

# the Urban cyclist

September 1999, Issue 4

www.vcn.bc.ca/vacc

The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition quarterly

## Two bridges over troubled water

### Port Mann

By John Whistler

On March 11 former Premier Glen Clark announced a two year \$74 million renovation of the Port Mann Bridge with the statement "we want to get people moving... severe traffic congestion hurts commuters and commercial traffic, so this project is a priority." Unfortunately the details suggest this project will not get people moving and it will only reinforce auto-dependence in the region.

The project includes seismic upgrades, a reconfigured bridge deck to add a third east-bound High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane, and modifications to streamline the Cape Horn Interchange. There are no plans to accommodate cyclists or pedestrians which the government claims would add an extra \$30 million to the project. The government line is that since cyclists are currently prohibited from the bridge the additional cost is not justified. Cyclists are being advised to wait and they will be accommodated in a twining of the bridge, proposed at sometime in the undetermined future or in a proposed new bridge between Maple Ridge and Langley, a short 20 kilometers to the east.

The Ministry of Transportation and Highways (MoTH) is managing this project as the bridge is not within the jurisdiction of the local GVTA. Unfortunately Provincial control is bad news for cyclists as MoTH does not have an official cycling policy for highways and has been waffling on a draft plan for over five

years. This results in substandard facilities and cyclists have to lobby and fight on every MoTH project. The recent battle over the Lions Gate Bridge is typical and MoTH's newspeak claims that this substandard upgrade

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### Lions Gate

By Jim Cave

On May 1 Harry Lali, the Minister of Transportation and Highways, announced the long awaited and important refurbishment of the Lions Gate Bridge. The bridge deck and sidewalk on the will be replaced, effectively widening both the sidewalks and traffic lanes. The sidewalks will be widened to 2.0 m clear. This is short of the 3.7 m standard as set by MoTH for bridge sidewalks in this situation. We had hoped that the sidewalks would remain open for cyclists during the work on the Bridge, however, this will not be the case. In addition there will be closures of sidewalks on the bridge and along the Stanley Park Causeway prior to the main work on the bridge.

In early July 1999, the eastern sidewalk was completely closed for the entire length of the park Causeway. During this time the bridge towers are being painted, the sidewalks on the park causeway will be widened and resurfaced, and drainage problems will be corrected. The traffic lanes will be resurfaced during the bridge closures in 2000. There will also be a weeknight east-side lane closures. Once the work is completed on the eastern side, work will commence on the west sidewalks and lanes.

The VACC met with members of the construction team, parks board and other interested parties to discuss safety issues, to identify detour routes, and to propose signage.

The project managers hope that this phase of work will be completed by early October. However if weather becomes a problem during this first phase, there is a chance that resurfacing of the sidewalk may not be completed until March and therefore remain closed through the winter. The VACC has emphasized that this initial work should be completed by October in order to minimize the hazard of north and south bound cyclists travelling on the same sidewalk during dark and foul winter weather. In particular we noted that cyclists travelling on the opposite sidewalk are blinded by the headlights of on-coming cars and cannot see on-coming cyclists and pedestrians. In the past, similar closures of the sidewalks on the Causeway have resulted in several accidents and numerous close calls.

Beginning in early January 2000, the main work on the Lions

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# the Urbane cyclist

Published quarterly by the  
Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition (VACC)

The views in this publication are not  
necessarily those of the VACC.

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### VACC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### CALL US

Our president, Richard Campbell, enjoys hearing  
from all types of cyclists around town. If you  
have a concern call him at (604) 733-1764.

### MEET US

The VACC Board meetings are open to people  
interested in bicycling in Greater Vancouver. We  
generally meet on the second Wednesday of each  
month at 6:00 pm.

Sep 22 ..... Sport BC, 1367 W. Broadway, Vancouver  
Oct 13 ..... Sport BC, 1367 W. Broadway, Vancouver  
Nov 10 ..... Sport BC, 1367 W. Broadway, Vancouver

### E-MAIL US

Join our list serve by sending email to  
[admin@sustainability.com](mailto:admin@sustainability.com) with the message  
JOIN VACC in the body, nothing else.

Our website is [www.vcn.bc.ca/vacc](http://www.vcn.bc.ca/vacc)

### GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

We welcome articles (400 words or less),  
comments, letters, suggestions, or any  
correspondence about cycling in  
Greater Vancouver.

