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I'm writing in response to the email proposing the "merger" of the PWCC and the SRCC.

As one of the PWCC founders, I am admittedly no longer active in the club, and arguably therefore part of the perceived problems with member apathy.

Although I still ride, I no longer ride as often nor at the same level as I did when the PWCC was revived (from its historical roots). Here again, admittedly, I am part of the issue described, wherein lately I more often than not ride with folks who make arrangements privately.

I'm unsure that the essential club function articulated is still relevant. (Anecdotally I will tell you that the PWCC founder's original true intent was more probably to merely have matching jerseys to wear...similar to another group of longstanding Petaluma riders who were called "the chickens" – as I recall their wool jerseys were emblazoned with 'Ciclo de Pollo'). [“Polli Ciclisti”? – ed.]

In general any kind of club only survives based upon an influx of younger members. I don't know if cycling clubs generally are all that attractive to younger riders anymore. So the membership apathy being experienced may be nothing other than a sign of the times.

While I personally have nothing against routinely scheduled rides (PWCC, SRCC, or otherwise), such rides and their categorizations (A, A/B, B, and C/D) I think leaves riders feeling some unfounded sense of competition.

My off-the-cuff observation is that, historically, cycling clubs in CA have largely achieved their reputations and ongoing success by organizing supported ride EVENTS...the SRCC being a prime example. IMO the Wheelmen missed an opportunity to follow in those footsteps. At the same time I'm unsure if such a “universal formula for CC success” remains. I don't know the economics of supported ride events, i.e., if they are profitable. My hunch is that there is higher revenue potential in holding organized ride events, than there is in reliance upon membership dues alone.

So, all this being said, I am saddened by this proposition to merge the two clubs. While I never understood the reasoning behind obtaining liability insurance, registration as 501c non-profit, etc. (I also don't understand the controversy about the historical name “Wheelmen" ...), I guess I can appreciate a need for organizational formality.

If this merger initiative proceeds, I would advocate continuing as some sort of adjunct to SRCC while retaining the Petaluma Wheelmen identity, and ideally piggyback off their insurance and administrative capabilities. Perhaps the power of such a combination would facilitate an organized ride event focused upon Petaluma routes. I would encourage that this idea should be explored.

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I would encourage the Board not to merge or disband PWCC.

I'm one of those long time members who no longer participates in club rides or activities. The pandemic changed our lives. While many aspects of life have returned to their previous condition, others have not fully recovered. Perhaps PWCC needs more time to return to normal.

From other comments I've seen, there seems to be a common theme among those who would like to see the club to continue. Many members have drifted away from the club but still feel some connection. I'm the same. Like others, I've had my own reasons (I discovered mountain biking). And the pandemic's forced separation has made it difficult for me to find the right place and time to reconnect.

Can the energy of the club ever be restored? I think it's worth a try. For the Board members (and President!) who have been slogging away at this for several years I'm sure it must feel like performing CPR with no response.

I feel that some of the opportunities to connect have been lost.

We used to have club meetings several times a year. Sometimes the speakers were great. More importantly, the meetings provided an opportunity to gather as a larger group, outside our individual riding coterie. This helped build a larger community. (The meetings also provided an opportunity to recruit ride leaders and new board members.)

I also miss the listserv. It was an easy and immediate way to connect with others. Yes, it could be annoying at times. Many times someone would post: "What is Saturday's B ride?," just two hours after the ride had been posted by the ride leader. Or, someone would post a non-ride email that would ignite a dozen responses. When I was on the board, we wrestled with this as we fielded complaints from members about extraneous posts. We ultimately decided to keep the listserv going, since providing an easy to use forum for communication was more important than reducing our members' daily irritations. I've subscribed to the SRCC "chatty" list for years (they also had a separate "ride only" listserv, but nobody posted to it). It experiences minor flare ups from time to time, but overall it's a positive asset. (For example, see the recent posts on Mt. Veeder Road and Ida Clayton Road -- they provided immediate information for SRCC members hoping to ride those roads.)

In summary, I like the informality and size of the PWCC, and hope it can survive. But I realize that this cannot happen unless those of us who have kept our distance from the club make a concerted effort to bring it back to life. I hope the Board might consider opening things up a little, with a new listserv and members' meetings. Such moves just might reignite the club.

