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PEOPLE O&P POWER! UPDATE

SANTA CRUZ CYCLING NEWS

ISSUE 64

SPRING 2010

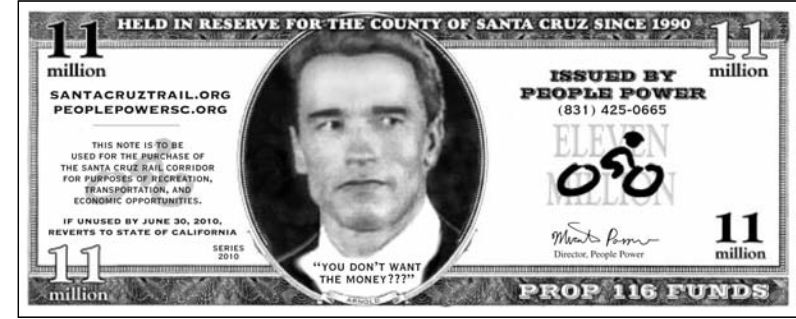
TRAIN TRIP TO SACRAMENTO TO REQUEST FUNDS FOR RAIL PURCHASE

Support for public ownership of the Santa Cruz Branch Line is at an all-time high, with endorsements from a broad array of folks: Barry Swenson Builders, the Sierra Club, the Campaign for Sensible Transportation, the Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce, the City of Capitola, Friends of the State Parks, Supervisor Tony Campos and the Electrical Workers, to name just a few. All of these groups and two dozen others were represented at a stakeholders meeting on April 8th, called by Supervisor John Leopold.

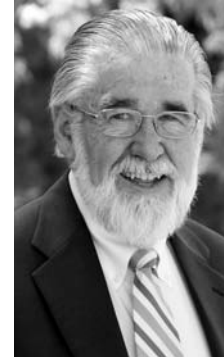
People Power and Ecology Action both donated staff time to work with Friends of the Rail Trail volunteers to make it a success. At the meeting, Supervisors Neal Coonerty and Tony Campos spoke in favor of the purchase, as did Santa Cruz Councilmembers Don Lane and Lynn Robinson, and Capitola's Dennis Norton.

On April 14th, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCRTC) held a public hearing for people to weigh in on the purchase. More than 150 people *(continued on page 4)*

Santa Cruz taxpayers have been paying for rail projects (Proposition 116 funds) in our county since 1990. We have accrued \$11 million, the majority of what is needed for the purchase of the branch line. Due to dysfunctional politics, we are one of the last counties to apply for these funds. The money cannot be used for anything else and on June 30th, it reverts back to the state. Join us in Sacramento on May 19th to ask for our money.



JUNE ELECTION ENDORSEMENT: Neal Coonerty for Supervisor



The upcoming June 8th election will include many important issues at local, state and national levels. Based on his candidate survey responses and on his past record, People Power is endorsing Neal Coonerty for 3rd Supervisorial District of Santa Cruz County, which includes the entire City of Santa Cruz.

With regard to sensible transportation, Neal has had a 100% positive voting record during his last four years on the Board of Supervisors and on the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC). He voted repeatedly in favor of the rail purchase, and publicly supported Broadway-Brommer. Neal voted for a countywide bike route signage network despite staff opposition and reasserted his opposition to highway widening in his survey, promising "to vote against it at the RTC."

At times, Neal went beyond just voting and joined with People Power to help make change. When Union Pacific threatened to ticket people walking along the rail corridor, Neal joined us on a rainy day for a public walk on the tracks. More recently, Neal has joined us in meetings with Bill Monning and Joe Simitian to lobby for their help with the rail line purchase.

While entirely responsive and helpful, we'd like to see Neal take even more leadership around transportation issues, as has fellow supervisor John Leopold. And we'd very much like to see him be more publicly critical of highway widening.

There is clearly more work for us to do together towards changing and improving transportation in Santa Cruz County. Neal Coonerty has proven himself to be a very dependable ally with an excellent voting record. We hope you'll vote for him and also consider working for his campaign.

To learn more, visit (www.nealcoonertyforsupervisor.com) or call (831) 295-1015. A majority win for Neal in June will save our whole community the time and expense of a November runoff. ■

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.

