

# THE LOUISVILLE BICYCLE CLUB

Founded in 1897

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

April 2012

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**MS 150, June 2-3, 2012**

Please Click on Our OKHT  
Sponsor's Ads!

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

*Please submit articles and photos to:  
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Louisville, KY 40216,  
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502-447-7814.*

***Deadline for the  
May 2012 issue is Apr 20***

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



## Bits & Pieces

*by Andy Murphy, LBC President*

- In 2011, the Louisville Bicycle Club donated nearly \$11,000 to charity! \$5,198 in proceeds from the Old Kentucky Home Tour was donated to the American Red Cross. In addition to this, \$3,300 was generated in raffle ticket sales on the CANNONDALE CAAD 10 105 bicycle donated by Clarksville Schwinn. A donation in the amount of \$2,500 was made to the League of American Bicyclists. On behalf of the American Red Cross, the League of American Bicyclists, Clarksville Schwinn and the rest of our OKHT Sponsors, thank you all for your generous support!
- Registration for the 35th Annual Old Kentucky Home Tour will open May 1st. We will be handling volunteer and rider registration electronically this year. Since we've invested in the Wild Apricot software package, we might as well put it to good use. As always, we'll need lots of volunteers, so, VOLUNTEER EARLY and VOLUNTEER OFTEN!
- Wayside Park Clean-up starts April 21st.
- Bike To Work Week is May 14th – May 18th. Every week can be Bike To Work Week, but this is the week it will be celebrated.
- The Mayor's Healthy Hometown Hike, Bike & Paddle will be on Monday, May 28th.
- RIDE SAFE!



Life is good  
Murphy



The new sweeper truck to help keep The Louisville Loop clean. I tried to get them to set the GPS coordinates to Campground Road, but they just smiled at me.

*(photo courtesy Andy Murphy)*

## 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 2012 (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, Tim	6002 Dora Ct	Louisville, KY	40214
Beyer, Sarah	626 Ledgeview Park Dr	Louisville, KY	40206 (270) 994-0321
Bird, Charles	3008 Eleanor Av	Louisville, KY	40205 (502) 456-9261
Bronson, Krista	9813 Reynolda Rd	Louisville, KY	40223 (360) 731-8341
Dauer, Amelia	2912 Richland Av	Louisville, KY	40220 (502) 456-5241
Dearmond, Mike	3513 Canterbury Dr	Louisville, KY	40299
Draper, Bill	5326 Panda	Memphis, TN	38120 (901) 634-0076
Fuson, Julie	4210 Winding Creek Rd	Crestwood, KY	40014 (502) 418-2495
Gedrose, Garey	324 Heritage Hill Trl	Louisville, KY	40223 (502) 299-3179
Green, Jackie	2132 Frankfort Av	Louisville, KY	40206 (502) 259-9000
Hanson, Sarah & Charles	16820 Shakes Creek Dr	Fisherville, KY	40023 (502) 759-8282
Hardesty, Rick & Lisa	1424 Mayland Dr	Cincinnati, OH	45230 (513) 231-1154
Harper, Jane & family	2638 Longview Av	Louisville, KY	40206 (502) 896-4809
Harris, Wes	400 Snyder Way #116	Radcliff, KY	40160 (931) 980-1495
Hoffman, Everett	2419 Meadow Rd	Louisville, KY	40205 (502) 744-9119
Jackson, Taylor	8815 Furlong Dr #16	Louisville, KY	40242
Kraemer, Rob & Cathy	4202 Big Springs Dr	Crestwood, KY	40014 (502) 243-9548
Leach, Carson & Harrison, Hannah	1206 Reutlinger Av	Louisville, KY	40204 (336) 707-7052
Lee-Tucker, Linda	1400 Pine Valley Dr #156	Elizabethown, KY	42701 (309) 314-4259
Luvlin, R. Alan	2012 Douglass Blvd #3	Louisville, KY	40205 (314) 974-3340
McWhorter, Mike	9813 Reynolda Rd	Louisville, KY	40223
Roberts, Debbie	5204 Heafer Farms Ct #101	Louisville, KY	40219 (502) 418-8223
Rome, Buffie	324 E Main St #321	Louisville, KY	40202 (504) 617-5553
Rowell, Marisa	532 S 4th St #307	Louisville, KY	40202 (650) 544-4785
Ruggles, Margaret	12812 Crestmoor Cir	Prospect, KY	40059 (502) 292-0244
Russman, Andrew	2305 Raleigh Ln	Louisville, KY	40206 (502) 364-6052
Saudan, Justine	1519 E. Breckinridge St	Louisville, KY	40204 (503) 442-5443
Seligman, Scott	13307 Harris Ridge Ct	Louisville, KY	40223 (502) 377-9766
Simonavice, Denny	9715 Bay Hill Dr	Louisville, KY	40223 (502) 500-4547
Smith, Ronald	4608 Southern Pw #10	Louisville, KY	40214 (502) 407-9735
Stevens, John & Kay	502 Eline Av	Louisville, KY	40207 (502) 415-0606
Stirbis, Pete	4320 Dublin Av	Midland, MI	48642 (989) 859-6630
Stockdale, Rendell	107 Fenley Av #0-8	Louisville, KY	40207
Thompson, Melissa	8508 Bronzewing Ct	Louisville, KY	40299 (502) 593-6882
de Weerdt, Henk	10407 Shadow Ridge Ln #204	Louisville, KY	40242 (601) 957-0487
Whitson, Gerry	311 Meadow Lake Dr	Taylorsville, KY	40071 (502) 619-1443
Wode, Chris	2604 Shining Water Dr #304	Louisville, KY	40299 (502) 802-7356
Yates, David	2346 Julianne Cir	Newburgh, IN	47630 (812) 490-9374

