



AMERICAN RANDONNEUR



Fall 2013 • vol. 16 #3





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American Randonneur Magazine
Volume Sixteen, Issue Number 3—Fall 2013

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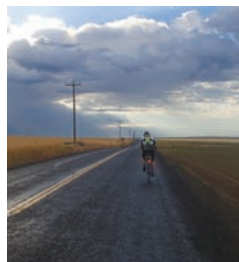
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On the cover



Chris Heg (RUSA #5106) took this picture of Gary Sparks (RUSA #6203) from British Columbia riding on the second day of the Seattle to Whitefish Montana 1000k on June 29.

From the President

by Mike Dayton

You've heard this many times before, but it bears repeating: our organization is run entirely by volunteers. Besides our hardworking RBAs, we have dozens of volunteers staffing our various Committees, including Membership, Rules, Permanents, Newsletter, Souvenirs, Team Randonnées, Medals & Awards, and Routes.

Have a look at the Officials link on RUSA's website. You'll know many of the volunteers listed there. They're riders just like you. They volunteer because they love our sport. The next chance you get, please thank them for the hours they devote to our organization both on and off the bike. And pat yourself on the back if you own a permanent. You're also a RUSA volunteer who plays a vital role in RUSA's health and growth.

I mention volunteers because RUSA's board is comprised of volunteers, and it's election time. This is your opportunity, as a member, to elect two board members. If you're an RBA, you also get to vote for the Liaison who represents you on RUSA's Board. Please show them some love and cast your vote – it's simple and painless.

You'll find the candidate's statements in this issue, as well as a paper ballot and information for casting an electronic vote.

Our election ballots may still be on paper, but more and more RUSA is moving toward electronic submissions. You've probably noticed how easy it is now to apply online for RUSA awards and order items from RUSA's store. That's in large part thanks to the efforts of James Kuehn, who for years has performed countless updates to our database and website. Mr. Kuehn and Don Bennett, another website volunteer, have been

changing the wording on the awards pages of the website to eliminate the paper application option. Mr. Kuehn has been updating the script as necessary to make sure things work seamlessly.

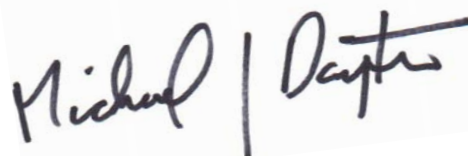
Summer is the high season for grand randonnées, and you'll find several ride reports in this issue on 1200Ks both domestic and foreign. Enjoy! Meantime, RUSA is pleased to announce two new grand randonnées here in the U.S.

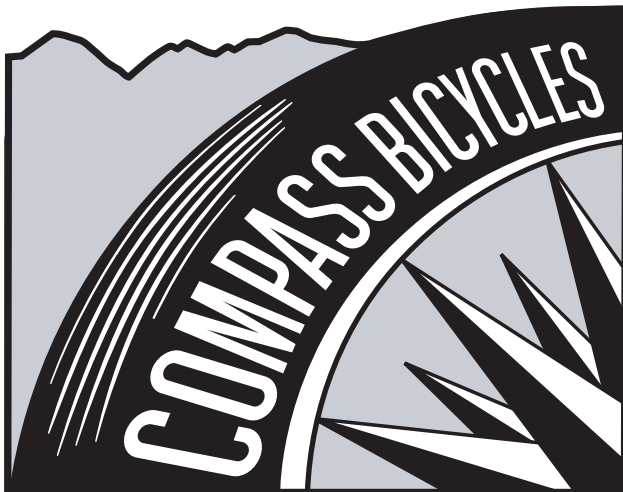
Bill Bryant and Lois Springsteen in California's Santa Cruz region will host the Central Coast 1200K in August 2014. The route features a tour through California redwood forests and along the picturesque Pacific Coast Highway.

For those folks who don't want the fun to stop after a mere 1200K, check out the newly approved ride of Nashville, TN RBA Jeff Sammons. In September 2014, he will host the Natchez Trace 1500K, which follows the national parkway from Tennessee to Mississippi.

Our sport recently gained national attention when NPR's Weekend Edition featured a story on randonneuring, complete with on-the-road interviews of riders in Oregon. If you missed the story online, you'll find a link on the RUSA website.

That's not the only media coverage randonneuring has received lately. Check out the newspaper article on page 13, which is reprinted with permission.





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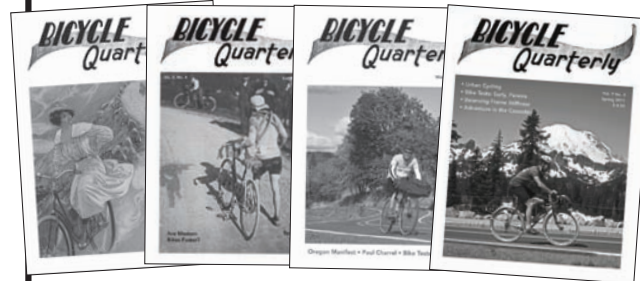
700C: 32, 29, 25, 23 mm

650B: 42, 38, 32 mm

Compass 26": 44 mm, 37 mm

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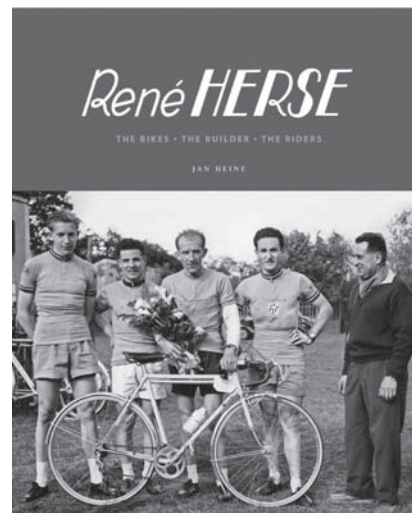


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New RUSA Members

RUSA #	Name	City	State/Prov.
8703	Jonathan Fertig	Jamaica Plain	MA
8704	Jon A Webb	Pittsburgh	PA
8705	Kim Alan Kindlespire	Pleasant Grove	UT
8706	Ray Dahl	Taylorville	UT
8707	Jason P DeVarennes	Woburn	MA
8708	Eric A Lyngaas	Minneapolis	MN
8709	Julia Walker	Fremont	CA
8710	Alec Schwarzburg	Wasilla	AK
8711	Burnley R Willis	Anchorage	AK
8712	Greg P Bouck	Asheville	NC
8713	Cara Larch Wells	Orlando	FL
8714	Bob Prudhomme	Cottage Grove	MN
8715	Wesley Wright	Portland	OR
8716	Eric O Rogers	Eagle River	AK
8717	Monica Berlin	Castaic	CA
8718	Elvira Hnatov	Great Neck	NY
8719	James Brian Mooney	Swarthmore	PA
8720	Richard W Cavin	San Benito	TX
8721	Robert C Freeman	Guthrie	OK
8722	Donald Richard Goetz	Subiaco	AR
8723	Robert H Beger, Jr	Bartlett	TN

RUSA #	Name	City	State/Prov.
8724	Ben Newell	Brooklyn	NY
8725	Dan Brown	Kempton	PA
8726	Kirk Gaburo	Saint Paul	MN
8727	Kenneth E Herbert	Brooklyn	NY
8728	Mike L Hoch	Eden Prairie	MN
8729	Jill Hueckman	Aurora	CO
8730	Craig Bailey	Big Spring	TX
8731	Jill Parsons	Anchorage	AK
8732	Larry B Buck	Bloomington	MN
8733	Donald F Cardwell	Dearborn	MI
8734	James Alexander	Niles	MI
8735	Matt Tanaka	Anchorage	AK
8736	Thomas R Dowdle	Woodbury	MN
8737	Yrjo Peter Roovers	Wasilla	AK
8738	Joseph A Jaffe	Geneva	NY
8739	Kristen Gilbert	Anchorage	AK
8740	Paulo Sierra	Anchorage	AK
8741	D Lane	Arlington	MA
8742	Mark Soderstrom	Syracuse	NY
8743	Erwin R Berglund	Fridley	MN
8744	Jeffrey Christian Meehan	Jamaica Plain	MA
8745	Jim Grace	Cary	NC
8746	Frank Todino	Hollywood	FL
8747	Laura Gonzalez	Hollywood	FL
8748	Matthew Costuros	North Tonawanda	NY
8749	Matthew P Sallman	Farmington Hills	MI
8750	Michael L Moberly	Anchorage	AK
8751	D J Moberly	Anchorage	AK
8752	Teri Wooten	Anchorage	AK
8753	Cable Starlinmgs	Anchorage	AK
8754	Shawn Wendling	Anchorage	AK
8755	Trish Jenkins	Anchorage	AK
8756	Bob Gengler	Eagle River	AK
8757	Terry Slaven	Wasilla	AK
8758	Suzanne Appolito	Howe	TX
8759	Daniel C Powell	Apex	NC
8760	Thomas Niccum	Eden Prairie	MN
8761	Tim Larsen	Hamilton	NJ
8762	Dennis VanStee	Rochester	MI
8763	Stephen Aycock	Buffalo	NY
8764	Amanda Mantino	Buffalo	NY
8765	Matt T Hassman	Harrisonburg	VA
8766	Ernie Bayles	Ithaca	NY
8767	Kevin G Higgins	Kingwood	TX
8768	Robert Lindner	Cibolo	TX
8769	Rahul S Kaul, Sr	Plantation	FL
8770	Thomas Ehlman II	Rochester	MN
8771	Paul B Webb	Lynchburg	VA
8772	Chris Patoir	Glen Rock	NJ
8773	Derrick Smith	Sherman	TX