I would like to volunteer. Please contact me.
 I am a new member. I am renewing my membership.
 NAME _____
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 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 HOME PHONE _____ EMAIL _____
 \$200 Business Member includes ad (tax deductible—call to arrange.)
 \$100 Velocitarian includes t-shirt (tax deductible—call to arrange.)
 \$50 Hub Spoke includes t-shirt
 \$40 Family or Household
 \$30 Individual
 \$20 Underemployed (Work exchange available. Call to arrange.)

Join People Power to make Santa Cruz a better place to ride and walk. Membership includes: subscription to our quarterly newsletter, email Action Alerts, and volunteer opportunities. Make checks payable to People Power and mail to:

703 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95060

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Santa Cruz, CA 95060

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A Step Back for King Street Bike Safety

— Rick Longinotti

At their meeting on April 20, the City Council retreated from their commitment of June, 2009, to fund a study of how to reduce auto traffic on King Street so that the street can be made safer for bicyclists. The study is needed because any plan to divert auto through-traffic from King needs to prevent cut-through traffic onto other neighborhood streets.

People Power members wanted the council to include the two (funded) intersection expansion projects at Bay and Mission and at King at Mission as part of the King Street study, since, if built, they would obviously effect traffic volumes and safety on King Street. (The King–Mission expansion would put more cars on King St. by creating a new turn lane onto King. The Bay–Mission expansion needs to be evaluated for bike and pedestrian safety.) The council allowed these intersection projects to move forward separately, while the King Street study was de-funded. Councilman Don Lane indicated he may bring the King Street study back for consideration at the council's June budget hearing.

The King Street Study was the only project that council members removed from the list of funded projects in the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). People Power members also wanted the Highway 1 Bridge widening over the San Lorenzo River to be removed from the list. This project is slated to receive \$500K in City Redevelopment Agency money in order to attract State funding. People Power members pointed out that widening Highway 1 to increase auto capacity is inconsistent with the City Council's stated climate action goals. No council member spoke to that issue.

People Power also advocated for removal of the proposed 5-story downtown garage from the CIP, at least until trip-reduction incentives such as low cost bus passes and car-sharing are instituted downtown. No council members spoke about the garage or a trip-reduction program.

Residents of the King Street/north-of-Mission neighborhood are meeting with People Power members to plan next steps for a bike-safe King Street. If we can't get city funding for the study, we may embark on fund raising to do a study ourselves, with the help of CSU Monterey Bay students.

If you'd like more information about King Street, or would like to get involved—especially if you live in the north-of-Mission neighborhood—contact Rick at 425-0341.

NOTE: People Power will meet to make endorsements for City Council candidates running in the November election. Members are invited to attend. Contact Micah at 425-0665 for details about the meeting and to volunteer on candidate campaigns. ■

People Power Members to Run for City Council

November is still many months away, but candidates are already starting their campaigns for city council. We want to offer a little introduction to three candidates who are People Power members, though we are not yet making any official endorsements.

DAVID FOSTER has been a People Power member for many years. He rides his recumbent bike to Capitola where he works on sustainable housing and infill development. David lives just off King Street and is on record in support of the boulevard study.

RON POMERANTZ is a longtime People Power member. Since retiring last year he has been extremely active in transportation politics. He currently serves on the board of Friends of the Rail Trail and the Campaign for Sensible Transportation and rides his bicycle to all the meetings.

DAVID TERRAZAS serves as chair of the City's Transportation Commission and has been working closely with People Power to create more citizen direction on transportation issues. The most contentious issue with staff continues to be plans for King Street, where David has been a clear ally.

Check back for more information on these and other candidates and our endorsements in our September election issue. ■

PEOPLE POWER'S 3rd Annual



Bicycle Bakery Tour

Sunday, June 6th, 9AM–2PM

\$20–\$50 sliding scale /\$15 min. for People Power members
(Riders will get a travel mug, courtesy of Caffe Pergolesi.)

A leisurely 18-mile ride to some of the best local artisan bakeries to sample sweet and savory delicacies. Host bakeries include **Beckmann's, Staff of Life, Gayle's** and **The Farm**.

