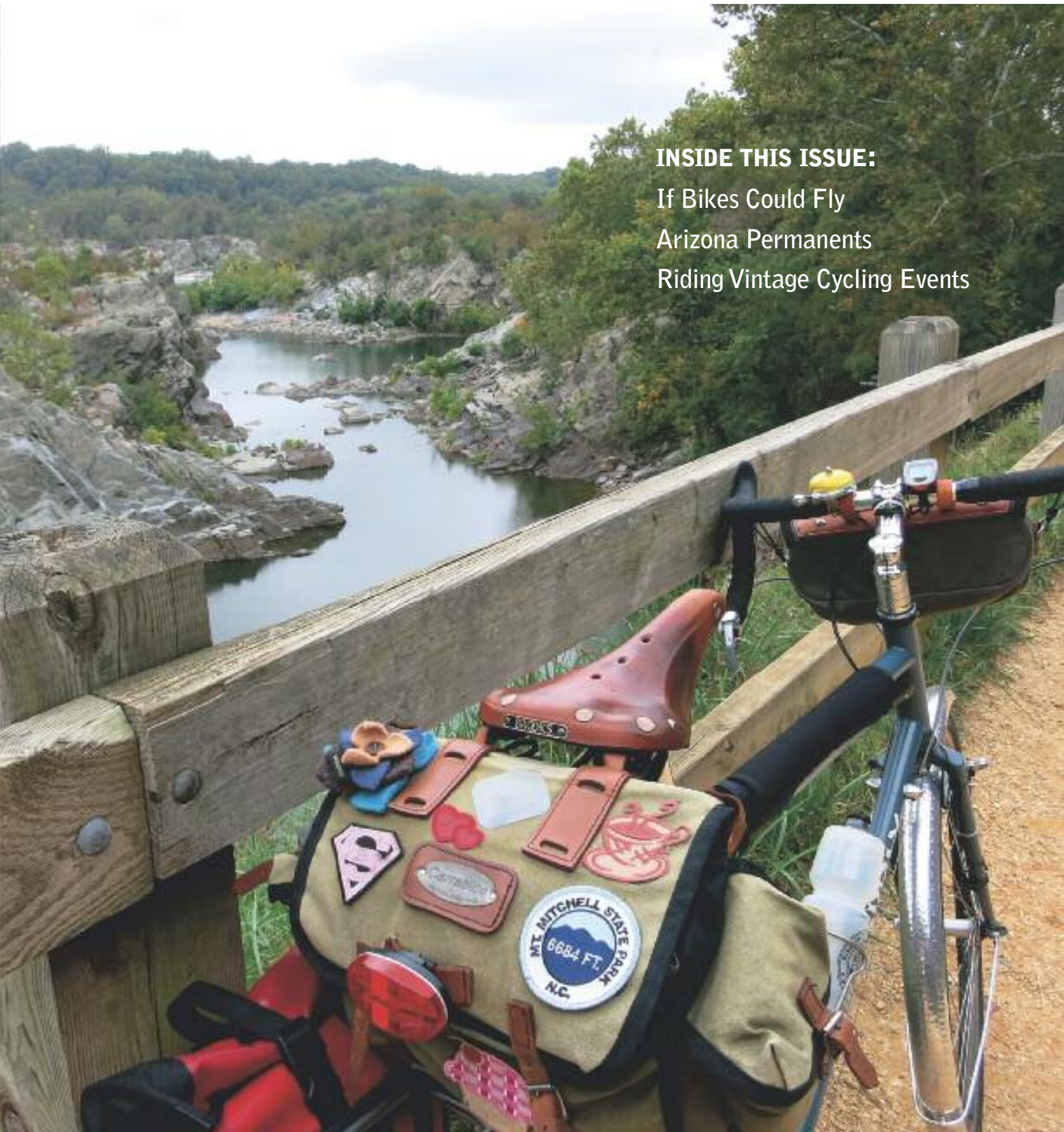


# AMERICAN RANDONNEUR

VOLUME 17 • ISSUE #4 WINTER 2014



**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**  
If Bikes Could Fly  
Arizona Permanents  
Riding Vintage Cycling Events





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## American Randonneur Magazine

Winter 2014 • Vol. 17 #4

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**Editor:** Janice Chernekkoff  
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American Randonneur is published quarterly  
Submissions: editor@rusa.org

Advertising: mdayton1@gmail.com

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2266 The Circle, Raleigh, NC 27608  
president@rusa.org  
Phone: +1 919.821.3153

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**COVER — An early fall ramble  
along the C&O Canal Towpath.**

PHOTO BY: MARY GERSEMA

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# President's Message

Happy holidays! Here's hoping you had a successful 2014 riding season and are already dreaming of 2015. The winter season is upon us, and even a moderately paced 200K can end in darkness, making reflective gear essential. Jennifer Wise, RUSA's storekeeper, is now stocking reflective vests that are a true bargain. The price? At a mere \$6, plus shipping, it is the perfect stocking stuffer. You can order a standard knit version or a mesh version that may be preferable in our warmer regions. Both vests meet the U.S. reflectivity standards of ANSI/ISEA 107-2004, Class 2. If you're heading to France in 2015, it's our understanding you'll be able to use these vests during PBP.

## Voting

Thanks to everyone who took part in this year's RUSA Board election. The turnout shattered our previous voting records. The 739 ballots we received was more than double the number of members (331) who voted for 2013 board candidates, and well above the 423 ballots recorded in 2014. No doubt

the voting was boosted by a strong slate of candidates, and it's also a clear sign that our members care about the future of our organization. The results: Susan Otcenas was elected to the board and Rob Hawks was reelected, while Spencer Klaassen was reelected as the RBA-Liaison. Congratulations to all three, and another round of thanks to everyone who threw their hat into the ring. Sadly, the board will be without longtime member Eric Vigoren in 2015. He was not eligible for reelection after serving two full terms. RUSA expresses its deepest gratitude to Eric for his many years of volunteer service as our treasurer.

## PBP

If you're planning a Grand Randonnée in 2015, you have two domestic choices—Sunshine 1200K and the Taste of Carolina. Then there's Paris Brest Paris, the one that started it all. Our hardworking RBAs are hosting more than 660 events in 2015. That gives you lots of chances to qualify for PBP before late June, when registration opens. Some regions

will be offering two full qualifying series, and if you look closely at the event schedule you'll also see some "brevet weeks," which make it possible to knock out the events you need in the space of a few days. For riders who are hungry for the latest PBP developments, RUSA will again be hosting a wiki site, just as we did in 2011. We've lined up Rob Hawks, Mark Thomas and Jonny Bertrand to serve as moderators. Turn to that resource for invaluable tips on preparing for and riding PBP.

## Super 600

In 2013, RUSA considered adding a new kind of ACP event, the Super Randonnée, to our line-up. We recently revisited the topic at the request of several members, and we're pleased to announce that these events can be now counted toward various RUSA awards. Super Randonnées are mountainous routes of 600K (373 miles) with over 10,000 meters (32,800 feet) of elevation gain. While riders have the option of riding a Super Randonnée in either randonneuring or tourist mode. RUSA is only recognizing the randonneuring option, which closely tracks how our other events are structured. RUSA members currently have five routes to choose from, with one route each in California, North Carolina, Oregon, Virginia and Washington. For more details, look for the Super Randonnée link on our website's permanent page. Once again, happy holidays, and here's to a safe and successful 2015 riding season.

—Mike Dayton  
RUSA President



RUSA #1 at work in the RUSA store.  
—PHOTO PIERCE GAFGEN

# From the Editor

Yesterday as I was climbing the hills of the PA 150K Fall Foliage route, I was thinking about this column and RBA Tom Rosenbauer's pre-ride talk. He had cautioned us against outpacing our guardian angels on any of the route's fast descents. Similarly, when I'm aware that friends are about to set off on a ride, I often text them: "Be safe out there." I'm not a religious person, but I take these wishes we express to and for each other as prayers offered for the safety of those we care about. It has been made too clear to us this year that our prayers are not always answered in the manner that we'd like, but they still matter. It is important for us to remind ourselves and each other to take care out there. Of course this sport involves risk, but we need to go as safely as we can.

Two of the articles in this issue thoughtfully reflect on the losses our community has suffered. Bill Watts and Stacy and Greg Kline write about loss, grief and reasons to keep doing what we love to do. And from firsthand experience, Susan Otcenas offers advice for riding safely and dealing with emergency situations should they arise.

Randonneuring is a good metaphor for life, so this issue not only contemplates and respects the difficult and tragic moments, but also celebrates accomplishments and dreams of future adventures. Damon Taaffe's appreciation for the natural beauty observed on the Central California 1200K randonné is clear in his ride report, and Melissa Hall demonstrates that one can successfully tackle a challenging ride like the Appalachian Adventure just by taking it one day at a time. Tom Bardauskas writes about sights seen, dogs encountered, and road trips taken to achieve the American Explorer Award (earned by completing rides in 10 or more states). Megan Arnold's ride report about the Orr

Springs Mixed Terrain 600K in the San Francisco bay area shows that with a little more work and tenacity, a mixed terrain brevet can be a wonderful experience. The Orr Springs route is part of a series being developed in large part due to the desire of Massimiliano Poletto to make available for west coast riders the kind of experience provided by the D2R2 in Vermont and Western Massachusetts. Finally and just as importantly, AR celebrates K-Hound women in a humorous piece that pays tribute to their effort and dedication.

This issue also includes stories of randos' international experiences this year. Dave Thompson writes of doing back-to-back 1200K randonnées with friend Hamid Akbarian. They completed Mille Failte 1200K (Ireland) and Herentals Cosne-sur-Loire Herentals (Belgium) with just one week between the two rides. Thompson is struck as much by the differences between the two rides as he is by the opportunity to tour some of the most beautiful and amazing places in the world from the seat of a bike. I had never heard of L'Eroica Britannia or the vintage cycling movement until I communicated with Lonnie Wolff and then read his article. Certainly there are similarities between this type of cycling and randonneuring, and I'm sure that many readers will be intrigued by vintage cycling after reading Wolff's article.

You will find advice and humor in the columns of Dr. Codfish and Chris Newman. The RBA Interview in this issue features Nick Gerlich from Amarillo, Texas, and there are also excellent write-ups on Arizona permanents. If you're looking to escape winter and get in a permanent, Arizona just might be the place.

Finally, there are several articles that look forward to PBP next year. Billy Edwards provides guidance to riders planning a faster-paced PBP.



Vickie Tyer offers suggestions for travelling to France with bikes, and finally, Jack Holmgren presents a great idea for showing appreciation to French supporters along the route.

Thanks to the contributions of many fellow randos, this issue is chockablock with good reading. Enjoy it, and happy dreaming of adventures to come.

Be safe out there.

—Janice Chernelkoff  
Editor, American Randonneur

## Off Label Use

When I took up randonneuring, I quickly learned that on-bike nutrition was one of the three major challenges (navigation and bike fit being the other two) one needed to master to be successful. Finding the right mix of foods to keep you going is different for everyone. Dealing with stomach distress that may occur on a ride is an associated issue with which randonneurs will need to deal.

Prescription and even over-the-counter drugs are occasionally used for unapproved indications. Regulatory agencies are unable to keep pace with the beneficial claims of practitioners and users. It is a hallmark of randonneuring that we find 'different' uses for all kinds of things, potions and elixirs included. I am not a doctor and I am certainly

not urging you to try some new, unapproved application of a medicine or therapy. However, I have learned a few tricks by trying different things, and some of the most valuable lessons have come as advice from those with more experience than me.

Years ago, on a hot and challenging (Stevens, Rainy, and Washington passes) 1000K brevet, I got some great advice from

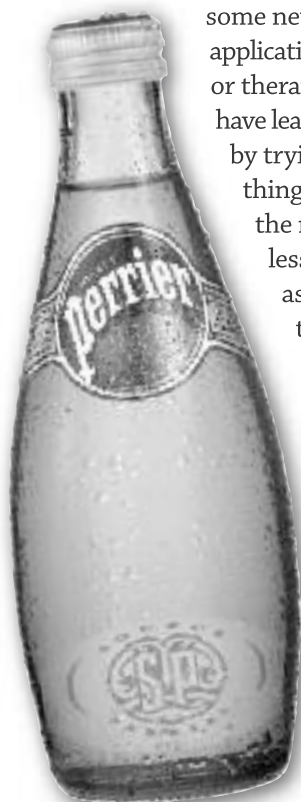
a seasoned randonneur: "Try 7-Up for a queasy stomach." I didn't think much of it, but felt I had nothing to lose. I gave it a try and within an hour, my stomach settled down enough to continue the ride with confidence; another little trick to add to the mental notebook. Thank you Mark Thomas.

I first rode PBP in 2003, the year Europe suffered that devastating, protracted heat wave. Spain and Greece experienced record-setting forest fires, elderly Parisians died in their apartments, and cities opened cooling centers: weeks upon weeks of 100+° temperatures. It was hot enough that I felt queasy for much of the ride, but there was nary a cold 7-Up to be found.

One of the things I learned on my first visit to the 'continent' was that Europeans had not been let in on the discovery that ice makes a pretty good amendment to drinks in the summer. A glass of water at a café most certainly did not come adorned with ice. Most bottled drinks were served tepid. This was a distraction at controles where after a hot and hilly 75K, my American sensibility wanted something ice cold and fizzy to drink. At these controles, water, sodas, wine, and beer—yes the northern Europeans drank beer and the southern Europeans drank wine while Americans huddled in their US Postal Jerseys drinking Gatorade—were served tepid, or slightly cooler. This was partly the result of tradition and partly due to the extraordinarily high demand at the controles. I would have gladly guzzled liters of pickle juice provided it was ice cold. (Turns out pickle juice might be a good choice, who knew?)

I moved through the controles without the satisfaction of a cool drink until at Tinténiac I spied a fellow rider clutching a bottle of Perrier to his forehead. The thought of a warm Perrier was just shy of revolting, but I knew Perrier was a distant if cultured cousin of my favored 7-Up. Thinking I had little to lose (sound familiar?), I went to the bar and ordered a bottle of green pretentiousness. I was instantly gratified to find that this little green bottle of relief was very cold, perhaps not ice cold, but cold enough, and much colder than anything else on offer. Not one to question good fortune I immediately ordered another. At the next controle I repeated this experience, delighted to find that here, too, the Perrier was ice cold. And so it was from stop to stop. I was refreshed and as hoped, my stomach settled down. As I rode on I formulated this theory: few if any riders at the controles were drinking Perrier, but the beer, bottled water, and Orangina were everywhere in demand. It occurred to me that while these popular potions were turning over very rapidly, the spurned Perrier was obviously languishing at the bottom of the coolers. For whatever reason, I consistently found throughout the 90 hours of the event that I could rely on the green genie being cold and plentiful. "Deux Perrier s'il vous plait," was my newfound passport to relief.

I certainly would not suggest that others come over to the sparkling side, as I believe in the philosophy of "à chacun le sien." Frenchmen I find to be particularly dismissive of this product. My beer drinking friends upon reading this will certainly snicker at the thought of anything but a cold lager or ale after a day on the bike. I don't hold it against them, believe me, I know how satisfying a cold beer can be. But if you stumble into a controle with a growly stomach on a hot August afternoon somewhere in Brittany, an off label application of cold fizzy water in a green bottle might be just what the doctor would order...if it were not off label. 🚲



# New RUSA Members

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE	RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE	RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
9877	Eric Aylies	Casselberry	FL	9926	Charles Morel IV	San Jose	CA	9975	Philip Lee	Bronx	NY
9878	Eric Stiasny	Dove Creek	CO	9927	Kristy Jackson	Raleigh	NC	9976	Patrick O'Grady	Berkeley	CA
9879	James Gibson, Jr	Wildwood	FL	9928	Deric Young	Olympia	WA	9977	Ronald Gurney	Ashburn	VA
9880	Brian Steacy	Sacramento	CA	9929	Don Wetherell	Cedar Falls	IA	9978	David Broderick	Portland	OR
9881	Daryl Morgan	Bothell	WA	9930	Michael Arnold	Spring Lake	NC	9979	Dang Griffith	Everglades City	FL
9882	Nathan White	Lighthouse Point	FL	9931	Susan Gryder	Tampa	FL	9980	Timothy Duffey	Arlington	VA
9883	Michael Lewis	Reedsville	PA	9932	Jonas Laucys	San Francisco	CA	9981	Yves Fioux	Las Vegas	NV
9884	Daniel Cline	Indianapolis	IN	9933	Iulian Cociug	Bellevue	WA	9982	Tsun Au Yeung	Watertown	MA
9885	Toby Welborn	Carson City	NV	9934	Rich Holst	St Paul	MN	9983	Milo Schaefer	Hoboken	NJ
9886	Renee Beckloff	Redwood City	CA	9935	Joe Clucas	Los Angeles	CA	9984	Suzanne Hogan	Livonia	MI
9887	Dale Harrison	Salinas	CA	9936	Thomas Holst	Lanesboro	MN	9985	Robert Bennett	Canton	MI
9888	Katherine Joubin	New York	NY	9937	Jordan Harris	Triangle	VA	9986	Mark Andrews	Sacramento	CA
9889	Vance Nagel	Lutz	FL	9938	David Bosch	Sunnyide	NY	9987	Tom Lindsay	Beaverton	OR
9890	Randall Runtsch	Rochester	MN	9939	Paul Paquin	Derry	NH	9988	Allan Jacks	York	PA
9891	Jeff Root	Detroit	MI	9940	Natalia Shymanska	Raleigh	NC	9989	Anthony Pavel	Washington	DC
9892	Kuan Chun Chen	Richmond	BC ON	9941	K. Wightman	Indianapolis	IN	9990	Duane Combs	Litchfield Park	AZ
9893	Mark Davis	Leslie	MI	9942	Gomez Bourdier	Miami	FL	9991	Guillaume Gantard	Bryn Mawr	PA
9894	Keith Willard	Saint Paul	MN	9943	Joe Fox	Parkville	MO	9992	Robert Muth	Olney	MD
9895	Richard Bardauskas	Effingham	SC	9944	Robert Park	Forest Hills	NY	9993	Joseph Urban	Millersville	MD
9896	Micah Condon	Erie	CO	9945	Robert Larson	Phoenix	AZ	9994	Kevin Metz	Albion	MI
9897	Su-Lai Hamilton	Erie	CO	9946	Candace Hanrahan	Frederick	MD	9995	Carl Hruza	Egg Harbor	WI
9898	Larry Eads	Odessa	TX	9947	Peter Peterson	Issaquah	WA	9996	Joe Birdsong	San Francisco	CA
9899	Matt Stiasny	Littleton	CO	9948	Preston Sparks	Charleston	SC	9997	Christoph Boeckeler	Brooklyn	NY
9900	Alex White	Seattle	WA	9949	Alastair Calderwood	Boca Raton	FL	9998	Kelly Chambers	Raleigh	NC
9901	Katrina Anderson	Seattle	WA	9950	Carol DeMent	Olympia	WA	9999	Daniel Dayton	Raleigh	NC
9902	Tibor Tamas	Fort Worth	TX	9951	Michael Povman	Sleepy Hollow	NY	10000	Kerry Reardon	Anchorage	AK
9903	Stewart Gouck	Coopersburg	PA	9952	Micha Oliver	Briarcliff Manor	NY	10001	Sharon Ross	Portland	OR
9904	Paul Nelson	Tampa	FL	9953	Gordon Oliver	Briarcliff Manor	NY	10002	Anthony Gale	Hollidaysburg	PA
9905	Rick Pagan	Boca Raton	FL	9954	Eric Kahler	Blairstown	NJ	10003	Carol Gale	Hollidaysburg	PA
9906	Ed Wesley	Redwood City	CA	9955	Nicholas Rice	Santa Clara	CA	10004	Jay Nadeau	Altadena	CA
9907	Donald Shriner	Ellensburg	WA	9956	Richard Pina	Springfield	MO	10005	Chris Lindensmith	Altadena	CA
9908	Paul Roberts	Pompano Beach	FL	9957	Stewart Smits	Menifee	CA	10006	Adrian Halme	Charlottesville	VA
9909	Carina Roberts	Pompano Beach	FL	9958	Steve Burdine	Dayton	OH	10007	Jon Marshall	South Haven	MI
9910	Jan Kraemer	Guaynabo	PR	9959	Susan Taeuber	Bolton	MA	10008	Phil Neighbors	Watertown	MA
9911	Thomas Hayes	Anchorage	AK	9960	Paul Weaver, Jr	Conshohocken	PA	10009	Alexandre Yatsina	Saskatoon	SK CAN
9912	Jeff Boyette	San Francisco	CA	9961	Gary Petersen	Storm Lake	IA	10010	Juan Vargas	Aventura	FL
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9916	Paul Isabella	Saugerties	NY	9965	Sally Rozelle	St. Petersburg	FL	10014	Angela Lakwete	Auburn	AL
9917	Wei Sun	San Diego	CA	9966	Alan Pratt	Limerick	PA	10015	Michael Hogan	Auburn	AL
9918	Ron Mullet	Corvallis	OR	9967	Joseph Escribano	Detroit	MI	10016	Lori Lee	New York	NY
9919	Kathy Mullet	Corvallis	OR	9968	B Pollard	Los Angeles	CA	10017	Scott Geller	New York	NY
9920	Greg Barker	Berkeley	CA	9969	Douglas Morgan	Longview	WA	10018	Leah Wener-Fligner	Seattle	WA
9921	M. George	Pittsburgh	PA	9970	Garrett Bentley	St. Louis	MO	10019	Jeff Harmon	Raytown	MO
9922	Steve Bredthauer	Vancouver	WA	9971	Brittany Davis	St. Louis	MO	10020	Alan Johnson	Phoenix	AZ
9923	Robert Page	Fort Worth	TX	9972	Luanne Brinn	Fort Myers	FL	10021	David Kelsey	Windsor	CT
9924	Gail Page	Fort Worth	TX	9973	Anton Brammer	Orinda	CA	10022	Sam Shen	Berkeley	CA
9925	Tommy Rogers	Raleigh	NC	9974	Mark Hall	Muncie	IN	10023	Eric Royer	Southport	NC

