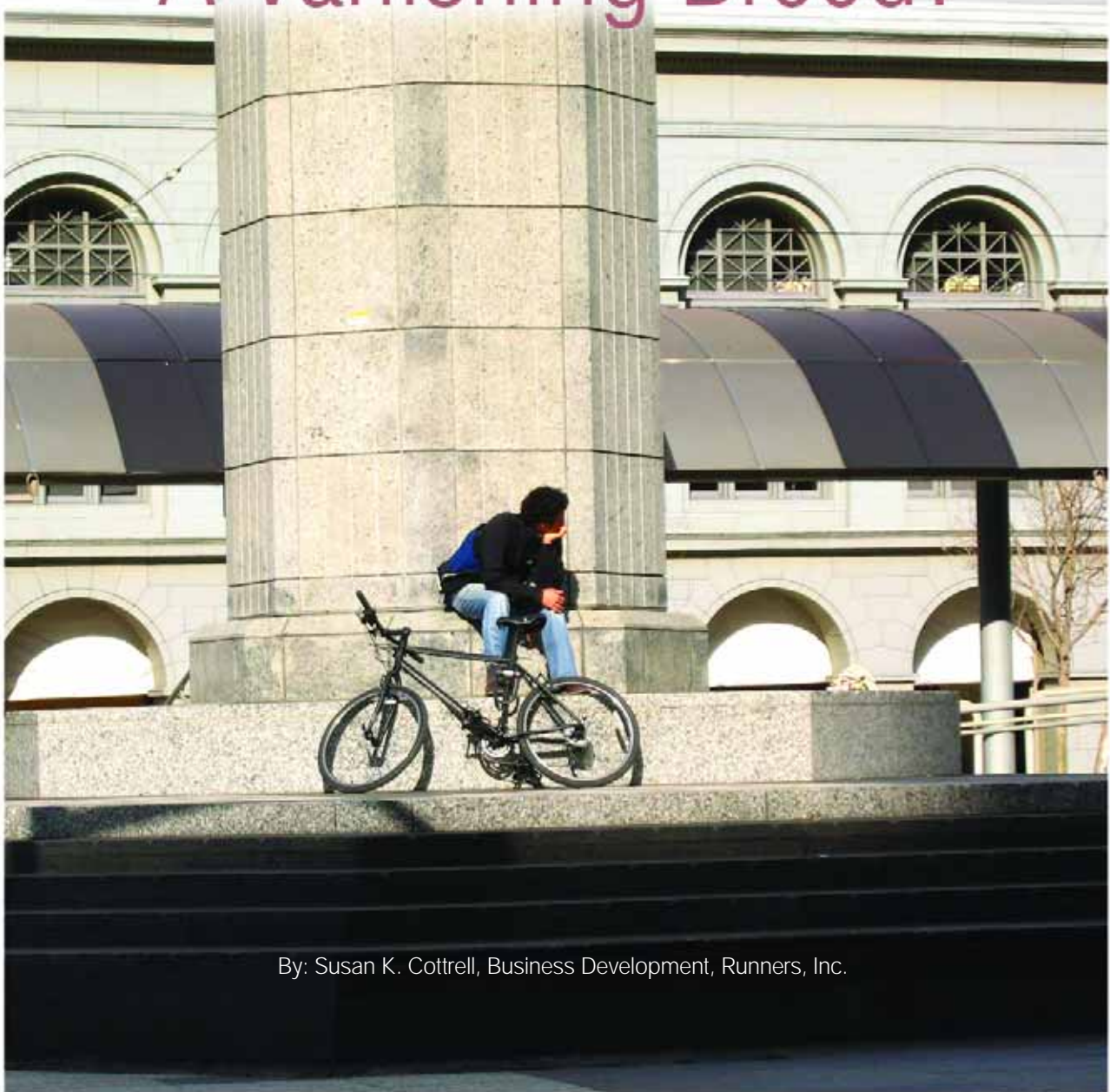


BIKE MESSENGERS

A Vanishing Breed?



By: Susan K. Cottrell, Business Development, Runners, Inc.

Runners, Inc., a small, woman-owned company located in Gaithersburg, Maryland, (www.runnersinc.com) has been providing courier services in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area since 1987. To meet the ever-changing needs of their customers, Runners' has expanded services and added trucking, warehousing, fulfillment and custom services.

Delivering packages in congested areas where parking is at a premium or nonexistent, can be difficult for traditional couriers with vehicles. Runners' relies on the services of Elton Franklin, an independent subcontract bicycle messenger to make an average of 10 weekly deliveries in Washington, D.C. to customers such as:

- graphic/marketing specialty firms who want to hand-deliver marketing products to attract new customers and thank existing clients;
- companies who want to deliver files, documents and packages;
- architectural firms that need over-sized bulky blueprints delivered; and
- anyone who wants concert or movie tickets picked-up and delivered.

