

If you can't control your peanut butter, you can't control your life



Calvin & Hobbes really gets it. As I'm riding south on Highway 1 towards Santa Cruz with my son, Kevin, who's going to be 19 tomorrow, I found myself explaining to him that the sun isn't going to get any higher in the sky, it's just going to travel along an arc fairly close to the horizon... and realized I lost an opportunity to come up with something really interesting like Calvin's dad used to do. Like the fact that the world used to be black & white until sometime in the 30s, and that the reason old paintings are in color was because artists were crazy. Am I letting him down when I tell him the truth?

And then later on we were looking at the Calvin & Hobbes strip where Calvin's giving his mom a bad time because she doesn't scoop the peanut butter out of the jar exactly right (which is where the phrase "If you can't control your peanut butter, you can't control your life" comes from).

Fortunately, we can control our lives, or at least enough of them to feel that our destiny is not entirely determined by fate. We can decide to go out on a long bike ride, for example, a race against the sun actually, to find out if we can get out on the road early enough and ride fast enough to do the Redwood City-Santa Cruz loop (about 112 miles) before the sun sets. Answer? You can! But we did bring flashing tail lights and high-powered head lights (insert commercial plug here for the fantastic Niterider 1-watt tail light and 350 or 600 lumen self-contained headlights).

Just to be (a little) different, we rode up 84 from Woodside instead of the usual Old LaHonda, but other than that, it was basically the same ride we must have done 5 or 6 times in the past few months. Just a few years ago I never would have considered a 112 mile ride to be no big thing. That was then, this is now. What I wonder though is whether I'm doing these rides to help push my son's limits, or am I trying to prove to myself that I'm capable of more, not less, as I get older? This is where the bit about controlling our lives comes in.