me your thoughts on this

highly debated subject and I will post them in the next edition of Chain Reaction. Please remember to keep your comments constructive (nice) as this is YOUR opinion and we all want to learn from what others have to say.

Be careful out there, and see you on the trails.

Alan Vester  
Goat Hill Mountain Bike Dude  
[alanvester7@gmail.com](mailto:alanvester7@gmail.com)





# Pandemic Group Rides: A Cyclist's Dilemma

**By Todd Key, U.S. Paralympic Para-Cyclist  
U.S.A. Team Member/Resident Athlete**

Where does this end? The last several weeks have created a new world order in the cycling community. What world do you live in, and what world can I live in?

I'm not a casual cyclist; I'm an elite bike racer and I'm used to traveling around the world this time of year for World Cups, World Championships and National Championships. That world has ended for now - abruptly, emotionally and completely. Obviously, there are non-cycling communities dealing with much more serious disasters, sickness, death, and financial devastation, while cycling is only a blip in the grand scheme of societal activities that has disappeared. I'm writing about cycling however, because this is what I know. I'm not a scientist or a healthcare worker; I can't weigh in on the communities that matter most right now, so I'm going to try and make sense of what I do know.

I've lived through trauma before: personal trauma that has changed my life, changed my perspective, changed my understanding of the world, differing greatly from the average person. I lost my right hand function from an accident at 7 years old, and my right leg was amputated at 17 after a cancer diagnosis. I've learned over several decades how to live with

what happened to me and become appreciative of what I can do, embracing the opportunities it has afforded me. I became an avid cyclist late in life – far later than most cyclists – and the learning curve was steep, painful, and arduous. I've loved every minute of it; I've relished all of it, and the frustration from the process has only added to the unconditional joy I feel from what has turned into the most rewarding experiences of my life. Cycling is everything! Cycling is freedom! Cycling is a never-ending adventure of love!



There are many people that contributed along the way - many without whom I couldn't have done it, many who don't know that they were essential, and many to whom I will never be fully able to show my gratitude. Custom bike parts, custom prosthetics, custom equipment, custom interpretations of things that had never been used like this before. These people are my heroes! Riding with one leg and one hand isn't safe, isn't easy, isn't for the faint of heart. Learning things you shouldn't have to learn, expect to learn, or even imagine you will ever need, is the secret badge of courage that has become the reward I never wanted.



I describe this history to illustrate that I don't step back from cycling lightly. I have continued to ride and compete through obstacles that would stop most athletes. Nevertheless, COVID-19 has added a new dimension to this coveted cycling life, a dimension with an unforeseen level of disruption. How is this possible in the science-based world we live in? How did we get here? And how do we return to the pre-COVID world of cycling? I certainly can't answer these questions, and I'm increasingly becoming concerned that the people with whom I previously was riding aren't interested in the answers. That lack of concern is jeopardizing one of the most important aspects of my training: group rides. Group rides are intrinsic to the world of cycling; for many people, they are a staple and the reason they ride. Group rides fill so many niches for the avid cyclist, and there are so many options for people to participate where they feel comfortable: groups that provide race training, groups for long milers, groups for socializing, groups for exercise, groups for coffee, groups for status, groups for every pace.

I choose groups mostly for the race training they afford me. The level of competition is incredibly beneficial. My level of disability creates almost the perfect dynamic for many A-group rides. A-groups are always fast paced, and have a variety of intense efforts throughout the ride. It's because of this intensity it's the PERFECT scenario for a Paralympian. Riding with one leg in a group of two-leggers is the most race day training that I could ever hope for. Virtually ev-

ery time I'm with a group like that, I'm simulating what my World Championship race will be like. I couldn't possibly be in a better situation than to be surrounded in Arizona by so many opportunities that so exactly match racing simulation.