For over 18 years, Elton has been providing courier services to satisfied customers on his reliable Cannondale mountain bike, making an average of 30 daily deliveries. His reputation for service has created many loyal customers and he works with several courier companies in addition to Runners, Inc.

When asked why he chose this type of a job, he quickly replied: "For 15 years I worked in a government office and longingly looked out the window at people on bikes wishing I could be outside. One day I just decided to do something about my dream and need for a career change with more freedom. I walked into the office of a nearby

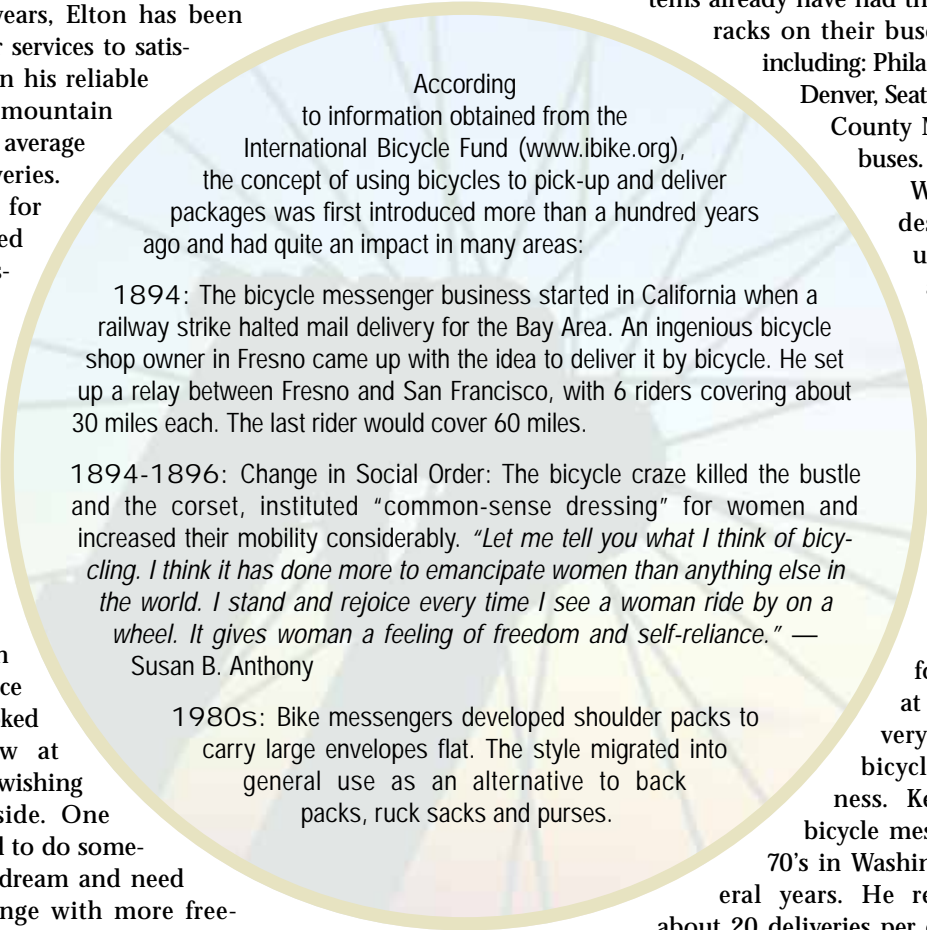
courier company and signed up as a bicycle messenger even though I didn't have any previous experience. They trained me on-the-job and my new career began. I enjoyed my work so much that I stayed with them for over 15 years and never regretted my decision even in bad weather. I'm from Chicago and the climate in Washington, DC doesn't bother me at all!"

One of the obvious benefits of choosing this type of a job is that bicycling 30-35 miles every day keeps Elton physically fit. In fact he doesn't have or feel the need for a drivers' license. When he wants to take a break from his bike, he hops on a metro bus. Washington, D.C. is becoming more bicycle-friendly through the Metro Bike-'N-Ride program and cyclists can transport their bikes for free aboard Metrobus in a special rack attached to the front of each bus. Bicycle lockers and racks are available at Metrorail stations for cyclists wishing to split their commutes between bike and rail. Metrorail also permits cyclists to bring their bikes aboard trains at off-peak times. There are several private and government organizations that offer helpful information on local bike trails, commuting, safety, advocacy, the annual Bike-to-Work day and other bike events, services and initiatives. Many transit systems already have had the same type of bike

racks on their buses for several years including: Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Denver, Seattle, and Montgomery County Maryland's Ride-On buses.

