

DATES EVENTS**Dates Spring Camping Trip June 4, 5, 6 Tyler State Park**

Don't forget the Spring/Summer Campout!! Juanita and Roane Logan will be hosting the annual campout at Tyler State Park.. The route Saturday can be 30 52 or 62 miles, with the famed "beast" is on the 62-mile route. A 40-mile ride on Sunday around Lake Hawkins will include a stop for breakfast along the way. Tyler State Park has a nice lake adjacent to our campsite for swimming or floating afterward. Look for the camping reservations form at campsite area 5 (108 through 116) or the Comfort Inn in Lindale. Questions call or email 972-620-1882 or rlogan@southwestbank.com.

RAY ROBERTS TRAILWAY RIDE

Sunday June 13 - 8:00 am Ray Roberts Greenbelt Parking Lot

Meet at the Ray Roberts Greenbelt parking lot on Hwy 380 approximately 22 miles west of McKinney and 3 miles east of Denton. The ride will be about 32 miles. The first 10 miles are on a hard packed crushed gravel trail meandering alongside a river greenbelt area alive with animals, birds, and a few other outdoorsey types. You might even see a couple of turkeys (other than Herb and me). This pretty trail is suitable for most large 700-26/28 and 26X1.25 and up tires. This type tire is cheap, so if you don't have them, invest a few bucks. Bikes/Tandems with 700 tires and dropped bars are common on this trail. The next 2.5 miles are on paved FM 455 with two good climbs, one is to the top of a scenic overlook of Ray Roberts Lake. Then a ride into the Isle du Bois Unit of Ray Roberts State Park for 7 miles on a trail (concrete) and park roads. Then it's back the way we came to the original trailhead.

Trail/Park admission I believe is \$3.00 per person (honor system-no change made). There are lots of restrooms and water, but no food. After the ride we will eat at the Prairie House on Hwy 380, just east of the trailhead. Info: R. D. or Lynn Vanderslice. Call or email Home 972-771-5465, office 972-771-5465, therwflash@msn.com

July 2004 DATES-LINE Schedule:

Mailed by: June 26, 2004

Notices & Articles due by: June 23, 2004

Tour of the Stars and [most] Upscale North Dallas Neighborhoods, AKA an Urban Tour of North Dallas – AKA "That DATES Ride with the Longest Name."

Sunday June 20, start by 8:30am

Join Lee Wilson & Beckie White behind Kohl's, at the NE corner of Preston & Frankford – north end of The Arbors shopping center (mapsco 5G). Ride 31, 40, or 47 miles – all routes meet at the official "rest stop" at La Madeleine in University Park, where you can enjoy coffee and a croissant. Just near the finish we'll stop during the ride at "John's Backyard Grill" (one mile from the finish) to enjoy one of John's famous creations, such as the "Singin' The Blues Burger" or a "California Chicken, Dude." Continue to relax after the ride at Lee & Beckie's house for snacks and beverages on the patio. This is not just another urban ride, it's an interesting look at North Dallas. We'll ride past the homes of well known personalities as we crisscross an area with the highest concentration of disposable income in the country. Why drive to the country to ride when Dallas has all this to offer? Learn what we mean when we say we're going for a "ride around the lake." You'll pedal through well known neighborhoods and at other times not even believe you're still in the city. Who says Dallas is flat? RSVP or more info email cyclist_lee@earthlink.net or call 972-977-9686

After Cow Creek Country Classic Party

George & Ginger Cole's – Saturday, June 26

The Cole's invite you to a pool party at their home at 207 Rock Springs Court in Waxahachie after the Cow Creek Country Classic. Lunch will be served about noon or whenever you finish the ride. Cole's will have meat, iced tea & soft drinks. Bring a side dish or dessert to share.