Now, though, that perfect world has exploded, and those amazing days of racing in my neighborhood are currently over, with no sign of returning anytime soon. At least, that's what I thought; that's what the science says; that's what prudent cyclists believe. Unfortunately, there is something else happening in my area, something I hadn't anticipated, a dilemma that has changed me, and brought me great sadness. Despite these risks, the groups have started to return. What? How can this be? The science apparently doesn't matter; the state of the world doesn't matter; the death, the sickness, and the financial burden of many doesn't matter. The groups are regrouping.

What is happening and why is it happening with all the information we have? Why would seemingly intelligent cyclists who heeded the warnings eight weeks ago, suddenly decide that the world has returned to "normal," and that it's "safe" to ride in someone's slipstream? I'm baffled; I'm perplexed, and I'm disheartened by what I'm witnessing. Strava is a well-known cycling app, and I've used it for years to follow



Dozens of people have poofed out of my life, and I will never ride with any of them ever again. How can they be so selfish? How can they not see the bigger picture? How can they ignore what the rest of us are clearly seeing? We are now living in a world of solo rides; safety is no longer in numbers, and safety for the group is no group. When I lost my hand at age 7, I learned what sacrifice meant, and it made me stronger. When I lost my leg at 17, I learned more about sacrifice, and it made me stronger. With the pandemic, we are learning

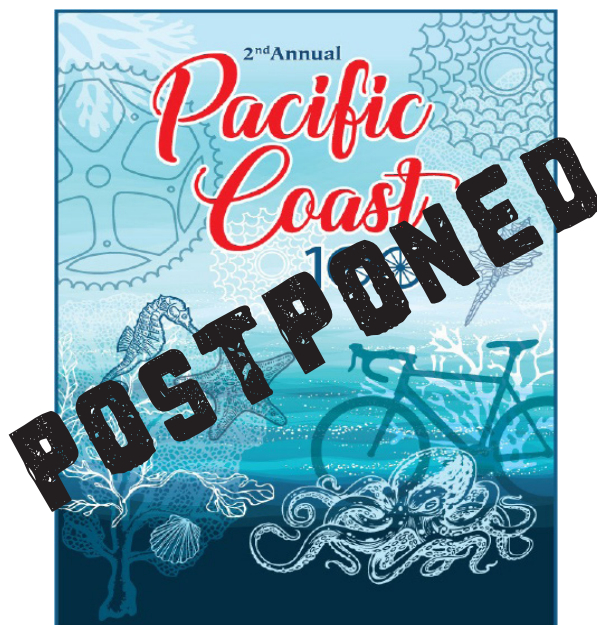
cyclists I ride with, and cyclists I race with. It's a great way to see who's riding, where they are riding, and with whom they are riding. I have many followers on Strava, and I can see what's happening with groups all over the world. Starting a few weeks ago, people in Arizona began to form secret small groups, but if you use Strava, the secret is easily discovered, so there's no secret. The groups got larger; the groups started to announce their presence, and when Arizona officially opened, the secrecy evaporated.

I have not, and I will not be joining any groups for the foreseeable future. Many cyclists have not rejoined the groups, and I assume they are following the guidelines that are dictated by science. Most of the people I once rode with, though people I called cycling friends, people I happily trained with, drank coffee with, did long rides with, people I trusted — are group riding. I'm at a loss; I'm disgusted. I'm in a state of disbelief, and because of the pandemic I have very few places and people to help me commiserate. I trusted these people, and without warning, that trust is gone. As of now, it will never return. How can I possibly trust any of these people, any of these groups, any of their decisions, or anything they ever do going forward when they seem oblivious to the very real health risk in this moment?

another lesson, and in the end, it will make us stronger. People who have rarely sacrificed for anything or anyone, are in the perfect position to make a sacrifice now, and riding solo for a few months, isn't much of a sacrifice. If people can't make this tiny resignation to avoid groups in this moment, what else won't they do for the greater good? What else is not necessary, not important, not urgent, not of value? Many of us have chosen to follow the science, to take precautions, to value health above convenience, to stay solo for the good of the cycling community. We have made this choice to protect us all, and now we are finding former cycling friendships dwindling, or gone. This is our dilemma.

