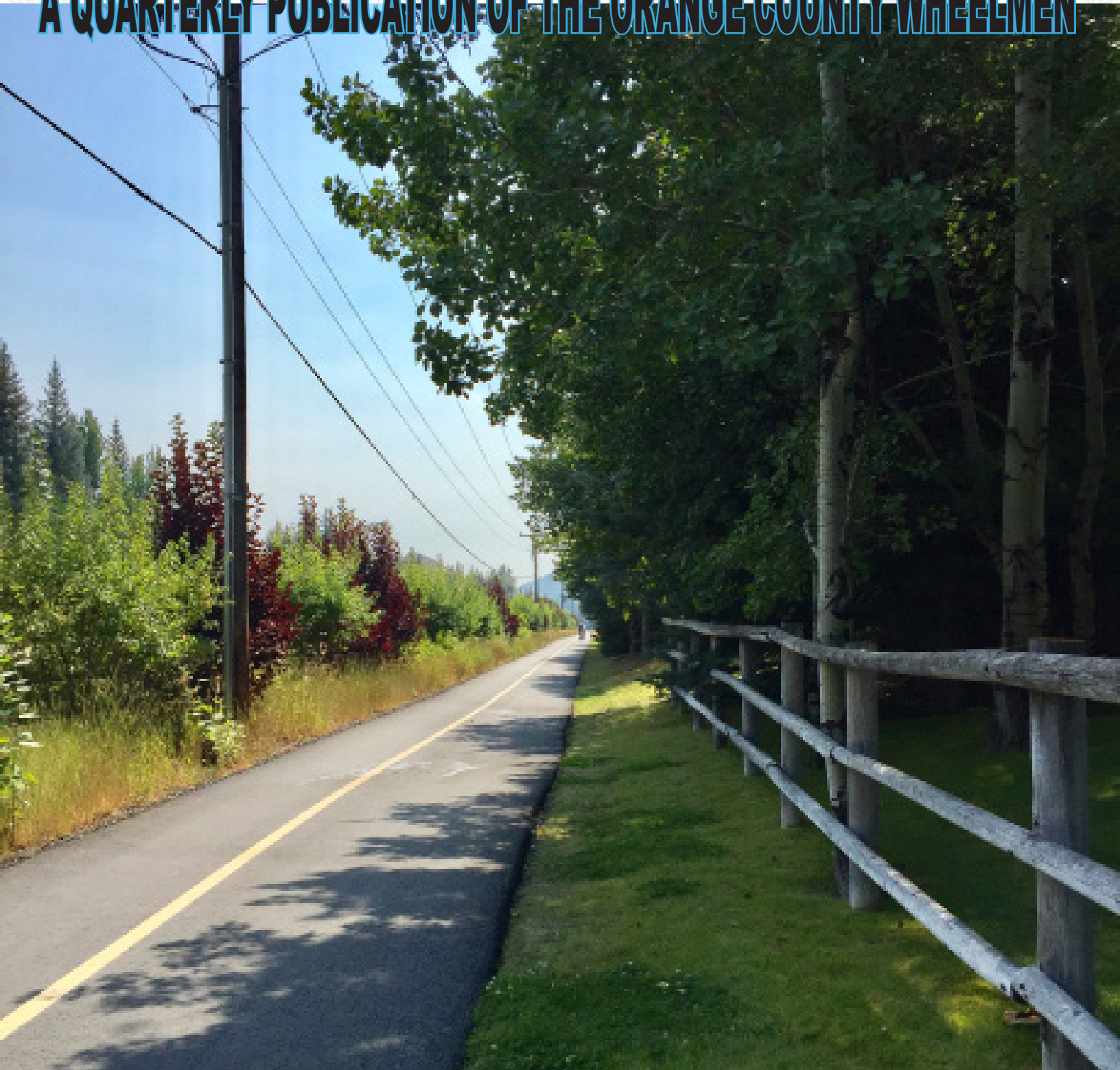


# CHAIN REACTION



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



# 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:** <https://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/418687-officers-directors-2020>

**EVENTS:** <https://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/418365-events-site-map>

**SUPPORTING MEMBERS:** <https://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/424483-support-members>

## 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)

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## Editors Musings



Michelle Vester

There are some fun things to do in this issue. Try the word search puzzle, and there are also tiny "stick figure" bikes throughout the pages, so see how many you can find!

We also welcome our new vice president, Bert Ohlig. We will be reading his articles starting in the next issue.

Fun things on the bike have been going on in the club. The peak challenge. Some of these peaks can be reached on your road bike, while other peaks can be reached using your mountain or gravel bike. Learn more on [www.ocwheelmen.org](http://www.ocwheelmen.org) or our [Facebook page](#).

While the county, state, and nation starts opening back up, so will our rides and events. Be sure to check back often on [www.ocwheelmen.org](http://www.ocwheelmen.org) to see when your favorite ride or event is scheduled.

Summer is right around the corner and a lot of our members will be traveling looking for the best places to ride or hike. Remember if you visit someplace awesome to take pictures and write an article.

Have a great summer.

See you on the trail!



Steve Loughran

# The President

Well, I'm sure we are all hoping that the end of the current health "issue" is near. OCW has been working hard to re-establish normalcy to our group. We completed our Spring Metric which was well attended and I hear great feedback regarding the event. I think the pent-up desire to see and socialize with our friends in the club was high and this gave us a super opportunity to do just that. Thanks for the volunteers who made this happen. We kept it simple, but that did not seem to dampen the fun had by all. It was also the first time we included a gravel segment to our metric. While that went well, I understand that some got lost; likely due to the difficulty providing a "route slip" to participants. Hopefully we can improve on that.

In addition to the metric, our ride calendar looks to be back to its full complement of rides just this past week. So, we now have rides on all days except for Mondays. We have our Wednesday evening ride back on for those who are looking for a ride after work. Larry Locken, our ride leader, has worked incredibly hard to get all of our routes incorporated into Ride with GPS format, available to download to your device that accepts ride maps. He has also developed many new routes taking you to places OCW has never been. Alan Vester is also posting many mountain bike/gravel rides on the calendar as well. So, many of our rides are new, and with the calendar being full, get that bike tuned up and come out and ride.

