

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Besides riding your bike, getting your friends to join People Power is the most important thing that you can do to promote sensible transportation in our county. State Assembly Member John Laird recently joined People Power, as did Dan Haifley (former head of Save Our Shores).

Our current membership of more than 350 people includes baker Peter Beckmann, New Leaf owner Rex Stewart, chef Jim Denevan, and Geoffrey Dunn of Community Television. Current Santa Cruz Mayor Mike Rotkin is a dues paying member, as are past mayors Bruce Van Allen, Katherine Beiers, Christopher Krohn, Scott Kennedy, Don Lane, and Celia Scott.

We are aiming to increase our paid membership base by 100 new members by the end of the year. You can help us meet this goal by talking to your friends and neighbors and encouraging them to join People Power. ■

Support for the Rail Trail

To start building the Rail Trail legally next year, we need to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars. Two "Golden Spikes" have already stepped up:

New Leaf Markets has, for the 3rd year in a row, come through with \$4,000. So much support for our trail comes from New Leaf that the least we can do is to shop there.

The Agape Foundation has awarded us a \$2,000 grant for the trail. The Foundation's purpose is "to fund nonviolent social change organizations committed to peace and justice issues. Unlike social services that aid and assist individuals, social change efforts confront the root causes of social problems by challenging the responsible systems and institutions." We couldn't be more pleased to receive support from such a revolutionary organization.

If you know anyone who can afford a tax deductible donation as a Founder (\$500) or Golden Spike (\$3,000), have them contact Micah at 425-0665. ■

JUMBO JETS A surprising result of the obesity epidemic: Because of the increasing weight of Americans—an average gain of about 10 lbs. per person during the past decade—U.S. airplanes consumed an extra 350 million gallons

of jet fuel in 2000, CDC researchers recently estimated. That costs the financially strapped airline industry \$275 million a year. And the extra fuel results in the release of about 3.8 million tons of carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas) and other pollutants

— UC Berkeley Wellness Letter (May, 2005)

PEOPLE POWER!

Become a **People Power** member and make Santa Cruz a better place to ride and walk. We offer a subscription to our quarterly newsletter, use of the HUB library, and opportunities to get involved in local activism.

- \$100 **Velorutinary** (includes free T-shirt)
- \$ 50 **Hub Spoke**
- \$ 35 **Family or Household**
- \$ 25 **Individual**
- \$ 15 **Students/Under-employed**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ FAX _____

EMAIL _____

Make checks payable to **People Power** and mail to:
224 Walnut Ave., Suite C, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

People Power/SCCCC
 224 Walnut Ave., Suite C
 Santa Cruz, CA 95060

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People Power! UPDATE is published by People Power. Our goal is to educate people and politicians about the advantages of a transportation system less dependent on the automobile. A special thanks to all our volunteers.

PEOPLE POWER! UPDATE

SANTA CRUZ CYCLING NEWS

ISSUE 46

SPRING/SUMMER 2005

Why Doesn't Miles Have a Train and Trail?

With **60,000** people in Santa Cruz County living within a ten minute walk of the Union Pacific corridor, a Rail-With-Trail facility simply makes sense. Studies show that 2/3 of the trips that people make from these homes are less than 5 miles, and 1/3 are less than 3 miles. The trail would make shorter trips do-able by foot or on bicycle, while longer trips could be done by train.

History

In 1989, just about the time Miles Payton (pictured on right) was born, California voters authorized Proposition 116 as a way to raise and allocate funds for commuter rail service. Since that time, \$11 million has been available for Santa Cruz County to jumpstart rail transportation.

In March, 2004, a public hearing was held regarding the acceptance of Prop 116 funds for buying the corridor. This produced the largest positive response ever for a county transportation project. Despite public support for the corridor purchase, the county government's commitment to the train and trail seemed half-hearted. After the defeat of Measure J in November, 2004, this situation began to change considerably.

Even so, we continue to be told that the train isn't "economically feasible," even though a recent study commissioned by the city of Santa Cruz identifies self-propelled trains that cost



People Power Intern Miles Payton looks for his trail.

about the same to operate as buses. In the same breath we hear that trains are too noisy for a handful of neighbors. Before the defeat of Measure J, we were told that in order to have a long-term possibility for train or trail, we would have to support a \$490 million plan to widen Highway 1.

How can an incremental, sensible, low-pollution, technically-feasible and popular plan to increase mobility for the people of this county be getting such hysterical resistance? Why doesn't Miles have his train and trail?

