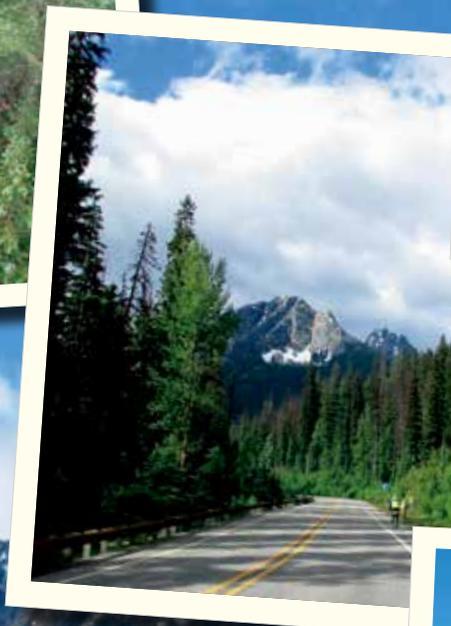


AMERICAN RANDONNEUR



VOLUME 19 • ISSUE #4 WINTER 2016



2016 Cascade 1200K *stories from the road*

A Washington State of Mind — BY CHRIS NEWMAN

A Sonnet to The Headwind — BY JAN PETER DEMBINSKI



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Chris Kostman, your Silver State 508 race director, racing across Nevada's Hwy 50 during the 1987 Race Across America, with support vehicle and his mascot Gunby in tow. Photo by David Nelson.



American Randonneur Magazine

Winter 2016 • Volume 19, Issue #4

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COVER—The Cascade 1200 proved to be a challenging and immensely rewarding tour through some of the most beautiful and varied topography imaginable.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS NEWMAN

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President's Message

In the last President's Column, I wrote in part about declining membership and participation. RUSA has not kept strict track of membership totals and the figures displayed on the member demographics page are largely estimations. On the participation side of things though, there is a large body of feedback, and it is clear that participation is not what it has been in recent years. In my last column I urged members to become more active in getting the message out about randonneuring.

One member from the South Florida Randonneurs wrote to me and included a few business cards that he carries and hands out when he crosses paths with riders. His cards include this information: a brief description of randonneuring, the name of his club, and URLs for both RUSA and his club. San Francisco Randonneurs has done

something similar for years. We've distributed these cards to our members at events and when we return processed brevet cards, in the hope that our riders will pass the cards along. I've also handed out more than a few when I've encountered riders in other circumstances. When SFR returns processed brevet cards, we also send

out postcards with the calendar of events. Stacks of those postcards have made their way into bike shops, outdoor recreation stores and the like.

One final plug I'd like to make to encourage outreach is for RUSA regions to host DART and DART Populaire events. In Northern California, there are three clubs that regularly host these events and they never fail to pull in new riders. The team event concept is the perfect incubator for hatching a randonneur. And having the finish be at a venue that accommodates large groups where team members from all the different teams can intermingle and share the day's experiences seems to seal the deal for many new randonneurs.

While it is somewhat early in the Fall as I write this column, by the time it is printed, mailed and read the year will be drawing to a close, and with it will be the last year of the Board of Directors term for someone who has contributed enormously for many years to Randonneurs USA. Mark Thomas served on the board for two different six-year stretches, has been the Regional Brevet Administrator for Seattle (the largest RUSA region in the country for many years), and currently serves on several RUSA committees. Mark has supplied the Board with a great deal of institutional knowledge, often providing historical context, and through all the time Mark has served on the Board during my own tenure, he has consistently supplied a perspective that has broadened my own. RUSA is a better organization for Mark's contribution and I want to thank him greatly for it.

—Rob Hawks
RUSA President
president@rusa.org



From the Editor

Every Christmas for the past several years, my partner and I have had a house-sitting gig for friends in San Diego. Providing a brief respite from the cold, snow and ice at home in Pennsylvania, this trip also offers the opportunity to do one or two permanents along the coastline. Poor me, huh?

Winter is obviously a very different experience for riders in the northeast. Some days it's too dangerous to go out, some days it's just impossible—I tried ice skating on my bike once and the ice won. On some winter days, riding is just uncomfortable, no matter that you're wearing all of your winter gear. In December, in front of the fire, I dream of long rides. Dr. Codfish's column encourages such winter ruminating.

Even though I don't think I will have the time or resources to do it, the Portugal 1200, briefly described in this issue, sounds fantastic. And ride reports on the Cascade 1200 and the Colorado High Country 1200 make me wish for a much stronger set of knees and more time than I can usually commit to riding. Flitcroft's report on the Scottish Highlands 1200, which presents additional challenges involving sheep, mosquitoes and long stretches of remote roads, will appeal to many of you.

Columnist Mary Gersema, of Coffeeneuring fame, offers an interview with accomplished SIR member, Theo Roffe. His story lends support to President Rob Hawks' message that team events attract new riders to randonneuring.

This issue even includes poetry. Limericks written in honor of the Limerick Post Office control in eastern PA, and a sonnet in honor of the winds encountered on the Cascades 1200 may inspire more of you to try writing ride reports in a poetic form.

Solicited articles and voluntary submissions make up the balance of this issue. Greg Olmstead describes two permanents in out-of-the-way locations that you will want to try when you can. Melissa Hall remembers back to the beginning of her randonneuring career. Jeremy Gray shares his simple and handy design for cue sheet holders, and Nanette Hilton writes about how cycling is so much a part of the fabric of our lives.

I hope this issue finds you riding as much as you can or want to, and that it encourages your randonneuring dreams for the year ahead.

Be safe out there, please.

—Janice Chernehoff
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The Scottish Highlands, Glens and West Coast 1200

BY IAN FLITCROFT

What images does Scotland bring to mind? If the Scottish tourist board's marketing has been effective, you might think of tartan, heather, scotch whisky and castles. All fine reasons to visit Scotland, but let me give you two more words you might want to consider if you are contemplating a visit: midges and rain.

The Highland midge is a species of small flying insect that particularly infests the north west of Scotland. Female Highland midges gather in clouds during the summer and bite any available warm blooded creature, including stationary cyclists. There are various home remedies, including eating lots of garlic, that are said to repel these blood suckers. However, the best remedy I heard was from a fellow cyclist: "don't stop." The only good news about midges, and I'll grant you it's a mixed blessing, is that they hide away when it's raining. In Scotland it rains plenty.

My plan for the first 600K of the Highlands, Glens and West Coast 1200 was to thwart the midges by continuing

to move as much as possible. Having ridden through the first night and into the early evening of the second day, I had made it up to the northern coast, and back again, and was now within forty miles of a bed and breakfast accommodation I'd booked in the village of Lairg. However, at that moment, I was huddled behind the dubious shelter of a dry stone wall located somewhere in the middle of a large moor. Looking around, I could see nobody, nor any sign of human habitation, even though my view stretched for many miles across the moor. Grey clouds swept from the west and a light rain started up again. Nearby a few sheep wandered among the bracken undisturbed by my presence. Some others sheltered from

the wind and rain in the lee of a lump of exposed rock. I took a jam sandwich out of my pocket and reflected that in this weather at least I could sit and eat without being swarmed by midges.

The food revived my spirits sufficiently that I donned my rain jacket *again* and continued pedaling west along the single lane track that wandered across the moor. Thoughts of a fish and chip supper in Lairg drove me on as I crouched in the drops against the rain and wind. As I pedaled alongside a loch, watching the wind whip up waves on the surface of the water, I lamented the absence of any sheltering trees. Northern Scotland is mainly moorland on which sheep now roam, grazing the vegetation down to low lying grass, bracken and heather, and preventing trees from growing. Combined with the generally unfavorable weather and the forbidding presence of the Scottish mountains, it makes for a somewhat severe landscape.

The presence of sheep can be traced back to the Highland clearances of the 17th and 18th centuries, when





A rider begins the climb up Glen Coe.

—PHOTO MATTHEW SCHOLES

the land-owning aristocracy forcibly removed crofting tenants from their land to make room for more profitable enterprises, such as sheep farming and grouse shooting. Once the sheep were introduced they stayed in large numbers to graze with freedom across the unfenced moors. A friend of mine recently suffered two broken arms when he collided with a sheep while riding down a mountain pass in the English Lake District. With this in mind I kept my speed in check, wary of a close encounter of the ovine kind. Indeed, I found out after the event that a rider crossing the moor later that same night had hit a sheep, sending him to the hospital with broken ribs.

Still in the middle of a desolate moor—only Macbeth’s witches would call this home—I was surprised to spot a couple of whitewashed houses ahead. I was entering the village of Crask, constituted of the Crask Inn pub and not much else. The Crask Inn is regarded as the most isolated public house in the British Isles. There were two bikes leaned against the front wall but neither of them belonged to randonneurs. The road now descended a river valley and

an easy spin into Lairg finished the day. After the reward of fish and chips, and a few hours of sleep at the bed and breakfast, it was time to tackle the West Coast section of the ride.

Northern Scotland is within ten degrees of the Arctic circle, with very long summer days. Nevertheless, I left Lairg in inky darkness, trying to make an early start to the third day. The proximity of the Arctic circle might also have something to do with the brisk temperatures we were experiencing; I doubted the mercury had passed 60F since we began. I was wearing two wool tops and a wind vest, along with wool bib knickers, wool socks and long-fingered gloves. “The English summer—winter painted green,” is a quip that must apply doubly to Scotland. In addition to the headwind, a misting rain continued to fall intermittently

and I stopped several times to add or remove a rain jacket. The Scottish word “driech,” meaning dire weather, came to mind.

Reaching the west coast at Lochinver mid-morning I now turned south. The West Coast of Scotland is craggier than the North Coast, where sandy beaches lie in broad bays between massive headlands. On the West Coast the scale is more compact and the shoreline is rockier. The organizer routed us onto some appealingly winding and hilly single lane roads that hugged the rugged coastline. Lung-bursting efforts up short steep climbs were followed by sharp descents into rocky coves. I thought back to the morning of the first day when I met a rider on a fixed gear bike. On a relatively obscure ride in Scotland, such a bike would indicate a Brit, and given the hilliness of the ride maybe a slightly eccentric one. But this cyclist was American, and turned out to be RBA liaison, Spencer Klaassen (Spencer freely admitted to his eccentricity). As I struggled up stretches of vertical tarmac in my lowest gear, I wondered how Spencer was getting on. I suspected he was finding the ride to be a bit of a challenge.

I stopped in Ullapool, which was by far the biggest and busiest town I had passed through so far, and sat on the sea wall eating an ice cream. I’d been riding by myself since the evening of the first day and had only briefly seen

***The only good news about midges,
and I’ll grant you it’s a mixed blessing,
is that they hide away when it’s raining.
In Scotland it rains plenty.***

The rugged West coast

—PHOTO MATTHEW SCHOLES



two other participants—Luke and Charlotte—at a control at a bunkhouse near the North Coast. I wasn't that many hours ahead of the control cut-offs and I wondered what was keeping everyone. All the controls, except for the bunkhouse control, were unstaffed. In Britain, cafés and stores keep more limited hours than I am accustomed to. For example, I arrived in Durness on the North Coast at 9am hoping for a hot breakfast after my first night on the road, but I was told that the only local café didn't open until 10am. 24-hour stores are not common in the UK and many shut their doors by 6pm. To provide proof of passage we therefore used receipts from ATMs. I was beginning to feel as if I'd embarked on a solo 1200K permanent.

In the afternoon I passed through

the Torridon giants, some of the most dramatic peaks in the British Isles, and thankfully, mostly visible. The rock here is more closely related to the Appalachians than with the rest of the British Isles, this NW corner of the island having been left behind when the continents drifted apart. You could say I'd traveled across an ocean to cycle on home soil.

It was here, during an outdoor bathroom break, that I had my only encounter with midges. Needing some privacy, I'd walked up the hillside and found a lower lying area where I could squat in the bracken and be hidden from the road. Unsurprisingly, this depression was rather boggy and also mostly sheltered from the wind—ideal conditions for midges. Within seconds of starting to do my business they had

Bad weather on the road to the West coast.

—PHOTO MATTHEW SCHOLES

found me. One disadvantage of bibs is the need to almost fully undress when removing them. To escape the wee beasts I threw my jersey back on and ran back down the hill with the bib straps still dangling from my waist.

My day ended just as darkness fell, at a bunkhouse in the valley of Glenn Carron. Twenty minutes after I arrived I was relieved to see two other riders show up: Lee from Manchester and Flo from Berlin. We arranged to leave together early the next day for the last 300K, which consisted of a run down the East Coast of the island of Skye, followed by a loop through the towns of Fort William and Glencoe.

We left the bunkhouse at 2:30am and rode toward the Isle of Skye, hoping to catch the first ferry of the day in Armadale back to the mainland. Lee and I were both born in Manchester, and are about the same age. He works in the area of sports physiology and I'd just finished reading *Faster* by the British cyclist and journalist Michael Hutchinson. There was plenty to talk about and if the ride hadn't ended later that day, we'd still be chatting.

Cycling into and out of Fort William was the low point of the ride. There was so much traffic that we were obliged to pull over frequently to allow a stream of cars, trucks and motor-homes to pass by. At times we resorted to riding on the sidewalk, dodging garbage bins and lampposts. Even though we were nominally riding on an



“A” road—supposedly the highest class of road in the UK that isn’t a motorway (interstate)—at times the road was only wide enough for a single car. Passing places are incorporated at regular intervals and oncoming vehicles must negotiate who is going to give way as they approach each other. More than one downhill swoop on the North Coast road came to a screeching halt as a car or motorhome travelling in the opposite direction applied the dictum “might is right” and forced me to give way.

