

AMERICAN RANDONNEUR

Volume Twelve Issue #1

February 2009



Contents	Page
Welcome New Members	3
RUSA News	4
2008 American Randonneur Award	8
R-12 Round The World	9
Dr. C's Flèche Tips	10
K Hounds Redux	14
Ride Calendars	20-21
2009 RBAs	22-23
Ask Bill	24
A 'Permanent' Vacation	25
In The Blogs	26
Pony Express Rides Again	27
Big Basin 200K	30
Crossword Puzzle	32
Photo Gallery	33
RUSA Store	34
Membership Form	35

RUSA Executive Committee

President	Lois Springsteen
Vice-President	Mike Dayton
Treasurer	Eric Vigoren
Secretary	Edward Robinson
Board Member	Jennifer Wise
Board Member	Don Hamilton
RBA Liaison	John Lee Ellis
Brevet Coordinator	Mark Thomas
Medals & Awards Coordinator	John Lee Ellis
Membership Office	Don Hamilton
Newsletter Editor	Mike Dayton
Permanents Coordinator	Edward Robinson
Routes Coordinator	Scott Brittle
Rules Committee Chair	Edward Robinson
Souvenir Coordinator	Jennifer Wise
Team Randonnée Coordinator	Bill Bryant
Webmaster	Don Bennett

RANDONNEURS USA, INC.
IS A TAX-EXEMPT 501(C)(3)
NONPROFIT CORPORATION

American Randonneur is a publication of
Randonneurs USA Inc.
226 West Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Website: www.rusa.org
e-mail: lois_springsteen@prodigy.net
Phone: 831-227-6266
All rights reserved.©

Message from the President

As we begin another season of randonneuring, I am honored to have been chosen by my fellow board members to be the new President of Randonneurs USA. Amid the congratulatory notes floating about and the shuffling of volunteer positions within the organization, I'm reminded that it is the individual member who gives good health and purpose to randonneuring, whether it be as a participant out on the road, or as an RBA organizing events, or as a volunteer helping behind the scenes or at a checkpoint. When we work together, our sport will keep moving forward. We can draw inspiration from departing Board members, **Mark Thomas** (President) and **Susan France** (RBA Liaison). Fortunately, like most of the others who preceded them, they've agreed to stick around RUSA HQ as volunteers. Mark will be assuming Brevet Coordinator duties and Susan is heading the new Insurance and Liability Committee. We also give a warm welcome to stalwart volunteers **Edward Robinson** (Secretary) and **John Lee Ellis** (RBA Liaison) to our current slate of board members.



LOIS SPRINGSTEEN

Among the messages I have received since taking office, some have to do with finding ways to get new members. "Maybe we can get you to come to our next club meeting to get more riders to try randonneuring", "One thing that would make randonneuring better is recruiting more women and people of color", or "Where are the young riders?" they say. As much as having me or some other RUSA officer give outreach talks to various cycling clubs, all our members can do this on the local level, and I hope you will. Each and every one of us is an ambassador working on behalf of randonneuring, not just a select few. Make no mistake; those who give to others get much in return. Invite a friend to ride with you one day or share your experience and enthusiasm at your next bike club meeting by welcoming your clubmates to try our sport. Lead some training rides to help potential RUSA members build their stamina before they try their first brevet, or develop a new Permanent Route so you can introduce others to your favorite long-distance ride. On club rides try working a little harder to join that faster group, or simply slow down a little and enjoy the company of someone slightly slower that you've never spoken to before; all these riders are potential randonneurs and randonneuses. Or, if there are some new riders nervous about night riding, offer to accompany them during their first long ride in the dark.

Everyone who has ever volunteered to help someone else knows the joy of sharing our passion for randonneuring—have you? We could all take a lesson from 2008's American Randonneur Award recipient **Dan Driscoll**. Besides, riding with others during brevets is way more fun than riding alone. Whether fast and social, or slower and social, ours is a group sport with traditions of camaraderie over competition. For most of people, trying a new sport can be intimidating, but our experienced members

■Continued on page 4

RUSA Welcomes Its New Members!

#	Name	City	State/Country	#	Name	City	State/Country
5156	Jerry Baughn	Azle	TX	5214	Dave Buyens	Plant City	FL
5157	Douglas John Carlson	St Paul	MN	5215	Marcia Blaine	Asheville	NC
5158	Nat Beagley	Richland	WA	5216	Ken Emerson	San Jose	CA
5159	Michael Martinez	Denver	CO	5217	Clem Bartolai	Sierra Madre	CA
5160	Michael Gray	Bellevue	WA	5218	Richard R Philabaum	Phoenix	AZ
5161	Jose A Ortiz Noriega	Toa Baja	PR	5219	Ray Suziedelis	Falls Church	VA
5162	Daniel Rearden	Seattle	WA	5220	James G Ray	Knoxville	TN
5163	Pamela Creighton	Snoqualmie	WA	5221	Peter Nagel	Georgetown	TX
5164	Scott E Alumbaugh	Davis	CA	5222	Naoko Sato	Irvine	CA
5165	Ian Charleton	Norfolk	VA	5223	Paul Strom	Harrisburg	NC
5166	John C Coste	Swarthmore	PA	5224	Matthew Pendergast	North Bend	WA
5167	Stephen Snyder	Omaha	NE	5225	Marguerite Gray	Ft Worth	TX
5168	Joseph A Carbone	Mt. Sinai	NY	5226	David De Rose	Walnut Creek	CA
5169	Miles Stoneman	Marion	IL	5227	Steve Burns	Lee's Summit	MO
5170	David Auchard	San Jose	CA	5228	Randy Hardwick	Lexington	KY
5171	Nola Auchard	San Jose	CA	5229	Peter Swanson	El Cerrito	CA
5172	Jeff Thomsen	Bellaire	TX	5230	Alin Winters	Deerfield Beach	FL
5173	Jim Wholey	Saratoga	CA	5231	Kim Aldridge	Virginia Beach	VA
5174	Jon Monteith	Houston	TX	5232	Anthony J S Parsells	Melborne	FL
5175	David Simonson	San Diego	CA	5233	Chris B Quirey	Louisville	KY
5176	Amy Hansen	Houston	TX	5234	Grover Everett	Taylorville	IL
5177	Spyche Elijah Hawken	Dallas	TX	5235	Allan Duhm	Lakeland	FL
5178	Dwight L. Brown	Los Altos	CA	5236	Chris Frothinger	Petaluma	CA
5179	Avery Jenkins	Litchfield	CT	5237	Alaina Dussler	Burien	WA
5180	Gregory F Rahe	Merrimac	MA	5238	George C Moore	Arlington	VA
5181	Angel Garcia	Long Valley	NJ	5239	Karen Comer	University Place	WA
5182	Joshua Talley	Santa Monica	CA	5240	Mark A Dolginoff	Henderson	NV
5183	Michelle West	Santa Monica	CA	5241	Jaime J Gurrola	Oceanside	CA
5184	Duncan Watson	Kirkland	WA	5242	Ole Eichhorn	Westlake Village	CA
5185	Walt Ebbert	Fort Walton Beach	FL	5243	Rene Rodarte	Irvine	CA
5186	Clayton Scott	San Francisco	CA	5244	Craig Dearden	Cape Coral	FL
5187	Juan Salazar	Ithaca	NY	5245	Molly Cook	San Diego	CA
5188	Willard Goss	Sammamish	WA	5246	Allen Gencarelle	Orange City	FL
5189	Tom Peck	Toano	VA	5247	Kenneth Widmaier	Springfield	VA
5190	Vickie Backman	San Luis Obispo	CA	5248	Al Mallozzi	Bridgeport	CT
5191	John Christopher Hoy	Eagle Mountain	UT	5249	Frank Quan	Carlsbad	CA
5192	Robert Gilbuena	Montebello	CA	5250	Glenn Mounkes	Davis	CA
5193	Adria Gundersen	Wentachee	WA	5251	Mark Schoonover	Santee	CA
5194	James Schwappach	Petaluma	CA	5252	George Larson	Marquette	MI
5195	Craig Hablewitz	Fort Myers	FL	5253	Billy Coats	St Joseph	MO
5196	Dr. Jack Smith	Topeka	KS	5254	David C Draper	Canton	GA
5197	Brian Rosner	Tempe	AZ	5255	Bill Patterson	Los Angeles	CA
5198	Attila Trungel	Newark	NJ	5256	Nathan A Michael	Jacksonville	FL
5199	Dean M Johnson	Charlottesville	VA	5257	Jon Erickson	Forestville	CA
5200	Jae Honda	San Mateo	CA	5258	Jo Ann Erickson	Forestville	CA
5201	Stephanie McCreary	Creve Coeur	MO	5259	Bob Hartman	SanDiego	CA
5202	Joe Eisch	Silver Spring	MD	5260	Marty Levine	Palmer Lake	CA
5203	Christine Hastings	Double Oak	TX	5261	Cory Nigri	Phoenix	AZ
5204	Lori Dailey	Rincon	GA	5262	Betty Cook	Omaha	NE
5205	Leigh Dancy	Shrewsbury	MA	5263	Sandra Estes	Whitewright	TX
5206	Steve Green	Franklin	TN	5264	Gary Estes	Whitewright	TX
5207	Jordie Field	Lake Forest	IL	5265	Sabrina Jones	Westlake Village	CA
5208	Bill Byrnes	Palm Bay	FL	5266	Claire Lunardoni	Winchester	MA
5209	Jasen Dul	Redmond	WA	5267	Joe Hamer	Ridley Park	PA
5210	Quin Thompson	Fayetteville	AR	5268	Jim Thomson	Moorpark	CA
5211	Michael Blatcher	Collinsville	IL	5269	Deborah A Barton	College Station	TX
5212	Carl A Magruder	Washington	DC	5270	Dan Sauers	Sunnyvale	CA
5213	Lynda M Beaulieu	Cambridge	MA	5271	Ruby Wooldridge	Sugar Land	TX

■ Continued on next page

RUSA Welcomes Its New Members!

#	Name	City	State/Country	#	Name	City	State/Country
5272	Nestor Albances	Oxnard	CA	5295	Paul H Smith	Oakland	CA
5273	David V Bell	Pennsville	NJ	5296	Ian S Birk	Seattle	WA
5274	Gary Dean	Silver Spring	MD	5297	John Lauer	Elk Grove	CA
5275	Scott Cross	Ventura	CA	5298	Kenneth Ward	Kent	WA
5276	Ayuko Kobayashi	Menlo Park	CA	5299	Janet Bodine	Millersville	MD
5277	Chris Farmer	Glendale	CA	5300	Keith A Spangler	Mechanicsburg	PA
5278	John Bundin	Schaumburg	IL	5301	Jeffrey Lesperance	Silver Spring	MD
5280	Michael A Revelle	Jackson	TN	5302	John Marion	Irvine	CA
5281	Clinton Brian Smith	New Brunswick	NJ	5303	Mark S R Williams	Santa Fe	NM
5282	Bill Willis	Pasadena	MD	5304	Raymond L Smith Jr	Austin	TX
5283	George Andrews	Severna Park	MD	5305	Jonathan Halterman	Spring Hill	TN
5284	Dwayne Barton	Indianola	IA	5306	Sean Roberts	Seattle	WA
5285	Becky Berka	Dublin	CA	5307	Michael P Schara	Hayward	WI
5286	Todd Wobig	Corpus Christi	TX	5308	Keith Hearn	San Carlos	CA
5287	Mark Kaufman	Lancaster	PA	5309	Thomas E Benim	Goodlettsville	TN
5288	N. Keith Duncan	Foxboro	MA	5310	Brian D Leonhart	Cocoa	FL
5289	Bryan Meek	Yorba Linda	CA	5311	Mark Heady	Houston	TX
5290	John Pearch	Olympia	WA	5312	Russ Fairles	Berkeley	CA
5291	Greg Golly	Grapevine	TX	5313	Jeffrey Shultz	Severna Park	MD
5292	Tom White	Orange	CA	5314	Kevin Van Dyke	Forest Grove	OR
5293	Bruce Hinkley	Kerhonkson	NY	5315	Hans-Jorgen Binder	Hvidovre	Denmark
5294	Ed Garrison	Cordova	TN				

President's Message (continued)

can all be mentors to the new riders as they learn randonneuring. Often all the new rider needs to get started is for someone to extend the hand of friendship and invite them to come see how far they can go. Perhaps that person can be you.