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8774	Daniel J Rock	Hillarys	Aus	8824	Michael D Gale	Fort Lauderdale	FL
8775	Shalimar Legaspi Crosby	Raleigh	NC	8825	Xavier Schlee	Anchorage	AK
8776	Matt Stockl	Chicago	IL	8826	Brett Thunstrom	Zimmerman	MN
8777	Robert F Tulloh	Austin	TX	8827	Carl Trimble	Coral Springs	FL
8778	Alexis Gross	Ft Worth	TX	8828	Andrew Wilson	Seattle	WA
8779	Peter Radosta	Erieville	NY	8829	Steve K Rayes	Eagle River	AK
8780	James Alvin Brown	Austin	TX	8830	Mike McConnell	Phoenix	MD
8781	Joseph E Hooton	Fort Worth	TX	8831	Paul Ivanov	Albany	CA
8782	Douglas Dorland	Palmer	AK	8832	Kathleen D Worthley	Anchorage	AK
8783	Richard Gonzalez	Ann Arbor	MI	8833	Donald W Worthley	Anchorage	AK
8784	Brian N Walters	Portland	OR	8834	Conni Schlee	Anchorage	AK
8785	Andrew DiPietro	Seattle	WA	8835	Ben D Harris	Anchorage	AK
8786	Art Holden	Sioux Falls	SD	8836	Daniel Frederick	Anchorage	AK
8787	Ozzy Vidal	Gainesville	FL	8837	L K Oshiro	Gilroy	CA
8788	Douglas K Long	FT Hood	TX	8838	Kimberly K Paul	Redding	CA
8789	Steve S Schwartz	Milwaukee	WI	8839	Larry A Vanderlinden	Anchorage	AK
8790	Mark W Bunn	Wasilla	AK	8840	Josh Davis	Springdale	AR
8791	Jim Baker	Belvedere	CA	8841	Bob Newman	Gainesville	FL
8792	Clayton P Smith	The Villages	FL	8842	Jennifer L. Zeuli	Arlington	MA
8793	Henry A Collins	Saugerties	NY	8843	Kent Crowell	Midland	TX
8794	Chris Behrens	Seattle	WA	8844	Larry E Wilson	Tomball	TX
8795	Charlie Sassara	Anchorage	AK	8845	David Clark Poulter	Coon Rapids	MN
8796	Todd Nelson	Pleasanton	CA	8846	Deborah Fryer	Boulder	CO
8797	Andre Dusablon	Lacey	WA	8847	Lon Riesberg	Boulder	CO
8798	George Galindo	Archer	FL	8848	Chris Jones	Waco	TX
8799	Douglas R Popovich, Jr	Virginia Beach	VA	8849	Vu Dang	Daly City	CA
8800	Steve Richards	La Crescenta	CA	8850	Michael J Radan	Rockville	MD
8801	Cs Senthil	Coimbatore	India	8851	Hans Evan Jatzke	Brooklyn	NY
8802	Ks Rajkumar	Coimbatore	India	8852	Miguel A Lopez	Calexico	CA
8803	James W Ross	Bradenton	FL	8853	Miguel A Lopez, Jr	Calexico	CA
8804	Marian G Ross	Bradenton	FL	8854	Kristina Frost	Oakland	CA
8805	Michael Scott Click	Raleigh	NC	8855	Mark Wm Davis	Bagley	IA
8806	Trevor W King	Cardiff By The Sea	CA	8856	Twiggs J Tanner	Milledgeville	GA
8807	Mackenzie Elizabeth Gloven	San Diego	CA	8857	Spencer S G Haughton-James	Lauderdale Lakes	FL
8808	Mark Mackenzie Gloven	San Diego	CA	8858	Greg A Pedersen	Beaverton	OR
8809	Jan Gloven	San Diego	CA	8859	Brian J Gangelhoff	Oakland	CA
8810	Eric M Guillemot	Victoria	BC Can	8860	Philip A Hastings	Austin	TX
8811	Berry L Mobley	Columbia	SC	8861	Franz Kelsch	Gilroy	CA
8812	Alexandra Leach Levin	Berkeley	CA	8862	Jon Gingrich	San Francisco	CA
8813	Alex Roberts	Fayetteville	AR	8863	Elgin J Glanzer	Abilene	KS
8814	Tim D Taylor	Melbourne	Aus	8864	Linda Brooks	Kansas City	MO
8815	Janet Smalley	Anchorage	AK	8865	Roland Tam	San Marino	CA
8816	Nicholas C Goffee	Somerville	MA	8866	Joe M Simon	New Orleans	LA
8817	Jason B Williams	Chicago	IL	8867	Henry K Gong	Fremont	CA
8818	Robert A Perks	Ventura	CA	8868	Ernest E Wang	Chicago	IL
8819	Loy E Donaldson	Anchorage	AK	8869	Joann E MacFarlane	San Mateo	CA
8820	Jason M. Ham	Otis Orchards	WA	8870	Nick M Lyons	Los Angeles	CA
8821	Benoit Guizar	San Diego	CA	8871	Susan Bromley	San Francisco	CA
8822	Bruce J Meyers	Westerville	OH	8872	Angela M Navarro	San Francisco	CA
8823	Austin J Hinton	Portland	OR	8873	Vanessa A Nirode	Brooklyn	NY

New RUSA Members *continued*

RUSA #	Name	City	State/Prov.	RUSA #	Name	City	State/Prov.
8874	Pablo Gonzalez-Gandolfi	Woodinville	WA	8891	Michael P Wallin	Northfield	MN
8875	Brian K Benson	Seattle	WA	8892	Claire Dooley	San Francisco	CA
8876	Lanier Meeks	Warner Robins	GA	8893	Devin M Mortensen	Carlsbad	CA
8877	Josh D Downer	Berkeley	CA	8894	Amanda Gonzalez	San Francisco	CA
8878	Matthew Izen	Santa Rosa	CA	8895	Chris N Edie	Tasmania	Aus
8879	Robert OConnell	Port Orange	FL	8896	John C Hart	Mattawan	MI
8880	Bob Otwell	Traverse City	MI	8897	Barb C Hart	Mattawan	MI
8881	Daniell B Doyle	Oak Hill	WV	8898	Loren L Larson	Phoenix	AZ
8882	Michael Towner	Palmer	AK	8899	Tiffany Scanlon	Lutherville-Timonium	MD
8883	Anne Green	Nevada City	CA	8900	Howard Hurd	Aledo	TX
8884	Stanley P Shreve	Rochester	MN	8901	Mark E Segal, MD	Lucas	TX
8885	Craig Plesco	Saint Clair Shores	MI	8902	Andrew J Sasinowski	Saline	MI
8886	David A G Branson	Seattle	WA	8903	Kristy Marie Carter	Asheville	NC
8887	Mark David Carter	Owings	MD	8904	Nicholas F Legan	Boulder	CO
8888	Cesar Archuleta	Carver	MN	8905	Mike R Breen	Seattle	WA
8889	Michael Boyco	Hollywood	FL	8906	Derek W Blakeslee	Kenmore	WA
8890	Amy L Benson	Ellicott City	MD	8907	Richard R. Robinson	Petaluma	CA

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8908	Aaron S Hawkins	Beacon	NY
8909	Sharon L Lacy	Capitola	CA
8910	Michael Tyson	Alexandria	VA
8911	Sonja Myers	Alexandria	VA
8912	Geoff P Donnelly	Houston	TX
8913	Gregg Seider	Lake Worth	FL
8914	Eleanor Strehl	Brooklyn	NY
8915	Billy D Dodson	Odessa	TX
8916	Puck Ananta	San Francisco	CA
8917	Dale E Jackson	Bloomington	IL
8918	William D. Brown	Antioch	CA
8919	Cody Lee Stitt	Manhattan Beach	CA
8920	Martin Nolasco	Hollywood	FL
8921	Jan Rybar	Apple Valley	MN
8922	Jeffrey N Brown	Caddo Mills	TX
8923	Jonathan Gorstein	Seattle	WA
8924	Terrence James Moons, Jr	Sunrise	FL
8925	Christian M. Liddy	Tavares	FL
8926	Mark C. Stevens	Anchorage	AK
8927	Jennifer P. Hamm	Seaford	VA

RUSA #	Name	City	State/Prov.
8928	James Edward Geray, Jr	Gainesville	TX
8929	Victoria E Brown	Nampa	ID
8930	Patrick Herlihy	Redwood City	CA
8931	Greg Bullock	New Egypt	NJ
8932	Jane M Brown	Fleetwood	PA
8933	James P Skon	Mount Vernon	OH
8934	Carrie Goff	Dallas	TX
8935	Dzung A. Dang	San Jose	CA
8936	Kevin Campagna	Dallas	TX
8937	Svetlana Wiesen	San Clemente	CA
8938	Chuck Clark	Greensboro	NC
8939	Julie Clark	Greensboro	NC
8940	Jack D Draper II	Holland	MI
8941	Sam P Burchett, Jr	Lexington	KY
8942	Ainsley K Wagoner	Lexington	KY
8943	Jacob D Lopez	San Diego	CA
8944	Paul Ammann	Vienna	VA
8945	Noah Schabacker	Boulder	CO
8946	Randy A Bunting	La Grange	KY
8947	Greg DeMuth	Grand Rapids	MI

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2013 RUSA Board Elections

It is time again for our annual elections. These RUSA members have been nominated for positions on the RUSA Board. The general board members serve three-year terms, while the RBA Liaison, nominated by the RBAs, serves a one-year term. (Remember, only RBAs can vote for the RBA Liaison position.) See pages 10-12 to learn more about each nominee, then use the Election Forms to cast your votes. RUSA depends on our volunteers to provide its leadership and operations, and in turn these good folks depend on your vote. If you'd like to vote online, go to RUSA's Website at www.rusa.org.



Bill Bryant
RUSA #7

I have been a randonneur for a long time and the sport has given me a lot back in return. I am proud of having helped American randonneuring grow since RUSA's inception in 1998. Over the years I have done many of the jobs at RUSA HQ and have a strong understanding of how our organization works and what our sport needs to continue onward into the future. I am "rested, ready, and willing" to continue working for the membership.

- RUSA founders' group, 1998
- RUSA Board member 1998 to 2006
- RUSA President 2004-2005
- RUSA representative, quadrennial Randonneurs Mondiaux meetings 1999-2011
- Primary writer & editor RUSA Handbook for Members
- Author of numerous articles in American Randonneur and RUSA website pages; Editing team member on 1999 & 2003 RUSA PBP Yearbooks; Member of ACP's 2011 PBP writing & translating team
- Current member RUSA Rules & Team Randonnée Committees
- RUSA Membership Co-coordinator 1998-2000
- Creator of R-12, P-12, Ultra-Randonneur, and La Société Charly Miller awards
- Organizing Committee for first Gold Rush Randonnée; control co-captain or volunteer at all editions of GRR
- Co-RBA with Lois Springsteen for the Santa Cruz Randonneurs; organizers of numerous brevets, team randonnées, populaires, and permanents since 2004. Organizers of Central Coast 1000k in 2010, and 1000k/1200k in 2014
- Participant 150+ randonneuring events since 1983; PBP finisher 1983 & 1999
- Recipient 2006 American Randonneur Award



Janice Chernekoff
RUSA #1172

RUSA has done a fine job of expanding offerings and attracting new riders. I am interested in contributing to discussions and plans for future developments, particularly with regard to encouraging riders who aren't as confident of their ability to complete

brevets. I would like to inspire more riders to join in the fun and earn the satisfaction of completing some of our events.