We enjoyed a respite from the traffic while riding around Loch Leven, stopping for lunch at Kinlochleven where there was an information control. Luke had left us a malt loaf and a jug of water on a park bench, with a note—“for Ian and friends.” The note proved useful in persuading the organizer at the finish that we had passed through the town because we completely failed to find the information control. The traffic picked up again as we climbed up the valley of Glen Coe and across

Rannoch Moor, and although we marveled at the expansive views across the moor—the highest point on our ride—we were relieved to turn off the main road for the last 40 miles.

The sun had finally made an appearance and we sat on a bench and embraced its warmth while taking in a view of low hills and the sea behind them. And of course the sheep; there are no views in Scotland that don’t include sheep. The consensus was that this was one of the harder rides in our collective experience. We felt that the indifferent weather, the more-than-usual need to be self-sufficient, and the continual hilliness of the course (50K feet of climbing) might produce a large number of DNFs. Carrying on along a farm track that cut directly across the middle of fields, we found our way blocked by highland cattle. Unlike sheep these shaggy beasts were not interested in making way, so we left the road altogether and rode around them on the short grass. A couple of viciously

steep climbs provided a final test for weary legs, before the ride ended at a village hall rented out for the event by the organizer, Mark Rigby.

The first two finishers, Luke and Charlotte, had already arrived and left, but Mark and two volunteers were there to greet us. However, from our arrival until the cutoff time of 3am, only the mixed tandem couple of Ashley and Cathy Brown made it in, for a total of 7 finishers from approximately 34 starters.

If Mark offers this ride again—and kudos to him for organizing the event with minimal help, as well as a sister 1200 that ran a day earlier—he might consider scheduling it outside the high season of European tourism (July and August), when hopefully there would be less traffic. And if you do decide to visit Scotland on a bike, then pack some fenders, wear some woolies, and do some hill training. As for the midges, well, just keep moving, as I suspect garlic won’t deter them. 🚲



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Making a Sturdy Cue-sheet Holder

BY JEREMY R. GRAY, RUSA #9913

When I rode my first brevet, I lacked a way to attach a cue sheet to the bike. I had a GPS unit and tried to ride with people who knew where they were going, with my cue sheet in my pocket. Although cue sheets are a critical part of randonneuring, I was not tempted to buy a commercially available holder. Some handle-bar bags come with an excellent integrated map display, but I did not want to buy a bag just for the holder. Stand-alone map holders are available but position the cue sheet over the stem, which feels cluttered and too close to the rider. A basic cue-holder can be made from a spring-steel paperclip that is zip-tied to the stem—elegantly minimalist but positioned close to the rider.

For brevets this year I made a cue-sheet holder having all of the features on my wish-list: forward position, sturdy, removable, waterproof, and easy to use. I rode with a prototype on the Detroit Randonneurs 600K brevet in June 2016. I'm so glad I did; I had to rely on

it entirely for the second half without GPS. The cues were easy to read, and the whole thing was very stable even at downhill speeds (30+ mph) and on gravel roads. A couple people asked about it, so I wrote up some notes, incorporating several improvements.

Supplies

- 2' 7" of 9-gauge galvanized wire (\$7 for 50', hardware store)
- 4 neodymium magnets: 1/2" diameter x 1/8th" thick (about \$1 each online)
- 26" of shock cord (bungee): 3/16th" diameter (about \$1, sporting goods store)
- 3" of heat-shrink tubing, size 1/2" to 1/4" (\$1, hardware store)
- 1 quart-size zip-lock bag (grocery store)
- Optional: clear packing tape, electrical tape

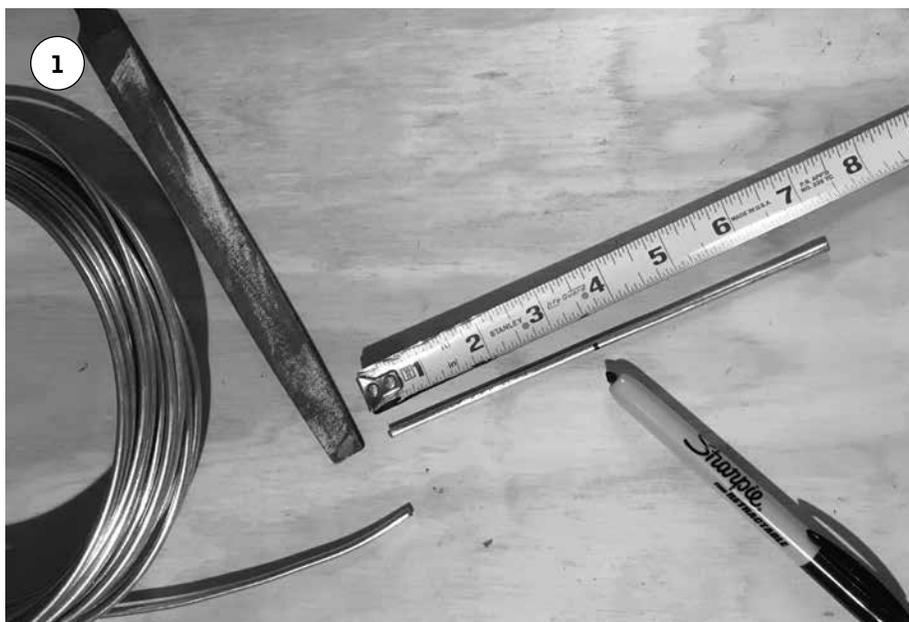
Tools

- wire cutters, sturdy pliers, or hacksaw
- bench-mounted vice
- hammer
- file
- super glue (cyanoacrylate)

Steps

1. For the frame, cut two pieces of wire: a 24" main piece, and a 7" bridge piece. Straighten them out if needed, smooth any sharp ends with a file, and mark the middle of each piece (photo 1). A main piece that is 24" long will result in a gap of about 1.5" between the trailing edge of the cue sheet and the handlebars. This free space for hands is one of the design changes I made after doing a long ride. If you want a more compact feel, just shorten your main piece a bit.

2. Bend the 7" bridge piece slightly in the middle, so that the two ends are about 6.5" apart. Then curl 1/2" of each end back on itself. This was the most difficult part of the whole process. I used a vice and hammer to get a tight bend in the right spot: hold about 3/8" of the end in the vice, and then bend and hammer it to a 90 degree angle (shown in photo 2). Then hold only 1/4" in the vice, and bend further using the hammer. Finally, use the vice to





squeeze the end to its final position (see photo 4). File one face of each loop to create a flat surface for a nice contact area for gluing.

3. Pre-bend the main piece at the middle using your hands, and then bend it upwards around the bike stem into a U-shape. Then bend the arms forward over the handlebars to about 20 degrees above horizontal (photo 3). It took me several iterations on and off the bike to get the main piece to have an acceptable shape that fit the bike well. After making all such adjustments, check that the arms are about the same length. A small difference will not be noticeable, but if the arms are more than 1/8" off, trim the longer arm to match the shorter one.

4. For each arm, curl 1/2" of the end back on itself (as with the bridge piece), making a loop out to the side. Bend the loop itself sideways a bit more (shown in photo 4), and file the upper face where you'll glue a magnet. To reduce scratching or wear, wrap a bit of electrical tape around the wire stem frame where it touches the handlebars and stem.

5. Glue a magnet to the filed surface at the end of each arm and bridge piece. I found it helpful to mark each magnet indicating the polarity before gluing; the polarities need be aligned in order to hold a cue sheet.



Then use a 3/4" piece of heat-shrink to wrap each magnet and wire together (white, photo 5). I used my kitchen stove as a heat source; avoid overheating. Trim off any excess heat-shrink plastic using a razor blade, if desired. The heat-shrink gives a more finished look and provides some minimum distance between the magnets (making it easier to separate them). Electrical tape is cheaper and easier to work with than heat-shrink, but the end result is less satisfying. Widen the arms of the main piece as needed, so that the magnets line up with the magnets on the bridge piece.



6. Tie a double-fisherman's knot in the shock cord to make a loop (photo 5; consult the internet for how to tie such a knot). The loop is effectively just a big rubber band that provides some downward tension on the arms, holding everything in place. The loop goes around both arms of the main piece. The lower edge of the loop then goes under the handlebars, to one side of the stem, and over the stem bolts (photo 6). The loop stays tied, even when removing it from the bike. The size is adjustable without untying, e.g., for use on a different bike. Velcro or zip-ties would work instead of shock cord if your stem bolts do not secure the loop adequately.

7. A zip-lock bag will provide reasonable protection for a cue sheet against rain and incidental moisture. I use a thicker "freezer" style bag. A quart size bag almost accommodates a half-sheet of paper (8.5" x 11" folded in half); I just fold or trim the paper a bit. Reinforcing the edges of the bag with clear package tape helps prevent little holes from forming on the edges due to repeated flexing (e.g., on long windy rides or if you reuse the bag). For good rain protection, put a quart-size bag inside a gallon-size bag. An outer bag also helps keep out the elements when you open the inner bag to flip the cue-sheet. Specialty plastic map-bags (e.g.,



The author with cue-sheet at the end of 600K.

—PHOTO TOM DUSKY



Aloksak) do not seem necessary but might provide a better fit for standard-size paper.

The magnets secure the leading edge of the cue-sheet. That is all that is needed most of the time, even in a moderate crosswind. In case of a strong crosswind, I carry a spring-steel paper clip: Clip the trailing edge of the bag to one of the arms.

Out of curiosity, I held the cue-sheet holder out the window of a car moving at 55 mph for 30 seconds.



Notes:

- Keep electronics at least a few inches away from the magnets. I remove my GPS from the stem while installing or removing the cue-sheet holder.
- Seems unlikely to be a hazard during a crash (not tested). The ends of the arms are curled out to the side, not pointed straight ahead. Moreover, the two arms are not fixed rigidly: The shock cord can stretch, allowing a range of movement.
- Probably not compatible with aerobars; maybe there is a way to make something work.
- Compatible with lights mounted below the handlebars, but not above. Attaching a clip-on light to hang downwards worked well for me on the 600K.
- Weight: about 3.5 oz.
- Time to attach or remove: 15-20 seconds.

The magnets held a cue-sheet securely. With just the thickness of a few sheets of paper and plastic separating the magnets, they hold together firmly—yet also release easily enough by tilting the bridge piece.

Anyone wishing to use or improve on the design is welcome to do so. For

this reason, the design is covered by a specific, open-source license: Creative Commons - Attribution - ShareAlike 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>), Copyright (C) Jeremy R. Gray 2016. Contact jrgray@gmail.com; blog <https://jeremycycling.blogspot.com> 🚲

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Cycletherapy

BY NANETTE HILTON

I am a masked bandit—my every inch barricaded against the wind chill. Really, I am just a desert tortoise unused to temperatures below fifty. Although I grew up here, I'm now out of my element. Unable to wait for a flawless forecast, I brave the sharp air because I must. But all these seemingly indigenous people on the path with me today think it the epitome of spring, evidenced by their lack of clothing. It's deep winter to me. I'm visiting from the Mojave Desert which is now my home.

People wave at me. I don't know them and they don't know me. I am perplexed at the familiarity they assume. At first I ignore them, simply making sure we don't collide. "On your left!" I shout in warning as I approach from behind. They usually move right; some dart while others drift. Parents grab their children and pull, or navigate their strollers to the side. Some thank me. Many times my warning falls on full ears—stuffed with who-knows-what noise of their own making. These people are even more insulated than I—oblivious.

I suppose people wave to be noticed and feel benevolent acknowledging me. There is expectation of reciprocation. Initially, I feel annoyed by this burden, but then experiment.

First, I squinty up my eyes in a smile beneath my balaclava, sunglasses and helmet. "Is that enough?" I wonder, unsatisfied with my paltry gift.

Second, I lift the fingers of my gloved hand, thumb still glued to my hoods, in a nonchalant pseudo-wave of "Howdy!" and simultaneously launch a huge, invisible grin—emitting my goodwill like gamma radiation from beneath my headgear with a cursory

nod. I imagine a glint of approval from their eyes.

My final venture is to hurl a genuine wave, arm extended, coupled with my vivacious smile vibrating in ripples like a skipped stone around my camouflage—the full monty! If they initiate the wave and I respond, I feel relief in meeting my moral obligation. If, however, I go whole hog and they ignore me, I feel an avalanche of dejection. "Outrageous!" I think to myself. "How could they snub me like that?" Pedaling on, I muse at my own irony, ignoring and waving as I choose—a capricious monarch caught up in my own ridiculousness.

There's a guy who throws his whole arm out every time I pass him, coming and going day after day. He trundles down the path, out for exercise I guess, but he is probably just waiting to see ME. As I approach, out goes his arm—the one closest to me. At first I think he's going to smack me. It's almost involuntary, like a guard gate arm triggered by infra-red.

In life, we each begin and end as individuals. But the in-between years we spend in pursuit of affinity, belonging, community, and companionship.

Therefore we wave at strangers; therefore we ride and walk with strangers; therefore we write for strangers and read what strangers have written. We fling ourselves toward one another pitching tokens of conviviality seeking communion. Solitary confinement is a form of punishment and torture capable of inciting mental ruin. The most ghastly specter haunting the human psyche is not disease, famine or death; it is loneliness.