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I guess I'll get my few comments in just under the wire.

I would like to see the Petaluma Wheelmen remain an independent hometown cycling club. If, due to lack of resources, we need to downsize our spending on such things as the website, insurance, tax exempt status, etc. so be it. I'm sure the collective input of those of us who ride regularly as PWCC members can come up with some workable solutions to keep the club functional. I personally don't see a problem with smaller show and go rides or email list rides organized by PWCC members. Since we serve a wide demographic (regarding age, employment and ability) the smaller group dynamic seems to work well. We live in a great community with riding options that are unsurpassed. We owe it to ourselves as members of the Petaluma Wheelmen to assure the continuation of OUR local club.

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May I introduce myself. My name is Carol Janakes widow of the late Jim Janakes "JJ". He was one of the co-founders of the PWCC. Him and a group of close cycling friends were instrumental in bringing back this club which started in Petaluma in the late 1800's. It was with extreme sadness to read the email that you recently sent out with regards to a possible merge with the SRCC.

The PWCC has a history that goes way back. What shocks me is dropping the name and that this club loves the town they represent. Jim put his heart and soul into this club. He had a love for cycling. His goal was to bring fellow riders to get in and around our beautiful city of Petaluma. No, I'm not a cyclist but have supported Jim in all he did for the club.

To this day my license plate on my red Jeep reads PWCC. He chose this and was extremely proud to drive around and sharing the love for this club and its members.

I hope you will take this letter to heart and just about others in the club before even considering a merger. If you would like to chat with me XXX-XXX-XXXX.

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[Apologies] for not responding to the survey. I support whatever decision the board makes and understand it's not reasonable to request the PWCC stay as is without doing much to contribute.

I haven't been very active, as I'm 8 months pregnant, which means I'll probably have less time to ride once baby makes its appearance! That being said, the club holds a very special place in my heart. If it weren't for such welcoming and kind people, I would not have picked up cycling - at all. I was welcomed with open arms not knowing a thing about cycling (outside of spin classes, which don't do any educating or offer much community

building), and in an old rusty mountain bike... the fact that I was welcomed and loved riding made me invest in an actual road bike and keep with it. For those reasons, and all the kind people I've met through the club, I very much appreciate this club but understand the need for a merger.

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I replied to the questionnaire prior, but reading some of the comments I have suggestions based on clubs I was in in XXXX. First of all, not knowing members of PWCC other than Mike M, I am dissuaded from joining show and go rides as I also have to drive, and because I don't know the roads want to have the route ahead of time.

In my belief- scheduled rides with a leader and a route enable people to meet people on rides and over time make friends, and hopefully gain confidence to lead rides oneself and pay back. The other piece of the puzzle is to encourage and mentor ride leadership by encouraging co-leads, and also for a new leader to have an experienced co-leader.

I think there is a synergy where organized rides attract and foster more organized rides. All that said, people may not have the time or desire to commit.

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While it would make me sad to see the PWCC dissolve I have seen its decline in recent years and believe that it makes sense to merge with the SRCC. My biggest concern is that we will lose our individuality. Could there be a Petaluma chapter of the SRCC? Will there still be rides in Petaluma? I don't want to have to drive to Santa Rosa if I want to participate in a group/club ride. While I haven't ridden with the club much in the recent past (partly because a broken wrist got me off my bike for quite a while), I most certainly have enjoyed the pop-up social events.

Prior to that, my reason for not riding with the club was a bad experience as a ride leader. I hosted an A/B paced ride and while some riders may have thought this was a combined group of both A and B riders, I believe I made it clear that it was the pace. Anyway, my point is: I got left behind on my own ride. I was pissed! Fortunately, I'm in a better head space now than I was then and hopefully also a faster rider! But it really turned me off to riding with the club. I do have a good network of friends outside of the club with whom I ride regularly and they never leave anyone behind.

I have to add: I certainly understand the lack of participation at the Butter and Egg Parade. I participated once and never again. Too hot, no shade, slow moving. Hard to keep a smile and wave going in those conditions! I'm glad the club will no longer participate. In my opinion, it isn't a good way to present a cycling club.

