

Los Angeles Wheelmen VP Report - December 4, 2018

Hello All:

Sunday: Last Sunday we were in Whittier for "Valley Rally." I took this photo at the start. I'm sorry I didn't wait for everyone to turn around.



From left to right: **Mel Cutler, Phil Whitworth, Jacques Stern, Sheila Szymanski, Bill Faulkner and Terry Neff.** With me that would make 7 riders. Like last week, we all did the long route except Mel who had ridden to the start and was planning on going to the Southbay Wheelmen pizza party on his way home. Sheila and Phil formed the fast group and the rest of us rode together in the rear. It was a nice day for the ride -- maybe a little crisp -- I never took my jacket off. Terry suffered a bad slash in the sidewall of one tire and took a shortcut back to the start, but we all finished about the same time. I don't have any more photos from the ride, but Mel sent me this one he took of the sunset on his way home from the pizza party.



Next Week: Next Sunday we will be riding our monthly century and metric century. As it has been for several years now, our December century will be the "Foothill Footsie." This ride was created by **Dennis Miller** but for the first time he won't be riding it with us. It's a fairly easy ride out to Claremont and back. The full century starts in La Crescenta while the metric century starts an hour later in Pasadena. The metric century pretty much rides the center portion of the full century, so the riders may come together on the route or at lunch. As I have in the past, I'll probably start early, but usually all the other riders catch me either on the route or at lunch.

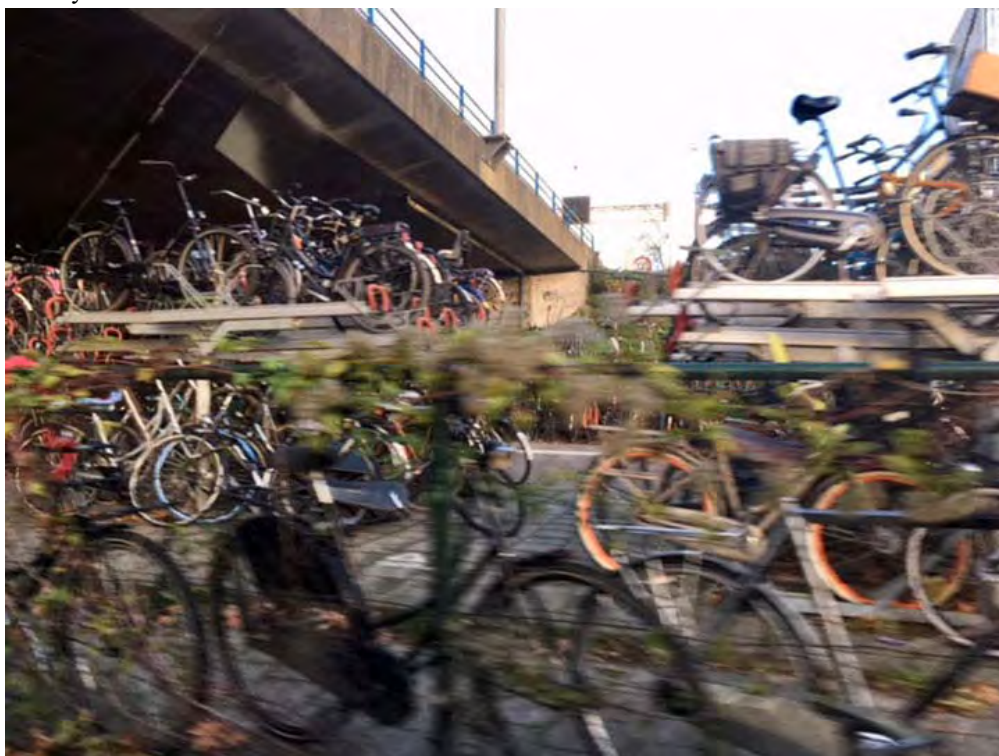
I'll be at the Habit Burger if you want to find me. Most homes will probably have their holiday decorations up by this weekend and it's always fun to see what is new this year in decorations.

Early Triple Dipper Ride: Because it looks like rain is likely this Thursday, **Gary Murphy** and I rode the usual Triple Dipper ride today. It was a clear day and you could see where last week's rain had put snow on Mount Baldy. Gary took this photo from Ballona Creek. That's my back in the photo.



