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Sierra Foothills Cycling Club

Monthly Newsletter

December 2025

UPCOMING ENDURO RIDE

Folsom-Jed Sm BT to Discovery Park-Johnny Cash BT 65 miles

Another month and another great enduro planned!

Please note, this was changed from the usual Saturday day as we wanted to give the club members a day to recover after partying at the Holiday Mixer. -KIM

SUNDAY DECEMBER 14th

See the **CALENDAR** for all the details

RIDE SMART, RIDE SAFE ♂

Nothing beats a great ride when everyone feels confident and safe. By stepping up our awareness and looking out for one another, we can ensure that every SFCC ride is not only fun but also worry-free.

DECEMBER SAFETY CORNER

Winter riding can be great, but it comes with a few extra things to pay attention to. Please keep these in mind as we ride through December.

FOG AND VISIBILITY

- Expect reduced visibility on morning and evening rides.
- Use a bright front light and a rear light. Flashing is fine in normal conditions. Use steady mode in heavy fog.
- Wear clear or lightly tinted lenses (yellow, amber, or rose) to better see the road, potholes, and debris.
- Give yourself a little more space between wheels so you have time to react if someone brakes or swerves.

WET ROADS

- Assume painted lines, metal plates, manhole covers, bridge decks, leaves, and pine needles are slick when wet.
- Brake earlier and more gently than usual.
- Keep the bike more upright when braking. Avoid hard braking while you are leaned over in a corner.
- Be cautious with puddles. They can hide potholes, cracks, and debris.

COLD HANDS AND BIKE CONTROL

- Numb fingers make it harder to shift and brake.
- Wear full-finger gloves. On colder mornings, consider a thin liner glove under your regular gloves or a warmer winter glove.
- Keeping your core warm helps your hands and feet stay warmer. Use layers on your torso (base layer, jersey, vest or jacket).
- If your hands feel clumsy on the shifters or brakes, ease up on the pace until they warm back up.

GROUP RIDE SPACING

- Leave a little extra room between wheels, especially on descents and in corners.
- Call out hazards early and clearly so riders behind you have time to react.
- Hold smooth, predictable lines. Avoid sudden moves to dodge puddles or debris at the last second.
- When in doubt, slow it down. Getting everyone home safe matters more than speed.

Let's keep our winter rides safe, smooth, and enjoyable for everyone. In the meantime I'll be counting the days until Spring!!

Chain Reaction | Member Stories

Our Three-Week Fall Adventure: Mountain Roads, Desert Skies, and Everything in Between



Don and I love exploring in our Sprinter van—two wheels in the open air, a cozy home on four, and scenery that stirs the soul. Our favorite trip will probably always be the one from a couple of years ago: Twin Falls, Idaho Falls, Lamar Valley in Yellowstone, the Tetons, Missoula, and that magical no-cars ride on Going to the Sun Road in Glacier. From Coeur d’Alene, the warmth of eastern Washington, the Columbia Gorge, Bend, McKenzie Pass, and Crater Lake—also blissfully car-free—every day felt like a postcard.

Our recent three-week fall trip wasn’t quite the same kind of magic. Still, it was full of discoveries, beauty, surprises, and moments we’ll remember forever. **Moab, Monument, and a Dance with the Weather**

We began in Moab with three rides—along the Colorado River and, of course, one of our favorites: riding through Arches. From there, we continued to Colorado National Monument and camped at Saddlehorn. The nights were pitch-black except for the stars—the moon bright, the air still, and the red cliffs glowing even in darkness. Pure peace.

But travel requires fluidity, and rain was closing in fast. We headed east toward Gunnison. **Gunnison, Crested Butte & the Return of the Aspens**

We rode Ohio Creek Road, where we met some locals and ended up sharing miles with them. The elk herd we saw along the way was unforgettable—a hillside alive and moving.



