

Heart-to-Heart



You are invited to attend HeartCycle's Annual Luncheon on Saturday, October 19 at Mount Vernon Canyon Club! Details and registration information are below.

- Enjoy** networking with friends, old and new!
- Enjoy** a delicious gourmet buffet!
- Share** memories from this year's 15 tours, and enjoy a continuous slideshow with photos from these tours.
- 2025 tours will be announced** by Tour Director, Judy Siel, and the tour leaders.
- The recipient of the **Distinguished Service Award** will be honored!

REGISTER TODAY! [Click here](#) to register for the Luncheon.

-Please register and pay online. (All payments must be made online, no payments accepted at the door.)

For further information regarding the luncheon email Mark Lestikow, at mark.lestikow@closetfactory-colorado.com.

Saturday – October 19, 2024

Mt. Vernon Canyon Club

24933 Club House Circle

Golden, Colorado

Cash bar opens @ 11:30 AM; Buffet starts @ 12 noon

\$35.00 per person, Members or Guests

We look forward to seeing you at the Luncheon!!!

The Board of Directors

Mark Lestikow (303) 919-0426 (2024)
President - president@heartcycle.org

Janet Slate (303) 683-6128 (2025)
Assistant Tour Director

Alan Church (303) 489-1789 (2024)
Treasurer

Laura Davis (970) 581-1361 (2024)
Secretary

Cindy Dore (303) 249-3718 (2025)
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Safety Coordinator & Insurance

Rita Kurelja (970) 231-7163 (2025)
Registrar - registrar@heartcycle.org

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Webmaster, Special Projects

Judy Siel (720) 519-9401 (2024)
Tour Director - tourdiretor@heartcycle.org

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Asst. Registrar - registrar@heartcycle.org

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

Barry Siel (303) 434-1947
Newsletter Editor

Tour Director Musings

Janet and I have started pricing, formatting tour descriptions and wading into the website to get our 2025 tours posted and ready for you to view on October 19th. We are seeing a trend towards hotel prices increasing significantly and thus our tour prices will be going up for 2025. Hotel prices usually account for 50-55% of the price you see when registering for a HeartCycle tour. Tour registration for the first five 2025 tours will begin on October 26th and second six will begin on November 2.

A special shout out to the Heart 2 Heart newsletter editor -Barry Siel. He has been doing this volunteer gig since he was on the board of directors in 2008. Back then our newsletter was printed, assembled and mailed to all the members quarterly. Barry took us into the electronic age and with the new website was able to notify HeartCycle members whenever the monthly newsletter was published and available to read online. Sixteen years with so many newsletters completed. Thank You!!

Thank you to all the members who biked with us this past year, the club hosted 15 tours. Thank you to all the great tour leaders who organized and led our 2024 tours. Hope to see you on a tour in 2025!

