



*Chico Velo*

*Bicycling Advocacy and Education*

*... since 1980!*

## **Wildflower In the Eyes of the Rider**

The [Wildflower Century ride](#) has been ranked among as the top 10 Century Rides in the US . This year we will be celebrating the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Century and we are proud to also be acknowledging the riders who have come back year after year to ride with us and celebrate their own Wildflower anniversaries.

Susan K. (Seely) Boone, 56, is one of many of our devoted riders who has done the ride for over 25 years. Susan is a high school science teacher of Infectious Diseases and IB Biology in Sacramento. She first got into cycling as a little kid, riding around the neighborhood, and has continued riding since. In high school a friend asked her to try out a century ride. “With no water bottle cages, no clip-in cleats, no gloves, no cycling shorts, not much more than shorts and T-shirt, I rode the Hekaton Classic in Livermore back in 1977. It didn’t kill me, so I continued doing century rides.” Boone first heard about the Wildflower Century when she moved to Davis, California to attend college. Her boss’s husband told her about the ride, she gave it a try and she added the Wildflower Century ride to her yearly ride line-up in 1982.

In her 25 years, Boone hasn’t had a bad Wildflower experience yet. She explains, “There are parts of so many I really enjoyed.” Specific ‘best memories’ that have brought her back again and again include the times when she rode with her friends, when she finished the ride strong, and when Table Mountain was blooming with wildflowers. “I love the route, the people running the event are always great and everyone is so happy on the

ride, making it easy to find groups to ride with.” Each year, Boone especially looks forward to the Honey Run climb. She and a friend created a ‘score-keeping’ game to motivate them up the hill. Each year, they count the number of people they pass and then they subtract the number of people that pass them. “I think our score was 40ish last year,” Boone remembers. She explains that it is a challenge for her and her friend made up. Another thing she looks forward to is the amazing sandwiches at the lunch stop. “They really hit the spot,” she says.



*Susan and her friends at the 2013 Wildflower Century Ride. Trisa (left), Tim (middle), Susan (right)*

All these things make up for ‘super-size’ memories. Some are good and some are not so good. “Unfortunately, some big memories include getting hailed on or drenched,” Boone remembers. But no matter the weather, Boone still has had fun during all the rides because she likes the Chico area and how beautiful it is. Boone’s overall view of the Wildflower ride is extremely positive and encouraging - she describes the ride as “a great challenge with beautiful views and plenty of good food and people along the way.”

Participating in a ride like the Wildflower requires a lot of preparation. Boone has done exactly that so she can be ready for this year’s ride. “I currently stay in shape by riding frequently, trying to make sure I do at least one hill ride each week and a couple of other rides during the week,” she says.

Century rides are a great experience for everyone who participates in them, as Susan Boone can attest after 25 years. Aside from the challenge of the ride, she is always

having a great time, meeting new friends on the ride and enjoying great food. If you see Susan out on the route, congratulate her on her hard work! We hope to see Susan out there for many years to come!

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*About Chico Velo*

*Chico Velo encourages and promotes safe bicycling through education and advocacy. As a 501.c.3 nonprofit, Chico Velo hosts cycling events including the Chico Wildflower, attended by 4000 bicycle riders, and manage bicycling programs in the community like Trailworks mountain bike advocacy, Light Up Chico which offers free bike lights to those who cannot afford them, and KidsPedal! which brings bike safety training to local children. To learn more, go to [www.chicovelo.org](http://www.chicovelo.org), or email [velo@chicovelo.org](mailto:velo@chicovelo.org).*