



Heart-to-Heart

HEARTCYCLE BICYCLE TOURING CLUB

Online news...

I'm sure you've thought about it at some point on a ride: "gosh I really wish <insert your grand cycling idea that you know nobody has thought of>."

I'm talking things like industry standards, clothing options, bike options, etc. What would you change if you had the power?

In his article linked below, Will Jones of Cyclingnews.com presents his manifesto for better bikes and better kits...

"One thing that's been rattling around in my head, as if I am an impotent Napoleon of the industry, is what I would do if I had the power to decree all standards for the bike industry. How could I improve things, primarily for consumers, not just of bikes but of soft goods too?"

Click below to read Will's article online at cyclingnews.com.



Inside this issue:

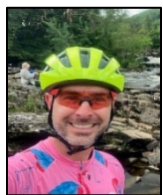
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Newsletter tune-up

By HeartCycle Newsletter Editor Cody Ensanian

First and foremost, I would like to extend many thanks to our past Newsletter Editors, Barry Siel, Cindy Dore, and Sue Hoogstrate. Their dedication and contributions have been greatly appreciated by the HeartCycle Board and our entire community. We are deeply grateful for their time and effort—thank you!

In response to the "wanted ad" in last month's newsletter, I reached out to HeartCycle President Mark Lestikow to express my interest in serving as the new Newsletter Editor. I had shared some background about myself and my enthusiasm for volunteering for HeartCycle. I also included a reference—who happened to be none other than Cindy. After a welcoming introductory call with Mark, I was officially on board.

I'm truly excited to support HeartCycle in this role. One of the

first changes you will notice is a refreshed layout and updated formatting. Much like a beloved bike deserves a spring tune-up, I felt the newsletter was due for a bit of the same care and attention.

My vision for this newsletter goes beyond sharing trip dates and regular updates. I hope it becomes a source of inspiration—to ride more, to tell stories, to share helpful tips, and most importantly, to have fun while celebrating our shared passion for bicycling.

In this and future editions, I'll be reaching out for article submissions, photos, stories, advice, feedback, and more. If you have an idea or suggestion, send me a message at heartcyclecody@gmail.com.

Lastly, if you'd like to learn more about me and my cycling adventures, you'll find a brief introduction later in this issue.

I'm looking forward to connecting—and hopefully riding—with many of you soon!



"Jerry was a tremendous athlete and enjoyed skiing, hiking, cycling, running, swimming and golf. A longtime member of Cherry Hills Country Club, he loved playing golf with his friends and five boys. Jerry was a natural leader, becoming president of just about every organization he joined. As president of HeartCycle Bicycle Touring Club, he organized and rode on dozens of bike rides across Colorado and around the country."



Remembering Jerry Bakke

By HeartCycle
President
Mark Lestikow



A long time member of HeartCycle, and a great friend to many of us, Jerry Bakke, passed away on March 30. A link to his obituary can be found below.

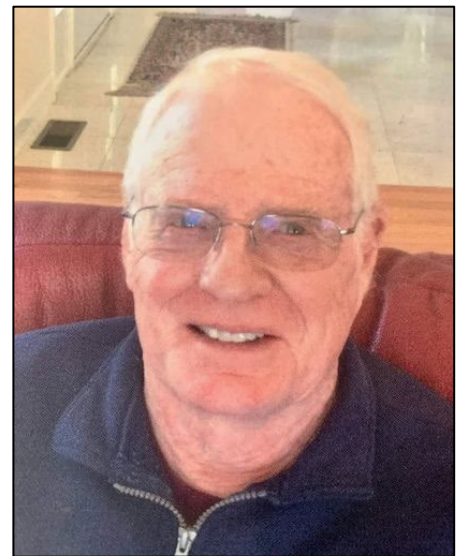
Jerry's impact on HeartCycle was immeasurable. He raised the level of hospitality on tours and inspired many to become tour leaders.

Jerry served on the board for many years and was a past president. One of his greatest accomplishments was taking Steve Parker's vision to create an "Adventure Series" of tours starting with a Ride Across America and convincing a skeptical board that this concept could work. The result was a successful 3-stage ride across the southern tier of the United States starting in March 2008, nine additional "Adventure Series" tours including a border-to-border ride of the West Coast, and a second Ride Across America along the northern tier.

Jerry will be remembered for his unflappable demeanor and great sense of humor!