## 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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## More About A. D. "Pap" Ruff

by Carson Torpey

I hope everyone has read Joe Ward's article about A. D. "Pap" Ruff, the man who left the money to build Wheelmen's Bench. If you haven't read it, you can find the article as part of the LBC's website listed under "history". During my research I have come across his name a few times and would like to add a little more to the story.



(photo courtesy Carson Torpey)

We know that Pap Ruff lived in Owingsville, Kentucky. That's what is listed in the 1880 Census and that's where he is buried but did you know that he lived in Richmond, Ky.? I don't know the exact relationship he had with the two cities but it is apparent that he had connections to both.

"Dr. T. Y. Cooper and Mr. A.D. Ruff of Richmond, arrived here Sat. night on a visit to relatives and friends. These two gentlemen are both expert riders of the bicycle and greatly amused the folks by an exhibition of their skill. -Owingsville Outlook Parties in the neighborhood of Hunley's stable, who several days ago saw our genial jeweler take a "header" into the Irvine street gutter and not much surprised to know that his efforts furnished amusement for the Owingsvillians." Richmond Climax 9/7/1877

Here we have the Richmond newspaper quoting the Owingsville paper about one of its citizens. The next year he attended the Kentucky State LAW Meet at Covington, Ky. and took part in the bicycle parade on July 4th. The Courier-Journal made note: "conspicuous in the line of prosession was Mr. Ruff of

WHEAT.

---

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to the Post-office, Richmond, Ky.

(photo courtesy Carson Torpey)