I have been a member for more than 10 years (and a former VP on the board) and miss the core group of yesteryear, so I don't know even half of the current members. It's true, it's just not the same.

It will be interesting what y'all decide. And I will embrace whatever decision is made.

What will happen to the signs on Stony Point Road? Will they stay?

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Mike, thanks for presenting such a thoughtful summary. Obviously you guys have really labored and agonized over this.

My short answers to your questions are

1. Yes, we do need and want to continue a Petaluma cycling club.
2. Its function, as expressed in its Mission Statement, should still be to continue to “provide *opportunities* for cyclists of all levels to meet...in a safe and supportive environment.” (Even if most of us are not taking advantage of those opportunities at the present.)

My *long* answer is as follows:

Admittedly, the pandemic has taken the stuffing out of the club. I think it will take quite some time for it to recover. When I was on the board (probably 3 years, as secretary, President, then treasurer), we always held enough money back in the bank in the event of a catastrophic year when theoretically *no one* paid dues – so that we could keep the web site and the insurance afloat for one year while we figured things out.

I would be interested in seeing a treasurer’s report. I am attaching a projected operating budget that I prepared years ago. At the time there were 194 members. No doubt costs have risen since then, but with dues from the current 174 members it seems that there should be enough revenue to continue to pay for the web site, the domain name, and the insurance. If the club turns out to be just a skeletal crew of riders, it’s questionable whether insurance might even be needed.

Disbanding the club was never in our sights. The club has always had its challenges engaging all the members. However, I always regarded the “silent majority” not as apathetic, but as people who, although they were not participating actively, believed in and supported having a local bicycle club. We were a functioning club when there were only 50 members and a listserv. We can do that again if need be. As Rick pointed out, it doesn’t take much to run the club.

We too, in years past, tried participating in the Butter & Eggs Day parade, and after a couple of years, most participants figured “been there, done that”. We also had a holiday lights ride – for a couple of years. We continually struggled to find speakers and topics for club meetings, but we kept on meeting, with as few as eight and as many as 40 members attending. Club meetings, which seem to have gone by the wayside, formed some of the “glue” that held us together. We also tried to encourage people to communicate via the website, and set up forums for buying/selling cycling gear, asking questions about training, etc. However, it just didn’t seem to be a good fit for our members, who preferred the informality of the email list. The website was consulted mainly for the Ride Calendar.

Regarding the Santa Rosa Club: Every single PWCC member, active or not, knows about the Santa Rosa Club and what it has to offer. A good number of members already belong to both clubs. There is nothing to be gained for any member by a “merger” with the Santa

Rosa Club. And certainly nothing to be gained by disbanding a hometown club that has functioned since 2005.

I have a couple of suggestions:

1. Attempt to bring back club meetings, even if just a few per year. They should be informal, perhaps just with a discussion topic around pizza. BTW, we always passed the can for pizza donations, and pretty much came out even as far as club expenditures on meetings. And Mitchell was extremely generous by inviting us to meet at his beautiful studio on Weller Street.
2. Bring back the listserv. It wasn't formally part of the PWCC, although all members were encouraged to join. That was another "glue" element, and I fear we threw the baby out with the bathwater when we shut it down. Without it, there is no way for a member to reach out to the club at large, except through a particular website forum. I remember an email to the club asserting that "many people" complained and unsubscribed because of annoyingly frequent posts. As a matter of fact, I saw maybe a dozen unsubscribes over the course of over ten years. As the owner of the listserv, I was notified every time someone unsubscribed. I also would have been notified if there were bounces due to someone blocking it. If "many people" were unhappy with it, that was not evident in the actual behavior of the listserv members. When we shut it down, there were 212 of them, several of whom were folks who had moved away but wanted to keep abreast of what was happening in the club, and who occasionally posted or commented, and it was great to hear from them.

Also, the reason the listserv was owned by a "private individual" is because the club was looking at options for a listserv through GoDaddy, etc., that would incur a monthly fee. Being a Sonic customer, I offered to host one for free. The Santa Rosa Club's "chatty list" is also run by a private individual with a Sonic account.