Five abreast they push, pull and prod—five mothers, five strollers, two Big Wheels, one trike, and twelve children all under the age of six—a parade on wheels or a legion advancing to battle along Murdock Canal Trail. It is an imposing roadblock. "On your left...on your right...or down the middle," I equivocate. Chaos breaks loose as my herald disrupts the forward momentum of the group. I slow, careful to downshift and unclip one foot, ready to navigate the unpredictable, moving obstacle course. A cacophony of squeals, moans, giggles, screams, cajoling and pacifying emanates from the brigade like in a C-grade horror film. It's a daunting scene and I am relieved to make it through.

Further down the trail I spot a black and white cat. It sits on the chilled pavement, looking up and away from the path, twitching its tail left and right. It is thinking. About what it is thinking, I cannot say. Like me, it may be ruminating on its next meal.

During my childhood, Murdock Canal delivered irrigation to farmers along Utah's Wasatch Front. Backyards bordered it, and I was warned many times to stay away from it, for fear of drowning. After seventeen years of planning, the canal was finally buried.

Underground, 126-inch steel pipes invisibly deliver water to the valley. Above them, the 17-mile trail from Provo Canyon to Thanksgiving Point was celebrated in May of 2013, and today it links with other trails to create an impressive cycling network. Nearly two million people—and some cats—enjoy it annually.

The cat is a stray, I guess, since it has no collar and is about three miles north from where I saw it yesterday. Today it saunters along fences, purring loudly and rubbing its back on the wooden slats. The cat stops, staring upward as I saw it do before, ignoring the path and its patrons. I wonder if this cat has a destination in mind. What would mark the end of its journey? A good meal? Warmth? Belonging? Where on the path will I see it tomorrow? Maybe, like me, aimless roaming is its objective.

Pedaling 15 miles away from home leaves me, uh, 15 miles from home. Committed. I can't change my mind mid-ride. I first check the weather forecast, hour by hour. Precipitation? Wind speed? "Wind is the perfect training partner," echoes my better self.

My favorite routes are downhill—all the way. This is unrealistic and if it weren't, I'd be unfit for practically any ride since they all entail some challenge: elevation, distance, terrain, traffic or weather. Hills are food for thought. Pedaling up a steep hill at maybe six miles per hour yields lots of think-time—talk-time, too. I once began and cemented a friendship during the hour it took to climb from the Colorado River overlook in El Dorado Canyon to Nelson's Landing,

Nevada, past the old mines and ghost town. All the while we were breathlessly getting acquainted and then baring our souls to one another, discovering we were indeed kindred spirits.

I arrived in Utah Valley on April Fool's Day with my teenage daughter in tow as her chaperone, bodyguard and valet. At track practice over Spring Break, she broke her neck. Guardian angels held up her head in the hours before she finally made her way to the emergency room and was immobilized and sequestered in Las Vegas' Sunrise Hospital Intensive Care Trauma Unit for four days. We've come to Utah Valley at the mercy of a highly-esteemed neurosurgeon who says he will have her pole vaulting again in four months. Though this is hyperbole, his optimism is good medicine.

While my daughter recovered, flat on her back and neck braced, my first ride of the Murdock Canal Trail suggested an imminent efflorescence of color in every direction. All around were lilac, flowering pear and cherry, apple and plum trees adorned with tight-lipped buds. Along the path the verdant ground was abundant with early wildflowers and in adjacent yards canary-yellow daffodils in full bloom. Pastel tulips, looking like Easter eggs, bordered walks and drives poised to unfurl. The snowcapped Wasatch Mountains were shrouded with cloud-shadows making for a dramatic backdrop. I saw nothing but promise in every direction.

It rained heavily yesterday and the day before. Earthworms usurped the usual trail traffic during the downpour and today lay convulsing and stranded

in the sun. At first I carefully navigate around them, some ten inches long and fat as fingers. Before mounting my bike, I picked them up off the driveway with my gloved hands and altruistically flung them back into the grass, feeling generous. But there are so many on the trail and I'm not that generous. "Come here, Robin!" I say aloud. It's getting tedious dodging worms. So I turn traitor and decide to dissect them instead. I carefully sight them on approach but can't see them as my wheel rolls over each worm. I feel mean and rather sick. What does a worm think, feel? Is a worm hungry, cold, lonely? They are much less readable than even a cat.

Up ahead on the trail are the flashing red lights and beep beep beep of a backhoe. A crowd of men in yellow slickers with shovels are tightly knit. I slow down, seeing another rider walking their bike around the fray. I, too, stop and dismount as I smell tar and see the rain-induced sinkhole they're repairing. "It'll be done today!" they cheerily offer as apology for our interrupted trek. I've been dodging the anomaly in the trail for weeks as it was apparently sagging. Someone had outlined the hollow with red spray paint as warning. Now I'm relieved I didn't ride over it exactly at the very moment it collapsed! I was saved by all these people, I conclude. Eleven? No, thirteen armed men to my rescue. "Thanks so much!" I salute.

My daughter's surgery is deemed a success and her doctor gave us the OK to go back to our desert. It's hot there now, just as flawless forecasts are becoming the norm here. Once home, I'll be riding before dawn and wishing I were back on the Murdock Canal Trail with the cat, earthworms and anonymous waving people. And I'll remember; I'll remember the daffodils and tulips sequestered underground, preparing to pounce in spring. I'll remember Murdock Canal and it's life-giving waters coursing under my medicinal trail. 🚲

***The most ghastly specter haunting
the human psyche is not disease,
famine or death; it is loneliness.***

Colorado High Country Adventures

BY KIERAN JOHNSON

Day 1: Louisville–Saratoga

The small hours is the best time of day for riding in summer, and conditions were perfect as we set off at 4 a.m. through the deserted streets. There were a few frisky legs on the early rollers (I suppose me included) but soon we were rolling along in a loose group of 13 with plenty of chatter. It was fun riding the familiar roads with people from out of state though there were a couple of local faces in the group too. We got scattered on the first small climbs and arrived at the first control in ones and twos. A quick pastry and bottle refill and we set off for the gentle 58-mile climb up the Poudre Canyon.

At Rustic I felt I should eat, but with

the wind starting to gust I didn't want to delay by sitting down. So after some debate with other riders about the identity of the animal on the sign, required for the info control—some said salmon, some generic fish, one said very like a whale—I started the remaining 30-mile climb to the top of Cameron Pass. As I rode, the wind rose rapidly and it was mostly in my face. I stopped at a camp store for a couple of cans of tomato juice which seemed to hit the spot. The rest of the climb was slow going and just before the top I was blown off the road and had to unclip to avoid a tumble. I still hadn't seen any other riders after resting at the summit, so I got ready to battle the wind to Walden.

The next stretch was a little-ring slog into a savage headwind, enlivened only by a stop in Gould (we've struck Gould!) where the store owners cast doubt on my ambition of making it to Saratoga that day. The optimism of the morning was dissipating as I estimated and re-estimated the wind direction and mentally overlaid it against the roads to come. My conclusion was that things would get worse before they got better.

Finally making Walden, I sat down with a tired-looking randonneur who introduced himself as Vince from Oregon. Vince said he was thinking of knocking it on the head in Saratoga and I was glad it wasn't just me. We were



both covered in dust and a bit stunned. The store staff spread a rumor that the road to Saratoga was about to be closed due to wildfires, but having no alternative, off we went. The wind was more of a cross-tail for the first miles north out of Walden which cheered me up a bit. We leapfrogged each other as the terrain started to undulate and, the wind abating with nightfall, we arrived at the night's lodgings a little after ten. After an innocuous start, it had been a day of mind-games with the wind, but I felt OK in the morning with no valid reasons for quitting and managed to get out the door at four. I knew the second day would not be any easier, with more climbing and more of that Southwest wind.

Day 2: Saratoga–Steamboat

It was a cold morning in Wyoming and I passed a handful of riders early on, then no one until near the top of the Snowy Range climb. By that point it had started to warm, the temperature having dipped under 30 on the lower slopes before the sun rose. For a while I was breathing out foggy clouds and regretting not using the chemical toe warmers I'd packed in my drop bag. The summit scenery was glorious and I resisted the urge to stagger in cleats to the little windswept turret for a better view. Instead I began the descent which was long and fun. The wind was favorable, or at least not hostile, the whole way to Laramie, and I wanted to enjoy it while I could.

In Laramie I was ravenous so I stopped at McDonald's for consecutive breakfast and lunch. Taking 10 McNuggets with me, I checked off the info control and got ready for another stint in headwind purgatory. Each mile seemed to take forever as I rode to the right of the rumble strip on a road apparently going nowhere. Finally I



reached Jelms (odd name) where I rested and filled bottles. Up the "stiff" (per cue-sheet) six-mile climb, which would be fun on a normal day but felt like going up the down escalator today, and I was back in CO leaving WY and its rumble strips behind. I was dog-tired and my speed was glacial but I figured I would rest in Walden, the wind would die down after dark, and tomorrow would be easier.

At the Walden control I sprawled on a sofa for half an hour, chatting with friendly support people and hearing tales of windy woe from further back on the route. Around sunset I stopped to don my night attire but was instantly beset by a wrathful swarm of mosquitoes who infiltrated every crevice, so I crammed all my gear back in my bag and fled, swatting at my legs and torso as I rode! As on the first day, my spirits rose significantly with nightfall and the cessation of the wind. Scenery is a fine thing, but so is riding by moonlight, and I realized this particular brevet would have been much less punishing if ridden primarily at night.

I climbed Rabbit Ears Pass as the last of the sunlight drained away, negotiated the grooved surface between the summits, and managed the seven-mile descent into Steamboat without colliding with any of the deer who flashed by like pale-eyed spirits in the margins of my vision. I was completely shattered and mentally numb, but stayed up for an hour daydreaming and downing gallons of the fantastic home-

First light after the ride start.

—PHOTO JOHN LEE ELLIS

made chili offered at the control. I realized I had carried the 10 McNuggets all the way from Laramie and decided I probably wouldn't need them anymore, but I kept them overnight just in case.

Day 3: Steamboat–Walden via Grand Lake

I left at about a quarter to five with my roommate, Gavin, riding easily as we digested breakfast. We soon caught up with three others, but as we started to climb a series of small hills I left them behind and had a nice solo ride in the warming air to Yampa, passing a tranquil lake with patches of mist evaporating from it. Stopping only to strip off a layer or two, I soon found myself at the bottom of Gore Pass. This was the most enjoyable climb of the ride for me, because it was a windless, traffic-less morning, and the topography of the climb was engaging, with an early steepish section leading into a rolling plateau followed by another climb to the summit. Near the top I was joined by Gavin, a stronger rider than me who explained he'd been delayed by a flat. We took cheesy summit photos and then savored the 15-mile, near-traffic-free descent which was the highlight of the whole brevet. I was getting tired and hungry but it was only a short ride into Kremmling (official residence of the Russian president) where Gavin

Cameron Pass on day 1.

—PHOTO JOHN LEE ELLIS



Kieran Johnson.
—PHOTO JOHN LEE ELLIS

around the time I hit the tiny settlement of Rand where I made a mental note to return with paint and add an “o” to the sign. I felt full of energy as I knew I was on the home stretch. Swarms of gnats glittered in the moonlight as I crisscrossed swampy creekbeds. In contrast to the previous nights, there was an air of relief and tentative celebration at the final overnight control in Walden, and after a massive plate of turkey and mashed potato I staggered off to my room.

Day 4: Walden–Louisville

The last stage was only 150 miles with a net downhill, so I was feeling quite complacent when I woke up. For the first time I was one of the later starters, and finding my way into a group of seven, passed several other riders on the chilly morning drag to the bottom of Cameron Pass. We struck Gould again but I had already staked my claim on day one, so on I went as the heat began to build. The summit came sooner than I had expected, and after a relaxed descent I had a hearty

eggy breakfast in Rustic and an easy trundle down to Laporte. I could afford to linger over a second breakfast, and finally left in the scorching noonday heat with two others. We covered the last 50 miles pretty well, at one moment on top of the world because we were almost done, the next moment lamenting that we still had three, two, one hours to ride. We sprinted the last half mile in slow motion and finished with just over four hours remaining.

I was much slower on all four days than on any other long ride I’ve done due to the wind and riding mostly alone but also to my underestimating the fatigue that builds up on a 1200k. This meant I didn’t get the six hours of sleep per night that I had fondly anticipated, never mind a chance to while away the evenings reading the thick book I packed in my drop bag! So all in all, the ride was much harder than I’d expected, but the route was gorgeous with a good selection of climbs and the front-loading of the stages made sense. For much of the first two wind-wracked days I was vowing not to do another brevet, never mind another 1200k, but by the finish I was already sketching plans for next year. And vowing to bring the aero-bars next time I go anywhere near Walden. 🚲

and I hitched our hosses to the rail and had a slap-up feed at the local saloon.

A few miles out of Kremmling Gavin flatted again and waved me on. Soon I found myself unexpectedly in the Colorado River canyon which was winding and suspiciously easy riding (could it be a tailwind?!). I recuperated at the control in Grand Lake and on the way back down to Granby I waved at all the randos trundling up the hill in dribs and drabs, like penitents on an arduous pilgrimage. I was with four others as we turned off the highway onto Willow Creek Pass but was dropped like a hot potato. While I had been full of the joys of spring on Gore, I was weary on Willow Creek and crawled up it. There was nary a breath of wind, but I was moving just fast enough to keep the bugs off.