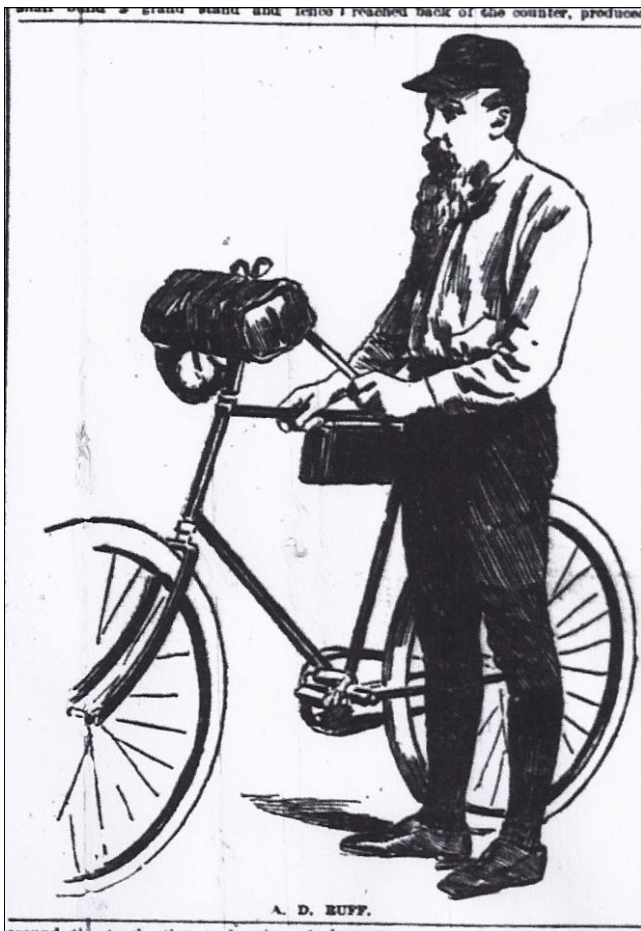
## More About A. D. "Pap" Ruff (cont.)

by Carson Torpey

Richmond, who holds the honor of being the second oldest Wheelmen in the League. He is sixty-one years of age and astonishes all by his staying powers."

In September of the same year, 1888, he entered the one mile bicycle race at the Madison Co. fair at Richmond where he took third place, not bad for an old man.

The state meet for 1889 was held at Danville, Ky. It was a tradition already to try and ride one's bike to the meets and "Pap" made it a point to join in. "One of the youngest men in the crowd was Pap Ruff of Richmond. Pap is sixty-four (his age changes with every article). But he is one of the boys just the same. He rode sixty-eight miles from Richmond to Danville in eight hours, including stops. And was as fresh at the end as anyone. When coasting downhill, his long flowing white beard gives him the appearance of Old Father Time on a bicycle." – Courier-Journal 6/16/1889



(photo courtesy Carson Torpey)

Ruff's "affable manner and pleasant address won him many friends" and his fellow wheelmen of Richmond named their club after him, the Ruff Wheelmen. The 1890 state meet was held at Richmond and the honor of leading the bicycle parade through town and out to the fairgrounds for the races, was given to Pap.

Perhaps his greatest achievement, that we are aware of, is his trip to Yellowstone Park. Here is a quote from The Daily Tribune of Salt Lake City Sunday 5/21/1893."A.D. Ruff and

E.E. Mitchell of Richmond, Ky. will start from their home for a tour to the Pacific coast. They will steer for Chicago where they will spend about two weeks at the fair. From Chicago they will take the best wheeling route for Yellowstone. Here they will again rest for a few weeks and then visit Washington, Oregon, and California riding all the distance if possible. Mr. Ruff is almost three score and two, yet can keep up with most of 'em on the road. Mr. Mitchell is about thirty and a noted scorcher. They are well considered the magnitude of their undertaking and are prepared to meet the hardships and make the most of them."

Not	<p><b>His Famous Trip to Yellowstone and Back Last Year.</b></p>	<p>"Pap" the affectionate sobriquet of paternal endearment bestowed by his fellow-wheelmen—lives on a pretty country place near Richmond. He was formerly a jeweler in that city, but he found that he did not have time to attend to business and ride, too, so he gave up the business end of it and retired.</p>
<p>"Pap" Ruff is the oldest rider in Kentucky and one of the oldest in the country. But this is not the remarkable thing about Mr. Ruff. What makes</p>	<p>"Pap" began riding seven years ago, when sixty years old. His mount was an ordinary. He rapidly developed the symptoms of a crank, and when the safety came into use, discarded his high wheel for one of the new machines. Since then he has been riding constantly, and, despite the fact that he is bordering on seventy, is to be seen on his wheel the greater part of each day.</p>	<p>Mr. Ruff made the trip to Yellowstone Park a year ago, going the entire distance there and back, 2,000 miles, on his bicycle. This feat brought him into notice all over the country, but he modestly bears his laurels as one of the oldest and most indefatigable riders in the country.</p>
<p>him a "phenom" is that he is able to take trips which would completely exhaust many riders one-third of his age. Mr. Ruff—A. D. Ruff is his name,</p>	 <p>A. D. RUFF.</p>	<p><b>NEW JERSEY MUDDLE.</b></p> <p>Attempt to Suppress Road Racing By Legislative Enactment.</p>
<p>Ex-Chief Consul Holmes, of the New Jersey division of the League of American Wheelmen, acting in the interest of his division, proposes to support a</p>	<p>Ex-Chief Consul Holmes, of the New Jersey division of the League of American Wheelmen, acting in the interest of his division, proposes to support a</p>	<p>Ex-Chief Consul Holmes, of the New Jersey division of the League of American Wheelmen, acting in the interest of his division, proposes to support a</p>

