

# Heart-to-Heart



## “President’s Spin”

Polly and I just returned from the HeartCycle **Paso Robles** tour led by volunteer leaders Cindy Alvarez and Helayn Storch, and the SAG support team of Danna Korak and Martha MacCormack. Thank you, ladies, for providing us 30+ riders with an incredible week!

We’ve been with HeartCycle for many years and have many long-time cycling friends in the club. But I’m always so grateful that we gain a new set of friends every time we sign up for a new tour.

So how do these new friends come in to HeartCycle? In many ways, but just like the best new employees are those that are recommended by current employees, we find that many of the best new HeartCycle members are those that heard about the club from a friend and current member.

The **Paso Tour** tour backs that up. Last year Polly and I led the **Springtime in Solvang** tour. Many of our long-time friends were on the tour. However, Graham and Cathy Hollis invited two couples to join them on the tour. These four individuals shared with me that they had a wonderful time, met some great new friends, and wanted to sign up for more HeartCycle tours in the future. (I’m going to add here that they fit right in with the group!) They not only signed up for the Paso Robles trip but invited another couple to join them. You guessed it...that couple had a great time (and fit right in!). That’s six new HeartCycle members in one year due to Graham and Cathy’s original invitation! Talk about a snowball effect!

HeartCycle Touring Club is a real gem of an organization, and our tours are meant to be enjoyed by many. Tell your friends and acquaintances about us, invite them to join you on future rides, and pick up some HeartCycle business cards from a tour leader or SAG on your next tour to share with others!

Keep Spinning!

**Mark Lestikow**

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## The Board of Directors

<b>Mark Lestikow</b> (303) 919-0426	(2024)
President - <a href="mailto:president@heartcycle.org">president@heartcycle.org</a>	
<b>Janet Slate</b> (303) 683-6128	(2025)
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<b>Scott MacCormack</b> (720) 939-6099	(2025)
Webmaster, Special Projects	
<b>Judy Siel</b> (720) 519-9401	(2024)
Tour Director - <a href="mailto:tourdiretor@heartcycle.org">tourdiretor@heartcycle.org</a>	

## Working Members

<b>Richard Crocker</b> (520) 539-8019
Asst. Registrar - <a href="mailto:registrar@heartcycle.org">registrar@heartcycle.org</a>
<b>Graham Hollis</b> (720) 323-6479
Asst. Treasurer
<b>Jeff Messerschmidt</b> (303) 904-0573
Sag Supply Manager
<b>Dan Palmquist</b> (303) 638-2535
Sag Vehicles
<b>Jimmy Schroeder</b> (260) 450-2007
Ride with GPS Coordinator
<b>Barry Siel</b> (303) 434-1947
Newsletter Editor

## **Tour Director Musings**

I recently returned from Portugal, where I was able to complete 2 fabulous bike tours. One with HeartCycle that was filled with laughter and fun as we cycled in southern Portugal and enjoyed quiet roads, stunning coastal views, sunny weather, welcoming guides who fixed picnic lunches multiple days and a great group of HeartCycle members. (See the article from Barry Hannigan in this issue.) A second self-guided tour in northern Portugal was an adventure discovering another great place to see from the seat of a bike. The joys of travel, good food, great wine and companionship. Bliss!!

Check our website for the updated tour list and openings. We have multiple tours with opening for you to share a room or tours with multiple spaces available. It is not too late to cycle with your HeartCycle friends in 2024 or make new friends and explore some new roads with HeartCycle.

Hope to to see you on the road soon,

Judy Siel, Tour Director

## Spring Training in Texas Hill Country – 2024

By Jeremy Bollington

HC's first tour of 2024 took place in the beautiful Hill Country of Texas. Our group was a great mix of long time HC members and a few HC newbies, including yours truly! The tour was led by Jimmy Schroeder and Tina Vessels, with fantastic SAG support provided by Kathleen Schindler and Mayoma Pendergast.