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE	RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE	RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
10024	Akio Otsubo	Jersey City	NJ	10048	Ethan Thorman	Cupertino	CA	10072	Robin Adams	Los Angeles	CA
10025	Robert Klein	Clovis	CA	10049	Robert Kirkpatrick	Seattle	WA	10073	Daphne Summers	Norman	OK
10026	William Wulfeck	Friday Harbor	WA	10050	Dennis Ward	Goose Creek	SC	10074	Ross Lord	San Francisco	CA
10027	Peter Chovancak	Fort Lauderdale	FL	10051	Kathleen Ward	Goose Creek	SC	10075	David Baldwin	Portland	OR
10028	Jeffrey Helm	Irving	TX	10052	Kristi Williams	Los Altos	CA	10076	Hans Groszkruger	Los Angeles	CA
10029	Lyle Beaulac	Livermore	CA	10053	Ross Warrington	Dallas	TX	10077	Ian Singer	Weston	FL
10030	Kevin Ruge	Camas	WA	10054	Erik Olsen	San Francisco	CA	10078	Christopher Guzik	Sunnyvale	CA
10031	Steven McKay	West Sacramento	CA	10055	Peter Borocz	Hillsborough	CA	10079	Stanley Rethford	Newalla	OK
10032	Richard Terry	Covington	GA	10056	Geoffrey Gonzales	Fresno	CA	10080	Will DeHaan	Pacifica	CA
10033	Kary Conaway	George	IA	10057	Adrian Person	Boulder	CO	10081	Derek Ching	Orinda	CA
10034	James Skinner	Mcallen	TX	10058	Desiral Hagger	Overland Park	KS	10082	Jesse Garcia	San Diego	CA
10035	Gary Gerber	Winter Springs	FL	10059	Hector Noyola	Los Fresnos	TX	10083	Eric Hannon Ford	Bronx	NY
10036	Bryant McGuire	Severna Park	MD	10060	Robert Liles	Antioch	CA	10084	Phil Smith	Lexington Park	MD
10037	Julie Opell	Washington	IN	10061	Daniel Stacey	Davie	FL	10085	Harris Samuels	New Smyrna Beach	FL
10038	T Wolfe	Olympia	WA	10062	Jeffrey Notarbartolo	Garden City	NY	10086	Chris Dutro	Newington	CT
10039	Jason Lawrence	San Jose	CA	10063	Colin Wilson	Los Gatos	CA	10087	Brian Dooley	Canoga Park	CA
10040	Arthur Gousby III	Palmyra	VA	10064	Pauline Wilson	Los Gatos	CA	10088	Anna Raymond	Mountain View	CA
10041	Michael Cooke	Windsor	ON CAN	10065	David Kelnberger	Leonardtown	MD	10089	Edward Stillman	Brooklyn	NY
10042	Ronald Van Hoosear	Walnut Creek	CA	10066	Foon Wong	Long Beach	CA	10090	William Timothy	Brooklyn	NY
10043	Luciano Oliveira	Columbus	IN	10067	Gino Romano	Long Beach	CA	10091	Brian Petrin	Seattle	WA
10044	Carlyn Tucker	Columbus	NC	10068	Chris Olson	Boynton	FL	10092	Chris Mueller	Lakewood	CO
10045	Ryan DeNunzio	Coral Springs	FL	10069	Mary Kay Harton	Yuma	AZ	10093	Bradley Baker	Columbus	OH
10046	Donna Carlson	Davie	FL	10070	Paul Bright	Medellin	Colombia	10094	Rob Rehkopf	Germantown	TN
10047	Susan Kayser	Cupertino	CA	10071	Romel Jacinto	San Francisco	CA	10095	Andrew Reiter	La Jolla	CA

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# RBA Questionnaire BY JENNIFER WISE

## Nick Gerlich, RBA, Amarillo, Texas

**How did you get involved with randonneur cycling?** It was a natural offshoot of our ultra-marathon cycling. Competition or not, we just love going long.

**What made you want to be a RUSA RBA?** Being an event director to the core, it's nice to have a portfolio of tours, races and randonnées to offer our friends.

**When did you start hosting RUSA events?** In 2004.

**What is the most popular (well-attended) ride in your area?**

The best-attended brevets are at our annual Texas Hell Week, in March, in Fredericksburg.

**What is the most popular (well-attended) brevet distance in your area?** The best-attended distance is the 200K.

**What is the most rewarding part of being an RBA?** We love seeing people finish what they start. It doesn't

matter if they smoke the 200K in under 5 hours, or if they pull in with a minute to spare. All finishers are rock stars.

**What is the most difficult part of being an RBA?** The recordkeeping is tedious, and designing acceptable courses is a challenge. You must start with safety, stir in some challenge, and sprinkle with integrity. That recipe keeps people from cutting corners.

**What attracts riders to your region to do a brevet? (Weather? Terrain? Camaraderie?)** The weather. Our Texas brevets are in March, and our Florida brevets are during the New Year's holiday week.

**What does the future hold for randonneuring in your region?** Randonneuring is big in Texas. In March we see many people line up to do our 200K's and 300K's. Hell Week draws riders from all over the US. Overall, participation is up.

**What is your greatest randonneur cycling achievement?** I have done nothing more than a full brevet series. Of the many RUSA (and IR) events I have done, the 600K from KC to Miami, OK and back, in 1990, was a real thrill.

**What is your favorite bike ride?** The two overnight 200K x 2 rides we do from Amarillo; one to Lubbock, and one to Tucumcari. Those are a lot of fun, challenging and interesting.

**Who is the cyclist you most admire?** I have always admired Rob Kish, not just for his speed, but for his life-long tenacity in the sport. It's hard to find anyone able to keep pouring it on for nearly two decades of RAAM.

**What is your motto?** The journey is the destination. 🚲

Becky & Nick Gerlich. —PHOTO BECCA GERLICH.



# Riding Vintage Cycling Events

BY LONNIE WOLFF, RUSA #3100 AND RETIRED RBA



British flags flying at the L'Eroica Britannia start. —PHOTO LONNIE WOLFF

There is a new subcategory in cycling events these days that has much in common with randonneuring. Like randonneuring, vintage or classic cycling fosters a love for the traditions of cycling, the camaraderie of overcoming a challenging course with fellow riders, and the personal rewards gained through a courageous effort. Vintage cycling events are somewhat of a cross between a celebration and a sporting event with a good measure of “party” thrown in. While the category may be a little hard to define, like many unique events, you will know it when you see it.

Classic cycling is undergoing something of a revival in Europe, with ground zero being in Italy, but the movement is branching out. The grandfather of these events, L'Eroica, was first held in Tuscany in October of 1997. The event drew 92 hearty participants that year.

Since then the event has grown to 5500 riders with entry now limited to that number. Lucky riders are determined by a lottery system with only 1000 spots available for non-Italians. Interest in vintage cycling events has grown so large in Italy that there is now a whole series of 15 vintage races under the organization of Giro Italia d'Epoca. There are no events that compare to L'Eroica in the US, but similar events in other areas are becoming popular:

- **Anjou Vintage Velo**, in France. 3500 riders.
- **l'Intrepida** in Italy, now in its 3rd year with 1000 riders.
- **Cino Heroica** in the US each September with a 160-rider limit.

These events are not simply costume parties on bikes but real rides tackling whatever terrain the region

has to offer. Usually, at least half of the route will be on dirt roads, old rail beds and even some single-track dirt trails. The courses chosen often cover routes on which such cycling legends as Gino Bartali and Fausto Coppi raced in the past. Distances of 160 to 200K are typical, with climbing totals of 3000 to 4000 meters. Events like L'Eroica are actually run as ACP brevets, complete with controls, brevet cards and time limits.

This year the vintage cycling movement gained a solid foothold in Britain with the introduction of L'Eroica Britannia. Based in Derbyshire in the village of Bakewell, the event offered an incredible route which toured the valleys, moors and villages of the Peak District National Park. I was lucky enough to be able to participate in this inaugural event with 2000 other riders. Approximately 600 riders joined me in riding the long route (100 miles), a route that was about 40% on dirt roads or paths, and included almost 10,000' of climbing on grades of up to 25%!

The event began at 6:00 am and we were started in waves of 30 at 2-minute intervals. I was off in the first wave as we made our way out of Bakewell and onto the Monsal Trail, a spectacular section of reclaimed rail-trail spanned by many bridges and passing through numerous tunnels. The Monsal Trail led us to the first control at Tisdale, after which the route was a continuous procession of climbing up to the moors, then dropping down into the next valley. The climbs and descents were often steep and rarely straight but once you



#### **MORE INFO ON THE WEB:**

The website for L'Eroica Britannia, the great British adventure is:  
<http://www.eroicabritannia.co.uk/>

One of the best short movies available on L'Eroica Italia captures the essence of the 2011 event.  
<http://vimeo.com/20622427>

A more complete and detailed account of these wonderful events is available at:  
<http://utahrandonneur.wordpress.com/>

were up on the moors the riding was more gentle and quite spectacular. Most of the rest stops were in the valleys and you could be almost certain that after a rest you would begin climbing again immediately.

The controls at Derbyshire Bridge, Hartington Village, Ilam Hall, Cromford-on-the-water all came and went in turn. Each control offered a different variety of refreshment ranging from a local sausage and beer, to High Tea complete with fresh scones! Each stop was situated in a unique and historic location, and each required that you get your card stamped as proof of passage before you departed.

One favorite part of the event for me was riding the Tissington Trail on the way to Carsington Water. It was another rail-trail, a firm and fast dirt path with a gentle down grade of 1% or so. Fast cruising at over 20 mph for 6 or more miles was both extraordinary and unforgettable!

The last control at Chatsworth House, only 6 miles from the finish, was located on the sprawling 25 square mile estate of the Duke of Devonshire. The Duke generously opened the estate grounds for the event and we passed through on paths that are generally not open to the public. Upon reaching Chatsworth House, we were treated to what is certainly a first for me at any cycling event: a glass of champagne!

The last few miles of the route were as challenging as any, but they went quickly and I soon found myself dropping back down into Bakewell and through the finishing chute. The crowds were spectacular and each finisher received a hearty round of applause and cheers. A costumed course marshal then stamped your card, and with a pat on the back, directed you to the beer tent. If nothing else this event had style!

The bike that I rode was a 1962 Legnano Gran Premio, which was

almost completely original. I made only minor modifications to the gearing to achieve the needed range for the expected climbing, and put on 32mm wide tires for a better ride on the rougher sections. This bike was very similar to the 1974 Legnano that I rode in L'Eroica Italia in 2012.

To participate in events like L'Eroica you will need a bike from 1987 or earlier. Additionally, your bike may NOT have indexed shifting, aero cable routing, or clip-less pedals. You should also be dressed in cycling gear that is period-correct to your bike. Remember, you are celebrating the classic era of cycling so modern cycling shoes or a camelback would tarnish the image. Wool shorts, a vintage team jersey, leather shoes, even a leather helmet are considered "proper" kit!

Each of the L'Eroica events has its own unique character as do the other vintage events in this growing scene. Participation in any one of them may well remind you of the simple pleasures of bicycling, good food, and the joy of adventuring into the countryside with friends! These basics are often forgotten in the sport of cycling today and are what events like L'Eroica are trying to remind us of! 🚲

At the last control, riders take advantage of lounge chairs in front of Chatsworth House.

—PHOTO LONNIE WOLFF

A passer-by happily snapped a photo of Lonnie taking a break.



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## Coming Events in 2015

Arizona Desert Camps and Tours February and March. This is our 20th year offering early season tours based from Tucson, Arizona. Each week has a different theme for different types of riders. You can combine weeks to extend your cycling season in Arizona. Check out the PAC Tour web site for available tours. Come join us!

**Week #1 Feb. 21-28**

**Tour of the Historic Towns and Hotels With Bike Friday**

50 miles per day between classic Arizona hotels.

**Week #2 Feb. 28 to March 7**

**Cactus Classic**

Tucson to Wickenburg and back 75-90 miles per day

**Week #3 Mar. 7-14 2 nights in Bisbee Chiricahua Challenge**

75-90 miles per day to the Chiricahua Mountains

**Week #4 Mar. 14-21**

**Nearly a Century Week with Jennifer Wise**

Five nights based in Sierra Vista 60-100 miles per day

Evening seminars to prepare riders for Paris Brest Paris

**Week #5 Mar. 21-29 (8 days)**

**Mountain Tour with Mark Thomas**

80-100 miles per day from Tucson to New Mexico and back including the 25 mile ride up Mt. Graham.

**Brevet Dates for 2015 at Desert Camp**

200 KM on Feb. 21st, Feb. 28, March 7, 14 and 21st.

300 KM Sunday, March 29

400 KM Tuesday, March 31

600 KM Friday, April 3

In conjunction with the AZ Brevet.com

Based from Tucson and heading south toward Nogales, Sonolita and Tombstone. Contact us for detail and prices.

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***[www.pactour.com](http://www.pactour.com)***

**Elite Transcontinental**

**San Diego, CA to Savannah, GA**

Sat. May 16 fly-in                      Thur. June 4 fly home

18 days      2,800 miles      165 miles per day

This is the fastest and toughest PAC Tour coast to coast tour. Riders completing every mile will qualify for the Race Across America. Minimum average speed is 13 mph. All riders should have completed other PAC Tour Transcontinental Tours or have experience riding ultra distance events of more than 200 miles per day. This tour is only for the best riders who have the time to train and commitment to ride across America fast.

**Pacific Crest Tour Full waiting list forming Everett, WA to Ashland, OR**

Sat. Aug. 1 fly-in

Sat. Aug 15 fly home from SeaTAC, WA

12 riding days      1,237 miles      105 miles per day

Back by popular demand. This revised version of our Pacific Crest Route begins in Everett, Washington and follows the best roads of the Cascade Mountains across Washington and Oregon. The route will visit many classic hotels and National Parks including Mount Hood and Crater Lake. We will finish in Ashland, OR and then shuttle all riders and bikes to the SeaTAC Airport for return flights.

**Southern Transcontinental**

**San Diego, CA to Savannah, GA**

27 days      2,800 miles      105 miles per day

September 12th to October 10th

This new route will start with shorter and easier days to help riders prepare for crossing the desert. We have ridden this route more than a dozen times and we have refined the roads and hotels to offer the best cross country riding experience.

We will see a variety of sites and cultures across California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. If you have ever wanted to ride across the United States, this tour has a good balance of serious cycling and sight seeing along the way.

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# If It's Tuesday, This Must Be Idaho

BY TOM BARDAUSKAS, RUSA #2045



Yellowstone — PHOTO TOM BARDAUSKAS

my collection. And so the obsession grew. It's not coincidental that obsession and randonneuring are two words that appear in proximity quite often.

The first states that I obtained, simply by doing brevets within driving distance, were the local Southeastern states. I've collected some states since then by completing big 'destination' rides such as Alaska's Big Wild Ride. On these occasions, adding a state was just a bonus for a spectacular ride. Other states have been collected while travelling for business or pleasure. Whenever possible, I make it a point to add a day or so and get in a ride or two. For example, I have a business trip to Phoenix, so I rent a bike and ride a permanent. I'm visiting family in Chicago, so I sneak away for a 600K in Wisconsin. Before dropping my son off at college in Maryland, I discover that Crista has many permanent options that can add several states quickly. A business trip to Seattle allows me to drive to Idaho, only 5 hours away. I am able to borrow a bike, and the drive is worth it to grab another state.

While hanging out in front of the bike shop waiting for a non-rando group ride to begin, I overheard a conversation among some local riders. They were discussing heart-rate meters, power meters, altimeters and the data that they enter into their training logs. Without consideration for the audience, I made an off-hand remark that I found it much more useful and interesting to have a flickr.com account to record my memories than a spreadsheet to record my mileage. Most of the riders gave me a funny look, but Scott, the other randonneur in the group, gave me a knowing smile.

My mom has a map of the world mounted to her apartment wall. She has highlighted every country that she has visited. By comparison, my global exploration has been limited. However,

long before RUSA announced the "American Explorer" award, I had been informally collecting states on my bicycle. Once an officially recognized goal was created, I pinned a map of the USA to my cubicle wall so that I could highlight the states as I added them to

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***“It’s not coincidental that obsession and randonneuring are two words that appear in proximity quite often.”***

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Since this is a very large country, I eventually realized that there was no way I was going to finish this journey just by hoping to serendipitously visit every region. So, I started planning specific “state hunting” trips: a week in 2012 to the Northeast to add six states, then a week in 2013 to grab all of the south central states. In the summer of 2014, I went on an incredible three-week road trip driving all across the country to bag the remaining seven western states. Riding in the mountains of Colorado, the canyons of Utah, around Lake Tahoe and through

Yellowstone was the perfect way to complete the American Explorer list, and really improve the quality of my flickr photo stream. (NOTE: as of the writing of this article, I still need to ride in the District of Columbia. I've been saving that for a symbolic bookend, and I fully expect that to be completed before this is published.)

Along the way, I have ridden past extinct volcanoes and active glaciers; past towering saguaro cacti and thundering waterfalls; past The World Famous No-Name Biker Bar in Daytona Beach and the slightly less famous

Skinny Dick's Roadhouse south of Fairbanks. I've ridden through Manhattan, NY (population 1,800,000) and Harlem, GA (population 1800). I've been chased by dogs in almost every state. I was caught by a three-legged dog in Georgia, not my proudest moment. I've evaded moose in Alaska, bison in Wyoming and a really big snake in Louisiana. From the comfort of my British saddle, I've seen the spacious skies and amber waves of grain of America the Beautiful.

I've sprinted against friends and strangers for many county lines, winning very few of those sprints. I've finished brevets with the lead group once or twice, and I've finished as the *lanterne rouge* a few times. I've made many good friends, heard a lot of stories and had my share of laughs and moments of whining and suffering doing this. I've ridden many miles in efficient pacerlines, more miles in “randonneur pacerlines” (side by side with no drafting), and a whole mess of miles with only my rambling thoughts for company.

I've ridden through freezing rain and snow. I've ridden with my tires sticking to the soft tarmac under cranium-melting heat. I've ridden on a bunch of beautiful days, but somehow I remember the worst ones most of all. I've slept on small town park benches and in church courtyards. I've survived the hallucinations of sleep-deprivation. I've also found reserves of strength deep within my legs late in rides that I had no business finishing.

I've eaten a lot of energy bars, candy bars, gas station microwave burritos and a few great meals at small town diners and roadside barbecue joints. I've consumed more Gatorade than a Florida football team. I also took



Tom on the Big Wild Ride.

—PHOTO GREG MORGAN

Zion Canyon  
— PHOTO TOM BARDAUSKAS

advantage of the opportunity to drink a whole mess of good beers after (and occasionally during) all of these rides.

RUSA President Mike Dayton once wrote on his blog, after hitting another seemingly unachievable milestone, “We randonneurs are goal oriented. It’s satisfying to reach one, then look up the road to see what’s next on the cue sheet.” I’m not sure what my next goal is (yet), but I’m sure that there is something wonderful on the way to the next control.