George & Ginger have a lovely pool and patio area and are wonderful hosts. The Cow Creek Country Classic is a very popular and enjoyable area payride. This is an opportunity to enjoy a good ride then enjoy lunch and playing in the pool in the company of your fellow DATES. Bring your swimming togs and toys and come on out and have a great day.

Please RSVP to George or Ginger at 972-937-2440 or gngcole@sbcglobal.net

RIDE REPORTS

SWTR 2004

Contributed by Warren Casteel

Nice roads, beautiful scenery, friendly people, and smooth organization. TxCATS, of the Austin area, did a superb job with the 2004 Southwest Tandem Rally. It was held, as five years ago, at T bar M Ranch in New Braunfels. This is a great place for such an event, with varied routes available in all directions, plus a facility that suits us to a "T".

After monitoring the weather all week, we decided to skip work on Friday, and drive straight to New Braunfels so that we could get the ice cream ride in – worried that we might not be able to ride on Saturday. After checking into our spacious 2 bedroom condo, we hopped on the bike for a ride to Natural Bridge Caverns. This was a nice little 27 mile ride on moderately hilly roads – OK, I admit it, we tried the granny a couple of times, and found that A.) It wasn't working quite right, or B.) we just don't know how to shift to it due to lack of use! After that pleasant feeling of a jammed chain in mid pedal stroke, and severe words from stoker extraordinaire Audre, we decided to practice a bit. The next two efforts led to chain drop. We adjusted at the ice cream stop, and pretty much solved the problem – by grinding out the hills in the middle ring!

The happy hour and dinner (Mexican food better than most Dallas restaurants) were quite good – quite possibly the best meal I have ever had at a tandem rally.

The next morning was "interesting". Missy Douthit started the talk about the routes, and at that precise moment lightning and a downpour started. Instead of dashing to the bikes, we listened to a presentation from Cycle Provence regarding cycling in France. Plus, Bike Friday demonstrated their bicycles in the indoor tennis court area. In the late morning the rain let up, and a few brave souls took off. Many of us drove to Greune Hall for lunch. We had a good box lunch in the historic building – the oldest dance hall in Texas – hosted by Bill & Juanita Magnuson (Missy Douthit's parents). By this time Audre was determined to not ride in rain, on wet roads, in the cold, so I was relegated to my single bike. Rick & Kay Watson, and Roan and Juanita Logan and I had a very nice ride on River Road, which is a beautiful trip – so nice that we did it in both directions! Arriving back at Greune Hall, we were forced to sample what it had to offer – a few beers and some great live music. We were an odd mix of bicycle Spandex mixed in with jeans and boots!

The evening meal of Italian food was another success preceded by another happy hour. Thanks to all who provided the door prizes for the rally. Bike Friday brought several goodies, Cycle Provence gave t-shirts away. Special thanks to Rick Gurney of Plano Cycling and Fitness, who provided a large number of door prizes. We should all support the bike shops that support us!

Sunday morning was as beautiful as Saturday morning was gloomy. The temperature was crisp, the sun bright, and a bit of wind to make things fun! It was a perfect end to a well planned and produced event. TxCATS should be congratulated for running such a well organized event. Thanks, Austin Crew!

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Sign up for DATES Email Distribution List

Receive up-to-the-minute information about scheduled & impromptu rides and other events and matters of interest to cyclists in general and tandem riders in particular. Go to web page groups.yahoo.com/group/DATES1 and click on "Join This Group" in the upper right corner of the panel, then click on "Sign Up Now" to go to the sign up page.

If you need assistance in signing up, e-mail Warren Casteel at warren@casteelsign.com.

Ride of Silence A Disquieting Experience by Colleen Hering

More than 2,500 cyclists turned out at White Rock Lake for the second Ride of Silence organized by Chris Phelan. The ride was prompted by the death of Larry Schwartz in 2003, but is intended to memorialize all cyclists who have been injured or killed in bicycle-to-motor vehicle incidents. The print and TV media were there to record the somber event to help raise awareness about the dangers of cycling and to educate the public about sharing the road.