Judy Siel, Tour Director

Puget Sound Island Hopping 2024

By Karen Johnson

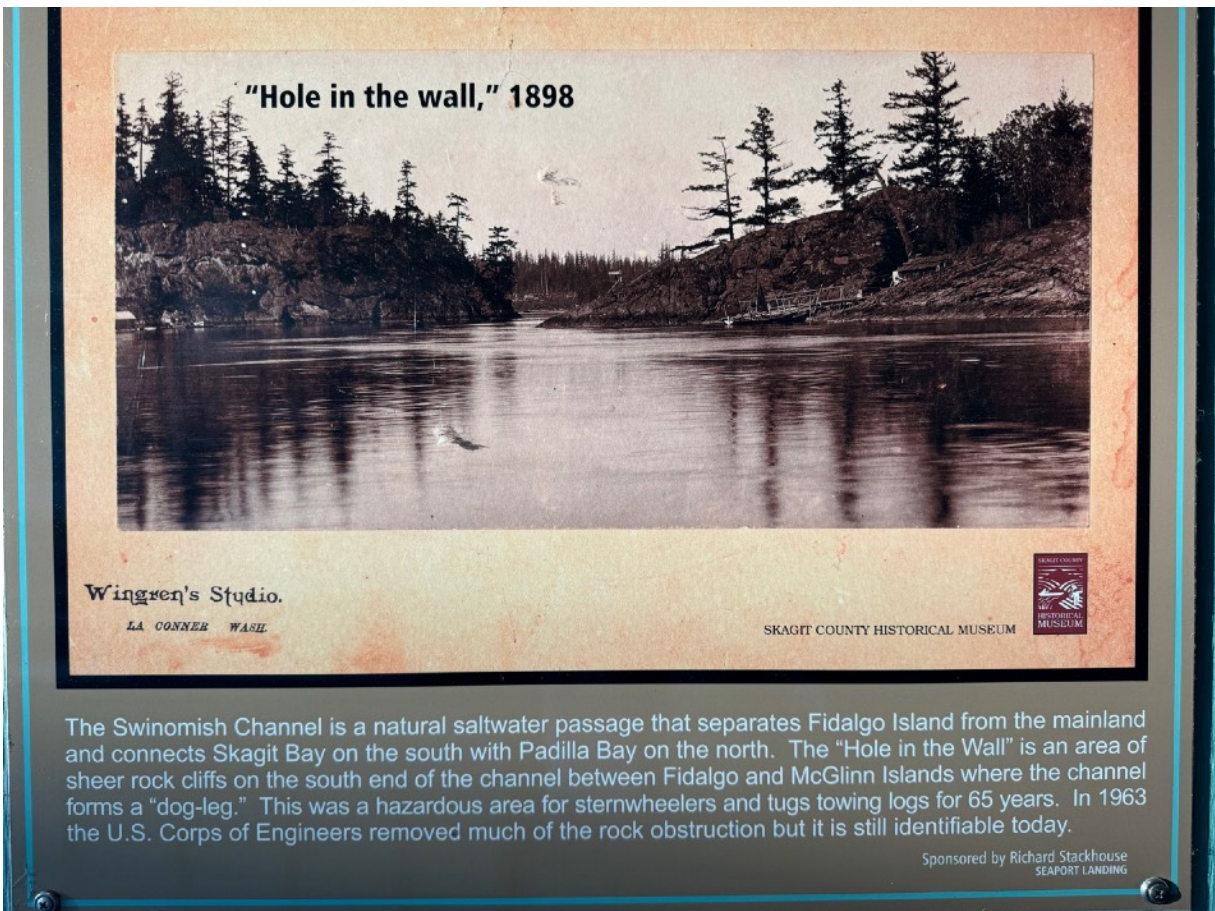
Day 1 Saturday, August 3rd - Orientation

Cyclists from across the country converged in LaConner, Washington on Saturday, August 2nd for our Puget Sound Island Hopping briefing. Our fearless leaders, Helayn Storch and Cindy Alvarez provided us with the week's overview and helpful guidance to navigate the roads along the route as well as recommendations for sights to see. SAG executives extraordinaire, Danna Korak and Martha MacCormak delighted us with promises of delicious snacks and lunches along with witty repartee.

The rest of the evening we roamed around the quaint town of LaConner – great little restaurants, antique and thrift shops, historical museums (quilting museum), creative bike sculptures and wonderful views of the harbor.

LaConner was first known as Swinomish (named for its post office name) and was settled in May 1867 by Alonzo Low. It's location became an ideal harbor along the Swinomish Channel

for ships by 1869. J.S. Conner bought the settlement's trading post and changed the name of the town to LaConner to honor his wife Louisa Ann Conner. The "La" represented her first and middle initials although some assumed there was a French connection.





Day 2– Sunday, August 4 – Skagit Valley Ramble

The cyclists headed out for the backroads and countryside of Skagit Valley on this first day of the tour. The weather was sunny and cool with temperatures topping out in the mid 70s, such as relief to the 90+ degree weather many of us left behind. The relatively flat loop took us to the small communities of Mt. Vernon and Conway. On the bayside we traveled through Bay View and Whitney. Along the way, we came upon dinosaurs and African elephants. With 56 miles under our belts, we all headed back to a nice group dinner in LaConner.



“Head out on the highway. Lookin’ for adventure and whatever comes our way



Amazing wood sculptures, Skagit Vally or Africa?



