

# THE LOUISVILLE BICYCLE CLUB

Founded in 1897

[www.louisvillebicycleclub.org](http://www.louisvillebicycleclub.org)

October 2011

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**LBC Newsletter Goes MONTHLY!**

*The Louisville Cyclist is a bi-monthly newsletter of the Louisville Bicycle Club.*

*Please submit articles and photos to:  
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502-447-7814.*

**Deadline for the  
November 2011 issue is Oct 20**

*Please let us know what you think this newsletter needs. After all, it's your newsletter!*



## OKHT 2011--WOW, what a weekend!

*by Andy Murphy, LBC President*

The days leading up to the 34th Annual Old Kentucky Home Tour on September 10th & 11th were kind of dreary looking. Cloudy, with rain or light showers was the standard weather forecast as the 2011 OKHT neared. Saturday morning as the riders began showing up, a brilliant, seldom seen orb appeared in the sky--it was actually the sun making an appearance for the first time in over a week! Even with a brief overnight shower Saturday, the weather was beautiful all weekend!

The first thing I want to do is thank all the volunteers that made this year's ride so successful--THANK YOU! From the folks who helped stuff registration packets on the Tuesday night before the ride to the folks who helped pack everything into the storage shed after the Pizza Party and everybody in between--THANK YOU! Without strong volunteer support, we couldn't put this ride on. Once again, I'd like to thank our sponsors for their generous support. The support of our partners in the business community is vital to assuring the continued success of the OKHT--THANK YOU!



Everything went as smoothly as we could've hoped for Saturday. When the riders began arriving in Bardstown, they were greeted by a display of antique bicycles courtesy of The Kentucky Wheelmen. Carson and Alison Torpey had 8 of the coolest bikes you've ever seen on display. Throughout the day, WORKitOUT Therapeutic Massage and The SPORTSMASSAGE TEAM offered massages and Baptist East/Milestone Wellness Center offered complimentary yoga on the lawn of Spalding Hall. When the dinner bell rang, Chris Cakes offered up a Bar-B-Que sandwich dinner or vegetarian burger dinner with all the fixin's. Mary Ann Heckler, who loves her ice cream, said she opted for another ear of the delicious corn on the cob instead of an ice cream! Speaking of ice cream, the dude selling ice cream on the Spalding Hall lawn sells a bourbon caramel sundae which is unbelievable! Clarksville Schwinn donated a CANNONDALE CAAD 10 105 that was raffled off by the American Red Cross. 100% of the proceeds went to the Red Cross and nearly 3300 raffle tickets were sold! The winner of the bicycle was 13 year old Jennifer Moore of Bardstown, KY. Thank you to Clarksville Schwinn for the bicycle and thank you to the American Red Cross for everything they do and thank you to Jennifer Moore for supporting the cause. Another Colour offered up some great music to close out the evening.

I worked registration at E.P. "Tom" Sawyer State Park Sunday morning, but I've been told everything went well in Bardstown. Chris Cakes was flippin' pancakes, the luggage truck got loaded and the ride back to Louisville was underway. The stop at SAG 1 was memorable as usual with the Sarson/Sexton Bunch offering up a Wizard Of Oz theme this year. After the World Famous Cookie Stop and the Team Bag Balm Stop, it was time for the Pizza Party at "Tom" Sawyer to close out another successful OKHT. The Brandon's Pizza was awesome and the clean-up crew after the Pizza Party was awesome!

Again, thank you to everyone that helped make the 34th Old Kentucky Home Tour a success!

Life is good  
Murphy

P.S. If you would like to order photos from the 2011 OKHT, check out Craig "Dooleymann" Dooley's galleries here:  
<http://www.photorelect.com/store/store.aspx?p=29990>

## EMAIL NEWSLETTER DELIVERY

### Notice!

As a cost-saving measure, the newsletter of the Louisville Bicycle Club is available only in electronic format beginning with March/April 2011. Please go the website address below to sign up or change your email address for uninterrupted service.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Also, beginning with March/April 2007:  
The electronic newsletter contains  
**COLOR PICTURES!**

You can sign up to update your email for newsletter and membership renewal delivery by editing your member profile at the LBC website:  
<http://www.louisvillebicycleclub.org/>

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### YOUR CLUB OFFICERS (Executive Committee)

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The Louisville Bicycle Club is affiliated with the **League of American Bicyclists (LAB)** and the **United States Cycling Federation (USCF)**.

## NEW MEMBERS

|                                |                              |                    |                      |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Baker, Kimberly                | 6005 Mariners Trl            | Charlestown, IN    | 47111 (502) 523-6443 |
| Barger, Bryan                  | 3803 Old Brownsboro Hills Rd | Louisville, KY     | 40241                |
| Brownfield, Valerie            | 6002 Harrods Landing Dr      | Prospect, KY       | 40059 (501) 296-3436 |
| Cappiello, Paul                | 2219 Woodford Pl             | Louisville, KY     | 40014                |
| Christy, Carl                  | 1118 Blackthorn Rd           | Louisville, KY     | 40299                |
| Comer, Carol                   | 1208 Audobon Pkwy            | Louisville, KY     | 40213                |
| Corder, Rebecca                | 6103 Diablo Ct               | Louisville, KY     | 40219 (484) 515-3587 |
| Creek, Anthony                 | 2520 S. 3rd St #106          | Louisville, KY     | 40208 (812) 606-9273 |
| Culliney, Brian                | 324 E. Main St               | Louisville, KY     | 40202 (978) 502-2906 |
| Gonzales, Zach & Webb, April   | 8780 Park Laureate Dr #206   | Louisville, KY     | 40220 (704) 431-8748 |
| Graves, Junie                  | 9518 Gutenberg Rd            | Louisville, KY     | 40299 (502) 235-0241 |
| Hall, Amy & Harold             | 12002 Luray Ct               | Louisville, KY     | 40245 (502) 396-8329 |
| Harbison, Tim & family         | 3820 Edwardsville-Galena Rd  | Georgetown, IN     | 47122 (502) 295-1289 |
| Herrington, Paul               | 418 Country Ln               | Louisville, KY     | 40207 (502) 897-7070 |
| Hurle, Alicia                  | 1015 E. Kentucky St          | Louisville, KY     | 40204 (502) 544-7584 |
| Joyce-Hassan, Melissa          | 1403 Earl Av                 | Louisville, KY     | 40215 (502) 240-2163 |
| Maxey, Lauren                  | 5902 Mercury Dr              | Louisville, KY     | 40291 (502) 548-3670 |
| Maxey, Marcy                   | 2926 Rio Rita Av             | Louisville, KY     | 40220 (765) 714-3363 |
| Morgan, Michael & Lynnelle     | 3903 Hillsboro Rd            | Louisville, KY     | 40207 (502) 836-2549 |
| Phillips, Pontious & Kenneth   | 7510 Abbott Glen Dr          | Crestwood, KY      | 40014 (502) 476-5983 |
| Pierson, Cathy                 | 1305 Taxus Top Ln #204       | Louisville, KY     | 40243 (502) 533-3843 |
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| Rose, Tom                      | 4502 Wolfspring Dr           | Louisville, KY     | 40241 (502) 553-0271 |
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| Stephens, Nancy & Joshua       | 2825 Lexington Rd            | Louisville, KY     | 40280 (505) 681-5671 |
| Stevenson, Sally               | 13615 Pinnacle Gardens Cir   | Louisville, KY     | 40245 (502) 608-4944 |
| Stoll, Michael & family        | 208 Mills Ct                 | Shepherdsville, KY | 40165 (502) 543-5295 |
| Szatzschneider, Konrad & Emily | 4525 S. 6th St               | Louisville, KY     | 40214                |
| Thai, Andrew                   | 8501 Atrium Dr #201          | Louisville, KY     | 40220                |
| Vasell, Ellen Marie            | 2215 South Shelby St         | Louisville, KY     | 40212 (502) 777-7243 |
| Watson, Monica                 | 6045 North Hwy 11            | Elizabeth, IN      | 47117 (812) 969-3157 |
| Wooldridge, Patti              | 401 Victory Ridge Ct         | Louisville, KY     | 40245 (502) 744-8794 |
| Zettwoch, David & Nancy        | 4102 River Oaks Ln           | Louisville, KY     | 40241                |

## NOTICES

### MetroCall – 311 or 574-5000

It's been brought to our attention that not all cell phones recognize 311 as a legitimate phone number. If you have a problem on a bike path, bike lane or in a park you can report the problem to MetroCall at 311 OR 574-5000. When you report a problem, you'll be given a tracking number so you can follow-up to make sure the problem has been addressed.