Our vice president presented at our May general meeting via Zoom. He presented his ideas and devices that he uses to make bike maintenance easier and less time consuming. We continue to investigate the possibility of having live general

meetings but we are constrained by room availability. We will put out an email to the membership as we progress on this activity.

We are hoping to begin having live board meetings in the near future. That, of course, is dependent upon our ability to get a room to meet. Typically that was on the first Sunday of each month after the Sunday ride. So, hopefully this will happen soon and the meetings are open to any member. Please check the calendar and consider attending a meeting to bring any ideas to the group.

We continue to evaluate different possibilities to replace our Amtrak/PC 100 ride. The likelihood of resurrecting the Amtrak century is remote at best. Amtrak has not shown any indication that they will begin chartering trains again. We have had no luck contacting them so we try to look at other options. While the PC 100 was most enjoyable, there are many logistics that, at this time, seem insurmountable, such as chartered bus occupancy limitations and larger group gatherings. So, we continue to discuss options to replace this ride.

So, actually lots going on now. Encourage your friends who are new to cycling to come out and join us for a ride. There is something for everyone. I also encourage you to frequent your local bike shop to get your parts and have your bike maintenance done. Many have struggled through this time and we have seen many close their doors. Please support them. While I know getting parts online may be less expensive, but I don't see sending your bike in for a tune-up to Amazon coming anytime soon. So, we need to keep supporting our local bike shop.

Hope to see you out on the road soon.

# WORD SEARCH

WORDS CAN BE FOUND FORWARDS, BACKWARDS AND AT AN ANGLE

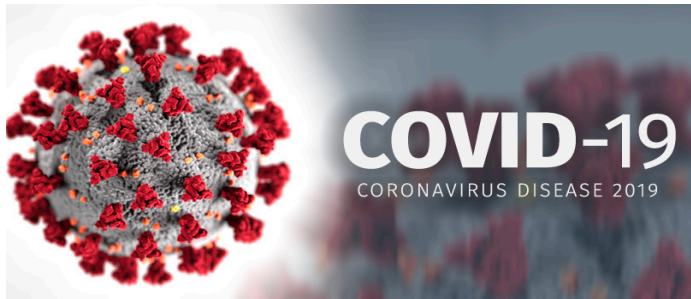
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S	Y	U	S	T	N	A	R	B	L	T	A	N	S	E
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- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. SUNNY      | 11. RELAXING |
| 2. STARGAZING | 12. OUTDOORS |
| 3. LEISURELY  | 13. BIKING   |
| 4. BARBECUE   | 14. HIKING   |
| 5. BAREFOOT   | 15. LAZY     |
| 6. ACTIVE     | 16. WARM     |
| 7. NATURE     | 17. BACKYARD |
| 8. BEACH      | 18. TROPICAL |
| 9. SWIMMING   | 19. SUNBURNT |
| 10. TAN       | 20. LAKESIDE |



Find the solved puzzle at the back of this issue.



**Due to the Covid-19 virus and concern for the health of our members, club rides may be modified so be sure to log in to [www.ocwheelmen.org](http://www.ocwheelmen.org) for further details.**

**Check website for updates on Pacific Coast 100 for 2021.**





# ARTICLES WORTH READING

Thank you to Harry Gunther and Ron Vioria for selecting and asking permission on the articles below

## **Legally Speaking: Cyclist-pedestrian crash liability**

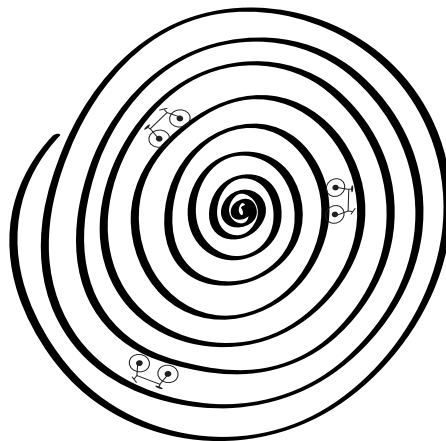
The VeloNews legal expert offers a few tips on who is responsible when a cyclist-pedestrian or cyclist-cyclist crash occurs.

## **What to Do if You're Hit by a Car**

Being involved in a crash with a driver while on a bike or on foot is bad enough, but the trouble doesn't always stop when you get yourself to safety. Navigating the justice and insurance systems afterward can also be an ordeal.

## **What We Learned From Tracing Cycling Deaths for a Year**

With the help of the nonprofit BikeMaps.org, we analyzed the data we collected on bicyclists killed by drivers in 2020 and found some surprising takeaways.





# The Hungry EyeList



## Cinnamon Streusel Coffee Cake

This coffee cake is excellent anytime and so moist. For more on this recipe visit:

<https://www.halfbakedharvest.com/cinnamon-streusel-coffee-coffee-cake/#wprm-recipe-container-102676>

### Ingredients

1 stick (8 tablespoons) salted butter, at room temperature

3/4 cup packed brown sugar

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

2 large eggs, at room temperature

1 cup plain Greek yogurt or sour cream

2 cups all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon cardamom

1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

1/2 cup brewed coffee

#### Streusel

1/2 cup packed brown sugar

2 teaspoons cinnamon

3/4 cup all-purpose flour

6 tablespoons cold butter, grated

6 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature

#### Glaze

1 1/4 cups powdered sugar

2-3 tablespoons whole milk

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1-3 teaspoons instant coffee, to your taste

### Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F. Butter a 9-inch bundt pan.

2. In a large mixing bowl, beat together the butter and brown sugar until combined. Add the sour cream and vanilla, beating until smooth. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, until combined. Add the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, cardamom, and salt. Slowly mix in the coffee until just combined, being careful not to overmix.

3. To make the streusel. In a small bowl, combine 1/4 cup brown sugar and 1 teaspoon cinnamon. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, 1/4 cup brown sugar, and 1 teaspoon cinnamon. Add the butter and use your fingers to mix the butter into the flour until a crumble forms.