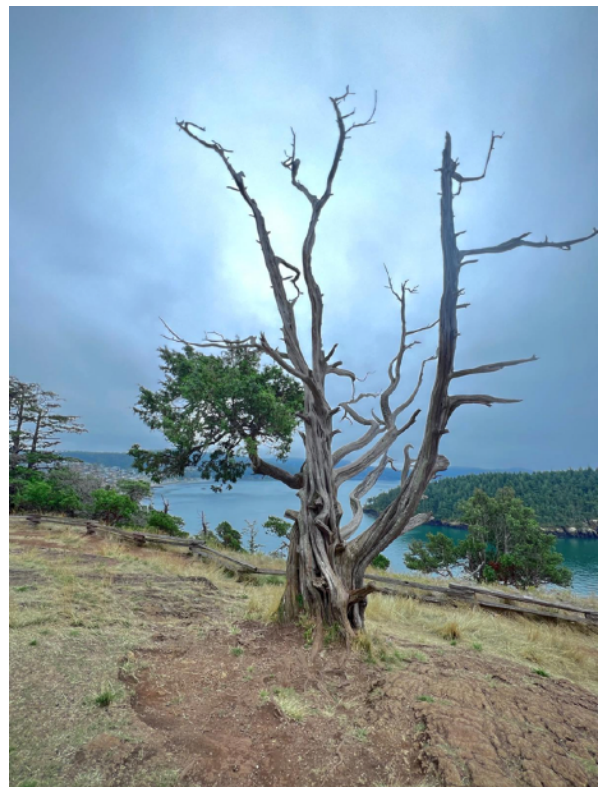
Enjoying a well-deserved lunch break!

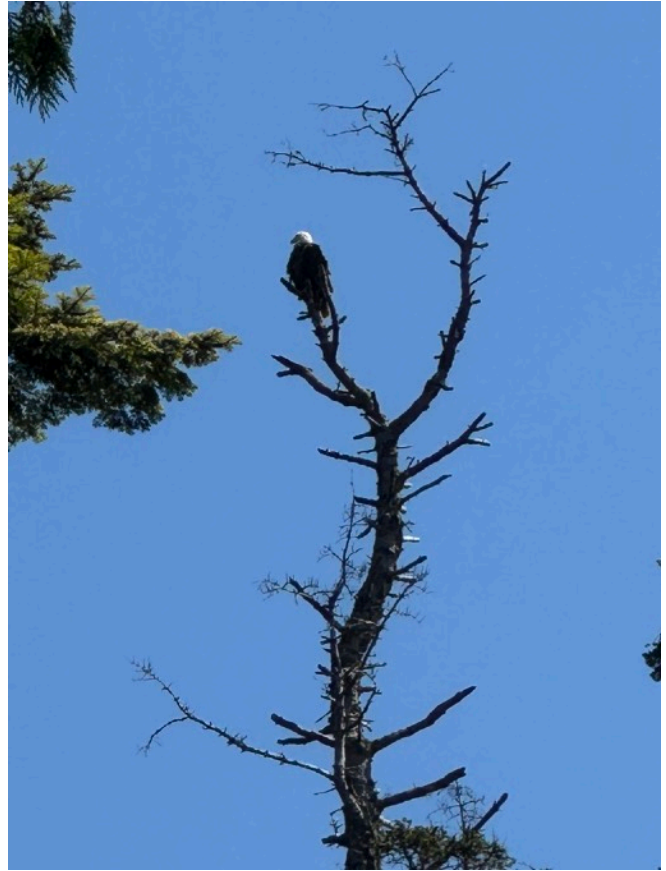


Great group dinner back in LaConner

Day 3 – Monday, August 5 – Chuckanut and the Samish Bay

On day 3, we took off for another fairly long route of 61 miles, traveling north and looping around Lake Samish then west to Chuckanut Road. We were forewarned about the narrow roads but the gorgeous scenery made the route well worth it. We had expansive views of bays and beyond. We were fortunate to see several bald eagles along the route that nest in the area. Some of the group spent the evening “A Drift” in Anacortes at a wonderful restaurant suggested by Paul who regaled us with tales of boatbuilders from around the world who once stayed in Anacortes to produce top-notch sailboats for the America’s cup.