With the rain coming this week, there should be some really nice snow cover on Baldy when we ride out to Claremont on Sunday.

Vacation Photo: Ann Trank has been in Israel for a few weeks, but she sent me this photo from Amsterdam -- maybe she is on her way back now. Anyway, she says she took it out of moving vehicle and apologizes for it being blurry. She says it is of a parking lot for bicycles.



Rant (or whatever): Just want to get a few thoughts off my mind here -- you can skip this part. I prefer not to shop on-line. I like to physically see what I'm buying and for clothing, it's nice to be able to try it on. Recently, I wanted to buy a new cycling jacket for the winter. I knew the type of jacket I wanted so I went to two different bike shops that in the past have had a fairly large selection of bicycle clothing (Performance and Helen's in Santa Monica). Neither place had what I wanted. So I went on line and easily found what I wanted (the red Showers Pass jacket in the photo above). It seems to me that bike shops are being squeezed by on line-shopping, so with diminishing revenues, they can't afford to stock as much inventory as they used to. So they don't offer the wide selection they formerly had. But this just sets up a vicious circle. I can't find what I want at the shop, so I go on-line, which further squeezes the shops. I don't have any solution for this -- I just think it's sad. People seem to think brick and mortar stores are losing out to on-line shopping because people like going on-line so much. I'm just not sure that's entirely true. People like me are being forced on-line because the brick and mortar stores don't carry the selections they once did.

BTW -- I'm not crazy about Amazon either. I could have gotten the jacket on Amazon, but I got it through an on-line bicycling retailer that I like: BikeTiresDirect.com. Despite the name, they carry a full line of bicycle accessories. They have a nice web site and I've purchased 3 things from them now and they usually ship the same day you order. Just like Amazon.

Well, with that, I'll just say --
See You On the Road,
Rod Doty, VP

Los Angeles Wheelmen VP Report - December 11, 2018

Hello All:

Sunday: Last Sunday we were riding our monthly century or metric century. **Terry Neff** and I started the century an hour early, so I didn't get a group shot. We ended up finishing just about the same time as the other riders, so I'm thinking the hour head start was the right move. There were 4 other riders on the century: **Gary Murphy, Phil Whitworth**, a newcomer named **Brian**, and a stranger named **David Nakai**. I never saw any of the riders on the metric, but I was told there were two -- **Jacques Stern** and another unidentified rider. It was a beautiful day for a ride. The recent storm had put a lot of snow on the mountains and since our route was out the San Gabriel Valley and back, we could see them most of the day. I received several photos of the snow, but my shot was about as good as any, so here is mine of Mount Baldy:



Gary sent me some other photos that show the beautiful fall colors we saw:





I played my annual game of counting cars with Christmas trees on top and came up with 11 which is a pretty good total.

Next Week: This Sunday we will be back at the "Corner" for "Exploring the Environs." The long and the medium both head out to the Valley, go west across the Valley to lunch. After lunch it is over Topanga or Old Topanga to the coast and a return to the start. Although the routes travel to the same areas, they don't actually stay together much. The short stays on the Westside. The trip through Topanga should touch on a bit of the recent fire area. It should be interesting to see what it looks like. I don't have an elevation gain for the long route based on actually riding the route, so I hope to do that route. I hope to see a lot of you there.

December 20th Meeting: We have our monthly meeting coming up in a couple of weeks on the 20th. I've decided I will whip up a batch of Grandma Doty's sugar cookies for refreshments (I always like to make a batch for the holidays), but I would like a volunteer to bring drinks (soda, water, coffee, whatever). If you can do this, let me know. This meeting is a little more important than usual because nominations for club officers open up. We have a vacancy in the secretary position and it would be great if we could fill that. Consider showing up and throwing your hat in the ring (it will probably be the only one, so don't worry about campaigning).

Weekly Sunset Photo: For the third week in a row, **Mel Cutler** sent me a photo of the sunset. He says this one was taken through a dirty train window down near San Clemente. I'm beginning to think he has a thing for sunsets.



Well, that's all the news I've got tonight, so . . .