As co-editor of the 2011 PBP Rider Reports and Memories, I had the pleasure of reading many inspiring narratives about our premier event. I have also been studying ride reports on blogs and in American Randonneur. Clearly, ride reports inspire readers and draw our community together around common goals and values. If elected to the board, I will encourage writers and look for additional ways to publish our stories.

Randonneuring has not only brought me pleasure, but has also become a central part of my life and self-identity. If elected, I will work cooperatively with other board members to provide the range of events that will allow others to have this same rich experience of randonneuring.



John Lee Ellis
RUSA #153

Being nominated for a Board position is an honor, because it's a chance to contribute at the national level to an organization that is so focused on its members. I've been struck over the years how well RUSA Volunteers work together and get things done, all with that amicability that characterizes randonneuring. That is a huge reason, I think, for RUSA's steady growth in riders and events over the last 15 years.

A bit about my background ... I've been riding bre-



vets for a while, including a number of 1200k's (and shorter brevets), from Boston-Montreal-Boston to Alaska's Big Wild Ride, including the two I organize: the Colorado Last Chance and the Colorado High Country 1200. I've been Colorado RBA since RUSA's founding. Our Colorado schedule has grown from a simple SR series to a "banquet" of events spanning all but the winter months. To fill in the gaps, I've created a number of permanents, some mountain-oriented, some winter-rideable. I've also been RBA Liaison for a few years. It's been highly rewarding and, I hope, useful.

RUSA continues to grow ... in events, regions, and awards (as well as membership, of course) – all opportunities for our members. I would appreciate your vote and this chance to contribute.



Lynne Fitzsimmons
RUSA #3821

I would be pleased and honored to represent you as a member of the RUSA board. As a member of the board, I would work to make RUSA operations more transparent, and provide a process for members' contributions and concerns to be heard, acknowledged, and addressed. I would be there for the members who enjoy participating in RUSA activities, but maybe don't have an SR or 1200k as a goal, and I would work toward ways to attract additional members outside our current demographic.

I stumbled into randonneuring in 2007 and have continued to enjoy participating and volunteering ever since. At the local level, I have volunteered at many events and organized several rides. I have also created 4 permanents. At the national level, I am currently volunteering on the Routes committee. As for riding, I have completed 2 SRs and 3 R-12s.

My professional experience as a Human Factors Engineer/Usability Engineer will benefit the RUSA Board. My work requires me to listen to and observe people trying to do something with the software on their computers, and then design ways to make it easier and better. This skill carries over to organizational process understanding and improvement.

I am currently on the executive board of the NW Bicycle Safety Council in Portland and in the past have served as treasurer for a very large international professional conference, and as a Girl Scout leader.



Mark Thomas
RUSA #64

In 1998, the year that Randonneurs USA was founded, I rode my first brevet. Since that time, I have been fortunate to participate in events in 20 different states and 14 countries. Those travels have shown me varying styles of riders participating in different types of events on a wide range of bicycles, united by the common threads of randonneuring.

As a volunteer with Randonneurs USA and with the Seattle International Randonneurs, I have sought to work with others to promote opportunities for more riders to participate in more events in more places around the country, with a focus on the camaraderie of our sport and with an eye out for each other's safety. I would be honored to have your vote to serve on the RUSA board for the next three years to help support the great RBAs and tireless volunteers that keep randonneuring vibrant in the US.

RUSA Election Ballot

Three positions on the RUSA Board of Directors are on the ballot.

Members may vote for TWO candidates from the nominees listed below.

Check the box to cast your vote. You may also vote online at www.RUSA.org.

- Bill Bryant, RUSA #7**
- Janice Chernekoff, RUSA #1172**
- John Lee Elliis, RUSA #153**
- Lynne Fitzsimmons, RUSA #3821**
- Mark Thomas, RUSA #64**

Your Name: _____
RUSA #: _____

Please send this form to:
William Beck
17719 Foxmoor Drive
Woodbine, MD 21797

Ballots are due to the RUSA secretary by November 15.



2013 RUSA Board RBA-L Candidates



Spencer Klaassen | RBA Liaison Candidate RUSA #1989

I first learned about this sport on the Andes Mountains in South America while touring with a British couple. They talked about this mysterious ride called PBP. I was amazed at the distances that they talked about cycling. The next year, when I was in the UK, I joined an Audax UK 200 K on a day off from touring. I was amazed that I could ride that far in a single day.

I joined RUSA in 2003 and did my first brevets with

the Kansas City group. I learned a great deal from Bob Burns (KCUC RBA) about distance cycling. I, as they say, “drank the rando punch” and was officially hooked. I have done a fair amount of brevets in the US and abroad. In the process of these rides, I have learned a great deal about myself and the world around me.

When the Nebraska Brevet Tour was retired due to medical issues of the former RBA, I just couldn’t see those wonderful rides gone forever. I was granted the ability to serve as the RBA and enjoyed putting the events on this year.

These experiences made me realize that it is time for me to give back to my RUSA family. I don’t claim to be the best cyclists, smartest person, or the most experienced RBA. I am far from that. I can only promise that I will do my best in working with other RBAs to support them as they help grow our wonderful organization.

RUSA RBA-L Election Ballot

The RBA-Liaison, nominated by the RBAs, serves a one-year term. (Remember, only RBAs can vote for the RBA Liaison position.)

If you’re an RBA, you may vote for ONE candidates from the nominees listed below.

Check the box to cast your vote. You may also vote online at www.RUSA.org.

- Spencer Klaassen, RUSA #1989
- Bob Riggs, RUSA #2739

Your Name: _____
RUSA #: _____

Please send this form to:
William Beck
17719 Foxmoor Drive
Woodbine, MD 21797

Ballots are due to the RUSA secretary
by November 15.



Bob Riggs | RBA Liaison Candidate RUSA # 2739

My name is Bob Riggs. I am the RBA for Houston, candidate for the position of RBA Liaison.

I grew up and raised my family in Texas, and started cycling some once the kids got older. I became involved in randonneuring in 2005 when Kay Ogden started the Houston Randonneurs, and became RBA when she moved away a year later. Since then, our club has hosted over 170 brevets, populaires, and fleches. Thanks to these rides, I have been fortunate to meet and ride with more great people than I can begin to count.

If elected, I look forward to getting to know as many as possible of my fellow RBAs, hearing their ideas, and working with them and the Board to help make American brevets even better.

Randonneurs take the long view

Editor's note: American Randonneur occasionally reprints articles about randonneuring that appear in other media. This article from the San Francisco Chronicle is reprinted with permission.

One evening last month, Martin Meyer of Oakland sent his cycling partner a text message: "Hello Jenny. We will pick you up tomorrow morning at 4:45 - and then go on a longer recreational bike ride."

That ride, organized by the San Francisco Randonneurs, was, strictly speaking, "recreational." It was also 373 miles long. Meyer and two friends finished it in 38 hours, including a one-hour nap and a hot shower, squeaking in under the 40-hour limit.

For Meyer, 49, the ride was part of his induction into the sport of randonneuring, a strenuous form of bicycle touring in which cyclists work their way up to organized training rides, or brevets, that can cover hundreds of miles at a stretch.

Some aim to tackle the sport's ultimate challenge, a 760-mile continuous ride like the Gold Rush Randonnée, which Meyer and 100 others will attempt next week in Davis.

"Everybody who rides a bike has ridden a century (a 100-mile ride in a day), but that's where it stops for 99 percent of people," said Meyer, who began cycling for exercise last year, and heard about randonneuring from a friend who told him that his new steel touring bike looked perfect for riding brevets. Meyer had to Google the term to find out what he meant.

When he did, he became intrigued with randonneuring's romantic history. The sport began in early 20th century France, where adventurous amateur riders were trying to prove the bicycle a valid means



Kitty Goursole

of long-distance transit. Randonneur is French for "wanderer," and true to its meaning, the sport draws independent-minded cyclists who enjoy testing how far and how long they can go under their own power.

Today, the world center of randonneuring is still France, where thousands gather every four years to ride its premier event, a 760-mile (1,200-kilometer) brevet called Paris-Brest-Paris, or PBP.

U.S. interest

But the sport has gained popularity in the U.S. since a national organization was founded in 1998, with



The long view (continued)

the Bay Area having an especially large, and growing, contingent.

"There's been a huge jump in the number of riders," said Rob Hawks, 56, director of the San Francisco Randonneurs, noting that about 100 people participated in the club's events in 2008; they now draw 10 times that number.

Local clubs

Local brevets are also organized by the Santa Cruz Randonneurs, the Santa Rosa Cycling Club and the Davis Bike Club, host of the Gold Rush Randonnée. "I patterned our Gold Rush after PBP," said Dan Shadoan, 66, of the Davis club, who was inspired to offer a long brevet in California after riding PBP with his wife on a tandem in 1991.

Like all brevets, the Gold Rush Randonnée is not a race. But it must be completed in a time frame - 90 hours, or just under four days - that requires riders to pedal almost around the clock, stopping at designated points, called controles, for food, a shower or a quick snooze on a wrestling mat.

The route covers some of the most remote ground in northeastern California before turning around at Goose Lake, just miles from the Oregon border.

What does it take to ride your bike hundreds of miles, almost nonstop? Physical strength is a given, but many randonneurs emphasize mental stamina even more.

Kitty Goursolle, 58, a first-grade teacher from San Ramon who began riding ultra-distance events in the early 1980s, described randonneurs as embodying a resourcefulness that evokes MacGyver and a sense of adventure worthy of Mad Max: "If we get tired, we can sleep by the side of the road in a space blanket. Or if something breaks on your friend's bike, you can make him a tire boot out of a dollar bill."

Most riders relish the freedom of the open road. "It can be beautiful to ride your bike at night," said Meyer. "You look up and see the stars. All the animals come out that you never see. It's mind blowing."

Nearly all extol the sense of camaraderie they find on long rides. Jason Pierce, 38, a systems administrator in Oakland, said the sport is unlike racing where "people line up at the starting line, they charge, they finish, they go home." The cooperative aspects of randonneuring impressed him. "I found that this community was a little different. People take care of their own."

The rules of randonneuring require riders to be self-sufficient on the course, carrying what they need and fixing mechanical problems themselves, or helping each other.

And inevitably, difficulties do arise - in the form of headwinds, heat and cold, freezing rain, equipment failures, and physical breakdowns from the spectacular to the mundane. Every long-distance cyclist knows the agony of keeping the pedals turning after developing saddle sores.

Perseverance

But those who embrace the sport describe adversity as part of the experience. "The rides that are tougher, where you have to persevere through some stuff, those are the ones that you are able to recall the most, and they make for better stories," said Pierce, who hopes that riding the Gold Rush this year will be good training for PBP in 2015.