Our base for the week was Fredericksburg, a charming and historic town nestled in the heart of the Texas Hill Country, an hour or so west of Austin. Founded in 1846 by German immigrants, the town today continues to pay homage to its history with numerous restaurants serving up authentic German fare alongside Texas favorites – lots of schnitzel and red cabbage, along with awesome steak and BBQ!

For the six-day tour we were treated to a variety of loops with typically a short option of 40-45 miles and a long option of 60-70 miles, however the fixed base allowed those that wanted to take a day off to do so easily. Most days comprised 2,500 – 3,500 of climbing via rolling hills on quiet country roads that were in excellent condition – the only “hazards” being the hundreds of cattle grids to “hop” across and the odd wet water crossing!

We cycled past countless ranches and some picturesque vineyards and saw a range of wildlife including longhorns, llamas and even some ostriches. We were treated to endless vistas of wildflowers – it really did feel like the tour was perfectly timed to catch the blue bonnets at their peak.





Route highlights included:

- The Luckenbach Loop – with picnic lunch in Luckenbach, the tiny town memorialized by Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson in the country hit song "Luckenbach, Texas (Back to the Basics of Love)."

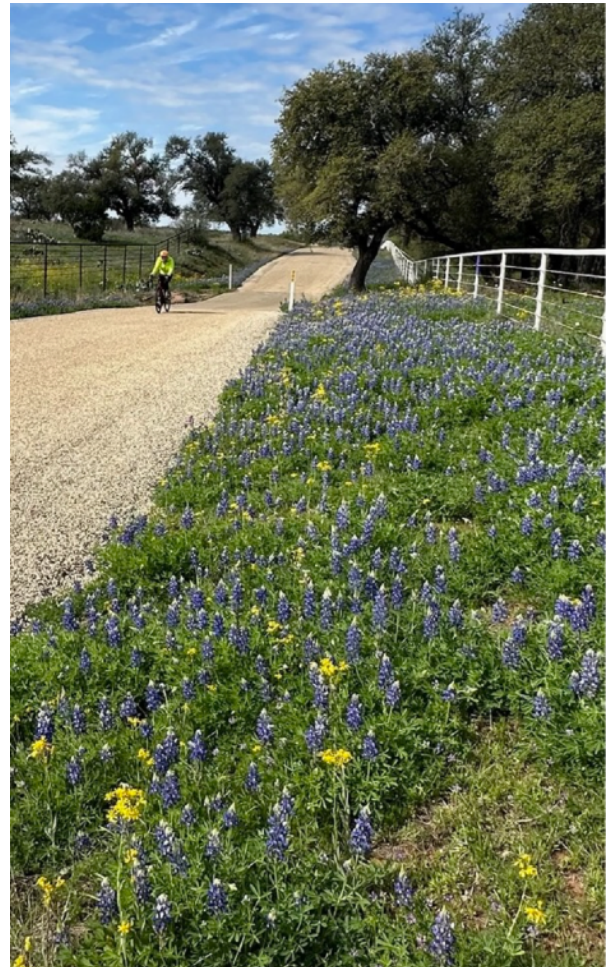


- The Enchanted Rock Loop – with a great vista of the “Rock” – a massive pink granite dome that rises 425ft above the surrounding landscape.





- The Willow City Loop – this was THE Queen Stage of the tour, with a winding route through limestone cliffs, small creeks, vibrant blue bonnets and an iconic fence topped with cowboy boots!



We had one rest day and many of the group took the chance to visit the amazing National Museum of the Pacific War. The museum was created in honor of Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, a native of Fredericksburg who played a pivotal role in the Pacific theater during World War II.



Weather for the week was ok – some mist and drizzle in the mornings... but it did not dampen our spirits and we got some blue sky most days, including on the ride though the Willow City loop. The below picture captured an amazing sunrise with the trusty Penske waiting to roll and keep us fed and watered for the day !



All in all a great warm up for the season and a fun time with old friendships renewed, new friendships made and good stories to tell.