Because parking was limited at Tee Pee Hill, many participants parked at different locations and rode to the start. Some cyclists sported black arm bands to honor those killed and others wore red bands to indicate they had been injured or harassed by motorists. At 7:00 p.m. hushes spread through the crowd as someone began to speak on a bullhorn. We were too far back in the lineup to comprehend all but one message. "Look at those around you. Some of you won't be here next year." The point was unmistakable.

The sound of toe clips locking into pedals echoed as we started to slowly roll forward. It was reminiscent of the Hotter 'n Hell mass start before we the advantage of the tandem start. We had to scoot along at first, then we were able to ride a few yards before we turned right out of the parking lot and hit the first hill. Due to the accordion affect, there was a lot of stopping and scooting, again. The tandems had an especially difficult uphill restart.

The mass of bikes began to spread out in comfortable proximity and we enjoyed a brief time of relaxed riding on the west side of the lake. As we approached the Mockingbird Bridge, we tunneled down and squeezed into the narrow lane. From there the ride zigzagged to accommodate roadblocks through the Yacht Club and Bath House areas. I was impressed that no one called out positions or warnings. Everyone used hand signals to warn of lane changes and slowing.

The east side of the lake is plagued with potholes and cracks wide enough to lose a tire. Consequently, bikes were weaving to miss the hazards as well as fellow cyclists. I kept my left foot unclipped much of the time just in case, I didn't dare take my hand off the handle bars to reach for my water bottle. It was like driving during rush hour on Central Expressway—slowing for the pileups, then speeding up to fill the gaps. Just ahead of us, one cyclist dodging a pothole, weaved into the back wheel of a bike ahead of him. His spokes locked up into her sprocket. I whispered, "no, no!" under my breath in an attempt to will them into safety. Both managed to stop simultaneously without falling. The only words I heard

spoken during the entire event were his apology and her forgiveness. I found it ironic that a ride intended to memorialize killed and injured cyclists due to street incidents was held in a location fraught with road hazards. But upon reflection, a road without hazards is nonexistent. The mandated silence, therefore, seemed served two purposes—to reflect upon those individuals whom we honored and to facilitate an atmosphere for concentration.

Once around the lake, we approached Tee Pee Hill again and turned right into the road that leads to the parking lot. To my surprise, cyclists had lined the roadway on both sides, perpendicular to the curb and facing each other. We took our place in line, as did those arriving behind us. It was the sight and silence that brought the full impact of our purpose for being there. We stood for several quiet minutes, reverent and somewhat awestruck over the sheer number of us. We were bound together by a shared interest, purpose, and sense of loss. With a mounting possibility that we might suffer the same fate as our fallen friends, we are determined to continue sharing the road, although with more trepidation in recent years. There is a hope that we will cosmically turn the odds in our favor that we will be counted as participants in this memorial ride rather than a statistic on the toll of dead and injured.

All riders having returned to Tee Pee Hill, Chris Phelan, in his distinctive black and white striped shirt, rode through the pathway with a slight smile and a thumbs up. The waiting cyclists returned the thumbs-up as he passed through the line of cyclists to the end. Everyone applauded as they began to disperse denoting the end of the event.

We left with a strong sense of camaraderie and a hope that our participation will help heal the continuing adversarial relationship between motorists and cyclists. Larry would be proud. Happy (and safe) Trails!

2004 Southwest Tandem Rally

by Mark & Debbie Livingood
Introduction by Kevin Vinson

The following is a write up of SWTR 2004 that was kindly submitted to the Tandem & Hobbs forum by Mark Livingood. Linda and I had the pleasure of meeting Mark & Debbie Livingood at the 2002 Southern Tandem Rally in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi.

Mark and Debbie are a wonderful couple who are avid cyclists (including motorcycles, mountain bikes and tandems). Mark is probably one of the most knowledgeable cyclists I have ever met. Mark was kind enough to give me permission to submit his write up to the DATES-Line Newsletter.