If anybody is looking to add South Carolina to their collection, give me a shout. I’ll happily provide you with a card and cue sheet. And maybe a few memories and pictures for your flickr account. And a beer. 🚲



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# Appalachian 1000K Ride Report

BY MELISSA HALL



Bill, Gavin, Henry, Jerry, Brad and Chip—exhausted and happy at the end of the Appalachian 1000.

—PHOTO JERRY SEAGER

Virginia or West Virginia before and I won't get there any younger. And what better way to see it than by bicycle on a route designed by Crista Borrás. With this thought in mind I head out the door. As Oscar Wilde once said, "To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all." I don't want to just exist: I want to grow, and learn, and experience. I want to be brave despite being such a coward at heart. I don't want to die wishing I had done things that I did not do. I want to ride my bike.

It is time to depart, to leave this place, this person, and these pets that are so very dear to me. And for a fraction of a second, as my eyes drink in their familiar visages and my lips welcome my husband's farewell kiss, soft, lingering and unbearably sweet, his embrace, warm and synonymous with home and safety, I think of just staying here and not riding. With all of his health issues and his failure to be honest about how he is feeling when he knows I am going somewhere, I worry if he will be okay when I get back. One year when I went to Hell Week, he was admitted to the hospital later in the day. With his typical generosity, he did not want me to miss something I wanted to do because of his health. And while I have been an absolute harridan since that time, threatening him if he ever does such a thing again, I know that he would and no amount of spousal threatening would stop him from repeating his action if he feels it

would impact my embarking on a new adventure. I think perhaps long-term illness and pain cause him to appreciate how important it is to live while you can still enjoy it. Or perhaps he knows that despite good intentions, I could not thrive shut away in a house only leaving to work or go to the grocery.

Experience has taught me that I can not live always worrying about what I know will eventually happen to each of us. Also my son, Jeff, and his wife Lena, are awaiting my arrival in Annapolis, and while there is a part of me that would like to stay home a greater part of me wants to see them and also knows that I would forever wonder what would have happened if I had ridden. A part of me is eagerly anticipating the adventure and knows that I need it despite being scared to death of it. Life is not and should not be a lesson in stagnation however comfortable and appealing that may seem at times. I have never been to

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I arrive at the host hotel, check in, have my bike inspected, eat, and go to bed. During this time, I meet several of the riders, but I know I will not remember their names. Not good with matching names to faces in the first place, the stress of the past few days combined with an aging mind has made it more unlikely. Everyone is friendly and welcoming but I still feel rather out of place. I have trained as best I can, but do I truly belong with these skinny, athletic-looking people? They all look so fit, and then there is me who carries a bit of a belly around with me. I do love food and were it not for my bicycling I fear I would weigh 300 pounds.

Briefly I wonder if anyone else is nervous and has doubts or if it is just me. So many things can happen on a brevet: I doubt anyone is completely confident that they will finish. I don't expect to sleep well as normally I toss



and turn and sleep only sporadically the night before a challenging ride, but I find myself drifting to sleep easily despite the fact it is only 7:30 p.m. This bodes well for day one.

The prediction for the first day of the ride is for oppressive heat, something that I have not acclimated to this summer since in Indiana we have had an unseasonably cool summer. I respect heat. I fear heat. During my years of riding, I have seen what heat can do to people and have suffered under his brutal hand myself. He is merciless and has no heart, squeezing people dry and leaving them with nothing, laughing cruelly all the while, crushing any illusion they have of

strength or endurance. I also continue to worry about the course. With the heat and the hills will it still be a delight or will it turn into a death march? I know three men who are very strong riders who have ridden 1000K rides in Virginia—Greg Zaborac, Tim Argo, and Bob Bruce—and all three have warned me about the demands of the Virginia terrain. Each is much stronger than I am, and I begin yet again to question what in the world I am doing here. I have until 7:00 a.m. Monday morning to finish the course I assure myself. I need not be so very strong to finish in that amount of time. It is only 623 miles. Surely with a bit of luck and a lot of determination it is

Sunrise at the peak of Warm Springs Mountain.  
—PHOTO HENRY VAN DEN BROEK

possible. In the past I have ridden farther, and I have trained assiduously for this ride. But I also realize that I must ride smartly, something more easily said than done. I decide from the beginning that since it is going to be so hot, I will not press the hills as I often do but gently spin up them, changing gears whenever I find my leg muscles being pressured.

Heading downstairs with my loaded bike, a bike that seems to weigh 100 pounds despite my best efforts to take only what I need, I find the lobby/breakfast room bursting with activity and sound. Nervous chatter and laughter fill the void, cleats click against tile floors, derailleurs sing their clicking tune as everyone completes their last minute preparations and hopes that they are one of the lucky ones who finish. Someone, I believe his name is Mike, is clicking photo after photo as we ready ourselves and for a moment as the flash on the camera triggers relentlessly, I think that this must be what it feels like to

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***“I like the mountains because they make me feel small,” Jeff says.  
“They help me sort out what’s important in life.”***

MARK OBMASCIK

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be important and have the paparazzi on one's trail.

It is not yet hot outside, but it is clammy. Just standing there I can tell that the humidity is high and that it will be one of those days where sweat does not cool you but just stands on your skin until it drips to the ground taking your life juices and salts with it. Anticipation can be felt as Nick Bull gives his speech about the course, about calling if you DNF, about safety. I momentarily panic as I realize I forgot to have anyone sign my brevet card this morning, but I realize that Nick won't be taking off on a bicycle as he rode the prior week. When Nick asks if anyone thinks they will finish before 55 hours, one man says he hopes to. Looking at the results, it appears that it was Barry Dickson and that he was successful in finishing in 46 hours and 49 minutes. Unbelievable. It makes me feel like such a weak, whiny baby. I know brevets are not races, but what must it feel like to ride so swiftly and conquer the hills so effortlessly? Would it be a good thing or would you be so caught up in your speed that you miss your surroundings? Despite the fact that I am not very fast, there are times that I wish I had ridden more slowly and absorbed more of what surrounded me. Some of my favorite rides have been solo rambles where I creep along stopping to photograph or appreciate the grandeur of the scenery. But there are also those times that I wish I were as swift as the wind and could be home long before it is a reality. In the end I suppose there is no "one size fits all" type of ride, even for the same person.

While waiting, I chat for a moment with a man named Nigel and I wonder if we will ride together at all. He seems a comfortable sort of person and he is even familiar with my blog. And then

we are off, a blur of white and red lights and reflective gear. Shortly after we start, I realize I can still hear the night sounds here: frogs and insects valiantly chanting their farewell to summer. I will miss this sound, the sound of summer and of life as it yields to the stony, barren silence of winter rides. And I think how I always celebrate in the spring when the frogs and insects first wake up, hungry for warm summer nights and mating, filling the air and my ears with their joy, a song of hope promising warm weather and rebirth and of long, leisurely rides where you don't have to worry about your fingers or your toes getting cold.

I think how differently this group is riding compared to the Kentucky brevets where the front group heads out as if it were a race and there were

not so many miles to follow. The pace is subdued, even slower than I would normally ride. The route seems to descend forever to Harper's Ferry and I begin to worry about the return trip. My friend, Paul Battle, warned me that there would be a climb if I was visiting Harper's Ferry. What a climb it will be at the end of a long journey when I am already worn out, but at the first control someone mentions that this is not an out and back course, something I knew but had forgotten. One trick I use on out and back brevets is to tell myself that every hill I climb I will be able to go down on the return journey. I am disappointed that it is dark and I can't see this famous place where John Brown once walked, where the states of Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia all converge. Tendrils



Paint Bank General Store...Lunch stop.

—PHOTO HENRY VAN DEN BROEK

of mist swirl through the lower areas and through the headlights it is as if I can see the dance of small droplets that are the core of its being: silver and beautiful, like a lace shawl, its beauty hiding its potential danger as I am less likely to be seen by any approaching automobile, yet still enchanting and fairy-like.

I wish I could tell you from day to day and hour to hour what happened, but as always on a brevet, the longer I ride the more confused my mind becomes until everything seems to blur together in a rhythm that involves riding, eating, and sleeping: repeat. The first day I do remember being surprised at the ease of the course other than the heat. I remember fields yielding to more mountainous terrain, the verdant green that speaks of fertility and enough rain. I remember the beauty of the architecture and of the surrounding fields, the camaraderie at lunch where everyone entering the restaurant was welcomed by other riders. I remember Teresa's friendliness at a control. Mostly, however, I remember the intense heat, heat that will repeat itself the next day. I remember the relief that a brief, late afternoon shower brought, how the rain seemed so cold after the intense heat. I remember that Norman and I sheltered for a while in someone's barn when lightning was flashing and he did not laugh at me because I did not have a smart phone or know how to use his before we parted ways. And I remember coming into the overnight control alone and tired and being overwhelmed by the kindness and caring shown by the volunteers.

I hope I never forget how it felt when Crista introduced herself and said that a friend, Greg Smith, had asked her to check and make sure I was okay, as if a soft, fluffy blanket had been wrapped around me. Mistakenly, I assumed they somehow knew each other. I hope I never forget the melodious, mellow sound of Carol's voice and laughter floating through

the room, and her tenderness dealing with a rider who came in sick from the heat, unable to eat and nauseous. Of how she carried his drop bag for him and helped him to his room so that he could recover to ride another day. I hope I never forget the way the smell of food wafted through the air, heady and enticing, fuel for another day. Or how it felt to take off my riding shoes, to feel my feet sigh with relief. Or how showering felt, the inebriating smell

and my stomach somewhat unsettled. I climb and climb, and next to me I hear the rushing, chuckling sound of water, laughing as if it knows some secret that I do not. I wonder how I missed this sound the prior evening coming into the control as I am tracing my way backward on the same road. I wish I could see it rather than just hear it, but it is so dark. Still, it sounds lovely and makes the steady climbing easier somehow. I worry, however,

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***I wish I could tell you from day to day and hour to hour what happened, but as always on a brevet, the longer I ride the more confused my mind becomes until everything seems to blur together in a rhythm that involves riding, eating, and sleeping: repeat.***

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of shampoo and soap, warm and sensuous, washing away the day's travels and cares. Or how the bed was welcoming and warm, a respite from the road and from my long journey. Sometimes I think that this is what I like the best about brevets: it gives me a new appreciation for things I too often take for granted and a renewed faith in human kindness. These volunteers will be here all night, doing without sleep, caring for riders as they come and go. And it will be repeated the following evening by other volunteers and the evening after that. Who could not want to be part of a club that has such people in it?

Sleeping a few hours, I head back out into the dark hoping to make the first significant climb, Warm Springs Mountain, before the heat once again lays claim to the day and yet again begins relentlessly pounding me with his smoldering fist. I am more tired than I expected and had trouble drinking the coffee as it was strong

about two hours later, long after the stream has been left behind, when I find I am averaging only about nine to ten miles per hour. The climbing is not particularly difficult, but it is demanding and it will be a long day if my pace does not pick up. Still I know it would be quite unwise to push myself with such a long distance left to cover. Eventually I meet up with Kelly and we ride together to the bottom of the first big climb. His company helps to put my sleepiness at bay, and I am wide awake by the time I stop at the store to refuel and he heads onward.

I can't describe for you the loveliness of the climb up Warm Springs Mountain, the rhythm of my pedal strokes, the pattern my breathing takes when I climb, as if my body becomes a song. I can't say I am sorry when I reach the top, but oddly enough I am not particularly glad either for I have enjoyed the climb, that is until I see what awaits me at the summit. At first I think my eyes are betraying me,



RBA Nick Bull giving final instructions.  
—PHOTO MIKE WALI

and they are, for there appears to be an ocean winding among the mountains, tapping around corners with an errant paw, arching its back, curling around the edges, and settling down, still but not still as it is fluidity and constant motion, a shining, shimmering sea of mist, blue and gray. And I begin to cry silently, glad the guys aren't here to see the tears streaming down my cheeks at finding such beauty in the world. All the scenery has been delightful, but this view alone is enough to make a 623-mile ride seem insignificant. It would be worth a lifetime of climbing and striving and riding to see this, to feel the coolness settle tenderly upon my shoulders like a heavenly shawl. And I feel small: small and grateful. I am grateful to Crista for designing this route, to God for creating such magnificence, and to the DC club that organized the event.

And then there is the third day. When I leave the control I feel a tad dis-spirited for I am weary, my legs are sore and complaining and my butt hurts. Additionally, I have been warned about the climbs between Lexington and Leesburg and how they will beat a rider up. 200 miles seems a very long way to go when one is already tired. Gratefully, I latch onto someone's wheel as they pass hoping that he does not mind. I think that this, along with

the cooler temperatures, is my salvation. Would I have finished otherwise? Probably, but who knows. Certainly I would not have finished as early or with so little effort because in the end, the third day practically flew by.

Before long we are climbing again and I call a thank you to this unknown man as he pulls ahead on the climb and I settle into my rhythm. One lesson I learned early on about brevets is the necessity of riding your own pace unless there will be payback for the greater effort, like being sheltered from a strong headwind. Out of the dark on the side of the road Norman appears, temporarily startling me, saying his bicycle has broken and help is being called. I head on when he assures me he is okay. There is nothing I can do to help him and I have "miles to go before I sleep" (Robert Frost). I repay the man who gave me the pull when I see him miss a turn and shout out to him so he can turn around.

I later end up spending the rest of the day with the man who turns out to be Paul Donaldson. He reminds me so of my dear friend, Davy "Packman" Ryan, and I grow comfortable with him quickly, something that is normally quite hard for me. (Packman was a very strong brevet rider consistently arriving at the last control earlier than people who are now Charlie Miller

riders. He never owned or drove a car, but he was paralyzed after being hit by a car, one of life's little ironies). I get the feeling that Paul, like Packman, has forgotten more about randonneuring than I have yet learned. Of course, he started riding brevets in 1992 while I was still rearing children and would have joined the crowd in thinking anyone riding brevets was, well, just a little bit off. Rather than soaking myself in scenery this day, though I did some of that, I immerse myself in friendship and laughter and the telling of stories. The miles pass unbelievably quickly as we laugh and joke. Jim and Roger join us a bit out from the end, though Jim later says he is going to drop back. Nobody else appears to have noticed the house I noticed a day or two ago that allegedly was designed by Thomas Jefferson and I think about how each ride is unique to each rider. I keep teasing Paul saying he said he would have me home by midnight, and he does.

And it is somehow over. I have not been eaten by a bear or fallen off a mountain top. All the planning, training, and hard work lead to fruition. Not just in completing the course, however. I am not quite the same person I was when I embarked on this journey, and I suspect that the others are not either. I am a bit stronger, and I realize more that my strength has grown only through the giving of others. Christa, Nick, God, the mountains, and so many others...more precious the gift in that it was given by strangers. Thank you all for this feeling of accomplishment. Hopefully one day I can return the favor and pay back. "And now here is my secret, a very simple secret: it is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye" (Antoine de Saint-Exupery). 🚲

# The American Randonneur Award

Once a year, the RUSA Board of Directors and the RUSA Awards Committee present an award to a member of the organization who has made a significant and outstanding contribution to randonneuring in the United States.

This person is to be recognized for having gone above and beyond the call of duty to help our niche of cycling grow. It can be a RBA who has dramatically increased brevet participation, a hard-working RUSA volunteer, or someone who has helped randonneuring flourish by a selfless act, good sportsmanship, camaraderie, or by being a good Samaritan.

RUSA wishes to recognize that special volunteer and inspire others to do the same. This is a most prestigious award, a high honor of American Randonneuring. It is the only award we have that names a single winner; all other awards can be earned each season by any number of our members who qualify successfully.

This person must be a RUSA member. (Check the RUSA website Members Search to see if the person that you have in mind is a current member and note their membership number).

The American Randonneur Award is given by the RUSA Board. The nominees' names come from the general membership. The Board then votes on the award winner. Please note that the Board has decided to exempt itself from any active nominations for this award in order to avoid possible conflicts of interest that could then affect other Board matters. If an American Randonneur Award nomination comes in for a sitting Board member, it is held over until that person's term of office is ended and then placed among the next batch of nominees.

You may nominate a member by email. To make a nomination by email, send your name and your RUSA membership number with your nominee's name and RUSA membership number to Johnny Bertrand at [JohnnyBertrand@mykolab.com](mailto:JohnnyBertrand@mykolab.com). Or fill out a candidate submission form and mail it to the address below by January 15.

## THE PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS OF THE AWARD:

2001	<b>Johnny Bertrand</b>	2006	<b>Bill Bryant</b>	2011	<b>Mike Dayton</b>
2002	<b>David Buzzee</b>	2007	<b>Robert Fry</b>	2012	<b>Crista Borrás</b>
2003	<b>Jennifer Wise</b>	2008	<b>Dan Driscoll</b>	2013	<b>John Lee Ellis</b>
2004	<b>James Kuehn</b>	2009	<b>Mark Thomas</b>		
2005	<b>Daryn Dodge</b>	2010	<b>Don Hamilton</b>		

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## NOMINATION FORM

YOUR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ YOUR RUSA # \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR AMERICAN RANDONNEUR AWARD NOMINEE: \_\_\_\_\_

NOMINEE'S RUSA # \_\_\_\_\_

BRIEF REASON FOR NOMINATION: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SEND THIS FORM TO:** Johnny Bertrand, 858 Carrick Pike, Georgetown, KY 40324

**E-MAIL:** [JohnnyBertrand@mykolab.com](mailto:JohnnyBertrand@mykolab.com)

# San Francisco Randonneurs: Mixed Terrain Series

BY MASSIMILIANO POLETTO AND MEGAN ARNOLD

## The Back Story

### Massimiliano Poletto

In 2005, in Massachusetts, I was stunned by the beauty and sheer fun of Sandy Whittlesey's Deerfield Dirt Road Randonnée (D2R2). To this day, for me, that ride is the paragon by which any mixed-terrain ride is judged.

A couple of years later, when I moved to California and was new to the local randonneuring scene, my friend and fellow rando David Strong introduced me to the rural roads of Sonoma County. Old Cazadero, King Ridge, Skaggs Springs: these roads offered wonderful, world-class cycling but were hard to reach from San Francisco without a car.

The San Francisco “adventure series” emerged from these two experiences. I wanted to create motivation for riders to explore the remote country roads of northern California without resorting to a car, and to the extent possible, I hoped to emulate Sandy's ability to string together beautiful places in a coherent, well-paced whole.

Over the years, I scouted the routes by bike, often leaving San Francisco well before dawn. I used web software (first Google Maps, then RideWithGPS) to plan and visualize alternatives. And I received lots of support from my wife, Kara, and from the San Francisco RBA, Rob Hawks.

I'm afraid that D2R2—70% dirt roads on a 170K course—remains an elusive ideal. Unlike Western Massachusetts and Vermont, most of California's unpaved roads are on private property.

Nonetheless, the SFR adventure rides stand out for their remoteness and hilliness. The courses explore primarily small farm and mountain roads, some just one lane wide. On a

few stretches one might ride for two or three hours without seeing a car. Climbing is in the range of 1600-1900m/100K (8500-10000'/100 miles). Every course has some dirt, typically 15-60K (10-40 miles), ranging from well-graded fire roads to rough single track. Given the nature of the terrain and RUSA rules on intermediate checkpoints, we use many informational controls.



Highway 1  
—PHOTO BY MEGAN ARNOLD





I like to think that all this climbing and remoteness has its benefits: splendid views, intimacy with nature, few cars. The rides appear to have attracted a small but enthusiastic following, and ridership has grown every year.

The first brevet in the series, the Old Cazadero 300K, has been held annually since 2010. It features two substantial gravel sections, a river crossing, a hike-a-bike boulder field, and miles of empty country roads. The location of large blackberry bushes was a key consideration in route design.

The 2012 season saw the inaugural editions of the King Ridge 400K—essentially the big brother of Old Cazadero—and of the Marin Mountains 200K, a much more technical course that includes over 50K of rough trails and visits some of the places where mountain biking was born in the 1970s.

And this year, 2014, we introduced the Orr Springs 600K, a huge loop that traverses six counties, climbs over 30,000', and exposes riders to many diverse California ecosystems, from cool forests of coastal redwoods to the dry chaparral of the inland mountains.

It's still too early to promise anything, but plans for a *grande randonnée* of 1200K or more is in the works.

**Links:**

<http://ridebike.org/sfr/adventure/>  
<http://sfrandonneurs.org>

**Orr Springs 600K Ride Report**  
**Megan Arnold**

Some rides you want to ride even before you know the exact details of the route. The Orr Springs 600K was one of these for me. As the capstone of Max's Adventure Series I knew it would be a finely crafted challenge

showcasing scenic, remote and lesser traveled roads of the California North Bay Area.

