

Smoke gets in your eyes



Sometimes you're just scratching your head, wondering about priorities... more important to talk on a cell phone than drive carefully?

First things first. The smoke really didn't seem that bad this morning, even though I woke up with a dry throat that felt like it was coated by dust. Kaiser even sent out an all-hands email warning people not to be outside today if you could avoid it, talking about respiratory issues that could be made much worse through exposure to the smoke. But despite my ongoing breathing issues, the amount of pollution has never really made much of a difference in how I feel. Temperature is the most-important variable; if it's colder, my breathing becomes worse. If it's really hot, you can still hear me breathe, but I do much better.

Today Kevin (kid) and I were joined by Karen, whom we hadn't seen in quite a few months. We took it fairly easy up Kings, but towards the top Kevin was starting to feel some pretty bad pain in his right knee. Certainly not from today's climb; in all likelihood, it was from hanging onto Marcus' wheel on Tuesday's ride, when the two of them went flying up west-side 84. We shortened the ride a bit, eliminating the West Old LaHonda segment, to help Kevin minimize his knee pain.

Most noteworthy event on the ride is seen in the photo above. Pretty unbelievable, a guy driving too-quickly up around a corner, hogging the extreme side of the road such that, had there been anyone walking on that side, he couldn't have possibly avoided them. Oh, and he was holding a cell phone in one hand at the same time. That prompted me to send the photo above in an email to Woodside's Town Engineer, with this message-

Woodside has a number of signs encouraging better behavior for cyclists. What about motorists? How many accidents occur from people texting or talking on their phones (without headsets)? I've attached a photo from this-morning's ride showing a guy rounding a corner on Albion, at speed, just one hand on the steering wheel, the other holding a phone near his face. If someone had been walking on that side of the street, you'd be dealing with a serious injury (or worse) right now. People like this are a danger to all road users, including the many people we see on Albion with strollers, those out walking their dogs (and horses!), cyclists and other motorists.

Why not a campaign to eliminate distracted driving, making the community roads safer for all, especially those who live in Woodside and enjoy taking morning walks? That could get a lot of community support from residents, as well as cycling groups.

I'll let you know if I hear anything back. --Mike--