

May 21, 2009



BIKE TO WORK DAY CAN HAPPEN EVERY DAY

I joined roughly 150,000 other Bay Area commuters for the 15th Annual [Bike to Work Day](#) on May 14. With participation up 36% this year, it is plain to see that local and regional efforts to improve conditions for cyclists are paying off.

For more and more people, biking has become a regular alternative to car travel. The benefits of cycling include a boost to riders' personal health, a reduction in greenhouse gases spewed into the air, and a decrease in traffic congestion.

My Bike to Work Day began at my house where I biked three miles to the County Government Center for a series of budget workshops. Along the way, I stopped at three different "energizer stations" set up by local nonprofits to encourage the day's riders. It was great to meet so many people committed to exploring a healthy commute alternative.

Along with those sponsored by [Breathe California](#) and the [Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition](#), I was excited to visit the energizer station set up by the [Friends of the Guadalupe River Park and Gardens](#). Over 200 people stopped by and had an opportunity to learn more about this group committed to improving our ever-expanding system of local trails. Trails are increasingly becoming part of local commutes, allowing cyclists to bypass traffic while soaking in the beauty of nature.



Watch a video that chronicles my Bike to Work Day experience and explains the benefits of bike commuting at <http://bicycling.511.org/btwd09.htm>.

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As I continued along my ride, I thought about how we need to encourage even more cycling. The personal benefits are quite apparent. Whereas the average car commuter spends about \$8,000 a year, the average bike commuter spends only \$700. The average person burns about 100 calories an hour sitting in the driver's seat of their car. The average bicyclist, on the other hand, can burn more than 800 calories in that same hour. Evidence is mounting that we must reduce greenhouse gas emissions to reverse detrimental changes to our climate.

Getting people out of cars goes a long way toward reducing harmful pollution. That is why the [Metropolitan Transportation Commission](#) explicitly included a climate action plan in its long-term transportation funding strategy.

The vision for “[Transportation 2035](#)” is to support a prosperous and globally competitive Bay Area economy, provide for a healthy and safe environment, and promote equitable mobility opportunities for all residents. Included in that plan will be \$2 billion to complete a 2,100-mile network of regional bike routes that include on-street routes and trails.

Cycling is also becoming a more viable way for people to segment their commute. Those with commutes too far to complete solely by bike are using public transit as part of their journey. We need to continue to support policies that encourage bike use as part of a commute, especially in conjunction with transit. For instance, I will personally oppose policies like the proposed fee to bring bicycles onto Caltrain.

On my way home, I stopped by the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition’s [Bike Away from Work Bash](#) at Plant 51 in downtown San José. It was a great opportunity to relax and learn about other people’s Bike to Work Day travels. Overall, people had very positive experiences. Many even wanted to make cycling part of their regular commute. I look forward to finding ways to help that become a reality for even more people in the future.

As always, I encourage you to contact my office if you have any concerns or are interested in additional information. You can reach me at 299-5040 or via e-mail at Supervisor.Yeager@bos.sccgov.org.

CUT COSTS AND IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT WITH GREEN BUSINESS CERTIFICATION

As part of the County’s efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of its operations, each individual County office is looking at ways to further conserve resources and reduce waste. In the spirit of those efforts, I am pleased to announce that my office at the County Government Center has recently earned certification from the [Bay Area Green Business Program](#). As a point of pride, I am excited mine is the first Supervisorial Board Office to reach this goal.

The Bay Area Green Business Program verifies that businesses meet higher standards of environmental performance. The program is coordinated by the Association of Bay Area Governments and implemented by Green Business Coordinators in nine participating counties.

Green Business Coordinators work with local businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations and find ways to take actions that reduce their environmental impact while saving money. The Green Business Program provides a checklist of practices that help businesses meet the standard.

Practices include buying only recycled-content paper, copying double-sided, cleaning with less toxic products, using efficient lighting systems, conserving water with low-flow toilets and faucet aerators, and more. Many businesses may already be doing enough to qualify.



Over 1,600 businesses and public agencies have been certified since 1997. A green business is a recognized environmental leader that strengthens its bottom line through operating efficiencies while improving the health of the workplace.

Businesses who wish to participate in the program can receive free advice and technical assistance. If your business would like to receive Green Business Program recognition, visit www.greenbiz.abag.ca.gov to learn more.