Further reinforcement that it would be no ordinary brevet came when the ride notes sent to riders before the event included this information: blackberries. Sadly, the blackberries that engulf the roadsides of much of this course were not yet ripe when we did the ride.

The notes also included stern warnings about the difficulty of the course. A group of us had done a pre-ride of part of the unfamiliar section of the route, so we had a better idea of what we were getting into, and my ride buddy Patrick had calculated target times for the intermediate controls that seemed to indicate it would be doable within the 40-hour limit. Despite all that, I vacillated between cautious optimism and overwhelming nerves as the day approached.

The alarm for the 0400 start verged on punitive, but it allowed for a timely unfolding of the route to a logical rest break in Ukiah, and the 40-hour limit coming before nightfall on the second day. The only downside was that we would be too early for several of the fantastic bakeries along the first part of the route.

The start was at the Golden Gate Bridge Toll Plaza, which is a magical place to begin a journey. Max added

some dubious luster to the inaugural run of this brevet by noting the fact that it was on this day 100 years earlier that Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated, which started WW1.

A light fog had produced enough moisture to make the bridge deck slick as we headed north, but it did not obscure the lights of the Bay Area. The early hour made for an easy roll through Sausalito without having to battle throngs of tourists.

Soon we were on the coast with the sound of the Pacific Ocean to our left and a bright star hanging in the sky to our right over the shoulder of Mt. Tamalpais, the silhouette of which was barely discernible in the first hints of dawn. We descended towards Bolinas, and the lagoon was stunning in the early morning light. Daybreak continued, but we were now in the coastal fog.

Most of the group was still together at this point, and we kept a brisk but civilized pace line up Highway 1. The number dwindled as some folks headed off the front with a more up-tempo pace, and then Patrick and I stopped for a nature break.

The fog thinned as we headed inland, and a moderate bit of climbing put us into the redwoods at Occidental. We caught most of the group here in various stages of the first receipt control. The route then continued



Orr Springs Road.

—PHOTO BY MASSIMILIANO POLETTA

were more surprised to see us or the other way around.

At Highway 1, we turned north into headwinds to the next receipt control at Gualala. At the control, it felt good to be off the bike and eating some real food, although I had to keep in mind we had more stout climbing and the first dirt segment, Fish Rock Road, just ahead. Still, we also had to be prepared for no services until the next receipt control in Boonville, about forty miles away. Despite the impending hills, I couldn't pass up the gelato cart.

A steep pavement climb and some ridge rollers were followed by a descent to where the pavement ends. Fish Rock Road is passable by automobile, but doesn't see much traffic as it goes from not much of anywhere to more of the same, without providing a shortcut. The surface is a bit of a washboard in spots, but we could usually find relatively smooth passage. The road was dry and the gravel loose but still ride-able as long as we paid attention.

The first part was mostly forested, which was great for the shade, but not so much for the views. Later sections opened up to some views, but put us into full sun. I was glad I'd brought extra water, and that the day wasn't any warmer. The route passed through beautiful redwoods of Maillard State Reserve, and a meadow that had me looking for Julie Andrews. I spared Patrick by not breaking into song.

After a couple of false starts, the road reverted to pavement even if it was often in poor condition. Reaching Highway 128 was a mixed blessing as the road surface to Boonville was predominately buttery smooth pavement, but there was more traffic and a headwind. Highway 128 trends downhill as it heads to the ocean, so it felt like we were making pretty good

downhill through more redwoods to the Russian River, and the last bit of what might be considered the prelude section of the ride, covering roads that most riders were familiar with.

At Cazadero the route transitioned to more significant climbing, remoteness, and new territory for many riders. The lower reaches of King Ridge were mostly shaded; the types of trees changed as we gained altitude, and eventually our efforts were rewarded by sweeping vistas from the top of the ridge. The open grassland sported the golden brown of California summer, dotted with magnificent bay and oak. I never get tired of the

views from here. It feels like the top of the world.

For the most part we had it to ourselves, although as we approached the information control at Tin Barn Road we encountered a parade of fire trucks out on a training exercise. Tin Barn Road also featured a tire-flattening cattle guard that claimed several victims, and a high security Buddhist retreat center. The road roller-coasted along the ridgeline to Skaggs Springs Road, which dropped us back to Highway 1. Part way down, there was a super stretch Escalade limousine having difficulty navigating one of the steep sharp turns. I'm not sure if they

time. The vineyards and orchards of the Anderson Valley glowed in the late afternoon sun and then we passed into a tree tunnel of redwoods.

In the lingering twilight, with a big hill between Comptche and Ukiah, we realized that we weren't going to make the next control in daylight, so we settled into a steady but comfortable pace. As we climbed, there were occasional gaps in the trees that allowed us to see the sunset color to the west. We stopped to add layers, and then again a bit further on to capture the last of the sunset, and then returned to climbing.

We rode the route's namesake Orr Springs Road in darkness, missing potential views, but the night sky was amazing. Stars, stars and more stars! Eventually the lights of Ukiah appeared in the distance. A big descent brought us to the north end of town, and a somewhat jarring return to so-called civilization.

We had agreed to stop at Safeway (it's before the control), but when did Main Street get so long? Just when I was about to give up, Safeway appeared, and after a bit of wandering around, I did find the things I wanted. We continued to the control, checked in, ate, cleaned up and negotiated departure time. I'd been saying I'd be fine with just finishing the course, but now that we'd made all the intermediate controls so far, I realized I really did want to complete within



the 40 hours, and it would be a bit of a bummer to miss that on account of an overly long sleep break. Patrick had a more optimistic prediction of how long the remaining distance would take us to cover, so we compromised on a 0330 roll out.

It was still dark when we got to the second dirt segment, Old Toll Road, on the second day, but an imperceptible fade to sunrise began as we made our way up the gentle climb. After a somewhat chilly descent, there was a bit of meandering through pear orchards, hay fields and ranchettes to the next climb. Much of Bottle Rock Road is exposed, so it was nice to get through that early in the day before it got too hot. There were a couple of fun swoopy descents in this segment, the second of which brought us to the control in Middletown.

After resupplying we headed out for the last dirt section, Western Mine Road, the shortest and steepest. Or maybe it just felt steepest with so many miles already in the legs. It wasn't all

Above, the view from King Ridge.  
Below, riding along the Bolinas Lagoon.

—PHOTOS BY MEGAN ARNOLD

downhill from there, but we'd completed the dirt segments and difficult climbs, so I was feeling better about finishing within the 40 hours.

From here we were back on to more familiar and somewhat busier roads, not quite backtracking but unraveling the way through Sonoma and Marin Counties and eventually to the Golden Gate Bridge, where we had started almost 38 hours before.

This is truly an amazing route, especially considering that it's within a day or less of riding time from a major metropolitan area. So much of it felt like the back of beyond and that we were the only people for miles. A great reminder that adventure can be had in your own backyard!

#### **The long-winded version:**

<https://2m2t.wordpress.com/2014/07/21/2014-sfr-orr-springs-600k/>

#### **More pictures:**

[https://picasaweb.google.com/101129983306144734005/2014OrrSprings600k?authkey=Gv1sRgCO\\_arJj6wp3N0AE#](https://picasaweb.google.com/101129983306144734005/2014OrrSprings600k?authkey=Gv1sRgCO_arJj6wp3N0AE#)

#### **What people rode:**

<https://picasaweb.google.com/101129983306144734005/TheBikesOf2014OrrSprings600k02?authkey=Gv1sRgCOqCpdP9qv7eOw#> 🚲



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# Confessions of a junk food junkie

Dear Briant,

I have just returned from a 9-day self-contained ride down to Stanley, ID, via Lolo Pass and back up over Lost Trail (964 miles).

We fueled our ride almost exclusively with Hammer Nutrition products and felt energized for the entire trip. The sense of well-being I felt was the most intense I have ever experienced on a long tour. (We pre-positioned our re-supply at Riggins, ID, to ensure we would not run out of Hammer items.) I rode 2,476 miles in 34 consecutive days to prepare for this ride. At this point a short story/confession is in order!

Last summer I trained for a similar ride and sparingly fueled with Hammer products only during the rides. . . I thought it would be too expensive to totally rely on them before, during, and after riding. After riding 50 or 60 miles, however, I had to find a place to purchase a few jojos, chicken strips, and a pop, etc. to satisfy my gnawing hunger and waning energy. Each stop shot about \$5.00, and I often struggled to get going again! I had been doing the same routine for 6 years and just thought, "That's the way things are!"

On our ride we missed our re-supply of Hammer products (the P.O. was closed on Saturday), so I ended up with a lot of extra stuff when we returned home. I decided to fuel my rides entirely with Hammer items just to see if I could tell a difference. . . After a few days I realized what an imbecile I had been, sacrificing performance, confidence, and health for what I thought might be a couple of dollars a day! Imagine my dismay when I found it really didn't cost any more to use the best nutrition products available! I could rip off 60 or 80 miles, relying on Hammer Gel, HEED, Peperium, and Recoverite, and feel ready to do it again the next morning. I experienced a completely new level of confidence and energy compared to the old days of struggling to ride 5-6 days per week. Another significant benefit of Hammer products is that they are so friendly to the lower gastrointestinal tract! Take my word for it, at \$2 that's an important "added value!"

Thank you for improving the quality and distances of my rides, while leaving me fully energized and confident at the end of the day and ready to tear out the next morning!

Sincerely yours,  
Dave Dillon  
Columbia Falls, MT



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# If Bikes Could Fly

BY VICKIE TYER

Where would a bike go if it could fly? To France, of course, to ride in the oldest organized cycling event in the world: PBP. It's time to make plans for the ride next August! How are we going to get our trusty skinny steeds across the pond?

As cyclists, we have to accept that we have no buying power with the airlines. We simply do not have the numbers to be influential. The airlines know they can charge higher prices, and they know that we will pay because the box or bag is labeled a "bicycle." So, it is going to cost extra bucks to take our bikes to France; we know it up front, so plan on it, budget for it, swipe your plastic, and get on with your plans. Don't fret about it any more.

I went in search of "well-traveled" fellow randos and came up with a few suggestions to help you with your plans.

One of the first decisions could be to go with Des Peres Travel (who puts together a package) or to make your own travel plans. Randos choose both options. If you go with Des Peres, you will fly on Air France. If you make your own plans, you will likely choose an airline based on your flyer miles.

Shown above is a chart of the bike fees charged by airlines. Keep in mind they will likely change before you travel.

Most agree that traveling nonstop is the best way to prevent the possible loss of bags. There are horror stories of bikes that do not arrive, and people who make frantic trips to the airport to scream at helpless airline staff, to

no avail, and more stories about those who rent a bike at the last minute.

Everyone agrees it is best to take your bike on the plane rather than ship it separately. Shipping it is more expensive and reconnecting with your bike in France is less certain. More horror stories of black holes and lost bikes.

Randonneurs who have bikes with couplers rejoice! They are dancing in the streets and cheering; can you hear them? These forward thinkers still have to pay for an extra bag but they

AIRLINE	BIKE FEE if >62 in. & <50lbs
Air Canada	\$150
Air France	\$75
American Airlines	\$150
British Airways	No charge <75 in. in a recognized bike bag
United	\$200
Delta Airlines	\$150
Lufthansa	\$150
Virgin Atlantic	No charge <23kg

do not have to pay a bike fee. Everyone who has couplers would buy couplers again. You have to decide how much you are going to fly before you buy your next bike. If you are going to fly once or twice each year, it is cheaper to go with couplers. If you are going to



Take pictures of your packing for reference.

—PHOTO PAM WRIGHT



fly once every four years, it is not. The bike comes apart at the coupler and goes in a bike suitcase that measures 62 inches or less and weighs less than 50 pounds and should be regarded as a normal piece of baggage without a bike fee. It can be a challenge to get your bike in the case, so you need to practice it one time and take notes and take pictures at several stages of the packing. It helps to be mechanically inclined but there are many people who put their bikes together without problems. And do not forget that when you arrive in Paris, there are so many people putting their bikes together, it is easy to get assistance. Many of these coupler people use the S&S coupler suitcase. (Delta warning: this year two people traveling on Delta with coupled bikes still had to pay the bike fee. In one case the bag was a “soft case” and allowed the bag to bulge a small amount, so the airline argued it could bulge beyond the 62 inches.)

People use a variety of travel cases for non-coupled bikes. There are hard cases, soft cases, semi-soft, and even cardboard boxes. You do not have to buy a case; most bike shops will rent a case. However, it is very important to call and reserve the case early. Your bike shop will also pack it for you and help you learn how to assemble it. Again, take notes and pictures to help ensure you can do it yourself in France.

Many cases come with wheels and handles that make travel much easier. Remember you are going to have to get your case to the airport, pick it up at Charles de Gaulle airport, get to a vehicle, get from there to a hotel, and then do the reverse to get home. At the same time, you will be carrying another bag as well as a carry-on bag and maybe a kid or two or three. And don't forget escalators, stairs, and elevators: all part of the adventure. Wheels and handles come in handy.

Of course, lighter travel is better. Don't we all know that? But we all know we need a lot of stuff to ride our bikes 750 miles. Be sure you know the weight limit for your airline—it's

Bike storage, above and bike assembly, below.  
—PHOTO VICKIE TYER

usually 50 pounds. Get to your airport early and go find a place to weigh your bags. They have shrink wrapping kiosks that will weigh your bike for free. Then you can adjust your items across your bags to stay under weight.

Remember that all of your bike tools need to go in the checked bags; don't try to carry them in your carry-on as they will be confiscated at security. The same rule applies to CO<sub>2</sub> cartridges and spray lube and chain cleaner. Additionally, everything in your bike case should be in clear plastic bags so it can be inspected. Then it should be



zip-tied together so when your case is opened by TSA, it doesn't fall out.

When TSA opens your bike case and TSA will open your bike case, they don't care much about your stuff. Make your case easy for them to open, inspect and close. A strap around the outside helps to ensure your case doesn't come open. Or if TSA cannot close your bag because you packed it too full, maybe they can buckle the strap. Even if your case doesn't have a strap, you can put one on it, by using duct tape to hold it in place. Again, try to make it easy for TSA. A sign on the case that says "This Side Up" is a good idea. Put pictures of your bike in the case for them to visualize. Use cleaning rags for stuffing so you have them for after the ride.

Now, how are you going to get from Charles de Gaulle airport to where you are staying? Many people stay near the ride start in St Quentin and that is

about an hour's drive from the airport. Many people take a cab because it's easy but may cost about \$75 USD each way. If you can share, it may be a good choice, but then you have to have a big enough taxi for two bikes and bags and two people. Many people will travel with Des Peres, and his bus will take you and will cost about \$50 USD. With Des Peres, the bikes come on a truck and you have to connect with your bike at the hotel. Sometimes it can be a bit exciting finding your bike. The intrepid traveler might try public transportation. Before you do, however, understand that people seldom do this twice. There are stairs, turnstiles, ticket takers, ramps, buses, trains, people, people, people, and just a little space for you and a big bike case, a carry-on, and a big bag. You see why people seldom make this choice two times? But if you travel light and are the adventurous type, go ahead and report back, we

want to hear your story.

So what about insurance on your trusty skinny steed? For most people, your home owner's insurance will cover your bike in the USA but not in France. So look into your insurance. And while you are at it, don't forget insurance for yourself. Your medical insurance may not cover you when you leave the USA and may not cover medical evacuation.

Still, when you look down, and your computer reads 750 miles as you return to the streets of St Quentin where throngs of people have gathered on the sidelines, and you come to the circle in front of the gymnasium, hear the cheers, see the waving arms, and see your loved ones, friends and comrades, and realize you have reached the finish of an incredible journey, that you are now an ancien(ne), then you will truly know just how high your bike can fly. 🚲

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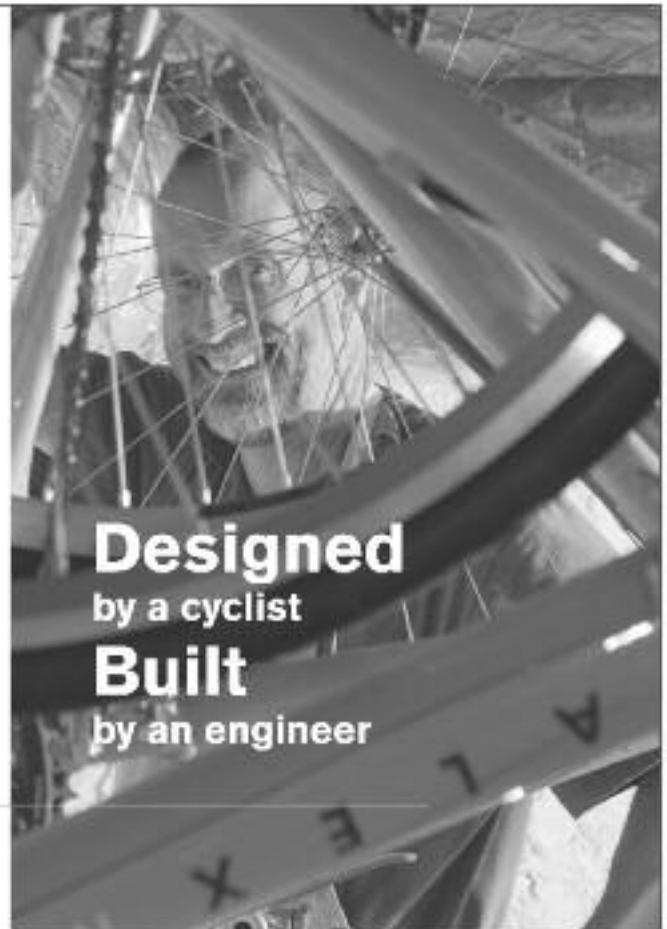
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# Giving Back to PBP

BY JACK HOLMGREN

If you are fortunate enough to participate in the 2015 edition of PBP, it would be nice if you left something behind with some of the people who make this event unique. We can show organizers, volunteers, riders from other lands, and the countless thousands who line the route at all hours of the day some love in the form of swag.

During the last PBP, I gave out refrigerator magnets. They are light and easily trigger a positive memory of USA randonneurs when stuck to a refrigerator in a home somewhere along the route. The interactions they create have also given me great happiness and sweet memories.

In my mind, I still see the look of

absolute joy on the face of the little girl who carried my tray of food to the table in Villaines-la-Juhel. Her smile was magnificent as she clutched a refrigerator magnet with a picture of the Golden Gate Bridge and the name of my club. Another memory: at around midnight on the brutal leg returning to Mortagne-au-Perche, I stopped at a stop sign and then heard a voice coming from the darkness asking the question, "Coffee?" This was dispensed in the finest porcelain cup with utmost grace by a grandmother in her bathrobe and slippers. Neither of us spoke much of the other's language, but by the end, I had presented her with a magnet and learned that her niece



PHOTO BY NIGRELLI

worked in San Francisco.

This is not the first time that someone has offered the idea of passing out small gifts along the PBP route. I've done this for two PBP's because I read Bill Bryant's suggestion to give out RUSA pins. But it is such a great idea that I wanted to pass it on. Let's make the next edition of PBP truly memorable not only for us but for our hosts as well.

Bonne route! 🚲

The best saddle is the one you aren't thinking about.



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## “Don’t Read This”

Great. Now we know you are the type of person who ignores instructions. You are precisely the person I want to address in this article, the person who ignores the instruction book and barrels full force into assembling the complicated toys on Christmas Eve after the kids have gone to bed. You are the person who showed up this morning at the last 200K brevet on the calendar and, even though this is your first brevet, you ignored all the pertinent information on our website

and the discussion on our Facebook page and the personal e-mail sent to you by our RBA. And then you were shocked, SHOCKED! to learn that there are rules, that the road isn’t marked and that there is a time limit!

It is impressive and encouraging to see how many new riders have joined RUSA in the last few years. When I joined RUSA in 2005, 7 years after it was established in 1998, I received RUSA #2861. In the 9 years since

I joined, we have added over 7,000 members and are closing in on RUSA #10,000! This is great for our sport, but this morning’s experience made it clear to me that more than a RUSA number is needed to be prepared for your first brevet. So for all of you who have

been at this for years, this article is not really for you. But for those of you who want the inside scoop on the basics of our sport, read on. Or don’t, it’s up to you.