Randonneuring is clearly not for everyone. Folks decide to come and then go for various reasons, and our member turnover is higher than we'd like. Still, ours is a perennial sport that will be there for everyone that wants to give it try—for a season or for a lifetime or for some time in between. Since becoming a Super Randonneur for the first time in 1990, I've learned that a person's internal desire to cycle long distances is the required ingredient in becoming a randonneur or randonneuse; the choice of equipment or clothing, ethnicity, age, or gender doesn't matter one bit.

—Lois Springsteen

PASSINGS

Donald Dunstan

Donald Dunstan (RUSA # 3831) was struck and killed by a pick-up truck outside of Winters, TX on December 11, 2008, while riding his bike. He was 55 years of age.

Don was an active

member of the San Angelo Bicycling Association (SABA) and rode in many West Central Texas cycling events over the years.

He was active in RUSA's permanent program and was the owner of RUSA Permanent Route # 211.

New Volunteers Join Permanents Committee

Randonneurs USA is pleased to announce that George Evans and Susan Plosky have joined RUSA's Permanents Committee. When contacted by Permanents Coordinator Edward Robinson, George and Susan readily agreed to volunteer their time in support of the Permanents program. Both will be assisting, primarily, with the generous volume of Permanent route applications that the club receives.

George is an experienced randonneur and active Permanent route owner in the Dallas, Texas, area. Susan serves as RBA in central Arizona, where she's established a selection of challenging Permanent routes of her own.

Edward's sincere thanks go to George and Susan for agreeing to take on this work, which is in addition to the substantial time and effort these volunteers already devote to RUSA and its membership.

CORRECTION

In the November 2008 issue of American Randonneur, John Kramer was not listed among the successful finishers of the 2008 Last Chance 1200k. He finished with a time of 64:55, making him RAAM qualified.

Our sincere apologies — and belated congratulations — to John.

New Members, Officers On RUSA Board

Lois Springsteen Elected President, Dayton Named Vice-President; Robinson Elected Secretary



Vigoren



Robinson



Ellis



Springsteen



Dayton



Hamilton



Wise

The RUSA Board has new members and officers for 2009.

Edward Robinson and Eric Vigoren were elected to the RUSA Board for three-year terms from 1/1/2009 to 12/31/2011.

Robinson fills the seat of retiring board member Mark Thomas, who was not eligible for reelection.

Vigoren has been on the board since January 1, 2008, serving out the remain-

der of the term (1/1/2008-12/31/2008) vacated by Jake Zmrhal's resignation.

John Lee Ellis, a former board member and RUSA Vice President, rejoined the board following his election as RBA Liaison. He replaces Susan France of Oregon.

New Officers

At a meeting in January, the board elected several new officers: Lois Springsteen—President; Mike Dayton—

Vice-President; Edward Robinson—Secretary. Edward Vigoren will continue as Treasurer.

Other board members include Don Hamilton and Jennifer Wise.

The board extends its thanks to immediate Past President Mark Thomas for his years of service to U.S. randonneurs and his leadership of RUSA. His presence on the board will be missed and his counsel will continue to be sought.

— 2008 AMERICAN RANDONNEUR AWARD —

TX RBA Dan Driscoll Honored For Passion, Club Leadership

BY PAM WRIGHT

Dan, The Goal Maker... Dan, The Danimal... Dan, The RBA... Dan, The Shoeless... Dan, The Puller... Dan, The bleep-bleep!... Dan...The Passionate

Yep, I'm biased about Dan Driscoll, this year's recipient of the American Randonneur Award. I'll admit that freely! Though it's easy to write about Dan's prowess on the bike, it's hard to have a better description of Dan's behind-the-scenes efforts than the actual description for this award itself.

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

So, that led me to a few questions.

How do you grow the 2nd largest RUSA club? In a sport where the large majori-

ty of participants are men, how is it that almost one-half of the riders on your events are women? How do you inspire people to ride more than they think humanly possible? How do you convince people to knowingly look forward to riding uphill...into a headwind...over chip and seal roads...while it's raining, cold and dark for 200Km at a time? How do you inspire almost every Lone Star member to actively participate in the coordination of the most brevets and permanents ridden each year in RUSA?

The answer is Passion...and the name is Dan Driscoll.

Stories create themselves when it comes to Dan and his passion for randonneuring. His personal skill on the bike is pretty much taken for granted by most, but few know the hours spent every day painstakingly answering each and every e-mail...some from LSR members, some from new people looking for a way to get started. All receiving unwavering



Photo from LSR Web site.



attention.

In addition to once serving on RUSA's board and in other national capacities, Dan is the RBA for Lone Star Randonneurs. Lone Star Randonneurs is not just a club for Dan, it's a way of life. A life built on camaraderie, mentoring and challenge. There truly is no more sincere randonneur -- one committed to every rider finishing the ride, every rider achieving their own personal goals and every rider giving back something to another randonneur.

Who else can convince people from 5 states to ride a 200k on New Year's Day?

And after talking with Dan, I'd bet every person actually thought it was their own idea!

I challenge any of you to mention a daydream or a possibility to Dan and not find yourself fulfilling it! For those few who don't know Dan, his sheer strength of will makes every goal reasonable, every challenge logical and achievable.

Dan makes everything sound so normal you actually think you CAN ride a 200k, 300k, 400k, 600k...oh and why not do that 4, 5, or 7 times this year. Why not? After all, you're just out riding with your buddies. What else are you going to do....watch TV?

Arturo Ortiz: Around The World for the R-12

By BOB RIGGS

What other RUSA member traveled around the Earth to earn their R-12...before they ever rode a mile on the bike?

December 13 was a memorable day for Arturo Ortiz. Finishing the Washington County Tour permanent today, he earned his R-12 award. Now, earning this award is a big achievement for any rider but especially noteworthy in this case, because this randonneur lives in Mexico City, and travels over 1,000 miles each way to ride a brevet! That's more than 24,000 miles, or roughly the circumference of

our planet.

It's not easy making a trip that long with a bike and Arturo has tried numerous options, including driving straight through, taking the bus and flying part of the way. Throw in sometimes spending several hours just to cross the border and you have one dedicated randonneur!

A long-time cyclist and distance runner, Arturo began randonneuring in 2007 to go to PBP. He qualified by riding in Houston and enjoyed it so much he set his sights on the R-12 award for 2008. As part of his 12 rides he completed a full series, a flèche and visited four of the



five RUSA regions in Texas.

This is not the end of randonneuring for Arturo by any means. His 2009 plans include another full series, a

1000K and preparing to return to Paris in 2011.

—Bob Riggs serves as the RBA for the Houston region.

Dr. C's Tips for Completing Your First Flèche

BY PAUL JOHNSON

It's A Bird, It's A Plane, It's a Brevet ... Nope, it's a Flèche!

That's right; a flèche is not a brevet. Oh there are lots of similarities, just enough, in fact, to lead you to a 24-hour disaster if you don't get chummy with the differences. In fact, it is your familiarity with brevet rules and your frame of mind for riding them that can contribute to the challenge of riding a flèche. I'll explain that later. What is that expression about the elephant? The animal



God constructed with all the left-over parts? Well the flèche may be the rando event that was created with all the

left-over rules that just would not work for brevets.

I'm notorious for my casual approach to rules in general, so for me to even attempt this subject is a little like juggling with knives. Think Homer Simpson at the controls of the Nuke Plant. So before I go any further, here is a little disclaimer: For a definitive answer to any question pertaining to a flèche, be sure to ask the flèche organizer ... in advance. But before you start pestering a volunteer with waaaay too much to do, make it easy on them by first referring to the complete set

of rules found at the RUSA website at <http://www.rusa.org/teamrando.html>. If you are like me, it might help to print off the PDF rules document and then sit down at the kitchen table (decaf would be a good choice here) and read it. It's the least you can do.

I originally thought to rip off a quick couple pages on this event based on my own experiences and then pass it off as consensus. After all, doesn't everyone think like me? Well, after a little thought

■Continued on next page

Latest R-12 Recipients Announced

175	Geoff Swarts	Mercer Island, WA
176	Dennis Godber	Bandon, FL
177	Wayne Methner	Lake Forest Park, WA
178	Linda Bott (F)	Ventura, CA
179	Miguel Encinas	Davie, FL
180	Robert Swindoll	Clute, TX
181	David Harper	Seattle, WA
182	Mark Vinette (2)	Bethesda, MD
183	Gary Prince	Seattle, WA
184	Jerry Austin (2)	Arlington, TX
185	Jonathan Gray	Davis, CA
186	Steve Davis	University Place, WA
187	Brenda Barnell (F) (4)	Dallas, TX
188	Jim Davis	St Petersburg, FL
189	James N Smith	Gunnison, UT
190	Chris Mento (2)	Glen Burnie, MD
191	Cindi Flerx (F)	Ft Meyers, FL
192	Ward Beebe (2)	Oak Harbor, WA
193	Richard N Ralls	Plano, TX
194	Dean Furbish (2)	Raleigh, NC
195	John Mestemacher	Carlsbad, CA
196	John Droese	Sherman, TX
197	William Thomas Reeder (3)	Alexandria, VA

198	Paul G Rozelle	Bexley, OH
199	John Morris	Durham, NC
200	Benjamin David Fichialos	Orem, UT
201	Craig Mathews	The Woodlands, TX
202	Bill Alsup	Portland, OR
203	Stephane Beaudry (2)	San Diego, CA
204	Cecil Reniche-Smith (F)	Portland, OR
205	Lynne Fitzsimmons (F)	Portland, OR
206	Gary Gottlieb (4)	Aledo, TX
207	Betsy Thorpe (F)	Tallahassee, FL
208	Ritaann T Becker (F)	Havana, FL
209	Edward Robinson (3)	San Benito, TX
210	Henrik Schroeder (2)	Lighthouse Point, FL
211	Aaron Little	Campbell, CA
212	Patrick A Donovan	Orange Park, FL
213	Paul Calewarts	Jacksonville, FL
214	Chip Adams	Severna Park, MD
215	Willy Nevin (3)	Pacifica, CA
216	Carol Bell (F) (2)	Baltimore, MD
217	Walter Pettigrew (2)	Cedarville, NJ
218	Jack Twitchell	Pomona, CA
219	Spencer Klaassen (3)	St. Joseph, MO
220	Keith W Gates	Olathe, KS

(F) = Female; (#) = No. of R-12 Awards

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. Please send notification of change of address to: Don Hamilton at dhamilton@copper.net.

Don't Forget...



...To renew your RUSA membership!

Memberships run from January through December. Use the convenient form in the inside back cover or download the form at www.RUSA.org.

Flèche (continued)

and with that slack period of snow paralysis over the holidays I decided to send out queries to a few riding pals, rando luminaries, and a collection of newbies around the country. I asked a few common, open ended questions so that yup and nope just would not do. I'm happy to report that in fact everyone does think like me ... well sort of. Anyway, what follows is the collected thoughts of riders around the country, probably some of them friends of yours.

Ultimate No-Drop Policy

Selecting your teammates wisely has more to do with your satisfaction (or frustration level) on a flèche than anything else. Because it is a team event and the rules require you to actually ride with your team there is no getting around that fact that if you are compatible with your team you'll have a bucket of fun. Conversely, if you are incompatible, it could be more like a 24-hour root canal. I've seen this personally and about half of the respondents to my unscientific survey confirmed it, both the joy and the frustration part. This does not mean that only gregarious, gabby, slowpokes enjoy flèches while focused, introverted speedy riders don't. It just means that you need to take care to assure that your teammates share your philosophy about ride speed, rest stops, lollygagging, or laser beam focus. Just remember, your fun or stress level, just like your success or failure, are

very much dependent on your team.