Share baked goods, coffee, and tea while enjoying some new routes along the way. **Ride limited to 50 – get your tickets early, as we expect to sell out.**

Thanks to the generosity of participating bakeries and our cup sponsor, all proceeds will go to support the work of People Power. Send your payment to **703 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95060** to get your ticket today!

Safer Roundabouts

— Micah Posner

Roundabouts are a type of intersection in which vehicles move slowly in a circular direction around a central point while making right turns off the circle to access connecting streets. Common in many parts of the world, Santa Cruz plans to install roundabouts to move more traffic at two busy intersections: Center and Pacific (near Depot Park) and at Beach and Pacific (at the wharf).

Opinions among our members range from “basically a good idea” to “firmly opposed.” Earlier this year, People Power's Steering Committee decided to focus on making sure that these facilities were as safe as possible for cyclists and pedestrians, rather than opposing them.

When People Power member Reed Searle brought to my attention that the roundabout at Center and Pacific would force cyclists coming from the west (on the contra-flow bike path) to dismount and become pedestrians, we went to a City Council meeting with a few other cyclists and pedestrian advocate Debbie Bulger. City staff was directed to meet with us and address our concerns.

Last December, Public Works Assistant Director Chris Schneider met with us and presented provisional plans. Our consensus was that contra-flow lanes at both intersections needed to enter directly into the roundabout and that signage at all approaches to the roundabout notify drivers that “Cyclists may use full lane.” Since cars don't stop to turn right as they exit off a roundabout, cycling to the right of cars at an exit point is quite dangerous. However, the slow speeds in the roundabouts make them good for cyclists to take the full lane.

I heard nothing from Public Works until reading an email on April 13 from People Power member Rick Hyman that the revised roundabout design was on the City Council agenda in TWO HOURS. I reviewed the agenda on-line only to find that though the contra-flow lanes had been addressed, the only signs planned were to say “share the road”—totally inadequate. Concerned that the Council wouldn't understand that the signs we asked for already exist in a many spots in Santa Cruz, People Power intern Paul Hempstead went out to take pictures of the signs and had them printed at Bay Photo. Photos in hand, Paul met me and a few other concerned members, at city hall. Our pictures were worth a thousand words. The council directed staff to install “Cyclists may use full lane” signs as soon as possible upon the completion of the project.

Thanks to a handful of People Power members, a great intern, and a cooperative council, the roundabouts got safer for cyclists. My staff time was also an important piece of the solution. If we keep on working together, sharing information, concerns, visions, and money for staff, we can keep making Santa Cruz safer for cyclists. ■



RIDE THE TRAIN, SUPPORT THE TRAIL!

Take your bike on the Roaring Camp Train from Santa Cruz to Felton, then ride together down Highway 9 with CHP escort, back to Santa Cruz.

Adults: \$10 / Children: \$5 (12 and under)

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT

SANTA CRUZ: Another Bike Shop, People Power, The Bike Church, Ecology Action, Spokesman Bikes, The Bicycle Trip **APTOS:** Family Cycling Center
FELTON: The White Raven Bakery **WATSONVILLE:** Watsonville Cyclery

MEET AT DEPOT PARK

(located at the far west end of Pacific Avenue)

8:00 – 9:00 A.M. BIKE RODEO – Kids Bicycle Safety Skills
Obstacle Course (for kids 4 – 12)
9:00 A.M. Music, information, food and train loading begins
10:00 A.M. Train departs for Roaring Camp
1:30 P.M. Ride finishes at Depot Park / Fun and Fitness Fair

Children 7 years and under must be accompanied by their parent and ride in a kid's seat, trailer, or attached seat/wheel.
HELMETS ARE REQUIRED.

After the ride, come back to Depot Park

for the FUN AND FITNESS FAIR

11:30 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

RAIL & TRAIL DAY SPONSORS: People Power (peoplepowersc.org), Friends of the Rail Trail (santacruzrail.org), Bike to Work (bike2work.com), Santa Cruz County Cycling Club (santacruzcountycycling.org), The Bike Dojo (thebikedojo.com)

FUN AND FITNESS FAIR SPONSORS: New Leaf, Bike Trip, Barry Swenson Builder, Two Hip, Amgen Tour of California-Santa Cruz, DJ Jon of Classified Sound

For more information or to volunteer, go to:

www.bike2work.com
tourofcalifornia-santacruz.com or
www.peoplepowersc.com, or call 425-0665.