See You On The Road

Rod Doty, VP

Los Angeles Wheelmen VP Report - December 18, 2018

Hello All:

Sunday: Last Sunday we were at the Corner for "Exploring the Environs." I was disappointed in the turnout -- especially considering that it wasn't a very long ride and the weather was great. There were only 4 of us. I took this photo:



That's **Jacques Stern, Gary Murphy** and **Mel Culter**. Mel was there to lead the newcomer ride, but there weren't any newcomers. He needed to get home early so he rode the short ride anyway. The rest of us did the long, although Gary cut it a bit short because he also needed to get home early. It had been so long since I had ridden this long route, I didn't remember much of it. It went up Beverly Glen instead of the usual climb on Benedict. Turns out Beverly Glen is a bit wider and probably a bit safer than Benedict, but I thought it was also a little more difficult than Benedict. The route out in the Valley was sort of screwy -- often zig-zagging for no reason and doing a lot of gratuitous climbing. I guess that was the point -- to add some miles and difficulty to the long route to distinguish it from the medium. The route ended with a trip over Old Topanga. I had thought we would see some damage from the recent fire, but I didn't see any. The fire may have reached Old Topanga Canyon, but apparently did not reach the road. Mel sent me this photo of the little lake near the top of Franklin Canyon. This just shows how pretty it is to ride this time of year. The rest of you are really missing out.



Next Week: This Sunday we will be riding "Honolulu For Lunch" which starts in Monterey Park. All routes head up to Montrose with the long and medium taking a more circuitous route there than the short. The long continues up and over La Tuna Canyon. I just saw a news report on improvements made to La Tuna Canyon to increase safety. Supposedly they put in bike lanes and made other changes. It will be interesting to see these changes. Yes, this ride will be only 2 days before Christmas, but don't you need to get away from it all just one day before all the relatives show up? Why not join us Sunday.

On Tuesday, we will be riding our annual Christmas Day ride. This is always a nice ride for those who can get out of the house for a few hours on the holiday. We ride along Mulholland and through Elysian Park before heading downtown. The streets are quiet and it's a good time to ride these places. We usually gather for a group photo up on Carroll Street where we view the restored Victorian houses there. I hope a lot of you can make it. It is a nice day.

Triple Dipper Excursion: Last Thursday the Triple Dipper ride changed things up a little and rode to Pasadena to view the "Moons" exhibit at the Arts Center College of Design. The concept of the exhibit was to sort of combine the science of moons with art. Here is a photo taken by **Mel Cutler** of one of the exhibits:



The man in the center was our guide and (I believe) the curator of the exhibit. I think my favorite piece was a series of photos of pancakes which looked like cratered moons. If I hadn't been told they were pancakes, I wouldn't have known. Here is a photo (from **Gary Murphy**) of the group riding the Arroyo Seco bike path on our way up to Pasadena. It was the first time I had ever ridden that path.



We also rode through downtown on our way there and I was surprised how bike-friendly they have made some of the streets downtown. Figueroa now has a separated bike lane running from near USC all the way to the heart of downtown.

Meeting: Thursday is our monthly meeting. I am happy to say we have a volunteer to bring drinks -- thank you **Gary Murphy**. I mixed up the Grandma Doty Sugar Cookie dough earlier tonight -- you have to refrigerate it overnight -- so I'll be baking them tomorrow. You will definitely want to come to the meeting for them.

Art Project of My Own. This time of year, as I ride around, I always see a lot of dead Santas on lawns. These are inflatable lawn decorations which are shut off during the day and collapse in a heap. For some reason, I always think they look sort of funny. Here are a couple of samples (I took the first photo and Gary Murphy took the second)



These include a dead Christmas tree and dead reindeer. We have another week before Christmas and what I would like everyone to do is take photos of any dead Santas they see (or dead snowmen, elves etc.) and send them to me. Next Tuesday, if I get enough of them, I'll put them together in a "Dead Santa Collage." So, as you ride this coming week, keep your eyes peeled and your camera ready.

Final Shot: There were some big waves today and some of them inundated the beach bike path in a couple of places. **Gary Murphy** sent me these photos: Who says ocean levels aren't rising?



See You On The Road

Rod Doty, VP

Los Angeles Wheelmen VP Report - December 26, 2018

Hello All

I'm getting this out a day later than usual because of the holiday. Next week will probably be a day late too.