A memorial celebration of Jerry's life will be held at Cherry Hills Country

Club on Friday, April 18, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. The dress code is business casual, with no jeans. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his memory to the charity of your choice.



www.horancares.com/obituaries/gerald-jerry-bakke



Tour Director Musings

By HeartCycle
Tour Director
Janet Slate



Let the tour season begin! One tour is in the books—the South Island of New Zealand (see writeup in this newsletter)—the Shikoku Pilgrimage in Japan started a week ago, and the Solvang tour near the coast, just north of Santa Barbara in California, started on Saturday. Do you have room in your schedule for another tour? Register for the [Central CO Rockies](#) tour (July 9–17), based in Frisco and Eagle, in the heart of the Colorado Rocky Mountains, home to world-renowned ski resorts and historic mining towns. High country Colorado in the summertime is glorious—green hillsides, wildflowers, and rivers! So much to see and do, this tour is sure to maximize your enjoyment of summer. (More details about this trip on page 12.)

About that time in your schedule... consider arriving a day early for any tour you may be using air travel, especially if it's an overseas tour. Because stuff can happen. You probably heard the news when Heathrow Airport, Europe's busiest, was shut down for nearly 18 hours on Friday, March 21, 2025, due to a fire at a nearby electrical substation. Dallas-Fort Worth Airport canceled 275 flights due to high winds and storms on the day several of our New Zealand tour participants were

scheduled to fly through that hub. We don't want you to miss a day or more of a tour you've been planning for months. Give yourself that extra cushion if possible.

Thanks for being a HeartCycle member!

Janet Slate
jslate@ultrasys.net



/// Trip Insurance ///

Because situations can change, HeartCycle strongly recommends that each participant purchase trip insurance. HeartCycle does not recommend any particular policy. You should inquire carefully about coverage and conditions. For a comparative analysis of travel insurance companies and their policies, consider visiting www.insuremytrip.com or, call them at (800) 487-4722. HeartCycle does not endorse, recommend, or make any representations about the above website.

BE PREPARED

London's Heathrow Airport Shutdown Causes Global Travel Issues

On March 21st, 2025, a fire at a nearby electrical substation caused a power outage at London's Heathrow Airport, leading to a temporary closure that disrupted over 1,300 flights and affected hundreds of thousands of passengers.

The closure affected at least 1,300 flights, with 120 already in the air at the time of the outage, and potentially impacted 290,000 passengers.

DFW Disruptions Cause Local Travel Woes

On March 4, 2025, DFW International Airport experienced significant disruptions due to high winds, resulting in 275 flight cancellations and 417 delays, alongside 63 cancellations and 87 delays at Dallas Love Field.





New Zealand Trip Report

By HeartCycle Member
Bob Stilwell

Thirteen of us—five of whom were new members—ventured to Christchurch to begin HeartCycle’s first-ever tour of New Zealand. (Welcome new members: Cathryn, Emily, Fran, Lili, and Peggy!) Most came from Colorado (8); members from California (3), Arizona (1), and Iowa (1) rounded out the group.

/// Day 1

We were welcomed to the beautiful South Island of New Zealand by our guides, Rich and Heather, and our fearless leader, Janet Slate. To avoid navigating our way through traffic on the left side of the road and maximize our riding time, we shuttled to the Port Hills, a popular riding area for locals. Getting our rented bikes adjusted, we took a shakedown ride a short distance and returned to enjoy French press coffee and banana bread! We continued our ride, a bumpy profile along the crater rim of an extinct volcano, to Godley Head where you could hear riders cry, “Car back” and “Lamb up.”



Factoid du Jour (FdJ):

Of the 5 million residents of New Zealand, only 1 million live on the South Island and half of those live in Christchurch. In 2010 and 2011, two major earthquakes hit Christchurch and decimated many of the buildings in the City Center and environs that to this day are red-tagged.

/// Day 2

Shuttling through the Canterbury Plains where Heather grew up, we learned she rode a pony to school! Quiet rural roads on today's ride from Geraldine to Fairlie took us past fields and farmlands. A delicious lunch at a café in a small community made us revel in NZ amenities. We shuttled to Lake Tekapo where we had beautiful lake views. Tekapo has several Dark Sky telescopes, and the nighttime views were spectacular.



FdJ: A Canadian goose eats three times the grass that a sheep does. (Likely an overestimate—suffice it to say that sheep do not eat as much grass as geese in proportion to their size.) Dairy cow farms are quickly replacing sheep farms, changing open grazing to irrigated fields.