(photo courtesy Carson Torpey)

The Sporting Life reported that Mr. Mitchell arrived back at Cincinnati and was waiting for his bike to arrive after his adventure. He rode a Victor safety as did "Pap" Ruff. They met many hardships. They became lost for several days while following a mountain trail and this convinced them to hire a guide. They had to carry food for four to five days at a time or go hungry and for a six week stretch they had to sleep in the open air. They each carried 35 to 40 pounds of luggage. Mr. Mitchell kept a diary which he hoped to have published. When asked if he would do it again, he said that he would not care to repeat the ride!

After Mr. Ruff died, two locations were considered for the bench and fountain, one at the end of Chestnut and the other at its present location on Third St. Third St. and The Boulevard was the center of cycling activity in Louisville at the time. Shawnee Park and Fountain Ferry Park had just been created and the route the cyclist took to them was out Chestnut St. Chestnut also had not been paved all the way to the parks at the time.

Please reread Joe Ward's article about Mr. Ruff on the club's website and check out The Redoubtable A. D. Ruff by Jerry Crouch of Lexington, Ky. at <http://web.qx.net/dce/ruff/>.

## Ride Captain Training Program

by Charley Drexler, LBC VP Touring

On Sunday, March 18, 2012, the club held Ride Captain Training after the General Membership Meeting. This is the first time that I can remember that the club has offered training of this type. I presented a power point presentation in a casual atmosphere. I believe that there was a good exchange during the presentation. We had 15 members in attendance and at least two of the attendees were new Ride Captains. Welcome Aboard! I am also very excited that one of the New Ride Captains has already jumped on board and scheduled two rides for April (April 9 & 16, 6:00 pm, Valley View Hill Jam). If you have the opportunity, check out these two rides and welcome Randall Davis aboard as a Ride Captain. The other new ride captain was Donald Snow, and he has already gotten set up to enter rides on the scheduler. I plan on having another one of these training sessions later in the year. This training can be of value to both new and experienced Ride Captains.

I am also very excited to announce that for April, four ride captains have entered rides into the "Best New Ride" Competition.

Vicky and Ron Dobbs have each entered a ride from Thurman Hutchins Park on River Road. These routes were designed to avoid those Saturday mornings when the waterfront park area is busy with runs, walks, or other activities. So come on out on one of these Saturday morning rides in April and try out the new "AIR" rides: April 7th, 14th or 28th. There are 15 and 32 miles versions of the "AIR" rides.

Timothy Stephen has entered his "Commiskey Gravel Ride". The starts at the Commiskey, IN Post Office. This ride is about 50% gravel, ranging from well packed easy rolling to chunky freshly groomed rocks. This is not the ride to bring your carbon tri bike. Recommended for 35mm plus tires. CX Bike, Fat Bikes, MTBs are all good choices. This ride has no store stops or other support. Hydration pack plus water bottles and food is recommended. Gee, I wish I had a bike with FAT Tires! :(

Finally, Jackie Green has entered a ride called "Urban Triangle". This ride is scheduled for Monday, April 16th and is repeated on April 30th. You will have two opportunities in April to give this ride a try. I wonder what the Urban Triangle will have in store for us?

Already in May, Gill Crenshaw has submitted his "Trailer Park Ride" leaving from McNeely Lake Park. The 26-mile ride goes through the trailer park.

