

# SHARING THE ROAD

Jennifer Schmidt

Thawing winter legs means more and more peddlers roaming the streets. As bicycles come out of hibernation, the need for increased awareness and road smarts becomes apparent. Cyclists and motorists are sharing the same territory in many cases, and a mutual regard for each other is essential. According to statistics, the majority of accidents involving both cars and bikes happen in urban areas, during the daytime, and on dry roads. By using caution while driving or riding, and by keeping the following tips in mind, a disastrous collision may be avoided.

#### For Drivers:

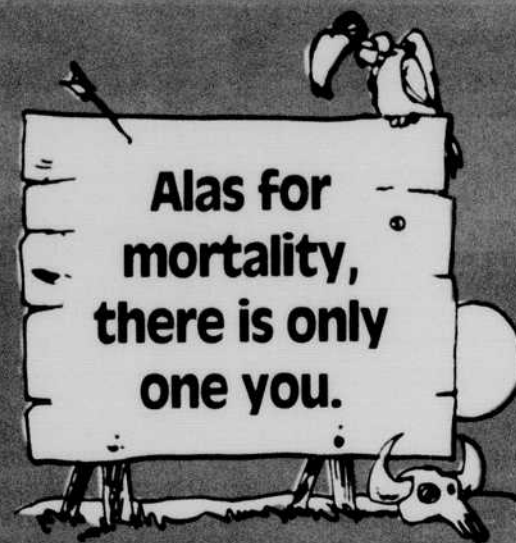
- Remember, bikes obey the same traffic rules as you do. Be as aware of them as you would be of any other vehicle.
- If you wish to turn across a bike's path, yield to a bike that is continuing forward. Don't cut it off!
- Parking in a bike lane creates a road hazard for any cyclist.
- Remember that cyclists put up with road hazards

that don't always affect you. Storm grates, glass, trash or pedestrians could cause them to slow down or swerve unexpectedly.

- Compared to a car, bikes are small and therefore not always as visible as another car would be. Really look before opening your car door, or before backing up onto a street.

#### For Riders:

- Obey traffic rules. This gives a degree of predictability to your actions that drivers and other cyclists depend on.
- In congested areas - slow down.
- Because of poor visibility, like sunlight in their eyes or another car blocking their view, drivers sometimes fail to see bikes. While riding, never assume that a driver has seen you.
- Check the traffic on a street before entering the flow yourself.
- Don't run stop signs or red lights. Don't ride the wrong way on a one way street. You place yourself in a position drivers don't expect you to be.



## OPEN WATER SWIMMERS...

The beach is calling you... you heard it in one of those sea shells and it's been so long since you've been there. Perhaps you've never seen the ocean before. We, who live in the states bordering the Pacific are truly lucky. The rugged coast is beautiful and the water is chilly and refreshing. But open water swimming needs to be done with great care. Novice swimmers and surfers who hit the foamy crests of the Pacific must take heed of the possibility of undertows and riptides.

According to the Surf Life Saving Association, backwash from waves - known as undertow - is of less concern for swimmers than underwater rip currents. A rip current is water moving swiftly seaward, usually in currents not more than 10 to 20 feet wide. These are hard to spot and may exist even in calm-looking waters.

Rip currents can be spotted by a break in wave pattern

of a discoloration of the water which is usually caused by sand. If caught in a rip current, **don't struggle**. The water is infinitely stronger than you are so save your energy and keep calm. Swim with the rip current, but angle toward the shore or closest bank. If this is impossible initially, ride the current seaward and as soon as possible turn and swim to shore outside the current.

Other open water perils include weedy areas. If you become entangled, don't struggle. Tread water and allow the current to carry you and you'll eventually break free. The swim parallel with the current heading toward shore. Fighting against the current will only tire you out. Panic is your worst enemy in open water swimming.

Finally, don't swim in waters that have not been tested for safety by the local board of health. In this age of industrial waste, contamination is not always visible to the naked eye. The ocean is a beautiful sight to behold and a powerful force of energy and water. Take care and respect the sleeping giant.

## Deep Heat from Tube

Does deep heating liniment work on tired and sore muscles? Good question. There's a theory that the answer is no. Ad copywriters like to claim that balms and liniments soothe muscle aches away. A more appropriate name for something such as "Menthol Deep Heating Rub" might be "Rub on a counter-irritant." The latter name describes the product for what it is. When deep heating balms are applied, many of their active ingredients stimulate sensory nerve endings in the skin to produce sensations of superficial pain, heat or cold that presumably distract from the more intense pain in sore muscles. One theory holds that heightened stimuli from the skin actually blocks pain impulses before they can travel along nerve pathways to the brain.

When ointments, balms, lotions, creams, and gels are applied, the gentle massage used to apply them may be actual relief. For some people, the aroma probably has a strong psychological effect.

Most heating rubs contain menthol from peppermint oil and methyl salicylate from wintergreen oil. The more expensive the ingredients—the more expensive the product. Usually most products contain the same ingredients of counter-irritant.

Counter-irritants can actually be hazardous when used in conjunction with heating pads or heat lamps. Never apply a counter-irritant before sunbathing or using a tanning bed. Heat applied over counter-irritants can result in severe burns and blisters. Counter-irritants which are applied before a bandage or wrap can also result in blistering of the skin.

If you're sold in the idea that a deep heat balm is what works best over an athletic injury or deep muscle soreness, you may indeed have an injury, muscle spasm or problem worthy of medical attention. Rather than treating yourself—which may lead to further, more severe injury, see a physician or call the Student Health Physical Therapy Clinic at 346-4401.

## LEAST TOXIC CHEMICAL SOLUTIONS TO FIGHT FLEAS:

Robbie Ross

Apply an insecticidal fatty-acid soap. Fleas can also be repelled with a shampoo or spray containing limonene, which is extracted from citrus fruit.

Sprinkle diatomaceous earth sparingly into rugs and upholstery frequented by your pet. Dia-

tomaceous earth abrades the flea's outer shell and causes the fleas to dry up and die. This material is relatively harmless to people and pets but care should be taken to avoid breathing it. These products can be found at most hardware stores and garden supply centers.

# ALCOHOL AND BOATING

Robbie Ross

According to a recent study, 60% of all fatal motorboat accidents involve alcohol. Drinking and operating a boat is as dangerous as drinking and driving and is also against the law.

If marine patrol officers suspect that a boat operator is under the influence of alcohol they may require the operator to undergo sobriety tests. The penalty for operating a boat under the influence is a Class A misdemeanor and could carry a penalty of up to \$2500 and one year in jail.

#### Why Drinking Alcohol and Boating is Unsafe

1. Alcohol affects your sense of balance, which is critical when boating.
2. Boating requires good vision and alcohol can seriously restrict your vision by reducing peripheral and night vision as well as affecting your ability to focus.
3. Alcohol affects your judgment. A person under the influence is more likely to take risks they normally wouldn't and are less likely to make the right choices in a life-threatening situation.
4. Alcohol slows your reaction time and in the case of a hazardous situation, seconds may be all you have to take the correct action.
5. Even without alcohol, reaction time is slowed in normal boating by stressors such as motion, sun, wind, and noise and when alcohol is included the stressor's fatiguing effects are multiplied.