Bike racing will return. I will race again. I will ride with bike racers who did not follow strict quarantine protocols, and I will do it for my love of racing. Will I — will we — group ride ever again with the people who are group-riding in the midst of this tragic moment in history? While the world is on fire, while people are dying, and while the healthcare system is being traumatized at historic levels, what should the cycling community be doing to promote an understanding of our place in this new reality? What will we sacrifice? Out of respect for the safety of others, I'm riding solo. Other cyclists riding solo right now have my deepest respect.

Meanwhile, I can't form the words for people who won't ride solo in solidarity of those who are suffering so severely right now. My sadness is beyond measure.....



After considering the health and safety of our riders and volunteers and the number of unknowns related to COVID-19, the Orange County Wheelmen has chosen to cancel the 2020 Pacific Coast Century with the hope of returning in 2021.

We hope you are staying well and riding during this time. We continue to stay alert to the current state and local recommendations with the hopes of opening club activities. Please visit our home page at:

<https://www.ocwheelmen.org>

as well as our Facebook pages and Strava club page for interesting and fun activities planned by the membership.

If you have fun ideas, feel free to message any member of the board via the OCW page.

# Dinner Rides



*By Joe & Margaret Polance*

Need an idea for a midweek cycling break? Like to ride bicycles? Like to eat? And in these times, would you like to find a way to reduce exposure to the current pandemic?

Yes? Then how about a Wednesday evening dinner ride?

My wife Margaret and I do them almost weekly. We find them to be a nice breakup of the work week. (but- they work for retirees too.)

We happen to like Wednesday evenings and our local territory and routes are along the coastal communities of Seal Beach, Sunset Beach, Huntington Beach, Newport and Balboa beach areas.

But you can do a dinner ride anytime or anywhere it suits you.

For us, the rides are mostly insulated with safe routes, lighted bike paths, and safe crossings. Rides are as short as 6-8 miles, usually more like 10-15, and as long as 20-25 miles. Any kind of bikes will do. We use commuter hybrids and sometimes single speeds.

Normally, we do part of the ride, go in to a restaurant, sit down and have a nice light dinner, and then finish the ride afterward.

Of course, in today's environment with so many restaurants still closed, you just pick up your favorite take-out or bring a home-cooked dish, and find a scenic picnic table or just sit in your car and enjoy a nice munch.

There are also plenty of interesting stops and scenery along the way. Here are just a few:

-State and local beaches.

-Sunsets, strings of graceful pelicans flying by, crashing waves, off-shore boats, and fellow recreationalists.

-In Sunset Beach, an old elevated landmark water tower converted into a very unique residence.

-Tidal Inlet at South Bolsa Chica State Beach- we actually saw a moonlight surfer skillfully glide in here one evening on our customary viewing stop there. There's a great story of local citizen advocates successfully gaining approval of this seemingly innocuous jetty break after a 20-years-plus effort negotiating with city governments, oil companies, developers, and bureaucrats. The permanent securing of the adjoining Bolsa Chica Wetlands subsequently became one of the most robust bird stops in the U.S. and is a pristine world-class walking area with many varieties of birds and other wildlife to enjoy.



-An Osprey nest on the other side of PCH in the same area. If you're lucky, you'll see the inhabitants themselves fishing in the Bolsa Chica Wetlands. Look for their telltale black face mask.

-Dog beach at North Municipal Huntington Beach. Park your bikes, lock 'em up, and walk down, put your toes in the water. Check out the pups joyfully running around.



-Huntington famous Pier. If you go on a Tuesday, you can park your bike and partake of the weekly Farmer's Market (once Covid ends.) Try Duke's Barefoot Bar or for more scenery- grab a burger, shake, and fries at Ruby's at the end of the pier. Ocean-view dining at a bargain price.