Another marvelous moonlit ride ensued as I rolled down the other side of the pass, the sun disappearing

Woods Landing on day 2.
—PHOTO JOHN LEE ELLIS





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Lon Haldeman and Susan Notorangelo
Contact us... 262-736-2453 or
info@pactour.com

New Tours for 2017

Arizona Desert Camps and Tours February and March 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. Come join us!

**Week #1 February 25 - March 4
Tour of the Historic Hotels**

50-65 miles per day between classic Arizona hotels.
New route to Nogales, Arizona.

**Week #2 March 4 - 11
First Century Week**

Four nights based in Sierra Vista 60-100 miles per day .
This week has a slightly different route with one night in
Nogales to offer new route options.

**Week #3 March 11 - 18
Chiricahua Challenge**

75-90 miles per day to the Chiricahua Mountains with two
nights in Bisbee, Arizona.

**Week #4 March 18 - 25
Second Century Week**

Similar to First Century with four nights based in Sierra Vista
60-100 miles per day and one night in Nogales to offer new
route options.

**Week #5 (8 days) March 25 - April 1
Mountain Tour Mt. Graham**

80-100 miles per day from Tucson to New Mexico and
back. This is a popular training week for serious riders.

***Check the PAC Tour website for
dates, prices and registration
information.***

Cycling Route 66 (Eastern Half) FULL Amarillo, Texas to Chicago

Late May to mid June 16 days 1,200 miles

How many milkshakes can you drink? We will ride the oldest
alignments of America's most famous highway. The tour
will focus on the history of building the highway and the
cultural changes that happened during the past 90 years.
We will stay in many original motels and eat at the popular
cafes and diners along the way. Bikes with 32mm tires are
recommended for the rough concrete sections.

Wisconsin Hill Country Late June

This tour begins in southern Wisconsin and makes a big
loop through the hills and valleys in the southwest corner of
the state. Daily distances average 90 - 100 miles with many
rural roads and over 6,000 feet of climbing. These routes
have some of the best cycling roads in the country with light
traffic and great views. **Contact info@pactour.com for
more information.**

Wisconsin Door County Late June

Door County is the peninsula in eastern Wisconsin that
extends 100 miles into Lake Michigan. The scenery and
landscape here have a maritime feel with many beaches
and fishing boats along the coast line. The terrain is flat to
rolling with daily rides of 75 to 100 miles. **Contact
info@pactour.com for more information.**

Southern Transcontinental San Diego, CA to Tybee Island, GA

**Arrive: San Diego, CA Saturday, September 9th
Fly home Saturday, October 7
27 riding days 2,876 miles 107 miles per day**

We start the tour riding 77 miles to the tourist town of
Julian, CA. in the Vulcan Mountains. Our next three days
cross the desert are planned with 85-110 miles distances
that include plenty of ice and support.

The days climbing the mountains of Arizona offer some of
the best scenery and challenging riding of the tour. The
climbs up Yarnell Hill and Mingus Mountain are both
memorable accomplishments. We will include plenty of local
history across New Mexico and riding on old sections of
Route 66 in Texas and Oklahoma.

We stay at several upscale resort hotels including the La
Posada Harvey House in Williams, AZ and the Talimena
Lodge in Arkansas. Each day offers new and different
terrain as we cross the country. This tour is a good
highlight for your cycling season while riding from Coast to
Coast.

***PAC Tour, helping make good riders
better since 1981 www.pactour.com***

The Trouble with Winter

The season as we generally know it has slipped by, your bike has been maintained and everything fits and runs as it should. Your fitness is at its peak and you feel like you could ride endlessly. There is only one thing that is getting in the way: the season.



No longer are the days long and sunny, the roads clear and dry, and the calendar a feast of events to choose from. To be sure, there are some scheduled events, and of course there is always the available list of permanents to choose from. But the daylight hours are fewer, and the weather and roads can be a gamble, or just downright unrideable. Anything is possible, but without doubt the routine changes when the sun heads south for the winter.

One way or another you will find a way to maintain your base level of fitness, but winter is good for other things, too. Goal setting for the coming season can be both enjoyable and fruitful. If you can get those “A” list events on your calendar in January

you have a much better chance of balancing other priorities with your randonneuring obsession. Tip here: post that calendar in plain view out in the garage next to the trainer, on the wall in your home office, or if you are really brave, on the refrigerator door. First of all, family and friends will know those dates and any potential conflicts may be resolved in advance. You will also have time to begin working on any riding friend(s) who so far has(have) successfully resisted randonneur infection.

Write down on your calendar in red the date of your club’s spring or early season populaire or dart, and start working on your friend(s) now. Remember, these events are designed to be inviting to new riders. These events are also the ‘gateway drug’ for those tottering on the fence of indecision. And even if they don’t tumble all the way down the rabbit hole, there is a better-than-even chance that these events will be more fun and more meaningful for you and memorable for your friends.

Speaking of group events, if you have not tried one of these yet, this year may be the perfect opportunity to undertake something entirely different than a 300 or 400 K brevet. The Flèche (or Dart) is the red-headed step-sister of randonneuring: similar but different from a regular brevet. If you thought that rules pertaining to brevets make interesting reading, you will find the rules for the Flèche more engrossing than the last Harry Potter novel. But more than that, once you have finished your event you will have a treasure trove of memories, some new special friends, and the makings of some great stories.

Stay busy through the winter finding your fitness in whatever way suits you, but take some time to look ahead. You will be back on your bike, riding randonneuring events before you know it, and there is no better way to assure that you are riding the events that best support your goals than to give some thought to the big picture now. 



New RUSA Members

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE	RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE	RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
11476	Singh, Prashant K	Fremont	CA	11498	Krull, Cory P	Bozeman	MT	11520	Weller, Steven	Flemington	NJ
11477	Young, Mary	Kansas City	MO	11499	Angotti, Robin L	Bothell	WA	11521	Anderson, Travis Lee	Seattle	WA
11478	Reinhart, John A	Olathe	KS	11500	Hazel, Jenny E	Seattle	WA	11522	Churchman, Sarah	Montgomery	AL
11479	Espina, Allan J	Odessa	TX	11501	Schmidt, Thomas G	Phoenix	AZ	11523	TeBockhorst, Earl Paul	Broomfield	CO
11480	Briscoe, Katie A	Midland	TX	11502	Tucker, Robert C	Jacksonville	FL	11524	Davidson, Fred	Glendale	AZ
11481	Lerner, Neal	Brookline	MA	11503	Hawley Jr, George L	Hendersonville	NC	11525	Lahaie, Mark L	Olympia	WA
11482	Raiyani, Sarju V	Columbia	SC	11504	Bowden, Laura J	South Boston	MA	11526	Rogers, Greg	Senoia	GA
11483	Goins, Gordon M	Renton	WA	11505	O'Connor, Patrick F	Washington	DC	11527	Budil, Patricia	Simsbury	CT
11484	Mittelstaedt, Ted	Maple Valley	WA	11506	Morris, Joseph	Oakland	CA	11528	Maurice, Dale R	Virginia Beach	VA
11485	Creech, Colin	McAlester	OK	11507	Malinski, Clement	Paris	LA	11529	LaCosta, Ricardo J.	Deland	FL
11486	Robbins, Steven L	Houston	TX	11508	LaFevers, Ben W	Anchorage	AK	11530	Streisguth, Steven	San Francisco	CA
11487	Miller, S. Ayanna	Coral Springs	FL	11509	Speed, R David	Mobile	AL	11531	McCarthy, Kevin P	Houston	TX
11488	King, Terry	Tacoma	WA	11510	Spence, Jeffrey	Denver	CO	11532	Paredes Jr, Jesse G	Odessa	TX
11489	Brown, David S	Parma	OH	11511	Collins, Roger E.	Redmond	OR	11533	Saxton, Shauna Joy	Odessa	TX
11490	Parson, Linda A	Miami	FL	11512	Saxton, Dan P	Odessa	TX	11534	Kimball, Elizabeth B	Waltham	MA
11491	Unassigned, X X	Philadelphia	PA	11513	Alvarez, Jorge	Coral Gables	FL	11535	Orzell, Daniel	Canton	CT
11492	Allen, Jared	Columbus	OH	11514	Grant, Jamie	Plantation	FL	11536	Hoffman, Jason	Jackson	MI
11493	Ungureanu, Georgeta	New York City	NY	11515	Pinkston, Paul Anthony	Belton	TX	11537	Skolnick, Jared	New York	NY
11494	Roginski, Krist D	Menlo Park	CA	11516	Younger, Brian A	Midland	TX	11538	Ederer, Matthias	New York	NY
11495	McGownd, Patrick	Anchorage	AK	11517	Van Horn, Ross A	Midland	TX	11539	Radke, Scott J	New York	NY
11496	Boernecke, Carl	Glen Burnie	MD	11518	Deasy, Sarah	Raleigh	NC	11540	Chopenko, Yevgeniy	Oakland Gardens	NY
11497	Colmenares, Paul A	Pembroke Pines	FL	11519	Ivory, Shaun	Woodinville	WA	11541	Rigby, Cliff	Fair Haven	NJ

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Chasing States II

BY TOM RUSSELL



Bobbe and I are back chasing states for RUSA's American Explorer award. As detailed in a previous article, last time we rode in many southern states. This time we intended to start in the Carolinas, and continue up the east coast all the way to Maine. On the way back home, we hoped to visit states in the upper Midwest.

We headed east out of California, along historic Route 66. North of Flagstaff, Arizona, Bobbe and I warmed up with John Ingle's populaire "Watchtower Overlook." Starting in Cameron, the route rises through the Painted Desert, and enters Grand Canyon National Park via the less frequented East Portal. The turnaround provides a dramatic overlook of the canyon (though you must pay entry into the park—a mile from the turnaround—for that breathtaking panorama). With rattlesnakes and coyotes to dodge on

the fast downhill, we asked ourselves why we were leaving this glorious open space for the east coast. But it turned out that we were not to be disappointed.

Three more days of driving found us in South Carolina. Mark Stone's "Greenville Watershed" took us through protected eastern forest in warm rain, with friendly people and quiet roads. From there we proceeded to Delaware, dipped our toes in the Atlantic Ocean and tried some fine local beer. We

Soon to be our route in Yardley, PA.

—PHOTO TOM RUSSELL

enjoyed an early morning spin down the coast via Gary Dean's "Rehoboth Romp," and then rode six permanent populaires in six different states on six consecutive days. Thank you to Nancy and Mike Myers of Kansas who shared information with us from their ride/drive vacation down the east coast last year.

Our permanista, Crista Borrás, has a permanent populaire composed of bike and canal paths from Virginia, through our nation's capital, and on into Maryland. We rode our bikes to the start at a Starbucks in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia, and then joined a surge of cycling commuters on National Bike to Work Day. After crossing a bridge over the Potomac River, we found ourselves deposited right in front of the Lincoln Memorial just in time for a quick photo before tour buses unloaded hundreds of tourists. We followed the bike and canal routes to a long greenbelt along Rock Creek. I confess to missing a couple of route transitions, and my one complaint was that I was so busy navigating that I didn't get to

***We came away with a new respect for
the wind and weather that randonneurs
encounter east of the Rockies.***

Heavy lifting in Newburyport, MA.

—PHOTO BOBBE FOLIART

see all the national landmarks that were there. However, the cue sheet and .tcx track for this ride were very detailed and all correct, and the route provided safe passage through a densely populated area that included Washington D.C. The fresh soup and beer at the Olney Ale House at the turnaround north of Bethesda were not to be missed. Kudos permanista!

We rode a more rural Crista ride out to Shepherdstown, West Virginia, then continued on to Christine Newman's "Capital City," which starts near historic Hopewell, New Jersey. After negotiating a detour, we walked our bikes across the Washington's Crossing Bridge over the Delaware River, and then turned onto leafy River Road to reach the opulent WaWa in Yardley, Pennsylvania. We were trying to get to another bridge to cross back over the Delaware River into Trenton, New Jersey, the state capital. Instead we were stopped by a running event with police roadblocks in our path. We didn't want to take the car detour so instead got on the red clay Delaware Canal tow path to reach the bridge crossing into Trenton. The ride takes cyclists through Trenton and then on



large suburban roads with bike lanes past Princeton University. Our route continued on a road that followed the Delaware River and Raritan Canal. Finally crossing the canal, we rode up Millstone River Rd and continued to loop back to the start in Hopewell, New Jersey. Christine's two pages of detailed instructions for a 107K ride kept us on safe by-ways.

After a nice warm day spent riding Jennifer Wise's "Pierce's Populaire

Permanent," we found ourselves in Newburyport, Massachusetts, for Greg Olmstead's "Coastal Cruise East," a flat ride along the water that would get us Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. We weren't too worried about the overcast skies in the morning because we had read a forecast for light rain with little accumulation. The start was at Plum Island Coffee. We drank some brew then set off in increasing rain to walk the bikes across the grated bridge north of town. We rode for the next 30 miles into a straight 10 to 20 miles per hour headwind along with driving rain, temperatures in the fifties, and rapidly pooling water on the road along the Massachusetts and New Hampshire coastline, to the Memorial Bridge in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. My advice is that if you reach the bridge but can't get on it, just dismount and carry your bike up the grass. Over the bridge was the turnaround in Kittery, Maine, where across from the post



Descending into the Painted Desert of Arizona.

