



Official Newsletter  
June 2005  
Come Ride with Us

# Free Wheelin'



---

## Inside

- 2 How to Contact Us
- 4 Meeting Minutes  
March 9, 2005
- 5 Chico Wildflower  
Century
- 6 Meeting Schedule
- 7 Ride Schedule
- 9 From the Office of the  
President
- 9 Bike Against the Odds  
Update
- 10 Club Officers, Chair-  
persons, and Ride  
Coordinators

# Tierra Bella Ride

By Amal Johnson

I managed to talk Mary McGowan, Stephanie Solorzano and Lynne Trestrail into doing the Terra Bella with me this year. Stephanie and Lynne had ridden the metric century route last year, and said it was beautiful. (I thought I had done this ride before, but I had confused it with another ride.)

We decided to meet at my house and caravan in two cars down to Gilroy. We planned to stop and have dinner mid way to Gilroy to allow traffic to die down. (In addition I did not think I could wait until late evening to eat!) After a wrong exit and a couple of wrong turns we arrived at Olive Garden. It was Friday night and it seemed

*(Continued on page 2)*

---

**Next Membership Meeting  
7 pm, June 9, 2005  
Rockridge Branch Library  
5366 College Ave (at Manila)**

(Continued from page 1)

everyone, (mother, father, sister, brother and cousins) were eating out this night at the Olive Garden! It didn't matter, it appeared that most restaurants in the area of this shopping center were crowded so we endured the half hour or so wait. We were finally seated and ordered refreshment and food soon after. Our waiter was an energetic young man... and attentive. Dinner was tasty and uneventful... however we did mention (brag?) to the waiter we were doing a 65-mile bike ride the next morning. He mentioned it to his manager who came over to visit and encouraged us to participate in a survey asking us to rate our service. He also mentioned our having dessert. Initially we were slow on the uptake... but followed up w/ the question "Is it on the house?" When he responded it was, we promptly ordered Tiramisu to go... and it was good!

Lynne (our fearless ride leader) made reservations at the Residence Inn in Morgan Hill. We tried in vain to find a TV station with a local weather report; all we could find was news about the Pope and Prince Charles' wedding. The next morning, we looked out the window to see overcast skies and wet pavement in the parking lot. We made the executive decision to wait until after breakfast to decide what to do, and that if all else failed, we would do what every other red-blooded American woman would do - go shopping! We donned a combination of cycling gear and street clothes. Lynne had changed from cycling to street clothes immediately, Amal had bike clothes, and Mary and Stephanie were dressed half and half. It was quite apparent as we went to breakfast we had mixed feelings about this ride if our apparel was any indicator. By the time we got back to our room, the skies were clearing (giving us the sign we should ride). We decided to go for it, however we had not fully discarded the notion of shopping if the weather became finicky. Note how I have placed the blame upon

(Continued on page 3)



---

## How to Contact Us



Oakland  
YellowJackets  
Bicycle Club

2185 Manzanita Drive  
Oakland, CA 94611  
510.986.9011

<http://www.oaklandyellowjackets.org>

*Free Wheelin'* newsletters are free with paid membership.

Opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.

Permission to reproduce these materials in part or whole, or to share, load, or rent them can be obtained through the Oakland Yellow jackets.

Submit *Free Wheelin'* articles at any ride or club meeting, or call the Oakland Yellowjackets voice mail (510.986.9011) to make special arrangements. Handwritten or typed articles or hard copy with the accompanying file on diskette (if possible), are accepted. Electronic files can also be sent to [fweditor@oaklandyellowjackets.org](mailto:fweditor@oaklandyellowjackets.org).

*(Continued from page 2)*

the weather: overcast skies, wet pavement, cold and windy... one could never say we weren't fair weather riders!

Tierra Bella is aptly named as the course passes through the beautiful country in the southern Santa Clara Valley. The ride begins and ends at Gavilan community college at the south end of Gilroy. The first climb on the route is an easy grade up to a reservoir on the west side of the valley. (The longer routes have more challenging climbs). The first rest stop is at the reservoir and is hard to leave due to its beauty. Fortunately the ride loops around this placid body of water and also passes a second reservoir. The second rest stop at a vintage school had a mechanic available, shade and lots of sun. The rest stops had plenty of racks for bikes and facilities for the riders, and lots of goodies, including nut breads.