When asked to describe some rather unusual courier assignments, Elton said that one customer has him routinely deliver the Wall Street Journal from the 5th floor to the 6th floor in the same building!

Kevin Joyce, the Technical Operations Manager for Dispatch Services at Runners, Inc., is very familiar with the bicycle messenger business. Kevin worked as a bicycle messenger in the early 70's in Washington, D.C. for several years. He remembers making about 20 deliveries per day and earning an



average of \$80 daily, which he considered a good income for doing what he loved...riding his bike! One delivery challenge he fondly remembers was successfully balancing a huge cake on his handlebars for ten blocks. At that time, he was kept busy delivering press releases from UPI to the Washington Post; making visits to Congress to pick-up the Federal Register; and going to the Document Room on Capitol Hill to pick-up copies of new laws being passed.

The bicycle messenger business continued to flourish until the 1990's until the impact of the Information Revolution changed traditional ways of doing business. Fax machines, modems and e-mail provided alternative ways of sending documents and the reliance on bicycle messengers diminished. However, technological innovations continue to provide new opportunities to process information in ways never thought possible and this change creates different business needs.

Futurists Alvin Toffler and his wife Heidi co-authored the earth-shattering, futurist classic "Future Shock" back in

1970. In a twist on the term "culture shock," the Tofflers described in their book a mass disorientation caused by technological innovations coming faster than most people can grasp. So far, they've been disturbingly correct.

A decade later, the Tofflers predicted the rise of the information age and the Internet in "The Third Wave." The book explained how the embedded industrial civilization based on social conformity and muscle power would be replaced by an information and technology culture dependent wholly on the creativity of the individual mind. http://www.g4tv.com/techtv/vault/features/31107/Alvin_Toffler_and_the_Information_Revolution.html

As businesses create new demands, the need for bicycle couriers will remain. Bicycles provide the ability to easily navigate in congested cities with bumper-to-bumper traffic. Currently there are an estimated 500 independent bicycle couriers in Washington, D.C. and associations such as the District of Columbia Bicycle Courier Association <http://dcbca.org> provide support. **MCW**

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was pointed out that Connecticut couriers have one of the best situations in the country with our declaratory ruling.

On a more mundane note, we have adopted a dues schedule that is on a sliding scale based on the number of drivers. Directors and Officer insurance has been found at a reasonable premium and will be purchased shortly. Discussions on our logo have been ongoing and Jim Chuisano indicated that he would present some alternatives at our next meeting. We also amended our by-laws to reduce the quorum for meetings from 50% to one-third of active members. Our next meeting is scheduled for November 28, 2006.

NICK A. BATTAGLINO, PONY EXPRESS, INC.



CALIFORNIA

California Delivery Association's annual Convention & Exhibition has become one of the industry's major trade shows and one of its premier events. 2007 promises more of the same.

CDA will be celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2007 and its theme for the convention and exhibition is based on Einstein's theory of relativity. You all know, I'm sure, that $E=MC^2$ is an important equation of Einstein which states an equivalence between energy (E) and mass (M), in direct proportion to the square of the speed of light in a vacuum (C^2).

Well, CDA has its own, equally important, theory. Those who attend the 2007 CDA Convention & Exhibition will experience energy from the masses that will be there. So sign up now with the speed of light rather than continuing to operate

in a vacuum. Stated differently, $E=MC^2$ where E = Education, M = Motivation, and C = Celebration after 20 years!

Leading off the convention is Frank Maguire, the former FedEx executive who by popular demand is returning as keynote speaker. Frank's message in 2004 was motivational, challenging and filled with the kind of energy that only comes from someone who's "been there." For many of those who attended in 2004, his presentation warranted a "best ever" rating.

California – indeed, much of the country – has also been talking about a recent appellate court decision in a case known as *JKH Enterprises, Inc. v Department of Industrial Relations* (the "JKH case"). This is the first California status decision that has general application to the courier industry and it may have spillover impact on businesses generally. It represents a departure from other precedent decisions because of its "overriding" emphasis on the so-called integral role factor, rather than the typical "control" issues. CDA's membership meetings in November were devoted to providing a thorough explanation of the decision and its implications for courier firms (employer-based as well as IC-based). The decision has been appealed by the plaintiff to California's Supreme Court.

CDA's membership is now at the highest level ever, with more growth expected in 2007. Much thanks for this growth is due our outgoing president, Mike Barbata. Mike has been a tireless spokesperson for the Association and his enthusiasm and energy have encouraged many new firms to experience the many benefits of membership. If you market your services in California, you owe it to your company to also be a CDA member.

RON BROBERG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MCW