

## Diahn's Bike Story

I have this theory that there are two kinds of bicyclists: those that wear skin-tight high-performance fabrics in bright, busy patterns, and the long-haired counter-cultural types, who ride and create bikes as a statement of their opposition to our car-dominated culture.

I represent a rather boring third type of cyclist. I am a bicycle commuter. I own one bike, and it has only two wheels, in the usual places. No doubt to the dismay of the numerous bicycle shops, I don't spend a lot of money on bikes and accessories.

Riding a bike has always been a matter of necessity. Growing up, our family had one car. We kids walked or biked everywhere. It was fun! ...When it wasn't raining, or snowing, or sleeting.

What I love about Tucson, besides the weather, is that it can be negotiated reasonably using alternative modes of travel. I started bike commuting in earnest when I worked at the Arizona Daily Star. I lived near the downtown/UA area, and I would pedal to Park and Irvington, about six miles south. Then I would ride my bike to my classes at the Pima College, west campus. Then I would bike home after classes, usually in the dark. I am pleased that many of the streets that I used to ride in those days accommodate bicycles better today than they did when I rode them.

Tucson has become more bicycle-friendly over the years. And I have a better bike. A significant improvement occurred when my bike was vandalized outside the workplace, and I had to buy a new back tire and seat. I upgraded to a woman's gel seat, and now I ride more comfortably! My advice to beginners – don't wait until your seat gets stolen. Buy a decent seat, and the goofy padded shorts help, too.

Today I ride about 5.0 miles on good roads. I go out of my way to ride on Mountain Avenue. I would like to see more bike facilities in Tucson like Mountain Avenue.

When my car was stolen in 2007, I decided to see if I can get by a full year without replacing it. Yes, we miss "Little Red." But we've managed fine, without it. My family won't be buying a second car any time soon.