4. Spoon half the batter into the prepared pan. Sprinkle the cinnamon sugar evenly over the batter. Then, gently dollop the warmed cream cheese over the batter and spread in an even layer. Spoon the remaining batter over the cream cheese in an even layer. Top evenly with the buttery streusel mix.

5. Bake for 50-55 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cool 30 minutes and then invert the cake onto a plate, flip-

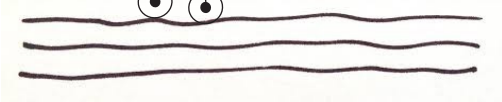
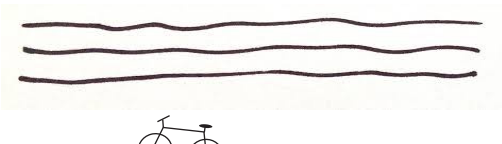
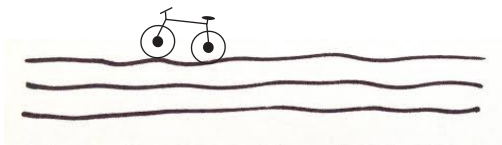
ping it back upright onto a serving plate.  
6. To make the glaze, whisk together the powdered sugar, milk, vanilla, and coffee powder. Add a pinch of flaky sea salt. Drizzle the glaze evenly over the cake and let set 10 minutes. Serve the cake slightly warm or at room temperature. Keep cake stored, covered in the fridge.



Find all the bikes!

There are SEVERAL "stick figure" bikes, including the ones below, all throughout this issue. Can you find them?

The answer is on the bottom of page 26. Did your numbers match??



# Join or Renew Your Membership



↑  
Just Click



**BY PETER GERRARD**

“What are you looking for?”

The question is from my friend, James. Along with me, he’d been seduced by the OCW Spring Metric Gravel Route.

We’re now a few hours into our trek.

Long after the one rest stop, where we’d been given a hearty slap on the back and informed that this was our last official support until the end of the ride. The “Good luck!” wish we left with has evaporated along with most of our water.

“A trail marker,” I reply.

“It’s the Skyline Trail,” he says. “Still.”

“I know what the route slip says,” I reply in a measured tone. I hope it masks the awareness that we were maybe in over our heads. “But I’m sure this segment is The Trail of Dashed Hopes.”

“Cheer up. At least we’re not lost.”

---

It takes a shift in perspective to see the benefits of getting lost, or being lost.

There’s that famous Robert Frost poem, “The Road Not Taken.”

Basically, it’s about making decisions. How it’s interpreted varies. That’s poetry.

Near the confluence of the Skyline Trail and Black Star Canyon, the Doppler installation looming above, the path forks. There’s no obvious right way to go.

I think about the poem, becoming a little fixated on the last stanza:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the road less traveled by,

And that has made all the difference.

---

You can sort through a million decisions you've made, in the quiet away from the background noise of our civilized living.

I think that's what endeared me to gravel bikes. Sure, in many ways they're the antithesis of the traits that define a good road bike—the nth degree of light weight, high pressure tires for speed, lightning quick reactivity. Except that, like a road bike, you don't have to put it in a car to appreciate its versatility.

I've found that the DNA that defines a great mountain bike makes it just a heavy and ponderous beast if you have to ride very far on pavement to the terrain where it shines.

On a gravel bike, if you happen upon paths that would severely tax a road bike's durability and beat you up in the process, you just make that turn.

It's a different set of concentrations, you often find yourself adapting and flowing over several surfaces in a short distance, more attuned to changes in traction by feel and vision.

And then there's the silence. You drop onto a trail that's not far removed from the pavement and you're in a different world. When you transition back to pavement, especially on a busy street, you're startled by just how noisy our world can be.



And the quiet encourages introspection, which is great if you have come to find that one of the best quirks of cycling is how you can get wrapped up in your thoughts while doing what it takes to keep the rubber side down.

---

My first gravel ride, I passed three mountain bikers, and I know it had more to do with my bike's tighter wheelbase, weight, and geometry than my ability. They were madly spinning in a very low gear as I went by.

I stopped at the top to look at the coast below, and listen to the wind in the mustard grass and the nattering of birds.

They caught up to me, and complimented my riding. "Impressive climb," one said. "Now go downhill with us."

I looked at their dual-suspension bikes. I had no illusions about what either my bike or I could handle. "Thanks, but no. You all go ahead. I'm still communing with nature. "

---

We eventually finish the Gravel Spring Metric.

While the sun is still shining.

Even after visiting the Doppler by mistake.

We get lost a couple of times.

Cold pizza is wonderful.



## For Sale

Co-Motion Americano touring bike  
2014 model year, 62 cm  
S&S couplers and new travel Case included  
TRP Spyre brakes 180mm/160mm  
XT rear, 105 front derailleurs  
Ultegra brifters  
Deore XT 10sp cassette 11-34T  
FSA Afterburner 46/36/26 Crankset  
Shimano SPD PD-M530 pedals  
SM-BB52 bottom bracket  
Brooks B17 saddle, Co-Motion seatpost  
Velocity Dyad rims with DT540 tandem hubs  
Schwalbe Marathon Plus Tour tires  
FSA Gossamer stem and handlebars  
New Brooks Microfibre Bar Tape  
\$2300  
Rich Welle, text: 310 766 1792



# INSIDE KNOWLEDGE

WHEN OUR OCW MEMBERS WERE ASKED TO COME UP WITH THEIR BEST ADVICE. HERE'S WHAT SOME SAID.....