For those riders who enjoy taking in the scenery (some would say 'slow'), this is the perfect ride. There are easy rollers on back roads, with little traffic, where you can enjoy the open country. My only complaint with the course is that as soon as you hit a nice downhill you come upon a STOP sign, forcing you to slow down as you make the hard right turn or halt for oncoming traffic. And we encountered a pretty stiff headwind on the way out! On the return, we were re-directed out of a construction zone and rode through pleasant neighborhoods with friendly folks working in their yards. (And that pesky headwind had turned into a tailwind!) Our late start, slow pace, and memories of a steep hill after mile 30-something took some of the wind out of our sails and we decided to do the shorter course (though the sun had finally shown its face). We saw some fellow Yellowjackets and connected with them to exchange greetings, and talk about the upcoming kick off ride. Mary even saw an OYJ member she hadn't seen since the Monterey ride several seasons ago. Whatever misgivings we may have had about the ride were quickly forgotten when we got back to the finish line and

stood in line for lunch. Lunch was excellent... pasta (of course), salad, garlic bread and pie ala mode for dessert! But afterwards... we did what we had really come down to Gilroy to do... after riding of course! Shop!

It was probably good we didn't have a lot of time because no one did much damage to charge cards or otherwise. I couldn't locate the store I was really interested in... it turned out to be next to the shoe store Stephanie went to. We gave ourselves a little more than an hour and met back at the cars to drive home. There was one funny incident on the drive back when Mary thought she was following Lynne... even when we made a wrong exit on 680 going towards Walnut Creek. As we drove along side "Lynne's" van, we realized we had been following the wrong person for approximately 20 -30 minutes. Fortunately we only went a couple miles out of the way before we turned around! In the future we will order better weather and minimal hill climbing to motivate our Humane group!





## **Oakland Yellowjackets Monthly Meeting Minutes May 12, 2005**

1. The Lake Sonoma ride is May 21<sup>st</sup>. An e-mail went out telling everyone what to bring. People are needed to help Wilma at the site. A couple of members volunteered to help. We have site #4 this time, which is at the same parking lot, but to the left.
2. Group Safety  
We need to obey traffic rules and set a good example for new riders. Safety is our number one concern!
3. Al thanked the light ride leaders (Al B and Reggie) for the great job they are doing. We don't have light routes for every ride at this point. Audrey will check to see what she has from last year. The light rides will try to follow the same general routes as the other groups as much as possible.
4. The Humane and Advanced Intermediate groups are having a great year so far, with many new riders.
5. Monterey Ride  
For 2006, Kathy was able to reserve 9/23 (instead of Labor Day weekend). The application for 2005 is on the web site. The closing date is July 3<sup>rd</sup> or when we fill up, whichever occurs first.
6. Bike Against the Odds  
The application is available online. This year there is a \$45 non-refundable fee, and riders are asked to raise \$250 in donations. We will set up a team for OYJ and will do a bigger outreach. We are partnering with the Oakland Convention Center and Executive Inn. Audrey is looking for volunteers to help with outreach.  
This year, we will dedicate the ride to Wilma Marshall, one of our own, who is battling breast cancer at this time.
7. We have over 200 members at this time. Al has received many positive comments from new riders.
8. Reggie asked for volunteers to help out with the light rides. Help is particularly needed on June 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 25<sup>th</sup>, when Reggie will not be here. Audrey volunteered to help out on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Claudette volunteered to help on the 25<sup>th</sup>.



# Chico Wildflower Century

By Diana Swantek

Every century has its epic, sometimes two, and this year's Chico Wildflower was no exception. There are several stories that could be told and several versions of those stories. Were there compromising photos taken with bike saddles? Did a certain physician lock her keys in her car—again? What was promised to the hotel clerk in exchange for hot showers after the ride? Yes. The Chico Wildflower holds many stories, yet to be revealed. However, to protect the innocent and not so innocent, your humble author will choose to stick to the tale of the road and leave the *real* story to others.