WHAT TO TAKE ALONG

Think about how you approach brevets, what your strengths and weaknesses are and the pace you would be comfortable riding for 24 hours. If you can find like-minded individuals with some of the skills you lack ... then take them along! How are your navigation skills? Good enough that you would be comfortable with the rest of your team relying on you when there is a route question? If not, recruit the resident Marco Polo to your team. How about mechanical skills? I once rode in a team with a young mechanic on board. He did the fastest, bare handed, no tire iron, thumbs only, flat tire repair any of the rest of us had ever seen. This was all the more impressive as we were less than 10K from our finish point and had not a lot of time to spare. It would have taken me 20 minutes (remember, we were in our 24th hour). How do you do with night riding? This is one of the big pluses of riding a flèche. If you are uneasy or inexperienced with night riding, there is a great deal of comfort to be had in the notion that you are not going to get stuck out past the edge of nowhere, all alone, in the middle of the night. And if you are not rock solid on the rules, perhaps incorporating someone with the requisite attention to detail, and a little experience might be a great addition. I'm not saying a

team full of first timers would not be a success, but without a flèche vet, you need to read and understand the rules.

WHAT TO LEAVE BEHIND

Here you can benefit as much by what you leave behind as what you take with you. In a brevet, you know that faster is always better, and getting to the finish sooner is better than later, right? How about the idea that you must be at the official finish point, when the clock runs out? LEAVE THESE NOTIONS BEHIND! 'Unlearning' your brevet riding success strategies is one of the hardest accommodations for riding a flèche.

THOSE KOOKY RULES

Here are a few peculiarities that I recommend you work out in your mind early on:

Article 8: For this event YOU design the route! It has to be at least 360K, it should be a point-to-point route, it can be a big circuit or loop, but it cannot be an out and back, and the start and finish must be different places. If you plan to pile on the kilometers by starting at the top of the highest point in the state, just keep in mind that even though you'll have bragging rights locally, for the purposes of ACP and RUSA distance awards you will only be credited with a distance of 360K. Like a brevet, the route distance is calculated on the basis of the shortest route between checkpoints that can legally be travelled by bike.

Article 10: At the end of the 22nd hour of the ride, the exact time and location of the

team must be noted on each route card. This requirement is a little tricky and you should definitely take it into consideration when you design your route. It is another good reason for you to plan a route and select teammates that can ride the route at the preplanned pace. By the way, your 22 and 24-hour check points cannot be the same (no little 25 Km out and back from the end point).

Article 12: This gets confusing so pay close attention. You must ride at least 25Km between the 22nd and 24th hour of the ride. Not only interesting, but this is one of the requirements to get a finish. No racing through the 360K event and then lounging around the bar as the slow pokes roll through in the next four or five hours. Oh, and just to make sure you don't tear through the thing and lounge somewhere else on the route there's this from Article 3: "No rest stop may exceed two hours in any one location." See what I meant about pacing yourself?

According to **Article 11**, you are done when:

- At least 3 team members ride the complete route and finish together.
- At least 25Km were ridden between the end of the 22nd hour and the end of the 24th hour of the ride.
- And, you have covered at least 360 Km on your event.

WHAT THE RULES DON'T SAY

There is nothing here

■Continued on next page

Flèche (continued)

about being at the endpoint exactly at the 24-hour mark, or what happens if you get there five minutes early, or late. So what does it mean if you come up 5 Km short of your end point when the clock strikes 24? Does it mean you are DQ'ed? The answer is no, so long as you have a minimum of 360Km total and 25Km between the 22nd and 24th hour.

What if you finish your ride in 23 hours and 45 minutes? DQ'ed? Nope, again, as long as you meet the other requirements you're good for a certification.

ARE WE THERE YET?

Given this, can you see how your compulsive, "gotta get there sooner, relentless rando efficiency, laser focus" might get in the way just a little bit? You can't start your 22nd hour if you have less than 25Km to ride; you can't "hang out" for more than two hours at a stretch; you don't necessarily have to be exactly at the end point exactly when 24 hours is up. So your focus needs to change from getting there as fast as rando-humanly possible to, sticking with the plan, riding with your pals, following the schedule, and making sure you get your minimum 360K in the books. This next tip will help you get your head around this change in approach and in the process give you a much better shot at upping the fun quotient while lowering the anxiety level. It's an absolute, rock solid, can't miss, Dr. C guarantee:

Once you have your route established (and approved) pencil in the times you plan to

arrive at and depart from each of your controls and stops. This will of course require that you make an assumption about your riding speed between controls. You will never have a better chance to get this right; after all, you get to design the course! If you are not intimately familiar with the course, its turns, grades, elevations, road surface conditions, traffic patterns, etc. get out there, on your bike in advance, and ride those questionable sections as a Saturday tune-up. Invite your teammates. If you get lost or tripped up on your schedule, you have no one but the course designer to blame.

Those who have found the flèche less than enjoyable tend to suffer from issues of loss of control (remember that need for self dependence on a brevet?) By scheduling your times in advance everyone should be able to agree about how long it will take to get from point to point, and when you should be rolling into and out of the controls and stops. And likewise no one should be freaking out if you have not yet left a control if you are still "on schedule." This is a real rookie trick, but if you find yourself riding with teammates you don't know all that well, it offers a fairly democratic way to reach consensus about when to ride, when to rest, when to poke along, and when to crank it up. And it could make the difference between enjoyable and endurable.

The big difference between a flèche and a brevet is this: A flèche is intended to be a 24-hour ride. You don't "win" by finishing faster; in

fact the rules are designed to keep you riding for 24 hours, unlike a brevet. This subtle but significant difference should influence every aspect of your planning, preparation and execution: Your selection of teammates, the pace and distance of your route, where you want to have your breaks, where and what time you want to start, where and when you want to ride through the night. Much of this would be far less important if you were just out to ride a 400K brevet.

WHY DO THIS, ANYWAY?

Given the right circumstances this event can be a tremendous learning experience. I already mentioned the opportunity to get comfortable with night riding, but wait, there's more.

You also get to try your hand at route design. Never done this before? Here is your chance to either give it a whirl or sit at the elbow of your experienced teammate. Learn this skill and you will be a much more capable rider, and you become a much more valuable member of your respective club (remember, we are all volunteers in the rando scene).

Getting something new under your belt always adds to the sense of accomplishment. Remember, it wasn't too long ago that you were new to randonneuring, so this is just another step along the path.

The flèche is the stuff of legends. You'll find at the post-ride banquet that you were really competing to see which team could come up with the most entertaining ride story.

You will also learn a few new success strategies. I've always said it is great to learn from your mistakes, but it's so much better to learn from the mistakes of others, and 24 hours is enough time to hear plenty of war stories.

Obviously, if it goes well you'll have a collection of new ride pals in the future.

A successful finish means you'll get homologated! And if you lust after that Randonneur 5000 award, the flèche is one of the harder requirements to come by. I've got a couple of these and they look darn nice in the shadow box frame on the wall.

THE DR C PRESCRIPTION

There are plenty of reasons to include this event on your ride calendar, and done right it's more fun than a boot full o' bees. But as I said, pick the wrong teammates or ride with an incomplete understanding of the rules and it could be more like a boot full of barbed wire. The big difference is that in a brevet you are dependent on you for all your decisions, you're beholden to no one else, and you are free to go at whatever speed you care to and ride with whomever you want anywhere along the route. In fact this independence is the norm and is rewarded. On a flèche, you and your independent nature are subordinate to the team. Get comfortable with this subtle but significant difference and I'm sure the flèche will become something you look forward to as the gateway to the coming year of brevets.

—Yr Pal, Dr. Codfish.

K-Hounds Redux

Those high-mileage riders from Texas are back! Membership is limited to riders who log 10,000 km or more of official events in a single year. Read on to see who joined the club this year.

“Open the kennel; another K-Hound coming in!” — George Evans, 2008

George announced his arrival just before the Lone Star Randonneur holiday party. George is joined by Jeff Elmer, Gary Gottlieb, Charlie Jenkins, Pat Jenkins, Vickie Tyer, Richard Whittenberg and Seattle litter-mate Geoff Swarts. In addition to our new puppies, old dogs Jerry Austin, Brenda Barnell, Dan Driscoll, Shellene Foster, Robin Phelps, Sharon Stevens and Pam Wright returned for 2008.

The K-Hounds aren't about a competition for the most K's; we support each other's efforts to reach our goals. The K-Hounds' motivation is as varied as each individual rider. Some seek awards, some set new standards, some crave a personal challenge and some simply want to improve as cyclists. The one thing we all have in common is we all love to ride our bikes. You need to love to ride your bike to average nearly 200K in RUSA sanctioned events per week.

For some of the K-Hounds, 10,000K was the goal from January 1, 2008. For others, as time progressed, 10,000K became a reality. Many faced the challenges of nagging over-use injuries, mental burn-out,

work schedules and reduced family time. Sharon survived a tandem crash, Gary survived a car explosion, Pat and Charlie survived a tornado and all LSR K-Hounds survived my attempts at humor. (Pam inserts: “Well, we might not ALL have survived the humor!”)

All five of last year's female K-Hounds returned with the addition of two new female pups. In a sport dominated by men, our female K-Hounds are outstanding! We continue to strive to “ride like a girl” here in Texas.

Incredibly, more than half of the K-Hounds are relatively new to the sport of randonneuring. I'm amazed by the progress these riders have made. The Lone Star Randonneurs continue to foster an atmosphere of support and a nurturing spirit that helps athletes reach their potential. This flow of new talent is essential to keeping our sport growing, healthy and strong.

Congratulations to all new and returning K-Hounds. As our brother in Seattle has shown, K-Hounds are not native to Texas. Join us in 2009; we welcome new additions to the pack. It's a new year and the K-Hounds are howling.

—Val Phelps (K-Hound 2008 & 2009)

JEFF ELMER, RUSA #4538

I started randonneuring in June 2007. My initial goals for 2008 were just to finish an R-12 and my first series, maybe two. Then a small group of LSR members took a trip to Jackson, MS in mid-January, to ride in the first brevet hosted by new RBA Michelle Williams. This ride along the Natchez Trace was so much fun that I decided then and there to try and ride in as many states as I could that year.

I soon had an opportunity to do just that. One of the folks we met in Jackson, Pat Horchoff, told us about a brevet he was putting on in New Orleans during Mardi Gras. We rode a 200K brevet north of the city on Saturday and the next day Pat gave us a cycling tour of the city itself, including a ride down Bourbon Street during a parade.

In late March, I finished up my first series with a 600K out of Italy, TX. Not feeling ready for the 1000K scheduled for May, I decided to visit my sister in bike-friendly Chicago. The Great Lakes Randonneurs had a 300K on their schedule out of Delavan, Wisconsin at around this time. Here was a chance to ride in two states with one trip!

My next new state was



Jeff Elmer

also the completion of my second series; with the Oklahoma is OK 600K out of Greenville, TX in late June. The heat was a challenge on this ride and I ended up riding it almost straight through, just to avoid the hottest part of the second day. By the end of the summer I was starting to ride both Saturday and Sunday on most weekends and the kilometers were piling up.

In September I had a chance to go back to the Natchez Trace and ride a new 600K route starting in Nashville, TN, passing through Alabama, to Tupelo, MS and back. With three states in one ride and another chance to ride the Trace, this was too good to pass up.

Now I started looking for brevets within a long weekend's drive and found the 300K Black Mountain Side brevet in New Mexico in late October. This was my

■Continued on next page

K-Hounds (continued)

hilliest ride, with steady and steep climbing up from the desert into ponderosa pine forest across the continental divide and back.

After another 600K out of Italy and a 400K brevet in Houston I was still a few kilometers short of entering the K-Hound Klub. Thanks to George Evans, I was able to finish out that goal and add one more state to my list with his pair of 200K permanents between Texarkana and Hot Springs, Arkansas. These rides were the icing on the cake for my year; 10 states, 4 series, 10,000 K, and lots of new friends along the way.

GEORGE EVANS, RUSA # 3157

I've been a RUSA and Lone Star Randonneurs member since 2006. When I first joined RUSA my goal was to ride some 200K brevets and maybe some day do a 300K. I had no expectation of ever riding farther than that and never dreamed that I could. By June, I completed my first 400K. The next year I earned my first super randonneur award and had gone completely over to The Dark Side.