STEVE LOUGHRAN

WITH ALL THE INTEREST IN CYCLING OVER THE PAST YEAR, IF I WERE ASKED ABOUT HOW TO START BY SOMEONE NEW TO CYCLING, THE FIRST THING I WOULD SAY WOULD BE TO GET THE CORRECT SIZE BIKE AND GET A BIKE FIT. WHILE THIS MAY SOUND PREMATURE, I BELIEVE ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS TO TURN A NEWBIE OFF WOULD BE IF THEY WERE UNCOMFORTABLE DURING AND AFTER EACH RIDE. AN IMPROPER BIKE FIT, AS WE KNOW, LEADS TO BACK, NECK AND KNEE PAIN AND WITH PROLONGED USE, CAN LEAD TO DISUSE INJURIES. TOO MANY TIMES NEW CYCLISTS BUY A BIKE OFF OF CRAIGSLIST, FACEBOOK MARKET PLACE OR SUCH AND IT JUST DOESN'T FIT. THE NEWBIE SHOULD AT LEAST KNOW THE CORRECT SIZE BIKE TO START WITH. WHILE STEM LENGTH, SADDLE HEIGHT ADJUSTMENT CAN HELP, THESE FIXES ARE JUST BAND-AIDS THAT DON'T MAKE THE ENTIRE BIKE FIT AN INDIVIDUAL. SO, GET A BIKE FIT AND DO IT THE RIGHT WAY. OTHERWISE THAT NEW BIKE WILL BE HANGING IN THE GARAGE NEXT MONTH.



ALAN VESTER

MOST MOUNTAIN BIKE RIDERS, ESPECIALLY PROS, OFTEN STOP AND WALK THE TECHNICAL SECTION OF A TRAIL, SOMETIMES EVEN SEVERAL TIMES TO INSURE THEY PICK THE BEST LINE WHEN DESCENDING THE TRAIL. I HAVE OFTEN USED THIS SAME STRATEGY ON TECHNICAL TRAILS AND ROCK SECTIONS. I'LL GET OFF MY BIKE AND WALK IT THROUGH A DICEY SECTION OR EVEN A SECTION OF THE TRAIL WHERE I'M NOT QUITE SURE HOW TO BEST APPROACH IT. THE THING I LOVE ABOUT MOUNTAIN BIKING IS THAT IT IS THE ART OF GOING SLOW. GENERALLY SPEAKING, WE ARE NOT IN A HURRY AND ENJOY THE OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT. SO, IT'S OK TO GET OFF THE BIKE, STUDY AND WALK THE TOUGH SECTIONS AND LEARN TO BECOME A BETTER MOUNTAIN BIKER.



LEE STEBBINS

PRACTICE UNCLIPPING WHILE RIDING IN A STRAIGHT LINE BY YOURSELF, ALTERNATING BOTH YOUR RIGHT AND LEFT FEET. THIS EXERCISE IS TO MAKE YOU COMFORTABLE UNCLIPPING EITHER FOOT SO IN A PANIC YOU WILL BE ABLE TO UNCLIP EITHER FOOT, NOT JUST YOUR DOMINANT FOOT. AS A SIDE NOTE THIS WILL ALSO WEAR YOUR CLEATS EVENLY AND PROLONG THE NEED TO REPLACE, SINCE REPLACEMENTS ONLY COME IN PAIRS.



# Traveling With Your Bike

*By Kevin and Ximena Ansel*

We often get asked “How do you get your bikes and gear to the start of a bicycle tour or home afterwards?” The answer is, “It depends. There are so many options available and it comes down to how much you want to spend and what you are comfortable with.” Here are some of the methods we have used in the past.

**Renting a car one-way** - When we rode from San Francisco to Orange County we rented a Jeep Cherokee at John Wayne Airport. Our bikes and gear were loaded in the back of the Jeep with the seats down. Once in San Francisco, we returned the car at Fishermen’s Wharf. That was where our tour began. We did the same thing when we finished our cross country bike trip. We rented an SUV in Virginia and drove back to California. We took an extra month driving home so we could sightsee along the way. It was a great way to finish our adventure. It is a bit more expensive to rent a vehicle one-way and is more expensive if you are traveling far.

**Shipping** - We have used FedEx to ship our bikes to the start of a tour. This works well but you have to consider shipping time and arrange a delivery location. Yes, the logistics. You might try UPS or BikeFlights.com as other shipping options. For our 2016 TransAm tour we contacted a bike shop in Astoria, Oregon, which was the starting point of our trip. For a nominal fee, the bike shop received, assembled, tuned, and adjusted the bikes. It was nice knowing that the bikes would be profession-

ally assembled and ready for pickup by the time we arrived. We have also used this method at the end of a tour. After finishing our bike tour from Salt Lake City, Utah to Golden, Colorado, we dropped off our bikes at a local shop and they boxed and shipped the bikes home for us. These arrangements were made in advance as well. It was nice not having to haul our bikes around while we spent more time traveling in Colorado. I just wish we would have had the bike shop clean our bikes before they shipped them back. They were a mess after getting caught in a storm in the Rockies.

**Amtrak** - We have used Amtrak a couple of times to get to and from our tour destination. Depending on your location Amtrak, bike rules can differ. We have taken the train a few times to San Luis Obispo for tours in Central California. You need to book your train ticket and make a bike reservation at the same time. Amtrak has a special place in some of its passenger cars to hold bikes, but space is limited. On a tour in Oregon we left our car at the train station in Klamath Falls. We did a weeklong tour to Corvallis, Oregon and took the train back to Klamath Falls. For that trip, Amtrak just took our bikes and put them in the baggage car. No special arrangements or reservations were needed. And yet, Amtrak may require you to box your bike in other areas. Check with Amtrak while making your plans so that there are no surprises when it is time to board.

**Flying** - We have flown with our bikes a few times.

Most airlines require you to box your bike. On our last trip we flew from Orange County to Vancouver, Canada for our tour down the west coast. We took our bikes to REI and paid to have them boxed. They did a great job. We also put our tent, sleeping bag, tools, and cooking gear inside the boxes. You just have to make sure the box weighs less than 50lbs. or you will pay an overweight fee. We flew on Alaska Airlines and each bike cost \$50. Some airlines look at bikes as an extra piece of baggage. When we got to Vancouver our bikes were in the oversized baggage claim area. We assembled them and left the empty boxes in the terminal. The airport was ok with it too. We have had good luck flying and never had our bikes damaged during transport. But be prepared for TSA to look through your box. They like to rummage around and see what's in there.