*Randonneuring: Frequently Asked Questions.*

**1. What is this card you are giving me?** This is your brevet card. You need to have it signed or get a receipt at each controle. There may also be information controles where you need to enter a piece of information which proves you have followed the route as detailed on your cue sheet. Don’t lose it. If you don’t have it at the finish, you do not get credit for the ride. The ride organizer will take the card from you but will return it to you at the end of the season. One day in the off-season, an envelope will arrive in the mail and memories of a day well spent on the bike will come flooding back to you. You may show it off or frame it since it is your first card. After doing this for several years, however, you may have boxes of these cardboard mementos which will force your heirs to lug one more thing out to the dumpster when you pedal off to that big brevet in the sky.

**2. What’s a controle?** In everyday parlance it would be called a rest stop, but don’t be fooled, very little resting actually takes place at most controles. Get in, get out. Unless you are speedy; then you can rest. Of course, if you are speedy, you probably don’t need to rest; just one of the many paradoxes of this sport.

**3. Why do I need this cue sheet, the road is marked with arrows, right?** Wrong. This isn’t a charity ride, this is a brevet. You have a cue sheet to help you navigate the course.

**4. Wow, that’s going to be inconvenient carrying that cue thing in my pocket.** Oh my lord. Did you read anything on the website? You need a mechanism to hold your cue sheet in a stable manner in a place where you can easily see it and it should be resistant to rain or snow.



Just when you think cycling clothes cannot get any goofier.

Opposite at left: Except for packing two left gloves, Janice is well prepared for riding in the rain!

Opposite at right: The Philly Art Museum makes a suitable backdrop for fashionable Randos Joe and Katie.

—PHOTOS CHRIS NEWMAN



Many riders use map holders but there are dozens of ways to attach the cue to your bike. My preferred method is quite simple and has worked well over thousands of miles. I use a binder clip laced through a Velcro strap which I wrap around the handlebar stem. My big secret, which I am sharing with you now, is waterproof paper. The paper is sturdy, there is no baggie to mess with which means there is no glare on the paper from your headlamp. The paper is more expensive than regular paper but you can print on both sides and the ease of use makes it well worth the extra cost. So check out other riders' cue sheet holders and experiment with what works best for you. You can, of course, load the ride into your GPS unit, but the cue sheet is your bible and you should always carry one with you.



**5. Um, you lost me at "snow." And also at "headlamp."** Wow.

Ok let's deal with snow and rain and weather in general first. There is no crying in baseball and there are no rain delays in randonneuring. We ride in every weather condition you can imagine. I have seen only a few rides moved to alternate dates when blizzards were predicted and I like to think we would have canceled any ride that fell on the day Sandy bombarded the East coast but I could be wrong about that. Driving rain is no excuse to stay in bed. Laurent C., the very wise former NJ RBA, likes to say there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing choices. Laurent shows up at the start with what he needs in case the weather turns nasty, and he wisely does not seem to pay attention to the weather forecast. On my first 300K, held in hot, humid NJ in June, I foolishly left my arm warmers and vest in my car at the start. The day was so miserably hot, why would I possibly schlep this stuff

around with me for 187 miles? Because it gets dark and meteorologists lie, that's why. I finished that ride in the rain, hypothermic and shaking so badly that I could not sign my brevet card. I have been that cold and wet on two more rides, but I finally learned my lesson, and I will gladly cart enough clothes around to ensure I am never that cold again. Carrying sufficient clothing to ensure warmth is not difficult, and I'll fill you in on a few secrets in a minute but let me address the lighting issue first.

**6. Lights? I need lights?** In a word, yes, but I can't possibly let this go with just a word. I know you are fast and it would never take you 13.5



hours to complete a 200K ride, but stuff happens. You could get a flat; you could get multiple flats. You could rack up a few bonus miles missing a turn or two; you could rack up a few dozen bonus miles becoming hopelessly lost. You might need to stay with your friend who catapulted over his handlebars to wait for the ambulance and then find a ride to the finish for his bike. This happened to three friends of mine who needed 16.5 hours to complete

Dressed in their fashionable wool jerseys, Team Escargots Volants is ready for Flèche 2012.



the cold, February 200K on which this occurred. In addition, lights are a great way to increase visibility in tunnels and foggy weather. There are many inexpensive and bright lights on the market and your fellow randos will be more than happy to share their hard won light knowledge with you.

**7. Ok, so what's the big secret to staying warm?** I just want to say one word to you. Just one word. Are you listening? Wool. (Did you think I was going to say plastics? How old are you anyway...) Wool will keep you warm and reasonably dry. The wool jerseys today are soft and durable and not itchy like you remember. They insulate even when wet. When you stink, they don't. They dry reasonably fast. I was wearing wool at PBP 2011 when the sky opened and

we were drenched by torrential rain. I reached the St. Nicholas controle where I put on every piece of wool clothing I had with me. I was wet and pretty miserable but I wasn't cold. I spent two hours there with many experienced randos who were shivering uncontrollably in their nylon jerseys. I was miserable but they were cold and miserable which is a much worse state of affairs. Wool jerseys cost a bit more but they are well worth it. And if you are absolutely insistent on wearing that Gran Fondo kit because you earned it, darn it, and it inspires you to pedal your heart out it, and by the way it cost a bloody fortune, well then consider purchasing a light wool shell to wear under that Fondo finery. You'll still impress all your friends and stay warm as well.

**8. Anything else?** There's so much to tell you but my editor informs me that other articles have been submitted for this issue, so I'll just throw out a few gems:

*Keeping cool:* ice socks or bandanas—fill a sock or bandana with ice from the convenience store controle, wrap it around your neck and tie—not too tightly. This will cool you right down.

*Hotel room shower caps:* are for taking with you to be repurposed as helmet covers which keep your noggin dry in those storms you now ride through.

*Rubber kitchen gloves/plastic exam gloves:* not attractive but quite effective in keeping your hands warm and dry. Try to bring a matched pair of kitchen gloves—you already look goofy enough in that shower cap. 🚲

## American Randonneur — CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

**The editor welcomes submissions of interest to readers of American Randonneur. Articles with photos or other visual elements are particularly welcome. While the focus of AR is on randonneuring events held in the U.S., articles on international events are also published.**

**Types of articles include but aren't limited to the following:**

- Ride reports
- Ride promotional articles
- Technical articles
- Gear articles
- Training, health, nutrition articles
- Humorous articles
- Collage articles incorporating tweets, facebook quotes and/or short quotes from blog posts
- Reprints of blog posts (occasionally. Material not printed elsewhere is preferred, however, exceptions may be made.)
- Reports on non-rando long-distance/endurance events of interest to randos
- Letters to the editor
- Book reviews
- Cartoons
- Sketches

**Length of articles:** articles of up to 2000 words would be appropriate. There is no minimum length requirement, but please contact the editor if you wish to write more than 2000 words.

**Photos:** must be high resolution and unaltered. They can be submitted as attachments to email messages. Other options are available and can be discussed with the editor.

**How to submit articles:** articles should be sent as Word files (no PDFs, no links to blog posts) to editor@rusa.org or jchernekoff@yahoo.com. Send photos separately; do not include them in articles.

The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, accuracy and brevity.

**Paid advertising:** is available. Please contact Mike Dayton (president@rusa.org) for details.

**Submission deadlines:**

Spring issue — December 15  
Summer issue — March 15  
Fall issue — June 15  
Winter issue — September 15

**Questions?** Please contact the editor at editor@rusa.org.

# Remembering Randonneurs We Have Lost

BY BILL WATTS

Two of the most difficult moments of my life have come on randonneuring events. Both involved the death of a fellow randonneur.

The first was during a particularly groggy and sleep-deprived stretch of Paris-Brest-Paris in 2011, when I came upon a number of emergency vehicles on the outskirts of a village. I saw an abandoned bicycle under a truck, but I did not stop to figure out what had happened, partly because I did not want to get in the way, and partly because I did not then want to know the details. I knew in my bones that something bad had happened.

As I continued the ride, the information that came to me about the incident was fragmentary and confusing. Eventually, I did get word that a rider had died. For a while, I thought that two riders had been killed.

In my confused and exhausted state, I thought that the death of a rider would surely mean the end of PBP for that year. "How could we continue after the tragic death of a rider?" I asked myself over and over again, in the obsessive way one does on a long ride. I was surprised, then, when I arrived at the next control, and found that it was functioning as usual, with no talk about closing down the ride. Eventually, I, too, returned to normal, and stopped obsessing about the disturbing scene I had witnessed.

Only after I finished did I learn that Thai Pham of the DC Randonneurs had tragically died on the ride at the age of 58.

These painful memories of three years ago came flooding back to me during a 200K in Ohio in March of this year. As I approached the turn-around

point in Troy, Ohio, I came upon a stretch of road that was closed off, with police cruisers, a fire truck and ambulances blocking the way.

This time, there was no doubt about what had happened. Joe Giampapa, a 56-year-old cyclist from Columbus had been struck by a minivan and killed. His body lay along the side of the road, covered by a blanket, and his mangled

PBP, I was unsure about what to do after the death of a fellow randonneur. Should we stop the ride to honor Joe? David Roderick, the Ohio Randonneurs RBA, had arrived at the site, and, after some deliberation, he said that we should decide for ourselves what to do. The ride would continue, but everyone would understand if we decided to withdraw.

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***Curiously, we honor our dead best by continuing to do the sport that we love and that we share with them.***

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bicycle was some distance away. The windshield of the van was shattered, and its driver sat in a police vehicle writing his report.

To be at this site was to feel deep loss. Beyond the mere fact of Joe's untimely death was the fact that there was no way of explaining it. He was killed in the late morning, when there was plenty of light and no glaring sun on the horizon. The road was straight, with no chuckholes or other barriers to dodge. The driver was not impaired in any obvious way. The bitter cruelty of Joe's death was evident to everyone who was there. A very kind sheriff explained to the six of us who had come to the site what had happened, and he could not hold back the tears as he did so.

Eventually, the sheriff told us that we could continue on our ride. As on

Some riders did withdraw. But because I had driven three hours to get to the event, I did not have an easy way to return to my car. And it seemed that the safest way to return to the starting point was to follow the brevet route. I and the riders with me decided to continue.

We walked our bikes past Joe's body. It was unbelievably sad. I could not think of any way to pay tribute to Joe except to remove my helmet. It seemed a woefully inadequate gesture.

Unfortunately, this scene was played out again on August 9th of this year, when Matthew O'Neill, a 33-year-old cyclist from Chula Vista, was killed on the California Central Coast 1200K. As was the case with Joe Giampapa, there is no good explanation for what happened to Matthew O'Neill. He was killed at



7:30 p.m. on a summer evening by a 16-year-old who was driving a truck hauling a horse trailer on a straight road. There was nothing about the weather, the state of the road, or the behavior of O'Neill that would explain this inexplicable accident.

This was obviously a tragedy for Matthew O'Neill's family and many friends. But it must also have been a terrible thing for those on the ride with him and for the organizers of the event. I feel deep sympathy for them.

With the help of Mark Thomas, I have been able to identify four other riders, in addition to Joe Giampapa and Matthew O'Neill, who have been killed on RUSA events during the 15-year history of the organization.

Gustavo A. Antonini, aged 66, and his stepson William W. Cupples, aged 44, were killed while riding in a bike lane on February 8, 2004 on a 300K brevet outside of Gainesville. The driver left the scene of the accident, but flipped his truck over about three miles down the road. The driver was sentenced to 15 years for DUI manslaughter, and was spared a longer sentence after the family of the victims wrote a letter expressing forgiveness and asking for leniency in his sentencing.

Stan Oldak, a 60-year-old randonneur from New York City, was

hit by a truck and killed while riding a 400K near Columbus, Texas, on May 6, 2007. Oldak had been president of the New York Cycle Club, and had come to Texas for the 400K in order to qualify for PBP. The driver of the truck that hit him left the scene of the accident, and, so nearly as I can tell, was never apprehended.

James Swartzman, aged 46 from Encino, California, was hit and killed early on the morning of April 10, 2011, while riding a 600K near Leucadia State Beach. The motorist left the scene of the accident, but was later apprehended and sentenced to two years for hit and run manslaughter.

I am not well enough versed in the actuarial sciences to say whether six deaths over the 15-year history of an organization that has had 10,000 members mean that randonneuring in the United States is particularly dangerous. With over 30,000 highway fatalities in the US each year, I am inclined to think that most randonneurs are at greater risk when they drive to events than they are when they actually ride them. In the age of the automobile and jet plane, all forms of travel carry some risk, and I am not convinced that cycling in general, or randonneuring, in particular, are especially dangerous forms of travel.

I do know, however, that all of these deaths hurt. And I also know that 2014 has been a tough year for RUSA. Not only have we had two deaths, but, in the passing of Joe Giampapa and Matthew O'Neill, we have seen two good men snatched away, in the prime of their lives, from their friends and family. And there is simply no good explanation for either death. As cyclists, Joe and Matthew were doing everything right. And yet they were killed.

One of the questions I have found myself thinking about since riding through the site of Thai Pham's death three years ago is this: what do we owe to fellow randonneurs who have fallen?

If you are in the middle of an event where this happens, it is hard to muster the detachment and good sense to give a reasonable answer to this question. If it had been entirely up to me, I think I would have cancelled the events in both Ohio and in France. And I think that would have been the wrong answer.

For one thing, if you are a near-witness to a death, it is all too easy to put yourself in the place of the victim. What if I had reached this place in the brevet an hour earlier? Or what if the motorist had come by an hour later? These are not merely

hypothetical questions. You know in your heart that it could just as easily have been you who died that day.

Moreover, being at the site gives you a deeper sense of the loss than you would have if you had read about it afterward. For several weeks after the death of Joe Giampapa, I was in touch with two randonneurs who were thinking about quitting the sport because of what they had witnessed. It wasn't so much that they feared their own death as they feared what their deaths would do to their wives and children. How could I put my family through that, they asked?

Ultimately, though, they both kept riding, and they both went on to finish longer RUSA rides in the course of the season. And it seems to me that this is the right answer. Curiously, we honor our dead best by continuing to do the sport that we love and that we share with them. In this, randonneuring is like life itself. Sooner or later, we must all come to grips with the death of friends, colleagues and loved ones. But we cannot stop living out of deference to the dead.

For this reason, I have been grateful for the wise and humane guidance of organizers and riders who carry on despite grievous circumstances. In Ohio, I was impressed by the quiet dignity of David Roderick, David Buzzee, and the other volunteers who made it possible to finish that ride. And, while I was not there, I understand from the accounts of others that the California Central Coast 1200K continued in a dignified and respectful way after the death of Matthew O'Neill.

At the end of the day, I think the best we can do for fallen randonneurs is to keep riding, and to keep their memories alive.

One way to remember and honor those we have lost is to work to change the circumstances that led to their deaths. After his death, the family of Joseph Giampapa released a statement supporting a three-foot passing law,

which was then before the Ohio legislature. (Unfortunately, the bill was later withdrawn.) Likewise, the family of Matthew O'Neill launched a campaign, "Remember Matthew: Change Lanes to Pass a Cyclist," to extend and enhance California's recently enacted three-foot passing law, and to increase awareness of cyclists on our roads. We owe it both

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***At the end of the day, I think the best we can do for fallen randonneurs is to keep riding, and to keep their memories alive.***

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to ourselves and to those we have lost to be the best bicycle advocates we can be in our communities.

But we can also do a lot through RUSA and through our individual clubs to remember those we have lost. One of my favorite things about randonneuring is the Société Adrian Hands, which has its own jersey and recognizes riders who achieve a time on PBP "equal to or greater than Hands' 2003 finish time of 88:55." While the mission of the Société is somewhat jocular, it keeps Adrian Hand's memory alive, and it perpetuates the spirit he brought to randonneuring.

Because of the Société and its distinctive tie-dyed jersey, I have had conversations about Adrian Hands with riders in various states in the US, and in England, the Netherlands and Norway, and I got to meet and ride with his son on a stretch of PBP in 2011. I was very pleased to learn afterwards

that Ian had managed to match his father's time 88:55. As I have met others who have either joined the society or aspire to do so, it is clear to me that Adrian Hands is now a living part of an international randonneuring tradition.

(By way of explanation, Ian got his card stamped at 88:55, even though his official time is much earlier).

Likewise, when I rode the Cascade 1200 this year, I found that the ride jersey had RUSA number 2391 printed on one sleeve. In this way, I got to know about Donald Boothby, who died a premature death from cancer at the age of 61 in 2012. While I never had the chance to meet him, I learned that he was a spirited randonneur, and a much loved volunteer for Seattle International Randonneurs events. I thought that a wonderful way to remember him.

In the same way, I think we need to keep alive the memories of Mathew O'Neill, Joe Giampapa, Jim Swartzman, Stan Oldak, Gustavo Antonini, and William Cupples. In some sense, they are all still with us. We can look up their results on the RUSA website, and we can talk with people who knew and rode with them. And we can go on telling their stories, and remembering what they brought to the sport.

Let us ride on, then, no longer encumbered by their deaths, but enriched by their presence. 🚲

**Postscript:** Since I wrote this piece, I have learned of two more randonneurs who have died on RUSA events. Jared Carr, aged 31, was killed by a drunk driver while riding a 400K in eastern Washington on May 27, 2012. On May 18, 2014, John Fusselman, aged 67, was hit and killed while riding a 200K permanent outside of Austin, Texas. This means that at least eight randonneurs have died on RUSA events during the 15-year history of the organization, and 2014 has been an especially painful year, with three deaths.

# Dr. Matthew O'Neill RUSA# 2797

## Randonneur, Special Needs Advocate, Friend

BY STACY & GREG KLINE

[facebook.com/remembematthewoneill](https://facebook.com/remembematthewoneill)  
[changealanesavealife.com](http://changealanesavealife.com)  
[MatthewsChange.org](http://MatthewsChange.org)



Matthew O'Neill at Venice Beach. —PHOTO GREG KLINE

Matthew O'Neill, was one of the kindest, most supportive, most knowledgeable randonneurs we have ever met. He would ride with you through tough times, guide you through a tricky route, feed you peach gummy rings when you were bonking, and keep you upright on your bike when you were falling asleep on a late night ride. He hosted brevets, owned or cared for a multitude of routes, and was known to offer the most attentive and comprehensive support on extremely challenging rides. He was the very soul of our close-knit PCH Randonneurs group.

Matthew was riding the California Central Coast Randonnée, and was our riding partner and roommate. As he rode, he continually kept his sweetheart Jen updated with texts, and talked frequently about their plans to get married and buy a home after being awarded his Ph.D in June, 2015. His next big challenge was to be the Perth-Albany-Perth 1200K which he was planning to ride with his dear friend Jun Sato of Japan. We've never seen him more excited about a big ride.

Matthew was killed while riding on Foxen Canyon road, in Santa Maria, California, about 40 miles from the overnight control on day three of the inaugural 3CR 1200K. The CHP officers at the scene told us it was an "accident" since it was not hit and run or drunk driving. Visibility was not an issue, as the driver said that he had seen Matthew. He simply failed to pass in a safe and responsible manner.

We need to change the culture that accepts close and unsafe passing of cyclists as normal, and tolerates the "need" to pass cyclists when it is not safe to do so.

Matthew's family and friends have begun a campaign to address the factors that contributed to Matthew's untimely and wholly preventable death. It is a campaign that encourages motorists to change a lane when passing a cyclist, like they would for any other vehicle. It also seeks to amend California's three-foot law to allow passing a cyclist over a double yellow when safe to do so. Finally, it seeks to update driver training and testing to include material

on driving safely around bicyclists.

As well as being an accomplished ultra-distance cyclist, Matthew O'Neill was dedicated to addressing the needs of the under-served members of our society. Matthew's interest in civil and disability rights issues centering on special education law and policy led him to pursuing his Juris Doctorate from Whittier College in 2009. Following his law degree, Matthew furthered his legal training by becoming a Ph.D. candidate in Special Education, Disabilities, and Risk Studies at UC Santa Barbara. He was beginning his final year in the program in the fall of 2014. While in the Ph.D. program he worked as a Clients' Rights Advocate for Disability Rights California's Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy and served clients of California's unique Regional Center system that provides services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities to live in community settings with family and friends. His passion was seeking ways for children and young adults to have inclusive and communicative experiences in public schools.

Matthew's tireless dedication to our sport and to randonneurs worldwide is deserving of recognition and we would like to nominate him for RUSA's highest honor, the Randonneur of the Year award. Matthew O'Neill embodied the spirit of randonneuring. Those who were fortunate enough to have ridden with Matthew will remember that he rode like he lived his life—taking care of, and helping to succeed, those around him.