I credit my success in becoming a K-Hound to two things: First is the incredible support and mentoring I've received from my fellow Lone Star Randonneurs. From the day I showed up for my first brevet, I heard, "just take it easy, and you'll do fine." I really had no idea what I was getting into, but



George Evans

that advice has seen me through some pretty rough times on the road.

Second is the RUSA permanent system. Without permanents, achieving 10,000 Km in a year would be much harder and require a lot of travel. We have a large number of permanents in the Dallas/Ft Worth area and generally good riding weather year round so there's no shortage of opportunities to rack up the kilometers. Having a lot of different routes helps avoid "route fatigue." And since a given permanent route only counts once for mileage credit, there's a lot of incentive to ride a lot of different routes anyway. We are very fortunate to have so many permanents here and I'm grateful for those who take the time to create and offer them.

GARY GOTTLIEB, RUSA # 2565

I have been riding bikes non-stop since I was in the second grade. Every year I have increased the length of my rides. When I lived in St. Louis, Missouri I raced road

bikes and mountain bikes. I would recover with a long ride on Sundays usually on the Katy Trail. I met my wife Dana Pacino (RUSA # 2692) while on one of those Sunday recovery rides on the Katy Trail.

About seven years ago we moved to Fort Worth Texas and we realized that the road riding is king in Texas and we bought our first road bike tandem, a Trek T2000. We started doing rallies or what we now call "T-Shirt Rides." It was on one of those rides that I met Dan Driscoll (North Texas RBA and RUSA #390) and Mark



Gary Gottlieb

Metcalf (RUSA # 1589). After the rally we "tacked on a few extra miles" and ended with 127 miles total. He invited me to a 200K brevet the next weekend and even-

Continued on next page

K-Hounds (continued)

tually my wife joined in the fun.

The first couple of years all we did were 200Ks and 300Ks. On our third year we went for our first ACP series. That aluminum Trek tandem hurt us badly on the second day of the 600K. That day we decided to get a custom made titanium DaVinci tandem to ease the pain and celebrate our fifth wedding anniversary that year. We ordered the bike with a Schmidt lighting system and a rear rack. I had also set up a steel Trek 520 with a Schmidt for the weekends my wife worked.

With our new bikes the long miles were a lot more comfortable and we switched from riding rallies to riding randonneur events. We eventually joined the Houston Randonneurs and the Hill Country Randonneurs along with our home club, the Lone Star Randonneurs.

The rides started to add

up and at the beginning of this year I was within striking distance of my Ultra Randonneur award. I decided to pack on the brevets early in the year and get it done by May. We just kept riding more brevets and permanents after that and I ended up with over 14,000 KMs and a whopping seven RUSA/ACP series this year.

So here I am in the K-Hound Klub this year. Woof Woof!

CHARLIE JENKINS, RUSA #3922; PAT JENKINS, RUSA #3923

We began randonneuring in 2007. We're a bit unique, as we ride a tandem exclusively. Prior to randonneuring, we enjoyed what we thought to be long distance cycling (i.e. mostly 60+ mile rides, with a couple centuries per year). We were invited to the LSR 2007 New Years Day 200k brevet. We were

hesitant at first, as we had never ridden anything longer than a century. Reluctantly, we agreed. We completed the 200k, thinking "that wasn't so bad, maybe we'll try a 300k, but definitely never anything longer." A couple months later, we completed a 300k & agreed "that wasn't so bad, maybe we'll try a 400k, but definitely never anything longer." Little did we know that we were hooked and there was no turning back. Later in '07 we completed the 400k and were hungry for a 600k, but had to wait until '08 for the 600. We finished the year with almost 3000k. We began 2008 with an entirely new set of goals: we planned to do a series, and hoped we could get 5000k. By the middle of the year, we had our 5000k & promptly doubled our goal to 10,000k.

The k's started piling up without us even realizing it. Every weekend there was either a brevet, or someone was riding a permanent. LSR is the best group we've ever ridden with. The camaraderie is the greatest we've ever experienced! We quickly made a bunch of new friends, and memories that will last a lifetime. We have visited towns and communities by bike that we would have never seen by car. We found ourselves planning a brevet or permanent almost every Saturday. Our non-rando friends and family quickly realized that we would be "unavailable" almost every Saturday.



Pat & Charlie Jenkins

Riding on the tandem exclusively has the advantage of always having someone to ride with regardless of how good you are (or aren't). You never have to ride alone. We constantly motivate each other, and we always have someone to talk to. However, it also means that when one is sick or otherwise unavailable to ride, neither of us rides. We are fortunate that both of us always wants to ride! We both enjoy fresh air and the outdoors, exercise, spending endless hours together, and the camaraderie of other cyclists. I can't say enough good about randonneuring on the tandem. It's one of the greatest things we have ever done.

VICKIE TYER, RUSA #4495

Well, it's a pretty easy call. Do you wanna work or ride your bike, wanna be at home or ride your bike, wanna be like other people or ride your bike ... so I just ride my bike. And with no real direction or goal, I just ride my bike in blissful ignorance, just for the fun of it.

■ Continued on next page



Vickie Tyer

K-Hounds (continued)

This bike business is pretty new to me, I'm an old rodeo trick rider where we did everything the hard way. I drove endless miles across the USA and then pounded my guts out running around a rodeo arena doing stupid things on a horse. I see lots of similarities with my bike riding. I spend Friday nights getting all my junk ready, reading my cue sheet and checking the map, leaving home in the wee hours of the morning, donning my brightly colored spandex and riding for endless miles on a bike, eating all kinds of junk food, sweating profusely, pumping my legs up and down endlessly for what would appear to be far beyond the bounds of human limitations. And why do I do this, I don't even know, it just seems like the fun thing to do; now that has to be blissful ignorance.

I'm still so new to this I don't even speak bike yet, I still speak horse, give me a horse and I can tell you what he will do, but this bike has its own special language. I can't tell you anything about my bike. So I just take mine to the shop and flirt with the mechanic for a while and smile and say, "I'll be riding day and night for the whole weekend, don't let my bike break down, check everything." Now don't laugh, so far this has proven to be a great strategy for me; girls can get away with it. This is not the blissful part of ignorance this is carefully planned.

So this year I rode

10,000 miles and 10,000ks. I don't have any great strategy on what to do next. I usually just ride the next ride, whatever the group is doing is fine with me, doesn't matter if it's a 200 or 400 or a 1,000k, let's just ride. I'm not intimidated by any distance anymore; it's just a matter of riding to the next control — see, it all goes back to blissful ignorance again. Course, I do like to ride at the front with all the fast folks, problem is I'm too slow, so I'm always chasing the front runners. Look out I might catch 'em one day!

ABC's Race Across America was the first thing I ever saw or knew about cycling and RAAM is what I would really like to do. There is just one problem; I'm old, fat, and slow.... Well, here in Texas, in my hometown, we have the Tejas 500 RAAM qualifier, so I gave that a shot this year. The result: DFL, dead freakin last, but I don't care where I finished, I finished and I RAAM qualified!

PacTour sounds like a great event. And of course I'd like to do the whole thing but work gets in my way too much so I hope to ride the first half this year from Portland to Amarillo...then what next???? Well I don't know, Elite Pac Tour sounds like fun too! It's all part of the bliss.

RICHARD WHITTENBERG,
RUSA # 2943

In the summer of 2003 as a way to work through some serious physical issues, I



Richard Whittenberg

started riding an inexpensive mountain bike from the local shop (I was run over by a pick up truck while jogging back in 2000). It was essentially riding around the block type of stuff. Trying to get some balance, I fell over a lot. I really enjoyed the feeling of the bike, cruising down the street and on the off-road trails. I bought my road bike, a Lemond Zurich, that winter.

In 2004, I did my first group rides and my first metric and mile centuries. I was getting hooked. The experience of riding with others really sparked me and I began to train more, riding 4-5 times a week. I enjoyed the feeling from exercising regularly.

Jerry Austin, a training partner, told me about a group of cyclists in Arlington who had head lights on their bikes and did insane distances such as riding all day and night. It sounded like a challenge. I called Dan Driscoll and went on my first 200k in the spring of 2005. I finished totally exhausted and pleased with my self.

Soon after I joined Lone Star Randonneurs, riding more brevets, populaire and

permanents. Learning by doing, I followed the peleton trying to stay up without getting dropped, as well as learning the physical and mental of the discipline, like how to keep going all day and all night, how to pace, what to eat, hydration, equipment, group riding and how to keep going on a bad day. In the beginning my goals were simple, to progress through the different stages of randonneuring, getting through longer and longer rides and accomplishing a Super Randonneur series.

My goals for 2008 were 2 SR's, a R-12, a 1000k, and to compete in the Texas Time Trails, which I was able to do. I never considered the 10,000k. However, in September I saw it was possible and began to work hard towards completing all of the remaining kilometers. I rode lots of Saturdays and Sundays in the fall months. I would go to work on Mondays tired, recover by Wednesday and start preparing for the weekend's rides. I rode a total of 47 brevets, permanents and populaires to finish the year with 10,513 kilometers and logged over 10,000 miles total.

My club, Lone Star Randonneurs, is a great group of cyclists, and good friends. Without them I would not have accomplish these goals. They are willing to help, whether changing a flat or pulling into the wind, always handy with a joke, witty, funny and smiling. I am fortunate to know them and be part of the club.

2009 ACP Events

Region	200 km	300 km	400 km	600 km	1000 km	fleche
AZ: Casa Grande	01/03	02/07	03/07	04/18		
CA: Davis	03/07 07/09	03/28	04/25	06/05	07/06	
CA: Los Angeles	01/10	02/07	03/07	05/09		04/16
CA: San Diego	01/03 04/04 05/23	01/31	02/28	04/04	05/23	
CA: San Francisco	01/24 04/26 06/13	02/21	04/04	05/30		04/09
CA: Santa Cruz	03/01 06/27	03/21	04/11	05/09		
CA: Santa Rosa	02/28	03/14	04/18			
CO: Boulder	05/02 09/19	05/16 08/08	06/06 07/25	06/20 07/25	06/20 07/25 09/09	05/07
FL: Central	01/10	02/07	03/07	04/04		
FL: Gainesville	01/17	02/21	03/21	04/18		04/09
GA: Atlanta	02/07 03/28	03/07 04/18	05/09	05/23		
IA: Cedar Valley	04/18	05/09	06/20	07/11		
IL: Chicago	04/25	05/16	06/06	06/27		
KY: Louisville	03/07	04/11	05/09	06/06		
LA: New Orleans	02/21	03/07	04/04			
MA: Boston	05/09	05/30	06/20	07/25		
MA: Westfield	03/22 04/25	04/05 05/02 09/13	05/30	06/27		05/14
MD: Capital Region	03/28 04/18	05/02 05/16	05/30	06/13		04/23
MN: Rochester	05/02 10/03	05/16 08/08	05/30 08/22	06/13 09/19	07/24	
MO: Kansas City	03/28	04/25	05/09	05/23	06/07	04/09
MO: St. Louis	03/14 03/21 03/29	04/04 04/18 04/25	05/16 05/23	06/13 06/27		
MS: Jackson	01/17	03/28	04/25			
NC: High Point	01/03 02/07 06/20	02/21 09/19	07/04 08/01	09/05		04/09
NC: Raleigh	04/04 08/15	04/25	05/09	05/30		
NJ: NYC and Princeton	04/11 09/13	05/09	05/23	06/19		
NM: Cedar Crest	03/28	04/25	05/30	06/27		
NY: Saratoga	03/29	04/26	05/09			
NY: Western	05/09	05/23	06/06	06/27		
OH: Columbus	04/04	04/18 09/05	05/30	06/13		04/23
OR: Portland	03/28 04/18 07/11	04/11 05/02 07/25	05/09 08/08	05/30 08/29	06/27 08/29	04/23
PA: Eastern	04/04	05/02	05/16	05/30	06/26	04/16
SC: Spartanburg	02/28					
TN: Nashville	01/31 02/28 03/14	03/28 04/11	04/25	05/30		
TX: Amarillo	03/16 03/20	03/20				
TX: Austin	01/31	03/07	04/04 05/23	05/23		
TX: Brownsville	01/17	02/21				
TX: Dallas	01/01 01/10 08/15 10/03	01/10 09/19	03/07 10/03	04/25		
TX: Houston	01/03 01/24	01/24 02/07	02/28	03/21	04/10	
UT: Cedar City	04/04 06/20	05/02	05/30			
VA: Northern	03/14 03/21	04/04 04/18	05/02 05/09	05/23 06/27	10/10	
WA: Seattle	03/21 07/25	04/04 08/08	05/16 08/22	06/13 09/12	07/16 08/20	04/16

