

# Heart to Heart



## **Mini Tour Challenge Series** **Sheridan Garcia, Leader**

The HeartCycle Mini Tour Challenge Series is an offering of two separate long weekend tours approximately one month apart the first weekends in July and August 2011. Each mini tour will be priced independently, and fully supported with a SAG vehicle and fabulous organic and non-gluten food selections, and of course, our favorite cycling “junk food.” Pricing published on web site January 2011. The first mini tour is a Rocky Mountain cycling high experience; the other is what I call, “smell the roses.”

### **July 1-3, 2011 NEVER SUMMER CHALLENGE**

Meet and begin ride at 10AM on Friday, July 1; final hotel night, Sunday, July 3

The first mini-tour, the Never Summer, begins and ends in Granby, Colorado, 3-days 216-miles, most of which is climbing 4 passes: Willow Creek Pass, Muddy Pass, Rabbit Ears Pass and Gore Pass. We'll top off each day with hot tubing to unwind those climbing legs, and great camaraderie at group dinners. This tour includes 3 nights hotel and 3 group dinners.

### **August 5-8, 2011 CHAMA “SMELL THE ROSES” CHALLENGE**

Meet at 6 PM on Friday, Aug 5; begin ride on Aug 6; final hotel night, Sunday, Aug 7

The second mini-tour challenge, the Chama Challenge, is a pleasantly paced 3-day 216-mile “smell the roses” tour that begins and ends in Alamosa, CO. We will venture over 3 passes: La Manga / Cumbres Passes, and magnificent Wolf Creek Pass. There will be time to enjoy cycling the picturesque Los Caminos Antiques Byway or take the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad from Antonito, CO into Chama, NM. In Chama, we will “take over” the charming Chama Station Inn on main street and within walking distance from the Cumbres and Toltec Railroad Station for the convenience of those who ride the narrow gauge. We'll enjoy happy hour at the Inn's flowering garden and a group dinner. In Pagosa Springs, we will relax and revitalize at the Healing Waters Resort & Spa, a small and nicely appointed hotel with its intimate therapeutic mineral water pool, and a wellness center to offer bodywork and massage, herbal body wraps, and aromatherapy. We'll enjoy happy hour before and after soaking, with dinner on your own. Tour includes 3 nights hotel and 2 group dinners.

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## Notes from the Board

HeartCycle held its Annual Meeting and Luncheon on October 16 at the Mt. Vernon Country Club in Golden, Colorado with about 70 HeartCycle members attending. Prior to the meeting about 20 riders enjoyed the traditional training season wrap-up ride through Genesee and up Lookout Mountain.

A preview of the proposed tours for 2011 was presented with highlights given by the tour leaders that were present. The 2011 tours are now listed on the website with several tours open for registration. HeartCycle members will be notified by email as additional tours open for registration.

Jeff Messerschmidt had lots of classic HeartCycle merchandise for sale, including a few gems that were priceless (i.e. free).

Elections of Board Members saw the re-election of John Steele, Harvey Hoogstrate, Jay Wuchner, Rich Crocker and Sheridan Garcia as well as new comer Chris Matthews.



The speaker was Dan Grunig, Executive Director of Bicycle Colorado. He spoke about Bicycle Colorado's "bring bikes to schools program" and other timely road issues.

It was a great ending to another wonderful year of HeartCycle touring.

## Tony's to Tony's to Tony's to Tony's Ride

By Dana Lestikow

Every morning Mark Lestikow, CEO of Closet Factory, goes to the Original Tony's Meat Market to get his cup of coffee from friendly bakery staff and knows most of the managers by name (trust us, the coffee's worth it!). Needless to say, Mark has always enjoyed Tony's, and as the family owned market expanded its reach and opened stores in Denver, Castle Pines and Littleton, a dream began to develop in Mark's mind...



**Mark and Polly pose with Tony and the manager of the Broadway store, Stuart**

The dream was to ride a loop on a bicycle hitting every Tony's location and to take a little time to experience the cuisine at each one. This idea stewed for a couple of years until Mark was fortunate enough to meet the H.R. director for Tony's. Fate? We think so!



He pitched the idea to her and the next day received an e-mail saying that she loved the idea and wanted to make it happen. With Colorado HeartCycle, Tony's and Closet Factory on board as sponsors, it was time to get the word out.



Colorado HeartCycle notified their members, Tony's reached out to its stellar following, and Mark personally recruited several people.



**In preparation to eat their way through 72 miles of Tony's deliciousness!**

Between these efforts, they reached the cap of 55 riders in 4 days!! And yet, the interest kept coming...



By the day of the ride arrived, 70 riders had signed up and arrived at the Tony's on Broadway to begin this 72 mile ride.