BIKE WEEK 2010

MAY 9TH – 16TH

Bike to Work/School Day is Thursday, May 13th

Ecology Action is proud to host the 23rd Annual Santa Cruz County Bike Week. The 2010 Spring Bike to Work/School Day events are expected to attract over 5,000 participants!

The biggest Bike Week event is Bike to Work/School Day on Thursday, May 13th. Cyclists can enjoy free breakfast at 16 locations throughout the County. Visit www.bike2work.com to find the location nearest (or furthest) you.

On Saturday May 15, Ecology Action will partner with local organizers of the Amgen Tour, People Power, Santa Cruz County Cycling Club, and Friends of the Rail/Trail to host the 6th Annual Rail and Trail Day. Participants will take the Roaring Camp Railroad train to Felton (with their bikes on board) and enjoy a CHP-escorted ride down scenic Highway 9. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. This year the ride will finish at the Fun and Fitness Festival at Depot Park. Ticket vendor locations and details available at www.peoplepowersc.org or www.bike2work.com.

And, last but not least, Santa Cruz will be hosting the Amgen Tour of California, Stage 3 Finish on Tuesday, May 18, drawing record levels of participation. At the finish, bike valet parking will be provided by People Power. For more information, visit www.tourofcalifornia-santacruz.com.

In recognition of the growing number of bicycle-related events taking place in May, we are now designating it "Bike Month!" (Visit www.bike2work.com or Bike2work Santa Cruz on Facebook to see a Bike Month calendar of events.) ■



Stage 3 Finish, May 18th in Santa Cruz
www.tourofcalifornia-santacruz.com

UPCOMING CLASSES AT THE BIKE CHURCH

All events are free (donations accepted)

Hands-on learning in a supportive environment. No prior experience necessary! For more information about classes or volunteering, send email to bikechurch@santacruzhub.org.

INTRO TO BIKES, MAINTENANCE, AND THE BIKE CHURCH

Facilitator: Bike Church mechanics

Saturdays: May 15, June 19, July 17, Aug 21. **Time:** 11AM-2PM.

PLEASE BE ON TIME. A practical overview of the bicycle. Covers basic bike anatomy and function. Emphasis on safety. Includes hands-on fix-it time and introduction to our shop for newcomers.

BUILD A BIKE WHEEL / Facilitator: Eleanor

Sundays: May 9, June 13, July 11, Aug 8. **Time:** noon-3PM.

PLEASE BE ON TIME. A hub + a rim + some spokes = a bicycle wheel! Step-by-step instruction. Buy the materials (\$20-\$30) and keep your wheel, or build a wheel to donate to the Bike Church.

KID'S DAY AT THE BIKE CHURCH

Facilitator: Bike Church mechanics

Saturdays: May 1, June 5, July 3, Aug 21. **Time:** 11AM-2PM

DROP IN. A time for youth to take over our shop and learn about bikes and tools. Parents/adult companions welcome. We also offer free bikes to kids who need them. Ask a mechanic for details.

WOMEN/TRANSGENDER/FEM BIKE WORKSHOP (WTF!)

Facilitators: Ann, B, Eleanor, Emily, and/or Sophia

Sundays: May 2 & 16, June 6, July 4 & 18, Aug 8 & 15.

Time: noon-3PM.

DROP IN. Bike maintenance has traditionally been male-dominated. Our goal is to help individuals gain knowledge and confidence working on their bikes and cycling. We provide safe space for women and other gender minorities to work on their bikes and learn new skills. Taught by women/queer mechanics.

WTF! MONTHLY GROUP BIKE RIDE (Leaves from the Bike Church)

Sundays: May 5, June 6, July 4, Aug 1.

Time: Starts at 3PM. Social, mellow ride with all ages and experience levels welcome. Aim is to encourage more women, trans, and fem folks to ride while having fun and building community.