In Matthew's absence, we should strive to live up to the example he set. 🚲



# PBP with Le Premier Group

BY BILLY EDWARDS

In 2007, as my wife was preparing for PBP, I decided to join her on the Rocky Mountain Cycling Club's Black Forest 300K brevet. The ride goes south from Denver, and through the high plains of Colorado with 10,000' of climbing, with much of the route above 7500'. (We really cherish our RBA, John Lee Ellis, who always gives us enough training in climbing for PBP.) I was also racing triathlons professionally at the time and figured a moderate 300K ride could not hurt my fitness in preparation for my next ironman.

Soon after the ride started, a group of about 20 took off. The pace was well within my abilities, but the group was maintaining a speed that separated it from the other cyclists. Over the next nine hours, the size of the group dwindled down as some riders decided to slow their pace or take longer breaks at the controls. Our group leader, Michael Fulton, then a two-time ancien, guided us through the brevet at a fast, challenging, but fun pace. By the end, there were only three riders in the lead group. We chose to ride together, and we worked together to ride a speedy time.

Ever since that ride in 2007, I have learned what I can about randonneuring, but not the style of randonneuring that most people are accustomed to. I am always seeking to be in le premier group, to push the previous best times on the course, and to push my endurance limits. I enjoy being self-sufficient for 200–1200K on the road, and I like to get the ride done. However, I don't like to ride alone, so I do my best to keep a fast

group together and assist fellow riders that are both capable and willing to keep up the pace.

The Rocky Mountain Cycling Club situates most of its controls in small towns at amazing little country stores. Having drop bags or friends and volunteers at controls is not a normal part of our brevet series. I know some areas are not as fortunate, but to me this is one of the most unique aspects of our rides: true self-sufficiency.

As a rider seeking to be in le premier group, I do things that others might consider unnecessary or even detrimental to my ride. I use a very light set-up and carry a lot less gear; my bike looks more like a race rig. I also don't like to go to bed during a

most important consideration at this point is a broad strategic plan. PBP is one of a couple of 1200K brevets that you can safely ride without sleep, or very little sleep, and know that you will always have someone to ride with and great volunteers at every control at all hours. I recommend several techniques that you can use singularly or combined.

## **HAVE FULL SUPPORT AT ALL OR NEARLY ALL CONTROLS**

In recent editions of PBP, support has been permitted along the route, within a short distance of each control. Regulations to be published in December or January will address this matter. Riders can have crews at

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***I am always seeking to be in le premier group, to push the previous best times on the course, and to push my endurance limits. I enjoy being self-sufficient for 200-1200K on the road, and I like to get the ride done.***

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brevet. When I wake up the next day, I want to get brunch, not get back on my bike. If I can do a 600K in 24 hours, I can wake up Sunday morning and play with my kids.

In preparation for PBP 2015, I hope to shed light on the concept of riding in le premier group in *American Randonneur*. If you are interested, the

or near each control to service them and their bikes (get more nutrition, clean clothes, batteries or new lights, etc). Support like this allows cyclists to spend nearly all their time off the bike going into the control to get books signed and stamped and dealing with other needs. If you are a very strong cyclist and would enjoy the thrill of

attempting to be in Le Premier Group, this is the only way to stay with these riders at PBP. It is also a great way for a small group of strong friends or a pretty strong cyclist to go for the Charly Miller (complete PBP in less than 56H 41M). If considering this, you must have a crew that is good with French and patient with maps. Crews are not permitted to drive the route or be on the route outside of the distances allowed around the controls. In the past, crews were required to have signage on their vehicle denoting what rider they were supporting. Remember, that if you have your wife/husband act as crew, they are dealing with foreign languages and tricky roads/control maps, and a lack of sleep. They are not enjoying the trip like you are on a bike.

## TWO DROP BAGS

This was offered by a U.S. based company in the last two PBPs. They had your gear in the vicinity of the control of your request. They offered several options and normally performed as advertised. For those travelling solo and not wanting to carry their extra clothes or food, this is an ideal set-up. You will have to pay a fee, but it's cheaper than flying over a crew. I recommend two bags at the same control (Loudeac or around the 400/800K point) so you can properly space your nutrition and new gear. Two bags will also add some redundancy should one of them get lost. In 2007, it rained nearly the entire time, so some who did not properly pack their bags or were unlucky enough to have their stuff left in water, ended up with wet new gear. I have also heard of gear being lost or sent to a different control. Additionally, some people have had a more difficult time finding their gear as the navigation around the controls is not clear until you get there. The language barrier and the unknown small details can make link-up difficult and time consuming.

## PARTIAL SUPPORT AT ONE OR TWO KEY LOCATIONS

This was my method of support in 2011, as I missed out on the drop-bag option (they had actually sold out by the time I considered it). I had a friend who was fluent in French and knew the roads. She and her friend drove to Loudeac and stayed flexible for two days, doing some sightseeing when not waiting for me. I recommend this option to those who might have family in France with them. My crew did things like taking an afternoon at the beach and having a beautiful three-hour, five-course dinner in a castle while I was riding. I picked up the tab in this instance and it was well worth it. There is a lot more certainty with true support than with drop bags. They can also assist you with your bike/gear and it is really great to see a clean, friendly face. They need to be able to navigate, but are given much more time to do so. I also recommend they stay within the controls for their entertainment so they won't miss you. It should be noted that not having full support until later in the ride, you will lose the quick moving Premier Group at the early controls, but you can still go very fast and attain the Charly Miller.

I won't dig into tactics in this issue, but know that if you want to consider Le Premier Group, the pace is fast and practically a full-on bike race for the first 140K. It is also very tactical around the controls. There are many ways to lose the group, and there is also a huge risk factor in Le Premier Group, especially early on. I personally witnessed four very serious early wrecks, one of which put me off the road into a ditch. Fortunately, I had the ability to chase back on. Another wreck involving an oncoming vehicle occurred at around the 60K mark, taking out two Italian riders. I could see one writhing from a broken collar bone as we ripped by him. Le Premier Group is highly competitive. You need to decide what

you want to do and what your goals are. You also need alternative plans for pacing or meeting your crew should you get caught out or be unable to hold the pace.

Some might be concerned that this form of randonneuring is unsafe, especially since I mentioned being a witness to several mishaps. However, as with your local group rides, communication with fellow cyclists, being vigilant around traffic (no matter how little there is), and being honest with yourself about fatigue, are keys to a mishap-free ride. With PBP specifically, learning a little French, understanding the traffic nuances of France, and knowing when to rest and not push for an unreasonable goal, are key.

Ladies and gentlemen, coming to randonneuring from racing and triathlons where time is a serious aspect, I hope I can share with you some of the etiquette and techniques you can employ in your brevets next spring. I will also share some things to do once at PBP to be in or near Le Premier Group. I also recommend that those seeking the challenge of Charly Miller start to reach out to other similar riders in their clubs or around the U.S.

In 2011, I rode at 30.2 km/h out and 25.2 km/h on the way back, in 20:37 going out and 24:27 on the return (data taken from my bike computers which seem to add about 15K to the 1230K route, but you get an idea of the pacing). I also had nearly four hours of off-bike, stoppage time, finishing in 48:46. 🚲

*Billy Edwards (RUSA #6379), ancien of PBP 2011, father of two and husband of an ancienne, living the endurance life in Boulder, CO.*

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# Coasts, Cliffs, Climbs, Cobblers, and Coyotes

## The Five C's of the 3CR

### (Central California Coast 1200k Randonnée)

BY DAMON TAAFFE

Above the coastal hills, the glider's rainbow canopy traced a sunset moon. An hour before, visions of seals cavorting on the beach had yielded to the cliff-top spectacle of whales breaching the Pacific's ripples. It could only have been the Central California Coast 1200K Randonnée (3CR).

In spring 2012, as the canted grades of the Big Sur Marathon reduced my gait to a weary plod, a single thought consumed me: "I wish I were on my bicycle." The next summer, the spectacular Big Wild Ride 1200K in Alaska confirmed my love for pedal-powered epics, so when the Santa Cruz Randonneurs announced they were expanding their 1000K into a four-day exploration of the Pacific Coast Highway and the vineyards around Paso Robles, I couldn't register quickly enough.

As the ride approached, though, I grew apprehensive. At BWR, I'd spent the last 55 hours alone in some truly remote wilderness. I'd become so sleep-deprived that I'd hallucinated an Imperial transport ship from Star Wars hovering menacingly ahead of me in the Denali dusk, and I'd been so desperate to stay conscious that I'd resorted to "rumble strip intervals," shaking myself to the sinews. The morning after that ride, standing up had been a 15-minute ordeal entailing a plaintive crawl across the floor to furniture that I could scale inch by tentative inch as my limbs convulsed disturbingly. It was pretty special.

Having no desire to revisit that dark place, I resolved to do things differently.

After all, I was heading to one of the most beautiful parts of the world; I wanted to remember every moment and to spend as much saddle time as I could beneath the California sun. I therefore planned to ride hard and sleep even harder. If everything went well, I might even get a normal night's rest after each leg, which would be decadence manifest. Of course, such yo-yo pacing meant I'd likely spend most of the journey flying solo, casting passing pleasantries to bemused heifers, but that's how I roll.

Fortunately, the Santa Cruz Randonneurs had devised a route that was as logistically simple as it was visually striking. The distance we'd

that taxes a randonneur's mind. With predicted highs in the mid-80s and overnight lows around 70 degrees, one couldn't ask for more.

#### **Day 1: San Jose to King City (230 miles)**

Because 3CR comprised simultaneous 1200K and 1000K events, the pre-dawn scene at the starting line found a century of riders chatting amidst a menagerie of two-wheeled steeds, reflective piping popping in time with digital flashes. The opening miles through downtown San Jose were a surreal parade of tires reverberating through dormant streets, though we were yanked back to reality by a string

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***I was heading to one of the most beautiful parts of the world; I wanted to remember every moment and to spend as much saddle time as I could beneath the California sun.***

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travel each day would decrease as our fatigue built—230, 210, 185, and 125 miles, respectively—and the scenery would alternate between seascapes and vineyards. Better yet, we'd stay in the same location on the second, third, and post-ride nights, where we'd have ready access to all of our gear, thereby avoiding the check-in/check-out, unpack/pack-up, "What might I conceivably need tomorrow?" circus

of traffic lights that flashed green only long enough for us to clip in before stonewalling us. Our fitful progress parsed the peloton into clusters, with mine well back of the front group as we cruised past Stanford to the classic Old La Honda climb, a 3-mile, 1300-foot spike with stretches exceeding 15% grade. Consistent with my "ride hard, rest long" ethos, I put some effort in and soon found myself alone on the

A golden valley near  
Pinnacles National Park.  
—PHOTO DAMON TAAFFE



serpentine slope, witnessing the sunrise duel the mist over neighboring valleys. As one rider dryly put it: “This is nothing like Phoenix.”

An enthralling descent down the western side of the ridge revealed our first glimpses of the coastline, and after a jaunt north to Half Moon Bay, we spun southward for the cruise to Santa Cruz. By now the group was thoroughly dispersed, with a pack of local riders pushing hard some miles ahead, but the benefit was that, every few minutes and at each control, there was a new cast of colorful characters. Seagulls hovered in breezy suspended animation, and wizened trees fought private battles with the sea.

A lunch stop in Santa Cruz (motto: “Mellow, With Chance Of Surfboards”) marked the 200K point, and also our departure from the coast. Sharp rollers carried us inland to towering forests whose citizens diminished the nearby phone poles to toothpicks. The shade apologized for the arduous terrain, but the road was dangerously

pitted in places; here I passed the lead riders, who’d stopped to true a wheel that had disputed a point with a particularly misanthropic crater.

Our time in the forest was too brief, as our path led to an agricultural expanse that was as scorching as it was flat. I initially puzzled at stacks of white boxes beside the road, but soon determined that they housed transportable hives of exuberant bees, one of whose residents stung the daylight out of my quad. On the upside, the afternoon heat warmed the trillions of blackberries in nearby fields, and the fragrance was transporting, like standing next to an oven cooking a dozen cobblers on Thanksgiving Day.

Finally, after climbs, coasts, and cobblers, we snaked through a golden valley with nary a soul for miles, against a backdrop of mountains ignited by the evening sun and prefaced with plains of dried grasses. While I admired the view, a blur of gray motion streaked across the road and scampered up an embankment. *A fox!* I thought. *What a treat! Wait, are foxes gray out this way? I don’t know. And it was quite a large fox, more like a dog. A dog dozens of miles from the nearest house. Maybe not a dog, either. Hmm. Time to pedal fast while trying not to resemble food.* The endorphins carried me to the day’s



The skyscrapers of the  
Santa Cruz mountains.  
—PHOTO DAMON TAAFFE



penultimate control at Pinnacles National Forest, where volunteers awaited with a cornucopia of salt and sugar, and grazing horses followed each other lazily across meadows.

My timing was perfect: I crested the final climb toward the overnight control as the sun dwindled, which meant I capped the day with a 15-mile, 2000-foot descent into western crimson. I reached King City a little after 8:00 p.m., checked in, and moseyed to a nearby diner where I reserved a table large enough to accommodate the riders I'd passed in the forest and had seen again near Pinnacles. But they never appeared. When I returned to the control for my slumber, I learned they'd arrived—but had then rolled on, apparently planning to blitz the course straight through while carrying nothing but space blankets. Talk about a commitment strategy.

### **Day 2: King City to San Luis Obispo (210 miles)**

The *pièce de résistance!* The second day began with a spin northwest from King City to Carmel, where we'd gain the Pacific Coast Highway for 125 magical miles before alighting in San Luis Obispo. We'd been warned to get an early start in order to reach Carmel before the northwest winds picked up, so I trundled downstairs at 4:30 a.m.

and looked around for the posse, only to find that, while I'd slept, almost every other rider had arrived, rested, and departed for Carmel. I sheepishly tendered my overnight bag to the volunteers, explained that I was in a secret Rip van Winkle division, and got a move on.

As it turned out, there was sense in lighting out for Carmel sub luna, as the first hours offered little to see besides sprinklers and the occasional crop-dusting helicopter. It wasn't until 70 miles in, as we passed the Laguna Seca Raceway and took a rural route through the hills south of Monterey, that the scenery perked up amidst climbs that had me craving lower gears. Shortly thereafter, we greeted 17-Mile Drive, home of the Pebble Beach Golf Links and gateway to the cycling paradise that is the Pacific Coast Highway from Carmel to Cayucos.

I was feeling proud of having ridden 300 miles since the previous morning as I struck up a conversation with a solo rider hauling loaded panniers up one of the PCH's initial grades. He asked where I was headed; I replied that a group of us had left from San Jose the morning before and were en route to San Luis Obispo. I then inquired from where he'd ridden: "Minneapolis—I just retired." He wins!

What can one say about the Pacific Coast Highway? It's so

Arched bridge en route to Ragged Point.  
— PHOTO DAMON TAAFFE

magnificent that you'd better hope your camera eventually runs out of batteries or you'll never reach the end. Riding southbound meant we had unobstructed views from atop cliffs to the crashing sea hundreds of feet below, and when crossing Bixby Bridge, I could almost believe I was floating.

The Big Sur control arrived 100 miles in, about halfway through the day mileage-wise. As I approached, I spied a line of 20 randonneuring rigs arrayed along the front of a country store, with a corresponding lycra-clad crowd enjoying lunch under the midday sun. I'd finally overcome my indulgent slumber and caught the action. A note of agreement echoed through the small talk: just then, none of us could imagine being anywhere else. We were riding through an issue of *National Geographic*.

With an effervescent spirit, I set off for Cayucos in the belief that the day's toughest climbing—and, sadly, its most awe-inspiring scenery—was behind me. But I was wrong on both counts: the 50-mile stretch from Big Sur to Ragged Point resembled nothing so much as the cliffs of Corsica, with little separating the road from a precipitous drop to rocks far below. The grades grew fangs, to the point

that riders in passing cars looked at me with a mix of pity and alarm.

The miles around Ragged Point, a thousand-foot rock face jutting from sea to sky that marks the transition to the beaches of southern California, were otherworldly. The polygraphic elevation profile brought views that seized the breath at every hairpin turn. Toward the top of a 5-mile ascent, dozens of tourists stood atop rocks and shielded their eyes toward the sea, gesturing jubilantly. I joined them and immediately spotted a tail fin, followed by a telltale geyser of seawater that marked a whale luxuriating amidst the waves. It's a rare ride that offers whale sightings without requiring one to unclip.

The final 60 miles, from Ragged Point to San Luis Obispo via Cayucos and Morro Bay, were a perfect dessert for a hard day's effort. The mountains melted into beaches and surf, and we were ushered down the coast by a tailwind so compelling that a fixed-gear rider later said he'd had to ride his brakes to spare his knees. I held 30 mph with little effort, though my progress was checked when road debris gouged my rear tire. Because it was set up as tubeless, I had to remove the indecently tight valve and nut from the rim, a 30-minute charade resulting in shredded fingers and splatters of sealant that doubtless contributed a certain *je ne sais quoi* to my portfolio of charms.

After wrestling my damaged tire into compliance, I joined the growing stream of randonneurs for the final stretch into San Luis Obispo. It didn't disappoint. To the right, just off a horseshoe beach flecked with Frisbee-tossers, the massive Morro Rock, a 23 million-year-old volcanic outcropping, erupted from the water like a scene from *The Odyssey*. To the left, a lonely hang-glider floated beside the full moon.

What a day—one of the most spectacular I've experienced on a bicycle. I checked into my delightfully seedy San Luis Obispo hotel knowing

that, because I'd have to time after my morning departure before I would find an open bike shop to replace my rear tire, a full 7 hours of sleep awaited me.

### Day 3: South loop from San Luis Obispo (185 miles)

Because the most convenient bike shop was in a town 60 miles down the road and didn't open until late morning, I reasoned there was little point in rolling out before dawn, which again meant I was close to being *lantern rouge* in the early hours. But no matter; there were vineyards ahead, as well as something ominously called "Gaviota Pass." Groovy, baby.

Like the previous day, this segment revealed its charms reluctantly; the morning hours had us traversing agricultural tracts that appeared to contain all the dirt on Earth and little else. It was a bit of a let-down

bore down. There were moments when I could scarcely imagine any future other than climbing forever toward the apocryphal turnaround point. Worse still, a steady stream of randonneurs passed heading the other way, and I optimistically hoped each one signaled an imminent end to the suffering. Alas, no—those guys were a couple of hours ahead of me, even though they were close enough to touch.

Relief (physical and comic) came in the form of Solvang, a Danish town complete with traditional half-timbered architecture, decorative windmills, and women in barmaid garb. As tempting as a stein of beer sounded, I confined myself to ice cream before resuming the self-powered wine tour along Foxen Canyon Road, site of the Blackjack

A vineyard perspective en route to Solvang.  
—PHOTO DAMON TAAFFE



following 125 miles on the PCH, but then anything would've been. At last the elevation profile began to track the rising temperature, and we scaled a few aggressive highway grades before arriving in Lompoc, where I successfully hunted the bike shop amidst a web of strip malls.

The climb to Gaviota Pass turned out to be a Wind Tunnel to Nowhere: 15 miles on the shoulder of a rural highway, churning upward straight into a 25-mph headwind as the sun

Ranch famously featured in *Sideways*. The winemakers blended the functional with the aesthetic. Miles of crisp white split-rail fences were festooned with blooming roses, which not only provided a pleasing backdrop for touring wine-tasters, but also acted as canaries to alert proprietors to bugs encroaching on the vines. But some winemakers' tactics were profoundly weird: one had hung several white human-sized dummies by their necks from the tops of the vines, and the disturbing result

was best described as “voodoo chic.” I don’t know if it prevented animals from pestering the grapes, but it certainly repelled this cyclist.

Eventually, as we graduated from the Solvang wine region back toward San Luis Obispo, the scenery morphed into an oak-speckled valley backstopped by hazy peaks. The mercury retreated, and the vacant roads lent themselves to quiet contemplation of the setting sun. Not that we were entirely alone: In the closing miles, a grinning dog bounded ahead of me, where he trotted along for several miles as Virgil to my Dante, looking back every few moments to ensure I was keeping up.

I rolled back into the San Luis Obispo control at dusk, noting happily that I had 27 hours to cover the final 200k. Visions of Chipotle danced in my head.

#### **Day 4: North loop from San Luis Obispo (125 miles)**

The victory lap! As I thanked the volunteers on my way out, I learned that a local rider had finished his 1200k the previous afternoon, chalking up a scarcely believable time of 57 hours. Amazing.