**Riders enjoy a pre-ride breakfast at Tony's**

A full Continental breakfast gave the riders the energy they needed and off they rode. Their first stop was the Original Tony's off Dry Creek Rd. Previously a 7-11, Tony and his wife sold their house in order to buy the property and open an "old-fashioned butcher shop with counter service and sawdust on the floor.



The riders then proceeded south to the Tony's at Castle Pines for some well earned refreshments including wraps and a variety of delicious deserts. After fueling up, we were ready to tackle the longest leg of the tour from Castle Pines to Tony's in Littleton, by which time the weather was warming up and the riders were ready for some cold drinks, including cold

cans of Bing, a cherry flavored, carbonated energy drink.



Then it was back to Original Tony's for great lunch of pasta and salads and of course great deserts. Several people also took did some taste testing of the barley beverages or indulged in a soothing massage.



Overall, the ride was a huge success thanks to the support of our wonderful sponsors and the amazing treatment at all of the Tony's locations.

All of the participants are already excited about making next year's ride even bigger than this year and possibly adding a charitable aspect to it as well. A huge thank you to all who helped and participated in making Mark's dream come true!

## Fireworks of Fall – Notches of New Hampshire

By Janet Reilly

Our gathering day in Concord was sunny, warm and summer like. Tour leaders, sags and other early arrivals went for a stroll at the farmer's market and crafts fair in shorts and T-shirts: no arm warmers and shoe covers necessary! Alas, we did not have such fine weather for riding, but this did not deter our group of HeartCycle riders. We climbed mountain passes (notches, in this part of the country) and rolled through river valleys in search of challenge, camaraderie, and wildlife as well as sun. Ultimately, we found warmth sitting beside fireplaces, drinking hot chocolate and enjoying the companionship of other participants.

Day 1 – Lake Region Concord to Center Harbor  
– 65 miles 3100 ft. of climbing

In light rain and cool temperatures, we headed north toward Lake Winnepesaukee. When the group arrived at the sag stop at Canterbury Shaker Village, there was a dog show, already in progress. Many breeds of dogs were led around the riders, making it appear that visitors were required to have either a dog or a bike to be admitted to the grounds that day! At our second sag stop, the rain continued, but did not obscure the serene beauty of Little Squam Lake (setting for the movie: “On Golden Pond”). Most riders ate lunch aboard the van.



One band of free spirits had found their own way to go, adding extra miles as they went. When the sags discovered that these riders “were temporarily misplaced” Don went to find them, leaving Deb under a tree limb. She was joyous to see the last riders roll into the park, followed by the van before she and what was left of lunch were soaked through! We set out again, over a covered bridge, wishing that all the roads were covered. Finally, we descended Bean Road to Lake Winnepesaukee, and were relieved to reach the Center Harbor Inn, take hot showers and enjoy our evening meal at the Corner House Inn.



Day 2 – White Mountains - Center Harbor to Lincoln – 60 miles – 4100 ft. of climbing

We left the Inn and continued north through the White Mountains National Forest to climb up and over Sawyer Highway into Lincoln/Woodstock. Once again we started the day in drizzly rain, so when we came to a “real” rest stop on the highway, we went in as much to warm up and dry off as to use the facilities. As we were leaving, we apologized to staff for getting mud on their floor, and a laughing attendant waved us on our way, assuring us that “I have a mop, and I am not afraid to use it!” We rode on, scanning the horizon for a missile on display in Warner, New Hampshire which was



our landmark for the lunch stop. Yes, dear reader, there really was a missile – relocated by townspeople from Huntsville, Alabama so that school children could see what one looked like. Next to the missile was a gazebo where Deb and Don had set up lunch – but the cold and wet amongst us opted for a nearby restaurant serving hot soup! We left the missile behind, standing guard, and proceeded onward and upward. Few cars passed us, which was welcome and possibly due to the sign along the way which read “pavement ends.” Fortunately, the sign referred to a short gap in the pavement, and not “the end of the road!” The descent to Lincoln was fast, but everyone arrived safe at the Comfort Inn. Some of the group made it to Woodstock later that evening and enjoyed fine craft ales at the Woodstock Inn & Brewery.



Day 3 – Three Notches -- Lincoln to Gorham – 68 miles – 4200 ft. of climbing

Our third day of riding rewarded us threefold: great climbs, thrilling downhills and weather mild enough to conduct our evening meeting outdoors, surrounded by the majestic mountains of the Presidential Range. It was cool, windy but exhilarating at our sag stop at the top of the Kancamagus Highway – and the view was sunny and spectacular. Bear Notch, the second climb was perhaps the most beautiful.

Our lunch stop at the covered bridge at Jackson, just before our final ascent up Pinkham Notch provided entertainment as well as good food. We watched in mixed amusement and fear as two workmen proceeded to climb up and saw down a tree surrounded by power lines, traffic and people (us). We determined that our chances for survival were better cycling uphill than standing still – and got on our way. The final descent into Gorham was well worth the long climb up.