2009 RUSA Events

Region	200 km	300 km	400 km	600 km	Dart/Arrow	Other
AR: Little Rock	05/09					
AZ: Casa Grande	08/22					
CO: Boulder	04/18 08/15					(103 km) 03/22 (106 km) 04/05 (122 km) 04/19 129 km) 10/11
GA: Atlanta	01/01 09/05					(100 km) 08/15
IA: Cedar Valley						(160 km) 08/29
IL: Chicago	08/08					(100 km) 08/08
LA: New Orleans						(223 km) 01/10
MA: Boston						(107 km) 04/18 (350 km) 08/15
MA: Westfield	05/10 08/09 09/20	07/27			(180 km) 08/22	(100 km) 03/15 (150 km) 07/11 (100 km) 08/22 (100 km) 10/11 (170 km) 10/11
MD: Capital Region	02/14					
NC: Raleigh						(110 km) 08/15
NM: Cedar Crest	05/16 12/05	08/29 10/24				
OH: Columbus	10/17					
PA: Eastern	01/03 02/07					(153 km) 10/24 (204 km) 10/24
PR: San Juan	01/18 02/21					
TN: Nashville	10/24 11/28				(360 km) 08/22	(250 km) 09/26
TX: Austin	12/05					
TX: Dallas	03/07 04/25 08/01 09/19 10/17	03/07 04/25 10/03 10/17	04/25 10/17	10/17		(100 km) 02/01 (100 km) 02/15
TX: Houston	02/07 05/02 06/13 07/11					
WA: Seattle					(180 km) 05/30 (180 km) 09/19	(100 km) 03/08 (100 km) 06/27 (110 km) 09/06

2009 RM 1200k Events

Location	Date	Distance (km)	Contact	Web Site
VA: Northern	2009/06/11	1200	Matt Settle	http://www.geocities.com/shenandoah1200/
CA: Davis	2009/07/06	1200	Dan Shadoan	http://www.davisbikelclub.org/goldrush/
CO: Boulder	2009/09/09	1200	John Lee Ellis	http://www.rmccrides.com/lastchance.htm
PA: Eastern	2009/09/30	1240	Tom Rosenbauer	http://users.rcn.com/trosenbauer/PA1200K.html

RUSA Expands Online Ordering Of Medals

Thanks to the efforts of RUSA's hard-working Web volunteers, applications for the following awards are now accepted online:

- Super Randonneur
- RUSA Distance
- R-12

- American Randonneur Challenge
 - RUSA Coast to Coast
- Online applications for the R5000 and Ultra Randonneur awards are in the works. Go to the RUSA website 'Awards' or 'Online Store' pages to learn how to apply for these awards.

In most cases, your award application can be approved automatically and the award can be purchased immediately through the online store.

If you have already submitted a paper application for any of these awards, please do not submit an online application.

2009 RBA Directory (as of Jan. 1, 2009)

Region	Organizer	Address	Tel.	Tel2/Cell	FAX	E-mail
AK: Anchorage	Kevin TURINSKY	2301 Saint Elias Drive Anchorage, AK 99517	907-276-6299			kjturinsky@mac.com
AR: Little Rock	Dana JOHNSON	46 LedgeLawn Drive Little Rock, AR 72212	501-350-4562			dana@greengoblin.com
AZ: Casa Grande	Susan PLONSKY	858 Center Street Henderson, NV 89015	520-450-1335			susan@azbrevet.com
CA: Davis	Dan SHADOAN	812 Eucalyptus Street Davis CA 95618	530-756-9266		530-756-0187	djshadoan@ucdavis.edu
CA: Los Angeles (PCH)	Greg JONES	4465 Cedarglen Court Moorpark, CA 93021	805-523-2774			gsjco@pacbell.net
CA: San Diego	Michael BERRY	4635 Normandie Pl. La Mesa CA 91941	619-303-9630			mberry2@cox.net
CA: San Francisco	Rob HAWKS	5630 Santa Cruz Ave. Richmond CA 94804	510-526-2653			rob.hawks@gmail.com
CA: Santa Cruz	Lois SPRINGSTEEN	226 West Avenue Santa Cruz CA 95060	831-227-6266	831-227-6266	650-964-7037	lois_springsteen@prodigy.net
CA: Santa Rosa	Robert REDMOND	814 Winton Drive Petaluma CA 94954	707-769-9678			bobredmond@comcast.net
CO: Boulder	John Lee ELLIS	2155 Dogwood Circle Louisville CO 80027-1169	303-604-1163			jellisx7@juno.com
FL: Central	Timothy BOL	1140 S Orlando Ave Apt E5 Maitland FL 32751	407-538-0580			TJB4828@aol.com
FL: Gainesville	Jim WILSON	620 NW 27th Way Gainesville FL 32607	352-373-0023			wilson@afn.org
GA: Atlanta	Andy AKARD	1326 Pasadena Ave NE Atlanta GA 30306	404-216-9601			aakard@mindspring.com
IA: Cedar Valley	Robert FRY	2124 Touchae Street Waterloo IA 50702-4126	319-226-5436			cvbrevet@mchsi.com
IL: Chicago	Jim KREPS	2732 N. Central Park Chicago, IL 60647	773-862-9879			jimmyk22@aol.com
KY: Louisville	Steve RICE	40 Plantation Drive Shelbyville KY 40065	502-494-5288			srice@insightbb.com
LA: New Orleans	Patrick HORCHOFF	8909 Ormond Place River Ridge LA 70123	504-738-1352	504-957-1768		larba1955@aol.com
MA: Boston	Tracey INGLE	204 Barton Road Stow, MA 01775	978-212-5500	508-789-6290		tracey@inglelaw.com
MA: Westfield	Don PODOLSKI	55 Franklin St. Westfield MA 01085	413-562-5237		413-562-5237	don@newhorizonsbikes.com
MD: Capital Region	William BECK	17719 Foxmoor Drive Woodbine MD 21797	410-442-9946			wabeck@comcast.net
MN: Rochester	Michael AELING	603 E 10th Street Winona MN 55987	507-459-1629			mdapbp@yahoo.com
MO: Kansas City	Bob BURNS	PO Box 1387 Blue Springs MO 64013	816-229-6071		816-229-6444	bobgburns555@aol.com
MO: St. Louis	John JOST	9122 Conser Court St. Louis MO 63123	314-843-4486			stlbrevets@yahoo.com

2009 RBA Directory (as of Jan. 1, 2009)

Region	Organizer	Address	Tel.	Tel2/Cell	FAX	E-mail
MS: Jackson	Michelle WILLIAMS	213 Hillside St. Ridgeland MS 39157	601-573-2057		601-932-3987	mwilliams_spmr@hotmail.com
NC: High Point	Tony GOODNIGHT	1939 Barringer Rd Salisbury NC 28147	704-637-6289			info.rusa@bicycleforlife.org
NC: Raleigh	Alan JOHNSON	308 Ashe St Morrisville NC 27560	919-467-8457			alanj@email.unc.edu
NE: Omaha	Larry Larson	2477 North 150th Street Omaha, NE 68116	402-496-1840			nebraskabrevet@cox.net
NJ: NYC and Princeton	Leroy Varga	27 Beaufort Ave Dover, NJ 07801	373-366-5098			leroyvarga@verizon.net
NM: Cedar Crest	John MAZZOLA	PO Box 811 Cedar Crest NM 87008	505-263-7090			nmnightrider@comcast.net
NY: Saratoga	John J. CECERI JR	7 Pearl Street Schuylerville NY 12871	518-583-3708			john@adkultracycling.com
NY: Western	Peter DUSEL	1119 Lake Road Ontario NY 14519	315-524-8519			pdusel@sprintmail.com
OH: Columbus	Bob WADDELL	1488 River Trail Drive Grove City OH 43123	614-561-4914		866-712-2207	rba4914@ohiorand.org
OR: Portland	Susan FRANCE	25797 SW Neill Rd. Newberg OR 97132	503-628-7324	503-685-1337		susanfrance@teleport.com
PA: Eastern	Tom ROSENBAUER	300 Burke St Easton PA 18042	610-559-1145		610-559-1145	trosenbauer@rcn.com
PA: Pittsburgh	Jim LOGAN	215 Lindenwood Dr Pittsburgh, PA 15209	412-822-7778			jimlogan@verizon.net
PR: San Juan	William A. Medina	PMB 242, 100 Grand Paseo Blvd, Suite 112, San Juan, PR 00926-5902	787-477-8121		787-283-2934	sanjuancycling-club@gmail.com
SC: Spartanburg	Bethany DAVISON	229 Maple Blvd Clemson SC 29631	864-654-7434			greenforestsc@yahoo.com
TN: Nashville	Jeff SAMMONS	1512 Aberdeen Dr Brentwood TN 37027	615-373-2458		615-833-3407	jsammons@bellsouth.net
TX: Amarillo	Nick GERLICH	P.O. Box 53 Canyon TX 79015	806-499-3210			nickgerlich@cs.com
TX: Austin	Wayne DUNLAP	3108 Creeks Edge Parkway Austin TX 78733	512-402-9953	408-857-5458	512-372-7139	wgdunlap@aol.com
TX: Brownsville	Edward ROBINSON	3750 N. Sam Houston Blvd. San Benito TX 78586	956-276-9171			edward.e.robinson@gmail.com
TX: Dallas	Dan DRISCOLL	2811 Hollywood Dr Arlington TX 76013	817-460-5734	817-925-0158	817-461-5100	dansmark@flash.net
TX: Houston	Robert RIGGS	4418 Kingfisher Houston TX 77035	713-301-7093			elantier@hotmail.com
UT: Cedar City	Lonnie WOLFF	PO Box 416 Cedar City UT 84720	435-559-0895		435-586-0594	lonnie@oldairhead.com
VA: Northern	Matt SETTLE	67 Cullers Lane Strasburg VA 22657	540-465-2116			liznmatt@shentel.net
WA: Seattle	Mark THOMAS	13543 160th Ave NE Redmond WA 98052	206-612-4700		425-702-8881	president2008@rusa.org
WI: Beloit	Lon HALDEMAN	PO Box 303 Sharon, WI 53585	262-736-2453		262-736-2454	haldeman@pactour.com

Ask Bill | A Look at RUSA's Rules

Hi Bill, *I'm going to Paris soon on business. I finished the 2003 PBP and was thinking that while I was there, I would like to view the "Great Book" that lists all the finishers' names. Where would I go to see this?*

In modern times, the "Great Book" listing Les Anciens du Paris-Brest-et-Retour is more of an idea than a reality—but it does indeed exist and is not some mythological legend. However, it hasn't been updated in a very long time and I'm afraid your name won't be in it. Nowadays, the post-PBP results publication that came with your finisher's medal is the de-facto addition to the Great Book. (All



Bill Bryant has been riding brevets since 1983 and is a two-time finisher of Paris-Brest-Paris. An organizer of local randonneuring events since 2000 with Lois Springsteen, he is also one of the founders of Randonneurs USA. Bill was on the RUSA Board of Directors from 1998-2006 and its President 2004-2005. Bill is also the recipient of the 2006 American Randonneur award. He is currently working on an in-depth history of Paris-Brest-Paris.

of these quadrennial results are now compiled online at the PBP website and can be seen at: <http://www.paris-brest-paris.org>.) I am not sure when the original stopped being used, but suspect it was back in the 1960s at the least, and probably earlier than that. So, when a mod-

ern-day randonneur or randonneuse says he or she wants "to get my name inscribed in the Great Book", it basically means they want to join the fraternity of PBP finishers going back to 1891—but there is no longer some person in Paris laboriously handwriting thousands of names into some enormous ledger book every four years. Computers do that job now—thank goodness!