What always distinguished the Petaluma Wheelmen was its informality, abundance of corny humor, and extremely welcoming persona. The founder, Jim Janakes, emphasized that he wanted us to be different from, not a copy of, the SRCC. Our rides were small enough so that everyone got to know one another. It did indeed set us apart from the Santa Rosa Club who, because of its sheer size, and the large events that they sponsor, needed to adopt a more formal set of rules and means of communication. The very colorful personality of our club has been subdued in the past couple of years, the pandemic being the main culprit. We need to nurse it back, even if it means a couple more years of hibernation before we all emerge again.

Please don't destroy a club that has blossomed over the past decades. I understand the board's burnout after a grueling couple of years. Indeed, I burned myself out laboring over this club for several years – but I still love it and want to see it survive.

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I'd rather not see PWCC disappear, but I certainly understand the Board's dilemma. I am a member of both clubs, but my health is such that I am hardly riding with either. I'd prefer to not see PWCC disappear though. Is it possible to scale back the amount of work required to

keep it going until the great resurgence of cycling happens?

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First, thank you to you and the rest of the board members for all your work supporting PWCC. PWCC will always hold a special place for me, as it was the very first cycling club that I joined.

Second, while the circumstances are sad, I fully understand. XXXX and I had a conversation during a ride last month, and the economics I think do not justify keeping the club operational. Layer on to that how it is almost entirely the board who actively lead rides or help organize events. That is not fair nor sustainable. Since there is a lot of overlap with SRCC, which has about 10 times the members thus more activities and ride leaders, from my perspective PWCC feels a bit redundant. Even if PWCC members decide to step up, while great, we will always have the challenge of being small and people wondering, "Why join this club when I can join that club?".

I'm in support of winding down PWCC and merging with SRCC. I wish that were not the case, but from everything I know and my experience the past year with PWCC membership, I think it's the best thing to do for the club.

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I have great appreciation for PWCC. I moved to Petaluma in XXXX and felt very welcomed by a friendly and active cycling community! I know you have worked hard to keep the PWCC wheels rolling over the past years, but it appears it's time for a merger with SRCC.

Best always.

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I'm a MIA member. My personal reason is I felt too intimidated by most of the rides even though I've been riding for twenty years to participate. I would understand if the club decides to disband due to changed circumstances. It would be sad due to its history, but is there a way to continue the club with a different format/structure to enable it to continue? If not, merging would be a logical move as you mentioned many are currently SRCC members. I'm interested in knowing what the final decision would be. Best of luck to all moving forward.

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Re: going forward with pwcc, initially I had favored the idea of an srcc merge. However, in reading XXXX's email response, and talking it over yesterday with XXXX, I feel that that might not be such a great option. Don't see how "separate but equal" would be possible, if you get where I'm coming from.

So what would be an option? How about keeping the club in name only? No president, no board, no ride coordinator, no formal membership, including membership fees. Also no ride insurance. A Show and Go shadow entity. Picnics or get-togethers would be totally informal and loosely planned. As XXXX just put it, can't we be our own little rodeo?

Curious to see how it all unfolds!?!?!

Thanks for all your energy.

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In response to your query regarding merging the Wheelmen with the SRCC and the two critical questions for the members following are my answers.

My answer to the first question is YES we do still need & want the PWCC. The answer to the second question is what the members are willing to put their efforts to. That's always where the "rub" lies, as it always has been and undoubtedly always will be.

As the only one of the five that originally started the club, Club Pres. first two years followed by continuous Bd. membership and two more years as Pres, Ride leader at least once a week for ten years, etc. etc. etc. All that said what it amounts to is that this Club has always been a LABOR of love. The membership, whether 25, 50, 75 and now 174, has always been largely apathetic about just about everything the Board and leadership of the Club has tried to initiate in the way of meetings, gatherings, B&E's Day Parades both early & recently, and Ride leaders were always difficult to recruit and keep. The only thing that has seemed to garner much interest and heated discussion has been the Club kit(s) and recently the name.

Club finances have always been difficult. And given that all of the programs (services & events) are serving just a quarter of the membership some of presently incurring admin. costs that could be trimmed or eliminated without any dire consequences. The PWCC has always been quite informal and though records were kept on a spreadsheet early on, no non-profit status nor returns filed for much of the first ten years. Club insurance wasn't an option until sometime between the fifth & tenth years. Initially members signed a Club Waiver when they joined the Club that released Club from any liability. We did not have a website, only a list service for rides to be posted by any member as well as our few Ride Leaders. All this is to say that services can be discontinued. All our events, summer bar-b-q and Holiday Party were pot luck and held at a members home. I asked local bike stores and companies for donation's of kit's & bike bits to auction off at events to raise monies for



Club's coffers. We had fun bootstrapping the Club and it did bring the members together.