Submissions may be sent to:

**THE URBANE CYCLIST**  
3 - 1676 WEST 10TH AVENUE  
VANCOUVER, BC V6J 2A1

Or e-mail: [vacc-news@canada.com](mailto:vacc-news@canada.com).

We reserve the right to edit submissions for  
clarity and length.

**THE NEXT DEADLINE IS  
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29TH, 1999.**

# BCCC keeps rolling

By Colin Brander

Now that the British Columbia Cycling Coalition (BCCC) has officially become a society and elected it's first official Board of Directors in March, we have begun to make a name for ourselves.

Francis van Loon, the BCCC's President, has been appointed to ICBC's President's Advisory Committee. This is the first time that a member of a cycling organization has been appointed to this committee. This also puts us on equal footing on this committee with the BCAA. Francis is very excited about this appointment and foresees a productive working relationship with ICBC. As well, Francis will be sitting on the ICBC's Road Safety Committee, along with Peter Stary who is representing Cycling BC.

Harry Lali, the Minister of Transportation and Highways, has agreed to meet with the BCCC on a quarterly basis. The BCCC is currently working with the VACC's Port Mann Bridge sub-committee and is likely to have a meeting on this issue with the Minister in September. At the last meeting, we discussed the Lions Gate Bridge project and the Interim Cycling Policy (ICP).

It was at this meeting that the Minister agreed to a workshop to finalize the ICP. The ICP workshop is going to be held on September 9, 1999. This document has been an interim policy since December 1992. As we can all attest to with our frustrating experiences of having cyclists not being considered on various bridge projects around the Lower Mainland, the policy just does

not work and is not being interpreted as we believe it should be. We want serious changes made to the ICP so that cyclists are properly considered in new, rehabilitation and upgrade projects, so that we don't have to fight them on every project and so that we can spend our energy in other areas.

Another of the major issues that the BCCC is working on is a review of the Motor Vehicle Act (MVA). The MVA is in need of major changes on issues affecting cyclists to bring it in line with other more progressive jurisdictions. As part of this review, we will also look at the list of highways that cyclists are currently banned from. This is of particular interest to VACC members who want to have access to portions of the Trans-Canada Highway from Capilano Road in North Vancouver to Sumas Way in Abbotsford, Highway 91 and 91A in Richmond, Delta and New Westminster, and Highway 99 from Surrey's 8th Avenue in to the Oak Street Bridge in Richmond. Once the review has been completed we plan on contacting Ministry staff to discuss our proposed changes and we will continue pushing to get these changes implemented.

If you have any issues that you would like the BCCC to consider, please let Francis Van Loon know and the board will discuss the concern. Call Francis at (250) 370-0428 or look at our website for more information at [www.bccc.bc.ca](http://www.bccc.bc.ca).

Happy Cycling!

# Bike shorts

By Ken Wuschke

### More bikes on buses...

This past spring TransLink increased the amount of bus routes using bike rack to include all West Vancouver Blue Buses as well as the new Bowen Island service.

Coming this November, TransLink will be having bike racks on the following routes: 100 Airport / New Westminster via Marine Drive; 135 Stanley Park / SFU via Hastings St; 145 SFU / Lougheed Mall via Gagliardi Way; 147 New Westminster / Coquitlam via North Road; 158 Port Coquitlam / New Westminster via Riverview; 159 Port Coquitlam / New Westminster via Mary Hill Bypass; 160 Vancouver / Port Coquitlam via Barnet Highway; and 701 Coquitlam / Haney via Pitt River Bridge.

However several times a day there will be no bike racks offered and, in the case of the

135, all day Saturdays and Sundays. Please pick up a timetable at your library, call (604) 540-0400, or click to [www.translink.bc.ca](http://www.translink.bc.ca) for details.

### Amtrak allows bikes on

Amtrak and the Washington State Department of Transportation are allowing bikes back on board trains heading southbound between Vancouver and Bellingham.

To take your bike with you on a journey on Amtrak call (800) USA-RAIL or [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com). Bikes on the service between Vancouver and Seattle are subject to a US\$5 fee and must be reserved in advance due to space limitations.

### We're looking for more shorts

Send your cycling shorts to [vacc-news@canada.com](mailto:vacc-news@canada.com) and we'll publish them here.