/// Day 3

We started the day with a steep 1.3-mile hike to the hilltop telescopes at Mt. John to enjoy a well-earned coffee and a view of Lake Tekapo. After tasting salmon from the local farms, we shuttled to the hydro canals, a network of canals that they use for power generation, where we rode for many miles and gained very few feet. Along the way, we passed by serious crew races and salmon farms.

Then shuttled towards the base of New Zealand's highest mountain into Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. Après ride beverages (thanks, Janet!) and snacks (thanks, Heather!) were enjoyed from the deck of our hotel with majestic mountain and glacier views.



FdJ: One third of New Zealand's electrical generation is hydroelectric.



/// Day 4

We shuttled to the Tasman Glacier where we hiked to the overlook to see icebergs in the lake below, and our guides told us how much the glacier has retreated. Down we rode to end the first segment of our day's ride along the shores of Lake Pukaki. We avoided busy roads to resume our ride to Lake Ohau, with Mount Cook in the background, to our hotel at the base of the winter snowfields.



/// Day 5

We shuttled to our ride start to climb the Benmore Dam and rode along Lake Aviemore. Our post-lunch ride routed us on several miles of unintended dirt, which earned us a round of beverages courtesy of our tour company! A short shuttle brought us to the Pacific Coast town of Oamaru; the Victorian architecture has served as the location for the new show "East of Eden."



/// Day 6

Well, to this point we'd had pretty good weather. Today, not so much. It rained most of the night and showed no chance of letting up anytime soon. The guides advised and the group concurred, we were not going to ride in the downpour, so we drove to our lunch stop in Macraes, a mining town that dates back to the late 1800s. Today, Macraes is home to the largest active gold mine in New Zealand, an open pit operation that began in 1990.

Officially scrubbing the day's ride, we headed to Ranfurly. Most of us ventured to the Maniototo Adventure Park to experience curling for the first time! For anyone who watched the Winter Olympics in 2020, we were forced to watch this game for weeks on end as it was the only thing televised. Who would know it is so darn fun! Much better than riding in the rain. When we got back to the hotel, Rich had BBQ steaks ready for us.



FdJ: We learned that 1 tonne of ore yields 1.5 gram of gold.

/// Day 7

With cold, but sunny skies, we rode from the hotel through the Ida Valley, still in the Central Otago region, to Clyde. Avoiding high-traffic roads, we shuttled to Queenstown for a couple of days off. We sampled “real fruit ice cream” at Mrs. Jones Fruit Orchard, a wayside stop in Cromwell, where they blend each serving individually with fruit of your choice. Yum!



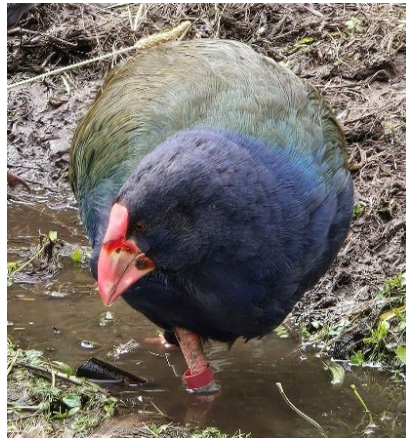
/// Days 8 and 9

We enjoyed a couple days off the bike in Queenstown, known as the adventure capital of the world with over 200 activities, ranging from mild to wild, including water sports (jet boating, whitewater rafting), aerial adventures (paragliding, skydiving, bungee jumping), and mountain adventures (hiking, skiing, mountain biking). Several of us went to Gibbston Valley Winery for wine and cheese tasting and probably stayed too long. We had fun!



/// Day 10

After a hearty breakfast, we loaded up the bus and shuttled south along Lake Wakatipu to Lumsden where we experienced the full glory of the Red Tussock Conservation Area. With a weather front approaching, the headwinds were so strong, our guide Rich called it, and we loaded up and shuttled to our destination, Te Anau, at the edge of the Fiordland National Park.



/// Day 11

With rain threatening, we left Te Anau and headed south to Manapouri. Yesterday's massive headwind was today's massive tailwind. We continued to the historic Clifden Suspension Bridge. Another shuttle brought us to Invercargill, considered the world's southernmost southern city.