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## Ironman Louisville 2011

by Jeffrey Johnson

“Jeffrey Johnson, first timer from Louisville, Kentucky, you ARE an Ironman!” I never thought I’d hear those words and to be completely honest, while it was happening live, I didn’t. Between my own tears, the cowbells, and the cheering, I didn’t really hear Mike Reilly, the voice of Ironman.

I, along with Susan Howell, Kevin Brooks and perhaps other members of the LBC competed in this race on August 28. I use the term race loosely, at least for myself, as I wasn’t racing anyone or anything except the 17 hour clock. My Ironman experience really began on August 28, 2010. I volunteered at the finish line for the final 5 hours. This is when the “real people” finish, people like me who have no illusions of winning an age group, setting some spectacular time, qualifying for the World Championship in Hawaii, etc. At about 11:30 (the deadline is midnight), I gave a medal to a young lady and, after about a five minute hug, she told me that she had just been through chemotherapy. I knew at that moment that I had to give it a go. If she and all the other regular people could finish, why not me?

I had been riding regularly with the LBC, but swimming and running? I started laying a base of both and began an official 20-week training program in April. I’m just an average athlete and I’m convinced that Ironman is about endurance, not getting down, not letting yourself get sidetracked when you have a bad training day or a bad spell in the event.

The day itself? The coolest, most exciting, most fun experience I’ve had. Just about the best thing I’ve ever done. Outside of my wedding day and my daughter’s birth, this was the best, most emotional day of my life. I decided early on that I was going to smile, laugh, cheer on other athletes and thank every volunteer I saw and there were loads and loads of them. I simply can’t praise them enough. They made my day so much easier and enjoyable!

Some of the highlights of the day for me...

Having Sue and John Pyron shove me off the dock into the Ohio.

Seeing Dave Combs and Tommy Sutton at the corner of 42 and River. These little moments were repeated all day.

The rock star atmosphere in downtown LaGrange; it felt like I was in the Tour de France. On the second lap, I got a couple kisses and hugs too. Even though I have no recollection of it, my wife said after the hugs and kisses that the tune “Pump up the Jam” was playing and I literally danced on my bike as I rode away.

Having the devil and grim reaper chase me up 393 in Oldham County. Another Tour de France moment.

Seeing so many familiar faces all day: LBC members like Dougie Fresh Brent, Murph, Susan, Bobbi, Charlie Brown etc.

Coming within a couple hundred yards of the finish line while starting the second lap of the marathon portion, I’ve heard it either energizes you or demoralizes you. For me, it was the former. It felt like I was floating for the next 2-3 miles.

Having El Presidente, Murph, ride with me for a bit at about mile 23-24 of the run. “Let me be the first to say, ‘Jeffrey Johnson, you are an Ironman!’ ”

The madness and excitement of the finish chute. So loud, so fun, so emotional. I found out later that most of my friends and family also saw it live on [ironmanlive.com](http://ironmanlive.com).

Getting my medal and other finisher goodies from my 2 running partners.

To sum it up, unless you have an underlying medical or other type reason not to do it, I would recommend that everyone do Ironman. If I can do it, you can too! If not, volunteer. I’m sure others will agree that this event is a huge success for our city and I heard it about 100 times on race day, “The best race in all of Ironman is Louisville. The volunteers and the 4th Street Live finish make all the difference!”



Susan Howell in the finishing straight.  
(photo courtesy Andy Murphy)



Jeff Johnson pausing and posing en route to completing his first IRONMAN!  
(photo courtesy Andy Murphy)



Kevin Brooks finishing up his second IRONMAN!  
(photo courtesy Andy Murphy)

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## Tandemonium #3 – Articles about tandem cycling

by Nita Bernat

Ok...now is the time to talk about two “F” words. Fashion and Fit.

Fit and fashion sound better, but fashion is the mother ship here. I am talking about what’s important to wear and the implication of all that matching gear you see tandem captains and stokers sporting. I would venture to say, if you ask the ladies who are stoking, you might find out that matching jerseys may not be first and foremost on their list. Ask the guys and I think you will hear a different story. Who would have thought that the men would be the fashion matching divas on this two-of-something bike? I mean...what’s with all the hoopla?

There’s matching jerseys...that’s a given...then there are the socks, shoes, gloves, helmets...will it ever end.

Will it make you ride faster...maybe...smoother...maybe. Will it keep the captain of your tandem happy so that he / she can

work harder...most likely it will and that’s what this is all about.

And now the fit.....oh so important. There are so many adjustments one can do to make the tandem ride a comfortable and enjoyable experience.

I have gone through 5 seats, at last count, as a stoker on my Santana. I have found one, a Sella An-Atomica at the moment, that seems to work, but then I thought that of the Brooks Saddle and the Terry saddle. I thought I liked the downturned handlebars on my Trek tandem - but having the bullhorns on the Santana...so much nicer. Like anything else in life, fit for either the captain or the stoker on a tandem is a series of adjustments. You keep adjusting until you think you’ve got it right and then continue to make your changes and never stop. If you can do something, anything, to make it more comfortable for your partner in cycling...do it.

## Touring Committee 1965

by Charlie Drexler, LBC VP Touring

I recently had an opportunity to look at the “Louisville Wheelmen Tours for 1965” schedule. There were 16 tours on the schedule, starting on March 21 and ending on November 7th. The touring schedule included start time, meeting place, and general details of the route. The popular ride starting location in those days was the White Castle at Bardstown Road and Eastern Parkway. In looking over the schedule, one can see the similarity with some of today’s ride routes. While today’s ride schedules include many more rides with many more options, the purpose of the rides seems to be the same. This 1965 Louisville Wheelmen Tour Schedule puts it well: “The club’s only interest is to further cycling interest in this area. Won’t you come and ride with us?” So check out the new October Schedule and “Won’t you come out and ride with us?”

An example of a ride from the 1965 Tour Schedule:

June 6 The Grist Mill Tour

Meet at White Castle at Bardstown Road & Eastern Parkway. Time 7:00 A.M. Ride to St. Matthews through Cherokee Park to Westport Rd. to Hubbards Lane to Rudy Lane to Brownsboro Rd. to Chenoweth Lane and return. This is approximately a 25 mile tour.

If you want to see the complete 1965 Tour Schedule, check out my post in the LBC Members Forum of the clubs website.

You may have noticed that the a few of the century rides have a shorter mileage distance offered for those wanting to perhaps just get out of the city and try some other terrain and take in different scenery. These shorter routes are a great opportunity to get out and try a somewhat longer distance and see something different. Additionally, it is a great way for a new ride captain to gain experience by assisting the long-distance ride captain get ride captain credit. I would like to thank those ride captains for taking the time and energy to offer those options. Recently, Ellen Mackin and myself did Puddle’s 52-mile option of her

Medora Century. It was a beautiful ride with lots of sights to see along the way. I have posted a link to some photos from the ride in the LBC website Members Forum. So if you are not sure that you want to tackle the century route, come on out and try some of these shorter route options. Last year, we did the 70-mile option of Timothy Stephan’s Boston-Munfordville-Boston (BMB) century and enjoyed it so much that a few of us went back later in the year and did it again. We called the 70-mile route the Boston-Magnolia-Boston ride. Near the end of the ride, there is a fantastic fast descent into New Haven, Ky. This ride is again on the Schedule for October 23rd. So .....“Won’t you come out and ride with us?”

As the 2011 touring season and year comes to a close, it is time to start thinking about next year. If you are an LBC member and you are interested in becoming a Ride Captain, email me at [touring@louisvillebicycleclub.org](mailto:touring@louisvillebicycleclub.org). I will set you up for Ride Captain Broadcast emails, and also for the Ride Captain Forum on the LBC website. I also hope that we will have a Ride Captain Training Program early next year. So if you have been on the fence about becoming a Ride Captain, now is the time to make that move. The club is always looking for new ride captains and new ride ideas!

Emails from the LBC website (Ride Captain Broadcast email list) and the LBC Website Members Forum will be the primary means for ride schedule reminders and updates. If you are a ride captain or want to be a ride captain and you are not getting the Schedule Reminder emails from the LBC website, email me at [touring@louisvillebicycleclub.org](mailto:touring@louisvillebicycleclub.org) to be added to the broadcast email list.

For Ride Updates and Cancellations be sure to check: <http://www.louisvillebicycleclub.org/RideUpdates> and the LBC Website Members Forum.