"A Drift" in Anacortes

Day 4 – Tuesday, August 6 – Deception Pass

On Tuesday, the 56 mile route took us around Fidalgo Island. Along the way we crossed over Deception Pass Bridge which links Fidalgo Island to Whidbey Island. Deception Pass State Park is one of the most popular of Washington's state parks with over 4000 acres of beaches, old-growth forests, wildlife and hiking trails. The Deception Pass Bridge is on the National Register of Historic Places which offered expansive views of Skagit Bay. Our rest stop was in beautiful Washington Park. We cycled the 2.2 mile scenic loop within the park where we enjoyed spectacular views of Guemes Channel and Burrows Bay. And we enjoyed ice cream on our return to LaConner.



Deception Pass Bridge



Enjoying ice cream at Lopez Island Creamery on our return to LaConner

Day 5 – Wednesday, August 7th Transfer Day to the islands

This day was our transition day from LaConner to Friday Harbor on San Juan Island. Those with cars moved them to the Anacortes Ferry parking lots and others road their bikes the relatively short (21 miles) distance to the ferry. We boarded and sailed on to Friday Harbor where we settled into the Discovery Inn for the next 4 days.

San Juan Island is 55 square miles with a population of about 6,894. Friday Harbor is the bustling commercial center of the island and the largest town in the islands.



Great Blue Heron fishing as we cycled over a bridge to Anacortes



Boarding the ferry from Anacortes to Friday Harbor



View from the ferry



Glenn and Judy enjoying the views from the ferry

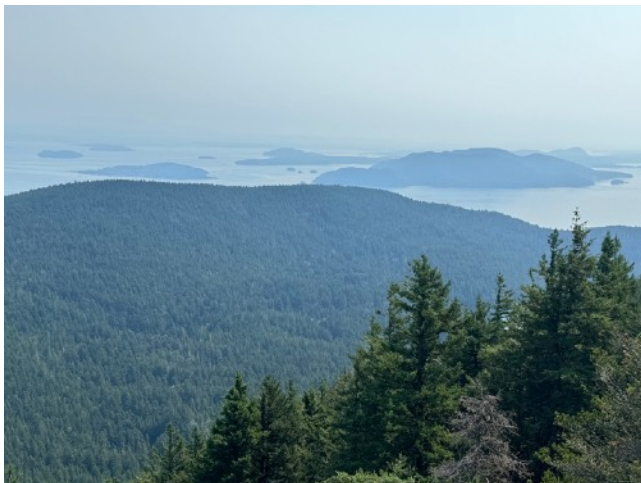


Greeted by deer at Discovery Inn when we checked in

Day 6 – Thursday, August 8th - Orcas Island and Mount Constitution

We traveled by ferry to Orcas Island on day 6. Orcas Island is about 57 square miles with a population of 5,387. The island's horseshoe shape and geographical features make it a natural wonder and a challenge for cyclists – we set our sights on getting to the top of Mount Constitution.

This day's 40 miles may have appeared as "short" but the 4693 feet of climbing made it feel a bit longer. From Moran State Park, we climbed Mount Constitution – 5 miles with an average gradient of 6% with small sections reaching 13%. The panoramic views on the top were epic! We further explored the island with an option to visit East Sound, where many galleries and shops were located. A late afternoon ferry sailed us back to Friday Harbor.



Expansive views



Many switchbacks promised we were soon at the top



Almost to the top, we stopped to enjoy the views (and catch our breaths)



Yes, the summit!



Karen was happy be at the top and climb the tower for the fabulous view



Sweet success for Lori!

Day 7 Friday, August 9th - Lopez Island

An early ferry on day 7 took us to Lopez Island. This island is roughly 30 square miles with a population of 2,350. It is relatively flat compared to other islands in San Juan County. We were blessed with gentle grades and back road farmlands along the 34 mile route. We were lucky to see the horse drawn plow tilling up the farm land that past tours have seen. We visited Spencer Spit State Park and Shark Reef Nature Trail. Those of us birdwatchers were treated to great blue herons, gulls, sandpipers along the shore and eagles sailing above. We returned by ferry to Friday Harbor where we explored the great restaurants and shops in town.