## Portugal, The West Coast and the Algarve

### By Barry Hannigan

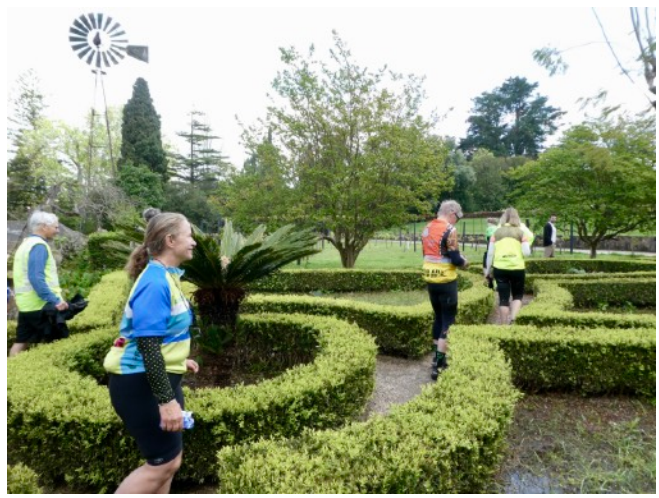
HeartCycle's Portugal tour, **The West Coast and the Algarve**, began on a busy street in the country's capital, Lisbon. Riders met André, Luis, and Nuno, the guides with Portugal Bike, who were leading our tour. They packed three vans with riders, luggage and bikes, and we headed to a hotel in Sesimbra, a town south of Lisbon.



The hotel was lovely, and the first dinner was very tasty. Both of these augured well for the tour, and that implied promise was more than fulfilled, as both the accommodations and dinners on the tour were consistently excellent!



Portugal Bike labels **The West Coast and the Algarve** as a Landscape Tour, promising amazing views. The first ride delivered a foretaste, as we rode quiet roads and then entered a gorgeous area, the **Natural Park of Arrábida**. The superb view from the crest of a huge ridge that day proved to be an appetizer for the landscapes that were to come. On the way, we visited a winery, José Maria da Fonseca, to learn about making port wine. This winery is the oldest table wine company in Portugal.

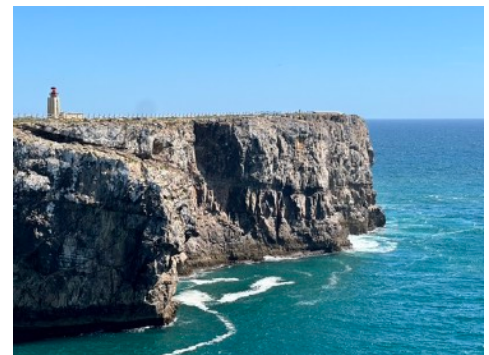




The second hotel had a fine ocean view, which was true for multiple hotels during the trip. Each night the guides would take us to a restaurant. The restaurants were carefully selected and the food was outstanding! Portuguese wines accompanied every meal, and some evenings had four or five courses. André, the head guide, turned out to be a “foodie.” He had carefully chosen the menus so that we sampled many aspects of Portuguese cuisine.



The tour continued south, mostly near the coast. The ultimate goal was “the end of the world” and Pousada de Sagres, a famous hotel on a promontory overlooking the ocean. The town of Sagres sits at Europe's most southwesterly point. In the ancient world, it was the last explored point. For that reason the Romans called Sagres the Promontorium Sacrum, otherwise “the end of the world.” The riders had a day off to explore the end of the world. Spectacular cliffs, abundant wild flowers, and terrific beaches made the day quite memorable.





The second half of the tour was a transit across the Algarve, the southernmost region of Portugal, extending over to Spain. Riders explored both beautiful coastal stretches and bucolic interior lands, where farms and vineyards were common.



The hardest day of cycling (3250 climbing) led to the most spectacular hotel, the Pousada da Palácio de Estói. It is rated a “Small Luxury Hotel,” and it lived up to that billing quite easily.