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# Labor Day Hike, Bike & Paddle

by Andy Murphy, LBC President



This past May, the Memorial Day Mayor’s Healthy Hometown Hike & Bike was expanded to include a paddling event on the Ohio River for kayaks and canoes. For the Labor Day event, Tai Chi and Yoga exhibitions were added and attendance was estimated at 9,000 people, a record! Many Louisville Bicycle Club members volunteer at the Mayor’s Ride. Whether it’s distributing

bells and lights, helping with helmet fits or serving as ride marshals, LBC members continue to answer the call when our help is needed. This ride keeps getting bigger and it’s cool that the LBC is such a big part of it!



Yoga we can get in to! (photo courtesy Andy Murphy)

Life is good  
Murphy



Ride Captain Of The Year Candidate Bitsy Dobbs getting ready to head out for the ride. (photo courtesy Andy Murphy)



Charlie Brown “Yee Hah” and Gil Crenshaw help with bell and light distribution. (photo courtesy Andy Murphy)

# University

A proud me





The record crowd heads out Witherspoon Way toward Shawnee Park on The Mayor's Healthy Hometown Hike, Bike & Paddle!  
(photo courtesy Andy Murphy)

After nearly 9 months, 64 members of the Louisville Bicycle Club Commuter's Group have logged a total of 43,844.54 miles. I would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to commute and then log their commuting mileage. If you would like to join the LBC Commuter Group, go to My Cycling Log here: <http://www.mycyclinglog.com/>

You have to register, it's FREE, then click on the Louisville Bicycle Club Group. When you get to the LBC page, click on "Request Membership". Keep in mind that if you decide to join the LBC Commuter Group, we are only logging commuting mileage. PLEASE DO NOT LOG LEISURE RIDES, TRAINING RIDES OR MILEAGE ACCRUED ON CLUB RIDES WITH THE LBC GROUP. Riding to and from club rides counts as commuting, but not the mileage on the ride itself. Also, when you log a ride, make sure you select "Commute" and "C02". This helps My Cycling Log calculate how much money has been saved in gas by our commuting activity and how much CO2 we haven't put into the atmosphere.

There will be no LBC awards associated with the Commuter Program. There will be no "Winner" for most commuting mileage. We appreciate people commuting and taking the time to log their rides with our group.

Life is good  
Murphy

# y Hospital

## Trauma Institute

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## Paris Brest Paris 2011 Part II (the Event)

by Melissa "Puddle" Hall

*"Sure I am this day we are masters of our fate, that the task which has been set before us is not above our strength; that its pangs and toils are not beyond our endurance. As long as we have faith in our own cause and an unconquerable will to win, victory will not be denied us." - Winston Churchill*

Finally I am on my way to Paris, France. The long months of training and waiting are finished. I will either succeed or fail, and there is not much I can do at this late date to tilt the scales either way. I am determined to succeed, to be victorious, but I hope I have the inner fortitude to accept failure if it should happen. As much as I hate to admit it, some things are out of my control.

Traveling stresses me to no end as it is so unfamiliar to me. Vacations were postponed to save for college expenses when the children were small with only the occasional week-end foray into neighboring states. Now my chicks are grown, and for the most part what I earn is my own and there is a world to explore. Being a social worker I am not highly paid, but I am a saver. For the first time, I book a flight online and print my own boarding pass. In 2007 when I attended PBP, I traveled through Claus and his travel agency, Desperes, but his schedule is not the schedule that I hope to have this time. In 2007 some people had to spend the entire first day in the airport waiting for the bus to the motel. Unlike my wondrous daughter who is the soul of patience and understanding and still takes my breath away as she did when I first gazed in awe upon her tiny face and held her to my breast to suckle knowing that my life was somehow irrevocably changed, somehow more than what it was before, I am impatient with waiting and an entire day in an airport would seem an eternity.

I briefly ponder my daughter recently thanking me for teaching her how to wait. Can a person teach something that they don't possess? She is beautiful in her waiting, unseasoned wisdom and patience in her eyes. During the flight I wonder if there will ever be a man wise enough to see through those thorns and pluck the rose that is encased within or if she will spend her life alone. But it is her life and she must live it to suit herself and not her mother. As the Graham Nash song says, *"And in the end remember it's with you that you have to live."* What a different life I would have lived if I had lived the life my mother envisioned for me. Despite the fact she wanted only the best for me our definitions of what is best vary drastically: I think I would have been very unhappy.

One of my saddest moments of PBP 2007 was seeing Dave and Steve leave for their plane the day after the event knowing that I had to stay an extra night when I did not feel well enough to do much of anything and knew no one with whom to commiserate or share tales. The glow of successfully completing the course had faded and while I nursed a nugget of satisfaction in my core, I was left with an all encompassing fatigue such as I had not known before. I would much rather have had my extra day in France prior to the event rather than stay an extra day when I know that every fiber of my being will suffer exhaustion and will long for my husband, the home of my heart, and for my little stone house and the lure of the familiar. For a moment I wonder what madness possessed me to return to ride this ride again: 2007 was so difficult.

This year I will not have to wait after the event, only before, but still there is stress. The packing up of the bike and worrying whether it will get there and not be broken, the trying to get things at work in order so that it will run smoothly while I am gone, the trying to get my house in order, the packing of suitcases and hoping that I will have the right clothing for the

weather, the wandering through airports and trying to find where I need to be, the necessity of having different currency, the anxiety of being unable to speak the language and to ask questions of those around me, and the nervousness of finding my way hold me momentarily captive despite the fact I have traveled the same flights as Dave King, despite the fact Steve Rice has assured me that Bill Pustow and he will be there with a taxi when we leave the plane. At heart I believe I must be quite the coward, and I wonder that anyone tolerates me.

I think that this stress is good for me though, that it is a form of living death to become too comfortable with one's existence, that perhaps people quit growing when this happens. Growing and changing is not always a comfortable experience. In fact, change is normally decidedly uncomfortable. It humbles me to think how much of this world is foreign to me. Complacency, perhaps, has a cost. I realize yet again that I treasure these friends who encourage me to overcome my fears and weaknesses and become a bit more than what I was before. What a blessing it is to have friends. Not everyone has a friend, and certainly everyone does not have friends like these. How very sad that is. These friends were the very ones who first encouraged me to take a chance at conquering an event like PBP, a 1200-kilometer bicycle event that must be completed within a 90-hour time limit. I puzzle over whether they know how I cherish them, these men who allow me to share the roads with them without asking for or expecting things that I cannot give them. Sometimes I don't quite know why they are my friends as I am not particularly clever or beautiful or talented, but I have come to accept that it is enough that they are my friends. *"One doesn't know, till one is a bit at odds with the world, how much one's friends who believe in one rather generously, mean to one."* - D.H. Lawrence). Perhaps the love of distance and the bike is what bonds us? I wonder sometimes that the sport does not draw more women, and my friend, Greg Smith, another friend who encouraged me, has discussed this with me. Whatever the reason, the man to woman ratio from the USA this year is somewhere around 12 women to 100 men, and most of the people I normally ride with are male. I have female friends that I love dearly, but few of them ride a bicycle.

The ride to the motel, the Campagnile in St. Quentin en Yvelines, wakens us as the driver recklessly brakes in tunnels, swerves out of his lane and misses other cars by inches. To come this far and be injured, not on the bike but in a car accident, seems too cruel to imagine. The right side of the van shows the signs of previous crashes, silver creases deeply etched in the white paint. Still the taxi fit four bicycles and numerous suitcases and four riders as well as the driver and it is heading in the right direction. All is said when we reach the motel and Steve Rice looks at me and says he wishes that I had been driving for I am the archetypical female driver; I am among the worst of the world's drivers, and his words tell me just how bad the driving looked from the front passenger seat. Before his comment, I thought perhaps it was my imagination. Still, we have arrived and are safe and it is time to assemble the bicycles.

Originally, Steve was going to help me pack my bike as it has been four years since I last packed a bicycle and that was with his help, but my husband wants me to go with him to pick peaches prior to leaving and I cannot deny him or myself that pleasure knowing that I will be leaving him alone for 10 days and understanding the sacrifices we have made to get here. So often he does not feel well enough to do things any more, and it is delightful to spend some time together with this man that I love, generously laughing and holding hands, carrying the bushel baskets overflowing with peaches, and sharing the

## Paris Brest Paris 2011 Part II (the Event) (cont.)

by Melissa "Puddle" Hall

memories that are our lives. I know I will remember this day and hold it dear; the smell of fresh peaches and the warmth of the morning sun will mingle with memories of his dear face, the arms that have held and protected me through happiness and sorrow. I will remember that this man has loved me and supported me when I am most unlovable and flawed. That memory will be worth more than any bicycle or bicycle ride. If my bike is packed correctly fine, and if not I will be fine: disappointed but fine.