A healthy contingent of Yellowjackets arrived in Chico for the 2005 Chico Wildflower Century. Six of us (Nadine, Dr. Karen, Lucinda, Paola, Diana Jr., and Diana Sr.) drove up and roomed together the night before. (For the unabridged version, please consult any of the above mentioned women. Food and gifts help.) After an evening of varying degrees of rest and surprisingly quick morning rituals, including a very tasteful job of makeup application by Paola (a seldom seen, but fascinating pre-ride custom), we emerged to greet a gray and threatening sky. Some wardrobe adjustments were in order and I was grateful to jam an extra rain jacket that Nadine brought into my jersey pocket.

Prepared for the unpredictable elements, we went off to the fairgrounds, until it dawned on Lucinda that we had already registered. No need to start there and back track the way we were going. Leave it to the woman who had completed the course last year. She would keep us out of trouble, including

avoiding the 'bad' Humboldt Road. So we hung a U and off we went.

After what seemed like a fairly insignificant amount of time, we hit Honey Run Road. Not to worry, I thought. I was still feeling a bit chilled (my arm warmers and Nadine's jacket still tucked in my pocket), so a nice little climb to get the blood moving would be just fine. Besides, the new member of our posse, Paola, was sprinting up the hill like a jackrabbit on crack. Strangely, I felt compelled to follow. Was it the Lancôme calling? Needless to say, the thrill of the chase was over quickly. I spent most of the climb catching glimpses of her back, as she merrily sang out, "I'm waiting for you Diana!" My only solace was thinking that her makeup must have been running by this point.

I wasn't alone in my agony or struggle. Lots of folks were stopping to catch some air on the side of the windy, endless hill. Others breezed by, helmets off, looking like they should be in the Alps. But my biggest competition was quickly closing in behind me. For out of nowhere, comes a guy on a tandem with his three or four year old son! Oh no! He passes me! As I glance up at the kid's back, I hear Paola chirping somewhere ahead of me, "I never use my smallest ring. I just refuse!" I look down. I have no more gears left. Ok. This is it. The epic. I must. I must. I must. I must pass that three year old! He's not even pedaling! "Pedal! Pedal!" I hear the more good-natured cyclists call out words of encouragement to the kid, as he looks around and smiles. "Smile at me, will ya," I snarl to myself, "Why, I outta..." Up, up, up on the pedals. I see the kid's white helmet bobbing. A few strokes more and I catch his wheel. I pull up to his side. I resist the urge to stick my tongue out. I pass them! Yup! Must have been the carbo-loading the night before. I'll admit this was not one of my more stellar performances. But sometimes, you take what you can get.

*(Continued on page 6)*



*(Continued from page 5)*

Finally, we hit the summit. Paola is right there and we pull off to the left to wait for the rest of our group. I take my helmet off. Water drips down on my head. My helmet strap is white with salt. I glance over at Paola. Her makeup isn't running. The rest of the group comes up. Suddenly, I go from sweating to freezing. The air becomes cold and the sky looks menacing. Thanks to Nadine, I have a jacket to put on. As we descend and go into a set of little rollers, it begins to rain. Diana Jr. asks me if I am bonking. Hmm. Since I've been complaining non-stop since Honey Run, I guess that is a fair assumption. The weather sucks at the moment, and all I want is some bananas and a porto-potty. Is that too much to ask? Thankfully, the first rest stop is only a roller or two away. The facilities are packed, but the food is decent and plentiful. Nadine comes out of the snack line with enough muffins to feed an army. (I guess Honey Run has zapped her synapses also.) Lucinda starts plotting out contingency routes if it continues to rain. (No loss of cognitive function there.) Then off we go again, some of us grumpy, some of us pragmatic, others still perfectly coiffed.

Lunch comes quickly within 13 miles. None of us bite. We want to keep cycling and are full of muffins and bananas anyway. The rain has ceased and we all are enjoying a second wind. Now our gang of six goes separate ways. Lucinda, Nadine, and Paola are off to

do the full century. The saner half (guess who) joins Kendall, Barbara, and Kate, and we set off to finish the metric century course. Lucky us! The weather has broken and the sun is now shining. After a quick roadside break to peel off extra clothing, we are on our way again. With Kendall leading the charge, we begin a respectable pace line of 18 mph. We keep at this for almost the entire way. The time goes quickly. One flat tire and one rest stop later, we close in on the finish. Pedaling back into town, towards more food and drink, the legs suddenly feel less heavy, and the conversation becomes more animated. Did we just cycle 65 miles? Oh, and by the way, did you notice the fog dancing along the green hills on Honey Run Road? I wonder where the others are? Hey! Let's get some food!