This is all in aid of saying that there are ways & means to keep the Club ticking over without requiring much money or volunteer help from membership.

Further, "merging" the Club with the SRCC as you've outlined in the email to the membership is NOT a merger. It's shutting the Club and offering the membership credit for their currently paid dues toward SRCC membership. And yet most of the members I've spoken to since the email are horrified at the proposal. Further I do not believe that the Club can be disbanded without a majority vote of the membership. The Club's Bylaws state that any substantive change in the Club's status requires membership approval.

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First of you are to be commended for staying on as the club President for what is it, 3 terms now.

I think the issue might come down to a monetary one. Can the club with the amount of dues coming in stay afloat with the requisite expenditures you listed.

I believe covid and also peoples life circumstances partially surrounding covid, have sent them off to other endeavors. And don't seem to be coming back even after the lifting of the lockdown.

Or moved out of town, in [our] case.

As with any club there seems to be a larger social contingent, which is true here. As far as events go, such as the Pizza Party, Ice Cream Social but especially a Christmas Party, a nominal fee could be charged to cover costs.

Not sure much of this is anything new, just some thoughts I had.

And again, my thanks for your tenure as President.

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If you build it, they will come. While this may have been true for bicycle clubs at times in the past, this may no longer hold true. Over the years, I have heard of several cycling clubs bemoaning losing membership and looking at how to increase membership often resulting in little or long lasting increase. An example is our previous club in XXXX, XXXX, which used to have a membership of 1200 and is now around 800.

I believe times of changed with regards to bicycle club joining and participation. I think the modus operandi of work has had some effect on how people make and spend their leisure time. While their work schedule may have some flexibility, their lives are chock full of other demands. It has been my experience in almost all clubs and organizations of which I

have been a member, that the leaders and regular participants are a small percentage of the whole membership. This small percentage may even be shrinking and that asking for more ride leaders usually results in a small increase or a long lasting result.

As for merging with SRCC, I do not think this is necessary as many active PWCC members are also members of SRCC. I hope that a merge does not indicate a dissolution of PWCC. My view is that we can retain PWCC but as a less formal organization without a board, insurance or perhaps even a website. I can see how PWCC could exist as a social organization as many clubs do. It could simply be a collection of people who have been bitten and consumed by the cycling bug get together occasionally or regularly to share their common enjoyment of just getting out to ride their bicycles. A website could exist to announce our existence and allow 'non-members' to join rides and who knows we may even pick-up new riders and/or leaders. As for social events, they could be kept low-key as now with everyone making a contribution and a way to socialize off the bike. Well there is my two cents worth. That and \$2.98 cents might get you a cup of coffee.

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I have deep feelings for the Petaluma Wheelmen and would hate to see it go. I realize that I am not currently active, but I have many fond memories of epic weekend rides. Plus, I have met so many great people through the Club. I attempted to be a Ride Leader but was discouraged by low turnout....more like no turnout. I have done little else other than show up for meetings and events. Injuries and not enough bike time has kept me away lately. I am only riding my bike the short distance to and from work.

It is a hard thing to keep a club active. Matt Muldoon did a great job of mixing things up and generating exciting new activities. We saw membership rise. Our club meetings used to have interesting speakers and slide shows. Maybe those still occur, but I have not heard of any.

I thought that when I retired (currently happening) I would have more time for cycling. But now I find my spare time being sucked up by the XXXX. During COVID, I started XXXX and competing (attempting) in the XXXX, so that has been taking up Saturdays. But I guess what it comes down to is that I don't feel I have anyone to ride with as I build up miles. Not that I have tried very hard through the Club, though. I even got XXXX's town bike electrified so we could ride together, but even that does not entice her to ride it.

I would work to save the Wheelmen. Joining SRCC would be just that, not a merger. Joint rides on occasion would be fine. But we have so much right here. Think about how much Backroads charges for a tour through Chileno Valley. We bike in paradise.