Don't forget that members who submit articles and photos from one of the new rides to Packman for inclusion in the newsletter will be entered into a drawing for a prize at the Annual Banquet in January.

The next Touring Committee meeting will be held on Monday, April 2nd, at 6:30 pm. The meeting will be held at the Spring Street Bar and Grill, located at 300 South Spring Street.



Attendees of the Ride Captain Training Program  
(photo courtesy Charlie Drexler)

## LBC Commuters Group

by Andy Murphy, LBC President



As of March 20, 2012, 66 members of the Louisville Bicycle Club Commuters Group have registered 6,339.73 miles. We would like to thank everyone who takes the time to commute, then log their mileage.

If you'd like to join, go to My Cycling Log here; <http://www.mycyclinglog.com/> Register -IT'S FREE-and click on the Louisville Bicycle Club group, then click on JOIN. Remember, WE'RE ONLY TRACKING COMMUTER MILEAGE. If you decide to join the group, you should only log rides that are legitimate commutes--trips that you could've

taken by automobile but chose to ride your bicycle. Please don't log training rides or mileage accrued on LBC rides. Riding to and from club rides would count as a commute, but not the mileage on the ride itself.

There will be no LBC Awards associated with the Commuter Program. There will be no "Winner" for most Commuting Mileage. We appreciate folks commuting and taking the time log their rides.

Life is good  
Murphy

## Welcome To Heaven-Here's Your Tandem!

by Dave Spittler

Tandem bicycles are FUN. We hear that a lot. It certainly looked like fun to me the first time that I saw two riders together on a bike gliding across the parking lot of the Shelbyville Road Plaza nearly forty years ago. The riders were "Doc" Barron and W. Haynes "Sprad" Spradling on "Doc" Barron's chrome Gitane tandem. I probably stood with my mouth agape as I watched the two men swoop gracefully across the parking lot. I remember the grins on the faces of the riders: a grin I wanted on my face. I knew that, some way, some day, I would have to have a bike like that. I wanted the bike, of course, but mostly, I wanted the *FUN*.

When it was time for the ride to start, I threw my leg across my almost new Azuki 10 Speed (anybody who remembers Azuki bikes or 10 Speeds raise your hand. Anybody? No?) and rolled out onto Shelbyville Road with the others.

For this, my first club ride, I had picked a lovely, cool, sunlit March morning. I was tentative, worried that I would commit some offense and get yelled at. From near the back, I watched the riders fan out across Shelbyville Road, angling for the left lane and a turn. I had never seen anything like this moment in my life, or even dreamed of it.

A few of the more experienced riders began to line up behind that shiny tandem as it made the turn and sped out of sight. "Wow", I thought, "not just shiny but fast, too." Now I wanted a bike like that even more.

Fifteen months later, I got my wish and became the owner of a Motobecane Tandem: not as pretty as the Gitane, perhaps, but it was a tandem and it was mine. I looked forward to countless blissful hours on my new ride. Sadly, within a few days, I came to realize that the FUN does not come with the bike: as with all bikes, the FUN must be earned.

Riding a tandem, I was to discover, is in no way like riding a single bike. A tandem is longer and heavier and the balancing, shifting, braking and handling are all much different. And then there is the matter of the two riders. Somehow, those two bodies have to sit on one bike and perform as one and two minds have to sync up and run in parallel or the expedition is likely to be short, unpleasant and not repeated.

Tandem teams, once formed, tend to be long lasting and for good reason. It is devilishly hard for two strangers to share one bike successfully: nobody wants to try getting accustomed to the habits, likes and dislikes of a parade of strangers on a platform as intimate as a tandem bicycle. When the team has formed, it will be tested again and again, ride after ride as the two cyclists learn to believe in the bike, to trust in and rely on each other, and to have fun riding that bike together.

So we are back to what attracted me in the first place. Tandem riding can be a whole new level of cycling fun IF you can find the right bike and the right partner AND the two of you can spend the hours required to learn to ride that bike together as well as equip it, adjust it and maintain it, all the while working at the best team building exercise ever devised.