Now, however, I have to unpack a bike that may or may not have been properly packed and figure out how to make it whole. While I love to ride bikes, having a good grasp of how they work and how to fix them when they don't work is not my forté. I try to visualize the correct order to put things back together, hoping I will only need to ask for help with the pedals, and mostly I am able to get everything where it belongs. Steve Rice graciously helps with the rest. Despite the fact we are a day earlier than in 2007, there are still other bike cases and bikes scattered in front of the hotel with their owners working diligently to get them back together. Tomorrow will be our trip to Paris by bike, the only pre-ride I will do other than the ride into the bike check prior to the start of the event. Briefly, I take a short test ride and all seems to be working. I park my bike in the bike room within the hotel and check into my room, eager to wash off the smell of travel.



(photo courtesy Melissa Hall)

After a good night's sleep (I was quite happy I brought my own pillow from home), I go down to breakfast. the petit déjeuner.. The breakfast room has changed since 2007, but not the delicious fare. There are all manner of pastries and breads, crêpes and cereal, jambon and fromage (ham and cheese, some of the most useful of french words), and all manner of delightful tastes and textures. I try the coffee, but as I remember it is quite strong and slaps you across the face. Unlike my friend Steve Roysse who loves this fierce coffee, I prefer to ease into morning gradually with weaker coffee. Bill is already eating and encourages me to try the café au lait. While I am not very adventurous with foods, I decide to try it and find that I like the taste; I like it a lot. It reminds me of the year we lived in England when I was 9, getting sick and Cliffy asking if I wanted warm milk. I assumed she meant hot chocolate, but such was not the case. She literally meant warm milk. But they do have hot chocolate here as well, a drink the French appear to appreciate as much as I do.

After breakfast, we meet to test our bicycles and ride into Paris.

Dave, Bill, and I all have on club jerseys. They are wearing the red captains jersey and I am wearing my yellow jersey. It is the first time I have worn the jersey since winning it a few years ago. The fleur de lis on the jerseys briefly makes me think of the connection between France and Louisville, something I had not considered before. If I remember correctly, the fleur de lis was a symbol of the Plantagenets representing faith, wisdom and chivalry. I let the thought go when I cannot think of a Plantagenet named Louis. Perhaps Geoffrey? Perhaps I am wrong in my association. So many things that I do not know, and not enough life, mind, or time left to learn them.

I think of 2007 and miss Joe Camp and Steve Roysse. Joe did not come this year and Steve is not arriving until today, too late to join us. Soon into the ride, I realize that my steering does not seem quite right. I can't determine if this is because of riding with the carradice, or if I put it together incorrectly. Still it is not significant enough to stop and try to fix at this point and we continue toward Paris, passing Versailles. Around us are countless people on bicycles: men in suits and women in dresses heading toward work. Many carry a back pack slung over their shoulders. There are rows of bicycles on the curbs that people can rent. At least I assume they are for rent. Momentarily I imagine a city where there are bicycles freely available to all. Bike lanes rule, but everyone seems to make allowances for bicycles whether they are in the bike lane or whether there is a bike lane or not. Indeed, some streets run the bike lane down the middle of the road with curb protection on each side and their own little set of traffic lights with a bicycle in the middle of the light that works to allow pedestrians to cross the bike path. Even as we make our way around the roundabout at the Arc de Triomphe, cars seem to yield to the cyclist melting out of my way at the last moment when I think a crash is surely inevitable. Bicycles are just so accepted here, a part of life rather than an anomaly.



Notre Dame (photo courtesy Melissa Hall)

In places the streets are still ancient cobblestone and our bikes rattle and groan, protesting that they are not mountain bikes but road bikes. It is a good way to test your bike and to be sure that nothing is loose, but this may be taking it to extremes. I find my bike is not shifting correctly and is jumping gears behind. I will have to decide whether to try to fix it myself, locate a bike shop, or plan on having it fixed at a control. I remember Tom Armstrong telling us in bicycle repair class to turn the little knob one quarter turn at a time, yet I can't remember for sure which way he suggested trying first. But I will deal with that later. For now I am enjoying my ride through this city.

## Paris Brest Paris 2011 Part II (the Event) (cont.)

by Melissa "Puddle" Hall

In 2007, our Paris bicycle trip was more about passing the tourist sights, but this year, though we do pass Notre Dame, the Louvre, and the Eiffel Tower, it is more about seeing different bicycle shops. It feels different. I relax and let go of 2007. Experiences just never can be duplicated, so they have to be



(photos courtesy Melissa Hall)

appreciated on their own merits. A few shops are closed and Bill, who lived in Europe for a number of years during his working years, explains that in Europe people close shops for extended periods of time while they are on vacation. We finally reach the shop of Alex Singer and it is closed. However, there is no vacation sign on the door and the grill over the front door is up so we determine the store may be closed for lunch. We decide to get our own lunch. We find a place that serves the traditional ham and cheese on a baguette. Sitting on the curb experiencing the marvel of this sandwich, I wonder why the taste cannot be duplicated at home in the United States; but it has not been or if it has been I have not yet found the shop. Kind of like croissants: they have them at home but the texture lacks the rich flakiness of the french croissants. And there is real butter everywhere, rich and creamy: not the pale imitation spreads I have at home. We eat and then return to the Singer shop. The bicycle in the window lures me and I spend a minute or two admiring the beauty and being glad that there are people in this world who can create such art. How fulfilling it must be to be able to combine usefulness with beauty. I will dream of

this green bicycle as a starving man dreams of food. What a greedy girl I am wanting yet another bicycle. Two other people are waiting on their bicycles, and soon the shop person arrives by bicycle and opens the shop so we can look inside.

When we return to the motel, Steve Royse and Steve Wyatt have arrived and are putting their bicycles together. It appears that this year there was no waiting at the airport. There are smiles and hugs and stories of past rides floating through the air. Those with the internet will be endlessly checking weather predictions for the next couple of days before the ride starts as if it really matters for we will ride regardless. The only thing the weather prediction affects is what I will lug with me on my bike, and I will be taking everything I reasonably "might" need anyway because weather is fickle. Still it feels weird to be without access to the internet or a telephone. Everyone is comparing the prices they paid to ship their bicycles, and there does not appear to be any consistency even within the same airline.

Mainly, other than an evening trip in by train to Paris for dinner, the remainder of the time before the event will be spent eating and resting. The guys will remember the mussels swimming in "stinky" cheese and beer from the trip, but I will remember the sound of our footsteps as we walk through the



(photos courtesy Melissa Hall)

## Paris Brest Paris 2011 Part II (the Event) (cont.)

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darkening streets with history popping up everywhere and the soft chatter and laughter of friends caressing me and holding me close. I will remember the warmth of the smiles and the hum of people around me saying things that I do not understand but wish I did. I will remember the ice creams we bought that were scooped into cones so that the ice cream looked like an open rose, and how the beauty of the presentation made it taste much better than it might have otherwise. Oh, I am such a girl. The guys would laugh sometimes if they knew my true thoughts on such things. It is not often I share. I try not to be a bother.

Before you know it, Saturday arrives and it is time to take our bikes for inspection and registration. It is required that you show your lights and back up lights and your reflective gear. I have my new RUSA vest that meets the French requirements, but I also have purchased another that I hope is a bit smaller. I worry briefly about the vest I have and whether it will be too hot, but later it turns out to be perfect for the weather. Bill, Dave, Steve, and I ride over and I try to memorize my way back to the motel so that I don't get lost if I finish alone. While I have made progress in dealing with it, I have a fear of getting lost that is a constant battle for me where intellect battles emotion. It is an irrational fear and I have no idea what terrible thing I think might happen if I lose my way, but there you go: that is why fears are often irrational as they make no sense. Emotions just are. It is not a good fear for a randonneur, but as I once told my friend, Grasshopper, if you ride long enough you eventually come out somewhere, and I have found that I can ride a long way when necessary or desired. It makes no sense that I have no dread of riding this entire event alone, but I don't.

My bike makes it through inspection with no problems, and it is time to go through registration. I have wrapped my lights in plastic not trusting the e-delux due to numerous on-line tales of failure and Steve Rice's lights failure in one of the qualifying brevets. Following the ride, Jeff Bauer tells me his light failed during the ride. The registration line is short and moves quickly, and directly I am given the numbers for my bicycle and my helmet. It is not as impressive as it was in 2007 when there was a table that obviously was for each individual country, but it is efficient. With the rain in 2007, everything was moved indoors and there were no outside booths as there were this year. There is also a neck pouch and my brevet card included in the package. I will use this pouch to carry my passport and brevet card the entire ride, slipping it inside my jersey or jacket except when I am having the card signed. This time RUSA has also supplied a nifty little name tag for your bike with your name

and USA designation. The young lady helping me explains that I need to fill in medical and emergency information on my brevet card prior to the event. Last time I stupidly forgot to do that, but this time I manage to remember when I return to the hotel.