/// Day 12

Starting our ride just outside Invercargill, we rode along rolling hills through farmland then along the South Pacific coastline. We stopped in Curio Bay for lunch and explored the 170-million-year-old petrified forest. Unfortunately, no yellow-striped penguins came out to play with us. Most of us loaded up and shuttled to our hotel and dinner at the Whistling Frog. A few brave souls along with guide Heather rode the final 9 miles and 1000 ft of gain!



/// Day 13

Our guides made a hot breakfast for us this morning! We then drove a short distance to the McLean Falls trailhead. What a great walk through what looked like a rain forest, only to arrive at a spectacular view of McLean Falls. Back at the Whistling Frog, we started our ride. After riding to Owaka, where we had sushi and walked through an interesting man-cave, we drove to Surat Bay. The group walked the beach where we saw several New Zealand sea lions. On our traverse to from one bay to the other, we encountered a large sea lion in the middle of the trail; we safely circumnavigated around him to reach the beach of Cannibal Bay. There, we found many more of the 500- to 600-pound bulls. We resumed our ride in Owaka and rode the rest of the way to the coastal town of Kaka Point.



/// Day 14

Our in-room continental breakfast and sunny skies had us ready for the punchy climbs to Nugget Point, where we hiked to the lighthouse. North along the coast and past fields we pedaled, stopping for lunch in Balclutha. Shuttled to Waihola, we resumed our ride up a killer hill and down to the coast where we rode along the South Pacific to Brighton. We shuttled from there to our accommodations in Dunedin. Another good day of riding!



/// Day 15

After an early breakfast, we started our ride just outside Dunedin, at the south head of the harbor, and rode over Portobello hill to the end of the Otago Peninsula. There, we toured the Royal Albatross Centre.

We rode back on the peninsula along the Otago Harbour until we regrouped in Macandrew Bay. After a group decision to scrub the next short cycling segment, we continued our drive to Oamaru, but not until we walked up Baldwin Street, known as the steepest street in the world. We heartily toasted and thanked our guides for an excellent tour at our final group dinner.



FdJ: Adult Royal Albatrosses migrate from New Zealand to South America annually and have a wingspan of 3 meters (roughly 9 feet).

/// Day 16 – Last day!

Woke to a foggy Pacific morning. After breakfast, we navigated through the fog heading south along the South Pacific. Just an out-and-back today, so we could have a beer or two and some pizza before we loaded up and made our way by van the 3 hours north to Christchurch.



/// Epilogue

The South Island of New Zealand is a sizable land mass, about 58,000 square miles. The whole country is roughly the same size as the state of Colorado! Our guides, Rich and Heather, from Adventure South NZ, did a fantastic job. We cycled through the most spectacular areas of their country without riding thousands of miles or on heavily trafficked roads. This required a lot of shuttling and bike loading and unloading, but they were quick and efficient, and the shuttle trips were rarely more than 30-45 minutes. Safety and fun was their goal, and they excelled.





Availability for the Central CO Rockies Tour

This tour will be in the heart of the Colorado Rocky Mountains through Summit, Grand, Eagle, Garfield, and Lake Counties—home to world-renowned ski resorts and historic mining towns.

This tour starts with shorter distances and smaller climbs and builds each day, giving us time to acclimate to the altitude. Generally, the climbs are steady and typically do not get much over 7%. The first three nights are in the scenic small town of Frisco, Colorado, nestled alongside Lake Dillon, surrounded by pine trees where we can breathe in the fresh mountain air. We bike

from Frisco to our second small town of Eagle, Colorado, 30 miles west of Vail. We will spend our day off in Eagle resting our legs and lungs, before biking to No Name, at the west end of Glenwood Canyon. Then we head back to Frisco for our final two nights and a truly epic ride up and over Fremont Pass to the highest incorporated city in the U.S., Leadville, Colorado, topping out at just over 10,000 ft. Detailed route maps, cue sheets and RWGPS files will be provided in advance to tour participants.



The bike path through Glenwood Canyon is just one of the many amazing areas you will encounter during the trip.

For more information contact:

Scott MacCormack
samaccormack@gmail.com
720-939-6099

Guy Kelley
guy.kelley@comcast.net
970-222-2932

HIGHLIGHTS...

July 9th – 17th

7 riding days

Inter / Adv rating

360 miles total

Up to 21K feet
elevation gain

SYNOPSIS...

Escape the heat of summer as we ride in the Rocky Mountains in central Colorado. Each day, we will increase our mileage and elevation gain. The summer flowers will be in bloom. This semi fixed-base tour with just two hotels covers many great routes in the high country.

TO SIGN UP...