## Meeting Schedule

Membership meetings are on the second Thursday (unless otherwise noted in the newsletter) of every riding season month. Meetings are held at the Rockridge Branch of the Oakland Public Library, located at 5366 College Ave. (at Manila). Meetings start at 7:00 p.m.

**June 9, 2005**  
**July 14, 2005**

# Ride Schedule

## **June 4 – LAKE**

### **Dublin Grade**

33/62 miles

START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

Departs: 8:00 AM

This ride warms up on Doolittle Rd by the Oakland Airport into San Leandro, crosses over Castro Valley via Fairmont and Lake Chabot, then traverses the Dublin Grade (Dublin Canyon Rd). Light riders end in Pleasanton and return via BART. Option riders continue north through San Ramon, Lafayette and Moraga, then ride back over the ridge via Pinehurst.

## **June 11 – BART**

### **Morgan Territory**

47 miles (shorter options for Light)

START: Concord BART

Departs: Lake @ 7:15 AM // Ride Start @ 8:00 AM

A ride circumscribing the foothills of Mount Diablo. Ride through Clayton and the ranch country surrounding Marsh Creek Springs, then tackle a challenging but shaded and picturesque climb. Hard work pays off with "the Plunge" on the eastern side of the Black Hills towards Livermore. The ride continues on a counter-clockwise path through Danville and ends at the Walnut Creek BART station. Shorter, less strenuous ride options for Light and Humane Intermediate groups will be arranged by respective ride coordinators.

## **June 18 – LAKE**

### **Palomares Option**

31/37/80 miles

START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

Departs: 8:00 AM

All groups climb "BBR" (Burdeck-Butters-

Robinson) and ride to Castro Valley via Redwood Rd. Light riders finish up at the Dublin-Pleasanton BART station. Others climb and descend Palomares Road in the southbound direction. Intermediate riders finish at Fremont BART, while advanced option riders return via Niles Canyon, San Ramon, Moraga and Pinehurst.

Light Group: Pleasanton-Livermore (30 miles)

## **June 25 – AWAY**

### **Peninsula**

39/34/53/77 miles

START: Cañada Road @ Hwy 92, San Mateo

Departs: Lake @ 7:15 AM // Ride Start @ 8:00 AM

All groups head south on Cañada Rd to Woodside. Light riders then loop around Portola Valley and Palo Alto before returning. Intermediate riders proceed to climb Old La Honda Rd, after which the Humane group drops down from Skyline via Kings Mountain Rd, then back to the start. Advanced intermediates ride out to the coastal town of San Gregorio and return over the ridge via Tunitas Creek. Advanced riders bypass the Old La Honda climb, but tackle its tougher cousin, Page Mill Rd, then descend Alpine Rd to Pescadero and eventually rejoin the Advanced Intermediate route at San Gregorio.

## **July 2 – LAKE**

### **Three Bears and Some Redwoods**

40/57 miles

START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

Departs: 8:00 AM

Climb up the Broadway Terrace, Old Tunnel Road and part of Grizzly Peak Blvd, then descend from Tilden Park on Shasta Rd and Wildcat Canyon. Light and Humane Intermediate groups finish at the Orinda BART station, while others complete an hourglass loop around the Briones reservoir with the Three

*(Continued on page 8)*

*(Continued from page 7)*

Bears, San Pablo Dam Rd and a return via Moraga, Pinehurst and Redwood Rd.

#### **July 4 – LAKE**

##### **Independence Day Decide-and-Ride**

START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

Departs: 9:00 AM

Meet at the Children's Fairyland parking lot and depart on a decided route at 9:00 AM.