If you have ever dreamed about taking a southern European coastal bike tour—the beautiful sunny days, perfect beaches, blue ocean—then you would love this part of the tour. It's exactly as you might have imagined it! The towns of Portimão, Lagos, and Tavira exuded a charm that made one feel like staying forever.



The tour had a special treat as a stop on the last riding day: a tour of a cork factory. We watched a worker who sorts and cuts the cork, and we learned about the exceptional properties that make cork useful for more applications than one might imagine.







All good things come to an end, and the tour's finale was lovely: a champagne celebration as riders came to the last hotel.

A thousand thanks to Judy Siel for her efforts and care in making this terrific tour possible!





# Colorado HeartCycle 2024 Tours

## Spring Training in Texas Hill Country

### Fredericksburg, Texas

March 15 - 22                      Status: Complete  
 6 days, Int./Adv.                      \$1,900.00  
 Jim Schroeder, [jimmyschweb@gmail.com](mailto:jimmyschweb@gmail.com)  
 Tina Vessels, [tina.vessels@gmail.com](mailto:tina.vessels@gmail.com)

## Springtime in the South Bay Area

### Campbell, California

May 19 - 25                      Status: Open  
 6 days, Advanced                      \$1,900.00  
 Carol Fredrickson, [swmcarol@yahoo.com](mailto:swmcarol@yahoo.com)  
 Janet Slate, [jslate@ultrasys.net](mailto:jslate@ultrasys.net)

## Portugal: West Coast & Algarve

### Lisbon, Portugal

April 7 - 17, 2024                      Status: Complete  
 11 days, Intermediate                      \$4,900.00  
 Judy Siel, [judy.siel@gmail.com](mailto:judy.siel@gmail.com)

## Explore the Door in '24

### De Pere, Wisconsin

June 2 - June 9                      Status: Open  
 8 days, Intermediate                      \$2,000.00  
 Jim Bethell, [bethell.jim@verizon.net](mailto:bethell.jim@verizon.net)  
 Cindy Dore, [cdorecycle@gmail.com](mailto:cdorecycle@gmail.com)

## Paso Robles Wine Country

### Paso Robles, California

April 13 - 20                      Status: Complete  
 6 days, Int./Adv.                      \$2,000.00  
 Cindy Alvarez, [sindelou@cox.net](mailto:sindelou@cox.net)  
 Helayn Storch, [helaynstorch@hotmail.com](mailto:helaynstorch@hotmail.com)

## Bike & Barge Beautiful Belgium

### Bruges, Belgium

July 20 - 27, 2024                      Status: Open  
 7 days, Easy/Int.                      \$2,150.00  
 Rita Kurelja, [ritakurelja@hotmail.com](mailto:ritakurelja@hotmail.com)

## Underground Railroad Year 1

### Mobile, Alabama

April 27 - May 12                      Status: Active  
 14 days, Int./Adv.                      \$2,840.00  
 Jim Schroeder, [jimmyschweb@gmail.com](mailto:jimmyschweb@gmail.com)  
 Ron Finch, [blouie-rfinch@comcast.net](mailto:blouie-rfinch@comcast.net)

## Basalt & Aspen - Road & Gravel Tour

### Basalt, Colorado

July 24 - 28                      Status: Open  
 4 days, Int./Adv.                      \$1,100.00  
 Ron Finch, [blouie-rfinch@comcast.net](mailto:blouie-rfinch@comcast.net)  
 Robin Heil, [heikrobin1@gmail.com](mailto:heikrobin1@gmail.com)

## Balkan Quartet

### Tirana, Albania

May 17 - 31, 2024                      Status: Waitlist  
 14 days, Int./Adv.                      \$2,600.00  
 Lisa Evans, [lceski@comcast.net](mailto:lceski@comcast.net)

## Puget Sound Island Hopping

### La Conner, Washington

August 3 - 11                      Status: Open  
 7 days, Int./Adv.                      \$2,560.00  
 Cindy Alvarez, [sindelou@cox.net](mailto:sindelou@cox.net)  
 Helayn Storch, [helaynstorch@hotmail.com](mailto:helaynstorch@hotmail.com)