—PHOTO TOM RUSSELL

office there was a nice store with an accurate receipt. We got there with eight minutes to spare. One good thing about the inclement weather was that there was little beach traffic, just guys with squat dump trucks working on shoring up the sea walls. The return was downwind with lighter rain. I took my feet out of the pedal clips to ride across one of the metal grate bridges, but still walked across the final bridge back into Newburyport, Massachusetts, where a side ramp let us onto the grounds of the harbor and back to the coffee shop. We dried off and warmed up with some hot lattes.

Now heading west, we circum-navigated the point where Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio touch, in Scott Eliot's "Tripoint 22." This is Amish country, and that night we stayed at a motel in Shipshewana, Indiana. There

was steady clip-clopping horse and buggy traffic on the wide shouldered highway by our motel. Also in the side lanes were bicyclists. Many were Amish women in full skirts and cloth caps riding cruiser bikes with high handle-bars, big seats, some gearing and no helmets. Some riders pedaled custom trikes made to carry tool boxes and packages. We gained back any potential lost calories from our ride with a huge buffet dinner at the large Amish restaurant in town.

Bypassing Chicago, we headed for Madison, Wisconsin and rode Robert Booth's "Fall River" populaire on a windy day. The Sassy Cow Creamery made it worth the effort.

A ripping tailwind got us to the finish of Greg Olmstead's "Wheaton Wamble"—through North and South Dakota, plus Minnesota—in time to

join the locals for the town's Memorial Day lunch. The volunteers made sure that we knew where the dessert table was. All in all, it was an enjoyable and productive trip. There is nothing more pleasant than traveling at the speed of a bike to see and experience the country.

We were gone for three weeks but time passed quickly. We had lots of threatening weather, but only three actual rain days, and we missed the early season hurricane in the Carolinas. Certainly we came away with a new respect for the wind and weather that randonneurs encounter east of the Rockies. Our 11 permanent populaires netted 19 new states for me and 23 for Bobbe, bringing my total to 49 and Bobbe's to 42. Ken Knutson tells me there are really 54 out there if you go for all the territories so there might be more stories to come. 

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From Seven to Seven Hundred, With Thanks

BY MELISSA HALL

After reading a recent blog post I wrote about a solo century, a friend asked me how I ride so far. A legitimate question and one I appreciate over the quick assumption of many that I am being blatantly untruthful or at least exaggerating. I still remember my first bicycle ride. Being the baby of the family, I got my sister's used bike. There were no gears and I could not reach the pedals, so they attached blocks of wood to the pedals. My three older brothers took me to the top of the hill on our street. Purposefully or not purposefully, they neglected to explain the mechanics of braking so while I somehow managed to remain upright until I was in front of our house, I did not know how to stop so as not to fly into the woods at the end of our street. Needless to say, the curb took care of that, and the last thing I remember was flying over the handlebars and into the air. I don't remember landing: I just remember that feeling of helplessness when you know you are going to crash and there is nothing you can do to prevent it. Despite that, I was hooked, at least until every other kid on the street had a banana seat bike, and I did not, and then adolescence knocked on my door.

My husband bought me my next bike because he worried that I was running too much. I thought he was crazy for while because running was my passion. Still, I did not want to hurt his feelings, so I began to ride. The feeling of freedom and independence, vaguely recalled from youth, began to renew itself. I remember going out and riding for seven miles telling myself that I could walk if it was too far and almost falling over as I regained a sense of how to balance. When I made it

those seven miles, I felt as if I had conquered the world. More importantly, something inside me was kindled; how far could I go?

I first heard about brevets from Jim Moore, Steve Royse, Bill Pustow, and Steve Rice after I joined the Louisville Bicycle Club. They told me about Johnny Bertrand and his series of distance rides in Kentucky each year, and about PBP and BMB. They talked of riding through the night in all weather with all types of people and using lights on your bicycle. It all sounded crazy, yet 200K didn't sound that much further than the century rides that I was completing by then, so when Jim asked if I wanted to do a 200K while we were at Texas Hell Week, I said yes.

I rode with Jim that entire brevet and with the others for part of the way. Frankly, I don't know if I would have had the courage to begin that journey without him. I remember the long, arduous climb over the mountain from Vanderpohl to Utopia and how it seemed an impossible task, particularly once I learned we had to return back over the same climbs. I remember making Jim stop so I could free a goat whose horns had gotten stuck in the wire fence. I remember having a flat and watching as my companions' lights faded leaving me in total darkness in the middle of a strange land filled with noises that I could not identify. Just as I accepted that the darkness would not hurt me and that somehow I would change my tire and find my way, they returned. And I remember finishing, riding into Fredericksburg glued to Jim's wheel, my butt feeling like I had gotten the whipping of a lifetime, and thinking that I would never do something quite this crazy ever



Melissa Hall

—PHOTO LAURENCE PREBLE

again. Mostly, however, I remember being proud and feeling as if I had accomplished a miracle.

And perhaps that is what randonneuring does for us. It gives us a sense of pride and accomplishment. It allows us to use our bodies as they were certainly intended to be used. We train for our goal, minimizing the distance and the difficulties in our minds, readying our bodies by putting in the miles, riding in weather not conducive to riding, teaching our minds to ignore our doubts, our fears, and our fatigue. We learn from both our failures and our successes.

Someday I will no longer do brevets, but I will never forget what they have taught me, about myself and about others. Thank you to all who have mentored, aided, and steered my determination, and have celebrated my successes with me and commiserated with me on my failures. You have enriched my life immeasurably. 🚲

Cascade 1200—A Washington State of Mind

This past June I had the good fortune to be one of the eighty-five riders who were treated to a bicycle tour of Washington State. The Cascade 1200 proved to be an extremely well-organized adventure along a spectacular route. It was supported by an extraordinary group of volunteers who kept us fed and watered and who made the challenging route fun.

My friend Paul had talked me into attempting this ride and we planned to stay together throughout the brevet. We readied our bikes and downed plates of Mexican food before the 10 p.m. start. The day had been sunny and warm but as the sun set the clouds rolled in and it was drizzling slightly by the time seventy-three evening starters pedaled out into the cool Washington night. We rode along in the pleasant night air, chatting and enjoying the mild terrain, arriving at Conway to find quite the queue of riders and locals all hoping in vain to quickly purchase their goodies and vacate the premises. We were among the last folks to arrive so a good bit of time passed and when we headed out the door we found a light rain had started. We dried off, loaded up and departed, only to have the rain become quite a bit heavier within a quarter of a mile. We pulled into the next gas station, unpacked our stuff and donned our rain gear. Although I had been informed that it only drizzles in Washington, I was unwilling to risk getting drenched thirty-three miles into a several-hundred mile day.

At mile thirty-nine, guided by a lone volunteer waving a bright light, we turned onto the Centennial Bike Trail, which would take us all the way to the Snohomish Bakery, our next control

thirty miles south. The trail crosses several roads and at some point near Marysville, we saw bright lights in the distance. I couldn't distinguish what they were until we got close enough to see that my brother Pete, his wife Jenny and my nephew Mike had come out, at 2:30 in the morning, to cheer us on with sparklers, bells and a "NJ RANDO RULES" sign. How great was that? Our own cheering section 3000 miles from home in the middle of a drizzly, pitch-black night. After taking a few photos we proceeded to the bakery and the delicious pastries and coffee the volunteers had scored for us in the pre-dawn hours. It was "drizzling" quite a bit now, and we had to huddle under the umbrellas to keep from getting wetter, but the sweets revived me and we remounted to pedal to the next control a mere fifteen miles away.

We arrived in Woodinville just as the sun was starting to illuminate the clouds. I headed inside to get coffee and whatever I could find to accompany it while Paul mixed up his liquid diet. We spent about five minutes at this control and then were once again back on the bikes and heading to the Sammamish River bike trail where we would spend the next fifteen miles traveling alongside rivers and past

lakes, over gorges and through pine forests. We pedaled through a landscape that was quite different from our usual routes in New Jersey, enjoying weather that was intermittently sunny and cloudy and rainy and cool enough to require that we remain in our long pants and arm warmers.

We reached the Elbe control and removed another layer of clothing as it was getting positively hot and we had the major climbing of the day to tackle before the overnight control in Packwood. We reached the base of the first significant climb when the drizzle started again. We stopped to put on our rain gear, which we regretted ten minutes later when the sun returned to make the climb unbearably steamy, so we stopped once again to remove our rain gear. This game of weather bait and switch continued for a while until the drizzle finally turned into a genuine downpour with rain and wind so ferocious we couldn't see and had to apply our brakes for the entire white-knuckle descent. We arrived at Packwood soaked to the skin.

It was just about dusk and it would have been wonderful to sit in front of the fire, dry out and chow down, but there were miles ahead of us before we could rest—sixty-two hilly, challenging miles—but at least the rain had stopped. This section took a little over five hours and we rolled back into Packwood at 12:40 a.m. where the tireless volunteers fixed us plates of food and gave us our room assignments.

I was able to sleep for about an hour and a half before rising at 4 a.m. to eat a large breakfast, blow-dry my

The morning was foggy, but as we climbed the sun gradually erased the haze and the mountains appeared.

Paul pulls into the wind..again.

—PHOTO CHRIS NEWMAN

still-wet shoes and head out into a glorious, cool morning, ready to tackle White Pass, the first extended climb of the ride. The morning was foggy, but as we climbed the sun gradually erased the haze and the mountains appeared. I knew we had twenty miles of gradual climbing to the summit so I settled on a steady pace and distracted myself with the gorgeous panorama. At some point, I looked behind me and there in full view was Mt. Rainer. It was breathtaking and I stopped to appreciate the grandeur and take photos.

We made it to the top and then to the bottom and then around a lake that was an indescribable shade of green. We eventually turned right and pedaled between a tumbling river and roadway filled with pick-up trucks, where the scenery changed dramatically from Pacific Northwest to Desert Southwest, or at least that's how it seemed. Remarkable mountain vistas populated by snow-capped peaks and evergreens gave way to stark brown cliffs and scrubby sage-colored brush. We crossed a highway and were treated to miles upon miles of orchards populated with fruit trees of every variety. We caught a few fellow riders who had some navigation challenges and together we reached the Yakima control where we luxuriated in the McDonald's air conditioning and I stuffed myself with massive amounts of fast food calories which would fuel me for the next one-hundred kilometers.

We enjoyed a few more miles of bike trail with Mt. Ranier visible far in the distance before turning left into a head wind that would be our constant companion for the next forty miles. There was not much to look at besides a whole lot of brown hills and a few farms, and the day had heated up so much that we were wishing for a little



of that Washington drizzle. Salvation of sorts came in the form of roadside angels staffing a much-needed rest stop replete with cold beverages and good will.

We were passed by several groups of riders including the ever-speedy duo of Sara and Kris and finally managed to reach the Mattawa control near dusk. We were treated to freshly prepared Chicken Lo Mein that was an indescribable treat after a day of fast food eaten quickly. We rode the next section to the Potholes control along a river and up some hills, stopping briefly to take a ditch nap on a sidewalk since I don't do ditches, and then it was on to the overnight control in Moses Lake where we arrived a bit before dawn. We slept for three glorious hours, awaking just past sunrise to start the eat, ride, sleep progression of day three.

One of Paul's contributions to our team efforts is providing up-to-date and usually accurate weather reports for the day. His dad was a meteorologist and an interest in weather seems to have rubbed off on Paul. His track

record is much better than the evening news forecast, so as we headed out and he told me that the prediction for the day was hot and dry with minimal wind and a sunny, cloudless sky. I had no reason to doubt him. We needed to make up time since we had only an hour in the bank and I knew if I didn't sleep at the next overnight control my ride would be toast. The morning's route was relatively flat, cutting through wheat fields that stretched to the horizon. The mild terrain would give us a chance to recover and increase our average speed before tackling two mountain passes later in the day. As I was making all these mental calculations we crested a small incline and were met full force with a brutal head wind. No worries, I thought, just a little gust. That kind of mental gymnastic is hard to maintain indefinitely so after about two miles into an impressive headwind Paul turned to me and said, "You know this is ridiculous, right?" The correct response might have been, "Could you be more specific? Do you mean the



NJ fans proving that Randonneuring is a spectator sport!

—PHOTO CHRIS NEWMAN

wind or the fact that we are voluntarily pedaling 1300 kilometers?” but I was pretty sure he meant the wind so we conceived a plan to trade off pulls with each of us taking a mile at a time at the front for the next eighteen miles. I passed the next two hours listening to music, counting the endless telephone poles that marked our progression and engaging in ever more desperate rando math. This was the section where we needed to fly, but we were averaging around ten miles per hour. We had two mountain passes to tackle before the day ended and I was starting to appreciate that there was a serious possibility we would run out of time. When I repeatedly couldn't make the math work in my favor I determined that I would finish the ride on my own, no sag wagon, and I would make the best of such a spectacular route. We finally turned and experienced a bit of relief and even a slight tail wind. We made a quick stop at a market where I inhaled some deep fried goodness and Paul macgyvered his increasingly uncomfortable saddle with arm warmers, a plastic bag and duct tape. We were headed to Dry Falls, a short

distance away, and we made reasonable time now that the wind was no longer a factor.