#### **July 9 – LAKE**

##### **San Ramon**

58 miles (shorter options for Light group)

START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

Departs: 8:00 AM

Climb Old Tunnel Rd, then drop down the other side of the ridge via Pinehurst and Canyon Roads. The ride then cuts through Moraga, Lafayette and Rossmoor on the way to San Ramon. A long, paceline-friendly stretch on Danville Blvd is a nice prelude to the only other significant climb of the day, the scenic Norris Canyon. After riding through Castro Valley, the ride heads back to Oakland via Bancroft Ave.

#### **July 16 – AWAY**

##### **Calistoga Picnic Ride**

29/46/50 miles

START: Bothe-Napa State Park

or caravan from Children's Fairyland, Oakland

Departs: Lake @ 6:45 AM // Ride Start @ 8:30 AM

**RIDE-AND-DECIDE OPTION:** Those who prefer to ride locally may meet at Children's Fairyland and depart on a decided route at 9:00 AM.

The ride travels south on Silverado Trail, which Light riders will cruise on until Yountville before returning to Calistoga. Others will head East along Hennessey Lake and travel through the lesser known of Napa County's wine region along Chiles and Pope

Valleys. The return features a climb to the town of Angwin and an exhilarating descent on Howell Mountain which bottoms out at Silverado Trail and the home stretch back to Calistoga.

Post-ride picnic and ride support sponsored by OYJ members. Non-members must pay a nominal fee to cover ride support costs. Bring your swimsuit and enjoy the pool at the park after the ride!

#### **July 23 – LAKE**

##### **Wildwood/Moraga**

20/42 miles

START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

Departs: 8:00 AM

Warm up on the hills of Piedmont (Wildwood and Moraga) and Oakmore (Leimert), then climb the wooded "BBR" (Burdeck-Butters-Robinson). Think you're done climbing? Think again. Head up Skyline Blvd, past the Chabot Space Center and keep racking up elevation till you reach Grizzly Peak. Finally, treat yourself to a plunge down South Park Drive in Tilden Park, then return via Moraga (the town) and Pinehurst and Redwood Roads. Humane and Light riders will enjoy shorter and a less strenuous ride.

#### **July 30 - LAKE/BART**

##### **Mount Diablo**

31/58 miles

START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

Departs: 8:00 AM

Light riders shuttle by BART to Orinda and enjoy a ramble around Contra Costa County's residential bike trail system, finishing the ride at Pleasanton BART. Humane Intermediates start from Lafayette BART and climb up the big mountain partially -- to the ranger station at the North Gate / South Gate junction. All others ride from Lake Merritt and learn just what quadriceps and gluteus muscles are good for: a warm-up climb through the Montclair district of Oakland, then a journey to the

*(Continued on page 9)*

(Continued from page 8)

summit of Mount Diablo at 3,850 feet and finish in Pleasant Hill.

Light Group: Orinda-Pleasanton (31 miles)

The Yellowjackets have a no drop policy and will leave no light or humane intermediate rider behind!

**REQUIRED:** Helmet, waiver, ID with emergency Info.

**RECOMMENDED:** Two bottles of water minimum, high energy food, pump, spare tubes, tools, patch kit, padded gloves, padded cycling shorts, protective eye wear, sun block.



## **From the Office of the President**

**VERY IMPORTANT**

Wow!!! the word has really gotten out about how great a club we are and as of this writing our membership has soared well beyond the 200 mark. That's good news...However, with the increase in numbers, it is incumbent upon us to assure that we do all in our power to remain good citizens as we assemble for our rides

and on the road. At the Lake we have been asked, by the gate keepers, to keep a lane open so that cars don't have to run the gauntlet to enter and park. I am asking each of you to do your part to make this happen.

### **LAKE SONOMA**

What a great day and ride. Thanks to you, the membership, I received from the numerous guest and first time member participants, many pats on the back for the club. The food was delicious and ample. The ride leaders did a great job, which resulted in everyone enjoying themselves and returning safely. As usual Kathy Starkey did a great job of keeping everyone informed, on target and ordering perfect weather conditions. Thanks again!!!

### **REMINDERS**

1. Monterey Applications are due.
2. Our Bike Against the Odds, Breast Cancer Fund, ride needs the support of all club members.