(continued on page 2)

Imagine Highway 9 Without Cars...

Highway 9 was poorly designed to begin with. It is a curvy, narrow, and dangerous road, suffering from landslides on a regular basis and is expensive to maintain.

For these reasons, Cal-Trans would be happy to close the middle section of Highway 9 to automobiles at Henry Cowell State Park, where there are no homes. This would provide a wonderful opportunity to create a few miles of bicycle/horse/pedestrian paths.

Though Cal-Trans realizes that closing this particular section of Highway 9 makes sense, there is perceived political support to keep it open...so they do. Year after year, Cal-Trans spends our tax dollars to keep this section of road open that should have been closed years ago.

The sensible alternative for motorists to get between Santa Cruz and communities like Felton and Boulder Creek is

Graham Hill Road, which is much straighter and is not subject to frequent landslides.

Let's persuade Cal-Trans to do the right thing for the environment, for recreation, for local businesses, and to save our tax dollars. If we draft a closure plan and demonstrate support for the plan, we can close Highway 9 to through automobile traffic. Imagine cruising along on your bike or strolling through the redwoods overlooking the San Lorenzo River, with no danger of being hit by a car and no automobile noise or fumes. Having such a recreational amenity would also benefit area residents and businesses.

If you can help with the **Imagine Highway 9 Without Cars** campaign, please contact Micah at 227-4772 or Karsten at 359-5931.

WE CAN DO THIS! ■

Train and Trail

(continued from front page)

Today's Reason—SCARRED in Aptos

In early April, 2005, People Power and Friends of the Rail Trail received permission from the California office of Union Pacific (UP) to run a one-day demonstration train on May 22nd, from Santa Cruz to Watsonville. Roaring Camp Railroads was willing to run the train for free. The city councils of Watsonville, Capitola, and Santa Cruz all passed resolutions in favor of the event. Everything was in place for a fun community event to support Rail and Trail Day.

At the end of April, two members of Santa Cruz Coalition Against Recreational Rail (SCARRED)—a group of about 20 people who own property along the right of way in the Aptos area—contacted the UP offices in Nebraska and threatened to lie on the tracks to stop the May 22nd train. UP, which had little to gain from the event and eschews controversy, withdrew their permission.

Derailed But Not Defeated

While the neighbors were able to rain on our parade, the fact is that, every day, we are closer to our train and trail. The support of resolutions from the three cities represents a major step forward, and, since the defeat of Measure J, there's been a real turnaround in the county's efforts to buy the corridor. Plans are moving ahead for purchase by the end of 2005, after which, obstructionist threats can be met with democratic resistance. More encouraging news is that our membership drive and fundraising efforts are on schedule. *(See article on back page.)*

While we await the corridor purchase, qualified individuals are coming forward to begin design of the trail, including local engineering firm Mesiti-Miller, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, and Alta Planning. (Alta's definitive guide to Rails-With-Trails facilities is available at the Hub library.) Two train operators—Roaring Camp and Sierra Pacific—have become reliable allies in pushing for train transportation. Roaring Camp is so excited about showing the community the potential for trains that on May 22nd they have donated train service along the tracks that they own between Santa Cruz and Felton to replace the original train event. *(See schedule on this page for more information on Rail & Trail Day.)*

Lessons Learned

After all is said and done, what recent events have showed us is that if a small group of talented, committed people could hold our public space hostage and impede efforts to create the infrastructure for safe and healthy modes of transportation, then a larger group of equally talented and committed people can create a human-scale world in which our environment and personal well-being are valued and respected.

SCARRED member Sylvia Previtali has said, "Passenger rail represents the end of life as we know it." We couldn't agree more. ■

BIKE WEEK 2005

May 15th–22nd is Bike to Work and School Week and we have a lot to celebrate. Join thousands of cyclists for a week of community fun and free breakfast on Bike to Work Day, Thursday, May 19th. Then, end the week with Rail & Trail Day, Sunday, May 22nd. We'll be organizing a fun train and bike ride, followed by a visionary presentation on Rails-With-Trails facilities. *(See insert for Bike Week schedule of events.)*

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
RAIL & TRAIL DAY
Sunday, May 22, 2005

"DETOUR TRAIN" AND BIKE RIDE

Ride the historic Roaring Camp train to and from Felton -OR- bring your bike on the train to Felton and bike back on Hwy 9.