And so, my tandem cycling career began. It looked so promising until I actually tried to ride the bike. I was relatively new to the sport of cycling when I got that tandem, but I had fallen in love with the club and with cycling, logged a bunch of miles, made new friends and was beginning to feel like a veteran even if I was not. Certainly, I knew how to throw my leg over a bike and take off. I knew how to balance, shift, brake and stop. I was learning how to ride in groups and look back at traffic without wobbling all over the road. I was mildly contemptuous of riders who couldn't figure out how to ride in a straight line.

But when I rolled my brand new tandem out into the street, grasped the handlebars and attempted to mount, it began to dawn on me that I was going to have to relearn everything I knew.

"How am I supposed to get aboard this thing?" I wondered. With my single bike, it was easy, but this thing had an extra set of handlebars that snagged my foot when I tried to mount. Worse, I realized, if the second rider was already aboard, and I managed to kick my foot high enough to get around those bars, I would likely kick said rider in the face. Less than an ideal start to a ride, I thought. Clearly, I would need to devise a new way to get aboard my bike.

When I had worked out a plan for mounting the bike AND had recruited someone to sit in the second seat, I discovered that getting started is the next big challenge. After several aborted starts, we were finally in the seats and rolling when the bike seemed to develop a mind of its own. I thought the thing was trying to kill me; the bike and I fought for control and we wobbled down the street with growing panic. Graceful dismount? Didn't happen. By the time I got it stopped, the bike was shaking so badly that the two riders were just happy to get off alive.

In the ensuing months I went through several possible partners, finally settling on my wife as the best of the lot (and the only one who seemed interested in getting on that bike for a second ride). And so my wife came to be my tandem partner of choice for a little over a year, but the truth is that Rebecca never really trusted bicycles or liked cycling all that much, so she was not going to be a long term answer to my need for a tandem partner.

In the end, I figured out a way to fit the bike to my oldest son (five years old at the time) and we started riding together. I quickly realized that I had finally found the best path to FUN for me. When they want to be there, my children, I discovered, were wonderful tandem partners, with a willing heart, boundless energy and a terrific weight to power ratio.

I still had a lot of lessons to learn; am still learning them, in fact. But I had broken through to the FUN part and found it every bit as tasty as I had hoped it would be.

So 37 years later, I am still riding tandems and living the dream. Tandem riding is hugely rewarding and it is big fun. But don't let anyone tell you that it is cheap or easy.

**Tandemonium #7***by Nita Bernat*

Just the other day while talking to my sister in Savannah about having completed my first 200K plus brevet, she asked about riding tandem. She was thinking that because I'm in the 2nd seat, stoker that is, that I'm putting out only 70 % power. It made me smile and as I thought about how this might look like the case, it is not. I suppose you might have someone riding stoker who may not be a cyclist, have the strength, or in some cases might have a disability, and may not be willing or able to contribute any pedal power to the tandem team.

Riding as a tandem team takes strength, endurance, an inordinate amount of trust in addition to a desire to share time and space with another individual. Speaking for myself, I have more fun riding with a group and one of the best parts of cycling tandem is you can never drop your partner nor can they drop you. There is always lively conversation, someone to listen to your stories, even if some include whine(ing), and it is an

opportunity to improve your conditioning and strength just by riding a more challenging pace then you would if you were riding a single or singly.

I always encourage folks who might be interested in riding tandem to give it a try. You can never assume you know what riding a tandem is like unless you've ridden with some consistency and even then your experience may be very different depending on how hard you want to work.

My level of cycling has improved dramatically since I've started riding tandem after a layoff of several years. It has made a difference in my cycling on my single bike as well.

My motto...if you can't beat them...join them. And very few people can beat 'em.