For Goursolle, who will return to the Gold Rush for a second time, the long rides are a chance to escape all the modern conveniences, at least for a little while. "You get a wonderful feeling of accomplishment," she said. "There's just not many challenges like this left in our world."





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Bert Karp Memorial Populaire A Salute to All Bike Ride Volunteers

I'm in Central Montana, 33 hours into the 36-hour 600k brevet that will qualify me for Paris-Brest-Paris in 2011. It's been a long ride and I'm cooked. As I ride around a bend in the road, a familiar tan station wagon comes into view, parked at a wide spot along the road. A lawn chair waits beside the car. As I pull up beside the car, the back hatch pops open. I'm greeted by a smiling face and familiar questions.

"How's it going? What do you need?"

It's my mom, staffing the penultimate checkpoint, patiently waiting for me -- more than an hour behind the previous rider. I'm tired, a little cranky, and I don't really know what I need except to get off the bicycle for

a while. Mom hands me a Coke and a variety of snacks. Pretty soon I'm feeling better and back on my way.

Similar scenes played out numerous times over the years. Mom happily set up out in the middle of anywhere with a trunk full of goodies. Mom shuttling club riders back to the finish after a 30 mph crosswind kicked up, making it too dangerous to ride. Mom running a rest stop for our local bike club's century ride. Most of my family eventually took up cycling and Mom was always out there with us, taking care of us, and watching out for us. She loved it.

Cancer took away our biggest fan and supporter on March 5, 2012.

I had scheduled my first populaire as a RUSA Regional Brevet Administrator (RBA) for the summer of 2012, so when the family was still together after the funeral I casually mentioned the idea of dedicating that ride to mom's memory. That's all I needed to say. The family was all over it. We made plans, rounded up volunteers, printed T-shirts, and we held the first Bert Karp Memorial Populaire on July 28, 2012.

Thirteen riders started and finished that first edition—a modest number, but more than twice as many as any of the earlier randonneuring rides that I'd organized. Experienced



Mom working a Central Montana control



randonneurs, local riders, and several of my family members joined us, including my sister Jody, her two boys, 18-year-old Brian and 14-year-old Tyler, and my brother Travis, who flew from Georgia for the ride. The rest of the family, including spouses, grand kids, and in-laws provided excellent support at three checkpoints. It was a fun emotional day, and one that we wanted to try again.

For the second annual Bert Karp Memorial Populaire, I moved the date to the 4th of July, where we would conflict less with other cycling events taking place in the area. This time, my brother from Georgia was bringing his entire family with him. His 17-year-old son Austin would be riding this year. My youngest brother, Clay, and his boys, Darren and Derek, both 12, challenged themselves to ride the event as well. Jody, Brian and Tyler would be riding again.

The out-and-back 109 km (68 mile) route rolls across the floor of the Gallatin Valley in Southwest Montana from Bozeman to Three Forks and back. The course is mostly downhill on the outbound leg, which gets everybody committed, and has a gradual uphill drag

on the way back just when heat of the day catches up to add to the challenge.

The 2013 edition saw 21 riders start and 21 riders finish, including five of my nephews ranging in age from 12 to 19. Everyone finished with more than an hour to spare. It was an emotional moment watching the riders arrive, sweaty and exhausted, and proud of earning that little populaire pin. I couldn't help but have the feeling that Mom was still with us, watching over us, and loving every minute of it.

I'd like to thank all those who rode the populaire. A special thank you goes out to all the volunteers who helped out. First and foremost, thanks go to my wife Brenda, who has been there with me since I've become an RBA and has really stepped up in the absence of my mom. My son Jackson is not a long distance cyclist, but he has proven to be a capable checkpoint staffer. And thanks also to the rest of the crew: Shannon Karp, Danielle Karp, Rick Schmidt, Deborah Karp, Jameson Karp, LaVerna Schmidt, Deb Korrison, Chris Stucky and her dad Neville, and my in-laws Billy and Mindy Horne.

Not only is the Bert Karp Memorial Populaire a tribute to my mom, who loved to take care of people, it is a tribute to all bike ride volunteers. To those people who handle logistics, paperwork, refreshments, watch over the route, wait for us at rest stops, take pictures, and cheer us on to the finish line, along with everything else... We Salute You! Thanks for all you do.

Jason Karp (RUSA #4626), is the RBA for the Bozeman MT region. For an interview with Jason, see page 26.



Memorial populaire volunteers.





GRR 2013 by Tandem

By Emma Dixon

Emma and Jonathan Dixon moved from London to Sunnyvale, CA last summer. Their friend and prolific UK Randonneur Judith Swallow told them they'd be well-placed to ride the 2013 Gold Rush Randonnée and that they had to do it. So they did—and here's reflections on their big adventure. For more, see [Facebook.com/TandemThings](https://www.facebook.com/TandemThings).

So, how to compress 1200KM of riding into a ride report? There were so many highs and lows on this ride that I don't think it's possible to document them all, but one of the joys of randonneuring are that these shared experiences create the most amazing bonds between people.

Let's start at the beginning—Monday afternoon at Tandem Properties in Davis, CA. The weather was a not-very-Californian drizzle. Seventy-odd riders plus volunteers, spouses, friends, and supporters are milling around, checking in with lots of chatter and good humor. It's an international field, with riders from Japan, Australia, Canada, Russia, Korea, and Sweden,

although the local clubs are most represented. San Francisco Randonneurs had many riders, and several of them were starting their first 1200K.

Unusually, we were the only tandem riding, and, along with one velomachine and one recumbent, we constituted the “special machines” this year. We'd all ridden the Davis 600, and so understood the challenge before us. Once riding everything compresses, but my principal memories from the ride are:

- Storming to the first control at Sutter (96.9KM), arriving a few minutes before it opened. We lead out the whole ride for quite a bit of this stage.
- Flying over the I-5 freeway. For once we'd gotten the traffic light timing just right, and we led our group past the yellow velomachine, normally uncatchable on the flatlands!
- Being nearly desiccated by mosquitoes while repairing a broken front wheel spoke incurred just after the Sutter control. Lycra is no match for the biting things, and I had welts that stayed with me for the next 1100KM.
- The gut-wrenching sound of a bike crash. We were leading a group into the Oroville control (152.2KM). Two riders at the back touched wheels, and one Japanese rider went down hard, breaking his pelvis. We were too far down the road to do anything other than hurry to the control and alert the control team, who mobilized assistance.



Emma and Jonathan Dixon during GRR 2013. Photo by Deb Ford.





GRR riders on the final push toward home. Photo by Deb Ford.

- Hitting a pothole on the way out of Oroville and breaking a second spoke on the front wheel. We'd never used an emergency spoke in all our tandem travels, so using two in the first hundred miles of a 750 mi ride concerned us.

- Sourcing three spare spokes of about the right length for our wheel from a SAG driver at Tobin (218KM). The spares were clearly charmed. We carried them for the rest of the ride before returning them to our benefactor at the finish.

- Falling asleep, exhausted, at Susanville (412KM). We were disappointed that we'd not made it to our target of Adin (521KM), but we were too tired to tackle the next remote and hilly stage. We slept for a couple of hours before heading to Adin. All of the camp beds were full at Adin when we arrived, and one of the controllers let us sleep in his car for an hour.

- Leaving Susanville in a rainstorm and seeing a double rainbow on the climb to Antelope Peak.

- Descending to the tranquil Eagle Lake with the setting sun—twice! We arrived at sunset on both the outbound and return legs. It is such a quiet and beautiful place.

- It is never a good idea to try and use unfamiliar energy / protein drinks on a long ride. We experienced windy conditions in the first 30 hours as a result...

- Walking up part of the climb to the top of the GRR from Boulder Creek, and being glad that no one passed us. We were hot despite the rain, and with more than 350KM in the legs, it was just a bit too much.

- Climbing the fearful Janeville grade. According to Strava, I'm now Queen of the Mountain for the climb. Not bad, given that "tandems can't climb," and given that we took a 10 minute break after the steep section to adjust clothing, take a photo, and eat one of the awesome sandwiches made for us at Susanville.

- Singing 'If you're happy and you know it' at 2 a.m. on the approach to Sutter on the return leg, and making up foolish cycling-oriented verses as we went.



- All of the volunteers organizing the ride and manning the controls, from the familiar faces of people we've ridden with this year to the 4-H club members staffing the Taylorsville control. The controls were relaxed and efficient, with good food and excellent care. Everyone was fantastic, but the Taylorsville control was really something special. On the return leg (Thursday), one young girl remembered that we'd left a battery on charge on the outbound leg (Tuesday), and reminded us to collect it as we were on the way out of the door. Taylorsville has a population of 154, and they made us feel a real connection with the community.

- Stopping for an ice cream on the way down Feather Canyon. It was really hot, and that ice cream and a glass of lemonade were perfect.

- The care and concern of the SAG drivers. It was a welcome lift to see them on the remote sections of the ride. It's good to know that there are people out there actively looking out for you. We slept at a motel at Susanville on the return leg, and weren't returning to the control before climbing the Janesville grade. One rider had already abandoned after oversleeping at Adin, so one of the SAG drivers went around to the motels in Susanville until they found out where we'd slept to ensure that it didn't happen to us.

GRR 2013 Results

Name	Time
AGATEP, Scott	78:36
ALBRECHT, Glenn R	78:36
ANDERSEN, Carl	65:50
BENNETT, Don	88:24
BEVAN, Roland	79:49
BONNER, Kenneth R	71:40
BRAHMAN, Manoucher	85:51
BRATKOWSKI, Michael	88:45
BROUGHER, Michele	86:14
BUNTROCK, Robert	65:50
BUTT, Clyde	85:56
CARLSON, Drew	85:56
CHIN-HONG, Patrick	84:40
CLARKSON, Bryan K	78:36
DEWEY, Jeff	74:59
DIXON, Emma	85:35
DIXON, Jonathan	85:35
ELLIS, John Lee	77:10
FAIRLES, Russ	61:10
FITZPATRICK, Kevin	85:51
FOURNIER, Charles Joseph	88:24
HANSON, Christopher	85:28
HENNIGHAUSEN, Lothar	85:28
HOOVER, George D	79:02
INGOLD, John	86:14
JAGEL, Donald	77:10
JENSEN, Jan Erik	86:21
KAMENTSEV, Mikhail	83:19

Name	Time
KING, David	80:53
KLINE, Greg	88:24
KLINE, Stacy	88:24
KNOBLAUCH, Tom	72:31
LOCKWOOD, Robert J	86:16
LUCAS, Tim	85:28
MALAKHOVSKII, Vadim	74:22
MASLOVA, Tatiana	78:20
MASON, Aron	72:31
MASON, Tim	79:49
MEYER, Martin	85:56
MISAWA, Yoshiaki	78:20
MOSHER, Craig	85:56
OLSEN, William	84:50
PIERCE, Jason	74:59
PLUMB, Alex	88:24
POPE, Lee	68:32
RICE, Steve	80:53
ROFFE, Theodore	78:36
SCHARFFENBERG, Del	83:19
SCHER, Robert	79:02
SHENK, Catherine	74:59
SHOEMAKER, Ken	82:50
STUM, Richard	79:02
TAYLOR, Tim	88:24
THOMPSON, W David	74:59
UZ, Metin	78:36



The Luxos U headlight from Busch & Müller has their new IQ2 optical system, which projects a much wider beam than any other dynamo headlight. The illumination of the road surface is uniform, near to far, so you can see well on fast descents. At speed, most of the LED's output is concentrated at the very top of the beam where it illuminates the road furthest from the rider.

