

Become a member of the GNCC

As a member, you will get:

- SpokeLore Newsletter: Find out what's going on and who's involved.
- Better cycling facilities, sooner
- Discounts at most local bike shops
- Use of loaner mechanic's equipment, including tools and stand

Get involved or support those who are working to make our region more cyclist-friendly

Dues: \$10/year per individual

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone #: _____

Amount enclosed: _____

Interested in volunteering?

Help with GNCC special event

Provide a talk at a meeting

Lead group rides

Cut out this form and mail with payment to:

GNCC
Unit 130
#34—1150 N. Terminal Ave.

Any tips, suggestions, or article ideas? Send them to: SpokeLore09@thegncc.org

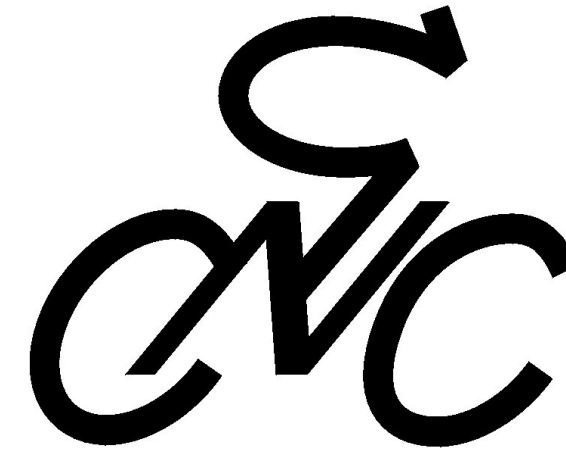
Upcoming Events:

- Bike to Work Week May 11-17
- Regular social rides are scheduled the 2nd and 4th Sunday of every month. Meet at 10AM at Coyote Café, St. George and Terminal.
- A FoodShare ride will be scheduled in the summer—join your GNCC friends for a guided tour of local farms and see where good food is grown right in your own backyard! Send us your email and we'll let you know when it gets scheduled.
- A Gabriola ride will be scheduled in the summer as well—send us your email if you're interested.
- Arrowsmith Bikes is sponsoring the Island Cup Series Mountain Bike races throughout the spring. Check out: www.islandseries.com for more info.
- April 23, May 22, June 22, July 29 (4th Tuesday of each month)

GNCC meetings open to all members: 7PM
#3—2370 Labieux Road, Volunteer Nanaimo centre, under the Credit Union at Bowen and Labieux
- Pacific Rim Bike s also runs regular group mountain rides. See www.pacificrimbike.com for details

Spoke Lore

Spring 2009



It'sSpring! And spring means a return to cycling weather for most people.

Now is a great time to resolve to ride more often, and there's plenty of reasons to do so this year.

Bike to Work Week is a great time to give bike commuting a try—it's cheap, great exercise, and makes your workday that much more enjoyable to begin. BTWW is early this year, May 11-17, and registration for workplaces and teams begins April 7. Check out www.biketowork.com/nanaimo for registration information and more helpful hints. Don't forget, all buses in Nanaimo have bike racks, so you don't have to start out by riding the whole distance. Don't be afraid to ask the driver to help you load up your bike the first time—it's easy, and you'll be a pro in no time.



Out and About

Dave Beer

A comment I often hear to explain why a perfectly good bicycle is sitting in the garage rather than being used is, "It is too scary to share the road with motorized vehicles!" This seems a shame, because with the confidence that comes from safe riding knowledge and practice, you can have a bike path right at your own front door. Here are a few tips to help you stay safe as you navigate Nanaimo's roadways.

Be predictable. Choose a lane within a meter of the curb and don't weave in and out.

Be visible. Wear bright colored clothing, use lights, reflectors, whatever is needed for you to be noticed.

Behave like a law abiding road user. This means using helmets, riding single file, signaling, yielding and stopping for red lights or stop signs.

Ride defensively and use all your senses. That is, approach potential problem situations (intersections, drivers changing lanes or turning) with caution. Stay alert and leave your ipod at home! Watch for occupied cars in your lane, you don't want to become someone's "door prize!"

Adjust your riding to weather conditions to avoid braking or slipping problems. Be extra cautious as cyclists are harder to see through a car's

rain spattered windshield.

Make sure that your bike is properly sized and well maintained.

Look for debris, breaks in the pavement or railway tracks that could cause you to lose your balance.