In Crested Butte, the aspens were jaw-dropping in their fall colors. The town was as charming as ever, buzzing with creativity and mountain spirit. I hadn't been there since the 1970s when I came to ski—it felt surreal to return after so many decades. **Salida, Monarch Pass & Bighorn Sheep Before Breakfast**

From Crested Butte we drove over Monarch Pass—11,300 feet of “wow.” In East Salida, our campsite sat right on the Colorado River. One morning, I walked down and watched bighorn sheep scaling the mountainside like it was nothing. Rain kept us off the bikes that day, but we happily explored artsy, colorful downtown Salida.



Royal Gorge, Colorado Springs & a Detour to Pueblo

Next came Cañon City and the Royal Gorge Bridge. We stayed at Star Lite Vintage Resort—a quirky, adorable RV resort that perfectly matched the road-trip vibe. The riding wasn't the most scenic, but that's part of the journey: you take the good with the not-as-good.

Colorado Springs brought heavy winds and no campsite availability, so we drifted south to Pueblo and stayed at Arkansas Point Campground on the reservoir. We rode around the water and soaked up the calm, quiet scenery.



Back in Colorado Springs, we stopped at Garden of the Gods, slipping in just as the rain arrived. The drizzle made the red rocks glow—a short walk in moody weather that felt almost sacred. **Boulder Bliss & a Birthday in Rocky Mountain National Park**

We continued north to Boulder to visit our nephews at CU Boulder. Beautiful campus, great energy, and such a treat to be with family.

The riding around Boulder was some of the best of the entire trip: Lee Hill to Old Stage Road, Lefthand Canyon, and peaceful rural scenery backed by mountain ranges and endless greenery. It was one of my favorite rides of the whole adventure.

With a brief window of good weather, we dashed to Estes Park and rode into Rocky Mountain National Park. Crisp mountain air, rugged peaks, golden light—it was the perfect birthday ride: 25 miles, 2,000 feet of climbing, topping out at 9,000 feet. Not huge, but stunning. Afterward, we circled Lake Estes and wandered through the surprisingly lively town center. A perfect day from start to finish.

New Mexico: Beauty in the Sky, Less on the Road

New Mexico's landscapes held a different kind of beauty, but cycling-wise, it wasn't our favorite part of the trip. I love mountains and sparkling water—and we didn't find much of either. We also didn't feel especially welcomed as cyclists, and the routes weren't as scenic.

Still, there were highlights.

Taos was a designated dark-sky city, and the night sky was unbelievable—stars scattered like diamonds. Waking up to 28° made for the chilliest morning of the entire trip. The Rio Grande Gorge and Taos Pueblo were fascinating: living history, adobe architecture, and centuries of culture.

Santa Fe was a completely different energy—art, color, and creativity everywhere. I loved the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum. Our ride on part of the Santa Fe Century route was a mix: Highway 14 was busy and not particularly scenic, but Highway 41 was quiet and calmer. Forty miles, 2,400 feet of climbing, and big winds on the way back.



Albuquerque greeted us with a surprise classic car rally—loud, chaotic, entertaining. Our main ride was the Paseo del Bosque Trail. It was pleasant, though honestly, our bike trail in Sacramento is nicer. The Rio Grande not so “grande.”

Truth or Consequences had a remote, peaceful campsite—until the mosquitoes claimed it as their kingdom. By then, we were ready for a change. **Arizona: Catalina Mountains & McDowell Magic**

We arrived in Tucson and camped at Catalina State Park, which was absolutely lovely—spacious, peaceful, framed by the Santa Catalinas. The Huckleberry Loop ride wasn't our favorite: confusing, urban, and not especially scenic. Saguaro National Park was enjoyable, but we still haven't ridden Mt. Lemmon—next time!

The final stop was McDowell Mountain Regional Park near Scottsdale and Fountain Hills. The riding here was superb: Apache Junction, the Superstitions, Cave Creek, Carefree, and the McDowell loop—55 miles and 3,000 feet of climbing.

We also visited the Owl headquarters in Mesa and upgraded our van storage with new containers—small change, big improvement!