As your speed drops below 15 km/h, the Luxos U automatically transitions between optimal illumination for fast riding and slow speeds by gradually shifting power from the driving LEDs to close up "panorama" LEDs. This ensures you always have the optimal beam pattern regardless of your speed.

The headlight can be switched directly, or via a handlebar mounted switch which also provides the connection to the built-in USB charger and cache battery for cell phones, GPS units and beer coolers. Don't forget the beer.

The Luxos U also monitors the status of your taillight. A flashing LED on the headlight switch warns you if the taillight malfunctions. Use the handlebar mounted switch to flash an oncoming driver for increased safety during daylight. The Luxos U is amazing.

The less expensive Luxos B model has the same new IQ2 optics for riding at speed. Both Luxos models have Licht 24 daytime running lights, and standlights. Both models may be used with or without a wired taillight.

Find comparison photos of many popular bicycle headlights including the new Busch & Müller Luxos U and Luxos B models on my website at: www.PeterWhiteCycles.com/headlights.asp

Luxos manual: www.PeterWhiteCycles.com/Downloads/B&M_LUXOS_B_U.pdf

Busch & Müller 2013 catalog: www.PeterWhiteCycles.com/Downloads/B&M_2013.pdf

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- Don Jagel sitting beside of the road into Adin holding a kitten. He'd seen it in the road, so he dashed across to rescue it and look after it until someone could be found to take care of it. We went on to ask the volunteers at the Adin control to see what they could do. A CHP officer took custody.

- The epic tales of endurance, plumbing the spirit of this ride. The rider who broke a crank and finished the ride on a borrowed bike—and shoes. The rider who finished the last 400K, riding with Shermer Neck. The riders who had problems on the outbound

leg and struggled on until they either ran out of time or finished. They are the heroes of the ride.

- Finally, the organizer Dan, his wife Ann, and the wonderful support and enthusiasm of Davis Bike Club. They are a very special bunch of people to put on this ride.

The next Gold Rush Randonnée will be in four years. It's a ride to experience. It has some of the best support you can find anywhere, and the mountains are spectacular. It's never going to be an easy ride, but can a 1200K ever be easy?

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Coming Events in 2014

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Week #1 Feb. 22 to Mar. 1

Metric Century Week

60-70 miles per day. Four nights based in Sierra Vista .

Week #2 Mar. 1-8

Tour of the Historic Hotels and Towns

50 miles per day between classic Arizona hotels

Week #3 Mar. 8-15

Chiricahua Challenge

75-90 miles per day to the Chiricahua Mountains

Week #4 Mar. 15-22

Nearly a Century Week

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

Week #5 Mar. 22-29

Mountain Tour

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PAC Tour has crossed the country 80 times in the past 30 years. We have a 75% return rate of riders for each tour. We consistently offer the best support to make sure riders are safe and successful when their dream is to ride across the United States. All tours include full technical support, rest stops, motels, lunches, commemorative clothing and many other nice things. Prices could vary contingent on group size. Visit the PAC Tour web site for full details and services offered for each tour.

Three New Tours in Vermont and Upstate New York

July, 2014

PAC Tour will be offering three weeks of different tours based from Vermont. Each week will travel to a new region and will stay at hotels and resorts in those areas. Daily distances of 80-100 miles will include lots of hills and mountains. Weeks can be combined for a 1, 2 or 3 week tour. Look for more details and route information on the PAC Tour website next month.

Ridge of the Rockies

Early September

Kalispell, Montana to Albuquerque, NM

1,800 miles, 17 days

Our route will zigzag across the Continental Divide several times on our way across, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and New Mexico. This is a tour with lots of climbing while viewing the best scenery of the Rocky Mountains. We will have a stay over day at Yellowstone National Park and the Grand Teton National Park where riders can make a loop tour of those interesting areas.

Ride to the Grand Canyon

Late September

1,000 miles, 10 riding days, 3 hiking days

Beginning in Albuquerque, NM we will ride 500 miles to the Grand Canyon in 5 days . We have the option to hike at the Canyon for 2 days and 3 nights. Our return trip will stay one day hiking at Canyon de Chelly before returning to Albuquerque. This is a popular tour including plenty of southwest culture with a good mix of cycling and hiking in some beautiful areas of Arizona.

Going to Ghana, Africa

Late October, 14 days, 9 riding days, 500 miles,

Ghana is located along the southern coast of Africa near the equator on the Pacific Ocean side of the continent. It is a tropical area with a diverse landscape. Our bicycle tour will ride 40-60 miles per day around the Volta Region which is a mountainous area in eastern Ghana. The roads will be paved with some gravel sections. We will ride used mountain bikes and donate our bikes to the Ghana Girl's Cycling Team when we are finished with the tour. We will stay in hotels and lodges along the way. This is a beautiful area and the people are friendly and speak English.

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RBA Questionnaire

Jason Karp

Bozeman, Montana RBA

How did you get involved with randonneuring?

I stumbled onto randonneuring via the internet. A cross state tour made me realize I could ride long distances. By 2008, I was entertaining the idea of riding PBP 2011.

What made you want to be a RUSA RBA?

The closest brevets were over 500 miles away. I could spend the money and time traveling, or start a brevet series at home. Montana needed representation. Why not me?

When did you start hosting RUSA events?

My first permanents were approved and ridden in 2008. I hosted my first brevets in 2010.

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

Our annual Bert Karp Memorial Populaire gets a nice turnout. We ride in honor of my Mom, who we lost to cancer. My whole family rides or volunteers.

What is the most popular (well-attended) brevet distance?

The Going to the Sun 300K, in Glacier National Park.

What is the most rewarding part of being an RBA?

Sharing Montana, and a little bit of Wyoming, with the rest of the randonneuring world.

What's the most difficult part of being an RBA?

Having the clairvoyance to schedule ACP brevets for the next season without conflicting with other local rides or screwing up family summer plans.



What attracts riders to your region to do a brevet?

The amazing scenery of Big Sky Country. Glacier National Park in Montana and Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming are big attractions. Plus there's no humidity here.

Who is the cyclist you most admire?

Ken Kifer. His website, Ken Kifer's Bike Pages (<http://www.phred.org/~alex/kenkifer/www.kenkifer.com/bikepages/>) has great cycling advice and amazing touring journals. Ken was killed by a drunk driver in 2003. His website literally taught me how to properly ride a bike.

What is your favorite bike ride?

The Hyalite Canyon Ride outside Bozeman. It's closed to cars in the spring, ten degrees cooler in the summer, and has beautiful colors in the fall. My Hilly Hyalite 100K permanent features the canyon.

What is your greatest randonneur cycling achievement?

Conquering the Beartooth Highway. 14,000 feet of climbing in 200K, at an elevation of 10,947 feet. I'm 6'5" and 200 pounds. Climbing is not my strength.

What is your motto?

You're really slow when you're stopped.

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Bethpage 300K

By Omri Ben-Amos

The Bethpage 300K was my third officially sanctioned brevet ride, a 300K loop that started and finished in Bethpage, Long Island (NY) and extended out to the northeastern terminus of the island at Orient Point.

My first attempt at a brevet earlier this spring, the Cranbury 200K in central NJ, ended with a DNF (Did Not Finish) for a host of reasons, including a near-total lack of sleep the night before and inadequate training miles. I'd been kept off of the bike for nearly three months after a winter fall on black ice, resulting in a torn ligament in my thumb. My second effort, the inaugural run of the Ronkokoma 200K, also the first brevet to be held on Long Island, was a much happier occasion. I successfully completed the ride in time, with a minimum of suffering over the climbs in the last 30 miles.

I am not a climber. My cycling career is long and varied. I've done long tours (over 1,700 miles), a few years of alley cat and Cat 4 track racing, lots of commuting, and plenty of urban mileage just getting

around NYC as a kid, teen and adult. But I have always been heavy, and going uphill is not my strong suit. I can sprint, descend well, and carve a nice line through bad traffic on terrible roads, but I am not going uphill quickly. I'm okay with that. However, it does mean that on group rides, I usually fall off the back of the group every time the road heads up, and may not catch back on. There's lots of solo riding.

After the bike inspection by brevet organizer Steve Y, Long Island RBA Paul M. gave us a quick course review and sent us on our way, promptly at 4:00 am. The group maintained a brisk pace over the flat roads leading out of Bethpage, and I slotted in behind veteran NJ Randonneur Joe K., and chatted with Steve V. about mutual acquaintances in the NYC cycling community. We shared our two-wheeled histories as the dark miles rolled along. We hit the first climb of the ride around mile 13, and I bid farewell to Steve and the others, settling into a comfortable pace in my granny gear, winding my way up the hill. I would be riding alone for the next 120 miles.

The course was largely front-loaded. Most of the serious climbing was concentrated in the next 40 miles (there isn't too much serious climbing to be found in relatively flat Long Island.) As the sky grew lighter, I found I was rolling up and down some unfamiliar but very picturesque parts of northern Nassau County, through Huntington and along the southern shore of Long Island Sound. None of the climbs were too tall, but





they were surprisingly steep in places. I munched a few mini-bagels with butter as I took in the descents, and was pleased with how well my bike handled the curves with only minimal steering inputs.

At mile 47, I rolled into the CornerCopia deli in Port Jefferson for the first "manned" contrôle. There had been an information contrôle at mile 15, where I briefly rejoined the leading group, who had taken a wrong turn, before they sped up the next hill. I tried to be as quick as possible in and out of the stop, getting my brevet card signed and filling my waterbottles in short order. I had plenty of food in my bag, so I grabbed a banana, applied some sunscreen, swapped my regular glasses for my "serious bike racer" sunglasses and headed out of town and straight up the last major climbs of the morning.