Sunday: Last Sunday we were riding "Honolulu For Lunch" which started in Monterey Park. There were only 7 of us at the start, but we were joined en-route by two more. I took this photo at the start.



That's **Russ Brynes, Jacques Stern, Phil Whitworth** and **Terry Neff**. **Sheila Szymanski** and **Thomas Knoll** were not in the photo. The two that joined us later were **Chris Hedberg** and **David Nakai**. We all started off on the long. Sheila, Thomas and Phil made up the lead group and as far as I know, completed the long. Chris, Russ and Terry cut the route short at one point or another. David and Jacques took the early lunch while I went on ahead. I didn't see them again, but David sent me a report and they did complete the long. The weather was a bit colder than I thought it would be, but otherwise it was a nice day. I took several photos of "dead Santas" (see below) There had been news reports of changes made on La Tuna Canyon for safety reasons. There is now either a wide shoulder or bike lane on the entire hill, but it didn't look new to me, so I'm not sure what changes were made. There are "botts' dots" periodically along the edge of the traffic lane which would warn drivers if they are drifting into the shoulder. Those seemed new. I guess that's something.

Tuesday: Yesterday we held our annual holiday ride. There had been talk of rain, and that might have kept some riders away, but the day was mostly sunny and even a bit warmer than Sunday. The roads were still a bit damp in places so there may have been rain overnight, but not a drop during the ride. There were only 6 of us riding.



From left to right: **Jacques Stern, Ann Trank, Mel Cultler, Marc Spiegelman** and a newcomer whose name I now forget. We all stayed together except that Mel had to get home early and cut out about halfway through the route. The air was very clear and the views from up on Mulholland Drive were spectacular -- both of the mountains and the buildings downtown. We took the usual group shot up on Carroll Street, but without Mel, we were down to 4 (plus me taking the photo)



There was scaffolding around one of the old Victorian homes which was derelict in past years, so perhaps they are finally going to restore another of the homes along this street. We took our usual break in Chinatown and then headed home. It was a very nice day. It's a shame more of you weren't able to join us.

Next Week: This Sunday we will be riding "Legg Lake" which starts at Brookside Park next to the Rose Bowl. These are relatively short and easy rides which take us down to the Whittier Narrows area and back. There actually isn't much difference between the routes except a few miles. We finish back at the Rose Bowl where they will be feverishly finishing the floats for the Rose Parade on Tuesday. You could always look into volunteering some of your time there before you head home.

On Tuesday, January 1st, we have our usual two rides. You can choose to ride to the Rose Parade. This is a very short ride from Alhambra over to the parade route and back with a break while you watch the parade. If you have never seen the parade in person, you really should do it at least once and this is an easy way to get there and back. If you volunteer to help finish the floats (see above), you can check out your handiwork.

Our other ride on the 1st is our annual "Kickoff Century and Metric Century" These both start in Malibu and head north. The full century gets all the way to Ventura while the metric century turns around in Camarillo. These are fairly easy century routes and a good way to get your year off to a good start. I like to think that if you ride a century on the first day of the year, there isn't anything you can't do the rest of the year -- the Grand Tour, the Triple Crown, whatever. I hope to see you there.

Winter Solstice Ride: Mel Cutler and David Nakai both rode the Winter Solstice brevet offered by the San Diego Randonneurs last Friday night. I'm not sure why this ride has to be at night, but it is held every year on the shortest day of the year. David sent me this photo of the riders. As you can see, many of the bikes were decorated for the season. David is not in the photo, but his bike was still decorated when he showed up to our ride on Sunday.



Good News: At the club meeting last Thursday, nominations for club officers were opened. We have been without a Secretary for almost a year now, but **David Williams** has accepted the nomination to become our

club secretary in the coming year. Nominations remain open for another month, but it's a pretty safe bet David will become our new secretary in March.

Dead Santas: Last week I included a couple of photos of "dead Santas" (inflatable lawn decorations which are turned off during the day). I took several more photos this week and I had intended to put them all together in a collage, but that's too much work. So here are just two more of my favorites:



Santa and all his reindeer came in for a hard landing and there were no survivors.



Looks like this one was caught scaling the wall and just shot where he was.

If I don't see you on Sunday or on the 1st, Happy New Year and have a great cycling 2019.

See You On The Road

Rod Doty, VP