- Depart from Santa Cruz: 10:30 A.M. from Depot Park (101 Washington St. two blocks up from the Wharf).
- Return from Roaring Camp in Felton via train or bike: 11:30 A.M.
- **TICKETS:** \$3 each way; on sale starting May 9th. All proceeds go to Friends of the Rail Trail. (Children under 12 ride free but need a ticket.)

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

SANTA CRUZ: Another Bike Shop, Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce, The Bicycle Trip, **APTOS:** Aptos Natural, **CAPITOLA:** Super Silver, **WATSONVILLE:** Trey's True Wheel.

**** Alternative transportation donated **
by Roaring Camp Railroads.**

RAILS-WITH-TRAILS PRESENTATION

Featuring two of the foremost experts on Rails-With-Trails facilities: **LAURA COHEN**, director of the Rails to Trails Western Regional Office.

MICHAEL JONES, principle planner for Alta Planning and Design.

- 2 P.M. in the Depot Park Freight Building, 101 Washington St.

BBQ/PARTY TO CELEBRATE BIKE WEEK

Depot Park Freight Building, 101 Washington St.

Food for sale from 12:30 P.M.–6 P.M.

* * * * *

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO VOLUNTEER, CONTACT:

Micah at 425-0665 or Piet at 423-9569, x127.

SPONSORED BY:

People Power—www.peoplepowersc.org

Bike to Work—www.bike2work.com

Friends of the Rail Trail—www.santacruztrail.org

- STAY INVOLVED -

Raising Money for People Power through New Leaf Markets

In May, New Leaf Markets will decide who will get money from their Envirotokens program (up to \$300/month—enough to cover our rent) and People Power is on the ballot.

Vote once at each store for your favorite six organizations sometime during May, and get your friends to vote too. This is an excellent source of ongoing funds to support People Power.

Reach Out to Cyclists on Bike to Work Day

Also, on Bike to Work Day (May 19th) thousands of folks will ride their bicycles to breakfast sites throughout the county. The day is an incredible opportunity to reach out to sympathetic and interested cyclists, most of whom are not members of People Power. Volunteers are needed to tell cyclists about People Power, rally support for projects like the rail trail, and sell tickets for the May 22nd train. Shifts are available from 6:30–9:30 AM or from 4–7 PM, in front of the New Leaf Markets. Please call Micah at 425-0665 to sign up.

Hub Board Elections

The Hub's board election is fast approaching, and you can be a Director. This is an exciting time for the Board of Directors. The Hub is soon to be remade at a new location, and there is a lot of work to be done. There is room for folks that care about and utilize the Hub to play a role at its foundations, help shape our community center, and keep it going.

Nominations are due at The Hub (224 Walnut St. Santa Cruz, 95060) by June 10th, 2005. Fill out the information below and return it to the Hub. Cast your ballot, in person, at the Hub between June 13th and June 17th. Votes will be counted June 17th, 5PM.

Name: _____

Nomination: _____

(you may nominate yourself, please)

Special areas of interest, skills, etc.: _____

Know What's Going On

Bookmark the People Power website and visit often to stay up-to-date on the latest news, community events, and action alerts. <www.peoplepowersc.org>

Highway 1 Sneak Lanes

Despite a clear defeat at the polls, a slim majority of the County's RTC continues to try to waste taxpayer money on widening Highway 1. Their latest plan involves creating "merge lanes" between Morrissey and Soquel. A request has been made to US representative Sam Farr to acquire federal funds to support the project. We call it the "sneak lane project."

On April 22, representatives from People Power and the Campaign for Sensible Transportation met with Farr who assured us that there would be an "open process showing public support for the project" before he delivers any money for the lanes.

Two weeks later People Power and the Campaign turned in 1,100 petition signatures to Congressman Farr and the RTC asking them to pull the plug on the sneak lanes and instead use scarce federal funding on improvements with clear community consensus such as pedestrian bridges over Highway 1. ■

Bike Lanes on the Drawing Board

Plans for the revitalized Beach Street Bike Lanes will go to bid early in June with construction scheduled for the Fall. The Public Works Department's next design project is the Soquel bike lanes. The Department is looking to hire someone with AutoCad expertise to help draw up plans. If you know of anyone, have them contact Public Works at 420 5187. ■

People Power! T-shirt



"peaceful transportation, practical revolution"
sums up People Power's 13-year tradition.

Our shirts are made from 100% tough, preshrunk, organic cotton and cost \$15. Add \$3 for home delivery by PedX in the Santa Cruz area. Sizes: S-M-L-XL.

Call People Power, at 425-0665 to order yours.