For us mere mortals, the final day recalled the highlights of everything that had come before: Spins along the coast, grueling ascents, immaculate towns, arid vineyards, and views forever. After retracing our path to Morro Bay, we launched up the most difficult climb of the ride, the 1700-foot Old Creek Road, the grades of which asymptotically approached absurd. It was a demanding chore for tired legs, but waves of coastal mist cooled our burning muscles and panoramic views of Whale Rock Reservoir distracted us from the task at hand.

A meandering descent to the east led back to wine country and a leisurely breakfast in Paso Robles, the sort of postcard town in which bobbing fluorescent flags chart the progress of elderly couples riding recumbents to brunch. Mid-day brought us amidst the vineyards to Mission San Miguel, an arcade of a dozen graceful arches erected in 1797. With only 70 miles to go in 12 hours, a celebratory mood graced the staffed control, with icy Coke the toast du jour.

Retracing our route back through Paso Robles and over the ridge toward the coast presented us with the ultimate

reward for a 730-mile effort: A 10-mile, 2000’ descent with views that stretched to the ocean, where Morro Rock loomed behind the foothills. After cruising for 20 minutes without pedaling a radian, we achieved the coast and regained the tailwind we’d enjoyed two days before, slaloming through seaside towns as dogs frolicked in the surf. It marked a fitting end to what must be the most striking randonné in the contiguous United States. I finished with a smile in about 82 hours, wanting nothing more than to head out for a second go-round.

#### **Epilogue**

As rewarding as my ride was, the experience took on a tragic aspect at brunch the next morning, when the ride organizers told everyone what a few already knew: on the third evening, Matthew O’Neill, a 33-year-old rider who was a mainstay of the local randonneuring community, had been struck by a truck and killed as he returned from Solvang along Foxen Canyon Road.

There is little I can say about this that hasn’t already been said—by those of us in tears on the Amtrak ride back to San Jose, by the dozens of riders who attended his Life Celebration in Chula Vista, and by those who took part in the memorial ride in early September. It is utterly gutting for such a senseless, preventable tragedy to strike someone in his prime, a rider doing what he loved and embracing life’s magnificent journey with every ounce of his being. Rest in peace, Matthew; you’ll always have a place in our peloton and our hearts.

Thanks to Lois Springsteen, Bill Bryant, and the countless other volunteers from the Santa Cruz Randonneurs for putting together an unforgettable adventure that every randonneur should experience. It sets a new standard for beautiful rides. 🚲

A mansion overlooks the hills of Paso Robles. —PHOTO DAMON TAAFFE





# Safety Lessons Learned

BY SUSAN OTCENAS

Four of us were with Jim when he fell asleep and crashed at 12:30am on a recent 400K. I've thought a lot about the incident since then, and I'd like to share some of the takeaways from the night's events.

**Carry a cell phone.** I know some randos who still don't carry a phone. While I certainly respect the desire to be untethered from technology, the benefits of having access to a phone during an emergency outweigh the inconvenience of carrying it. Keep it on airport mode, or turned off to save battery life. Also, little known fact: ANY cell phone, even one with NO contract or prepaid minutes, will connect with 911. (My elderly dad keeps 5 or 6 old phones charged and scattered around his house, all on low shelves a foot off the ground, just in case he should ever fall and be unable to get up.) So if nothing else, carry an old flip phone just for emergencies. Are you often in locations that are out of cell range? Consider carrying a SPOT device, which can be used to either call in the cavalry via an "SOS" button or can also alert a friend or loved one that you need non-emergency assistance at your current location.

**Have the organizer's number pre-programmed into your phone.** After you call 911, contact the ride organizer to apprise him or her of the situation. While waiting for the ambulance to arrive for Jim, I contacted the organizer to let him know there had been an incident, that it was under control, and that I would follow up with him as soon as I had more information. Contacting the ride organizer early enables him or her to reach out to a

rider's emergency contact(s), who may be needed at the hospital and for post-ride transport. Once the ambulance left, I sent several text messages to the organizer to let him know what hospital Jim was being transported to, and passed along Jim's requests for who should be contacted, etc.

**Know where you are (even if you use a GPS!)** I am an unabashed GPS user. I love that thing. But I also carry and use a cuesheet. While emergency services might be able to triangulate your position from your cell signal, it will be far more useful (and faster!) for you to be able to tell 911 that you are near the intersection of Old Pipeline Rd & Woods Lake Rd, 5 miles outside of Sultan.

**Divide and Conquer.** You will be most effective if you concentrate on just one thing and other tasks are covered by other riders. In this case, Asta kept Jim calm, Keith moved bikes and gear off the road and kept his eye out for vehicles from one direction while Douglas watched for vehicles from the other direction. I handled communications with 911 & the ride organizer. Giving everyone a "job" keeps everyone calm and minimizes chaos.

**Encourage the rider to be still and wait for help.** This one is pretty hard. Adrenaline is a powerful painkiller and no one ever wants to be "trouble" for their friends. Embarrassment may also play a role, as might a fear of incurring "unnecessary" medical expense. The downed rider may try to tell you nothing is wrong, that they will be fine. However, I am a STRONG believer that in nearly every circumstance of this type, we should

be calling 911. Encourage the rider to be still and wait for an examination by professional medical personnel. EMTs are trained to look for signs of head trauma, confusion, assess injuries, etc. Let THEM decide if there's no need for transport. It's always better to be safe than sorry.

**Be Visible.** Anyone who has ridden with me at night knows I am super reflective, well beyond the "minimums" suggested by RUSA guidelines. And if you ride near Asta, you know her star-studded bike twinkles as brightly as does her personality. Since we don't want one accident to lead to another, be as visible as possible so that rapidly approaching motorists can see you easily, and so that emergency personnel can find you. The EMTs that found us were super-impressed by how brightly lit and reflective we were, complimenting us on our visibility.

**Buddy up.** Most likely, we've all spent our fair share of time riding alone, even at night. I know I have, and have never been "afraid" doing it. That being said, I think there is added safety in buddying up at night. Not only will a group be more visible than a lone rider, but in those rare cases where something goes wrong, someone will be there to help. At night, our worlds tend to shrink down to the circle of light in front of us, and that can be mesmerizing. Find a friend, have a conversation, tell blonde jokes or tall stories. And don't be afraid to tell your buddy that you are falling asleep (or conversely, that you think THEY are riding erratically). No ride is worth a broken collarbone. Or worse. 🚲

SAFE BIKE  
SAFE RIDE



# Mille Failte 1200K (Ireland) and Herentals Cosne-sur-Loire Herentals (Belgium): a Study in Contrasts.

BY DAVE THOMPSON

Hamid Akbarian and I rode these two events together. If there were ever two rides that deserved to be ridden back-to-back, these are the ones. With one week in between, HCH became our “recovery ride”!

## Mille Failte 1200K

From a scenery standpoint, this ride ranks right up there with the 1001 Miglia in Italy and the Rocky Mountain 1200 in BC Canada. The views are stunningly beautiful, the greenery and flowers abundant, and the people friendly beyond belief. The route often hugs the coast, sometimes at sea level, sometimes a few hundred feet up along sheer cliffs. Old stone walls stand between you and oblivion. Elsewhere the views are of green farmlands, and sheep in the distance (and sometimes on the road in front of you!). These landscapes remind me of London-Edinburgh-London, but the ocean views are something else. Castles abound, some rehabilitated, some covered in ivy and decrepit. Their charm is matched by the flower gardens, wild and cultivated. We were often on narrow roads, sometimes holding up traffic, but never was a horn blown. Patience is the order of the day. I stopped at one point to let a farmer and his wife herd some cows down the road as they were skittish... did I look strange to them? Had I continued riding, they would have been really spooked. The farmer was thankful, and it only cost me a couple

of minutes. Contrast that with an almost identical scenario that I encountered in North America where the farmer yelled, “You f-ing cyclists shouldn’t be on this road!” What, the road was built for cows?

Logistically, the ride had an odd start: 8 AM. That was so we could start the second day later and catch the first ferry at 7 AM; otherwise, there would have been a control timing problem. That 8 AM start required a mental adjustment relative to other rides where we would normally start the second and subsequent days at 4 AM or earlier. We also lost an hour or two (or a few) to being tourists, unusual for us. We stopped to take a few pictures, and I had more cappuccino than I’ve had since the Miglia. We stopped to simply admire the view. It was that kind of ride; we weren’t going to set any records, personal or otherwise, and didn’t try.

The weather was outstanding. That will not likely be repeated. Four days without rain? This is Ireland? The newspaper headline before the ride said, “Heat Wave.” Well, it was a heat wave for Ireland. Temperatures were in the low 70’s during the day and down to around 50 at night. With the ride alternating between hugging the coast and climbing the next ridge, sometimes I’d be thinking about putting on my long-sleeved jersey and a few minutes later feeling the heat as we climbed.

There were some notable climbs,

too, 1000 to 1200 feet, and then long descents. There were a couple of really sharp descents where I was thinking that I was wasting all that vertical, chewing it up way too quickly! On those descents, it was necessary to pay careful attention to the road rather than the view! Total climbing came in around 34,000 feet according to my Garmin, and the amount of climbing per mile was similar each day.

The first three days were around 350K and the last day 160K. There was a secret control about 30-40K from the end on each of the first three days. That control, and the overnight controls, had food. Accommodation was in hostels, or in hotels (at your expense). We gathered receipts, or selfies, from each intermediate control. During the ride, at the secret controls or at the overnight control, those were tallied and marked on the Brevet Cards.

The scenery on this route is amazing with days two and three providing the most breathtaking views. Much of the daytime riding is close to or in view of the rugged and unspoiled coast. Even some of the longer climbs are in view of the coast, if you look back over your shoulder! Pay attention though, there might be sheep on the road.

This was a great ride, and it will only get better. The inaugural running went like clockwork. Mille Failte means “a thousand welcomes,” and it certainly lived up to its name.



### Herentals, Cosne-sur-Loire, Herentals

HCH starts in Belgium, enters France during the first day, and returns to Belgium on the way home, with the only visible transition from country to country being the flags hanging from the windows. The countryside ranges from gently rolling hills, to flat areas along canals and rivers, to longer climbs through the Champagne region on the third day. The riding days are similar in length, with the first day being just a little longer. Most people will be able to complete the ride without riding in the dark. Controls are few—nine—the fewest number I’ve ever seen on a 1200K ride.

As we rode, we passed through farmland with poppies everywhere. In the woods, there were small, well-tended military cemeteries with crosses (mostly without names) all lined up. Early on the second day we rode along a canal right into the heart of Paris, following the Seine through

the city and then the Loire south. Touring Paris at dawn was one of the highlights of this ride; we circled the Arc de Triomphe and then wound our way through the city, the cue sheet being our tour guide. It was like a hop-on-hop-off tour bus, with one major difference: we saw the glory of the city as well as its underbelly. There are places in the “City of Lights” where the tourists do not go. On the third day we were treated to incredible vistas of vineyards. We were hard pressed not to stop and sample the fruit. The rows were posted with the names of owners. Who knew that there were so many Champagne producers? I did recognize one, “She keeps Moët et Chandon in her pretty cabinet,” (“Killer Queen” by Queen).

Jan Geerts has the organization of this ride down pat after 7 or 8 consecutive years. He provides some food and you handle the rest. There are reasonable restaurant choices on

Dave and Hamid at end of Belgian ride.

—PHOTO SHAB MEMARBASHI

nights two and three right at the hotel while Geerts takes care of the first night with a sandwich buffet from his van. Geerts manages the ride with the help of two volunteers and a large van. With about 25 riders all riding a similar pace, it works quite well.

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These were both excellent rides. From the coastal views in Ireland to downtown Paris, to the rugged, stony hills and sheep to Champagne, I cannot imagine starker contrasts.

Don’t limit yourself to Paris-Brest-Paris for European riding. There is so much more to see and experience! 🚲



# the LADIES of 2014

Most of us grew up singing Cyndi Lauper's song...♪♪ "That's all they really want — Some fun — When the workin' day is done — Oh girls they wanna have fun — Oh girls just wanna have fun."♪♪♪♪ Lucky for us, these twisted sistas think riding more than 10,000 Km in a year sounds "fun!" These gals get their kicks racing down a pass on singles, fixies, recumbents, tandems, you name it, they're there. Congrats you howlers - meet the Kennel Klub K-Gals of 2014!



Christine "Jersey Girl" Newman

**Lash:** Glad you called Christine! Looks like you and I are both taking the "steady eddy" route to K-Hound.

**Jersey Girl:** Yeah, just riding 200k a week will get you there, which is pretty good advice for anyone wanting to tackle it. But, Lash, I think you're the only K-Hound "I" know of doing this with a double, total knee replacement! And I hear you're shaming all those NC fellas into keeping up with you. Show me what that looks like.

**Lash:** The fellas here are pretty great to ride with, especially with my sexy new knees!



Lynn "The Lash" Lashley

## JUST 200K EACH WEEK



Vickie "Ol' Bat" Tyer

Brenda "Babee" Barnell



Kerin "Diesel" Huber

**Babee:** Cracks me up that you call yourself an Ol' Bat on a Bent, Hound and a Half would be more like it! I heard you were playing at

the 3CR 1200k this summer with Banksie, KitCat and Road Pixie. Did you get to visit Diesel out there?

**Ol' Bat:** Yes, she was volunteering and we couldn't have done it without her. Hey, we need to call and tell her how we changed Katy Perry's song... ♪♪♪ *California Girls are unforgettable, lycra shorts, great jerseys on top, sun-kissed skin so hot, they'll melt your popsicle.* ♪♪♪♪

**Babee:** Pretty cool having 3 K-gals out there!

**Diesel:** Yeah, I hated to miss 3CR, but that gorgeous Colorado High Country was calling my name!



**The Machine:** Road Pixie, I hear there's a handful of K-Gals riding tandem nowadays...you, Barbie, me and even GalaxyGirl has been riding tandem. Did you and your sweetie really just finish 30,000 feet of climbing this week?

**Road Pixie:** We did and we're still getting along! She's recovering from losing part of her lungs and is finally joining RUSA. And the only thing sagging on THAT ride was our chests!



Michele "Road Pixie" Brougher



Nancy "The Machine" Myers

But I heard you almost got derailed from K-Hounding with a pretty big scare. What happened?

**The Machine:** Yes, things got a little dicey for a while with a heart scare, but I've beat bigger things than THAT to keep rolling! My sweetie calls me his "Nagagator," so I couldn't let a stupid heart scare keep him from our 400k weeks after I retired. It's the best "happy hour" there is!



Asta "Asta Lavista" Chastain

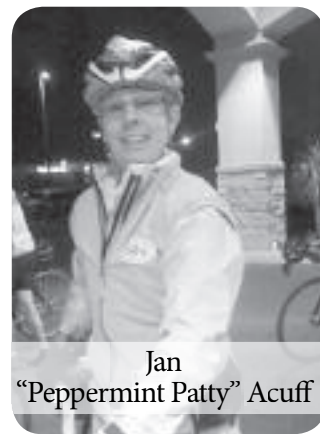
**SuzieQ:** Miss Peppermint Patty did you get to ride with my best buddy Asta-Lavista at the Cascade 1200? You know, she pulls a 200# trailer full of soup all over Portland, which had to make Cascade a breeze.

**PPatty:** We did get to ride and she was making K-Hound look like a breeze too. There were three K-Gals there with Banksie. What happened on that 600k and that wicked wheel?

**Asta-Lavista:** I keep proving to myself I'm the luckiest person I know. Hit a drainage grate and completely crumpled my rear wheel. SuzieQ came back for me and we finished by volunteering instead. We've been

riding together and really making K-Hound a mutual plan for 2014.

**SuzieQ:** Yep, Asta & I have ridden a LOT of miles together this year, especially in the NorthWET. Looking back on our quest for our first K-hounds, I've come to realize that water has been a recurring theme in so many of our rides, though not always in the most benevolent of manners.



Jan "Peppermint Patty" Acuff



Susan "SuzieQ" Otcenas

## GET YOUR AMERICAN EXPLORER

*I'm gonna kill Driscoll for this picture*

*Not if I get to him first!*



Dana "Barbie" Pacino

Pamikins Wright

**Pamikins:** Barbie, after all the K-Hounding and my K-Bitching, I can sure say I never get tired of sitting on your wheel, but how in the world do you and GalaxyGirl psych up for all that nonsense in the front seat?

**Barbie:** You know, time really does pass faster and miles are a whole lot more fun with all the dirty jokes and bad, 12-year-old-boy humor. I've heard you zinging in more than you'll admit!

**GalaxyGirl:** You're right gals, if it weren't for the miles and smiles, we'd be playing somewhere else. Pamikins, I think we can all safely say your "Boy Butt Buffet" is part of your excuse.

**Pamikins:** I do like a nice pair of shorts and I love my K-Bitches! (Ain't that right Banksie?!)



Becky "The Princess" Berka

**Princess:** I K-Hounded and you two weren't around to help celebrate. How about a howl? Actually, I'd prefer a Meow...

**Banksie:** Princess, you're gonna need a Bob trailer to carry around those kitties of yours next year while on the bike.

**KitCat:** Hello? I'm not getting into the back of a trailer, no way!

**Banksie:** KitCat, with the amount of miles you put in heading uphill, I can barely keep up with you.

**KitCat:** Keep up with me? You're the globe trotting K-Ho who snagged the 1st USA woman Super 600.

**Banksie:** Yup. I like to K-Ho around. Got to ride with a bunch of the K-Gals this year. It's been stellar to ride with the pack.



Brenda "Babee" Barnell, Pamikins Wright, Vickie "Ol Bat on a Bent" Tyler, Sharon "GalaxyGirl" Stevens

## RIDE WITH FRIENDS



Kitty "KitCat" Goursolle

Deb "Banksie" Banks

# Arizona Permanents

BY SUSAN REED AND JOHN INGOLD

During the winter and early spring seasons, the southwest provides opportunities for riding in more temperate weather. Susan Reed and John Ingold present two very scenic permanents for your consideration.

## **Tucson, AZ: Arivaca Permanent** **By Susan Reed**

When freezing temperatures, snow, ice, or rain prevail in your neck of the woods, I know a place where you can ride permanents to your heart's content and maybe not even have to wear long fingered gloves! It's true! Come on down to Tucson,

Arizona, deep in the Sonoran Desert.

One of my favorite 200K Tucson permanents is the Arivaca, which can be ridden as a clockwise route (#478) or a counterclockwise route (#890). The permanent is named after the little town of Arivaca, population 700, about half-way along the route. The Arivaca Mercantile will be your mid-point control where you can refuel. Restrooms are to be found across the street at the La Gitana Cantina.

Much of the ride is in spectacular desert beauty: Prickly Pear, Saguaro, Cholla, Barrel Cacti, Mesquite, Palo Verde, and Desert Willow trees. The

terrain is rolling with about 3,400' of climbing. You'll cross a few cattle guards as the cattle—including some long horns—are free range. You'll also pass through two Border Patrol Stations. Usually, the officers just wave me through, but sometimes they ask if I'm a US citizen. Just to keep your wheels rolling, I'd recommend you carry a government issued ID. For about half of the route the only traffic you'll see are the Border Control or ICE (Immigration

Road crossing is a bit of a challenge following summer monsoon rains.

—PHOTO SUSAN REED



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***I know a place  
where you can ride  
permanents to your  
heart's content and  
maybe not even have  
to wear long fingered  
gloves! It's true!***

---

and Customs Enforcement) ATV's. Their presence is actually a bit reassuring in the event you have a medical or mechanical issue.

At one point, you will be within 11 miles of the Mexican Border; Kitt Peak National Observatory will be within view (<http://www.noao.edu/kpno/>), as will Baboquivari Peak, the most sacred place to the Tohono O'odham people.

You'll also pass through the town of Green Valley, home of the 7,000 acre Green Valley Pecan Orchard, the largest irrigated pecan orchard in the world. You'll ride right by the entrance to the Titan Missile Museum <http://www.titanmissilemuseum.org/>. This preserved Titan II missile site is all that remains of the 54 Titan II missile sites that were on alert across the United States from 1963 to 1987. And finally, as you ride up or down Duvall Mine Rd, you'll ride within sight of some very active copper mines.

If you plan your permanent in mid-February you can take in the world-famous Gem and Mineral Show, <http://www.tgms.org/tgms.htm>, or if you're more of a rodeo kind of person, The Tucson Rodeo is February 21-March 1. Hey, it's such a big deal down here, kids even get a Rodeo Break from school!

Contact me at [susanwreed@gmail.com](mailto:susanwreed@gmail.com) if you have questions.