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# Colorado HeartCycle 2024 Tours

## Over Hill & Dale, NW Vermont

### **Burlington, Vermont**

August 17 - 24                      Status: Open  
7 days, Int./Adv.                      \$1,700.00  
Jim Bethell, [bethell.jim@verizon.net](mailto:bethell.jim@verizon.net)  
Gail Golderman, [goldermg@union.edu](mailto:goldermg@union.edu)

## West Virginia

### **Charleston, West Virginia**

Sept. 21 - 28                      Status: Open  
7 days, Advanced                      \$1,600.00  
Jim Schroeder, [jimmyschweb@gmail.com](mailto:jimmyschweb@gmail.com)  
Kurt Arehart, [klarehart@gmail.com](mailto:klarehart@gmail.com)

## Tuscany

### **Florence, Italy**

Sept. 5 - 18, 2024                      Status: Open  
13 days, Intermediate                      \$3,550.00  
Cindy Dore, [cdorecycle@gmail.com](mailto:cdorecycle@gmail.com)

## Le Monastere in Southern France

### **Limoux, France**

Sept. 28 - Oct. 5                      Status: Waitlist  
7 days, Int./Adv.                      \$3,100.00  
Guy Kelley, [guy.kelley@comcast.net](mailto:guy.kelley@comcast.net)

## Black Hills of South Dakota

### **Custer, South Dakota**

Sept. 7 - 13                      Status: Open  
6 days, Int./Adv.                      \$1,600.00  
Judy Siel [judy.siel@gmail.com](mailto:judy.siel@gmail.com)  
Barry Siel, [bsiel03@gmail.com](mailto:bsiel03@gmail.com)



**Save the date:  
HeartCycle Annual Meeting  
October 19th**



## WHY YOU SHOULD LEAD A HEARTCYCLE TOUR

HeartCycle is a bicycle touring club. If you are reading this in the newsletter, then you are a member who has probably been on a few of the club's tours. As a club, we depend on our members to keep the club operating, but also to keep it vital and fresh. While a member contributes to the club by renewing his or her membership, and by participating in tours, the club also relies on some members to go a bit further, by performing tasks important to the club, such as editing and distributing the newsletter, looking after the Sprinter, serving on the Board, and leading or sagging a tour. Leading a tour is one of the most important contributions a member can make to the club.

Each year, the club assembles an exciting menu of tours for the following season. Club members at the annual meeting in October look forward to the announcement of the upcoming tours. The tours are integral to the club's *raison d'être*. We are not a commercial bike tour company: the club's tour directors work hard to make the tour offerings fresh, interesting and attractive to members, and non-repetitive from year to



year. This is harder to do than it might look. It requires more effort to plan a tour that isn't in our back yard. The club benefits from new ideas about tour concepts and from broader participation in tour leadership. It is better for us not to rely on a handful of tour leaders, or to ask the same people to lead too many tours season after season.

**Here are eight reasons why you should lead a tour:**

1. You can ride the tour you want and when you want – because you are planning and leading it.
2. You make the club better by contributing and volunteering.
3. It's gratifying to see other members appreciate and enjoy a tour you are leading.
4. You make new friends.
5. If you lead a tour, your registration fee is waived.
6. If you lead a tour, you earn a registration priority on a future HC trip.
7. If you lead a tour, you earn a discount on a future HC trip.
8. You gain renewed appreciation for the work and organization that go into a staging a bicycle tour.

If you have never led a tour, start by co-leading with someone more experienced. The Club has developed a tour leader's manual with guidance on many of the issues faced on tour. Our Tour Director Judy Siel and Assistant TD Janet Slate, both experienced tour leaders, stand ready to help train new tour leaders, as do other members who have led tours.

Contact Judy at [bjsiel@msn.com](mailto:bjsiel@msn.com) or Janet at [jslate@ultrasys.net](mailto:jslate@ultrasys.net) to get your tour on the 2025 tour schedule.