The Great Book was started with the first edition of PBP and its 98 official finishers and it was updated with each successive event every 10 years. After the 1951 professional race the organizers tried to mount another event in 1956, and again in 1961, but both efforts failed. The racers said the race was too hard and that they could earn a lot more money in the post-Tour de France criteriums instead of torturing themselves on some crazy 40-hour marathon to Brest and back. So, the promoters reluctantly threw in the towel and the racing version of PBP came to an end.

They turned the Great Book over to the French cycle-touring federation (FFCT), since there were two amateur versions of PBP still going strong at that time—the randonneur version (which you rode) hosted by the Audax Club Parisien (ACP) and the group-format audax version (which seems to be dwindling these days, but usually had more participants than the randonneurs until the mid-1980s). The FFCT, in turn, turned over the Great Book to the ACP since they were the older of the two clubs, and it was felt they were promoting the version of PBP closest in spirit and format to the original event.

As far as I know, the ACP still has custody of the Great Book. At last report (about three years ago), it was at the home of Bob & Suzanne Lepertel, who show it to visitors on occasion (along with a similar ledger book that has all the names of the ACP's earliest free-pace brevet participants, going back to the inaugural event on September 11, 1921.) So, even if the original Great Book isn't up to date with all the modern-day finishers, you can still be proud your name is indeed among the laureates of Paris-Brest-Paris going all the way back to 1891.

Have a question about randonneuring? Send it to: bill_bryant@prodigy.net.

A 'PERMANENT' VACATION



Departing Texarkana for Hot Springs, AR (l-r): Richard Whittenberg, Jeff Elmer, Charlie and Pat Jenkins (on tandem), Vickie Tyer, Val Phelps, Brenda Barnell, George Evans, George Elizondo, Dan Driscoll, Robin Phelps, Todd Martin (front), Bryan McKenney, Shellene Foster. The group did two new permanents that are designed as a weekend getaway to the resort town of Hot Springs. The inaugural ride took place on November 8-9.

BY GEORGE ELIZONDO

The itinerary – Leave the Dallas / Fort Worth metroplex after work on Friday (7-Nov, 2008) by car and meet up at the Ramada Inn, Texarkana, Texas. After a night's rest, depart by bicycle the next morning for Hot Springs, Arkansas (213 km) by way of a newly approved permanent, spend the night at the historic Arlington Hotel and ride back by bicycle to Texarkana via a different permanent (204 Km) the next day. The RUSA approved permanent routes, Hot Springs Eternal and Hotter Than Hot Springs were developed and organized by Lone Star Randonneur, George Evans. Fourteen vacation minded LSR riders made the inaugural, round trip.

The beautiful state of Arkansas was a pleasant change of scenery for these North Texas riders. Stately pines lined many of the roads along our route and much of the route included wooded countryside and rolling terrain. The roads were excellent with a lot of butter smooth asphalt. The drivers we met were curious and courteous.

The highlight of the first day was the big climb just outside of Hot Springs pedaling through Hot Springs National Park. We came up on this hill after 130 miles in the saddle and a lot of climbing already done. The grades were steep with some switchbacks in the 15% - 20% range. All this made for lots of banter and hearty appetites later that evening at Belle Arti, the Italian restau-

rant in downtown Hot Springs where we met for dinner.

Our accommodations for the night, the old Arlington Hotel, was grand, with a large open lobby, large bar with comfortable seating, live band and dance floor. Amenities also included a large steaming hot tub on the 7th floor — a great place to relax, enjoy the view and savor the day with a dozen of your friends.

The group met the next morning at the Pancake Shop across from the hotel for breakfast, then assembled for another 7:00 AM group start. Ride start temperature was 34° this morning, but the riding was comfortable with light wind and sunny skies. By afternoon everyone was shedding layers.

The ride back to

Texarkana called for a climb out of Hot Springs including near by Jack Mountain, not as steep as the previous day's climb but still a challenge, followed by another 100 miles or so of ups and downs. There was a 20 mile stretch of flat at the end of the day, but the final miles into the Texarkana control got hilly again and it was a great way to end the weekend.

These routes are available year round by contacting George Evans through the RUSA Permanents website. The routes come highly recommended by all 14 riders who consider this a fabulous weekend vacation complete with RUSA Km credit!

Topo USA calculates approximately 13,500 feet of climbing over the two days.

IN THE BLOGS | Randonneurs Online

BY MIKE DAYTON

Training time. Hudson River Valley randonneur **George Swain** recently found himself facing another icy New York day. He writes: “I woke up this morning at 5:30 a.m. to ride to work. The trouble was: 15 degrees, dark as coal and the bridge ‘walkway’ connecting me to work was a sheet of ice.” His solution? He grabbed his water bottle and headed for the trainer. Read all about his spin session in “Winter Trainer Blues” at <http://the-hudsonvalleyrandonneur.blogspot.com>.

###

A Great Great Southern. The plan was to include **Mark Thomas’** report from his successful completion of the Great Southern Randonnée in Australia. But an epic ride requires an equally epic ride report — and one that proved too long for inclusion in American Randonneur. Fortunately, RUSA’s ex-prez has posted the full account, “Great Southern Randonnée 2008,” on his blog at <http://rusa64.blogspot.com>.

###

Medal Mettle. My riding pal **Byron Morton** recently fired up a blog, *randonneurextra*, and posted about the real treasure in earning an R-12 medal: “The best benefit of the regular monthly permanents is being able to connect with your great cycling pals all year ‘round.” Read the rest of his reflections on his R-12 achievement at the blogger address <http://randonneurextra.blogspot.com/2008/12/r-12.html>.

###

After the flood. It ain’t always about the bike. Yr Pal Dr. Codfish (aka **Paul Johnson**) and his Oakville, WA



Mark Thomas at the start of Australia’s Great Southern Randonnée.

neighbors had to deal with flooding following heavy snow and rain in the Pacific Northwest. An excerpt from one of his January entries: “I’ve been called a sandbagger many times in the past, this time it was well deserved. The city makes a deal with the residents: They supply the sand, the county supplies the bags, and we provide the Swedish backhoe powered by Armstrong, and a little elbow grease.” Read all about the hell of high water in his post, “The Politics of Disaster.” <http://drcodfish.blogspot.com/2009/01/politics-of-disaster.html>.

###

Weight weenie. Out in Seattle, **Matt M** began a blog post, “It all adds up,” with this remark: “If there were ever two things that should not mix, it is probably randonneuring & gram counting (aka being a ‘weight weenie’). But, on a recent e-shopping spree I bought a Park digital scale. And once I got it, I started weighing everything!” That included two full water bottles (1.67 kg or 3.68 pounds). Check out his blog at

<http://cyclinginseattle.blogspot.com/> to find out what other bike components he put on the scale.

###

12 Days of Christmas. What to give that randonneur who has everything? Just in time for the December holidays, **Ed Felker** of *The Daily Randonneur* fame came up with a dozen must-have stocking stuffers — from Clif Shot Blocks to RUSA reflective gear. See the full list at his blog address: <http://thedailyrandonneur.wordpress.com/>.

###

T.G.I.(B.)F! RAAM legend and PacTour leader **Lon Haldeman** is always up for a Big Adventure. Like a bike race in Peru. In 100-degree heat. While riding a Bike Friday. “A lot of the racers had never seen a bike with 20 inch wheels and they were surprised I was staying with them,” he writes. To see how the race turned out, visit his blog at <http://pactour.blogspot.com/>.

The Pony Express Rides Again

Spencer Klaassen and Dan Clinkenbeard tackle RUSA's longest permanent — a six-state, 3,000k monster from St. Joseph, MO to Sacramento, CA.



Dan Clinkenbeard and Spencer Klaassen

BY SPENCER KLAASSEN

Lots of crazy ideas start in a pub. This story was no different. I was drinking a black and tan at the end of a spring club ride with my buddy Bob Fitzpatrick when the idea was floated: “Would you be interested in riding from St. Joseph to Sacramento to kick off the Tour of Missouri?” The neurons in my brain exploded as many thoughts and emotions began to circle as we discussed the issue. The idea fascinated me but there were many logistical and practical issues to work out with the biggest being how to explain to my wife that I was wanting to do yet another adventure ride. We left the Hi Ho with the agreement that he would work on some of the issues and I would start training and talk to my family.

I finished up the Kansas

City brevet series and the Nebraska brevet tour and received approval from my family to do the ride if a few conditions would be met. Bob kept up his part of the deal but things moved slowly as I continued training. A highlight of the long summer was that I received a verbal commitment from Danny Clinkenbeard to ride with me.

Danny is from Columbia, MO and is a very interesting character. Most people who have met him either love or hate him and almost everyone in the KC area has a “Clink” story. My history with Danny goes back about five years through riding the Kansas City brevet series. I have spent many nights riding with him as he kept me awake and upbeat with jokes and stories told with a strong southern accent. No matter how tough the ride was or

how bad the weather was, we could ride together without conflict.

As the monotony of training dragged on through the summer I was tormented by the thoughts of the failed attempt at doing the Santa Fe Trail Permanent with another friend (Thomas Faust). The 900 mile trip taught me a great deal as we packed too heavy and were far too lax with our schedule. Despite this, we were able to average a little over 140 miles per day but the route was much flatter than the Pony Express route as it doesn't cross any mountain ranges.

Somehow, three days before our scheduled departure all the cards fell in place. The ride was on but getting to Sacramento was the next challenge. I am not talking about the plane flight but the courage it took to pack up what you think you need to

live for two weeks on your bike and get to the starting line. This was the toughest part for me on any long ride. I keep a quote by TS Elliot in my billfold to read when my nerves get the best of me: *“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far they can go.”*

After we started riding out of Sacramento we were both treated to the hardest day we have ever experienced. Danny has ridden many 1200s as well as the Leadville 100, which is considered one of the hardest mountain bike races in the U.S. He said he would do Leadville any day but that he would never try to ride from Sacramento to Carson Pass again.

On the way to the pass, we both ran out of water and were cramping in the 90°-plus heat when a local

■Continued on next page

Pony Express (continued)



Clinkinbeard heads up an empty Nevada highway.

cyclist stopped and gave us two liters of water. This is one of the many random acts of kindness that we experienced on this trip. It helped us get near the top of the pass before we could ride no further as both our bodies essentially shut down. I really thought about turning around and quitting at that point. As I climbed into my emergency bivey near midnight, I pulled out another quote from my billfold. It was from Martin Buser, a three-time Iditarod Dog Sled Race champion. It keeps him from dropping out of a race: *“Always wait until morning before deciding to drop out. Things have a way of changing when the sun comes up.”*

When I got up in the morning after a long night of shivering in a tinfoil bag, Danny and I split four pieces of licorice for breakfast and headed up the pass. We got to the top and after descending 15 miles, we found a café and had a huge breakfast. It

is one of many things that fell into place despite having no idea that the café was there. Without it, we would have had very serious problems.

We pedaled down the road and piled up good miles over the next two days despite temperatures over 100°F as we still struggled to recover from that first day. We had to ingest water and salt on an hourly schedule to overcome our serious state of dehydration. I just kept telling myself if I could make it through the first four days, I could finish the whole ride.

The days kept getting a little bit better as we developed our rhythm and routine. Danny remained very upbeat despite later telling me he thought he would never make it longer than a couple of days (he could hardly walk when he was off the bike). The multiple mountain ranges of Nevada made us work for every mile

but it was much cooler at 5,000 to 6,000 feet of elevation.

Our next challenge was the Utah desert. We worried about this for days as we approached it. We were lucky to get an early start from the Nevada/Utah border and beat most of the heat. It was amazing to see the vast tracts of land with absolutely nothing on it. I called it stark beauty but Danny called it a wasteland.

The next sections through the rest of Utah to Casper, WY were the most psychologically challenging. Danny kept me going when I was ready to toss my bike off the mountain and walk back into town. The 30 miles to Eureka, UT were some of the hardest miles as we had been told it was “flat.” I stopped multiple times because I thought that I either had a flat tire or the brakes were rubbing. I later found out that we gained a great deal of elevation when

we were treated to 10 miles of the steepest downhill that I have ever experienced. The emotional highs were very high and the lows were very low.