**Grand Canyon South Rim/Cameron Start  
208K (N. Arizona) Permanent #496  
By John Ingold**

*Permanent details:* this is an out and back route. The distance is 208K (13H 56M) with 8500' of climbing.

*Route Description:* This ride starts and ends in the Painted Desert at the historic Cameron Trading Post in Cameron, AZ (about an hour's drive north of Flagstaff) at approx. 4200'. The route climbs from the Little Colorado River up and into Grand Canyon National Park's "quieter" east entrance onto the South Rim. Riders will be treated to the Desert View lookout (pause to marvel at the river and "Palisades of the Desert" below) as you first enter the park. Many more breath-taking views abound along the South Rim between 6600-7400' elevation to the turnaround at Hermit's Rest Visitor Center. Climbing is approximately 8500' on mainly low-traffic secondary highways. Fall and winter rides include colors in the oak-pinyon-ponderosa forest covering a large section of this route, as well as rich canyon light and shadow play, and

Long stretch without services on the Arivaca.  
—PHOTO SUSAN REED

much less traffic. Solitary overlooks abound. In the summer months and during holidays, park visitor vehicle traffic can be heavy along the route near the South Rim Visitor's Center, Grand Canyon Village, and Grand Canyon Railroad. It is advised to ride cautiously in these areas and near all overlooks.

*Highlights of this Permanent:*  
This is a great fall-winter-spring ride. Summers can be hot, even in northern Arizona, and bring busier tourist traffic around the Grand Canyon. Just about everyone has car-toured the Grand Canyon, but few have enjoyed a pedal pace of the South Rim. The climb from the sparse Painted Desert up to the South Rim is one big overlook, and once you're there, what's not to like about one of the Seven Wonders of the Natural World! Numerous mind-blowing perches over the Desert and Little Colorado River Gorge are pleasant distractions during the 3600' climb onto the Rim through the quieter

Grand Canyon National Park's east entrance. Desert View and the several overlooks along East Rim Drive are perfect rest areas that make you truly rethink your place in the universe, if you like that kind of thing. Look for deer, elk, mountain lions, and the elusive Pink Jeep (aka Pink Jeep Tours). After the bustle of the Grand Canyon Village and Visitor Center areas, the quiet bike-designated Hermit Road out to the ride turnaround is a true paved treat, again studded with those surreal overlooks. All told, the rolling Rim road adds up to 8,000' of climbing on this 200K classic. The last 33 miles are all downhill on very good pavement. Tuck and roll, baby!

During fall, winter, and spring months, weather can be iffy, but on the right sunny day, with low traffic, you can feel like you have the Canyon all to yourself and it's well worth the effort. If in the Phoenix or Tucson areas for winter riding, keep an eye on this ride. Lots of area and Park forecast and webcam information is available for planning. I like to call the friendly folks at the Desert View General Store to get a "live" report. The short trip north from Flagstaff to the ride start in Cameron is quick and the Trading Post is itself a unique feature on the Little Colorado River. (Full disclosure: I really only do this ride for the world class Navajo Taco at the end in the Trading Post. Little known secret: frybread is a cycling superfood.) Coming soon is the 100K permanent populaire version of this ride. This abbreviated ride is also suited for the shortest winter days and turns around at the Canyon's Desert View General Store and Watchtower Overlook.

*GPS Route: "Ride With GPS"*

Link <http://ridewithgps.com/routes/4153751> (*Map/Elevation/Control Locations*) 🚲

—PHOTO SUSAN REED

Other permanents in the area include the Grand Canyon South Rim/GC Village Start 208K (#497); the Flagstaff/GC South Rim 132K (#1161); the Grand Canyon S. Rim/Flagstaff 173K (#1162); the Grand Canyon Loop from Flagstaff 306K (#1160).

**Precautions:** Northern Arizona weather conditions are variable, so riders are advised to check current weather hazards and the local forecast before committing to a ride date (see links below). The South Rim area winters can be harsh or have mild stretches so this ride is available year round. Monsoon season (typically July and August) can bring torrential downpours and lightning storms. High wind advisories are always possible.

**Weather Information:** <http://forecast.weather.gov/hazards/fgz>

**Grand Canyon Village Area Forecast:** <http://forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?CityName=Grand+Canyon+Village&state=AZ&site=FGZ&textField1=36.0464&textField2=-112.153&e=0#.VChpBUuaLwJ>

**Traffic and Road Conditions:** <http://www.az511.gov/adot/files/traffic/> ("Pick a Region" Coconino County)

**Start Times:** This ride can start early as Control #1 area has a trading post/store/restaurant and a gas station/convenience open at 0600 daily. Be aware of the posted opening and closing times at the other controls when planning. Special Note: Riders will need to plan their start to be at Control 2—Hermit's Rest before it closes at 1900 daily.

**Start/Finish Location:** This ride begins and ends at the same location in the proximity of the Cameron Trading Post: 466 Hwy AZ 89; Cameron, AZ 86020; tel (928) 679-2231. Winter Hours: 0700-2100; Summer Hours: 0600-2130; Thanksgiving Day: Close at Noon; December 21st: Close at 1700 (Restaurant Closes at 1600); Christmas Eve: Close 1800; Christmas Day: Closed

**Permanent Owner:** John Ingold RUSA #3067 tel. 928-310-8096 [ingoldjm@gmail.com](mailto:ingoldjm@gmail.com)





# RUSA Awards

## R-12 Award Recipients

The R-12 Award is earned by riding a 200km (or longer) randonneuring event in each of 12 consecutive months. The counting sequence can commence during any month of the year but must continue uninterrupted for another 11 months.

### Events that count toward the R- 12 Award are:

- Any event on the RUSA calendar of 200 Km or longer.
- Foreign ACP-sanctioned brevets and team events (Flèches), Paris-Brest-Paris, and RM -sanctioned events of 1200 Km or longer.
- RUSA permanents—a particular permanent route may be ridden more than once during the twelve-month period for R-12 credit. The applicant must be a RUSA member during each of the twelve months. RUSA congratulates the latest honorees, listed below.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
2014/07/28	Barry N Meade [2]	Hopkinsville, KY
2014/08/02	Steven T Graves [7]	Gretna, LA
2014/08/02	Patrick A Horchoff [7]	River Ridge, LA
2014/08/03	James Edward Geray, Jr	Gainesville, TX
2014/08/07	Norman Carr [3]	Pasco, WA
2014/08/07	Paul Whitney [2]	Richland, WA
2014/08/08	George Winkert [8]	Highland, MD
2014/08/09	Steven R Williams [2]	Overland Park, KS
2014/08/11	Michael D Losey	Springfield, MO
2014/08/12	Libby Subers (F)	Richmond, CA
2014/08/12	Michal Young [3]	Eugene, OR
2014/08/13	Patrick Herlihy	Redwood City, CA
2014/08/15	Christopher Heg [6]	Seattle, WA
2014/08/15	Jim Kaufman	Berkeley, CA
2014/08/16	Timothy J Sullivan [3]	Coronado, CA
2014/08/17	Alan Bell [6]	Seatac, WA
2014/08/17	Toshiyuki Nemoto [4]	Loveland, OH
2014/08/18	Penelope A Lawrence (F)	Cooper City, FL
2014/08/22	Eileen M Lloyd (F)	Richmond, CA
2014/08/25	John Vincent [3]	Rochester, WA
2014/08/25	Eric Walstad	San Francisco, CA
2014/08/27	Daniel Greene	Nashua, NH
2014/08/28	Mark Reilly	Egg Harbor City, NJ
2014/08/31	Tim Newhall [2]	Tallahassee, FL
2014/09/01	Michele Brouger (F) [5]	St Louis Park, MN
2014/09/01	Jack Twitchell [4]	Pomona, CA

2014/09/01	Kathy Twitchell (F) [3]	Pomona, CA
2014/09/02	Charles Jenkins [7]	Denison, TX
2014/09/02	Patricia Jenkins (F) [7]	Denison, TX
2014/09/07	Mark Heinrich [2]	McKinney, TX
2014/09/09	John Ingold	Flagstaff, AZ
2014/09/10	Brenda Barnell (F) [9]	Dallas, TX
2014/09/10	John Preston [5]	Plantation, FL
2014/09/10	Juliet Preston (F)	Plantation, FL
2014/09/10	Metin Uz	Palo Alto, CA
2014/09/10	Metin Uz [2]	Palo Alto, CA
2014/09/11	James P. Holman	Sinking Spring, PA
2014/09/11	Norman Smeal [3]	Philadelphia, PA
2014/09/12	Donald Jagel [5]	Germansville, PA
2014/09/12	Robert Riggs [9]	Houston, TX
2014/09/15	William Fischer [6]	Elmira, NY
2014/09/15	Lisa Nicholson (F) [2]	San Diego, CA
2014/09/19	Linda Bott (F) [7]	Ventura, CA
2014/09/20	Kenneth E Nawrocki	Macedon, NY
2014/09/21	Richard Stum [6]	Mt Pleasant, UT
2014/09/22	Lynn Lashley (F)	Raleigh, NC
2014/09/23	Kyle S Butt	Fremont, CA
2014/09/26	Mario Hernandez	Miramar, FL
2014/09/26	Mark Mullen	Arlington, VA
2014/09/30	Curtis B Hunter [3]	Alexandria, VA
2014/09/30	Paul Schmitt	Jupiter, FL
2014/10/03	Charles A Witsman [5]	Pana, IL
2014/10/04	Greg Bullock	New Egypt, NJ
2014/10/05	Gardner M Duvall [4]	Baltimore, MD
2014/10/06	Lynne Daniels (F)	Jupiter, FL
2014/10/06	Michael A Hogan [4]	Raleigh, NC
2014/10/07	Jeff Newberry [5]	Austin, TX
2014/10/09	Stephen J Hemmelgarn	Englewood, OH
2014/10/09	Chris Mento [8]	Glen Burnie, MD
2014/10/12	Jonathan F. L. Gray [7]	Santa Barbara, CA
2014/10/17	Robert D Bergeron [3]	Raleigh, NC
2014/10/17	Mike Shaw [2]	Oceanside, CA
2014/10/19	Mark N Lockwood	Seattle, WA
2014/10/20	Bill Threlkeld	Herndon, VA
2014/10/21	Jeff Bauer [5]	Nashville, TN
2014/10/21	Brian P Burke [2]	Cumming, GA
2014/11/01	Janis Ayers (F) [4]	Durham, NC
2014/11/01	Janis Ayers (F) [5]	Durham, NC

# RUSA Awards

## RUSA Cup Recipients

The RUSA Cup is earned by completing at least one of each type of RUSA calendared event, comprising 5000km in total, within a two-year period.

### Riders must complete:

- A 200k, 300k, 400k, 600k, and 1000k brevet
- A 1200k or longer grand randonnée
- A rusa team event (dart, dart populaire, arrow, or flèches-USA)
- A populaire
- Any other calendared events—including populaires—to achieve the required 5000 km.

RUSA congratulates the recipients of this prestigious award.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
2014/03/15	Ian Page Hands [2]	Raleigh, NC
2014/04/26	Spencer Klaassen [2]	Saint Joseph, MO
2014/05/24	Dan Driscoll [2]	Arlington, TX
2014/05/24	Craig Mathews	The Woodlands, TX
2014/05/24	Pamela Wright (F) [2]	Fort Worth, TX
2014/05/31	Mark Thomas [7]	Redmond, WA
2014/06/21	Joshua Crixell	Temple, TX
2014/06/21	Andy Speier	Seattle, WA
2014/07/09	Tim Lucas [2]	Wilson, NC
2014/07/09	Clint Provenza	Millersville, MD
2014/07/26	H Edward Boltz [2]	Fulton, NY
2014/08/03	Nigel Greene	Elkins Park, PA
2014/08/07	R Scott Cone	Severna Park, MD
2014/08/07	Tom Haggerty [2]	San Francisco, CA
2014/08/07	Metin Uz	Palo Alto, CA
2014/08/07	David Walker	Fremont, CA
2014/08/14	John Pearch [3]	Olympia, WA
2014/08/14	Robert L Trombley	Seattle, WA
2014/08/20	Peter W Dusel	Ontario, NY
2014/08/20	John Peltier	Farmington, NY

2014/08/30	Jerry L Phelps [2]	Durham, NC
2014/09/05	Barry F. Benson	Ellicott City, MD
2014/09/13	William Olsen [2]	Califon, NJ
2014/10/09	Patrick Herlihy	Redwood City, CA
2014/10/09	Jason Pierce [2]	Oakland, CA
2014/10/09	Barry Schwartz	Los Altos, CA
2014/10/11	Jacob Anderson	Virginia Beach, VA
2014/10/11	Larry D Graham	Westerville, OH
2014/10/18	Gavin Biebuyck	Boyertown, PA
2014/10/18	Greg Kline	Balboa, CA
2014/10/18	Stacy Kline (F)	Balboa, CA
2014/10/18	Bob Torres	Carlstadt, NJ

  
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# RUSA Awards

## P-12 Recipients

The P-12 Award is earned by riding a sub-200km randonneuring event in each of 12 consecutive months. The counting sequence can commence during any month of the year but must continue uninterrupted for another 11 months.

### Events that count toward the P-12 Award are:

- Any populaire (100km-199km) on the RUSA calendar.
- Any dart of less than 200km.
- Any RUSA permanent of 100km-199km. A particular permanent route may be ridden more than once during the twelve-month period for P-12 credit.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
2014/07/27	Ian Flitcroft	Williamson, GA
2014/07/27	Matthew Izen	Santa Rosa, CA
2014/08/03	Lois Springsteen (F) [3]	Santa Cruz, CA
2014/08/04	Joshua Crixell [2]	Temple, TX
2014/08/17	Patrick A Horchoff [5]	River Ridge, LA

2014/08/20	Bill Bryant [2]	Santa Cruz, CA
2014/08/20	Mark Thomas [3]	Redmond, WA
2014/09/14	Jerry Austin [6]	Arlington, TX
2014/09/22	Lynn Lashley (F)	Raleigh, NC
2014/10/02	John James Tebow	Pascoag, RI
2014/10/05	Robert Riggs [4]	Houston, TX
2014/10/06	Jerry L Phelps [2]	Durham, NC
2014/10/16	David N Staats [2]	Columbus, OH
2014/10/17	Robert D Bergeron [2]	Raleigh, NC
2014/10/19	Ross Gridley [2]	Pickerington, OH
2014/10/20	Michael A Hogan [3]	Raleigh, NC
2014/10/22	Anita Olszyk (F)	Lacey, WA
2014/10/24	Amanda Orr (F) [2]	Blacklick, OH
2014/10/27	Kitty Goursole (F) [3]	San Ramon, CA
2014/10/29	Ben Rodelo [2]	Cleburne, TX
2014/10/29	Kalleen Whitford (F) [3]	Cleburne, TX



L to R: Ian Hands, Robert Bergeron (2012 K-Hound), Mary Florian (2012 K-Hound), Patrick Herlihy (2014 K-Hound in the making).

—PHOTO JENNY OH HATFIELD

# RUSA Awards

## 9 Members Earn Mondial Award

The Mondial Award is for RUSA members who have successfully completed at least 40,000 km in RUSA events.

The name "Mondial" comes from the French adjective meaning worldwide or global. The name relates to the fact that the circumference of the Earth is approximately 40,000 km.

This award can be earned just once by a member and is automatically awarded upon completion of the required distance (no application or purchase required).

The qualifying distance for this award is based on all events on RUSA's calendar (ACP brevets and Flèches, RUSA brevets, populaires, arrows and darts), RUSA permanents, and 1200km events held in the United States after 1999. Foreign events (including PBP) are not counted.

RUSA congratulates the riders who have just earned this prestigious award.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
2014/07/27	Timothy J Sullivan	Coronado, CA
2014/08/03	Lois Springsteen (F)	Santa Cruz, CA
2014/08/03	Karel Stroethoff	Missoula, MT
2014/08/18	Jonathan F. L. Gray	Santa Barbara, CA
2014/09/13	Michael Fox	Davenport, IA
2014/09/13	Craig Mathews	The Woodlands, TX
2014/09/20	Ronald Malinauskas	Chesapeake, VA
2014/09/23	Michele Brougher (F)	St Louis Park, MN
2014/09/23	Lawrence A Midura	East Syracuse, NY

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# RUSA Awards

## 11 Riders Earn Ultra Randonneur Award

Eleven honorees have earned the Ultra Randonneur Award, given to RUSA members who have ridden ten (10) Super Randonneur series. The Super Randonneur (SR) series of brevets (200 K, 300 K, 400 K and 600 K in a calendar year) needed to qualify for the Ultra Randonneur Award need not be in consecutive years, nor is there a time limit on how long it takes to accumulate the ten SR series. Riders can apply with ACP brevets, RUSA brevets, or RM-sanctioned 1200k events.

RUSA congratulates these riders who are the latest to earn this prestigious award.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
2014/07/25	Kitty Goursolle (F)	San Ramon, CA
2014/07/25	Kerin Huber (F)	Pasadena, CA
2014/08/04	Joe Llona	Lynnwood, WA
2014/09/02	Bob Bingham	Graham, NC
2014/09/16	John Pearch	Olympia, WA
2014/09/26	Mike Kerrigan	Salem, NH
2014/09/29	Greg Courtney	Ames, IA
2014/09/30	Debra C. Banks (F)	Sacramento, CA
2014/10/08	Todd E Williams	Cincinnati, OH
2014/10/15	Ian Page Hands	Raleigh, NC
2014/10/27	Mel Cutler	Los Angeles, CA

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- **Training** – plans for SR series and 1200Ks
- **Nutrition** – developing your personal plan for nutrition, hydration and electrolytes
- **Riding events** – how to deal with problems that would cause a DNF

<http://www.roadbikerider.com/e-articles/endurance-training-and-riding-3-article-bundle>

# RUSA Awards

## R-5000 Honors Announced

In 1961, the Audax Club Parisien created the Randonneur 5000 award to recognize finishing ACP and Randonneurs Mondiaux events totaling at least 5000km within a four-year period.

**To qualify for this award, the randonneur must complete:**

- a full series of ACP brevets (200, 300, 400, 600, and 1000km) [longer brevets cannot be substituted for shorter ones];
- a Paris-Brest-Paris randonné;e;
- a Flèche Vélocio, or other ACP-sanctioned flèche (your team of at least three bicycles must finish officially); and
- additional ACP and/or RM events to bring the total distance up to at least 5000 km.

Some additional French events can also be used as qualifying rides. The qualifying events must be completed within a four-year period, beginning on the date of the first qualifying event.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
2014/07/02	Patrick Chin-Hong	Forest Hills, NY
2014/07/04	Chris Nadovich	Easton, PA
2014/07/06	Ian Flitcroft	Williamson, GA
2014/07/13	Stephen Royse	Versailles, KY
2014/07/19	Bill Russell	Vineyard Haven, MA
2014/07/29	Linda Bott (F) [2]	Ventura, CA
2014/08/13	Jan P Dembinski	Woodstock, VT
2014/08/14	Robert J Booth	Madison, WI
2014/08/15	Barry Schwartz	Los Altos, CA
2014/08/17	J Michael Lutz	Lancaster, PA
2014/09/05	Steve Yesko	Forest Hills, NY

## American Randonneur Challenge Award

The American Randonneur Challenge (ARC) is a special award given by Randonneurs USA to any RUSA member who successfully completes in the same season two or more Randonneur Mondiaux 1200-kilometer or longer grand randonnées held in the United States. The ARC award can be earned only by riding the event as a 1200k; riders entered to do it as a 1000k + 200k may not claim the award.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE	
2014/01/08	John Lee Ellis	Lafayette, CO	Gold Rush Randonnee / The Big Wild Ride
2014/09/01	Kitty Goursolle (F)	San Ramon, CA	Colorado High Country 1200 / California Central Coast Randonnée
2014/09/12	Emma Dixon (F)	Sunnyvale, CA	Colorado High Country 1200 / California Central Coast Randonnée
2014/09/12	Jonathan Dixon	Sunnyvale, CA	Colorado High Country 1200 / California Central Coast Randonnée
2014/10/15	Rodney D Geisert	Columbia, MO	Cascade 1200K / Natchez Trace 1500
2014/10/15	Ian Page Hands	Raleigh, NC	Natchez Trace 1500 / Taste of Carolina 1200
2014/10/16	H Edward Boltz	Fulton, NY	Natchez Trace 1500 / Taste of Carolina 1200
2014/10/16	Clyde Butt	San Jose, CA	California Central Coast Randonnée / Taste of Carolina 1200
2014/10/16	Gregory H Smith	Richland Center, WI	Colorado High Country 1200 / Natchez Trace 1500

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