Unlike 2007, there seem to be fewer booths to tempt my pocket book, but I do end up buying a jersey, a rain cap, and a tee shirt. I am spending money like I have it, but it is fun and a luxury I don't normally allow myself. Earlier this week I haunted the shops and bought gifts for my family: chocolate for the men and lace scarves for the ladies. There are all sort of bicycles here, many with ingenious inventions to meet the rider's needs. One rider had modified a tennis racket to make a rack for the back of his bicycle that was lightweight but would hold what he needed to carry. The ingenuity astounds me.



(photo courtesy Melissa Hall)

My husband worked for a few days inventing a device to keep my handlebar bag from touching my front wheel. The guys will make fun of it saying it is a phallic symbol and will later decorate it with a red knob on the front, but it works and it was built with love.

After registration we easily pedal back to the motel, passing cyclists who are on their way to a later registration time. We each attach our numbers to our bicycles and to our helmets.



(photo courtesy Melissa Hall)



(photo courtesy Melissa Hall)

Initially I attach mine over the cables, so I have to remove the number and redo it. Duh! Drop bags have to be prepared and taken to the trucks and I have to pack my carradice and handlebar bag with those things I will carry with me on my adventure. Each drop bag contains a change of clothing, a towel, spare tubes, a folding tire, and gels and energy bars. My first PBP I did not use any gels or energy bars, but I have vowed to ride more smartly this time, and part of that is better nutrition and not becoming so depleted. I make a trip to the ATM to make sure I have enough money to carry me through as I know of no place to stop on the ride to get more. When we later take the drop bags to the trucks, I take note of a Subway as I know I will need some type of nourishment to take to the start as it is at dinner time and most stores in France still close on Sundays, like the United States when I was a child. Suitcases will need to be ready for check out and stored in the luggage room once it is no longer the bicycle room. And then I must rest.

But before resting, I need to decide what to take with me. My handlebar bag is for food. In my carradice I pack clothing and tools. I have a wool undershirt, arm warmers, leg warmers, wool gloves, and an extra pair of gloves that are water resistant. I have my rain jacket. I have spare tubes and a spare folding tire. I have medications and personal care items such as a toothbrush and toothpaste and floss. Before you know it, I have about what feels to be about fifteen to twenty extra pounds of stuff to cart up and down the rolling hills that are PBP. I try to whittle the weight: each item is carefully examined and thought about. It is no use. I will be more comfortable toting it all than I will be not having it if I need it. The only thing I leave behind that I originally packed was a wind vest, and that is because the reflective vest seems as if it will be warm. I realize too well how cold can debilitate you, sapping your will to succeed and sapping your strength until you are shriveled and wanting. I know from other longer rides that no matter how I prepare or what I carry, there will be times when all I want is to throw my hands up, white flag flying, and I know from the past that I will fight this giving in with all of my being. It is a physical and mental scrimmage: cold will not be only thing I contend with on this ride. I also have brought a cheap camelbak to wear until the first stop at mile 87 and then discard. If I were faster, I would take much less; but I am not so very fast.

I am surprised by my ability to sleep the night before the start. Often I suffer insomnia the night before an event. When I was doing triathlons, my husband would chide me for racing the tri the night before. Eventually I got it under control the majority of the time. Maybe I am becoming comfortable enough with distance bicycle rides that insomnia will now be a thing of the past. Despite my reluctance to use any drug, I did use melatonin for the first time when arriving in Paris to help with the jet lag. Perhaps that is the reason. Perhaps it is from being in Paris late (for me) the previous evening or just the luck of the draw, I find sleep easily and I let him claim me, wrap his arms around me, surrendering completely to halcyon oblivion. And then it is Sunday. The strain is evident from the moment I come down to breakfast. I can hear it in voices and see it in the nervous movements of the others around me. People are checking their bikes like Santa checks his list, not once but twice. Movements are jerky and less fluid. At this moment, I know what people mean when they say that the air is electric. It is almost tangible, this anticipation.

Originally I intend to have pizza as my pre-ride meal, but the others want McDonalds and I go along. I want food that is filling and has a high sodium content, and McDonald's or pizza fit the bill. All this rest and all this eating, I should be as full as a tick. More weight to carry up hills, I think to myself. Before

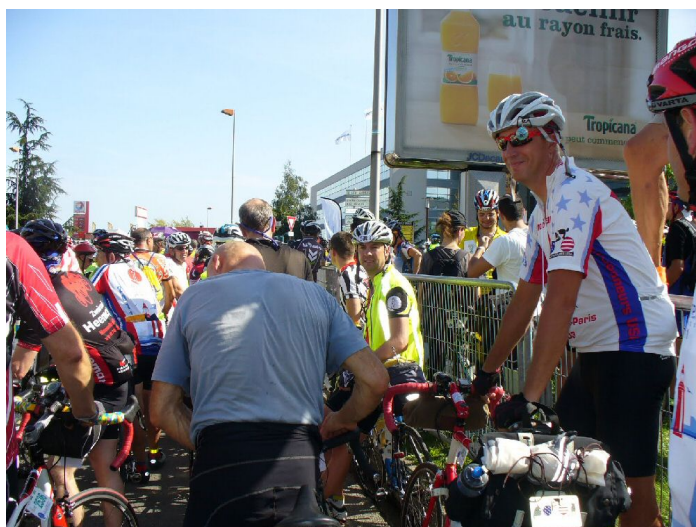
eating, we move our bicycles from the bicycle room to the hallway so they will be easier to get to and we talk about the time to head over to the start. I know from experience it will be a long wait with everyone pushing and crammed in like sardines. It is almost impossible to stay together as a group. In 2007, I grabbed onto Steve Royse's carradice to keep from getting separated. Hating crowds the way I do, it is one of my least favorite parts of the ride, but it is part of the ride experience. This year the ride is to start earlier rather than the 10:00 p.m. start time.

After lunch I rest and read for just a bit keeping my legs elevated, then I dress and head downstairs dropping my suitcases off in the bag room. The outside is crowded and if anything the tension has increased. We head over stopping at Subway on the way to grab a sandwich to take. It is the hottest day since we arrived, and I know I will need extra water while waiting in line. I take a throw-away bottle of water.

The waiting is in and of itself an experience. Our group happens to pick the wrong line, and despite getting there quite early we don't manage to get out until the fifth wave, all, that is, except Dave who left with the fourth wave despite the fact that most of the time he was a bit behind us in line. The movement of the line makes no sense and depends on metal gates that appear to be opened or closed into starting chutes at random without rhyme or reason. Unlike 2007, the earlier start time means that despite getting out in a later wave I can see better as it is still light outside, and I am grateful as there are narrowing roads and roundabouts with unexpected curbs. I still remember the horrible sound of someone crashing near the start in 2007, then sound of scraping on the pavement made worse by the darkness and the crowd.

While in line, though I hate crowds and waiting like this, it engages me to see the riders from different countries and their bikes and hear people talking. Some conversations I can understand and others I cannot. I watch in disbelief as one woman pulls a bag of make up out of her handlebar bag saying she thought it might be easier if she could put on make-up during the ride to make herself feel better. Another man brags about DNFing in 2007 and not being trained enough to finish this year. His rationale for attending was that it meant a trip to Paris. I don't understand this, but there is much in this world that is beyond my ken. Amazingly, one woman lights a cigarette to smoke before the ride. Around us there are multitudes of watchers and entertainment: musicians with bagpipes and people in costumes on stilts. I am toward the center and can't get a good shot of these performers, but the music is uplifting. At times I become annoyed as people are bumping and pushing me with their bicycles and their persons and I am not a patient person and I like my physical space, but I know that we are getting closer to starting all the time and I counsel myself to be patient.

We finally arrive at the start after a two to three hour wait. I have eaten a sandwich while in line, run to the bathroom while Steve held my bike, and drunk the extra water that I did not intend to carry on the bike. I have taken a picture for a man from another country of him and his buddy. I am weary of standing. My feet are beginning to ache. As we near the start, attitudes change and smiles begin to flicker across faces. I feel myself inflating inside with excitement. The journey is about to begin. All of us here, whether or not we understand each other, are challenging ourselves, and all of us love the bikes. All of us have worked and sweated and planned and dreamed for this moment. Maybe because it is an event rather than a race, nationalities seem to unite.