Ride sensibly but confidently and you will do fine. These suggestions and many more tips are available in a great cycling handbook called "Bike Sense." You can access it at <http://bikesense.bc.ca>



The Frugal Cyclist

Tobi Ming

Build Homemade Bucket Panniers
Cycling is a lot more convenient and comfortable if you can get a change of clothes and your lunch out of a backpack and into panniers (bags that clip onto your rack). Unfortunately panniers can be expensive, and ones large enough to carry significant amounts of groceries around can be prohibitively so. Luckily you can make your own panniers out of new or repurposed 4 gallon square buckets with snap on lids (you can get kitty litter in these

type buckets, scrounge them from a cafe if you're lucky, or buy them new from the plastic shop). You need to make two hooks at the top to hook over your rack and one tensioned hook at the bottom to clip on the bottom and snug everything in. Drill two holes near the flange of the bucket and attach sturdy "rope hooks" from a hardware store with nuts and bolts. Make the bottom hook using a short bungee cord hooked through a hole in the flange.

If you're feeling a little more flush, make rack attachments using pannier replacement hooks and tensioners from Mountain Equipment Co-op.

Pictures and more details on both methods are available at:

<http://www.crazyguyonabike.com/doc/Buckets>

<http://www.ibiketo.ca/node/372>

Riding Reads

Marilyn Ming

It's pretty hard to read when you're actually biking. But comfortably back home, you might be inspired to pick up a little something in print about biking.

Bike-related books range from technical mechanics manuals to touring books, expedition books, memoirs, and how-to tomes. Some of the travel books are detailed guides to specific rides, such as *Bicycling the Pacific Coast*, or John Nagiecki's *Road Biking Northern California*. Others deal more with the authors and their reactions to their trip, more journaling, less route detail.

When Anne Mustoe (*A Bike Ride*) started her ride, she couldn't even fix a flat tire and had never ridden a bike, yet she managed a solo journey of 16,000 km. Her book doesn't give roadside stops, but does tell how she did it.

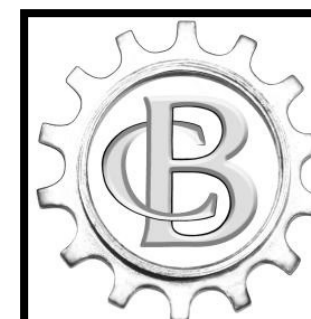
The ultimate bike trip has to be Kropp's (*My Everest Odyssey*). He cycled from Sweden to Mt. Everest completely self-supported carrying over 108 kg of stuff and actually summited Everest all on his own without oxygen. To top it off, he rode his bike back home to Sweden.

Combining the tour book and jour-

nal approach is "Bike ride with a twist: 8321 kilometres across Canada" by Janice Kenyon. Combining journal entries with specific mileages and stops, she writes of her trip across southern Canada striving to stay north of the border.

At the other end of the spectrum for those of us not quite so extreme are the how-to guides such as "Biking to work: a beginner's guide" by Rory McMullen.

What are your favorite cycling books? Drop us a line, and we'll run reviews in future issues.



**Bastion
Cycle**

Jeff Goerz, Owner

250-758-2453



Cycling on Gabriola

Micheal Bean

For cyclists, Gabriola Island is a perfect metaphor for the Protestant work ethic. It's the big mother telling you there'll be no dessert until you finish your broccoli.

Gabriola Island has hills. And those hills are alive with the sound of cyclists' screaming thighs. From the first lung scorching incline up from the ferry landing to the infamous Brickyard Hill, a spandex-splitting monster sloped at 18 percent-that's 18 feet up for every 100 feet travelled horizontally -- Gabriola thrives on exacting a certain penance from the seeker of cycling enlightenment.

But what's a pedaling purgatory

without a glimpse of paradise. For the spiritually motivated, the natural surroundings are unparalleled and for those of a more secular nature, you can be sure there's a pub and a frothy pint at the end of virtually path you choose to follow.

If you're eager to challenge the island and yourself, there are ways to cheat the devil as you circumnavigate the island's 35 kilometers or so.

The island's ring road is divided into North Road and South Road, and the place to make your choice of route is about 500 metres up from the ferry landing. Here's a tip: stick to your right and take South Road. This way means you'll face the Brickyard Hill from the

good end, and you can charge downhill to Degnen Bay, and thence to Silva Bay for a spot of lunch before returning to the ferry on the somewhat less challenging North Road.

For those not ready for the full conversion, try taking a left on Taylor Bay Road, about 200 meters up from the ferry for a truncated trip that offers a visit to Twin Beaches Park, and an easier pedal to Clark Bay and a stunning view of Entrance Island. And, of course, the obligatory pub, should you have a need.

For further information, visit gabriolaislandbc.com or gabriolaisland.org