A few days later, while in Farson, WY on Sunday of Labor Day Weekend, we were without food, the café was closed and nobody came to open the convenience store on time. After waiting for 2 hours for it to open, we bought some cans of Mountain Dew from the pop machine and counted the calories in the few peanut butter crackers we had before heading out for 77 miles up over South Pass (continental divide). I remember telling Danny that I had only 400 calories in food before we started to ride. He then stopped and gave a hitchhiker \$2.00 and a few peanut butter crackers. I couldn’t believe what he did, we didn’t have

■Continued on next page

Pony Express (continued)



A view of the buttes in Wyoming.

enough for us and he gave some away. I shook my head as I pedaled off thinking that this would be a very long day. A few miles later we see a sign for a yard sale and Danny says he was going to stop to see if they are selling donuts. I am amazed that there are people in the driveway as we approach. As Danny worked his magic, I see a couple of boxes of fruit snack bars and a big jug of Gatorade appear from under the table. She gave all of them to us but we each pitched in and made a “donation” to her garage sale. Somehow I got away without her name or writing down her address. She truly was our “guardian ange.”

We had a tough stretch into Casper due to heavy rain, wind, and RV traffic but it was not nearly as bad as some folks had predicted. That seemed to be the way the trip went. It was hot and very windy — as well as

much colder (even snow) — after we passed through the mountain passes.

Going east from Casper, the towns were much closer together and the mountains were behind us. It made getting food and water much easier. We adjusted our planning and followed the “Clink Schedule” of 60 miles before noon, 60 miles after noon, and bonus miles in the evening. Our speed increased and the time spent on the bike was cut by an hour or two per day. We also became more and more focused on what it would take to get to the end. If something was more than five feet off the road and we didn’t need to eat it, drink it, or sleep on it, we didn’t go. Our morning and evening routines were now taking only one-third of the time it did on the first few days. Everything we did was becoming much more efficient and methodical.

As we entered Nebraska

and I got the spare tire and tubes that I desperately needed, we began to get very homesick. We would spend our time at meals talking about home and family. I could see the pain and fatigue in Danny’s face as he told me he was ready to quit each of the first three days. I then discussed my thoughts on those early days and wondered out loud how we ever made it. I think we both knew it was only a matter of time to get to the finish but the Pony Express Trail was taking a psychological toll on us.

A few days later, we entered Kansas, crossed the Missouri River and rode the last of the more than 3,000km into St. Joseph for the finish at the Pony Express Museum. It was an amazing trip through some very desolate parts of our country. I agree with Danny that it was the people we met along the way that made it special. It started with people

who gave us water and food when we were near a crisis. It also included people who gave us directions and great advice on places to find food and shelter. Many folks also gave us encouragement as we traveled, but most of all, it took an amazing friend who gave up two weeks of his life to help me out on my dream to do this ride. Danny is someone that I would have never known if I didn’t like to ride my bike long distances. He knew when to change the subject when things were bad, when to keep me moving when I was doubting myself, when to tell jokes and laugh when I was down and to avoid confrontation when it would not help us down the road. Thank you Danny!

I saw a sign at a fair-ground near Eureka, NV at the end of a very tough day: *“If your dreams don’t scare you, they are not big enough”*

I think that says it all for me.

2007 Big Basin 200K Brevet

BY MAX POLETTA

Editor's note: This ride report dates from 2007; however, this ride is being held in 2009, and the report is offered for riders who are planning to attempt this challenging event.

About 35 of us rolled out of the Cupertino Bike Shop parking lot at 6am on Saturday, June 30. Bill Bryant and Lois Springsteen, Santa Cruz RBAs and creators of this Big Basin 200K, billed it as among the most difficult 200K in the US, with over 13,500ft of climbing. That's well over twice as much climbing per mile as a typical randonnée, more than Terrible Two—one of California's most difficult double centuries—and on par with Sandy Whittlesey's D2R2, which racks up 11,500ft in 170Km, albeit mostly on dirt roads.

I saw several faces I could name—Reed Walden, with whom I've ridden parts of several brevets; Ken Holloway, in whose company I covered a good fraction of the Davis 300K; Craig Robertson, who captained a tandem to a sub-24-hour first-place finish at the Santa Rosa 600K—and a few others who have become familiar over the course of the year.

Our large group stuck together for the first five or six miles, west on McClellan Road and north on Foothill Blvd. These were the only flat miles on the ride, and we sped along in the cool early

morning air. The sky was pale blue, lit by the rising sun on the far side of the Diablo Range. The day promised to be gorgeous.

A sharp left turn onto Moody Road, and the climbing began—gradual at first, then steep enough to warrant the small chainring. I would end up riding about a 100Km in the small chainring before the day was over. Reed, unsurprisingly, pushed the pace, and the rest of us tried to follow. A large deer lifted its head from the grass and looked at us, motionless, as we passed, but I think few others noticed. By the next cue, marked simply “Low gears!”, I looked around and counted just six others: Reed, Ken, Craig, a man named Jason, and two men whose names I didn't know, one on a carbon Trek and another on a bike with a fancy rear hub power meter. What little conversation there had been ended abruptly as the road pitched upward at an 18% grade.

I could hear the other men's breathing over my own. Craig and the Trek opened up a small gap, while Ken and power-hub man fell behind. I didn't think the pace was sustainable, but I decided I would stick with Reed, caution be damned. Despite his 57 years, Reed is an amazing athlete who puts in 15K miles/year, and staying in his company seemed like a good challenge.

Moody merged with Page Mill, one of the Bay Area's classic climbs and a

favorite stomping ground of Jobst Brandt, and we continued up the mountain. Craig and Mr. Trek disappeared around a turn, and suddenly I was alone with Reed and Jason. I usually climb these roads alone, and found that other cyclists' company brought out a new level of motivation. Jason fell back a little, and we passed Mr. Trek, who had flattened. I edged past Reed on a steep ramp, and suddenly only Craig was ahead of me. You're being foolish, I thought to myself.

But I felt great when we reached Skyline Drive (2200ft), and was happily surprised to see Craig up ahead, talking to Bill Bryant at the secret control. We had covered 30Km and about 2500ft of climbing in 1:20. Craig was saying something about how he had managed to shave half a pound from his titanium rig. Maybe when you're as skinny and fit as he is, half a pound starts to matter, but I'm not convinced.

Our foursome—Craig, Reed, Jason, and I—negotiated Skyline's rollers to Saratoga Summit (2600ft), then swung right onto Hwy 9 at Saratoga Gap. In its first 6 miles west of the Gap, Hwy 9 falls towards Santa Cruz at a 5% average grade, losing 1400ft before the intersection with Hwy 236. Perfect pavement, well-cambered turns, and a skilled paceline—what a descent!

Then it was back to the small chainring: the road

shrank to a single narrow lane and the pavement deteriorated to Massachusetts levels as Hwy 236 took us deep into the redwoods of Big Basin. These enormous trees are over 1500 years old—they were saplings during the sack of Rome, and thousand-year old giants when Constantinople fell!—and on this particular morning they were shrouded in fog, damp, eerily quiet. I let Craig and Reed pull away and admired the surroundings. Jason and I crested China Grade (1840ft), then relished the descent through the redwoods to the headquarters of Big Basin State Park. Craig and Reed had arrived a minute earlier and determined that there was no way for us to obtain a receipt to prove our arrival time. It was just 8:24, and the park store didn't open until 9am. [Editor's note: the club will have a staffed control there for 2009.] We simply wrote down the time on our brevet cards and started up the 3-mile climb to Little Basin Summit. Then a 5-mile descent took us to an intersection with Jamison Creek Road.

Jamison Creek was “the” climb of the day, 1500ft of elevation gain at a 15-18% grade. The road climbs gently for a while, then turns left and pitches sharply skyward. I panted and stuck to Reed's wheel. My legs burned and I stuck to Reed's wheel. Then I broke—I could stick to

■ Continued on next page

Big Basin 200K (continued)

that wheel no more. Slowly (we were climbing at about 9Km/h, so even a 20% speed difference is a crawl) Reed and Jason pulled away. After several minutes they were more than one turn above me, and I lost sight of them. On a couple particularly steep stretches my front wheel lifted perilously into the air, bringing back memories of Mix Canyon (here in California) and Hurricane Mountain (in New Hampshire).

By the time I reached the ridge I had entered a kind of trance-like climbing state. It wasn't yet time to coast—there were still a couple of miles of gentle climbing to the top of Empire Grade, with sweeping views of Big Basin to the east. Energized to have Jamison Creek behind me, I sprinted out of the saddle to try to catch my former companions. Up and over the crest, then down the other side of Empire Grade, sharp right onto Pine Flat Road—which is not at all flat and affords good speeds in a 50x12—and straight down Bonny Doon, twisty and steep. Twenty-six hundred feet straight down, and my brakes started to hiss. Between one turn and another I caught glimpses of the Pacific at the bottom of the gorge. I started to actually smell the sea! The road flattened out, big trees gave way to brush, and I was out in bright sun, one sandy bluff away from the ocean. I turned north onto Hwy 1, California's coastal

highway. Davenport, the turn-around point, lay just a mile away. I would be there by 10am.

I looked around for Reed and the others, but saw no sign of them. I was puzzled. I filled out my brevet card, mailed the requisite postcard, refilled my water bottles. And then, just as I was about to leave, Reed and Jason showed up. They had somehow overshot Davenport and added a mile or two to their ride. A few seconds later, Craig arrived too. He had missed the right turn onto Pine Flat Road from Empire Grade, and had added both distance and elevation gain to his brevet. Maybe, I mused, that crazy effort up Jamison Creek had starved their brains of oxygen.

I set off alone to give myself a bit of a head start on Bonny Doon. I was still on Hwy 1 when I saw Ken and Mr. Trek fighting the north wind into Davenport, then I turned left onto Bonny Doon and entered the shade and quiet of the forest. Other outbound riders appeared eventually, streaks of color accompanied by whirring freewheels and a loud whoosh of air. Almost everyone managed a nod or smile in the fraction of a second before we passed each other, giving me boost after boost as I pressed up the hill. I'm always impressed by the friendliness of the randonneuring crowd.

It wasn't until near the

top of Bonny Doon that Craig passed me, his pedal strokes smooth and strong. I expected Reed and Jason to come charging up behind me any minute now, but that didn't happen. Instead, just before Empire Grade, Mr. Trek sprinted past. He slowed down after passing me and I considered trying to catch him, but decided instead to stick to my own pace.

Big Basin appeared stunning once again from the top of Empire Grade, but soon, past the Ben Lomond forest service fire station, it was time for the big descent. I turned right onto Jamison Creek Road and the pavement literally fell away beneath me. The road was too twisty and poorly paved, and I didn't know it well enough, to allow high speeds, yet I had trouble staying under 50Km/h. I alternately pumped the front and rear brake to allow the rims to cool off, and still the pads hissed. I feared a blowout. The cracks and potholes numbed hands and feet. I swerved to avoid a patch of sand coming into a sharp left turn, and came to a stop in the dirt on the outer side of the bend, unnervingly close to the edge of a ravine.

What a relief to start climbing again, back up Hwy 236 towards Big Basin State Park! I passed a few locals out for a spin, crested the 5-mile climb to Little Basin Summit, and sped down through the redwoods to

park headquarters. It was a little past noon, and the cool morning silence had given way to a sunny circus scene. Families with children milled around in the headquarters parking lot, and I dismounted and walked my bike. I saw Craig and the Trek leave just as I arrived. Reed arrived a couple minutes later, and we stood in line for what seemed like an eternity to buy water and sodas.

Refreshed, we set off into the redwoods, up to the top of China Grade, and down the other side. Where mists had hung close to the ground a few hours earlier, now rays of sunshine poked through the big trees and lit the cracked pavement. Traffic was light on this side of the park, and Reed and I got to talking—our plans for Paris, our bike commutes, gear, and other things that bike nerds will talk about. In no time we were back on Hwy 9 for the climb to Saratoga Gap. It's a long way up, but never too steep. Much of it is shaded by redwoods, and much of the rest affords beautiful views. Both of us settled into a swift but sustainable pace, and conversation helped the climb go by quickly.