Visit the tours page at HeartCycle.org.

Visit the [How to register for a tour](#) page for detailed instructions on how to sign up.



Meet the New Newsletter Editor

By HeartCycle
Newsletter Editor
Cody Ensanian



I'm thrilled to be stepping into this role and giving back to the club that first introduced me to the incredible world of bicycle tours.

When I applied for this position, I shared a bit about myself with our club president, Mark Lestikow, and I'd love to share the same with all of you:

I've called Colorado home for the past 10 years and am an avid cyclist—with a passion for just about any outdoor activity. In 2023, I joined HeartCycle for the Sardinia, Italy tour and had an absolute blast. It was my first bike tour and one that instantly had me hooked. Last year, I completed a 7-day cycling tour through Scotland (with a different company), which was another unforgettable experience. While I'm hoping to join HeartCycle for another tour in 2026, in the meantime, I'm excited to support the club that sparked my love of touring.

That very first trip taught me something right away: experiencing a country by bike—soaking in the sights, sounds, smells, and flavors—is, hands down, one of the best ways to travel. I already loved cycling, great food and drink, the outdoors, mountains, valleys, and the challenge of covering long distances. Bike tours bring all of that

together into one perfect package—and now I'm hooked.

Sardinia was an incredible place to kick off my bike tour journey. From the coastal roads to the mountainous interior, every day brought something new. The food, the people, the scenery—it was all unforgettable. If you haven't had the chance to visit, I can't recommend it highly enough.

To celebrate my birthday last year, I embarked on a 7-day bike tour through Scotland. We pedaled through charming villages, two national parks, and of course, sampled some fantastic Scotch—while making plenty of woolly friends along the way. It's another place I highly recommend exploring by bike. If you're curious about the tour company I used, feel free to reach out!

I'm genuinely excited to support HeartCycle in this new capacity. If you have articles, ideas, or anything you'd like to see in future newsletters, don't hesitate to contact me. Let's keep the wheels turning!

Cody
heartcyclecody@gmail.com





About HeartCycle Bicycle Tours

HeartCycle offers a number of exciting tours each year.

2025 tours that are currently scheduled or planned are highlighted on the next few pages. Tour details are also available on the [HeartCycle website](#).

To read and observe the procedures for announcing new and planned tours please review the [Tour Announcement and Registration Policy](#).

Links to tour policies (illness, conduct, wait list, etc.) can be found at the bottom of the [HeartCycle Tours](#) web page.

March

South Island, New Zealand Christchurch, New Zealand

Dates: March 6-22, 2025

Days: 16

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$5,100

Link: [New Zealand Trip Details](#)

Contact: Janet Slate

jslate@totalspeed.com

April

Shikoku Pilgrimage, Japan Koyasan, Japan

Dates: April 6-18, 2025

Days: 12

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: \$4,500

Link: [Japan Trip Details](#)

Contact: Tina Vessels

tina.vessels@gmail.com

Springtime in Solvang Solvang, CA, USA

Dates: April 12-19, 2025

Days: 6

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: \$1,660

Link: [Solvang Trip Details](#)

Contact: Mark Lestikow

mark.lestikow@closetfactory-colorado.com

May

Underground Railroad Year 2 Memphis, TN, USA

Dates: May 10-25, 2025

Days: 14

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$3,500

Link: [Railroad Trip Details](#)

Contact: Jim Schroeder

jimmyschweb@gmail.com

June

Randone en Dordogne, France Bordeaux, France

Dates: June 1-13, 2025

Days: 12

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: \$3,500

Link: [Randonee Trip Details](#)

Contact: Fred Yu

frederickyu@comcast.net

Le Monastere in Southern France Limoux, France

Dates: June 21-28, 2025

Days: 7

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$3,350

Link: [Le Monastere Trip Details](#)

Contact: Tom Kissinger

tom_k@pipeline.com

**October trip also available*



June cont...