Day-by-Day, Mark & Debbie Livingood:

Friday: The skies looked a bit threatening for Friday early on, but blue skies with towering white clouds and a healthy breeze prevailed in the afternoon. Our Atlanta contingent rode into New Braunfels for lunch and then back to the "ranch" for the start of the 27mi "warm-up" ride to the Natural Bridges Caverns / Ice Cream stop. The roads weren't too busy and the hills were just long enough to make you work for it to hold a healthy pace but without any suffering. The afternoon social and dinner provided a nice way to meet the other participants and wrap up the day. Of course, best of all was having a chance to catch-up and visit with old friends who we'd met at other rallies and to collect a few new friends as well.

Saturday: As predicted, severe weather arrived before dawn on Saturday morning. Several squalls passed over the area between 4am - 9am, after which things began to look up for the day. The rally-goers passed the time with a leisurely breakfast that segued into the pre-ride briefing in the rec center. The rec center included a full-size gymnasium, canteen, table games area, locker rooms, and two indoor tennis courts which came in handy given the weather. The tennis courts were basically "ride central", and played host to the bike storage/ work area, a test ride center for Bike Friday's demo bikes, and a PowerPoint slide show by Cycle Provence. The rest of the rec center gave us a place to kill time playing ping-pong, shooting pool, or shooting baskets until the rain stopped. Some intrepid riders went out early while others hedged their bets by driving with their tandems for a remote start or riding the 7-mile ride to the lunch stop at nearby Gruene, TX. We opted to ride over (well, that was an easy call since we were without vehicles) on what seemed to be the start of an unseasonably cold (50's), windy (21mph w/30mph gusts), and damp day. Although the bikes certainly collected their share of road dirt, thankfully we were never caught in the rain. Fortunately, we had packed various combinations of leg and arm warmers, wind-vests, rain jackets and booties so that while riding, we were warm.

After our box lunches in the Gruene dance hall we opted to ride the 67mi long route, backwards. The route took us North along the Guadalupe River (a great stretch of road) and then up past the Canyon Dam on our way to the Devil's Backbone, down Purgatory Road, then out West along SR 2673 to SR 3159 to Cranes Mill Road and then 46 back to the T-Bar-M Ranch. It was a little under 3,000v feet of climbing over 67 miles with a fairly steady headwind but sunny skies prevailed 2/3ds of the way through the ride. Unfortunately, since we opted to start late and do the long ride option we did not return in time for the tandem games. However, true-to-form, our friends David & Christen took top honors in the "slowest tandem

contest" (it's amazing how long they can trackstand a tandem). As like Friday, a very nice afternoon social and dinner event capped the day.

Sunday: Sunday brought blue skies and a bit warmer weather which allowed for something of a mass-start at 9:00am. The main group played nice for about the first 5 miles and then after an exciting twisty descent the tempo began to pickup a bit. Somewhere just short of the 1/2 way point we realized that we'd been enjoying a tailwind as we let the rabbits run off the front and began to work our way back to the ranch. Somehow it's easy to forget that you always have to pay for those great descents and tailwinds. Regardless, the sun in our faces along with the wind helped to off-set the additional effort required to make our way back to the ride start. Several other teams opted to put in a second 30 mile ride after the first and headed back out along the Guadalupe River. The weekend drew to a close with lunch for most of the group at a nearby BBQ joint that boasted having "The Worst BBQ in Texas", followed by the tear-down and packing-up of our tandems for the trip home.

All-in-all, a great weekend of riding with some fantastic Texas scenery and great folks. No, the roads aren't as smooth as the ones here in Georgia, but a day riding on chip-sealed roads still beats riding in the rain and it was raining in Georgia all weekend. So, we certainly made the ride choice by checking out the riding in Texas at this year's Southwest Tandem Rally. Again, our thanks to the TxCats for putting on a great event.

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