The next stretch was a fairly unbroken flat haul, over 52 miles, all the way to Orient Point. Paul M. was stationed just a few miles down the road for a secret contrôle that took just a minute, but made sure we weren't taking any short cuts. I enjoyed near-perfect conditions, with a light breeze crossing north to south across the road and sunny skies as I headed across the flat expanse of northern Suffolk County and onto the North Fork of Long Island. Over the past few years, my wife and I have spent time taking day trips out to the wine country of the North Fork, so much of Middle Road was familiar to me. I rolled past the sod farms and vineyards that dot the area, feeling good and making decent time.

I was pleasantly surprised to find that I had made it to the information contrôle at Orient Point, the turn-around point for the ride at 99 miles, before 1 pm. Another pleasant surprise was Paul M., manning the contrôle with a car fully stocked with water, ice, beverages and fruit. I lingered for probably 45 minutes, taking time to chat, stretch, re-apply chamois cream and sunscreen, and take a few pictures before I loaded up for the return leg of the ride.

It was just a short 10 miles to the next contrôle in Greenport Harbor, but thanks to a missed turn and

a few "bonus miles," I was feeling a little less chipper at the 7-11 stop. I could have kicked myself, because I know the town of Greenport Harbor well, having spent a few weekends there, most recently for my wife's birthday last September, and I should have recognized the (poorly marked) onto Main Street. I got back on-route, annoyed at my error, but otherwise feeling decent.

However, by the time I got to the next stop, a Subway restaurant in Riverhead, 20 miles down the road, I was starting to feel a bit weary. My eyes were red and I was beginning to notice some nagging aches in my knees and back. I was close to my maximum one-day mileage to date, about 150 miles into the ride, so I decided to take my time at the contrôle, having a solid meal, washing my face and eyes, indulging in the air conditioning and some Aleve, and getting off the saddle for a bit. The last three riders on the course caught up with me here, and I got to chat with a very nice couple,

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Bethpage (cont.)

Wade and Michele, and their companion Gary, as we ate.

We headed out as a foursome with about 45 miles to go, and shared the pacemaking across the return stretch, arriving in good time at the contrôle at mile 162, a Dunkin Donuts (there seemed to be one every two miles in this part of Long Island). We dawdled a bit too long though, and as we headed out for the last 28 miles of the ride, the light began to fade just as we started the first of the climbs. Did I mention that there were a bunch of climbs in the last 20 miles?

This segment was some of the most technically challenging and rewarding riding of this brevet. As we entered the Dix Hills section of Long Island and moved into some very twisty, dark, and unfamiliar climbs, I was surprised at how totally dark the road was away from street lights, with the full moon concealed by tree cover. I was well-equipped for riding in the dark, with the excellent Schmidt Dynohub and front and rear lights, and a helmet-mounted Princeton Tec lamp that had a very useful low-light red LED mode. I could read the cue sheet on my handlebar bag and still see well enough to navigate in the dark. Climbing and descending these roads in total darkness was a new experience for me, but nothing I couldn't handle.

Once we topped out the last climb, appropriately named "Mt. Misery Road", we had a blissful and quick ten-mile decent into the town of Bethpage and a fast roll into the parking lot. Paul snapped a few pictures, collected my brevet card, and directed me to the train back towards Jamaica, which was scheduled to arrive in just five minutes.

I was a bit disappointed at this news. I had planned on having enough time to scoot to a nearby deli and



grab a well-earned beer for the train ride home, but time was short and if I missed the train, it would have meant an extra hour's wait. I said a quick goodbye to Paul and my riding companions and headed for the train platform. Imagine my surprise, then when, as if by providence, I found that Saturday night party passengers had left behind two beers on the train platform. It was good beer at that, Victory Summer Love Ale, and still cool to the touch! Even better, the train was a few minutes late. I managed to polish off both beers before the train arrived. I enjoyed a very happy ride to Jamaica Station. I followed a few well-worn miles from the train station to home, with a glorious shower, a quick meal, and twelve hours of well-earned rest.

I put in a full day of chores on Sunday, including a visit to the local garden center and hauling a few big bags of mulch around, with no lingering major aches or pains. Back at the office, I found myself searching for upcoming 400K rides I could conceivably do this summer, in hopes of completing a full Super Randonneur series. I wonder if I can make it to Pittsburgh in August?

Ori Ben-Amos (*RUSA 8105*) is a first-year randonneur.





Fueled by the last bit of coffee cake purchased in Anchorage on my return trip from Alaska I will tell a tale of a wild ride that I just finished.

At the last minute, past the sign-up deadline and with inadequate training, I decided to contact Kevin Turinsky to see if the 'Big Wild Ride' was even an option. 'We would love to have you come ride with us', was his reply. What the hell, you only go around once! A day or so later, preparations well in hand, I am smiling thinking of Alaska. Pictures from riders' cameras and a couple of DVD's brought from the library by my wife amped me up even more. Bags packed, bike in box, ticket in hand, I'm on my way. Best ever plane ride: West Palm, Detroit, Seattle to Anchorage. Window seat

and clear skies. After warping through 5 time zones, my Delta time machine morphs me to a whole other world.

In Anchorage I found an oasis in the city at the Downtown Anchorage B&B at Raspberry Meadows. The property was abloom with wild flowers and the hosts were wonderful. Sharing this and our Valdez housing with Rorie Anderson and Art Fuoco, my Florida companions, was a perfect solution to our traveling needs. Unpack, bike together, test ride and bike inspection at Speedway Cycles; all good. I am ready to ride, ride, ride. Only...it was still a couple of days until the midnight start. We had to endure a train ride to Whittier and then a ferry ride to the start town of Valdez. All aboard!



Big Wild Ride (continued)

I sent pictures to my daughter early on the train ride and her response: Noooo bueno, It's raining! But it stopped and the rest of the ride was sunny with stunning scenery. Then on to the ferry Aurora we went. We experienced further visual delights. We wandered around bow to stern, up and down the decks to view the Alaskan beauty from all angles. We saw mountains and more mountains, glaciers, icebergs, seals sunning on the beach and whales' tails. The captain even pointed out the famous red light and Blythe's reef; the unfortunate undoing of Capt. Hazlewood aboard the Exxon Valdez. Yes, we endured the visual overload of an amazing day of exploring Planet Earth.

An evening and a day in Valdez. What to do? I rode the 17.5 miles to the Bridal Veil Falls as a last bike and leg check. Both were ready for the midnight start. Now 46 strong, we somewhat nervously began our adventure into the Alaska night. Our first challenge was Thompson Pass. Up, up, up we climbed to be greeted by a strong wind at the false summit. Not a chilling wind but gusting to squash my mph even further. I finally had to abandon the big chainring and creep to the top. We were a large chatty group before the climb. Now we were scattered like leaves in the wind, our taillights sprinkled on the mountainside.



The immediate carrot dangling before us was the Tonsina lodge at mile 79.1 and breakfast. All you can eat buffet. Need I say more? And eat we did. And on we went, trying to digest our overindulgence in time for the Sourdough Roadhouse and Paxon Lodge feeding frenzies to come. The wind was relentless all day long. Unfortunately, not in our favor. Tired legs and

windburned faces arrived at Delta Junction High School just before dark; 265 miles down and a few more to go. Some good food, a little 'talk of the day,' a shower and much needed sleep followed. The only glitch of the day was one quickly changed flat tire which would haunt me later.

With bleary eyes and tight legs, we ventured out after an early morning wake-up call and breakfast. More miles to travel and hills to climb. The wind died down and it became a perfect day for riding. Maybe a little warm for the natives not accustomed to this balmy summer weather, but I'm from Florida and I loved it. Riders reported moose sightings. Others saw wolves, caribou, bears, ground squirrels and rabbits. I even saw a porcupine. But I have yet to see a moose myself. (John Lee Ellis has twice promised to produce them on the High Country 1200K but has failed on both occasions.) We traveled through Fairbanks which was a marked contrast to the rural vistas that we had been enjoying. We

meandered through the countryside in the late afternoon with the roadway lit up with the fireweed as our lantern.

Near dusk, while riding with Scott and his tricked-out tri bike, we saw Craig from Kiwiland, standing in the middle of the road. He was waving for us to stop and we immediately saw the

why of his actions. Lazily munching the grass along the side of the road was a monster of an animal. This moose with a wingspan of antlers at least 4 feet did not seem to be the least bit concerned with us. Craig had been there for awhile and he said the moose had made several changes in his attitude to scare him enough to stop him from passing. Mr. Moose just kept munching the grass.





We decided to try to bypass him by going off the road and down the bank to a small trail paralleling the road. As we picked up our bikes and started down the bank, he raised his head and meandered off into the bushes, freeing us to continue on our journey. My first moose and a real beauty!

The second overnight was at a Baptist Church in Healy. No hot water in the shower! Ouch. The water felt like it would freeze before it hit the floor! Some brave souls actually jumped in for a quick rinse. I dried off my hand and decided to wait for tomorrow to clean up. Yep, dirty Florida wimp.

Day three and away we go. Sam Collins left slightly before me and not far down the road stopped to remove his outer layer of clothing. Overdressed, he said. I went down the road a few miles and stopped to put on my heavy rain jacket, big warm gloves and my balaclava. Underdressed, I said. Just a Florida boy with thinned-out blood trying to stay warm. It warmed up nicely as the sun came up, and I was happy. I then became drowsy. But along came Pam Wright and Dan Driscoll to my rescue. Pam gave me some caffeine gum: problem solved. Later, after hooking up with Rorie and Art, I had another sleep attack. I drifted off the back as they disappeared down the highway. I did not realize it at the time, but I was the last BWR rider on the road.

And then I heard the dreaded whish, whish, whish from the air escaping from my rear tire. I routinely removed the tire, replaced the tube and hit the CO₂. Nothing! Uh, oh. I had forgotten to replace the cartridge from the flat on the first day. I took my only other cartridge out and used that. The air escaped as fast as I put it in. The tube from the first day! Damn! I did not remember another rider helping me with the change, then rolling it up and putting it in my bag. Now I was in a real bind. No riders behind to help, no pump. A phone call to the number on the cue. No answer. Surprise -- out of cell coverage area. My tired mind raced with anxiety. I checked the time of next control closing and saw I had five hours to make it. Twenty-one miles to that



checkpoint. I remembered brain spasms in the past at home when I had forgotten to put my repair kit on the bike when changing bikes. I had solved the flat tire problem once by stuffing rolled up sea grape tree leaves into the tire and another using a bungee cord and miscellaneous bits of rubber and hose scavenged from the side of the road. I knew 21 miles was possible if I could find some stuffing. I saw some small saplings along the road and thought that they would work. Thankfully, I had sharpened my Swiss Army knife before leaving on the trip. I started feverishly cutting down the bushes I would need and started cutting the tube into 6 to 8 inch sections. I inserted the twigs into the sections of tube. I could see I had a shot. In the early stages of my frantic endeavors, Lars, a young German cycle tourist with a heavily loaded bike, stopped by. He watched in amazement as this crazy American attempted something he had neither heard of nor seen. I am sure at first he did not give it a chance in hell of working. He started taking pictures and then gave a helping hand. But his most important contribution to the project was a simple suggestion: Why not remove



Big Wild Ride (continued)

the front tire and put it on the back of the bike? There it would carry the most weight. Put the wooden tire on the front where it will not have to endure the worst of the pounding to come. Brilliant, why hadn't I thought of that? As Lars pumped up the rear tire, I completed stuffing the other one and secured the tire in the rim.