# Pender St. bike lanes at last! Maybe

By Carmen Mills

First, the very good news, after years of procrastination, Vancouver will soon see its first honest-to-goodness downtown bike lane since the turn-of-the-century bike lane along Pender Street. Our city may well be the last notable city in North America without such fundamental bicycle infrastructure, but better late than never. By the end of September, we will have real bike lanes on both sides of Pender Street, running from Carrall to Hamilton. Vancouver city council voted in June to forge ahead with bike lane plans. Pender was chosen as it is an ideal link between the Adanac Bikeway and downtown destinations, and since the street is currently being torn up due to massive water-system reconstruction. Kudos to Lon LaClaire and City Engineering

for seizing the moment and just doing it. After approving the Carrall-to-Hamilton bike lanes in June, City Engineering and Council then acknowledged that four blocks of orphaned bike route need somewhere to go. The City proposed that the lanes extend along Pender all the way to Cardero Street, where they would connect to Georgia Street, Stanley Park, and the West End. Ultimately this will provide a cross city link from the North Shore to Burnaby Mountain via the Lions Gate Bridge and the Francis-Union Bikeway. Not only is this plan obvious and sensible, it is virtually inevitable. Unfortunately, cold feet prevailed, and in July bike-lane construction was deferred until February 2000, pending further "consultation." If the plans are accepted by

Council at that time, lanes will be re-striped... again... hopefully by next spring. A city without bicycle lanes cannot claim to be truly committed to sustainable transportation. Studies have been made, examples abound, and the results are in: we need downtown bike lanes, and we need them now. The Pender bike lanes are long overdue, and they are only the beginning — they herald the dawn of a truly cycle friendly city. Contact Doug Louie at City Hall with comments, suggestions and support: <doug\_louie@city.vancouver.bc.ca>, (604) 873-7915. And write the Vancouver Bicycle Advisory Committee at: Bicycle Advisory Committee; Vancouver City Hall; 453 West 12th Ave.; Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4.

# Terry van Fleet goes to trial

By Francis Van Loon

In December 1998, cyclist Terry Van Fleet lost his life, while cycling along Blanshard Street in Victoria. Terry was the victim of a bizarre hit and run collision with a motor vehicle.

Since December, as an observer for the British Columbia Cycling Coalition (BCCC), I have attended many short court appearances with regard to this case and a two day preliminary hearing. A trial date and a date for jury selection was set at the most recent court appearance, on Wednesday August 11, 1999, in the Victoria courthouse. Lawrence Patrick Barker, 35, will stand trial starting March 20, 2000 in B.C. Supreme Court for the hit-and-run death of

bicyclist Terry Van Fleet. The trial will run from March 20 until March 30, 2000. Jury-selection, for the trial, will be on February 28. A pre-trial conference is scheduled for February 16.

For your information, all of the above proceedings occur in open court and are open to the public.

There is a publication ban on what was discussed during the two day preliminary hearing on July 7 and 8, 1999. As far as I know, details of the preliminary hearing remain under the cover of that publication ban. And therefore we are not allowed to publish anything discussed at the hearing. To do so would be a violation of a court

ruling. Additionally we would not want to jeopardize the case.

Lawrence Patrick Barker is accused of the following charges:

- criminal negligence causing death in the operation of a motor vehicle,
- impaired driving causing death, and
- leaving the scene of an accident

Thank you to Kim Boyd and GVCC's John Clark and Karen Leahy-Trill for keeping me company during the long hours in the Victoria Courthouse. Thanks as well to John Luton, Kent Leahy-Trill, Steve Balyi, and Susanna Grimes for dropping by whenever they could.

And as the BCCC keeps following this case, we will keep you informed.

## JOIN THE VACC !

**YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT TRANSPORTATION CYCLING IN GREATER VANCOUVER**



**I want to contribute on these working groups:**

- Lions Gate Committee
- SkyTrain Committee
- Communications Committee
- Burnaby Committee
- North Shore Committee
- I want to create a community committee for:

**1st Person:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**2nd Person:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**City:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Postal Code:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

The VACC does not sell or give out address information.

*Please turn over...*

Continued from page 1.

## Lions Gate

Gate bridge deck will commence. Both sidewalks will be closed and remain so until completion of the work in mid September 2000. The only remaining "on-bike" commuting route across Burrard Inlet will be the 2nd Narrows Bridge. The VACC is having ongoing discussion with project officials to determine how displaced cyclists will be accommodated. We have asked that a free bus pass be issued for cyclists only. However, we have been advised that transit passes will not be feasible. Shuttle bus options to compliment the newly installed bike racks on the West Vancouver Blue Buses are being reviewed. We have expressed concern that cyclists travelling during the early morning hours will have no alternative but to take the 2nd Narrows Bridge because of absent or intermittent bus service.