(photos courtesy Melissa Hall)

Finally the gun sounds and our wave is off. I remind myself not to get caught up so early in giving chase to others. Some of the cyclists appear to be riding individually; others are clustered together with others from their country wearing special jerseys. My choice to start this year was in my 2007 PBP jersey. It is a personal thing with me from my running days: you can't wear a shirt or jersey until you earn it. Still I appreciate the idea of countries identifying their participants and may need to change my thinking in this area. I find myself at the front of a long pace line, and I force myself to slow and drop back to accept the draft. It will be an hour or more before the crowds thin. I end up near Bill, and despite dropping back we pass rider after rider. Steve Rice pulls ahead, and Dave is long gone. Some of the riders I encounter have good riding skills, but others seem squirrely so I pay particular attention to those I don't know, mostly everyone, trying to prevent or avoid an accident. Throughout the ride I remain alert for riders stopping without giving any indication they will be stopping or pulling out in front of me. Weariness will exacerbate poor handling skills. I notice early on that more riders wear helmets than in 2007. In fact, I encounter very few riders who do not have on helmets.

The first fifty miles or so are fairly flat and I make good time. Then we hit the forest, the Forêt Domaniali Rambouillet, and the start of the climbs. There are never any really serious hills steepness wise, but they are relentless for most of the course. I don't remember this forest from 2007, maybe because it was

dark and I was occupied doing my best to hang onto Joe and Steve or maybe because of the incessant rain and wind, but it is breathtakingly beautiful. Like many of the villages we pass that are centuries old, it seems settled somehow, something you can rely on to go on much the same tomorrow as it does today giving stability to the world. Everything is so green and verdant. I wonder if one of these hills was the one where in 2007 on the return someone shouted, "Bravo, Madame USA." Throughout the ride, the French people will be out supporting us with cheers and giving out water and other goodies. Bill and I discuss how different it is, that in the USA our children would complain of boredom after the first two or three riders passed. The French adults and children warm my heart with their desire to be supportive. Throughout the ride families and individuals are there giving riders water, cheers, sugar cubes, and other goodies.

Even with the extra weight of my bags and the drag of my hub generator, I find I am climbing well. We will ride through the night, the next day, and part of the next night before stopping to sleep for a few hours. Bill and I talk about sleep stops. I tell him that my plan is to get to Loudeac and see how I feel. If I feel as if I can go on, I will. If not, I will sleep there as I did in 2007. I can tell he is wanting to plan on pressing onward, and that is fine. I learned in 2007 that I need to ride my own ride and not someone else's ride. He must do the same. During long rides, it is not unusual for me to go through periods of feeling strong and well to periods of feeling weak and wanting to give in. I need to use those moments when I am feeling powerful while still being careful to pace myself. It is unusual to find someone whose rhythm matches your own, but so far Bill and I seem to be matching paces. If this changes, I can ride alone.

We delay putting on our reflective gear as long as possible because of the heat. Even with evening gradually blanketing us in darkness, I am covered with sweat. This will change during the nights and the second day of the ride when I am at times gratefully wearing everything that I brought other than my short sleeved wool top to stay warm. But for now, it is hot and I am glad for the training I had in 90-degree temperatures at home.

It seems a long time before we hit Mortagne, the first control. It is an optional control so we don't get our cards stamped here, but we stop and eat. I remembered that they have mashed potatoes and have been looking forward to them. They are bland and seem to settle my stomach which was beginning to worry me with a faint hint of what I suffered in 2007. I drink not one, but two cans of Coca-Cola, sending silent apologies to my dentist, my middle brother. One thing I remember is that I need to force myself to eat and drink. Deficits are hard to recover from, particularly when there is little sleep. It is a relief to lose the camelbak as it is beginning to bother my neck, and I wonder at the riders that are able to carry backpacks the entire way rather than using panniers or carriages or other baggage holders. Mostly these riders seem to be European, but it makes me think momentarily of Packman. How I wish he had been able to do this ride. I feel sure he would have been a Charly Miller rider. Before I left the states I openly lamented the lack of Sprite that would be available during the ride, and I giggle thinking of his response that he would have taken his own and had it in his backpack. I think that I am glad he is my friend.

We eat quickly once we work our way through the line, and then it is back on the road. We share a large bottle of water, filling our bicycle bottles. Looking back, we might have been better served time-wise stopping at one of the cafes we saw open along the way earlier on, but I had made my plans based on 2007 without taking into account the different starting time,

something that will come back to bite me at the end of the ride. In 2007, I don't remember all these places being open.

The controls pass quickly and the countryside flies by. At one point, I look to my right and am awestruck at seeing a castle. I stop to take a photograph and Bill patiently stops as well. We talk briefly about what it must be like living in a castle. I have



(photo courtesy Melissa Hall)

been admiring gardens along the way. There are vegetable gardens that in themselves are works of art, but almost every home has a flower garden bursting with a collage of color. It is as if every gardener here is an artist and planting is not just utilitarian. I like to garden, but I have done nothing to compare to this, and I marvel at the complexity that ironically seems so simple. I briefly wonder if the cooler temperatures affect the lushness that is the french countryside. I marvel at the lack of litter along the way and think that the French must be a proud and caring people for there to be so little litter. I did not see one pop bottle or pop can discarded along the side of the road. The little trash I did see seemed to be from inconsiderate riders who had used energy gels and dropped the empty packages in the road rather than taking them to the trash can at the next control. I pride myself on not doing this with my trash. You should not litter your own nest, and you should not drop your trash in other people's homes. Yes, it means that some of my things got a tad sticky, but everything I have is washable. I am a guest here, and I am honored that they have allowed me to share their home. Respect is just one way in which I can show my gratitude.

I find myself singing as I ride along. The hills are coming easily and my song helps me pace myself. Later in the ride, while I am sitting on a curb drinking a coke, a man from Canada will come up and thank me for my song. He says he has never thought of music in connection with brevets. People stare at times, but I figure that if my singing bothers them they can speed up or slow down. My legs still feel strong when we reach Loudeac and there is no way I want to stop and sleep there. Controls have been crowded and have eaten our time, but it is still light. Despite my vow from 2007 to avoid eating at controls like the plague, I find myself eating at many of them. I also find myself getting used to entering a women's bathroom and finding men inside or there being unisex bathrooms. The bathrooms often don't have seats on the commodes, and sometimes don't even have commodes. In the port-a-pots at Villaines, I find myself trying to figure out how to urinate when all that is there is a small hole in the floor of the port-a-pot. I finally see how urine is funneled downwards and that a woman does not even need to

squat to urinate, but what one does when one needs to defecate in one of these port a pots eludes me. I am glad I brought along camping toilet tissue and corn fields will be fertilized and watered. Passing through the middle of one town, a man has his bib shorts pulled all the way down to his knees and is bent over examining himself. It is early in the ride for saddle sores, but I suppose that is what it was. I giggle and ask Bill if he noticed (as if anyone would not). It might have been sore, but he did have a beautifully muscled rear end. I think how different it is in the United States; here he would be arrested for indecency. Somehow, I don't find it offensive; just different than what I am used to. I revel in the newness.

Bill is still with me, and we plunge onwards. I am relieved that he appears to be okay because early in the ride he began to suffer from cramping. This was rather strange as I don't remember ever seeing him cramp before. The people watching from a doorway began shouting at me when I retraced my course to check on him after realizing he was not behind me and did not understand when I shouted, "Ami," but they understand when we ride by together and I holler, "Bonjour." I thank people for their "Bravos" and "Allez" and "Bon Chance" with a merci. Bill thanks them in English. By now it is apparent that Bill and I are riding together for at least the first part of the ride. We go a bit off course and find a McDonald's to attempt to replenish our sodium and hopefully prevent further cramping. It is rather odd how hard it is to find salt here, an American staple at every table and with every meal. I wonder if it is the same McDonald's that Dave and I stopped at on the return in 2007.

Fatigue is beginning to set in a bit by the time I reach St. Nicholas. Bill and I talk about continuing to Carhaix and just refilling water and grabbing a quick bite here; however, the volunteer directing us misunderstood and before you know it we are back out in the country with no water and no food. I toy with the idea of continuing on the Brest, but by the time I reach Carhaix I am ready to sleep. I am glad I did not stop at Loudiac. It was light and I was not tired. Bill and I decide on three hours of sleep. There is a line for the dormitory, and he says he will just sleep in the cafeteria. I want a cot. When I reach the front of the line, I hear knocking on the window. Dave King has found Bill and I understand that now we are going to sleep four hours. At the dormitory, I tell them when to awaken me. They do not understand. Luckily, the couple behind me speak french and are able to translate. I later find that both Dave and Bill slept there as well. While I am tired and do sleep it is not a sound, dreamless sleep and not particularly restful: the cots are not as comfortable as Loudiac was in 2007 being plastic and too full. The wool blanket makes me sweat, but I am cold if I am not covered. I am awake fifteen minutes before I am due to be awakened. Opening my eyes in the darkness, I see a totally naked man dressing. I think to myself that taking my cycling shorts off while resting would be a good saddle sore preventative and vow to do so the next time I sleep at a control.