**BIKE MS 2012: June 2 & 3 - "Bike to Create a World Free of Multiple Sclerosis"**

Fundraiser

Date: Saturday June 2 and Sunday June 3, 2012

Time: 8AM Tour Begins

Place: St. Catharine College - Springfield, Kentucky

Register: [www.bikemsky.org](http://www.bikemsky.org)

Contact: Mary Carabella

Phone: 502-526-5303

Email: [mary.carabella@nmss.org](mailto:mary.carabella@nmss.org)

<http://www.nationalmssociety.org/chapters/kyw/fundraising-events/bike-ms/index.aspx>

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# University

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## Redbud Ride Update

by Rodney Hendrickson, London-Laurel County Tourist Commission

Well over 500 cyclists from 17 states have already registered for the 2012 Redbud Ride that will be held in London, Kentucky on the April 21. Once again the event will have far more cyclists from Louisville than any other city. We would like to take this opportunity to say “**Thank You**” to the members of the Louisville Bicycle Club and Team Bag Balm for helping us promote the event in the Louisville area.

This year we have added a second day to the event. Cyclists who would like to ride on Friday can ride the Redbud Warm-up in Barbourville. Barbourville is about a 25 minute drive from London. We will also have unsupported but guided rides on Sunday morning. You can register for the Redbud Ride at [www.redbudride.com](http://www.redbudride.com). Below is an agenda of Redbud Ride Weekend events:

### Schedule of Redbud Ride Weekend Events

#### Friday, April 20

11:00 AM Redbud Warm-up Registration Opens-  
Union College in Barbourville

1:00 PM Redbud Warm-up Begins- Union College in Barbourville

3:00-6:00 PM Packet Pickup & Walkup Registrations-  
Farmers Market in London

6:00-9:00 PM Pre-Ride Block Party, Music and Food- Downtown London RSVP to [info@redbudride.com](mailto:info@redbudride.com)

#### Saturday, April 21

6:00-9:00 AM London Rotary Pancake Breakfast- Farmers Market in London

8:00 AM Redbud Ride Start Time- Farmers Market in London (riders of shorter routes can start later if they wish)

12:00-6:00 PM Food, Music and more- Farmers Market in London

7:00 PM After-Ride Block Party- Downtown London

#### Sunday, April 22

8:30 Redbud Ride Worship Service- Farmers Market in London

9:30 Unsupported but guided bike rides- Farmers Market in London



LBC and Team Bag Balm member Jim Moyer receives a lei at the Hawaiian Luau rest stop at the 2010 Redbud Ride.

(photo courtesy Rodney Hendrickson)

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It is the night before the brevet and I am unsure if I will ride tomorrow. The world around me has turned into a nightmare, a dark hell of destruction and loss. I am unsure of many things in the face of this disaster. As with all loss, I am left with a feeling of waiting, of something left to be done, when there is nothing that can be done. My own helplessness plagues me. Earlier today the skies darkened, clouds roiled and became menacing, and the wind howled angrily shoving everyone and everything out of its path. Like a drunken man on a rampage, unpredictable, impetuous, it indiscriminately punished all who dared to stand in its path, unheeding of cowering pleas for mercy.

Earlier I was trapped at work being the only one in management who had not left, and I have sent those workers home who wanted to leave. The few who chose to remain I shepherd into bathrooms as I listen on the radio and hear of the tornadoes touching down on roads where I frequently ride my bicycle and listen to the sirens blaring out a warning of impending destruction. If I did not ride these roads so often, I would not be able to so closely track the path the storm seems to be following, but I know these roads, their curves and pot holes and uphill and downhill. I worry about my husband and the family that went to my home because of the protection of our basement, but I am powerless in the face of this fury. Yet again it makes me realize how illusionary our belief in control really is, however comforting that belief may be. It is easy to see why so many poets felt that the fates were laughing at us in our puniness.

In the light of this afternoon, my car accident earlier in the day recedes to being a minor event. While my car was pretty messed up and it is a major financial blow, I walked away essentially unscathed suffering only a minor blow to the head. Any accident that allows you to walk away afterward, whether involving bicycles or cars or a combination of the two, is a good accident despite the contradiction in terms. There is much to be said of the ability to move appendages.