**Rent a bike and gear** - When we did a tour in France, we did not take our own bikes. We rented through the tour company we were traveling with. It was cheaper and less hassle. It cost \$400 to rent two nice Specialized bikes for 11 days versus \$600 to fly both bikes there and back. That was an easy decision. We just took our own pedals and saddle. On another trip, when we rode the GAP/C&O Canal from Pittsburgh to Washington DC, we used an outfitter that provided bikes and panniers. We brought our clothes in a small duffel bag and transferred it to the panniers during the tour. When we arrived in D.C., we returned the bikes and panniers to their sister bike shop and used the duffel bags once again. It was nice traveling light and not worrying about the logistics of bikes and bags.

**Get a Ride** - If you are lucky enough to be able to arrange a ride at the start or end of a tour, it takes a lot off your logistical plate. When we rode from



Zion National Park to Mesa, Arizona we combined our tour with a family vacation. Ximena's parents drove us to Zion where we all spent a couple of days vacationing. When the parents left us, we started our 520-mile tour that took us through the Indian Reservation, around the Grand Canyon, through Central Arizona and back to Mesa. On our west coast trip our friend, Joe, met us at the Mexican border and drove us back to Orange County. We would have taken the train but Amtrak was down for a couple of days due to track maintenance.

**Don't Transport** - We have done several tours where we started from our front door and ended there too. One of them was a six-day loop through Southern California. The trip was 240 miles riding from campsite to campsite. Planning is so much easier when you don't have to plan getting to and from a certain location. It's also great having the freedom to vacation without the use of a vehicle.

So you see, you have lots of options for transporting your bike and gear when you head off on a bicycle tour. Some are more cost effective than others. Do your research and figure out the logistics ahead of time. It will make your planning a lot less stressful. The main thing is that you get out there and have an epic adventure. And these days a little bike travel is good for the mind, body and soul. We hope to see you on the road soon.





# Mountain Bike Dude

By Alan Vester

## Mountain and Gravel Bike Riding Geared Toward the 50+ Rider

### How to Make Your Mountain Bike Ride and Perform Better

This article **does not apply** to Down Hill bikes, Fat Tire bikes, E-bikes, Professional riders, BMX bikes, Specialty bikes, or Racing bikes.

This article is geared toward average mountain bikes, full suspension and hardtails. I am not going to be able to tell you how to set up your suspension perfectly, but I'll be able to get you in the ballpark so at least it will be close. Keep in mind suspension is made to be adjusted for you as an individual rider, your weight, height, and skill level. A 300-pound rider will have a completely different setup than a 110-pound rider.

If you own a full-suspension or front-suspension mountain bike you have a few choices when it comes to setting it up.

1. Do nothing and ride an improperly adjusted mountain bike forever.
2. Hire a professional mountain bike mechanic who specializes in suspension adjustments and have him or her dial in your bike, so it rides and performs as it was intended.
3. Make the bold move to learn about your bike, correct tire pressure, front and rear suspension adjustments, and dial in your bike by yourself,
4. I will include two YouTube links to videos at the end of the article I think (after viewing several) will help you do it yourself. They are both excellent references.

Due to the numerous configurations of suspen-

sion and bikes, I will not cover all options.

#### TOOLS NEEDED:

- Shock air pump (preferably a digital pump) but a more common non-digital mechanical pump will work.
- Ruler or tape measure.
- Tire pump with an accurate gauge.

Having an assistant will be helpful, but you can do this by yourself.

Your tires and wheels are part of the bike's suspension. Tire pressure is very important. I find most riders run too much air pressure instead of the correct psi. So, what is the correct pressure? Unfortunately, there are so many opinions on this topic it is mind boggling. I weigh 175 lbs., and I have 29" wheels with 29 x 2.4 tubeless tires and I run 21 psi in the rear and 18 psi in the front.

You should talk to your bike mechanic or the manufacturer of your bike for recommended pressures, but as a baseline you can run 25 psi front and rear. If you are using tubes, I would run slightly higher pressures.

Keep in mind, road bicycle tires are high pressure, low volume. Mountain bike tires are high volume, low pressure.

The first order of business in setting up your suspension is making sure the fork (front) and shock (rear) are in good order and not leaking

oil. You will need to have them serviced first if the shocks or forks are leaking.

**Setting Sag.** Start with the rear shock. Sag is the distance your suspension compresses when you are sitting on the bike statically, not moving. These are general guidelines, 30% of the stroke for the rear shock and 15-20% for the front fork. This is where your shock air pump comes into play. The two major players in suspension are Fox and Rockshox. Both manufacturers publish the recommended air pressure for both the rear shock and front fork on their website. There is a feature on some rear shocks known as “Auto Sag” which is very slick. You pump up the rear shock (using the red valve) to 300 psi, sit on the bike and depress the black Schrader valve until the air stops coming out and it is set at 30% sag.

The other rear shocks only have one valve, and the recommended air pressure is published on the Fox and Rockshox website or even better use the bike manufacturer’s site, i.e., Trek, Pivot, Specialized etc., You are looking for the correct air pressure for your weight to get the desired 30% sag. You may have to adjust air pressure slightly to get the 30%. Many forks have a sticker on them with the recommended air pressure and rebound settings.

I recommend initially checking the sag without adding or removing any air. It is possible, the sag is right on and no adjustments are needed. The other reason for doing this is to see which way you need to go, more sag or less sag. I highly recommend watching both videos before beginning any suspension tweaks.

After you have the rear shock dialed in with the recommended sag, time to check the front fork. The front fork will compress less than the rear shock because you don’t have your entire body weight over the front of the bike like the rear shock.

**Rebound.** The speed in which your shock and fork recover after being compressed. I highly recommend Rockshox, or the manufactures web site of your bike for this adjustment spec.

You will notice there are two references to rebound, fast and slow. These are not the speed the bike is traveling, but how fast the suspension is moving up and down. Fast refers to big hits when there is maximum travel and slow refers to normal compression of the shock and fork. Rebound is set with a knob (usually red) in clicks, not air pressure. Many forks and shocks have only slow speed rebound adjustment which is fine. Higher end suspension will often use both fast and slow speed adjustments.

**Compression.** Relates how fast your shaft speed moves. It’s often the dial/knob on top of your fork and can be in various locations on your rear shock. It is also controlled by clicks of a knob. Refer to the manufacturer’s website for correct settings.