Day 4 – Heart of the White Mountains -- Gorham to Littleton – 65 miles – 3200 ft.

On the following day, we went back over Pinkham Notch before tackling Crawford Notch on our way to Littleton for two nights. Crawford was the most challenging climb of the tour. The view back down the valley was incredible, but few riders took time to look as they fought wind, cold, rain and steep terrain. No-one missed the best sight of all, however, which was our van waiting for us at the crest of the climb! The sags said they enjoyed seeing the relief on our faces when they directed each arriving group of semi-frozen cyclists to the welcoming fireplace for thawing frozen portions of their anatomy while eating lunch! We were all glad to reach our lodging at the Historic Thayer's Inn, but one rider captured it best

when he said “the rain stopped, the sun came out and I thought I heard birds singing, but then realized it was just my chain...” What our hotel lacked in some modern amenities such as an elevator it made up for in history, charm, a cupola, literary fame and allegedly, ghosts. More tangibly, it housed Bailiwicks Restaurant, which many of us frequented and enjoyed.

#### Day 5 – Option Day Littleton

The forecast for our scheduled option/rest day called for rain all day so many of the group decided to tackle mountains of laundry rather than the planned climb. As it turned out, this was the most beautiful day of the trip. Some riders got out for short rides, and one optimistic couple did the entire scheduled route. Everyone had a chance to explore the village and its shops, eateries and a working flour mill. Some of us opted for lunch at the mill restaurant, sitting outside on the deck above the river.



#### Day 6 – Connecticut River -- Littleton to West Lebanon – 70 Miles – 3064 ft. of climbing

This was a nearly perfect day of riding on mostly quiet, scenic back roads, through picturesque small towns, over covered bridges and with lovely river views. Only the final miles

to our hotel reminded us that we were still living in the 21st century with strip malls, highways and traffic. Our morning sag stop at the Brick Store in Bath (oldest general store in the United States) included a trip down memory lane listening to oldies but goodies “At the Hop” an old time record shop and ice cream parlor next door to “the Brick.” We later had lunch at the Roby Dairy (a working farm) which sold “fresh from the cows” milk products as well as donuts prepared for us by Mrs. Roby! That evening we warmed ourselves by the fireplace at the Fireside Inn, and quenched our thirst at the Seven Barrel Brew pub.



#### Day 7 – Chocolate -- West Lebanon to Keene – 64 miles – 2700 ft. of climbing

Fortunately, traffic was easier on our departure from the Fireside on Saturday morning than upon our arrival on Friday afternoon, and we were on quiet roads in a mile and a half. Our first challenge of the day was navigating the roundabout in Claremont, followed by the climb up Broad Street out of the sag stop, but from there to lunch we enjoyed “easy” riding by the village greens of classic New England towns. At lunch we encamped at the town square in Walpole (home of Ken Burns, the documentary producer) adjacent to Burdick’s Chocolates! Some riders indulged in hot chocolate, others

tried samples and then sent some home to pet-sitters and loved ones. From lunch we climbed again to stay off the main road. Our twisty, tree-covered path led us beside beautiful homes and bucolic scenery. That night we all shared a family-style group meal at Lucas in Keene. The salad, pasta and desserts were followed by an awards ceremony and songs presented by our sags. Deb and Don bestowed the following: The "Moose Plop" (maple rock candy) award to Doug for excellence in keeping the SAG's entertained with his daily mime routines; The "Recycling Scepter" (roll of recycled aluminum foil) to Jeff M. for being the King of Recycling all week; and The "Early Birds" (matching bird statuettes) to Geoff and Rich for being so helpful when they were consistently the first ones to arrive at every stop. Songs performed that evening included "The Tires they are A 'Changin' " in honor of Phil and Tom, for all the tires they had to change during the week and "When Fall Comes to New England" written by Cheryl Wheeler.

Day 8 – Monadnock Region -- Keene to Concord – 57 Miles – 2400 ft. of climbing

On our final day in the Granite State, we posed for group pictures at the arched bridge near Stoddard, built of this stone. After the photo op and morning sag stop, we headed east through the Contoocook River Valley on a 60 mile route over rolling hills back to our starting point in Concord. In the town of Contoocook, we stopped for lunch at an historic train station. In

addition to the restored station house and train, there was a covered railroad bridge with plenty of clearance for the big engines that once passed through it! Beside the bridge was another inviting gazebo where we enjoyed the last of Elinor's cookies. Fortunately, the weather was clear and we did not need the shelter it provided. The only showers that day were those at the hotel at end of ride! Back at the Holiday Inn, bikes were packed for the trip home, or the next adventure. Goodbyes were said to old friends and new. We did not see a lot of sun, or any moose, but we did see spectacular scenery and Doug saw two bears! We all enjoyed Elinor's home baked cookies as well as locally produced ales, chocolates, milk and music by our own troubadours, Deb & Don.

Hope to see you all again, somewhere along the road...



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