Here goes. With my best new friend by my side, I gingerly picked up speed to the 7.5 mph I had to make to get to the control in time. Ka-thump. Ka-lump. 4, 5, 6 then 7. Looking good. I ran it up to 10mph but backed off from there deciding not to push my luck. It was working, but for how long? Three hours to go at 7.5 mph was all I was asking. Two miles, then 3. We crept along. I called Kevin several times with no luck. Finally I got through and explained my predicament. He said the support would be notified and they would try to find a tube and get to me. I could feel the soft wood of the saplings getting squishy but the repair was holding its own.

Now it was Elisa and Ted to the rescue. They were given two tubes and headed out to find me. Unfortunately as they passed, they could see Lars with his huge load and correctly deduced he was not a Wild rider. They returned going the opposite direction. Seeing the bikes going down the road, they assumed all was ok. They were looking for a rider with a tube problem along the side of the road. They got back to the next control that Mike Price was manning and finally sorted out that I was in fact moving down the road at less than time trial speed. They finally returned and found me. Two hours and 14 miles on the wooden wheel, two very sore shoulders from the thumping, and now relief was in sight. I removed the debris from the tire while Elisa energetically photographed the mess the stuffing had become. I changed out the tube and as Lars pumped it up, I put the spare tube they gave me into my bag.

Then I saw it. The other spare tube! All along, I had the solution to my problem right in my bag. In my brain dead state, I had frantically watched the clock and cut

my repair parts. But as soon as Lars arrived with his pump, I had a solution. My second spare tube and his pump! So embroiled was I in my wood and rubber creation and my desire to finish with the clock running, I missed the simplest solution available to me. Sometimes on these long rides, mind-boggling things happen. This was the Mount McKinley of cases here. Logical thinking just goes out the window.

We now rolled down the road and made it with time to spare. After enjoying Mike's fantastic stew, Lars and I loaded up on road food, said our goodbyes and headed down the road. I still had some work to do to get to Mary's McKinley Lodge and the Talkeetna overnight stop before closing time. One tired rando pulled into the Swiss Alaska Inn at a quarter past 12. What a day! A mindbender.

After some explaining my MacGyverian efforts to the crew at the control and some food, I finally had my warm shower and a short nap before continuing. No, I did not tell those listening of my hidden tube and monumental mistake. I could not handle that right then. Anyway, if I had not messed up so badly, there would not be much of a story here, now would there?

The last day was sunny and warm just as the previous three had been. My worst fears of a wet cold ride finally evaporated. I hate to put a jinx on the event, but I wonder if they will ever again have the perfect weather window which we enjoyed.

I rode on in with Rorie and Art, watching the miles dwindle uneventfully. We realized at the last road control at the Wal-Mart that there were many turns so we had to be careful. If there were any real climbing, we were cutting it pretty close. We did have several candid discussions on several questionable turns but we made it with 22 min to spare. Comfortably in we arrived!

A sunny hello and thank you to all who worked so hard to put a smile on my face. A wonderful and memorable ride was had by all and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.





The Big Wild Ride 2013 – Results

Adams, Chip	85:20	Fuoco, Art	89:32	Owen, Robert	DNF
Anderson, Carl	85:07	Gazmararian, Julie	85:07	Provenza, Clint	86:06
Anderson, Rorie	89:32	Geisert, Rodney	84:00	Seager, Jerry	86:06
Atkins, Steve	82:51	Goursolle, Kitty	87:11	Smith, Kelly	85:20
Banks, Debra	86:01	Griffith, Scott	84:00	Sokolsky, Larry	85:07
Biebuyck, Gavin	81:58	Himschoot, Ron	89:32	Solanick, Jim	89:32
Carlson, Drew	86:01	Kaiser, Chris	86:11	Springsteen, Lois	87:11
Collins, Sam	83:56	Klaassen, Spencer	87:11	Stroethoff, Karel	85:31
Conderacci, Gegory	85:20	Knutson, Ken	85:08	Taaffe, Damon	67:16
Driscoll, Dan	87:11	Kobayashi, Masayoshi	80:03	Tajima, Toshi	80:03
Edwards, Joe	87:11	Mason, Tim	85:08	Timmons, Ted	85:31
Ellis, John Lee	85:07	Mathews, Craig	85:31	Wellnhofer, Karl	DNF
Farrell, Matt	81:58	McGregor, Craig	84:55	Woudenberg, Tim	86:06
Fast, Willi	DNF	Muoneke, Vincent	82:45	Wright, Pam	87:11
Fischer, Bill	81:58	Olsen, William	84:00		

RUSA Awards

R-12 Award



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

Events that count toward the R-12 Award include:

- Any event on the RUSA calendar of 200KM or longer.
- Foreign ACP-sanctioned brevets and team events (F l è c h e s), Paris-Brest-Paris, and RM

-sanctioned events of 1200 Km or longer.

- RUSA permanents — a particular permanent route may be ridden more than once during the twelve-month period for R-12 credit. The applicant must be a RUSA member during each of the twelve months. RUSA congratulates the latest honorees, listed below.

Date	Name	Location
2013/04/14	Cathy Cramer (F) [2]	La Veta, CO
2013/04/22	Susan Otcenas (F) [2]	Portland, OR
2013/04/23	Gary L Kanter	Gainesville, FL
2013/04/25	Audunn Ludviksson	Seattle, WA
2013/04/26	Dana A Pacino (F) [7]	Aledo, TX
2013/04/28	William Beck [7]	Woodbine, MD
2013/04/28	Dave Sweeney [2]	Middletown, MD
2013/05/03	Jonas Nygard	Minneapolis, MN
2013/05/06	Sharon Stevens (F) [7]	Richardson, TX
2013/05/07	Matthew O'Neill [2]	Chula Vista, CA
2013/05/08	Dan Lacey	Hollywood, FL
2013/05/08	Andy Speier [3]	Seattle, WA
2013/05/12	Agnes L Gallo (F) [2]	Oakland Park, FL
2013/05/13	Norman Carr [2]	Pasco, WA
2013/05/14	Sanford Aniya	Oceanside, CA
2013/05/14	Fred Hunley [3]	Midland, TX
2013/05/14	Glen Rumbaugh	Kansas City, MO
2013/05/15	Greg Courtney [5]	Ames, IA
2013/05/20	Keith Beato	Alameda, CA

Date	Name	Location
2013/05/23	Vickie Backman (F) [3]	San Luis Obispo, CA
2013/05/24	John Peltier	Farmington, NY
2013/06/03	Michael J Dayton [7]	Raleigh, NC
2013/06/11	Ian Flitcroft [2]	Williamson, GA
2013/06/13	Steven R Williams	Overland Park, KS
2013/06/18	Brian P Burke	Cumming, GA
2013/06/24	Keith W Gates [3]	Olathe, KS
2013/06/24	Roger Swanson [3]	Lindale, GA
2013/06/26	Daniel A Schaaf [4]	Rowlett, TX
2013/06/26	Daniel A Schaaf [5]	Rowlett, TX
2013/06/30	Lois Springsteen (F) [4]	Santa Cruz, CA
2013/07/01	Greg Jones [4]	Moorpark, CA
2013/07/03	Andrea Symons (F) [2]	Cupertino, CA
2013/07/08	Ted Sommer	Davis, CA
2013/07/09	Joseph H Todd	Decatur, GA
2013/07/11	Alan Woods [3]	Portland, OR
2013/07/12	Bill Erwin [2]	Clermont, FL
2013/07/13	J Martin Shipp [3]	Raleigh, NC
2013/07/15	Eric E. Keller [2]	Boalsburg, PA

RUSA Awards P-12 Award Recipients



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

Events that count toward the P-12 Award

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

Date	Name	Location
2013/04/25	Audunn Ludviksson	Seattle, WA
2013/05/06	Peter Nagel [2]	Georgetown, TX
2013/05/26	Kenneth Stevens	Kirkland, WA
2013/06/02	John W Himmelsbach	Waitsfield, VT
2013/06/05	Teri Berisha (F)	Kirkland, WA

Date	Name	Location
2013/06/09	Kelly DeBoer [4]	San Marcos, CA
2013/06/17	Michael A Hogan [2]	Raleigh, NC
2013/07/06	Jacob Anderson	Virginia Beach, VA
2013/07/16	Joshua Crixell	Temple, TX

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Washington & Texas Riders Earn Galaxy Award

Seattle rider Vincent Muoneke and Texas rider Sharon Stevens are the latest RUSA members to earn the "Galaxy Award" by riding more than 100,000 km in sanctioned events.

They join Texans Dan Driscoll, Gary Gottlieb and Mark Metcalfe, and Seattle rider Mark Thomas, who earned the award in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 respectively.

The Galaxy Award is earned by successfully completing at least 100,000 km in RUSA events.

The qualifying distance for this award is based on all events on RUSA's calendar (ACP brevets and flèches, RUSA brevets, populaires, arrows and darts), RUSA permanents, and 1200KM events held in the United States after 1998. Foreign events (including PBP) are not counted.