Well, I realize this is somewhat complicated, because it is. I have to say it is worth it whether you have it done professionally or do it yourself. I adjust and set up my own bikes because I want a comprehensive understanding of my mountain bike, the suspension and have control over the feel and ride quality.

“Understanding the Fundamentals of Suspension” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNELPKOoEcg>

“How To Setup Your MTB Suspension:” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ns2McJbvRPs>

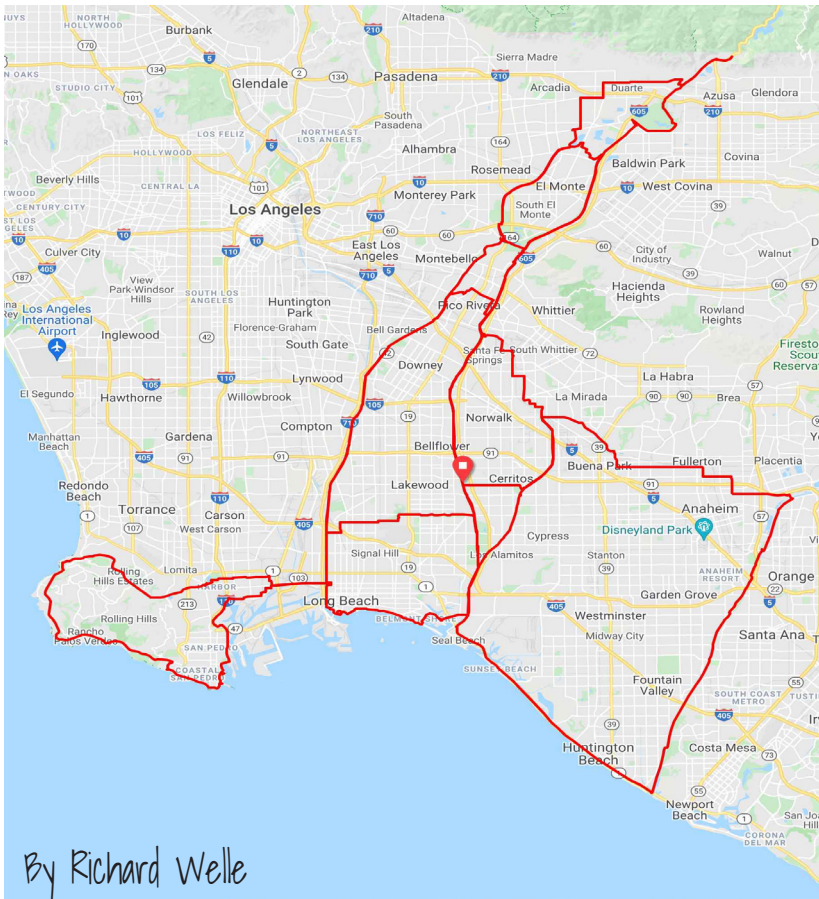
## Rules of the Trail

Ride Open Trails Only	Leave No Trace
Control Your Bicycle	Yield to Hikers/Horses
Never Scare Animals	Plan Hydration/Food



Be careful out there and see you on the trails.

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



# Connecting The Local Rivers

People living in south Orange County, and accustomed to the wide streets and generous bike lanes commonly available there, may find riding in north Orange County (and even more so, Los Angeles County) less appealing because of the comparative scarcity of bike lanes, as well as the often narrower streets. As a solo rider during the pandemic lockdowns, and based in the north, I found myself gravitating toward the comparative safety of riverside bike paths, particularly when riding anywhere north of Irvine, which was most of the time since I live closer to downtown Long Beach than to downtown Irvine. Between the Santa Ana River in the south and the Los Angeles River on the east side of Long Beach, a rider will also find the San Gabriel River, Rio Hondo, and Coyote Creek, and all five of these have lengthy bike paths.

Like many riders, I presume, I prefer riding loop trips rather than out and back. But to ride loops on rivers you eventually have to cross between rivers somewhere along the way, which typically has to be done on the streets. After more than a year of pandemic lockdown spent exploring the local rivers, as well as routes for loop rides, I felt

I could share my experience with those south-county residents who might be interested in points further north, but may not be familiar with what I believe are some of the best routes between the various rivers.



The greatest opportunity for variety is found along the San Gabriel River bike path, a 38-mile well-maintained path that starts at the coast in Seal Beach and ends (rather abruptly - see photo) in the foothills above Azusa, where it's possible to continue up the San Gabriel Canyon road (highway 39) if so desired. For those who live too far away to ride to the river, there is a convenient starting point for most of these loops at Liberty Park in Cerritos (corner of Studebaker and 195th). Although I've never parked there myself since it's within easy riding distance from home, it is a popular spot for cyclists and it appears the parking is free. The screenshot from Ride With GPS shows a compilation of the various loops that can be ridden from this park. A representative loop that shows one of the convenient crossings between the San Gabriel River and Rio Hondo is here: [ridewithgps.com/routes/36025066](https://ridewithgps.com/routes/36025066). I tend to ride these loops always in the counter-clockwise direction both because the winds usually favor that direction, and because it's a little easier to negotiate the downtown Long Beach area in that direction. The Ride With GPS route cannot be ridden exactly as indicated on the map - it shows a crossing from the east side of the river to the west side just north of Washington Blvd. (at mile 9.2 in the Ride With GPS file) but it's not actually possible to cross there. What most people (including the people at Ride With GPS) apparently don't know about this section of the river is that there are actually bike paths on both sides of the river from just north of Firestone to just north of Washington. The main path is on the east side of the river, but there is also a path on the west side that connects to the bike paths around the settling ponds between Washington and Whittier Blvd. It's possible to cross from the east side to the west side just north of Firestone by riding down the ramp, across the river bed, and up the ramp on the other side. The river is always dry in this area except just after rains, so the crossing is easy and safe (and doesn't seem to be prohibited). There is a good connection between the San Gabriel River and Rio Hondo that follows Mines Ave through Pico Rivera, starting just east of the settling basins. If you don't cross the river at Firestone (mile 5.5), then you have to continue as far as Whittier Blvd. on the east side of the river before you can cross and come back down past the settling ponds to pick up Mines. On the southbound leg along Rio Hondo, the main path stays on the west side of the river almost to Firestone

where it crosses at a bridge (mile 16.5), but again there is an alternate path along the east side of the river starting just south of the 5 freeway. It's possible to cross through the riverbed here, but the floor of the river is flat and often wet, and when wet it is exceedingly slippery because of the biofilm that grows in the water, so it's best avoided unless completely dry.

