What’s New with Valley Spokesmen

This time of year, Valley Spokesmen is all about preparing for the Cinderella Classic. (See Page 2 for more info) Although we are busy with plans for Cinderella, we still manage to pack in as many rides as the weather will allow. We had to cancel several rides in the fall due to rain (we weren’t complaining), but have many more on the calendar for the upcoming months.

The winter schedule for the standing rides is shown at left, and many other rides of varying lengths and difficulty are scheduled. Weather is the biggest factor for both road and mountain bike riding, and rides may get cancelled at the last minute. Being a Valley Spokesmen member will allow you access to our list-server, enabling you to get the most up-to-date information on ride status. The Feather Pedals conditioning rides start in January, preparing women for Cinderella, but all riders are welcome! If you have been thinking of getting back on your bike after a hiatus, or for the first time, now is the time!
Valleyspokesmen.org

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QUARTERLY FEATURE

Cinderella Classic and Challenge

Thirty-eight years ago, when Valley Spokesmen was still a young club, long cycling events were dominated by men. Women played supporting roles, riding shorter rides and performing SAG duties with their kids in the backseat of their cars. In 1976, the Club president decided that something should be done to say “Thank you” to the women in the club for all of their support. To show their appreciation, the men created the Cinderella Classic, the oldest women-only cycling event in the country.

Although it was longer than many women rode at that time, the metric century length (100K/63mi) was decided upon and the planning began. The inaugural ride started at Dublin High School and had three checkpoints, one on the side of the road under the freeway overpass on Greenville Road! The snacks were limited to cookies, fruit and lemonade, with peanut butter and jelly sandwiches at the lunch stop. There were no porta-potties, and during the gas crisis of the late 70’s SAG was done on bicycles. The first Cinderella had 200 riders, then 300, 600, 800 and 1,000. At its largest, the Cinderella Classic put 2,800 riders on the road. Local permits now limit us to 2,500, resulting in sell-outs of the event. To accommodate the growing numbers, the event moved from Dublin High School to Camp Parks and eventually to its current location, the Alameda County Fairgrounds.

Cinderella has always been about having fun and accomplishing something great. The staggered start (after 7:30) prevents congestion on the roads, making the event safer and more comfortable for the less experienced riders. Riders of all ages and abilities are welcome. The youngest was a 5-year-old in a tow-behind, and the oldest (so far) was 72 years old. Women ride with their mothers, daughters, sisters and friends. Their male friends and partners help provide SAG and checkpoint manpower, as well as check-in and post-ride support. Because Cinderella is not a race, participants have all day to finish. When they do, they are met with an amazing meal and vendor show at the Alameda County Fairgrounds venue. As many as 50 vendors bring their bicycle gear and women’s cycling clothing to sell on-site.

Weather in early April is generally good and in all of its years there have been only three Cinderella Classics that were rained upon. The ride still goes on rain, hail (yes, we’ve had that too!) or sunshine - so make sure you come prepared! And don’t forget to thank all of the Prince Charmings who volunteer their time to make this the premier women’s event of the year!
Feather Pedals Conditioning Rides

The Feather Pedals branch of the Valley Spokesmen was formed in 2009 to specifically address the needs of women riders. Most participants are training for either the Cinderella Classic or Challenge ride, but many come just for the camaraderie and chance to improve their riding skills. Founder Karin Ball and her crew of Feather Pedal volunteers, including Sagarella, Dean Ball, and our Faithful Sweep, Charles Parrish, coordinate the rides and provide support.

The official Feather Pedals conditioning series starts on the third Saturday of January and is held every Saturday thereafter until Cinderella in April. The rides are designed to add length and fitness each week so that the riders will be well prepared for the big event. These popular rides, often attracting over 150 riders, are for men and women, so couples often ride together. Each FP ride has two lengths; Classic and Plus, although SAG support is only provided for the Classic routes. SAG and Route Leader volunteers are always needed!

Holiday Sights and Sounds Parade

On December 6th, VS members escorted Cinderella in her carriage through the streets of Livermore to advertise the upcoming Cinderella Classic. She was accompanied by the King and Queen, court jesters and soldiers! The participating riders decorated their bikes with lights for a special touch for this evening parade. Special thanks to everyone who got together to build the carriage and participate in this event. We’re already planning for next year’s parade!

Upcoming Valley Spokesmen Events

Feather Pedals Conditioning Rides
January 17 - April 11, 2015 - Every Saturday
Public Event
Start locations and times vary

Annual Mid-Winter Party
February 7, 2015
Members Only

Three Bears and Redwood Rd. Ride
February 8, 2015
Public Event

Quarterly Club Meeting
Wed. March 4, 2015
New Members Welcome
6:30 Pizza and 7pm Meeting
Round Table Pizza, Dublin

Clay Dunning’s Boot Camp Rides
Public event
March 22-27, 2015 - Daily

Your Valley Spokesmen Membership Application is available at www.valleyspokesmen.org
Join the Valley Spokesmen Bicycle Club and enjoy these benefits:

- Access to a wide variety of fun club events, tours, and post-ride socials.
- Discounts at many local bicycle shops with your VS Membership Card.
- Preferential registration to: The Cinderella Classic and TOSRD (Tour Of the Sacramento River Delta).
- Invitation to our Mid-Winter Party: dinner, dancing, camaraderie, awards and fun.
- Participation in our annual Paso Robles Tour to the Great Western Bicycle Rally, Shasta Weekend and other biking adventures.
- Online Membership enables access to "Member's Only" pages that provide a Directory of club members and other important information.
- Club members are eligible to join the VS Yahoo e-mail list to chat about club events, rides, receive latest ride updates, and other social activities. A great way to keep current!
- Feather Pedals - This branch of VS prepares new and experienced riders for the Cinderella Classic and Challenge events.

Who Are Valley Spokesmen?

Valley Spokesmen was founded in 1971 by a group of local cyclists interested in perpetuating the cycling culture and encouraging family cycling in the Tri-Valley. Forty-three years later the Club is a leader in bicycle advocacy, accessibility and miles ridden! Valley Spokesmen has group road and mountain bike rides 7 days a week for riders of all levels. Although most of the rides are in the East Bay, the Club does many rides a year throughout the Bay Area and Central Valley.

They are well known for the Cinderella Ride, catering to women riders. In April the club sponsors the annual Wente Road Race in Livermore, a premier cycling competition. In the fall the Tour of the Sacramento River Delta provides a weekend ride to experience the seldom seen (for many) beauties of the Delta. Other events include a ride to Paso Robles for the Great Western Bike Rally, as well as adventure bicycle trips and vacations. As a non-profit organization, Valley Spokesmen provides funding to many cycling-oriented organizations and advocacy groups. The annual Cinderella Classic generates as much as $30,000 for groups dedicated to providing opportunities for women and girls. Go to our website to find out more and to see the benefits of membership!

Like us on Facebook!
Valley Spokesmen Bicycle Club

Come Ride With Us!
www.valleyspokesmen.org