I arise and go to look for Bill and Dave, but I can't find them. I decide to eat breakfast and brush my teeth and hope they turn up. After breakfast and a few trips walking from the bikes to the eating places, I finally see Dave. An hour has passed since I awakened, too much time to waste not sleeping, eating, or riding. He says he is going to eat breakfast. He does not know where Bill is. Perhaps they meant 4:00 a.m. rather than four hours of sleep. I leave a note on Bill's saddle telling him I am forging ahead alone, then roll out into the night.

The fog is thick, curling around me like gauze, obscuring my vision and dampening my clothing. I have trouble regulating my core temperature going from cold to hot, so I find myself



stopping often and taking clothing on and off. We climb and descend and climb again. At one point a man from Japan asks me in halting English if there is a name for this hill. I am sure there is, but I don't know it. I think how I admire people who know two languages. The fog is so thick that only the continual climbing tells me where I am. Water drips off my helmet in large drops. It distracts me, hanging on the edge of my helmet, sliding from side to side, but no amount of wiping will keep it away. I have to remove my glasses as I can't see with them on and I am glad that I still have some sight left in these old eyes. I worried about my eyesight when planning this ride, but they have been okay aided by the French roads that never seem to have the large pot holes or debris that take out unsuspecting riders in the USA. I wonder how people I have not seen on the course are doing. It is Dave Rudy's first PBP. Jeff Bauer, Tim Carroll and Steve Phillips were riding fixed gear bicycles along with another rider I don't know at all.

I pass a field of what I believe to be Charolais cattle and think how peaceful they look. Every cow in the field is lying down and peacefully chewing their cud. William Wordsworth comes to mind: *"The world is too much with us; late and soon, getting and spending we lay waste our powers: Little we see in nature that is ours."* Yes, I not only sing sometimes on rides but I have been known to quote poetry. I marvel that anyone will ride with me. I begin to wonder why I never see cattle lying down and chewing their cud at home any more, and I never reach a conclusion. It is odd the things one contemplates on long rides. I do know they are beautiful animals, sleek and well muscled.

At one point, I become incredibly sleepy and pull over remembering my promise to my daughter. Before I left in 2007, she asked me to give my word to pull over and rest if I get too tired to ride safely, and it has reached that point. It always amazes me how suddenly I can become sleepy, my eyes blurring and wanting to roll backwards in their sockets, and how hard it is to resist the temptation to just try to make it to the next control rather than stopping. It seems I am feeling fine and strong, and then quite suddenly fatigue overcomes me and brings me to my knees. Normally a five to ten minute stop will revive me enough to where I am not a danger to myself or others. This time it takes a bit longer, but I brighten and before you know it I am crossing the bridge to Brest. I lament that the fog kept me from enjoying the view from the top of the climb because it is one of my favorite memories from 2007: the panorama and the crowds cheering me on. Due to the fog and the changed start times, nobody is there when we crest. And I lament about not being able to see the view from the bridge more clearly. But I won't complain about this weather. The ride is so much easier than 2007, and I don't think it is training related. I think it is weather related. At one point I meet Dan Driscoll and the Texas crew, the name tags at work, but I fear I am rather in a foul humor from losing so much time at Carhaix and I want to be alone so I press the pace. They must think me unfriendly, rude, and an incredible snob. I just don't feel like talking. It is my own fault for not doing as I planned and riding my own ride, but I am disgusted with myself and I am not done chastising myself. I do not want company with my thoughts. I later feel shamed. Bill has done nothing but praise the Texas 1200 and these individuals who rode, helped, and organized it.

Crossing the bridge to Brest and reaching the control after what seems to be an eternity winding through city streets, I am elated at reaching the turn around point. It seems to take forever as I wind my way through the city to the control, and once I get there I can't help but compare how pleasant the control was in 2007 and how good the food was to what was available this year. I wonder if the course change is due to the fatality that

happened in Brest in 2007. While I am eating, Bill appears and I believe we will ride together again; however, we get separated due to bathroom issues and he takes off without me. I run into Dave, but he has not seen Bill. After checking for and not finding the Hilsen, Bill's ride, I take off.

My foul humor is beginning to leave me, finally shrugged off like an old sweater, and I find I am enjoying myself and my legs still are not protesting the climbs. It interests me how some men react to being passed by a woman on a climb, pressing the pace. I think of my son talking to me about driving and trying to pass cars that are going slowly but speed up when you attempt to go by them. "Sometimes, mom," he said, "you have to break their spirits." I break a lot of spirits on this part of the course. When I ask, my legs give without excessive complaint. I wonder at the difference from 2007. Dave catches me for awhile, but then drops backward as I charge these hills to return to Carhaix. I am surprised when he falls back, for he is normally much faster than me, at least riding. Now eating is another story. I know only one person who can rival Dave's slow eating and he doesn't ride: my nephew, Chris.

Despite what feels to be a pretty good pace, like the last time I am amazed at how long it takes to cover the approximate one hundred miles from Carhaix back to Carhaix when there are so many hills to climb. While I am riding along, a rider pulls directly in front of me and allows me to hold his wheel. He pulls me the entire way back to Carhaix. The fog has cleared by the time we reach the top of the big climb, and I can see for miles and miles. Numerous people jump on our back wheel, but none of them stick. With his helmet on, the fellow pulling me looks like a young man. I think how nice it is that a young man would help an old woman by eating the wind, asking nothing in return and wonder if I will offend him if I tell him that his mother did a good job raising him. We pass Bill and I think he might jump on, but he doesn't. We are machine like, attacking and steadily eating the hills as they appear. I already have been passed by many people during this ride, and will be passed by many more before it is over, but not on this stretch from Brest to Carhaix. The road belongs to Graham and to me and nobody seems to be able to hold our pace. When we reach Carhaix and he takes off his helmet, I find that my new friend, Graham, has more gray in his hair than I do. He just has kept the body of a young man, and I have the body of an older woman who has given birth to two children, likes to eat too much, and suffers an addiction to chocolate. He compliments my climbing and asks if I am from Colorado. I tell him no, Indiana, but I ride in Kentucky often. Graham is from Scotland though he now lives, if I remember correctly, in Montgomery, England. I later look it up and see that it is a small town between Wales and England. I thank him for the pull and wonder if we will continue together, but I am ready to move on and he is nowhere in sight. A poem from Robert Frost comes to mind: *"And miles to go before I sleep."* I regret that I did not get Graham's last name before we parted company, but I can't go backward.

Bill once again joins me somewhere either at or soon after Carhaix. Somewhere along the way we pass the postcard man that Greg Zaborac had told me about. This man will take care of you, giving you water and food, in return for a post card from your home. Everywhere he has postcards from previous people who have stopped at his stand. Towns and happenings begin to blur and run together in my mind. Bill and I talk briefly about how some people remember every detail and are able to write such detailed accounts, but my mind does not work that way. I know that I met another woman, a lawyer from the west coast named Louise, and I know that I run into her again at Dreux, but I do not remember what town I was near when we met or

whether I was coming to or going from Brest. While part of me wants to stop, Bill and I elect not to stop to visit the postcard man as weariness is beginning to grow. My eyeballs feel gritty. We pass a restaurant advertising pizza and I decide to stop. Bill continues onward, changes his mind, and returns. The owner of the restaurant is outgoing and friendly, the service is fast, and the food is good. He talks in a mixture of French and English about his children's visit to the states. While Bill and I had discussed sharing a pizza, we elected not to: big mistake. The pizzas are huge and neither of us can completely eat ours. It is strengthening to eat a familiar food, but it does seem a shame to waste it. There just seems to be no good way to cart it along.