-After traversing Huntington State Beach, cross over to Newport, catch the bike path, and ride to Newport or Balboa Pier. Restaurants abound- try the old stand-by Charlie's Chili.

-Balboa Ferry Boat- after a bit, turn left at Balboa Pier- walk the bikes right on the boat and cross over to Balboa Island. Enjoy the harbor scenery and surrounding views while you're traveling. Don't forget your Balboa Bar ice cream.

-Newport Wedge. Go to the end of the bike path. Turn right. Ride through the neighborhood, and park your bikes. If you're lucky, there will be some big waves and you can watch good surfers in action.

Make sure your head and tail lights are on, and enjoy the best part- your ride back. It usually goes fast. Keep an eye out for full moons, fluorescent tides, or even satellites on darker nights.

You're now officially ready to close out the work week. Repeat next week. Enjoy!



## OCW SUPPORTS THE BICYCLE TREE IN SANTA ANA

By Stacy Kline

Once again the dedicated and generous members of the Orange County Wheelmen have come through in a time of need for neighborhood bike shop co-op/bike kitchen [The Bicycle Tree!](#) Like everyone with the advent of the COVID19 Pandemic, this mostly volunteer-supported, “community bike center and shop,” had to severely cut back operations to comply with California’s Stay at Home/Shelter in Place order and closed its doors to the public on March 15, 2020. As was the case with many other small businesses, this hit The Bicycle Tree very hard, especially considering it is a non-profit and relies on donations from the community. When I received the [March 2020 Newsletter](#) from Paul Nagel, emailed shortly after the Shelter in Place order, I read with dismay that The Bicycle Tree

was struggling to make ends meet and they were unsure how long they could survive without funding. Greg and I immediately sent a \$100 donation, and emailed our dedicated OCW President, Steve Loughran, who sent out an email to our OCW membership explaining The Bicycle Tree’s precarious situation. I ran into a cyclist friend in the community who read the email and he said he and his wife sent \$100. I was so moved by the incredible generosity of our OCW cycling community, especially given the extreme financial burden that everyone across the country was facing.

A couple months later, after downsizing our storage a bit, including a much-loved Univega bike frame, Mavic wheels, and a few new Panaracers, I visited Paul at the shop in Santa

Ana, to say hello and drop off our bike goodies. Paul said that the shop was doing well, had weathered the storm, and was preparing for the eventual reopening in June. I asked Paul if they received any more donations following Steve Loughran's OCW email campaign and he shared a wonderful story about the impact that the \$1100 donations from our OCW community had had on this amazing bike shop!

*"The donations totaled about \$1,100. These donations came at a very crucial time. Coming out of winter, our financial reserves were low. Temporarily closing the shop and therefore halting most of our income caused us to veer way too close to disruptions that could have caused a fatal downward spiral. We were shifting to a new mode of operations under pandemic restrictions, focusing on drop-off repairs offered for sliding-scale fees. We were not sure how that shift or the general conditions of the pandemic would affect visitation to our shop. Thanks to the financial support of community members who were able to donate, we got through that tight squeeze. We then found ourselves in the midst of an explosion of demand for bikes and bike repair. Since we reopened in late March, our limited staff and volunteers have repaired over 350 bikes brought in for service, many of which were older bikes in poor condition. In addition, we sold about 200 used bikes that we had serviced. While our model of operations is far from lucrative, we are now in a more stable situation. While the pandemic continues to limit our ability to return to collaborative bike repair, youth bicycle education programming, and group bike rides, we are happy to be able to continue to serve our community. We are grateful for the support of the Orange County Wheelmen!"*



# Please Support The Premier Partners of Orange County Wheelmen

Many of our partners offer discounts to OCW members.  
Tell them you are from OCW and continue to support those who support us!

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Bristol  
Farms