DEFENSIBLE SPACE CRUCIAL TO COMBATING WILDFIRES

Each May, the County and the State declare Wildfire Awareness Week to mark the beginning of the wildfire season. Already this season, we saw a large fire in Santa Barbara County and, luckily, a much smaller one within the borders of Santa Clara County.

Each year, wildfires cause damage to property and homes. Last year's Summit fire on our border with Santa Cruz County burned over 4,200 acres, destroyed 35 homes and 64 other structures, and cost over \$16 million to suppress. Three thousand firefighters and other personnel were involved in fighting this fire and 16 were injured.

As this year's fire season begins, we need to remember that each of us needs to be proactive in preventing wildfires by taking up-front measures that will minimize damages. One key to preventing a fire from sweeping through the rural areas of our county is creating defensible spaces around each building.

State law requires owners of homes in high-risk fire areas to create a buffer zone of 100 feet around the house to limit a fire's fuel. However, these regulations are not often enforced in Santa Clara County because fire officials don't have the resources to police each person's property. This is why it is so important to encourage people to clear dead weeds and dry branches on their own.

The [Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council](#) provides community outreach and education programs to teach residents about defensible space and runs chipping programs to reduce hazardous fuels in selected areas of the county. Last year, those efforts helped protect more than 2,100 homes, 6,300 people, and \$2.1 billion in property values.

Learn More:

Visit the Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council at <http://www.sccfiresafe.org/> to learn more about creating defensible space and other measures you can take to help prevent wildfires.

Preparedness is vital to weathering any disaster. A defensible space can make the difference between containing an out-of-control fire before it reaches a home and losing millions of dollars in fire-ravaged property.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FROM COUNTY YOUTH TASKFORCE

The [Santa Clara County Youth Task Force](#) (YTF) is offering scholarships of up to \$500 to seniors graduating high school this year and going on to college in the fall. The scholarship is need based (household income must not exceed \$75,000) and can be used for books, tuition, test fees or application costs.

Applicants must be residents of Santa Clara County and have a minimum 2.5 cumulative grade point average. The deadline to apply is May 29.

The YTF is an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors and Human Relations Commission and strives to provide youth with civic leadership opportunities and access to education. For additional information regarding the Youth Task Force scholarship, contact Raji Bains at 792-2315.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Congressman Mike Honda presents Small Business Resource Fair

What: This forum of resources and programs for small businesses includes guest presenters from the Small Business Administration, the Northern California Minority Business Enterprise Center, the Internal Revenue Service, and Silicon Valley SCORE.

When: May 28, from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Where: Quinlan Community Center, 10185 N. Stelling Rd., Cupertino

More Information: Visit <http://honda.house.gov/smallbusiness>.

Family Jammin' Jamboree

What: This is a free community event presented by the West San Carlos Neighborhood Business Association. The event features two movies starting at dusk (Madagascar 2 and Casablanca), live music by the Groove Kings, a rock climbing wall, a kids' bounce house, and community booths.

When: May 30 at 4 p.m.

Where: Corner of W. San Carlos St. and Shasta Ave., San José

More Information: Visit www.sancarlosstreet.com or call 947-8711.

Music in the Park

What: June 4 marks the first of 13 free outdoor concerts each Thursday until August 27 produced by the San José Downtown Association. This concert features AC/DC tribute band Long Gone Bon and Journey tribute band Evolution. Concerts are free to the general public.

When: June 4, from 5:30 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.

Where: Plaza de Cesar Chavez, Market and San Fernando Streets, San José

More Information: Call 279-1775 or visit www.sjdowntown.com.

Out N' About LGBT Night at the San José Rep

What: This event features an evening of delicious hors d'oeuvres and wine, followed by a showing of the Broadway smash "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" and behind-the-scenes fun. Cost is \$41 for balcony or \$48 for parterre.

When: June 5 at 7 p.m.

Where: San José Repertory Theatre, 101 Paseo de San Antonio, San José

More Information: Call 367-7255 or visit www.SJRep.com.

E-Waste Collection

What: County residents are invited to take advantage of this opportunity to bring any unwanted and outdated electronics such as computers, monitors, TVs, stereo equipment, copiers and cell phones that they have wanted to get rid of but haven't had the chance.

When: June 6, from 8 a. m to 2 p.m.

Where: 1555 Berger Drive, San José

More Information: Visit the Household Hazardous Waste Program website at www.hhw.org or call 299-7300.