VOLUNTEER AND SHOP TIME

Facilitators: Bike Church Mechanics

Wednesdays: May 12 & 26, June 9, July 7 & 28, Aug 11 & 25.

Time: 7:30PM – 9:30PM. **PLEASE BE ON TIME if you are a first-time volunteer.** Want to learn how to become more involved in the Bike Church? A mechanic will welcome potential new volunteers to the shop and to our shared ideas about how to run it. Also a time for current volunteers to work on projects and get to know one another outside of busy open-shop hours.

703 Pacific Avenue (entrance on Spruce Street)
425-BIKE <http://bikechurch.santacruzhub.org>

Arana Gulch Delayed Yet Again—15 Years Is Apparently Not Long Enough

March 11th was to be the day the Arana Gulch Master Plan, including a multi-use path connecting Broadway and Brommer, got its final approval. But strange politics at the Coastal Commission produced further delay instead. A few weeks before the meeting the Coastal Commission staff produced an extensive report on the Master Plan and recommended its approval, including the path. They found that the City's proposed Master Plan would benefit the tarplant and would meet all the requirements of the Coastal Act. Their own biologist, the highly respected Dr. John Dixon, argued that without the Master Plan the tarplant faced a growing likelihood of extinction at Arana Gulch. Letters from the public to the Commission favored approval of the Master plan 9-to-1. The majority of public testimony at the Commission meeting also favored approval of the Plan, and included a lot of People Power members and Sierra Club members speaking in support.

But the Commission members had been privately lobbied in advance of the meeting by other Sierra Club members opposed to the plan, and four of the Commissioners simply repeated these lobbyists' arguments that, because the multi-use path serves a transportation purpose, it cannot also serve an interpretive purpose. The argument is nonsense—to qualify for funding, the path must be interpretive, but of course it can serve other functions as well, including transportation and handicapped access. The Commission has previously approved paths that served these functions (in Monterey Dunes and Sand City, for example), but neither precedent, law, common sense, or even their own staff could dissuade the four opponents. Four other Commissioners supported the Master Plan and their staff recommendation, while three Commissioners were absent from the meeting.

That left the outcome in the hands of one Commissioner: Santa Cruz County Supervisor Mark Stone. Had he voted "yes" to the City's

proposed Master Plan, it would have passed 5 to 4, the long fight would have been over, and the path would now be in final design and headed for construction. Instead of voting to approve the Plan and path, Mr. Stone chose to delay any decision by calling for study of an alternative route proposed at the last minute by some at the California Native Plant Society. He did not use the transportation vs. interpretive argument, but argued that the CNPS alternative (which would put more pavement in Arana Gulch, put the path closer to the tarplant, and would be a less direct route for cyclists) should be studied before any decision is made. So Stone, in league with the four who opposed any bike path (including the CNPS alternative), effectively blocked approval of the City's Master Plan.

The results of Mr. Stone's actions are clear: the City staff and the Commission staff must now study the alternative and come back to the Commission at some unspecified future meeting to report on their findings. That study is expected to take several months. Mr. Stone's intentions are less clear. He has argued that he saw the City's Plan was in trouble and stepped in to keep it from going down to defeat. That doesn't make sense, as Mr. Stone's positive vote would have seen the project approved. Moreover, Mr. Stone was the first of the commissioners to weigh in as the nine members discussed the proposal and he came out against the City's plan prior to any other Commissioner. The question is, was Mr. Stone attempting to kill the plan by delay (a tactic employed for 15 years now by those opposed to the bike path), or is he really going to lead the movement for a *viable* path once this alternative has been studied? People Power's definition of a viable path includes that it be a path without switchbacks or other features that would make it difficult to ride with a trailer, on a one-speed bike, or on a tandem, and that it can—without fail—be under construction within a couple of years of approval by the Commission.

The City staff and the Coastal Commission staff are now conducting the further study of the alternative, as they were directed to do. Then the issue will come back to the Commission in the next few months. If you want to see a bike path between Santa Cruz and Live Oak in the next few years, consider contacting Supervisor Mark Stone to ask him if he intends to champion a viable bike path between Broadway and Brommer.