Bikes are allowed on the Blue Buses between Downtown and Park Royal. Southbound, there is a bus stop on the north end of the bridge, along the on-ramp from West Vancouver's Marine Drive. Cyclists travelling from the North Shore can use this stop. Downtown the Blue Buses stop along Georgia from Homer Street to Stanley Park. For bus schedules call (604) 985-7777. Also, the SeaBus is available for cyclists. For updates on the closures call (604) 473-1500.

For almost 14 months, from the initial phases with the work on the Stanley Park Causeway, concluding with the completion of the reconstruction of the Lions Gate Bridge cyclists will be the most severely disrupted commuters over Burrard Inlet. We can only hope that the pain will be worth it.

Continued from page 1.

## Port Mann

will benefit cyclists, who should be grateful.

A number of individuals, spearheaded by the VACC, are questioning MoTH's plans. They are promoting the Port Mann as a strategic link for a cyclist network serving over 50,000 residents in a five kilometer radius. This network, on the Coquitlam side, could tie in to the Skytrain extension and would link Sapperton to Maillardville, Cape Horn, Riverview, and Mary Hill with significant opportunities for traffic separation. The connection to Surrey's growing Guildford, Fleetwood, and Whalley neighbourhoods over the Port Mann is strategic, as the Pattullo Bridge is the only alternative, a 10-15 kilometer detour. Currently this area has no cycling facilities and is a part of the Greater Vancouver area that can be described diplomatically as a cyclist and pedestrian hell. The VACC's vision is to convert this to a cyclist and pedestrian heaven.

Richard Campbell, president of the VACC, said "it is disappointing that MoTH is stuck in a highway building paradigm and is not picking up on the demands of Vancouver area residents to provide real transportation options to the single occupancy vehicle." Campbell further said "providing for cyclists on strategic links, such as the Port Mann, should be automatic and any exceptions must be subject to a complete analysis with compelling reasons. For this project it appears MoTH made the decision before the analysis and now they are scrambling for justification. So far the VACC has been unable to get details on the \$30 million estimate given to accommodate cyclists."

The numbers speak for themselves and

spending \$30 million may not be out of line. A cycling network, as envisioned by the VACC, should be able to attract at least 10,000 trips a day based on 5% of trips and 2 trips per resident. This would provide a new transportation option to this area and would provide additional transportation capacity. The \$74 million spent as planned will not attract 10,000 extra vehicle trips on the bridge. Any marginal traffic improvements will be quickly offset by increases in traffic volumes, an endless circle.

The VACC has set up a Port Mann working group to monitor this project and lobby for cycling access. Glen Springle is leading the committee and can be reached at glen.springle@ise.bc.ca if you want to help in this project.

Alternatively advise your MLA about your concern on this project. With the political changes in Victoria recently it is more important to make sure the politicians are aware of cyclists needs to get across the Fraser River. Certainly as we are heading closer to a provincial election.

## Road debris

By Su-laine Yeo

Are you tired of riding on road debris in Burnaby? You are not alone.

Many roads in Burnaby appear to have not been swept in over six months. The VACC has made officials aware but nothing has been done. Now the VACC is sponsoring a street sweeping. Come out to Gilmore Av and Still Creek Dr on Sat., Sept. 25th at 1 PM and let's sweep the streets clean. Call 733-1764 for more info.

# JOIN THE VACC !

**YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT TRANSPORTATION CYCLING IN GREATER VANCOUVER**

**I heard about the VACC:**

- through the media.
- from this newsletter.
- via the website.
- from a friend.
- from another cyclist.
- at a community event.
- other: \_\_\_\_\_

As a member of the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition, not only will you be supporting a cleaner, healthier, more sustainable mode of transportation, you will:

- Get the nifty "Urbane Cyclist" newsletter delivered to your door four times per year.
- Have the opportunity to get involved in community events and happenings.
- Maybe even meet some funky new people!

- \$20.00 Individual
- \$ 5.00 Each Additional Individual
- \$80.00 Corporate/Organization

Please make cheques payable to:  
**Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition**  
 and mail, along with this application to:  
**VACC**  
 c/o 4351 Tucker Avenue  
 Richmond, BC  
 V7C 1L9

*Thank you!*