

2023 American Randonneur Award

TIM SULLIVAN

BY BILL BRYANT

The RUSA Board of Directors is pleased to award the 2023 American Randonneur Award to Tim Sullivan, member #28. You can tell by his low RUSA number that Tim has been with us since our founding, and it is difficult to think of any person more deserving of this award than Tim.

Indeed, during the nomination period multiple people put his name forward, including a number of American Randonneur Award recipients and past RUSA Presidents and Board members.

Tim is a quiet fellow with self-effacing humor and is well-liked by all who know him. He is an accomplished randonneur too – he has earned the Ultra-Randonneur award twice, multiple R-12s, the RUSA Cup, the Mondial, R-5000, and has completed 15 1200k or longer Grand Randonnées. During each brevet, Tim provides encouragement to new riders and is a good role model for all of us on how to get through the toughest randonnées, all the while maintaining his wry sense of humor and good cheer. Similarly, his advice in the RUSA Handbook about how to be a successful randonneur with a busy work and family life has been especially valuable to new riders over the years.

But it is Tim's time off his bike that has earned him this award. He served on the RUSA Board of Directors from 2001-2007 and again 2020-2022, always bringing his best effort to help RUSA prosper and keep moving forward. He served as treasurer, secretary, vice-president, and RBA

Liaison – always willing to do whatever the president asked him to do. In more than a few instances, Tim was “Mr. Reliable” who was asked to fill in mid-year after the previous person resigned or there was a re-alignment of Board jobs. This usually meant more work for Tim, but he did each job well and without complaint.

Since our founding nearly 26 years ago, and before there was a Board of Directors for RUSA, Tim frequently gave us useful legal advice on all manner of things to help make RUSA into an effective, member-directed sporting organization. This was especially important as we formed our Constitution and Bylaws, and when we acquired liability insurance for RUSA and its RBAs. All of his work was pro-bono.

Tim has also been a longtime member of RUSA's Rules Committee, offering clear-thinking and sound advice about the wording of our regulations and how they apply to riders out on the road during our many types of events. Tim started the recent RUSA film project to help showcase our sport and hopefully garner us more members. He has also provided valuable legal work and advice pro-bono to several RUSA-affiliated clubs who wanted to incorporate their organizations.

—PHOTO TRISH SULLIVAN



Following the death of a rider at the hands of an errant driver during an event in Texas, Tim led RUSA's legal team during the subsequent lawsuit. The stakes were high, as were the legal costs; losing the case would have very likely ended Randonneurs USA, since we could not have paid for adequate legal representation without going broke. Undaunted and indefatigable, Tim worked skillfully with our paid attorneys in Texas for countless hours over many months; his work was all pro-bono and saved RUSA many, many thousands of dollars. His advice on hiring expert attorneys and supporting us during this challenging time was invaluable. It was a long and arduous legal action that was difficult for many on the Board, but Tim gave useful guidance and updates to steer us through the process and helped keep up our morale. In the end, we can all thank Tim for our eventual success in the case. One Board member wrote afterward, “The story of this lawsuit could fill a novel.” Happily for us, the story had a hero named Tim Sullivan. For these reasons, and more, President Dave Thompson said recently, “We cannot think of a more worthy candidate for the American Randonneur Award.” 🚲