What if we:

- Created more events for younger kids that might or might not involve parents.
- Organize downtown criterions.
- Had more mountain bike rides.
- Created a secret bike rally with an undisclosed picnic location that can only be accessed by bike.

I know that all of these ideas take time and people to volunteer.

I am not inclined to ride in Butter & Eggs unless we had something really special and creative to show.

The Holiday bike rides were fun (when not raining), but no one knows who we are in the dark. Plus, we are looking in, few are looking out.

I feel badly for not being more involved over the last 3 or 4 years, but if the Club continues, I will strive to participate.

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I suggest holding a club meeting for all members. We can't hear any opinions of other members with one-way email communication. Is there any reason for not sharing the survey results?

In case we don't get the opportunity to discuss the issue at a general meeting, I am not in favor of disbanding the club.

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I moved to Petaluma 2 months ago and absolutely love it! When I came across PWCC, I was quite excited to join the club and hopefully meet some local riders. I have spent the last 15+ years riding and racing road, gravel, CX and MTB's in XXXX. Also during this time I served on the board of directors and helped organize club supported gravel rides for XXXX, a club of over 500 members.

At this point, given the nature of PWCC's challenges, I would like to offer my support. I am also a full-time web developer and have an extensive background in graphic design should the club require assistance in these areas.

Whether or not PWCC remains an independent entity or merges with SRCC, I look forward to meeting you along with the other members of PWCC.

See you down the road.

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In short, I strongly favor keeping our club intact. With that being said, I feel equally strongly that we change the club name to be appropriate to all of its membership.

I may write more later, but wanted to get my opinion/vote in asap.

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Thank you for doing this thankless job...

Do we need a Petaluma club? Yes, of course we do. There are a lot of riders here in town, and they ALL could benefit from an active, healthy, and local organization to promote and support their sport. That's pretty simple reasoning, I think.

What should the function be? Obviously a more difficult question to answer, as it can, of course, be almost anything. We have a lot of cycling resources in Petaluma, from manufacturers, ex-pro cyclists, active influencer cyclists, experienced local riders, and a whole new group of riders on e-bikes. Petaluma is a community that prides itself on local businesses and resources, and I think a cycling club could use what local resources we have, and use them to help shape what a post-covid Petaluma Wheelmen club can be. As one single example of what I'm thinking about is group rides. People like riding in a group for several reasons, but I think safety is a significant driver of that motivation. The key to a great group ride is discipline. Discipline is where the safety is, and ultimately, the fun too. I've been riding long enough to know that people LIKE riding in a disciplined group. It's comforting, especially for newer or less experienced riders. It makes them feel more confident to ride more and to excel at riding, because it feels safe to do so. I don't think our groups have much if any discipline. When was the last time you heard a conversation regarding the ride protocol or discipline of the group, that wasn't started and finished, by complaining about somebody's poor behavior? I don't ride with the group much (or at all for that matter), but it's been a very long time since I heard much talk about it. We've had our share of un-disciplined riders that caused unease in the group. A strong sense of "how to ride as a group" keeps folks like that in check, before it becomes a problem. I'm not talking about military-type discipline, but more like the last BIG group of guys that come in at the end of a Tour stage. They are riding together to conserve energy to race another day, and they have tremendous discipline doing it. We just want to ride another day, but it's in the same spirit. So we have local riders like Michael James, Allison Tetric, Steve Cozza, Yuri Hauserwald, and Peter Stetina, who could and I'm confident would, help us to learn more about "how to ride as a group", all from a position of great experience and authority. People would listen to them.

This is of course just one simple example of how our club might be more desirable, allowing people to become more active and interested in participating. I am happy to help save our club because it is worth saving. I hope this is a wake-up call (as it was for me) for all the members to consider contributing and adding to what function we want from the club.

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For all of the reasons you laid out in your email, I think it makes sense for the PWCC to merge with the SRCC.  
As we age out of riding as much, this will give new opportunities for rides and socializing.