Supervisor Mark Stone

701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

(831) 454-2200 / mark.stone@co.santa-cruz-ca.us

To help with this ongoing campaign, contact Charlie Dixon at wilda@cruzio.com or 426-3689. ■

New Leaf Envirotoken Balloting— People Power Needs Your Vote!



Every May, New Leaf Community Markets holds elections to choose organizations that will receive funds from their Envirotokens Program (10¢ for every bag you don't use).

People Power is on the ballot again and **we need your vote.** Please vote once at each New Leaf **during the month of May** and get your friends to vote, too!

Envirotokens are a major source of funding for us and are essential to covering People Power's operating expenses.

TRAIN TRIP TO SACRAMENTO TO REQUEST FUNDS FOR RAIL PURCHASE

(continued from page 1)

showed up, with all but three in support of the purchase. Many of those attending learned of the meeting from the flyers made and distributed in early April by People Power staff and volunteers.

NEXT STEPS. On Thursday morning, May 6th, the SCCRTC will meet at the Board of Supervisors' Chambers (701 Ocean St.) and vote on whether or not to purchase the corridor. If they approve the purchase, the request for funds then goes to the California Transportation Commission (CTC). We expect majority support from the SCCRTC, and we hope it's unanimous. This would make it clear to the CTC that this project has support throughout county. The public is welcome to attend the SCCRTC hearing, though comments will not be heard at that time. (The April 14th meeting was for public comment.)

Following SCCRTC approval, the next step towards finalizing the purchase is on May 19th, when the SCCRTC's request for funds will be heard by the California Transportation Commission. In past years this would be a simple procedural issue, as the funds have already been earmarked for the SCCRTC for this purpose. Unfortunately, with the State of California unable to meet all of its financial obligations, the result of this meeting is less clear.

It is also likely that a handful of opponents who continue to try to derail the project, will be at the meeting to try to raise spurious objections. People Power needs YOU to travel to Sacramento and show your support. Though only a few of us will actually speak at the CTC hearing, we will have t-shirts, buttons, or train hats to wear to make ourselves visible.

Please join us for a train ride to Sacramento on May 19th. In addition to attending the CTC meeting, we will likely visit Bill Monning and/or Joe Simitian's offices to thank them for their help and possibly ask them for last minute support in getting the funding approved. It will be a full, exciting, and interesting day that just could end in a public ownership of the rail corridor.

Call Micah at **425-0665** if you are interested. We will know the exact date and day of the meeting by around May 5th. If you have other commitments that prevent you from going to Sacramento, please consider making a donation (if you can afford it) to People Power, to be used to defray the cost of travel and other expenses.

Come Celebrate Santa Cruz's Newest Bike/Pedestrian Facility!



On Friday, May 7th the city will host an opening ceremony for the newly-completed San Lorenzo River / Hwy 1 underpass. Exact time TBA. Call Micah at 425-0665 for more details.

The good news about the rail purchase is that we are much of the way there. The SCCRTC staff are completely on board at this point and working hard to get the purchase done. Negotiations have basically been completed with Union Pacific and with shortline operator Sierra Northern (Sierra favors a trail and has been a real ally in the past.) While the amount of effort needed to make this purchase happen has been staggering, the result could be an amazing rail WITH trail facility for our children and grandchildren. It's been a tremendous team effort. Let's all keep pulling to get this rail line in public ownership. ■

2010
HUMAN
RACE

Join the HUMAN RACE Saturday, May 8th

Help raise much-needed money for People Power and the Hub for Sustainable Transportation.

Just request People Power and the Hub when you register at scvolunteercenter.org or **(831) 427-5075**.

Valet Bike Parkers Needed!

Call **(831) 425-0665** to sign up!
(Volunteers need not work the whole day.)

• Tuesday, May 18th, 10 A.M. – 4 P.M.

AMGEN Tour of California

Please consider helping us park approximately 1,000 bikes at the race finish on Beach Street (near Coconut Grove, with a great view of the finish line). We don't know how we are going to pull this off, but somehow people always step forward and make it happen. Sign up for one or more 3 hour shifts.

• Saturday, May 1st, 9 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

Tour of California pre-event at the Kelly's Parking area. We'll buy you a pastry!

• Saturday, May 8th, 7:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.

The Human Race.