Al

---

## **Bike Against the Odds Update**

Two significant events have touched the lives of our fellow OYJ club members; one directly, one indirectly. Many of you know Wilma Marshall, a long time member of our organization who is a recent survivor of breast cancer. Many of you also know Winnie Pearson, who recently lost her sister to breast cancer. While we revel in Wilma's success in fighting the disease, we also extend our heartfelt condolences to Winnie for her loss.

So you ask, why am I telling you about this? It is that time of the year again, where the

*(Continued on page 10)*

# **Club Officers, Chairpersons, and Ride Coordinators**

## **Officers**

President:	Al Joseph 510-339-0454
Vice President:	Brenda Fields 510-663-6110 Barbara Massey 510-531-5899
Secretary:	Ann Ma 510-482-1167
Treasurer:	Barbara Moodie (415) 586-3783

## **Standing Committee Chairpersons**

Monterey Ride Committee:	Kathy Starkey 510-521-6235
Map Committee:	Brit Harvey 510-845-9122
Christmas Party Committee:	Kathy Starkey 510-521-6235

**Newsletter Editor** Jan Smith  
510-893-3374

**Webmaster** Alfonso Estrada  
510-465-1670

## **Ride Coordinators**

Light:	Al Bourges 510-530-7226 Reggie Burrell 415-586-3783
Humane Intermediates:	Al Joseph 510-339-0450 Lynne Trestrail 510-524-2928
Adv. Intermediate	Fred McWilliams 510-636-0838 Virginia Sorgi 510-655-1189 Craig Acosta 510-421-0243

*(Continued from page 9)*

Oakland Yellowjackets team with the Breast Cancer Fund to sponsor the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Bike Against the Odds on October 9<sup>th</sup> right here in Oakland. So you see, we Yellowjackets have a very close tie to the ride this year and with your support, we can all raise the funds to help eradicate this dreadful disease.

We have a lot of new members this year that may not be familiar with the Breast Cancer Fund so briefly, here is what they are all about. Breast Cancer Fund is the leading national organization focused on identifying the causes of breast cancer and preventing the disease. They believe that most breast cancer can be prevented, and have adopted the bold mission to eliminate the environmental causes of the disease. Through public education, policy initiatives, outdoor challenges and other innovative campaigns, the Breast Cancer Fund mobilizes the public to secure the changes needed to stop this devastating epidemic. For more information, check out their website at [www.breastcancerfund.org](http://www.breastcancerfund.org).

Today, a core group of Yellowjackets and other volunteers, along with our Program Manager, Sharon Meager of the Breast Cancer Fund have already begun the detailed planning needed to pull together this event. Volunteers are welcomed and appreciated for many of the outreach activities and if you're willing and able, please contact Audrey Rupe at [akrupe@mindspring.com](mailto:akrupe@mindspring.com) to find out more about how you can help make a difference.

Indeed, there is still much more..... the Yellowjackets are forming a team of riders for the event and have been challenged by a local group of riders, the Velo Girls, to raise more money than they did last year or plan to this year. That's quite a challenge as last year they raised over \$13, 919 while we raised \$11,493, a difference of only \$2426. If each OYJ member kicked in less than \$15 per person, we could have surpassed the Velo Girls fundraising. This year, they have already be-

*(Continued on page 11)*

*(Continued from page 10)*

gun their fundraising but we still have time to not only catch up but exceed what they are expecting to raise. So how do you sign up? Go to the Breast Cancer Fund website and follow these simple directions:

1. Click on the “Events” tab
2. Click on “Bike Against the Odds”
3. Click on the “Register Here” tab and follow the directions to register including “join a team”
4. Be sure that you select the Oakland Yellowjackets Team on the pull down list

What happens if there is no OYJ team on the pull down list? Check back in a day or two as we are in the process of setting up the team.

Once registered, you’re ready to begin fund raising. If you need help getting started, think about writing a letter discussing why you’re involved with this effort and what it means to you. Don’t be shy about asking for a specific amount of money for a contribution but, be sure to give people the option of giving an amount that they may be more comfortable with. Their donation is also tax deductible. You can do it; you can make a difference and have a great time supporting the cause.

Think about Wilma; think about Winnie’s sister; think about how this disease may have touched your life in some way. More importantly, think about how you can make a positive change for the future!