2013/04/18 Vincent Muoneke Federal Way, WA

2013/06/15 Sharon Stevens (F) Richardson, TX

Four Receive Mondial Award

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

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

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

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

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

2013/04/06	Willy Nevin	Pacifica, CA
2013/04/27	W Thomas Reeder	Alexandria, VA
2013/07/06	Stephen Hazelton	Garland, TX
2013/07/06	Paul G Shapiro	Princeton Junction, NJ

Nine Ultra Awards Announced

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

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

2013/05/09	John Preston	Plantation, FL
2013/05/12	H Edward Boltz	Hartsville, SC
2013/05/15	Clyde Butt	San Jose, CA
2013/05/22	George Winkert	Highland, MD
2013/05/23	Ian Flitcroft	Williamson, GA
2013/05/31	Steve Rice	Shelbyville, KY
2013/06/09	Stephen Royse	Versailles, KY
2013/06/18	Sharon Stevens (F) [4]	Richardson, TX
2013/06/26	Daniel A Schaaf [2]	Rowlett, TX





Why We Write Ride Reports

by Janice Chernenkoff

I became a member of RUSA in 2003 as a result of having read an article in *Bicycling Magazine* about the Boston-Montreal-Boston (BMB) randonnée. If my memory is correct, the article included interview quotes with Jennifer Wise, organizer of this challenging American randonnée last offered in 2006. Immediately drawn to the challenge promised, I contacted Jennifer to ask how I could sign up for BMB. I learned about the qualification process and started to develop some idea of the work and dedication that would be involved if I wished to pursue this particular goal. I didn't do my first 200KM brevet until 2004, and I remember finishing this ride in the dark with an inadequate headlight, feeling lost, exhausted and wondering what had possessed me to think I would want to do this kind of riding. Well, obviously I got over the shock suffered during that first ride. So, a kind of a ride report attracted me to this sport, and ride reports have been enormously valuable as I've continued to grow into a randonneur.

I have probably read hundreds of ride reports and yet I still read them through completely. In fact, my interest in ride reports, and my training as a rhetorician, started me asking questions about the value of these stories to the rando community. I've been able to turn this interest into an academic research project, and recently I received funding to interview ride report writers about why and how they write these narratives. I wanted to share some of what I've been learning and thinking about with fellow randonneurs. I've heard responses that I expected, but with every interviewee so far there has been a surprise; something is said that I did not expect or have not previously thought of. This is fun work, and it helps me try to answer the question, still, about what possessed me to think I could do this kind of riding.

Here is just a sample of what some of my interviewees have said about why they write ride reports:

Laurent Chambard explains that when he writes a ride report it "reproduces the experience" of the ride. Sometimes, he says, he is forming paragraphs and sentences while he rides, so that "somehow, the riding and writing intermingle." He says that he writes to encourage slower riders and also to encourage others to give the sport a try. One of his goals, he claims, is to show that almost anyone can do these rides, "even middle-aged fat people." One of my favorite ride reports written by Laurent is titled "Chasing the GRRizzlies (in the heat!)..."¹ and it inspired me to attempt the Goldrush Randonnée.

Nigel Greene states that he got started thinking about writing ride reports when another randonneur (Keith Snyder) asked in an online discussion if anyone was blogging about riding. This question prompted Nigel to explore a few blogs and then to try writing one himself. Nigel explains that he writes ride reports because, as he said, "I have a terrible memory for what I've done. If I write it down, it sticks. I won't be able to do this forever. If I'm putting this much time and energy into something, I want to remember it. It's an experience. It's an adventure." Concerned with how much time brevets take, particularly away from family, he also says that writing ride reports is a way to share what he's doing with his wife. Nigel is developing a fan base appreciative of his elegant style. It's well worth the time to read a few of his posts².

Bill Bryant recalls that he started writing about randonneuring when few Americans knew much about the sport so he wrote, in part, to help newcomers deal with "the steep learning curve" that people new to randonneuring face. He notes that the sport requires not only some degree of athleticism, but also intelligence, mechanical ability,



navigational skills, night riding strategies, a sense of pacing and an ability to read and deal with weather. Even though he claims not to be a writer, Bill was primarily responsible for the Rando Handbook and contributed substantially to the PBP memory books of 1999 and 2003³. He has also written more articles for *American Randonneur* than any other person.

In 2004 there was still not that much information available about randonneuring or particular brevets. Now, at [rusablogs](http://rusablogs.com)⁴, there are 120 links for blogs and websites where anyone wanting to learn more about this sport as well as about specific events will find a goldmine of information. I have enjoyed the blog posts of Rando Joe on Mellow Yellow⁵ for his indefatigably positive attitude. No matter the weather conditions--heat, cold, wind, wet--Rando Joe presents the experience as positive. I admire his attitude and think of him as a good role model in that regard. I read Nigel Greene's blog not only for his eloquence but also for his way of explaining life through randonneuring. *Chasing Mailboxes*⁶ is great for sheer fun, as in, M.G. seems to have fun every time she gets on her bike, no matter the distance, the terrain, the goal. And I've enjoyed participating in ride challenges thought up by M.G. such as "errandonnee," a fun way of getting us out on our bikes in the cold and snow of February. There are many more really excellent blogs that contain informative, interesting, and well-written ride reports.

So, why write or read ride reports? To record important moments. To coax others along. For the joy of reliving an experience through writing. And for readers? You know, I've probably read several hundred PBP reports, but I never tire of them, and I read each one in its entirety. Reading ride reports provides vicarious experience, information, and joy in seeing how and why someone lived and rode through the challenges of a brevet. I have made good use of ride reports to slowly, slowly, improve in this sport...and to do some writing myself⁷.

In an interview with Bill Bryant in 2007⁸, Bob Lepertel credits the resurgence of French cyclists' interest in brevet-style riding in the early 1970's to the publication of PBP Plaquettes (starting in 1971), and the increased international interest in randonneuring to the publication of Jock Wadley's *Old Roads and New*. Jock Wadley's account of the 1971 PBP is an enjoyable and detailed report providing readers with information about the route, the controls, the various types of riders Wadley encountered along the way, and his personal approach to a successful completion of the ride. Eric Fergusson has posted a chapter of this book onto the BC Randonneurs website⁹. In his introduction, he quotes 1979 PBP ancien Gerry Pareja who claimed that Wadley's book "had more to do with getting English-speaking cyclists to become interested in PBP than anything else written about it."

Blogging has made it much easier to share rando experiences with others, and ride reports are now often accompanied by photos, videos, and links to other information. Still, it seems that as much as ride reports have changed due to technology, their essential character remains the same. We want to know how others face and overcome challenges so that we may be encouraged in our own randonneuring goals.

(Endnotes)

- 1 www.njrando.com
- 2 eprider.blogspot.com
- 3 The 1999 Yearbook and the RUSA Handbook are available through the RUSA Online Store.
- 4 rusablogs.blogspot.com
- 5 mellowyellowbent.blogspot.com
- 6 chasingmailboxes.com
- 7 jchernekoff.wordpress.com
- 8 *American Randonneur*, Vol. 10, Iss. 4 (Nov. 2007)
- 9 www.randonneurs.bc.ca



Too Much Is Not Enough

By Mark Thomas

Four days. Should be sufficient. One day to celebrate the completion of the HCH 1200 and pack our bikes (see page 42). One day to travel to Hungary. Two days to build our bikes, repair what we broke in Belgium, and do some shake-down / scouting rides. And then we're off for the second step of what Vinny had called our "European Two-Step" - the Tour de Transdanubie 1200, the first grand randonnee ever held in Hungary.

Along with 55 other riders from all over Europe, Rick Blacker, Vincent Muoneke and I enjoyed a big ride around western Hungary, complete with

views of Lake Balaton and the mighty Danube river, sightings of nesting storks, endless fields of sunflowers, and a tour of numerous historical and cultural sights. We were also treated to many, many kilometers of some of the worst pavement I've ever had the (dis)pleasure to ride. The friendliness and helpfulness of the locals, across a great language barrier, far outweighed any discomfort from the roads. Thanks to their help, the camaraderie among the riders, and the efforts of organizer Ákos Székely-Molnár and his colleagues at Randonneurs Hungary, we came away with wonderful memories of the event.



Riders on the Tour de Transdanubie 1200, the first grand randonné ever held in Hungary.

HCH 1200K: A Randonnée through the Champagne Region

The plan for 2013 was to do London Edinburgh London. When that ride filled up and sold out, six U.S. riders turned to Plan B – Herentals Cosne Sur Loire Herental, or HCH 1200k. Held in July, the ride started near Antwerp in Belgium before looping into France, with the outbound leg passing through Paris and into the Loire Valley. The return leg passed through the steep vineyards of the Champagne Region and the city of Reims. Forty one riders started and 40 finished, a testament to the route planning by ride organizer Jan Geerts. Here, in pictures, are six reasons why you should put this intimate European randonneuring adventure on your to-do list.



Sure, we call it Paris Brest Paris, but that most famous of all 1200ks starts a train ride away from the City of Light. If you REALLY want to ride through Paris, HCH 1200 is your event. On Day 2, we rolled out of the overnight controle in Villeparisis and entered Paris from the northeast, following a quiet bike path that hugged a canal. Before we could cry out “sacrebleu” we were at the gate of Sacre Coeur. For the next 90 minutes we did a grand, if hasty, tour of Paris, stopping to upload Facebook shots at Moulin Rouge, the Arc De Triomphe, the Eiffel Tower and Notre Dame.



The HCH1200k route is shaped like a champagne bottle. Coincidence? Perhaps, but the tour through the Champagne region included a hillside loop into the vineyards. Champagne grapes grow best on the steep slopes of that area. It's a hill climber's paradise; the rest of us just suffered along for the ride.



Belgium randonneur Jan Geerts, pictured here with SIR rider Mark Thomas, has sponsored HCH1200k six times and is the story behind its success. Jan's meticulous planning and tireless legwork showed at every turn. Thoughtfully spaced sleep stops at budget hotels gave riders manageable goals to shoot for and a comfortable bed at day's end. Jan and his helper Eddie met us somewhere along the way each day to pass out snacks and drinks.



A man's home is his castle, the saying goes, and that's particularly true in the Loire Valley, where you can't swing un chat without hitting a chateau. More than 300 castles dot the region, and there's no better place for a moatside Coke than the fortified Chateau de sully Sur Loire, which is listed as a monument historique by the French Ministry of Culture.

HCH 1200k gives you an up-close look at the various cycle paths in Europe. We spent dozens and dozens of kilometers on routes dedicated to bike and pedestrian traffic, from the cobbled and brick sidepaths of Belgium to the many miles of paved trail along the Loire River, to this path along a canal into the center of Paris.



Paris isn't the only big city the route passes through. We also entered Brussels, and Capn John Ende posed for a photo op at the Atomium, one of the world's finest blends of sculpture and architecture. From Wikipedia: "The Atomium is an iconic building in Brussels originally constructed for Expo '58, the 1958 Brussels World's Fair... It stands 102 m (335 ft) tall. Its nine 18 m (59 ft) diameter stainless steel clad spheres are connected so that the whole forms the shape of a unit cell of an iron crystal magnified 165 billion times." According to the official Atomium website, "it carries on the debate begun in 1958: What kind of future do we want for tomorrow? What does happiness depend on?" Those are the perfect questions to ponder on a 1200k cycling jaunt.





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