

# BORP Bulletin

*BORP's mission is to improve the health, independence, & social integration of physically disabled individuals through sport, fitness and recreation programs.*

A Semi-Annual Newsletter

Fall 2008

## REV Ride Rocks

Revolution 2008, our 6<sup>th</sup> annual fundraising ride and festival, was a success by any measure. We had the most Riders (272) and Volunteers (110) ever! As of press time, these riders have raised over \$180,000, which includes a down-to-the-wire battle for the first place team fundraising champion between "Team Alameda," "BORP not Bombs," and "Touchtone Climbing".

John Ormsby, board member, shares his account of this year's Rev and his reflections as a six-time participant:

"The Graton Rest Stop is where my Revolution experience began as a volunteer. It was 2003, the first year of the REV. My job was to staff the rest stop -- constructing made-to-measure peanut butter sandwiches, churning sports potions and encouraging the riders. Then, as now, the Graton stop is the one place where all the rides, from the 10 to the 100 miler, intersect. From this unique vantage point I was lucky to meet a wonderful cross section of people. What they had in common was the pure joy of bicycling with friends and family in a glorious setting and the satisfaction that comes from committing yourself to something other than yourself. This was the REV spirit from the beginning and why it continues to grow and be such a success. I was hooked.

Flash forward five years to my fifth year riding the REV. Unlike previous REVs the



weather the morning of October 4<sup>th</sup> was ominous. A group of roughly 40 waterproofed and spandexed peacocks rolled out of Trentadue Winery just after sunrise. Some of us were looking for a fun, not-too-taxing ride through the vineyards and hills. Others were just hoping to make it back unaided. All were smiling.

The REV is the ride I most look forward to each year. The location is spectacular, the support on the road is exceptional, and the party after and the cause are second to none. I get to ride with some of my best friends, and maybe make a few new ones, making this spin a true celebration -- one I hope I never miss. For me, the REV provides an immediate connection with the people who make BORP the special organization it is. The experience never fails to inspire.

Around mile 40, I returned to the same Graton rest stop where it started for me five years earlier. I was in a fine mood. The rain never came, the sun was beginning to peak through and the slow leak in my tire didn't slow me down. We had not stopped to this point, and I was looking forward to the peanut butter sandwiches, bananas and extra thick coffee I knew would be waiting for me.

I was expecting a routine stop, but as we rolled up we were greeted with a chorus of shouts and cheers from over 100 children and adults who were preparing to start their own REV ride.

It was an uplifting and deeply humbling feeling to be cheered like a champion by this group. I couldn't help thinking that it should be us cheering them. But by riding the REV and supporting BORP we were cheering them -- cheering them to keep riding, to keep striving and to keep the promise we all have to honor the potential in ourselves and others. We ate our peanut butter sandwiches and rolled out for the next 60 miles and what comes after."

*Create your own Revolution memories next year on Saturday, September 26, 2009.*



John Ormsby

Thanks to our major sponsors:



Our great thanks to all the REV sponsors. See the full list at [www.borp.org](http://www.borp.org).

## Kaia's Message

*Dear Friends,*

*As you may have already heard me say, I feel very privileged to be here at BORP. Since starting in February, I've been repeatedly struck by the compelling stories of our participants and families. The successes that "BORPIes" achieve are quite phenomenal. The outcomes are so positive, that while it may sound quite trite, it seems almost criminal to me that every child, youth, and adult with a disability doesn't have access to our programs.*

*One of BORP's greatest strengths is a unique blending of the old and the new. We've got a solid tradition of the country's oldest and longest running programs, long standing staff and board members, loyal volunteers, consistent donors, and steady community support. We've also got new programs which continue to serve as models for other communities, three new board members bringing diversity of background and experience, new staff members bringing in fresh perspectives, and new partners eager to collaborate on programs.*

*With this great foundation in place, we are looking to grow. So for the next year or so, we'll be asking ourselves (and you) what is the most efficient, sustainable way to reach every person with a disability in the San Francisco Bay Area. We will be forming more collaborative relationships with partner organizations to expand our programs, more fully developing our volunteer base, fine-tuning our organizational infrastructure, re-vamping our materials and the way we communicate with you, and diversifying our funding base to create more long-term stability. And when March of 2010 rolls around, we'll be moving into our new digs at the Ed Roberts Campus.*

*This is an exciting time for us as we continue growing the BORP tradition. We recognize that we couldn't do this without you and welcome your involvement.*

*Kaia Burkett, Executive Director*



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## New Staff at BORP

**Issac Leff** is our new Development & Communications Manager. He is our first, full-time development professional and we are thrilled to have him on our team. Issac has focused his career on the nonprofit sector since his time in law school at the University of Georgia. He has worked in fundraising with a wide variety of organizations, provided legal assistance to victims of domestic abuse, and studied International Human Rights law.



**Trooper Johnson** is our new Youth Sports Program Coordinator.

While Trooper has big shoes to fill after Tim Orr's departure, we are confident he will make the Youth Program better than ever. Trooper is widely recognized as one of the top wheelchair basketball players in the country and serves as a great role model for our youth participants. He is a four-time Paralympic Games athlete, has been captain of the Golden State Road Warriors, climbed El Capitan twice, and served on the Athletic Advisory Council for the U.S. Olympic Committee/Wheelchair Sports USA.