Mines is not the only crossing between the San Gabriel River and the Los Angeles and Rio Hondo trails. Further south, there is a bike path, apparently also unknown to Ride With GPS, that runs along the south side of Carson Street as far as Brizendine Ave, just north of the Long Beach Airport. From there, one can continue east on quiet streets, eventually reaching Pacific Ave, and then Wardlow, where a bit of maneuvering leads to the LA River bike path. This link: [ridewithgps.com/routes/36053851](https://ridewithgps.com/routes/36053851) shows the start and end but, since Ride With GPS doesn't know about the bike path along Carson, the route is shown on Carson Street. However, Carson Street in this area is narrow, with high traffic and no shoulder, so should be avoided in favor of the bike path.



North of Mines, there are three crossings that I like to use. The first is at the Whittier Narrows dam and is fairly well marked: [ridewithgps.com/routes/36053862](https://ridewithgps.com/routes/36053862). Finally, there is a fairly good

route through Duarte: [ridewithgps.com/routes/36053891](https://ridewithgps.com/routes/36053891), where you won't always find a bike lane, but the streets are either wide or have low traffic. These various crossings, combined with the return through downtown Long Beach can make loops of various lengths up to about 90 miles, and an extension up highway 39 can make the ride as long as you like.

So far I've not mentioned either Coyote Creek or the Santa Ana River. Coyote Creek at its south end empties into the San Gabriel river just north of the 405 freeway, and the two riverside bike paths come together there. Going north on Coyote Creek, there are two routes I like to use to connect back to the San Gabriel River. The first is simply to ride across 195th Street to Liberty Park. The second is a little more complex. The Coyote Creek bike path ends at Foster Road, and I tried quite a few routes between there and the San Gabriel River, finally settling on a route that goes a fair bit north on quiet streets before reaching a path under the 605 freeway: [ridewithgps.com/routes/36054110](https://ridewithgps.com/routes/36054110). I also experimented with several routes between the Santa Ana River and Coyote Creek, finally settling on a route that starts where the Santa Ana River trail crosses Glassell and ends where Rosecrans meets Coyote Creek: [ridewithgps.com/routes/36054175](https://ridewithgps.com/routes/36054175).



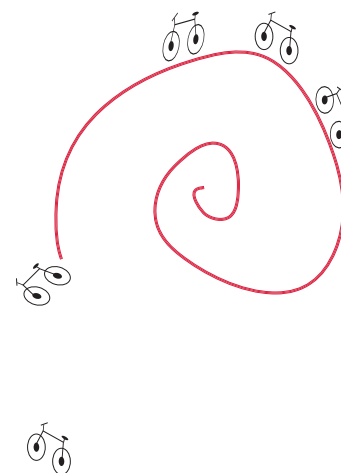
In general, all these river trails are well maintained (except for the section between Firestone and Washington on the east side of the San Gabriel River, which seems to have good pavement, but is rarely, if ever, swept for sand, so there are a couple of patches across the path that require attention). Like all river trails in southern California, there tends to be some homeless encamp-

ments. However, none of them are extensive on any of these routes, and I've never felt uncomfortable riding them solo. The main San Gabriel River trail is a bit narrower than the Santa Ana River trail along most of its length, and can be a bit crowded on busy weekends. However it's usually pretty quiet on weekdays. Being in the middle of a city, none of these trails are particularly scenic, but they are at least away from street noise, and there are occasional sections of trees or patches of wildflowers to provide local color. And being in the city, you occasionally run across some oddities.

Although not strictly a riverside loop, I've also explored options for transit across the Los Angeles harbor area to get from the LA River in Long Beach to the loop around Palos Verdes. After some experimentation, it appears that Anaheim Street is the safest, although, to be honest, I've only ever ridden it on weekends; you may find that weekday harbor traffic makes this street too dangerous. The route can be found here: [ridewithgps.com/routes/26807622](https://ridewithgps.com/routes/26807622). Like the San Gabriel River routes, I always ride this one counterclockwise. The bridge over the LA River has three lanes in each direction with no shoulder, but I've found the traffic to be respectful of bikes in that area - although you do have to pay attention when passing the 710 freeway on- and off-ramps. Between the river and Alameda Street, Anaheim Street is mostly wide enough for good shoulders, although there can be a fair bit of dirt and debris. Eastbound, as soon as I pass Alameda Street, I turn north on Mahar Ave. and work my way up to L Street before continuing west. G Street to the south of Anaheim Street is a designated bike route, and has bike lanes over at least part of it, but I discovered that it has stop signs at almost every cross street, and in most cases the cross traffic does not have to stop, so the intersections can be challenging. On the other hand, L Street has very few stop signs and wherever there is a stop sign, it's four way so the cross traffic stops as well, making the intersections much easier to negotiate. L Street also conveniently continues through a tunnel under the 110 freeway, from where you can continue straight ahead onto the campus of LA Harbor College and then connect to a bike path through the adjacent park (mile 17.3 on the Ride With GPS route). That path eventually crosses under Anaheim Street, pauses at a light to cross Gaffey Street and continues up the