Dry Falls, a three-mile long cliff where water flowed over falls five times the size of Niagara during the last ice age, was not your typical control setting. The parking lot overlooked the falls and the view more than compensated for the morning of wind and heat. I ordered up a killer sausage and pepper sandwich from a food truck and we luxuriated in the shade as we prepared for the next segment, a straight flat shot to Grand Coulee Dam, thirty-two miles northeast. We lingered for an hour or so which rejuvenated us and all-too-quickly it

was time to head back into the midday heat. I found the route to Grand Coulee quite beautiful in a desolate way as we pedaled through the austere beige desert with the massive Banks Lake to the west as our constant glistening companion; on a different day, on a different trip, I could imagine myself relaxing on one of the many sailboats which dotted the lake. But today the heat and lack of shade or shelter made this relatively flat section quite challenging both physically and mentally.

We arrived at the Grand Coulee control, mile eighty-one of an almost double century day around 3 p.m. and Paul decided he was too wrecked from the lack of sleep and the heat and wind of the last section to continue, so he DNFed. It had been a very demanding morning and the challenging section was still to come, so he rightfully concluded it would not be safe or prudent to continue. I left Paul to nap and recover, and headed out by myself toward the first of the day's major ascents.

The dam came quite quickly and after taking the obligatory photo I turned left and began the long climb to Disautel Pass. The road was a bit busier than I had expected but the cars soon dissipated and I was able to settle into a reasonable pace as I pedaled through the austere landscape. I reached the

I was mighty crabby and badly sleep-deprived, but even in such a foul mood I could appreciate the beauty of the Cascades.

summit a short while before dusk then headed down and up and down to the Omak control which I reached in the dark. I had been riding by myself for quite a while so I was a bit surprised to be greeted by a group of riders who were resting and stocking up on food and water in anticipation of the effort ahead. I was expecting a long night so I didn't hang around and soon found myself climbing, climbing, climbing through a deep black night with only a slice of road visible in my headlight beam. Other headlights began to materialize behind me and then taillights in front of me as we all silently advanced to the pass, the full moon the only witness to our efforts. Once again we were surprised along the way by volunteers who had erected a roadside café complete with hot and cold drinks and food that would fuel the remainder of our ascent.

I reached the summit of Loup Loup pass around 1:30 a.m, dropped my glasses on the screaming descent, walked back up to (successfully) find them, fell in with a group of riders led by the always-smiling and ever-speedy Jeff Newberry from Texas who thankfully led us uneventfully through a series of turns and the lengthy section along the Methow River which eventually brought us to the final overnight control. We were a few miles out when I realized the sun was coming up; I had started this segment a few hours after yesterday's sunrise and I was still on my bike. The thought was overwhelming; all I wanted was to get off the bike and climb into bed.

The Mazama control was hopping with riders who were waking up, eating breakfast and preparing for the final day's ride. It was noisy and hectic and no place for someone who desperately needed a few hours of sleep. Sara, who had also recently arrived, and I were assigned to a room right next to the luggage drop and the check-in table. In spite of ear plugs, eye shades and our most determined effort, neither one of us could sleep and so we stumbled

out of bed an hour and a half later. I was mighty crabby and badly sleep-deprived, but even in such a foul mood I could appreciate the beauty of the Cascades and how lucky I was to be riding next to streams and Evergreen forests and snow banks toward the white-capped mountains of Washington and Rainy Passes. By the time I hit the summit several hours later, I was in a much better place both physically and mentally. The remainder of the route was downhill and flat and I would be riding with Paul, who was back on course and riding the final day as a 200K permanent.

At midday, Paul and I stopped at a general store where we met a few SIR folks who were also replenishing their supplies after a hard morning and then we pedaled the thirty miles to Concrete, WA, and the penultimate control. I was pretty wiped out at that point; the day had become quite hot which worsened my fatigue exponentially. We took shelter in Cascade Burgers, a 1950's

style burger joint where I wolfed down a burger and a shake and napped in a booth for twenty minutes while listening to oldies from the jukebox.

With only a few dozen miles to go we pedaled along in the late afternoon on wonderfully shaded country roads. Clouds were moving in and I was sure we would finish the ride in the rain, just as it had started almost four days ago. No storm materialized as we reached the Best Western and the cheering volunteers who greeted us with pizza and beer and huge smiles for a job well done.

This edition of the Cascade 1200 proved to be a beautiful, challenging, hilly adventure. I cannot say enough about how incredibly well-planned this ride was, from the very cool official t-shirt, the unique brevet card and thoughtful route and overnight controls to the selfless, generous, upbeat volunteers who always had our backs. This is a ride to add to your bucket list. 🚲

Attention Members

The RUSA newsletter is mailed via third class mail to the address on file of all current members. It is critical that you inform the membership office of any change of address, so that your newsletter will reach you in a timely fashion.

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**...and to renew your
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There once was a biker named Willie... Or Limericks from Limerick, PA.

BY BILL OLSEN

lim·er·ick (/ˈlim(ə)rik/) – noun: limerick;
plural noun: limericks – a humorous, frequently
bawdy, verse of three long and two short lines
rhyming aabba, popularized by Edward Lear.

The events of the Eastern Pennsylvania SR series have traditionally all started from the Weisel Youth Hostel located in Nockamixon State Park.

For the PA600K, one sets out from the hostel, heading north for the first day's 400K, following a route that crosses over the Appalachian Trail at Little Gap, then goes up the Allegheny Front through Promised Land and on to Hawley and along the scenic Lack-

awaxen River. At the confluence with the Delaware River, the riders cross the river at the historic Roebling Aqueduct (originally a bridge for the barge canal across the Delaware) and then back along the Delaware to the Hostel via Hawks Nest, the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and finally crossing back over the Delaware at the Riegelsville Roebling bridge. This last section back to the hostel in the wee



Weisel Youth Hostel
Overnight and Start/Finish.

— PHOTO DIANE GOODWIN

hours of the night traverses roads with names such as Gallows Hill and Buckwampum.

The second day is a 200K segment passing through Limerick, PA, crossing the Schuylkill River for a loop through Amish country near Lancaster and then back to the hostel.

In order to allow riders to get sufficient rest at the overnight hostel control, RBA Tom Rosenbauer set up the second day's first control as an untimed post card drop at the Limerick Post Office.

Providing sleep-deprived, creative randonneurs with a blank post card to be mailed at a control named Limerick has inspired interesting results. Initially only a couple of riders wrote limericks

Limerick Post Office, The post cards are deposited into this mailbox.

— PHOTO CJ ARAYATA



View from Hawk's Nest, Day 1.

—PHOTO GREG KEENAN



on their post cards, but eventually word spread among riders and it has become a tradition to add to the collection which Tom posts on the PA Randonneurs website.

In comparing notes, riders agree that those composed and recorded on the first day's route are generally more subdued than those created on the climb up to the hostel, or early on the second morning.

Here is a sampling of riders' creative efforts.

*There once was a wise Randonneur
For whom wool was just de rigeuer
No synthetic skins
Could e'er touch his limbs
And t'was Merino he especially preferred.*

—**Joe Phillip**

*Let's raise a rousing cheer
For the end is drawing near
I most sincerely must say
600k is a mighty long way
And I sure could use a cold beer.*

—**Tom Oswald**

*Really bad heat and humidity.
A rainstorm with no visibility.
Pulled off at that juncture
with a front tire puncture.
This 600 just proves my stupidity.*

—**Dan Aaron**

*There once was bike ride to Limerick, PA
Getting there would take all day
we started at night
saw many a sight
Just to mail a card we carried the
whole way.*

—**Nigel Greene**

*There once was an old man from Reading
who liked to ride his Masi
He rode all day
He rode all night
Until he didn't know which way he
was heading.*

—**Gavin Biebuyck**

*There once was a sad clown from
Morristown
He would often pedal around town
He would huff
and he would puff
Finally, all the pedaling would take
away the frown...*

—**David Eisenberg**

*There once was a man from New York
Who set out to cycle a 600k, oh what
a dork!*

*He thought it's not possible
But when he got to the hostel
He said see I'm all done, just stick
in a fork ...*

—**Robin Landis**

*Fixed gear brevets are easy
Except when my stomach gets queasy
Or the sun gets to hot
Or the hills go up a lot
It all doesn't make any sense now, up
ahead I think I see a dwarf called sneezy ...*

—**Paul Scearce**

*There once was a Randonneuse
who imagined herself a chanteuse
When she became sore in the saddle
She sang a song as she pedaled
Be gone, you pain on my caboose! ...*

—**Grace Pineda**

*Our RBA, Tom Rosenbauer
Had us riding for hour after hour
We had many thrills
Going up and down hills
And because of all that, we finished the
ride a little bit narrower ...*

—**Len Zawodniak**

*The cyclist his weary way wends
Then a postcard he dutifully sends
Sure his body he's taxin'
Just observe the lack-o'-wax-in
The candle he's burnt at both ends!*

—**Mordecai Silver**

*There once was a biker named Willie
Who did not want a limerick too silly
But his mind was fried
from too much of a ride
and the limerick ended up willy-nilly.*

—**Bill Olsen** 🚲

A Sonnet to The Headwind

BY JAN PETER DEMBINSKI

*O my buffeting one, this breezy strength
Is doing me no good. Can you not see
I labor? How I am riding slowly
Along this randonnée's serious length?
How I am struggling with a waning faith
That I can finish this twelve-hundred K?
Sovereign, is there really no other way
To test me? Can I not somehow work with
You? I am tired. Can you not just turn, turn—
Release me from your elemental force?
How can I succeed? Can I stay the course?
Prevailing fatigue. How my muscles burn!*

*“Ambitious randonneur, do not glory
In your strength. This is our Cascades story.”*

Composed with Bill Fischer (RUSA #4702) while riding up Washington Pass on the last day of the 2016 Cascade 1200K.

Editor's note: I asked Jan if he would be willing to write a short explanation about the composing of the poem. What follows is his story.

Bill Fischer and I were headed up Loop Loop Pass in the evening of the third day of the brevet, and I was tired and dreading the rest of the climb. Making slow progress up the mountain, I asked Bill if he would like to hear a poem or two, more for my sake than his. Reciting poems aloud is something I do on long brevets when riding alone and to distract myself from whatever painful state my body is in. Bill said,

“Go ahead,” and I started sharing some poems of Keats, and some of my own as well. We talked about the structure of a sonnet as Bill recalled bits of what he had learned in high school, remembering the one English class he had enjoyed.

On the fourth and last day of the Cascades, a familiar headwind greeted us as we turned northeast to begin the climb up Washington Pass. We had had very strong headwinds during the morning of the third day and, basically, we had had headwinds from the get-go. So with our familiar friend in our face yet again, Bill turned to me and joked,

“The next poem you write should be Ode to a Headwind.”

Yeah, sure, I thought to myself. One long complaint. Then I thought, Well, I'd have to give the wind a chance to respond. I continued thinking about Bill's suggestion and realized it could make for an interesting sonnet.

I told Bill he had planted an idea in my mind and maybe I'd give it a shot. After I thought of an opening, we started discussing how to address the headwind in general, and then moved on to making the first complaint. When we had the first couple of lines worked out, Bill took out his smart phone and told me to record into it. Then we worked on the next series of complaints and rhymes, and whenever we both liked a new line or two, Bill would record it.

While Bill and I were composing the poem, a solo Cascades rider rode up to us and slowly pedaled past, commenting, “So it's come to this—poetry?”

I found his wry remark motivating. Yep, it's come to this.

A sonnet is, of course, one of the most artificial forms of speech that exists, but it can capture and highlight the intense emotional aspect of human life. And riding the Cascade 1200K right then and there was an intense experience—in my book, at least. Anyways, we spent the good part of an hour coming up with rhymes and lines of ten syllables and recording them. At the end, I remember thinking the time for the wind to respond had arrived and almost immediately the rhymes of *glory* and *story* came to mind. The line “Do not glory in *your* strength, this is *our* story” suggested itself. Then it was just a matter of using enough syllables and suitable phrases to fill out the final couplet. All in all, it was a great way to



Bill Fischer on his way to summiting Washington Pass.

—PHOTO JAN DEMBINSKI

pass the time on the last climb of the Cascades. It's a good thing that the headwind that morning was relatively mild; otherwise, we wouldn't have had the time or energy to compose the poem.

When I got to the finish and after

checking in, the first thing I did was to find pen and paper to write down what Bill had recorded. Then I went to Susan Otcenas who was signing in riders and collecting the cards. I said, "You are not going to believe this."

She slowly raised her head and looked at me as if I was about to tell her I had lost my car keys somewhere in Packwood (the first sleep control) and would she please go find them. "Try me," she said with little enthusiasm.

I pulled out a copy of the poem and said, "Bill Fischer and I composed a poem while riding up Washington Pass. Here. You might like it."

She started reading and began to smile. She finished it and said, "That's wonderful. You've got to read it tomorrow at the banquet."