Thank you for developing this proposal,

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Thank you very much for asking for our input. Although I don't really ride with the Wheelman currently, I love being a member and would like to see the Wheelman Club continue. I first joined over 20 years ago and have met many of my closest friends through the club. When I joined, most of the rides were on the weekends This is because the members were mostly younger and working. At first it was such a small group, we would all meet at the Apple Box and ride all together ...we had away trips and lots and lots of parties that I always helped organize. I was a B ride leader once a month on Saturday mornings and a board member. That core of Wheelman are much older now and less involved. I still feel invested in the Club.

I have some good friends that are members of the Petaluma Yacht Club. For years the boats couldn't come up the river, but the yacht club was still alive and well. They identified with the club and remained members. Most of the members are aging Boomers and don't sail but it is their comfort zone of friends.

While I am not going to step up in a leadership role at this point, I am always there to help when needed. The Wheelmen are not SRCC. We are small and not as established. The SRCC is stellar in every way. It is [Nordstrom] and we are a tiny boutique cottage store. I would like to see if we could "muddle" along. COVID, and an aging club, changed the structure of rides when we formed little pods of riders.

The last events have drawn a good amount of people even through they are not Wheelman Riders, just members.

My observation is the Club continues to serve a purpose as a social club.

I am really glad you sent this letter out and that you are asking for input. I love the SRCC and am a proud member. However, I love the Wheelmen, too.

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I am a member of both clubs. I use SRCC scheduled rides 95% of the time, as opposed to 5% with PW. I am not a leader, rather a follower, so I would not be committed to organizing or leading rides. I like that PWCC exists, and would be sad if they ceased functioning.

I realize that private small groups have their regular group, but have never felt part of those. I have attended the social events, Christmas party, ice cream social, summer party and enjoyed meeting some people I've never seen before on rides. I surely miss the "RICK" A rides that happened on a regular basis. So, I would like PWCC to continue existing.

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Why couldn't the name of the merged clubs be something like Sonoma County Cycling Club - and not just SRCC?

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Very thoughtful and thorough email. Thank you.

I am a member of both clubs. I am not that active with either club. I joined each more as a rider to support local cycle clubs. In this important decision I support whatever you think is best.

I think you can merge and still keep some Petaluma identity and community through a few social event that take place in Petaluma within the larger club. And hopefully in a combined organization there could be even more Petaluma centric rides for all members.

Here to support you.

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I am saddened by the prospect of our club disbanding. I do realize it is way too much work for those that are keeping it going. Nobody wants to step up to the plate to be ride leaders on the roster.

I have been riding with the club for over 15 years, it has been great. I started with Tricky Rick Moeller, it was really great fun, my exercise and therapy. When one of the original founders passed we all road over to the Veterans building for JJ s memorial. We had some fantastic parties at Mike's fabulous home on Sonoma mountain, we had nice big Christmas parties at the Petaluma Women's center.

When the pandemic happened I had to get an e-bike to keep up with the big guys, or ride

alone. Maybe we have gotten older and don't want to put out the effort. Sadly I am not ride leader material. I don't like to be in charge of a lot of people.

At least we had a nice summer party at Mike Sarmiento's. Maybe it is time to hang it up. Hope we still keep the connections. It has been a great ride.

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I think the merge makes sense. I've ridden with both clubs even though I live in Petaluma. I may be wrong, but it seems like Santa Rosa online technology is a little more sophisticated and up-to-date. They have more rides and more options. SRCC would just need to make sure they have rides a little bit further south with ride leaders to cover them. I think you would actually see more interest in ride leaders in Petaluma because SRCC Will drive more riders with their technology, and some of the SRCC members will come down as well..

with more riders and better segmentation amongst the riders, I would consider being a ride leader in the south division, Petaluma of SRCC.

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Although I am neutral with respect to a merger, I like the idea of at least maintaining a Petaluma "chapter" so that our small active core can continue to take pride in our hometown as well as having leverage to purchase custom joint-venture "Petaluma/SRCC" clothing for our locals.

In the event of a merger, I will continue to pay membership dues, but I am unlikely to attend any meetings/events/fiestas in Santa Rosa. Further, I will continue to ride locally from the riverfront with my close knit crew. A merger will not change that, nor will it inspire me to travel to Santa Rosa for a ride.

Re: PWCC specifically, having an official formal organization and its insurance are *unimportant* to me. Having formal ride leaders is unimportant to me. Increased participation from inactive members is unimportant to me.