**Day 8 – Saturday, August 10 - San Juan Island exploration**

On our final day, we cycled 47 miles around San Juan and explored many historical sites. We were delighted to see the San Juan Island sculpture garden with poetry and participatory artwork. The English camp and American camp reminded us of the claims made by several countries to this island in years past. The San Juan Island Historical Park offered splendid vistas, saltwater shores, quiet woodlands, orca whales (although most of us didn't see them) and one of the last remaining native prairies in the Puget Sound/Northern Straits region. It was here that in 1859 the United States and Britain nearly went to war, a crisis ignited by the death of a pig. The unfortunate creature was shot by an American settler because it foraged in the garden but the pig was owned by the British, who were so angry, they threatened to evict all the American settlers. British warships gathered off the coast and defiant Americans set up a military camp. For a brief moment, it seemed the nations might go to war over a pig killed for eating potatoes. Fortunately, this conflict had only one casualty: the pig.



**Sunrise****Spinning wheels sculpture****American Camp****Sculpture Garden****Bike sculpture**

Day 9 – Sunday, August 11 – Farewell and Final Ferry Ride

We bid a fond farewell to our new cycling friends and promised to see our local friends in the following weeks as we each embarked on our travels home. Our last ferry home brought a round of applause for our award winner, Magary, for his cheerful disposition even after taking a few wrong turns.

The cyclists were delighted with the great weather and the spectacular views. The stellar leadership by Helayn and Cindy and grub engineers, Danna and Martha made everything run smoothly and seamlessly.



Last ferry ride



Danna, Cindy, Helayn and Martha, our wonderful leaders



Thumbs up for a great week in the Puget Sound and Island Hopping!

During the week and on the last ferry ride, folks shared some of their thoughts about the tour:

“Everyone on the tour was so incredibly nice. What a pleasure to ride with this group.”

“The scenery and weather were perfection.”

“So fun to do this tour with new friends from around the country and friends from back home.”

“We had very little “blips” and it made rides each day filled with fun and excitement.”

“The leadership group was wonderful and they clearly put much work into the planning and execution of this very special trip.”

“HeartCycle hit this one out of the park! I’ve enjoyed many trips with them and I’ll be back!”

Over Hill and Dale, NW Vermont

By Richard Shoenfeld

Over Hill and Dale in Vermont is now complete. Leaders Jim Bethell and Gail Golderman faced some challenges due to recent heavy rains and flooding that caused significant road damage. There were several route changes to improve safety on this tour but still faced a few construction zones which were relatively minor inconveniences thanks to continued scouting and updating of the daily routes.



Waiting for the ferry



World's shortest ferry route

Day-One was a relatively flat ride heading north from our hotel in South Burlington to South Hero Island in Lake Champlain. There is a former railroad line that has become the Colchester Causeway and is shared by pedestrians and cyclists. The site of a former railway swing bridge leaves a gap of about 100 feet and is served by what may be the shortest ferry boat route in North America. The entire ferry route is 200 feet and takes about 90 seconds. There were great views of Lake Champlain and sailboats taking advantage of a strong breeze and several of us spotted black minks darting about the rocks on the side of the causeway.



Regular cast of characters

The second day took us from Burlington to Waterbury over our first real Vermont climbs. The forecast for rain had us shorten the trip to just over 26 miles and about 1900 ft of climbing. We arrived at the Best Western early and left our bikes on the property's covered bridge. A few of us enjoyed the pool and the hot tub and listened to the roar of the afternoon rain on the glass roof of the pool area. We had a group dinner at the hotel.



