

Susie Stephens

April 16, 1965 - March 21, 2002



Before Susie came to the Methow Valley, she was already well-known throughout the bicycling world for her leadership on bicycle and pedestrian issues. Susie was a Founding Director and then Managing Director of the Thunderhead Alliance (now the Alliance for Biking and Walking), the national coalition of state and local bicycle advocacy organizations. She also spent five successful years as the Executive Director of the Bicycle Alliance of Washington (BAW), and headed up the Northwest Bicycle Federation. As director of BAW, Susie built the organization to a powerful and respected statewide bicycle advocacy force, and helped push through the Washington State Legislature the Cooper Jones Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Education Act.

Susie was a passionate advocate of bicycles for transportation; bicyclist and pedestrian safety; and bicycle travel and recreation. On March 21, 2002, Susie Stephens was struck and killed by a bus while walking across a street in St. Louis, Missouri where she was helping direct a conference for the National Center of Bicycling and Walking on innovative approaches to transportation (sponsored by the US Forest Service).

Perhaps more than her work, Susie was known and loved for her endless energy, joyfulness, enthusiasm, and positive spirit. She had an amazing ability to pull people together to do good work, and had unflappable optimism in humanity. She believed that people could make a positive difference, and is proof that they do.

In Winthrop, Susie worked for the Methow Conservancy from March 2000 until her death in 2002. She helped in the formation of Methow Recycles, brought The Paperboys to town for a membership fundraising effort, and ran the outreach and development efforts during those early days of the Conservancy.



Remembering Susie:

Today's lesson:

Barbara McCann, of the Surface Transportation Policy Partnership, said, "Susie multiplied the effectiveness of the transportation reform movement by helping create and support a national network of effective bicycle advocacy groups. Perhaps most importantly, she taught many of us how to have fun while working for change."

If you don't

Bill Wilkinson, Executive Director of the National Center for Bicycling and Walking said, "Susie is phenomenal with people. She was one of those people who was a bright light in any group."

like where you are,

pedal.

The Alliance for Biking & Walking (formerly the Thunderhead Alliance) gives the *Susie Stephens Joyful Enthusiasm Award* to an individual who carries on Susie's passion for advocating for bicycling as a fun and economical way of transport as well as creating a safe biking and walking environment for all.



The Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals created the *Susie Stephens Scholarship* to celebrate the life of one of the bike/ped world's brightest stars. They say, "Susie's spirit, enthusiasm and optimism touched everyone who knew her. "

The Methow Conservancy created the *Susie Stephens Award* to honor those who carry on Susie's endless energy for helping others and her strong belief that education about conservation can make a difference.

In her own words, Susie said it was her personal mission to "use [her] skills and strengths to create healthier communities."