MN-WI: Mississippi River Weave

Minneapolis, MN, USA

Dates: June 21-30, 2025

Days: 9

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$2,000

Link: [Mississippi Trip Details](#)

Contact: Jim Schroeder

jimmyschweb@gmail.com

July

Central Colorado Rockies

Frisco, CO, USA

Dates: July 9-17, 2025

Days: 8

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$2,160

Link: [Rockies Trip Details](#)

Contact: Guy Kelley

guy.kelley@comcast.net

Jackson Hole Wyoming

Jackson, WY, USA

Dates: ~~July 24-29, 2025~~

Days: 5

Rating: Easy

Cost: \$1,800

Link: [Jackson Hole Trip Details](#)

Contact: Clare Bena

cbvamoots@gmail.com

CANCELLED

**Look for this trip in 2026!*

August

Alaska – The Last Frontier

Anchorage, AK, USA

Dates: August 2-9, 2025

Days: 7

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: \$4,280

Link: [Alaska Trip Details](#)

Contact: Scott MacCormack

SAMacCormack@gmail.com

Steamboat Springs NextGen Tour

Steamboat Springs, CO, USA

Dates: August 17-22, 2025

Days: 5

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: \$1,350

Link: [Steamboat Trip Details](#)

Contact: Mark Lestikow

mark.lestikow@closetfactory-colorado.com

September

Acadia: Rocky Coastal Maine

Bar Harbor, ME, USA

Dates: Sept 8-16, 2025

Days: 8

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: \$2,700

Link: [Acadia Trip Details](#)

Contact: Patty Menz

pattymenz@verizon.net

**HeartCycle
Bicycle Tours**

Send a message to tourdirector@heartcycle.org to let us know (1) where you'd like to go on a future tour and (2) if you have an interest in leading or co-leading a tour.

October

Le Monastere in Southern France

Limoux, France

Dates: October 4-11, 2025

Days: 7

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$3,350

Link: [Le Monastere Trip Details](#)

Contact: Tom Kissinger

tom_k@pipeline.com**June trip also available***Paso Robles Wine Country**

Paso Robles, CA, USA

Dates: October 18-26, 2025

Days: 8

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$2,450

Link: [Paso Robles Trip Details](#)

Contact: Cindy Alvarez

sindelou2@gmail.com**HeartCycle
Bicycle Tours**

Send a message to tourdirector@heartcycle.org to let us know (1) where you'd like to go on a future tour and (2) if you have an interest in leading or co-leading a tour.

/// Tour Ratings ///

Rating	Approx Daily Mileage	Approx Daily Elevation Gain (feet)
Easy	< 40	< 1,500
Intermediate	40–60	1,500–3,500
Advanced	50–70	2,500–4,500
Expert	> 65	> 4,000



HeartCycle Bicycle Touring Club Contacts

Please feel free to contact any of the members listed to the right with questions, comments, or concerns. We are more than happy to field your questions and get you in touch with the appropriate club contact.

Board of Directors

- **Mark Lestikow (2026) | 303-919-0426**
President - president@heartcycle.org
- **Tom Kissinger (2026) | 303-475-8669**
Vice President
- **Janet Slate (2025) | 303-683-6128**
Tour Director - tourdiretor@heartcycle.org
- **Alan Church (2026) | 303-489-1789**
Treasurer
- **Laura Davis (2026) | 970-581-1361**
Secretary
- **Ron Finch (2025) | 303-656-5573**
Safety Coordinator & Insurance
- **Rita Kurelja (2025) | 970-231-7163**
Registrar - registrar@heartcycle.org
- **Richard Crocker (2025) | 520-539-8019**
Asst. Registrar - registrar@heartcycle.org
- **Scott MacCormack (2025) | 720-939-6099**
Web Master - webmaster@heartcycle.org

Working Members

- **Jim Bethell | 303-919-0426**
Asst. Webmaster
- **Graham Hollis | 720-323-6479**
Asst. Treasurer
- **Jeff Messerschmidt | 303-904-0573**
SAG Supply Manager
- **Dan Palmquist | 303-638-2535**
SAG Vehicles
- **Jimmy Schroeder | 260-450-2007**
Ride-with-GPS Coordinator
- **Judy Siel | 720-519-9401**
Asst. Tour Director
- **Cody Ensanian | 570-419-9453**
Newsletter Editor - heartcyclecody@gmail.com

/// About Heartcycle ///

The HeartCycle Bicycle Touring Club is a not-for-profit Colorado corporation that began providing bicycle tours in 1978. The club is organized and run by volunteers who enjoy the challenge and the fun of cycle touring and want to share their enthusiasm.

HeartCycle has the unique distinction of having originally been formed as a cardiac research project (hence the name), but has long since become simply a not-for-profit bicycling club that promotes multi-day, SAG-supported tours. A volunteer Board of Directors meets monthly and welcomes member attendance and participation in planning and running events. HeartCycle also has many other volunteers working to assist the Board.