The value propositions for me are fellowship, discounts at bike shops, the occasional ice cream and pizza parties, the ridewithgps account with our saved ride library, and the PWCC website (which could become a subsection of the SRCC website). Even though I have not purchased PWCC clothing, I value the fact that our core gang has access to premium clothing at group discount pricing.

Not sure if this helps, but the upshot is that our 30-45-ish active members are essentially "friends who like to ride together." Having a formal organization to support our basic activities may be overkill for our core subset of members--for example, we can likely get club pricing without being burdened by a non-profit entity. "Simplifying" is always preferable when possible. Therefore I wouldn't worry about the other 129-144 inactive

members as we chart our path forward because they have their own mysterious reasons for shelling out \$20/year. If they want to metaphorically "draft at the back of the pack" without having a say in the route, that is their choice. No need to kick them off the ride just because they don't want to take a pull. There is safety and strength in numbers, so there is an upside for everyone involved.

As a parting thought, ponder the following quote from the Board's email: "*The harsh reality of this moment is that we are a club that is unable to provide the **essential services** to its members **for which the club was created.***" Raisons d'etre often change over time. Perhaps this sense of duty is stressful and cumbersome, and the Board members (who do *all* the heavy lifting) would be better off with a simplified credo. So I ask you (rhetorically) what do you as individuals want from your participation in our club? As long as the answer is not a variant of something lofty and ambitious--like "to increase participation and grow the sport of cycling"--we can potentially thrive within a simpler scaled-back organization. But if you want to throw some weight behind legislation and infrastructure changes that are relevant to cyclists, then it makes sense as an individual to associate with a much larger entity like SRCC.

I will be happy with whatever gives the Board peace of mind.

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Good question with a long answer. It was a surprise to read that letter but not an unexpected one. I think PWCC is having an identity crisis, there is not strong club leadership. They need outreach to their membership and to strengthen their ties to the city/community. There are thousands of riders in the North Bay who relesh the routes near and around Petaluma. I think the core is that Petaluma is a great city for riding. There are great routes to the North South East and West. The mayor is aa member. Rides always left from the same place and time consistantly. The local shops have always been supportive of the Club, eben the local Grocery Store. The board has not set an example for the members, and instead have only managed to produce a member event once a quarter, one that is often ill attended (ie Butter n Eggs). Building on those they need to re-establish a led- ride schedule, establish the links to community, ask more of their members and I think they need to produce a 'big' event annually like a century or metric ride through the west county, bring notice and finace to the club. All this comes with work and commitment and I dont see the current board leadership willing to make. We need a core group who is wilingl to put on the gloves and do the hard work. A question to ask is could SRCC take over leadership of PWCC without dissolving it? This is all my wishful thinking and I cant tell if its practical.

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[Note: below is a response to the prior comment (part of a private conversation that was forwarded to the Board).]

The challenge is just what Mike articulated – no members are stepping up to take those roles and make those things happen. Speaking from my experience, there is only so much an all-volunteer board of directors can do to make things happen in a bike club. It takes members willing to wade in and lead events, rides, and activities. In a best-case scenario,



you and others who read Mike's note will be galvanized to jump in and help make those things happen.

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Tough decision to make. I can only comment from a distance as XXXX and I have been on the edges of the PWCC for a number of years. I had been a very active member since the mid 2000s and my dedication and involvement has wained with time and I am sorry for that. I confess to being one of the peoples who ride with a breakaway group of old farts for the last couple of years. I agree with just about all of what you have to say. It is difficult to find volunteers willing and able to handle club activities ie ride coordinator etc. Do what you think best for the club.

Reading your email makes me sad as I a member of the Wheelmen since 2005, I think.

All the best to you, Mike.

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If a merger would mean having scheduled rides then I am 100% for it. I drive out from either XXXX or XXXX and won't come for a "show and go" and don't know other members to coordinate rides. So for me it would be very good. My only concern is that the ride starts would be in Santa Rosa which is pretty far for me. I had considered joining their club but wasn't sure I could make that long a drive.  
thanks

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While I have only been a member for a short time, my reason for joining was due to the history and a community based cycling club based in Petaluma. I have enjoyed my rides with the club and believe much of the local culture would be lost with a merger.