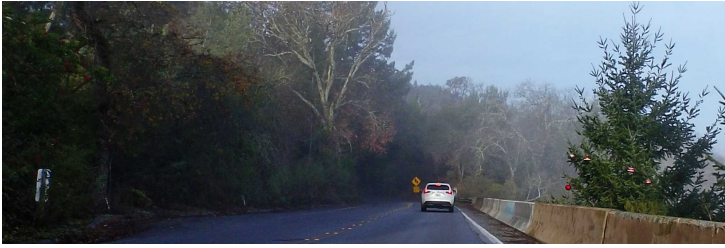


## It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...



Heading down 84 into Woodside on a foggy almost-winter day. Check out the Christmas Tree on the right.

I wasn't sure how I was going to feel this morning. I had a pretty good idea I'd be feeling better than Tuesday-morning's first ride back from Morocco though. And heading up the hill from my house, that feeling seemed vindicated. Sometimes that first 30 seconds heading up, well, your legs just feel heavy and you're thinking yeah, it's going to get better, it has to get better. Today was one of those morning where it felt good right from the start. A rare thing, that. Something that can't be explained but you're happy for.

No Kevin this morning; the kid (26) was having a colonoscopy. Ouch. At 26? Thankfully the results came back tonight and turns out just an "irritated rectum." Um, OK. But Karen showed up for the very-foggy ride. Nobody else out there. Tuesday it was a slow 36 minutes up Kings the normal route; today it was 3 minutes faster on the tougher through-the-park version. For a cold foggy day in December, that didn't seem too bad. Was even able to engage in short conversations.



Today's view on West Old LaHonda

We climbed up past the fog maybe half-way up, and it was still waiting for me, actually worse, on my return home. I did manage to get a nice shot of the Christmas Tree someone set up on the 84 descent though, just before dropping back into the fog. Also made an unscheduled stop on West Old LaHonda for a huge owl that flew across the road in front of me and perched in a nearby tree; unfortunately, the only picture I got has him turned the wrong direction.

The nicest thing about the ride was that I was able to feel something in my legs for the first time in a while. Pain. Normally I'm so nastily breathing-limited in my capabilities, my legs rarely feel that bad. Today, seemed like a better balance. Life is good again.