When the storm has passed and we are safe, I hear that several small neighboring towns were destroyed. I am unable to get through to home on the phone, but when I arrive my husband is safe. One brother, however, who lives in Henryville is unaccounted for, and we have no television or internet to try to find out if he and his family are okay. I do hear on the radio that most of the town is gone, including the school, and he lives next to the school. My husband ages visibly before my eyes, concern taking its toll. We debate driving there, but we hear on the radio that nobody is being allowed in. I also hear that we have lost our gas station store stop that we frequent on the Maple Syrup ride and the Salem Century. Indeed, we were sitting there just last Saturday, blithely unaware that it would soon cease to exist except as a pile of rubble. It makes the head spin how quickly things can change, and it fills you with sadness. As Freud said, "Illusions commend themselves to us because they save us pain and allow us to enjoy pleasure instead. We must therefore accept it without complaint when they sometimes collide with a bit of reality against which they are dashed to pieces." Well, I have no choice to accept, but I reserve my right to complain.

Finally, at around 11:00 p.m. that evening, we receive a call from Danny in Florida who has seen that Ernest and his family are okay. I think how ironic it is that he, living all those miles away, knows more about what happened just down the road than we do. Ernest just happened to be one of the people interviewed, and Danny happened to have on the right news station.

Do I ride in the face of all this? My husband tells me I should take his truck and go to the ride, and so reluctantly I go. While I feel incredibly selfish, I also realize my impotence. Still tears streak

my face upon occasion as I drive to the ride start, particularly as I pass the Henryville exit, still blocked off by police, and along the sides of the expressway I see uprooted trees and debris. I think of the child found ten miles from her home, tossed about by the wind like a feather, now hospitalized but soon to leave this world to meet her family which was also taken.

When I arrive in Shelbyville, I am surprised at the large number of people at the start as it is not a PBP year. 32 riders from five states are represented. There are two tandems, one recumbant, and many single bikes. Jody and Steve have completed a 200K before, but it is the first for Larry and Nita. Bill Pustow, the one who marked the course this year, is registered but does not show. All will be successful today except for one gentleman unknown to me who will suffer three flats within the first nine miles of the ride. Despite the wind, even the last person had a tad over fifty minutes to spare prior to the course closure. (In brevets, every stop has a generous time limit to allow for success.)

Because of the later start time and the distance, I have lights but I hope not to use them. I ride much of the early part of the ride with Scott Howes. We are not completely synchronized: Scott is a bit faster on the pedals than I am, but I am faster in and out of the controls. Also, I keep getting interrupted by telephone calls that I have to take since I am on call. After some interesting conversation that helped the miles to pass, we eventually part ways for good. I will not see Scott again until the end, but I am thankful that I had his interesting conversation for awhile to pass the miles and to keep my mind off of more unpleasant topics.

This course is easier on the way out than it is on the way in, particularly so with the wind. When I do the turn around, I know I have the choice of trying to find someone to share the wind with or facing it on my own. The power of a head wind when cycling never fails to astonish me, and I find myself growing weary as the wind throws up a wall to forward movement. Eventually I see whom I believe to be Steve Royse up ahead, but as I increase my speed, his speed seems to increase as well. Alas, I am not up to a game of cat and mouse today. He remains in my vision, but we never share the road or the wind today.

Finally it is the last control, and I quickly grab a drink and a snack. My pace is slow, but it is steady. The wind direction has changed or the wind has calmed. I really am not sure. I pass Steve Royse who has a flat. I ask if he has what he needs to get back rolling, and he assures me he does. A short while afterward I am joined by Mike "Diesel Dog" Kamenish. He had ridden out with some of the faster riders, but then faded. I worry when I hear his back is hurting because I remember his surgery for this same problem. Grasshopper and I rode to the hospital to see him afterward when he was as high as a Georgia pine. He tells me he also faced the wind alone today. We finish the ride together reaching my goal which was to finish before dark. I enjoy our time together and think of the many miles I have ridden with Diesel, my friend. My bicycling has introduced me to so many special people and I am blessed. I am extremely shy and meeting new people is a source of great anxiety to me turning me into a blithering or mute slob, depending upon the occasion.

At the end there are smiles, congratulations, teasing, and pizza: it doesn't get much better than this. Thanks for the great course, Steve, the great markings, Bill, and the companionship many of you provided this day. As brevets go, it was not a particularly difficult one, but I am exhausted, my legs are sore, and I will sleep better for it.

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

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