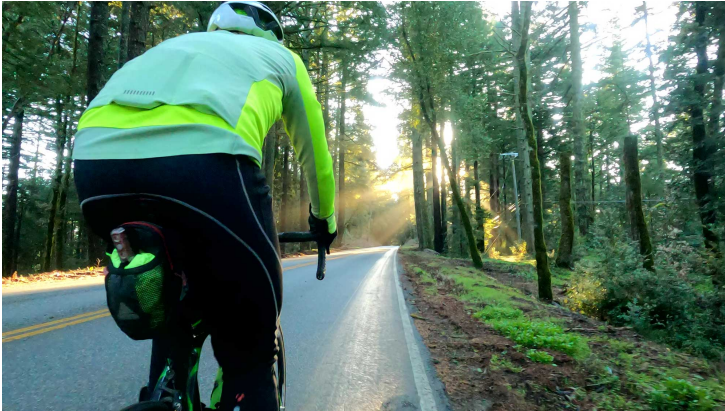


## At least I can pretend things are back to normal!



Looks like a typical January morning up on Skyline. Would be, except that it's been a month since last time I rode with Kevin. How long since last almost-daily-diary entry? Way way way too long. Would be nice to think I'll get back to normal and be updating things quickly, but there's so much going on, that's just not too likely. Part of it is the difficulty of updating WordPress compare to Facebook. On Facebook, you just take photos and add descriptions. The photos largely tell the story, and since what you take the photo with (your phone) and update Facebook with (your phone) are one and the same, it makes updates a lot easier.

The ride. It's a bit of a rude awakening, coming back from Southeast Asia where it's 90 degrees and 90% humidity, to seeing 39 degrees on your bike computer and knowing it reads 3 or 4 degrees high. Kevin and I went full-boat this morning (didn't I just get off a boat?), with heavy winter tights and, for Kevin, 3 layers up top, 2 for me plus a light windbreaker/rain shell. We saw 39.4 at the base of Kings, and again up top, and knowing our computers read a few degrees on the high side, we can assume it got down to around 36. Brrr. But we were dressed appropriately, so not so bad.

It's Thursday so that means up through the park; the steep pitch in the middle really got to me. A whole lot easier Tuesday, when I was riding by myself, up Kings all the way. Got to watch Kevin pull steadily ahead, even though he hasn't been on a real road ride in a full month, while I got back on the bike a week ago Tuesday. Doesn't matter. He doesn't have to ride and he's still pretty fast. How slow were we today? Well, after a really long stop at the top of the park to remove the rain jacket, plus having to navigate a closed gate at the bottom, it took us 40 minutes. Minus maybe a minute stopped. Ugly! But not impossible, didn't feel like turning around at any point, other than when I was watching Kevin ride away on that steep pitch in the park and thinking, in my best possible whiny Luke Skywalker voice, "That's impossible!"

I tried really hard, and I think I succeeded, in not whining about my breathing or being out of shape and slow. Just rode my bike up the hill. Complaining about things there are no quick fixes for doesn't make you any faster. Got to remember that. The only thing that will assuredly make me faster is an e-bike, but not quite ready for that. Yet.

What about last week's riding? Well, this was the first year in a very long time I didn't ride up Mt Hamilton. I was hoping to get out on a ride with my wife, an easy ride on the Mountain View bay trails to see the birds. Maybe 3-4 miles round trip, but right now pretty much everything has to take a place behind my wife's cancer journey and trying to get her strength back. In the end a couple of things conspired to keep the birding trip from happening; I discovered the tray that holds the bike on the car's bike rack was broken, and my wife (Karen) was not up to any sort of adventure. I'd really hoped that our cruise would be the turning point and she'd start getting stronger again, but that's proving to be more of a challenge than I expected, mostly because she's not eating enough. Working on that. We did get to the local school and ride laps until she got up to a mile. Little baby steps!