Vermont Farm

Day-Three started a bit cool with a 10% chance of rain. About twenty minutes after leaving the hotel and heading south to Middlebury the cold rain started. With temperatures in the low 50's and a soaking rain, it was a very uncomfortable riding day, and a few riders took advantage of the SAG vehicles. The rain stopped by late morning, and we even had some sunshine for the arrival in Middlebury. The Middlebury Inn is in the center of this college town and the following day was a scheduled rest day. Several riders walked to the laundromat, others went to the Woodchuck cider facility to check the quality of its hard cider and others visited the museum and the local shops. Middlebury has an assortment of enticing restaurants for evening meals.



Waterfall in Middlebury



**Quality Control testing at Woodchuck cider
outside of Middlebury**



Snack time!

**Local attractions****Evening walk after dinner in Middlebury**

The ride from Middlebury to Bandon was spectacular, crossing several covered bridges, sprawling farms with weathered barns and silos, and quintessential Vermont scenery including challenging climbs and fast descents alongside gurgling mountain streams. After 45 scenic (and hilly) miles and over 4100 ft of climbing, the Brandon Inn was our destination for the next two evenings. The site of the Brandon Inn has been a pub and inn for well over 200 years. The current building was constructed in 1901. And although we thought the Middlebury Inn had an antique elevator, the Brandon Inn has the oldest operating elevator in Vermont and was installed in 1906. Bikes were stored in a nearby barn on the property.

**Another Vermont farm****The Brandon Inn**

Day-Six was a “lollipop” loop heading south past the Marble Museum and the marble cliffs, then back north to Brandon. Vermont is a major supplier of Puget Sound Island Hopping 2024