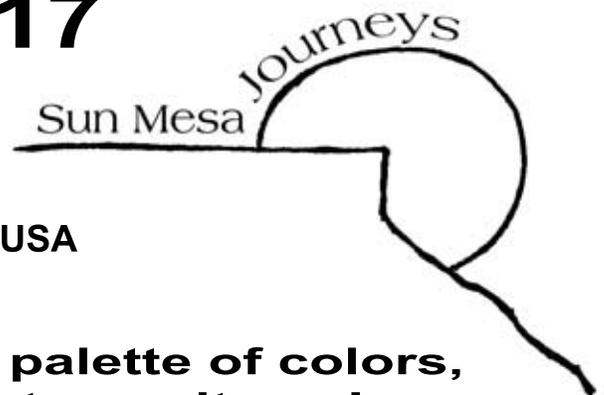
I told her I would and left feeling pretty pleased. At the same time I was drained of energy and everything felt a little unreal as I was in that exhausted and exhilarated state one is in after a grand brevet. 



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RUSA Member Profile

BY MARY GERSEMA

Theo Roff

Seattle International Randonneurs

This edition of RUSA Member Profiles turns to the Pacific Northwest for a conversation with Seattle-based randonneur Theo Roff. A randonneur since 2010, Theo talks about the appeal of the flèche, volunteering, and the ways randonneuring opens up the range of what we think possible.

Which club is your home club?

My home club is SIR: the Seattle International Randonneurs in Washington State.

How did you become involved in randonneuring?

I rode my first 200K and flèche in 2010 before traveling to India for the summer. I'd been riding and bike camping with some friends in Portland and one suggested that I should join him for a brevet. When he first

explained it, I have to admit that I thought it sounded terrible! But we did some longer rides together and as I got the hang of it, 200K started to sound like a good challenge. That spring I headed out to the start by light rail and met a few more riders on the train. Everyone was really nice and welcoming which continues to be my experience with randonneurs. Since I didn't have any experience with randonneuring, I started off way too fast and, after the first climb, dropped off the back of the group I'd joined. The rest of the ride was pretty tough—at one point, close to bonking, I ate a pack of shot blocks that someone had dropped on the road!—and I finished in an exhausted state, but felt quite accomplished. After saying my goodbyes, I rode the wrong way out of the parking lot and got about 10 miles down the road before I noticed. It was a long day... but I enjoyed it.

The ride that convinced me that I wanted to keep randonneuring was actually my second event: the 2010

Flèche Northwest. Because of work constraints, my team started off at 8 a.m. on Saturday, the last possible time slot. We rode out to Astoria, where we enjoyed an overly leisurely meal at the Ft. George Brewery. By the time we got back on the road and crossed the bridge into Washington, we were down on time and the weather began to turn. It ended up raining the entire night. At one point we were on a series of rolling hills in the rain, and the roads were covered in frogs. At the top of each hill, we came out of the rain and could see the starry skies before plunging back into the frogs and rain. Despite the seemingly endless rain and a sleepy night, I had fun. It was great to ride with my team through the night and to share the challenges. At 8 a.m. on Sunday, we rode into the finish where we were greeted by a few volunteers and our fatigue temporarily evaporated with excitement. However, by the time we sat down for the brunch banquet, we were all falling asleep in our seats!

There was a very enthusiastic fellow seated next to me who introduced himself as Don Boothby. Several times he asked if we wanted to ride back to Portland. He even offered to accompany us. That friendly, ready-to-go attitude made an impression and I knew that I wanted to keep at this randonneuring thing. Maybe I could even ride back to Portland after the flèche someday. And the next year, I did.



Another scenic 300K.

—PHOTO JEFF LOOMIS

My bike, freshly painted.

—PHOTO THEO ROFFE



How would you describe the terrain of the rides in your area?

We are fortunate in Washington State to have access to quite varied terrain. Close to Seattle we have hilly islands, a temperate rainforest, river valleys, the Cascades, the Olympic Mountains, Mount Rainier, and Mount St. Helens. Thanks to Puget Sound and the ocean, we have plenty of scenic shorelines to follow. On longer rides, or with a relatively short drive, one can reach the drier eastern half of the state, which is again quite varied, but features endless golden hills with plenty of sun and wind. If that weren't enough, the Amtrak Cascades train allows travel to Eugene, Oregon, with your bike on a hook in the baggage car. Between Seattle and Eugene, there are plenty of places to deboard and start riding without worrying about coming back to your parked car. This brings Mount Hood, the Columbia Gorge, Mount Jefferson, McKenzie Pass, the Willamette Valley, the Oregon Coast, and more into easy reach. Or you can just ride there on a 1000K. Randonneuring really increases the range of the possible!

For me, summer rides into the Cascade Mountains or along logging roads in Washington's forests are the highlight. But I really love it all.

You've also volunteered with and organized randonneuring events in your area. What do you like about volunteering?

Volunteering for brevets and rando events is hugely rewarding—and entirely necessary! Without volunteers, these rides wouldn't happen. Each region has its rockstar and repeat volunteers, but we should all chip in at least a little. Even if you're just helping with registration and preparation at a ride

start, signing cards at a secret control, or greeting and congratulating riders at the finish, that's great!

SIR has a strong culture of volunteering and there's always something you can do to get started. Put in some time helping in supporting roles and learning the process and you can eventually get to the point of organizing your own events from the ground up, developing your own routes, and sharing that with other riders in your club.

Volunteering is also a great way to get to know your fellow randonneurs. I find that as a rider, I only see people who ride somewhere near my pace. That might mean riding solo the entire time with everyone else ahead of or behind me! But as a volunteer, you get to see every rider on the brevet, regardless of pace. It's important to meet other people who also love this kind of riding and I've made a number of close friends this way.

What is your preferred bike for riding brevets (and a little bit about its setup)?

My preferred bike for riding brevets is my 2012 MAP semi-custom randonneur. It's a low-trail 650B bike with a steel frame, full fenders, generator lighting, and a handlebar bag. It looks like a bike from an earlier time which I appreciate for the sense of connection to the history of our sport, but the things that are most

important about it have nothing to do with appearance.

The low-trail thing is about how the bike handles with a front load—stable enough to ride with a light touch or hands-free, but responsive enough for challenging descents. I like having my food, clothes, and cue sheet in the handlebar bag because it's so much more accessible than a trunk bag or panniers.

650B gives me some nice options for wide tires which makes for more comfortable riding over a variety of surfaces. Chipseal, gravel, and bad pavement don't have a negative impact on my ride, which is good, because there are only so many miles of decent pavement out there.

Full fenders (with a long, generous rear mud flap!) are a must in the Pacific Northwest, but I've never regretted keeping them on in other places. I've been rained on, in the summer, in California, Colorado, and Kansas, for example, and keeping myself even a little bit dry makes the riding a lot more pleasant.

Generator lighting is probably the best thing you can do to a bike for randonneuring. It's wonderful to have reliable, high-quality lights at night or in low-visibility conditions, without worrying about batteries running out. I can't recommend this enough! And it doesn't matter what bike you're riding, it can be as different from mine as you like, it's important to see and be seen in the dark.



Highlight of the Cascade 1200K:
Washington Pass and the Early Winter Spires.

—PHOTO JAMES GREGORY WALSH

You use Instagram (randotheo) to post photos and updates of your rando rides. What do you like about sharing your rides on social media?

When I'm organizing a ride, I really appreciate the riders who share their progress. It helps me keep a picture in my mind of where everyone is on the course and determine when volunteers need to be at various controls, or if someone seems to be having trouble. Especially on longer rides, I worry a lot less when I know that people are still making progress on the route. And it's fun to follow ride progress in the same way it's fun to watch bike racing or other sports.

I post photos and updates of my rando rides in part to provide that bit of information and entertainment for organizers and rando-fans. I also feel like I'm swapping ride inspiration around the world. For instance, on Instagram, I follow cyclists in France, South Korea, Japan, and all over the United States. The pictures they post from rides are a great source of bucket list rides! Based on some of the comments they leave on my photos, I think the feeling is mutual.

What randonneuring ride/event would you recommend that others experience?

My favorite event is the *flèche*. It can be rough to pull an all-nighter, but I find the event to be deeply rewarding. On long rides, you get to know your riding companions pretty well, and with 24 hours (or more) together with your team, you can't help but talk about all kinds of things. Riding with a team of good friends is one of my favorite things. Often I don't want the *flèche* to end!

The gathering of teams at the finish is a lot of fun, too. We swap stories (and sometimes tall-tales) from our rides, laugh at our misfortune (bad weather, a rash of flats), and share the moments of beauty (a herd of elk, the kindness of a random person or another rider).

I strongly recommend a *flèche*. But I also recommend an unsupported ride of 600K or more. 1000K is a great distance. You might want to work up to this, but it's pretty cool to know that you can take care of yourself on a multi-day ride. And I mean carrying your own gear, no drop bags, and finding or bringing your own food and water. If you ride with a friend, sharing only enhances the experience.

What keeps you coming back to do brevets?

It's the randonneuring community that keeps me coming back. Without my riding friends (and I'm including all of you who I haven't yet met), I would get tired of brevets pretty quickly. Riding alone can be good sometimes, but I'm a pretty social person and sharing these rides is an important part of the experience.

Do you have a randonneuring mantra?

I don't have a randonneuring mantra of my own invention, but one that helps me out comes from Vinny Muoneke: "This too will pass." This is particularly true of the longer brevets. Are you feeling bad? This will pass. Are you feeling hungry? This will pass. Are you feeling good? Are you feeling tired? Are you hurting? Is this climb too long? Is it too hot, too cold, too wet, too dry? All of this will pass. There are certainly times when I need the reminder!

I've been lucky to have a number of randonneuring mentors from whom I learned valuable lessons. Maybe these lessons could be expressed as mantras; certainly they are things that I come back to again and again on rides. Have a plan when you go into a control and limit your time faffing about. Carry the tools you need to fix your bike, but also to fix other people's bikes: we can all use the help sometimes. Bring a spare tire (really). It's better to have too much food than not enough.

Looking outside of randonneuring, I'm partial to Kurt Vonnegut's phrase "If this isn't nice, I don't know what is." The next time you're having a great time on a brevet, say this aloud even if you're alone. 🚲



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American Randonneur CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

We welcome 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 James Poppy (jpoppy55@icloud.com) for details.

Submission deadlines:

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

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

The First 1200K Randonee in Portugal

BY PEDRO ALVES RUSA #7270

Alqueva Dam, in the heart of the Alentejo region.

— PHOTO RANDONNEURS PORTUGAL



The Portugal Além Tejo 1200K is a step forward after our successful 2012 & 2014 1000K brevets. Below is a taste of what will be included in the first edition of the Portugal Além Tejo 1200K in September 2017. The route crosses the Alentejo region, a land of wheat fields, cork oak forests, and whitewashed villages with an Atlantic Ocean view. It is a unique landscape of smooth and undulating hills, one of the main characteristics of the course, which was designed not to be hilly.

The start is in Lisbon, one of the oldest cities in the world, where the sun shines 290 days a year and the temperature rarely drops below 59 F. Be prepared for a warm ride and bring

your extra water bottle. Riders will depart Lisbon at 6:30 am and head south through Arrábida, South West Alentejo, and Vicentine Coast Natural Parks. This is a fine preserved stretch of coastline, and we will cycle on moderate to low traffic roads. The

route passes through small to medium-size villages where supplies will be easy to find, and English will do the job much of the time.

In the heart of the Alentejo, we pass through Cercal and Odeceixe Beach (randonneurs will want to

Evora, base camp for the loop, and its Roman temple.

— PHOTO RANDONNEURS PORTUGAL





Lisbon: at the start, just across from the Belem tower.

—PHOTO RANDONNEURS PORTUGAL

Menhirs near Alpalhao in northern Alentejo.

—PHOTO RANDONNEURS PORTUGAL

return to this spot) reaching Sagres, the southwestern most tip of our route. This is where Henry the Navigator devised his fifteenth-century maritime expeditions. Pedaling eastbound across the Algarve, the ancient Moorish region of sun, surf and sand, we reach Loulé at kilometer 384. This is the first staffed sleep control, where randonneurs get a well-deserved bed in a comfy hostel and their first drop bag.

Northbound, back in the Alentejo, we will soon be in Mértola with its fortified walls. Then we will encounter the plains of Serpa, Moura and Alqueva and their wheat fields, cork oak trees and whitewashed villages. Inside the fourteenth-century fortified walls, at Évora (classified by UNESCO as a world heritage site) randonneurs will find the second staffed sleep control at kilometer 688. Again, time for a bed and for the second drop bag.

The next segment, the Évora loop, covers 366 kilometers. First we will head north to Elvas and Castelo de Vide, with its dolmens and menhirs



along the route. Then we turn south along the Montargil dam and Arraiolos, famous for its hand-embroidered wool rugs, which are the inspiration for our unique event jersey. Returning to

Évora, the third staffed sleep control, one can take a power nap before heading off west to the finish in Lisbon.

Organized by Randonneurs Portugal, an enthusiastic and small community of volunteers that focuses on running events with a “small is beautiful” approach. Places are limited to 25 randonneurs. Entries will open on 1st January 2017. Updates available at: <http://www.randonneursportugal.pt/portugal-alem-tejo-1200k/>. The route may be previewed on our website. 🚲

The start is in Lisbon, one of the oldest cities in the world, where the sun shines 290 days a year and the temperature rarely drops below 59 F.

Permanents in Out-of-the-Way Places

BY GREG OLMSTEAD

The beauty of having a vast library of permanents is that you can find routes that take you through out-of-the-way towns and on rarely ridden roads. It may take a bit of time to get to some of these routes, but they are worth checking out. Here are two to consider.