This newsletter is available in audio (on tape) and as an electronic file. Please call 510-849-4663 for either.

## Chris

Chris started riding with BORP on July 17th, just four months after unexpectedly losing his eyesight in surgery. Chris, a professional architect, husband, and father, has been an avid cyclist for much of



*Chris and his family at the REV*

his life. He used to ride his bike 60-100 miles a week and would commute to work by bike between three to five days per week. After surgery, Chris was concerned that he would never get back on his bike. After finding BORP, he was thrilled to know he would ride again.

With training and support from Greg Milano, BORP's Cycling Program Coordinator, Chris and his tandem captain began riding from the BORP bike house. "From my first day at BORP, my goal was to ride in the Revolution and my whole rehab was focused around getting ready for the Revolution." Chris started a Revolution team and raised over \$10,000 for BORP's programs. What Chris and his teammates found was that, "It is one thing to write a check and donate, and another to get out there that day and experience it."

Chris says that after the surgery and as a result of his BORP experiences, he was more comfortable riding bikes than he was walking down the street. For Chris, his BORP cycling experiences have given him more confidence, trust, and a sense of empowerment. But one of the best parts for him has been the effect on his family. "To get out and be active with my son has been huge. He can see that I'm going to keep doing things and get out of the house... It's not just me, it's my whole family. It's keeping us all going together."

## Oscar

Seventeen year old Oakland resident, Oscar, has used a wheelchair his entire life. He discovered basketball and handcycling through BORP. Like many of our young athletes, Oscar is only able to participate because of BORP's accessible transportation program, which brings many of our players to and from practice. However, it is his commitment and not our van that really gets him to practice every week. "I have to get up at 7 a.m. on Saturdays to be ready when the BORP bus comes. Sometimes, I don't get home till three o'clock if I go to basketball and cycling practice. This year I really wanted to ride 25 miles, so I came all the time."



*Oscar on a BORP bike*

Oscar consistently made it to cycling practice in the months before the Revolution and ended up pushing himself further than he ever had before. In the 2008 Revolution, Oscar rode a BORP handcycle 25 miles through the rolling hills of Sonoma County.

Now that it's basketball season, Oscar is excited to get on the court and see what all this training has done for his hoops game. But we know next summer he'll be back on the bike trails training even harder. "I like all the views of the Bay we see when we are riding. I like that it makes me stronger. And I like that I get to go fast. Next year, I want to ride 50 miles!"

## Upcoming Events

November 8– 11AM – 5:30PM:  
**Power Soccer Tournament** at James Kenney Recreation Center, 1720 8th St., Berkeley

November 14 – 7PM: **BORP Poker Mini-Slam** at Chris Finn's house, 1801 Boxwood Ave., San Leandro – limited to 28 people with a \$50 donation to participate and top prize is a two nights at the Hilton Garden Inn in Emeryville.

**The Way Bobby Sees It** – Come see a documentary movie showing about a competitive mountain biker who is blind. Presented in conjunction with the NorCal High School Mountain Bike League. For more information, please visit [www.norcalmtb.org](http://www.norcalmtb.org).

Dates and sites:

12/2: Sundance Kabuki, S.F. 7:00PM  
12/4: Cinema West, Livermore 7:30PM

12/9: Rialto, Santa Rosa 7:30PM  
12/10: Grand Lake, Oakland 7:30PM

December 13 – **Power Soccer Tournament** at UC Berkeley, Recreational Sports Facility, 2310 Bancroft Way, Berkeley

December 20 – **Goalball Tournament** at James Kenney Recreation Center, 1720 8th St., Berkeley

# ERC Groundbreaking

After over 14 years of planning, BORP and the larger disabled community celebrated the groundbreaking of the Ed Roberts Campus (ERC) on September 4, 2008. Over 300 people attended the festive event which featured remarks by former Secretary of Transportation Norm Mineta, Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates, ERC Chair Dmitri Belser and others. Executive Director Kaia Burkett donned a hard hat, picked up a golden shovel and represented BORP.

The ERC will be the first of its kind universally accessible, transit-oriented commercial development. Located at the Ashby BART station, the 87,000 square foot building will house several nonprofits, a cafe, and child development center. BORP and six other disability services organizations will be co-owners and anchor tenants. This will be a vibrant community where people can access multiple services, leaders and activists can plan and confer, and where everyone can gather and learn.

The ERC represents a new and exciting era for BORP. For more information and ongoing updates, please visit [www.borp.org](http://www.borp.org) and [www.edrobertscampus.org](http://www.edrobertscampus.org).



*Kaia joins the other ERC agency directors at the historic groundbreaking.*

## eNewsletter



We're going green! We are moving some of our communications to electronic versions and our next newsletter will be an eNewsletter. If you would like to receive our eNews and other occasional email updates, please sign up on our website ([www.borp.org](http://www.borp.org)) or send your email address to [news@borp.org](mailto:news@borp.org).

## Wish List

BORP is hoping for:

- digital camera
- digital video camera
- digital projector
- Mac computer, G4 or newer

## Happy Holidays from BORP

*We wish you a happy holiday season and a healthy and happy New Year!*