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Group Photo with guest Dog



Reflections on the tour



Our leaders

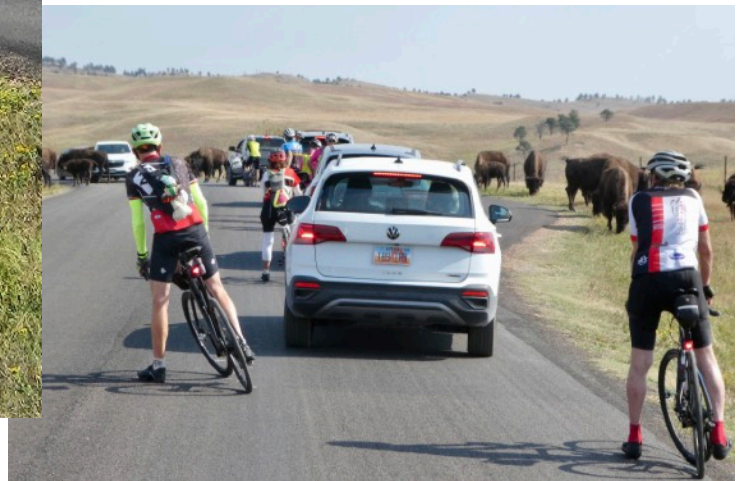
Black Hills of South Dakota

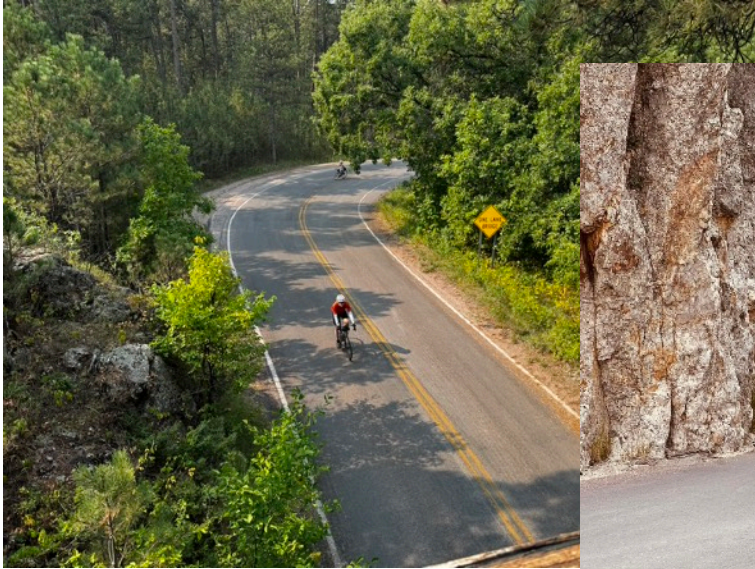
By Steve Parker

An exciting rainstorm greeted the group that arrived at Custer, SD on the first Saturday in September for a marvelous Tour of the Black Hills (Paha Sapa) capably organized by Barry and Judy Siel and supported by veteran SAG drivers, Kathleen Schindler and Mayoma Pendergast. The rain cancelled a warmup ride, but cleared the air for a week of adventure. Every day was a different route and we were challenged with substantially serious climbing. Riding through several Bison herds was fascinating along with the multitude of other creatures. Creatures observed included Big Horn Sheep, a Badger, Wild Turkeys, Feral Donkeys and the usual array of domestic animals. We enjoyed the wide array of geologic diversity from the Needles Loop to several lakes along our rides and a healthy and vibrant forest. The National Monuments and the Custer State Park were spectacular. We had ridden through the area years ago, but the various routes gave us a splendid variety viewing such an amazing geography. Thanks for the capable and interesting leadership of Judy and Barry and the support of Kathleen and Mayoma. HeartCycle is blessed to be in such good hands.



South Dakota traffic jams!







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
 Tina Vessels, tina.vessels@gmail.com

Springtime in the South Bay Area

Campbell, California

May 19 - 25 Status: Complete
 6 days, Advanced \$1,900.00
 Carol Fredrickson, swmcarol@yahoo.com
 Janet Slate, 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

Explore the Door in '24

De Pere, Wisconsin

June 2 - June 9 Status: Complete
 8 days, Intermediate \$2,000.00
 Jim Bethell, bethell.jim@verizon.net
 Cindy Dore, 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
 Helayn Storch, helaynstorch@hotmail.com

Bike & Barge Beautiful Belgium

Bruges, Belgium

July 20 - 27, 2024 Status: Complete
 7 days, Easy/Int. \$2,150.00
 Rita Kurelja, ritakurelja@hotmail.com

Underground Railroad Year 1

Mobile, Alabama

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

Basalt & Aspen - Road & Gravel Tour

Basalt, Colorado

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

Balkan Quartet

Tirana, Albania

May 17 - 31, 2024 Status: Complete
 14 days, Int./Adv. \$2,600.00
 Lisa Evans, lceski@comcast.net

Puget Sound Island Hopping

La Conner, Washington

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

Colorado HeartCycle 2024 Tours

Over Hill & Dale, NW Vermont

Burlington, Vermont

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

West Virginia

Charleston, West Virginia

Sept. 21 - 28 Status: Complete
 7 days, Advanced \$1,600.00
 Jim Schroeder, jimmyschweb@gmail.com
 Kurt Arehart, klarehart@gmail.com

Tuscany

Florence, Italy

Sept. 5 - 18, 2024 Status: Complete
 13 days, Intermediate \$3,550.00
 Cindy Dore, cdorecycle@gmail.com

Le Monastere in Southern France

Limoux, France

Sept. 28 - Oct. 5 Status: Complete
 7 days, Int./Adv. \$3,100.00
 Guy Kelley, guy.kelley@comcast.net

Black Hills of South Dakota

Custer, South Dakota

Sept. 7 - 13 Status: Complete
 6 days, Int./Adv. \$1,600.00
 Judy Siel judy.siel@gmail.com
 Barry Siel, bsiel03@gmail.com

Colorado HeartCycle 2025 Tours

South Island, New Zealand

Christchurch, New Zealand

March 6 - 22 Status: Open
 16 days, Int./Adv. \$5,100.00
 Janet Slate, jslate@ultrasys.net

Randonnée en Dordogne, France

Bordeaux, France

June 1 - 13 Status: Waitlist
 11 days, Intermediate \$3,500.00
 Fred Yu, frederickyu@comcast.net

Shikoku Pilgrimage, Japan

Koyasan, Japan

April 6 - 18 Status: Waitlist
 11 days, Intermediate \$4,800.00
 Tina Vessels, tina.vessels@gmail.com

***Remaining 2025 tours available to view on October 19th after the annual meeting with registration starting one week later.**