Best of all, we reconnected with longtime friends. The perfect way to end the trip **Already Planning the Next Adventure...**

Three weeks, thousands of miles, countless memories. Not every stop was perfect, but each one added something to the story. And that's the beauty of van life: the freedom to roam, the joy of discovery, and always the excitement of the next ride.

Time to start planning what comes next.

MERLO'S RIDE REELS

It's the ride, but funnier!

Watch on YouTube ►]

Groovy Ride up Bald Hill

Video by Larry Merlo



EZ RIDERS

Tired of rides that leave you wiped out? The **EZ Riders** are here for you! We're a fun new subgroup that loves the beauty of the Sierra Foothills—without all the grind. Our rides feature gentler hills, shorter climbs, and a pace that allows you to truly enjoy the view. Perfect for recovery days, busy weeks, or getting back in the saddle after time away. Come roll with us—easy miles, good company, and plenty of smiles guaranteed!

The rides are generally on Saturdays, but I can do Fridays or Sundays if people want. I also need ride leaders. I'm booked on 10/18, so without a backup, there will be no ride that day.

Thanks!
Jennifer Fink

2025 CLUB EVENTS

DECEMBER ENDURO
Sunday December 14th

MIKE'S ANNUAL BIRTHDAY ENDURO
Saturday January 10th
Comes with cake and coffee!
All the details are on the calendar

ANNUAL COOKIE RIDE
And Bake Off
Saturday February 24th

ANNUAL SUMMER CAMP PETALUMA
June 18-21

HOLIDAY MIXER AT VICTORY VELO

Save the date for the 2025 SFCC Holiday Mixer at Victory Velo Bike Shop.

What to bring: an appetizer or a dessert (think finger foods). Your club will provide water, sodas, cups, plates, and napkins. You're welcome to bring your favorite wine or spirit



Come hang out with your riding friends, talk bikes, and wrap up the year together off the saddle.

Where: [Victory Velo](#)

When: Friday, December 12th

Time: 6:00 pm

Please register by Wednesday, December 10th [HERE](#)

CLUB POLICY - GUESTS

Club Policy on Guests Joining Rides

We love seeing new faces at our rides and events, and we encourage you to invite guests to join us. It's a great way to grow our club and share the joy of cycling with others. To help ensure everyone understands our policy, here's a quick reminder about how guests can participate:

- **Guests are welcome to join us for one ride or event as a trial experience.**
- **To participate again, they'll need to become a club member.**

This policy allows us to give potential new members a chance to see what our club is all about while maintaining the benefits and support that come with membership.

If you have a guest who's interested in joining, feel free to share information about our membership process or direct them to the club's [website](#). We're always excited to welcome new members into our community!

Thank you for helping us grow our club and for making it such a welcoming club for cyclists of all levels.

LET'S GET SOCIAL!

Did you know we have an [SFCC Facebook](#) page? This is where **we post photos from rides and events**, share updates, and keep members informed about upcoming activities. It's a great way to stay connected, celebrate our rides, and engage with fellow members!

On our **Facebook** page, you can:

- See and share photos from club rides and events
- Stay updated on upcoming rides and special events
- Connect with other members and share your cycling experiences
- Get important club announcements and reminders

CLUB MERCH





SFCC has purchased club stickers that are free to all SFCC members. These are custom-made with the SFCC logo on them and are approximately 5" x 3.25"

The socks are \$10/pair. If you intend to buy some, please bring exact change.

deb2don.dh@gmail.com

Contact Deb if you're interested in ordering clothing.

Let's spread good vibes, not germs!



We all want to keep the group healthy and riding strong. If you're feeling off — coughing, sneezing, or running any symptoms — please take some time to rest and recover at home.

Even if you're starting to feel better but still not quite back to 100%, it's best to sit this one out so we don't pass anything around.

Let's be thoughtful and keep the good energy alive — no need to share germs when you can share a future ride instead! Your health and the health of everyone else matters most. And remember, your health is our priority!

Doug Jeffries

Skip Lauderbaugh

Mike Rubino

Jason Cox

BOARD MEMBERS

President | **Bob Peterson** | president@sfcyclists.org

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