Maps claim that the saddle where Skyline meets Alpine and Page Mill is 400ft lower than Saratoga Summit, but it didn't feel that way to me, as Reed and I alternated pulls on Skyline's many rollers. No talk now—we

■ Continued on next page

Big Basin 200K (continued)

smelled the barn and pushed hard. Past the Christmas tree farm, up a little hill... places familiar from many joyrides. And then, at last, there it was: the sign for Page Mill, and the stop sign with the cryptic code that we had to write down on our brevet card, like kids on a treasure hunt, to prove that we'd come all this way rather than taking the shortcut down Hwy 9 via Redwood Gulch to Cupertino.

Page Mill is a tough climb, but it's also an exhilarating and varied descent, alternately wooded and exposed, with several splendid views of the southern San

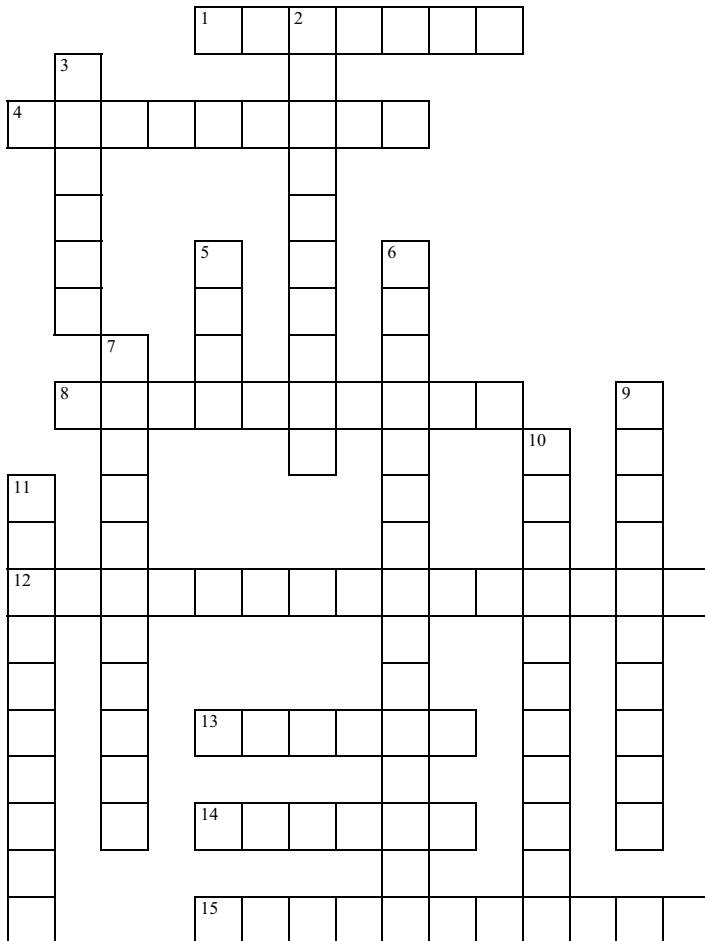
Francisco Bay. "That's what I've been waiting for all day!" exclaimed Reed as we caught our first glimpse of the bay, off to the left. But in an instant we were back in some trees and going faster than ever, the joy of speed making up for lost views: 74Km/h on one stretch, until I came into a sharp right a little too wide, found myself on the wrong side of the double yellow, and decided that a tad more prudence might be advisable.

The brakes hissed one last time on the rough pavement of Moody Road, and finally the grade flattened out and we were back on Foothill Expressway, with its lovely

olive and eucalyptus trees and towering bushes of oleander. I don't know many other expressways that are worth a detour on the way to work in the morning, but this one really is. Now all that was left was a short rise near the I-280 overpass—a not insubstantial little hill, to our tired legs—followed by a gentle descent on McClellan Road.

We almost missed Bill Bryant, sitting alone in a shady corner of the Cupertino Bike Shop parking lot. He welcomed us with an ice chest full of cold sodas and praised our strong ride. Our finishing time was 8:45, in-line with Bill's estimate that

this course requires a couple hours more than one's normal 200K time. Craig and the rider on the carbon Trek had arrived about 15 minutes ahead of us. We sat around for a good while enjoying the shade, the cold drinks, and the company of other people willing to talk ad nauseam about PBP. But no one else showed up, and I had little time to spare if I wanted to shower before cycling to catch my train home to Davis. So I bid Reed "au revoir" in Paris, thanked Bill for putting together a wonderful ride, and headed north on De Anza. Another great season of brevets was over.



WORDS TO THE WISE

Puzzle by Jennifer Wise

ACROSS

- 1 Mode of transport
- 4 Brevet ridden alone
- 8 RUSA member
- 12 President
- 13 Kilometre hog
- 14 Timed touring ride
- 15 Ticket to ride

DOWN

- 2 Ride break point
- 3 Head gear
- 5 Sustenance
- 6 Brevet series achiever
- 7 ARA 2008 Recipient
- 9 Belonging
- 10 Butt balm
- 11 Measure of distances ridden

For solution go to Announcements at the RUSA Website.

PHOTO GALLERY



Photographer | Kevin Turinsky

Riders on the way to Contrôle #1, at Vagabond Blues in Palmer, during the May 2008 300K.

You probably know Wasilla, Alaska as the hometown of Sarah Palin. It's also one of the scenic towns along Alaska's 300K route.

Alaska RBA Kevin Turinsky, who snapped the photograph, writes: "The photo shows Bob Voris, previous RBA for Alaska and PBP ancien, and John Ingold, pre-eminent long-distance rider and all-around-great-guy. They're at 25K into a full day on the bike, heading into the

first control in historic Palmer, Alaska on an ACP-sanctioned course designed by Bob. They're riding in front of a fresh spring dusting of snow on the Twins of the Chugach Mountains, having just crossed over the Kinik River. From Palmer the ride continues through Wasilla and Sutton, back through Palmer, and returns to the start in Chugiak."

Kevin continues: "Last year was my first year as an RBA. I started randonneuring

four years ago and absolutely fell in love with it. I was immediately drawn to the adventure and challenge of it. I liked it so much that when the previous RBA decided to step down after 15 some years, I jumped at the chance. It's been a ton of work designing new routes, and designing them still takes me much longer than I anticipate. But of our comparatively small road system up here, we've got some wonderful riding. I'm having a great time expanding

the number of brevet, permanent, and populaire courses up here. I hope that as we get more approved routes up here, riders from Outside will be tempted to pack up their bikes and make the journey up here to come ride under the Midnight Sun with us. We've got some amazing terrain and spectacular scenery."

"If you come to ride some of the longer brevets up here, you can probably leave your SON hub and lights at home!" Kevin says.

American Randonneur

Randonneurs USA Member Souvenir Order Form

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	SIZE	QTY	TOTAL	S & H
RUSA CLASSIC LOGO JERSEY	SHORT-SLEEVE TOURING JERSEY: S-M-L-XL-XXL	\$65.00				
RUSA LONG-SLEEVE JERSEY	LONG-SLEEVE RUSA JERSEY S-M-L-XL-XXL	\$75.00				
RUSA PBP 2007 JERSEY	SHORT SLEEVE JERSEY: Size XXL only	\$65.00				
SHORT SLEEVE WOOL JERSEY	MENS SIZES: L - XL - XXL WOMENS SIZES: S - M - L	\$90.00				
LONG SLEEVE WOOL JERSEY	MENS SIZES: M - L - XL - XXL WOMENS SIZES: S - M - L	\$95.00				
RUSA SLEEVELESS WIND VEST	RUNS SMALL: S-M-XL-XXL	\$55.00				
RUSA POLO SHIRT	WHITE WITH EMBROIDERED LOGO: S-M-L-XL	\$27.00				
RUSA T-SHIRT	WHITE SHORT-SLEEVE: S-M-L-XL	\$12.00				
RUSA FLECHE T-SHIRT	WHITE SHORT SLEEVE with Black Trim: M-L-XL	\$12.00				
RUSA WATERBOTTLE	WHITE 28 OZ WATERBOTTLE	\$5.00				
RUSA CYCLING SHORTS	LYCRA BLACK SHORTS: S-M-L-XL	\$45.00				
RUSA LAPEL PIN	SINGLE PIN	\$2.00				
RUSA LAPEL PINS	2-9 PINS	\$1.75				
RUSA LAPEL PINS	10 OR MORE PINS	\$1.25				
RUSA REFLECTIVE SASH	SAYRE Sash: Yellow: Limit 2 pp	\$5.00				
RUSA REFLECTIVE ANKLE BANDS	SAYRE: Yellow Velcro: Sold in pairs: Limit: 2 pr pp	\$2.00pr				
REFLECTIVE SCOTCHLITE TAPE	9" Strip of 3M Reflective Adhesive Tape	50¢				
RUSA REFLECTIVE YIELD SIGN	YELLOW & ORANGE REFLECTIVE TRIANGLE: Limit 2 pp	\$5.00				
RUSA SOCKS	SNUG FITTING CYCLING SOCKS: S/M or L/XL	\$10.00pr				
RUSA COTTON CAP	WHITE-BLUE-RED CAP WITH RUSA LOGO: S/M or L/XL	\$16.50				
RUSA WOOL CAP	WHITE-BLUE-RED CAP WITH RUSA LOGO: S/M or L/XL	\$27.50				
RUSA WOOL CAP w/ EAR-FLAPS	WHITE-BLUE-RED CAP WITH RUSA LOGO: S/M or L/XL	\$31.50				
RUSA DUFFEL BAG	WHITE LIGHTWEIGHT NYLON WITH RED TRIM	\$10.00				
RUSA CERAMIC MUG	WHITE 10oz MUG WITH RUSA LOGO	\$8.00				
PBP 1999 YEARBOOK	PBP 1999 STORIES & RESULTS	\$7.00				
RUSA HANDBOOK	MEMBER RULES, REGULATIONS & ADVICE	\$6.00				
RUSA LOGO DECAL	3" x 5" REMOVABLE VINYL COLOR LOGO DECAL	\$1.00				
RUSA TOP TUBE DECAL	5" x 1" REMOVABLE (BLUE & WHITE LETTERING)	\$0.25				
PBP 2007 DECAL	3" x 5" REMOVABLE VINYL COLOR LOGO DECAL	\$1.00				

Number of Items

SHIPPING & HANDLING (USA):

\$5.00 for first item. Add \$1.00 for each additional item
(except decals, strips or under 10 pins)

To order online, visit the RUSA Store at
www.rusa.org

Subtotal

S & H

Total

NAME _____ RUSA MEMBER # _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____ EMAIL _____ DATE _____

PAYMENT METHODS:

PAYPAL: www.paypal.com and send payment to souvenirs@rusa.org

CHECK: payable to Randonneurs USA; send to RUSA Souvenirs, 10 Bliss Mine Rd, Middletown, RI 02842

Questions? Email us: souvenirs@rusa.org

1 20 2009

American Randonneur



Randonneurs USA Membership Form

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!

Renewal New Member

Name : _____ RUSA # _____
Address : _____
City : _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
Country : _____ Tel: (_____) _____
E-mail: _____
Local Club : (full name) _____
Birth Date : _____ Gender (M/F): _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Randonneurs USA keeps personal member information private.

Membership Types and Terms: Please Check One

- Individual Membership
One Year \$20.00 Two Years \$40.00 Three Years \$60.00
Foreign Membership (if residence and mailing address is outside the United States)
One Year \$30.00 Two Years \$60.00 Three Years \$90.00
Household Membership (limit two names; please add the second person's information below)
One Year \$30.00 Two Years \$60.00 Three Years \$90.00

- Complete this section for Household Membership only -
Name : _____ RUSA # _____
E-mail: _____
Birth Date : _____ Gender (M/F): _____
Signature _____ Date _____

Memberships are active for the calendar year. Members agree to abide by the membership policy.

If RUSA publishes a RUSA Membership Directory, may we list your name and mailing address?
Yes No

Make check payable to Randonneurs USA in US Dollars. Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Send this form and payment to:

Don Hamilton
RUSA Membership Office
3078 Wakeshire Drive
Dublin Ohio 43017

Please allow two weeks for processing.