We stop at Loudiac and get into our drop bags. Bill talks about showering, but it is cold. I tell him I intend to use the wipes I brought and just change clothes. I just can't bear thinking of showering and having wet hair while I ride. If it were warm it would be heavenly, but not in this cold. Perhaps if my hair were short, but that would necessitate regular trips to the beauty shop, something that is right up there with visiting the dentist. Currently, I get by only visiting those shops once or twice per year. Bill decides to follow suit, and I give him some wipes. They have just finished cleaning the bathroom when I go in to change. While I don't feel that I am taking a particularly long time, I am startled before I am finished by a pounding on the door and I call out that I am almost finished. I hurry and come out expecting to find a long line and there is nobody in line. I'm still not sure what the pounding was all about. While still at the control, Dave shows up and talks about showering. I offer him wet wipes and he accepts. It feels wonderful having clean shorts and jersey. I have now chosen my red Tour De Mad Dog jersey from 2010 designed by Steve Rice. Bill has on his green Tour De Mad Dog jersey. We will get lots of compliments on these jerseys as we finish our journey. The weather has actually been perfect riding weather, but I had hoped for sun. Maybe tomorrow. We continue onward.

By the time we have reached Tinteniac, it is dark and I am tired. Bill agrees it is time to sleep. Dave is with us. We go to the dormitory only to find that the beds are all taken: there is no room at the inn. I don't think I can safely continue the 33 miles to Fougères without some sleep, so we return to the cafeteria and lie down. I take out an egg timer I brought with me and set it for three hours, then lie down between a table and the wall on the hard floor amongst strangers. Despite the light and noise, I am soon asleep, awakening only enough to unfold my space blanket when I chill. When it is time to get up, I cover a stranger who is shivering in his sleep with my blanket and get ready to move onward. A man from England notices and tells me I am kind and asks if I have heard about the accident. When I say no he tells me that an American was killed last night. He stated that initially they thought he was a "Brit" because he crossed onto the right side of the road, the side the English normally ride on, and was hit by a truck, but they then determined it was an American. [Thai Pham of the DC Randonneurs, near Médréac - *Ed.*] He speculates that the poor fellow fell asleep on his bike and drifted. I say a silent prayer in his honor and for those who loved him, and selfishly hope it is not one of my friends. I will become even more cautious about resting when I am tired as I continue.

As we ride, morning breaks, stretching and tossing her golden mane, flooding us with warmth, reviving our bodies and our spirits. For some reason, it is so much easier to stay sprightly when the world is awake and glowing. It will be hotter, but it appears to be just the type of day I have been hoping for. We stop at a cafe beside a river and have a coke. But I am beginning to feel the ride. At Fougères, I put my head down on the table in the cafeteria and sleep for a few moments while Bill

goes to the medical tent. He has cut his leg on his big wheel and pulled a back muscle. The cut on the back of his leg has blood running down it and looks like a bear swiped his calf with a paw. The doctoring does not help the pain in his back, but a tad later I remember I am carrying lanacane and stop and have him put some on. I am not sure if it will, but it helps. We continue to Dreux where we decide to rest for a half an hour before continuing. I sleep as soon as my head hits the cot.

I am blown away by the friendliness of the volunteers, anticipating what I want before I ask for it. Their kindness takes my breath away. It is nice to get a good dose of mothering. When we come out, however, Bill has a flat tire, and while fixing it he breaks his light. I give him my secondary light and we continue to the finish. At one point, there is a group gathered around me seeming to wait for me to point the way. Despite being completely tucked out, I find the humor in this and think how it would amuse my friends who know that I am directionally challenged. There is another section where the blackness and the surroundings make it seem like we are traveling a road that is surrounded on all sides by water. We are passed by multitudes of people as I keep taking breaks to wake back up. I tell Bill to go on, but he tolerantly waits and we finish together. Cards are stamped. It is done.

This is where I made a big miscalculation. I really had not expected to finish this quickly, so I had not rented a room until the day I expected to finish. But I finished at 5:00 a.m. so it is doubtful that they will let me in. Sure enough, when I return to the hotel I am turned away. Tearfully, I go back to the gymnasium only to realize that if I enter, I will not be able to get back out. I lay on the grass near the finish intending to sleep when a woman comes up and asks why I did not finish. The volunteers kept trying to herd me into the finishing chute and I would not go. She speaks English and explains to volunteers who allow me inside. Because I have left, however, they will not allow me to sleep in the dormitory, only on the floor. That is fine. Using my cycling shoes as a pillow and wearing the wool shirt over my clothing that I did not use on the ride, I sleep until about 10:00 a.m. At one point, I awaken quite cold and find a tall, blonde, good-looking Swede covering me with his space blanket. Perhaps our good deeds do find us. The kindness of his gesture touches me and warms me as much as any blanket. There is something intimate about the gesture. Upon reflection, if I return I may plan on sleeping here again rather than spending the money on another day at the motel.

After going through another translation nightmare to get my bike back out, I return to the hotel. Bikes are packed. I finally bathe and happily smell like a girl. Out to dinner and home. In the Chicago Airport, a stranger comes up to me and asks about my Paris Brest Paris tee shirt. When I tell him I just completed the ride, he looks at his wife and says, "Now this is a real cyclist," admiration in his voice. He made me smile. I do love a good adventure, but it is always good to come back to the home of your heart. There will be hugs and laughter and warmth. Will I do this again in four years? Originally I would have told you definitely, yes. There will be times when I know I would tell you, "Hell, no." Who knows? When you are an infant, four years brings on immense changes as you learn to walk, talk, and think. In your middle years, there are times when four years are hardly noticeable. But now I have reached my middle fifties, I suspect that four years will begin to cause more major changes. Unlike when I was an infant, those changes may be losing the ability to do things. And there are other adventures. Whether I go back or not, I am glad I was here. I am glad I shared the ride with my friends. "Vive la France!"

<http://www.randomthoughtsofapuddle.blogspot.com/>

Pictures from the 2011 Old Kentucky Home Tour



The American Red Cross Lilly Pike SAG Stop crew.  
*(photo courtesy Craig Dooley)*



Andy Murphy, Bob Peters and Logan McCulloch in Bardstown.  
*(photo courtesy Craig Dooley)*



Cookie corner *(photo courtesy Craig Dooley)*



Sandy Davis keepin' the customers satisfied at the World Famous Cookie Stop. *(photo courtesy Craig Dooley)*



Bike Parking in Bardstown  
*(photo courtesy Andy Murphy)*

**Pictures from the 2011 Old Kentucky Home Tour**

The Kentucky Wheelmen display at the OKHT.  
Carson Torpey rides his "Ordinary" down Xavier Drive in Bardstown.  
*(photo courtesy Andy Murphy)*



Alison Torpey rides a 100 year old "Safety" bicycle on Xavier Drive in Bardstown.  
*(photo courtesy Andy Murphy)*

Pictures from the 2011 Old Kentucky Home Tour



Bob Peters of Clarksville Schwinn repairs a bicycle at the Cookie Stop.  
*(photo courtesy Craig Dooley)*



Gym full of bicycles in Bardstovn.  
*(photo courtesy Andy Murphy)*



The Sarson/Sexton SAG 1 crew!  
*(photo courtesy Larry Preble)*



The finishing touch on a successful bike tour--the massage!  
*(photo courtesy Andy Murphy)*



Joe Ward, Larry Preble, Dave Runge and Duc Do pause for a photo at the Team Bag Balm SAG Stop, Sunday afternoon.1  
*(photo courtesy Larry Preble)*

## 2011 Old Kentucky Home Tour Sponsors

by Lynn Luking, OKHT Sponsor Coordinator

The OKHT would not happen without the generous support from our sponsors. LBC would not be able to put on such a “Legendary Ride” without their support.

I want to thank our 3 Gold - 1 Silver –and 4 Bronze Level -Financial sponsors. -- also our 12 Copper Level -In-Kind supporters for not only supporting OKHT the second weekend of September but, for their continued support of the cycling community throughout the year. Go to [www.OKHT.org](http://www.OKHT.org) and click on each of their logo’s to learn more about how you can support them.

Without the very generous support of these sponsors and supporters – the registration for OKHT would need to be more than \$100 per rider to cover the cost of the ride!!! So, my fellow cyclist—please let them know how much you enjoy OKHT being affordable!!

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Andy Murphy (photo courtesy Craig Dooley)



(photo courtesy Craig Dooley)



(photo courtesy Craig Dooley)

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Do you have something you want to share with your fellow club members?

Send us an article and photos for the newsletter! We can accept hand-written manuscripts, hardcopy print-outs or articles on disk (Word documents preferred), or e-mail.

Send them to David Ryan (Packman), VP Communications (see cover for addresses) or hand them to any club officer.

The Louisville Bicycle Club reserves the right to edit all submitted articles.

See cover for deadlines.

The newsletter is sent by email only. Please notify Barry Lockett, club secretary, of email address changes.

**Pictures from the 2011 Old Kentucky Home Tour**

(photo courtesy Craig Dooley)



Clean-up crew at E.P. "Tom" Sawyer State Park after the OKHT.  
(photo courtesy Andy Murphy)