Wheaton Wamble Hankinson, ND

Somehow I managed to convince Michele Brougher to do this ride with me. After landing in Minneapolis I picked her up and we drove four hours to the start town. The route generally travels north and south, and the prevailing winds pick up mid-morning,

heading north. So we decided to take a 6:00 am start the next morning while the winds were relatively mild. The ride leaves Hankinson, ND, a town of under a thousand people, and heads southeast to Wheaton, MN, a slightly larger town. The route takes you past small family farms, with small family cemetery plots every several miles

along the way. Along the ride you might see deer moving across the road from one field to another, and hawks soaring above. Closer to the turnaround point in Wheaton, the farms give way to a number of 'prairie potholes.' These are ponds as small as a large swimming pool, or as large as a football field. They dot the roadside for several miles and offer a stop for migratory waterfowl. The potholes host loons, herons, and ducks. Because the road is nearly empty of cars and trucks, it's easy to relax and take in the sights. As we got close to the turnaround point, the northerly winds picked up as we predicted. After a stop for a cookie and a visit to the local railroad museum, we headed back to Hankinson with the benefit of a strong tailwind. For the nearly six hours we were on the bike, I suspect we saw about only forty cars. The quiet roads made for an enjoyable ride.

Hotter than a Pepper Sprout Jackson, WY

The Grand Tetons are a geological aberration. They rise up immediately out of an otherwise flat meadow, and they look as close to the Alps as anything in the U.S. Leaving the town of Jackson, you join a dedicated bike/pedestrian path that parallels the highway, and are free from any concern about the many trucks and trailers on the highway. For twenty miles you are free to take in the sights of the Elk Refuge; elk and antelope might be

Traverse County Historical Society,
Wheaton, MN.

—PHOTO MICHELE BROUGHER





Prairie Potholes near border of SD and MN.
—PHOTO MICHELE BROUGHER

Jenny Lake Scenic Drive.
Riding along the Teton range (bottom).
—PHOTO GREG OLMSTEAD

grazing in the fields, and there may be moose sipping streamside. And for most of the ride the Tetons are right beside you. After you get to the first control at Jenny Lake, you leave the bike path and ride on a very wide shoulder to the turnaround point at Jackson Lake Lodge. During this part of the route, the road passes through a more densely forested stretch, which is a nice change of pace. This bit of road does not have a lot of traffic on it, and the traffic there is gives cyclists wide berth. This makes for a low-stress ride. On the return leg, you can take an optional detour for a scenic ride past Jenny Lake. You'll have a separate bike lane that passes by the lake shore, where you can see the lake through the pines and the mountains just beyond the lake. This might be the most beautiful route I've ridden. Well worth the effort it takes to get to Jackson. It's even better after Labor Day when the crowds thin considerably. 🚲



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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 an 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. Alternatively, you may fill out a candidate submission form and mail it to the address below by January 15.

THE PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS OF THE AWARD:

2001	Johnny Bertrand	2006	Bill Bryant	2011	Mike Dayton
2002	David Buzzee	2007	Robert Fry	2012	Crista Borrás
2003	Jennifer Wise	2008	Dan Driscoll	2013	John Lee Ellis
2004	James Kuehn	2009	Mark Thomas	2014	Lois Springsteen
2005	Daryn Dodge	2010	Don Hamilton	2015	Vincent Muoneke

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

RUSA Awards

Randonneur 5000 Award Recipients

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, 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 randonnée;
- 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. See the ACP rules for details.

The qualifying events must be completed within a four-year period, beginning on the date of the first qualifying event.

RUSA congratulates the recipients of this award.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
2016	Charles J Adams	Midland, TX
2016	Vadim Gritsus	Paramus, NJ
2016	Alan S. Johnson	Phoenix, AZ
2016	Deacon Matthew J Levy	Silvis, IL
2016	L John Mangin	Loveland, CO
2016	Thai Nguyen [2]	Bothell, WA
2016	Robert F Tulloh	Austin, TX

Coast-to-Coast Award

The Coast-to-Coast 1200km award is earned by RUSA members who have successfully completed four different Randonneurs Mondiaux 1200km-or-longer randonnées held in the United States.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
2016/08/25	Smith, Gregory H	Richland Center, WI

EVENTS: 2013 Endless Mountains 1240; 2014 Colorado High Country 1200; 2014 Natchez Trace 1500; 2016 Cascade 1200

Ultra R-12 Award

The Ultra R-12 Award recognizes the completion of 10 R-12s. There is no time limit; there may be gaps between any of the 12-month sequences that define each R-12.

It is likely that members will have applied previously for each of the ten component R-12 awards; however, it is not a requirement to have done so. A given month can only be used towards one Ultra R-12 award and one may earn only one Ultra R-12 award during a ten-year period. The applicant must be a RUSA member during each of the 120 months included in the ten 12-month periods.

RUSA congratulates the riders who earned and applied for the Ultra R-12 award.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
2016	George Winkert	Highland, MD
2016	W Thomas Reeder	Alexandria, VA

Ultra Randonneur Award

The Ultra Randonneur Award is for 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) that are used 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. Note that it is possible to earn more than one SR series per year, making it possible to earn this award in fewer than 10 seasons.

RUSA congratulates the riders who earned and applied for the Ultra Randonneur Award.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
2016/07/05	Sharon Stevens (F) [5]	Richardson, TX
2016/07/26	Dan Diehn	Black River Falls, WI
2016/08/11	Bryan Rierson	Garner, NC
2016/09/26	Yogy Namara	San Leandro, CA

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 200km or longer.
- Foreign ACP-sanctioned brevets and team events (flèches), Paris-Brest-Paris, and RM-sanctioned events of 1200km or longer, provided that these non-US events account for no more than 6 of the 12 counting months.
- RUSA permanents — a particular permanent route may be ridden more than once during the twelve-month period for R-12 credit.
- RUSA sanctioned Super Randonnée permanents.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
2016/06/30	Stephen D Haas [4]	Alameda, CA
2016/07/11	Ping Xiang (F) [3]	Hanover, MD
2016/07/20	David Danovsky	San Diego, CA
2016/07/26	Timothy Erickson [2]	Portland, OR
2016/07/26	Patrick Herlihy [3]	Redwood City, CA
2016/07/28	Mel Cutler [4]	Los Angeles, CA
2016/07/31	Andrea Symons (F) [5]	San Jose, CA
2016/08/02	Chris Nadovich [4]	Easton, PA
2016/08/02	Gregg A Seider	Boynton Beach, FL
2016/08/03	Alan Bell [8]	Seatac, WA
2016/08/07	George Winkert [10]	Highland, MD
2016/08/11	Patrick Gaffney	Philadelphia, PA
2016/08/14	Eric Senter [4]	Davis, CA
2016/08/14	Michal Young [5]	Eugene, OR
2016/08/18	Bob Torres [4]	Carlstadt, NJ
2016/08/19	Henry J Snavelly [2]	Centennial, CO
2016/08/22	Steven T Graves [9]	Gretna, LA
2016/08/22	Patrick A Horchoff [9]	River Ridge, LA
2016/08/26	Albert P Meerscheidt [3]	Renton, WA
2016/08/31	Christopher Heg [8]	Seattle, WA
2016/09/06	Ian Page Hands [6]	Raleigh, NC
2016/09/12	Scott D Gregory	Saint Paul, MN
2016/09/17	James R Haddad	Binghamton, NY
2016/09/17	Jeff Newberry [7]	Austin, TX
2016/09/19	Brian P Burke [4]	Cumming, GA
2016/09/22	Michael L Chalfant	San Francisco, CA
2016/09/23	Thomas McHenry [3]	Pasadena, CA
2016/09/23	Thomas McHenry [4]	Pasadena, CA
2016/09/25	W Thomas Reeder [10]	Alexandria, VA
2016/09/25	Paul K Smith [3]	Cooper City, FL

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
2016/07/11	Fischer, William	Elmira, NY
2016/07/13	Dusel, Peter W	Ontario, NY
2016/07/13	Ross, Roy M	Sunnyvale, CA
2016/07/20	Beckham, Jon E	San Francisco, CA
2016/07/24	Sexton, Robert B	San Jose, CA
2016/07/26	Herlihy, Patrick	Redwood City, CA
2016/07/31	Jones, Kris A.	Danville, CA
2016/08/09	Klaassen, Spencer	Saint Joseph, MO
2016/08/10	Smith, Lane	Sun City West, AZ
2016/08/13	Furnari, Theresa A	Baltimore, MD
2016/08/15	Roffe, Theodore	Seattle, WA
2016/08/17	McCarthy, Steven	St. Petersburg, FL
2016/08/17	Newberry, Jeff	Austin, TX
2016/08/24	Diehn, Dan	Black River Falls, WI
2016/08/24	Smith, Gregory H	Richland Center, WI
2016/08/31	Boltz, H Edward	Fulton, NY
2016/09/03	Walstad, Eric	San Francisco, CA
2016/09/25	Meridith, David L	Hartland, WI

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
2016/07/10	Jacob Anderson [4]	Virginia Beach, VA
2016/07/11	Michael Berry	San Diego, CA
2016/07/11	Patricia M Pinkston (F) [2]	Temple, TX
2016/07/13	Jacqueline S Shellow (F)	Hollywood, FL
2016/07/19	David Danovsky	San Diego, CA
2016/07/30	John R Fry	San Marcos, CA
2016/08/02	Alan R Blanchette [2]	North Brunswick, NJ
2016/08/08	Oswaldo Colavin	San Diego, CA
2016/08/08	Isabelle Telliez (F)	San Diego, CA
2016/08/12	Steven T Graves [5]	Gretna, LA
2016/08/12	Patrick A Horchoff [7]	River Ridge, LA
2016/08/15	Christine Newman (F) [5]	Skillman, NJ
2016/08/18	Bob Torres	Carlstadt, NJ
2016/08/25	Joshua Crixell [4]	Temple, TX
2016/08/26	Albert P Meerscheidt [3]	Renton, WA
2016/09/01	Byron E Morton	Raleigh, NC
2016/09/04	George Swain	West Park, NY
2016/09/06	Keith N Olsen [3]	San Diego, CA
2016/09/11	Jeff Sammons	Brentwood, TN
2016/09/15	Jeff A Greaves	Lacey, WA

American Randonneur Challenge

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
016/09/13	Eric Allen Williams	Silver Spring, MD
2016/09/18	Jeff Newberry	Austin, TX
2016/09/29	Doug Church	Riverside, CA

5 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
2016/07/09	Byron E Morton	Raleigh, NC
2016/07/17	Dan Diehn	Black River Falls, WI
2016/08/27	Massimiliano Poletto	San Francisco, CA
2016/08/28	Jeff Loomis	Seattle, WA
2016/09/10	Gintautas Budvytis	Castro Valley, CA

RUSA Awards

RUSA American Explorer Award

The American Explorer Award recognizes the achievements of RUSA members rambling across the United States. The award is earned by riding events that cover at least ten (10) different U.S. states and territories.

This is an ongoing achievement program that recognizes continued exploration of additional states and territories. The maximum achievable number of states and territories will depend on the availability of routes and the member's desire to explore.

Award criteria:

- Rides must be of the following types:
 - ACP brevets and flèches;
 - RUSA brevets, populaires, arrows and darts;
 - RUSA permanents and permanent populaires;
 - RUSA sanctioned Super Randonnée permanents;
 - 1200km events held in the United States after 1998.
- Routes must pass through or be contained within any of the 50 states of the United States, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories (Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, ...). Each state or territory through which the ride passes is counted and multiple states/territories can be achieved on a single ride.
- There is no time limit to earn this award.
- Only RUSA members may apply and each qualifying ride must be completed while an active member of RUSA.

Recognition

- A minimum of ten states or territories must be completed to receive initial recognition.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
2016/07/12	Coe, Mathieu	Roxbury, MA
2016/07/12	Kassen, Jake	Medford, MA
2016/07/17	Greene, Daniel	Nashua, NH
2016/07/17	Xiang, Ping	Hanover, MD
2016/07/19	Dembinski, Jan P	Woodstock, VT
2016/07/22	Boltz, H Edward	Fulton, NY
2016/07/24	Huber, Kerin	Pasadena, CA
2016/07/30	Brougher, Michele S	St Louis Park, MN
2016/08/01	Alexander, Ron	Overland Park, KS
2016/08/01	Wali, Michael C	Mount Airy, MD
2016/08/02	Taylor, Scott A	Austin, TX
2016/08/11	Wallace, Mike	Iowa City, IA
2016/08/18	Driscoll, Dan	Arlington, TX
2016/08/22	Jackson, David	Elgin, OK
2016/08/24	Olmstead, Greg	San Diego, CA
2016/08/24	Smith, Gregory H	Richland Center, WI
2016/08/29	Shopland, Ian	Olympia, WA
2016/08/29	Stoychev, Georgi Emilov	Greenbelt, MD
2016/09/06	Zenter, John	Hanover, MD
2016/09/12	Williams, Eric Allen	Silver Spring, MD
2016/09/17	Smith, Jack	Topeka, KS
2016/09/19	Greene, Nigel	Elkins Park, PA
2016/09/21	Ende, John Capn	Asheville, NC
2016/09/25	Knutson, Ken	Tracy, CA
2016/09/26	Olmstead, Greg	San Diego, CA
2016/09/26	Peskett, Roger	Tucson, AZ
2016/09/26	Thompson, W David	New Smyrna Beach, FL

AMERICAN RANDONNEUR

Randonneurs USA
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Lyon Station, PA 19536

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