Help make People Power visible to all these generous and community minded individuals raising money for their favorite cause or charity (including People Power).

OTHER VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Thursday, May 13th, shifts available throughout the day Bike to Work Day

Help represent People Power by tabling at one of several Bike to Work Day breakfast sites.

Volunteers also needed at New Leaf Market in the afternoon/evening of May 13th to help us get votes to receive Environment tokens for next year. (See *Environment Election* article on page 3 of this issue).

Reflections on the Rail Purchase and Green Ways

— Carolyn Jett

The bike movement will have no shortage of leaders and the rail corridor will be well used, if the youth involvement in the Rail Purchase hearing is any indication.

On April 14th, 25 students from Mission Hill Middle School, Santa Cruz High, Harbor High, Cypress High, Kirby Prep, and PCS attended the pre-hearing youth gathering. Students shared their thoughts on the impending purchase and the future of transportation, expressing hopes for a transportation corridor through the county that would give them the option of biking, walking, skating, or taking a train. They have a strong awareness of transportation's connection to climate change, and are frustrated by our auto-centric system. At the gathering we were honored by a visit from County Schools Superintendent Michael Watkins, who joined the party and commended the students for their involvement and concern.

The RTC commissioners generously allowed us to speak first at the hearing. "This is our future" said Raphie from Kirby Prep. Joya and Joshua lightened the mood with a skit demonstrating possibilities for safe travel and friendship along the rail corridor. Maxine from the Junior Cycling Club asked for a safer place to ride. Student speakers eloquently covered topics from safety to climate change and social inequality. Becca, from the Bike Church, shared her experiences working with foster youth, explaining how for those

with little family support, bikes and public transportation are essential to mobility and taking care of basic needs.

Middle schoolers expressed many reasons for wanting the rail and trail. Said one, "It would be great for people who are left out of driving, like kids, old people, and people with disabilities. They [could] take a train or trail and get where they needed to go."

As director of Green Ways to School, hearing young people so clearly express the priorities of the bike movement demonstrated the huge difference this program has made. I am so thankful to having been part of its beginnings and am also grateful for having had the opportunity to grow with the program, from a part-time job focusing on a handful of schools to a full-time position with many dedicated volunteers and students from six schools. I have wonderful memories of bike rides, classroom projects, and conversations. Green Ways to School has been one of the richest experiences of my life, and am eager to see it grow and change under the direction of Tawn Kennedy. I am very sad to leave the program and my community here, and look forward to more fun in the upcoming Bike Week, the youth ride to Monterey, and the rail purchase! The overnight Monterey ride will be Memorial Day weekend. It's open to any high school student, but space is limited. Email greenways@peoplepowersc.org or call Carolyn at **425-0667** to reserve a spot. ■

New Director for Green Ways to School

We are excited to introduce Tawn Kennedy, our next Green Ways to School director. He has already been working with Carolyn this spring to insure a smooth transition when she leaves in June. Tawn has been a sustainability educator in our locals schools for the past six years. He is from Santa Cruz, and an alumnus of both Santa Cruz High and UCSC's Community Studies program.

Greetings People Power members! I am thrilled to now be working with Green Ways to School and People Power. Carolyn and her allies have done an amazing job of building youth participation in the local bicycle movement, and I feel honored to continue with what they have created. My passion is supporting our youth in making healthy choices for themselves, their communities and for the environment. Since graduating from UCSC, I have worked with schools throughout the county supporting young people in their inspiration to care for our planet. Most recently, I've been the director of the Eco Teach program in Watsonville, training high school teens to teach environmental science to younger students. I have also worked extensively with the Education for Sustainable Living Program at UCSC and coordinated the Life Lab garden at De Laveaga Elementary School. Green Ways to School is in alignment with my values, my passions and my previous professional experience.

This spring has already been a dynamic introduction for me to People Power and Green Ways. I loved our Spring Break trip to the cement ship in Aptos. I was moved and amazed by the eloquence and energy of the youth speakers at the RTC's community hearing for the rail purchase. I am constantly impressed by the commitment and long term dedication of People Power and the larger bicycle community. I look forward to this journey, to continuing this important work, and to expanding Green Ways to School's impact throughout the county. ■