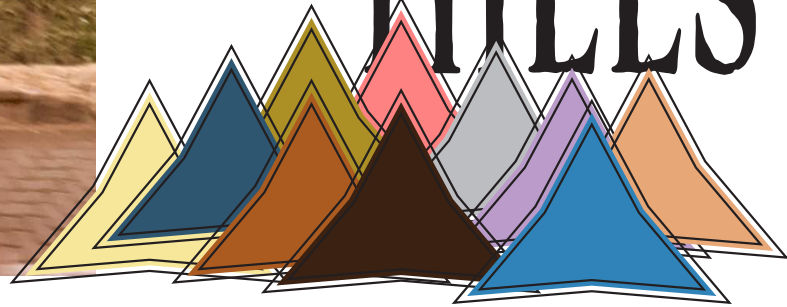
hill on the south side of Palos Verdes Drive North as far as Western Ave, where you cross to the other side of PV Drive N and find a bike lane to continue around the peninsula. On the south side of the peninsula, I like to ride down Anchovy Ave. to Paseo Del Mar (mile 36). On this route you have to walk your bike for a couple hundred meters through the White Point Nature Center (mile 37.4) where Paseo Del Mar is interrupted by a slide. If you want to avoid this you can just skip the Anchovy turn and stay on 25th Street. As you turn from Front Street to N Pacific (mile 43.4) be careful of the shallow angle railroad crossing. On the return ride through Wilmington, I like to use the bike path through Wilmington Waterfront Park and then zigzag my way up to Anaheim Street just west of Alameda. East-bound Anaheim is much like west-bound, but narrows at a couple of spots and again going over the freeway and river.

These routes through northern Orange County and parts of LA County are offered here for those of you who live in south Orange County and may rarely ride this far north. If anyone wants more details on these routes, feel free to get in touch.





# CYCLING THE LAND OF A THOUSAND HILLS



BY JON PORTER

Costa Mesa, CA — Every once in a while I find myself longing for the pristine asphalt roads and unbeatable climbs located in... the middle of Africa?

Rwanda, best known for an intense period of ethnic violence in 1994 called the Rwandan Genocide, which claimed over a million lives in a few short months, is well on its way to establishing itself as a modern development miracle, as well as a premier cycling destination. Limited corruption, excellent infrastructure and a liberalized economy are among the key ingredients concocted by a visionary President who has driven the small, landlocked nation forward for almost three decades. This recipe has given way to a pervasive national optimism that becomes more palpable with each passing year.

When I moved to Rwanda a decade ago to work with a startup, socially motivated consulting firm, I left my cleats hanging in California. On a continent known by Americans for potholes and savannah there wouldn't be any reason to devote precious luggage space to a road bike... or so I thought.

The "Land of a Thousand Hills" has become a polka-dot's dream. Rwanda's asphalt is new,

smooth and extending by the day. Incredible segments wait around almost every corner, and—one of the lesser-known perks of cycling in Africa—Strava leaderboards are occasionally within the reach of even amateur cyclists like myself... or at least they used to be!

Cycling in Rwanda has become a national pastime, in many ways owing to the success and celebrity of Adrien Niyonshuti and the National Cycling Team. Adrien, who lost six brothers during the Genocide, rose from poverty and obscurity to compete at the London Olympics in 2012. Adrien's story, and that of 'Jock' Boyer, the American former professional cyclist who discovered him, are the subject of the documentary "Rising from Ashes."

The most memorable aspect of cycling in Rwanda, however, wasn't the roads, the climbs or the crowns, but the camaraderie. As an expatriate living in a foreign culture, cycling wasn't a nicety but a necessity, and fellow riders grew to become brothers and sisters in arms. Every Wednesday morning our motley and ever-changing band of cyclists would ride the "Croissant Loop," named after the delicious *pain au chocolat* that awaited us at the end of our route. Saturdays were for longer jaunts, to the border

with Burundi, or to Volcanoes National Park, where Dian Fossey famously studied mountain gorillas.

Eventually, it became my turn to bid the peloton adieu and board a one-way flight back home. In the years since, new faces have appeared in photos, and familiar ones have faded away, but none of us has ceased to share updates, congratulations and encouragements within our ever-growing WhatsApp group. Those like myself who have moved away hope one day to return

and reclaim lost trophies on leaderboards and, more importantly, that peculiar sense of family that we experienced together cycling the Land of a Thousand Hills.

*Jon Porter leads acquisitions for Cojourn, a boutique investment firm based in Newport Beach that acquires, operates and holds excellent businesses forever. Jon is also the owner of Masaka Creamery, a leading dairy processor located in Kigali, Rwanda that hires proactively from the Rwandan Deaf community.*





# BENCHMARKS

BY MICHELLE VESTER

Have you ever been on a hike and seen a round medallion-looking thing cemented to the ground? It most likely is a USGS marker, or plugged oil well. These markers are also known as Benchmarks.

A USGS marker is a survey marker, also called survey marks, survey monuments, or geodetic marks. They are typically round, made out of various materials that can hold up to any kind of weather, and set into rock or cement. These markers are used by geodetic and land surveying agencies, mainly by the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) which is a division of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). NGS maintains a database of all markers meeting certain criteria.

A plugged oil well can have the same type of marker but with a different inscribed identifier, if any. Before the 1950s plugged or abandoned wells weren't accurately regulated, leaving thousands of wells unplugged or ineffectively plugged and almost impossible to find on any database. So if you happen to find one plugged, like the picture to the right, then it was most likely after 1950.

Finding USGS markers and even plugged wells can be fun and is called Geocaching. There is even an app for Geocaching!

So the next time you want something to do on your hike, road or mountain bike ride try finding a USGS marker, or plugged oil well marker and take a picture, and be sure to write about your find for Chain Reaction.

I can't wait to see what you find!

## References:

- <https://geodesy.noaa.gov/datasheets/>
- <https://www.summitpost.org/usgs-summit-markers/887644>
- <https://www.fractracker.org/2019/03/failing-abandoned-wells/>
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- <https://www.geocaching.com/mark/>
- <https://www.fractracker.org/map/us/california/>

WEIR CANYON, ANAHEIM HILLS



# SOLVED

WORDS CAN BE FOUND FORWARDS, BACKWARDS AND AT AN ANGLE



1. SUNNY
2. STARGAZING
3. LEISURELY
4. BARBECUE
5. BAREFOOT
6. ACTIVE
7. NATURE
8. BEACH
9. SWIMMING
10. TAN

11. RELAXING
12. OUTDOORS
13. BIKING
14. HIKING
15. LAZY
16. WARM
17. BACKYARD
18. TROPICAL
19. SUNBURNT
20. LAKESIDE

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\* Number of stick figure bikes is 20