

DATES EVENTS**Copperas Cove Weekend
November 26 - 28**

Team McManus/Cole are planning a post Thanksgiving getaway in Copperas Cove, a wonderful cycling area 44 miles west of Temple. The weekend of riding will start Friday November 26 through Sunday the 28th. For those who can eat and run, this post-holiday cycling is surely the best plan after a day of feasting.

We will meet at the Best Western on Friday and ride 30 miles beginning at 2 p.m. Saturday we will ride about 60 miles and on Sunday there will be several options. The local Chamber of Commerce, which is trying to make Copperas Cove "Bike Central Texas", will support the rides for us. On all 3 days they will supply refreshments and water and will deliver lunch on Saturday.

8 rooms are blocked at the Best Western in Copperas Cove. If you are interested in joining us please (1) call 254-518-3363 and book one of these rooms and (2) email Brenda at Brenda_J_Cole@yahoo.com. The cost for the weekend is \$20 per team which will cover lunch and refreshments during the rides. Lodging and other meals are the responsibility of each team (\$75 plus tax per night)

**Annual Christmas Lights Ride and
Business Meeting
Sunday, December 12**

The gathering time for the ride is 6:00 p.m. in the Snider Plaza parking lot near Penne Pomodoro. Parking on Sunday evening is not a problem. *Headlights and tail-lights are required for this ride.* Festive decorations and costumes are always welcome and will be awarded prizes!! We will ride through Highland Park enjoying the holiday lights and return to Penne Pomodoro for a fabulous Italian dinner at 7:30p.m. If the weather is bad or you just don't want to ride, join us for dinner and the business meeting at 7:30. Please RSVP to Linda or Malcolm Cole by December 5th, at 214-826-6779. The restaurant has asked for a close count and will use their full menu.

**New Year's Day ride
Saturday, January 1, 2005**

Meet at 10:00 AM; ride starts at 10:30 AM
Start point: 1480 Lucas Road, Lucas, TX
(About 7 miles east of Allen, TX)
Ride Hosts: Don & D'Ann Hunt 972-442-6622

Join Team Hunt for the annual New Year's Day Ride! We'll ride about 30 miles -- plus or minus a few. The route will be between Lucas and McKinney on back roads of residential Collin County. After the ride D'Ann will be serving "Mom's Good Soup". Bring a side dish or dessert. Ideas: relish tray, 3bean salad, salad of any sort, corn bread, any kind of dessert.

Email d2h@airmail.net or call 972-442-6622 (after 6 PM) to RSVP and to find out what other teams plan to bring. We'll probably need card table(s) and chairs too so let us know if you can offer any!

Directions: Take Hwy 75 to the Bethany exit in Allen, TX. Go East about 6.1 miles to the intersection with FM 3286 at Lucas Foods (gas, food, bait shop, ice, etc.). (Along this 6 mile stretch Bethany becomes Bandy Lane, West Lucas Road, and then FM 1378. Stay basically straight (Eastward) until you get to the intersection with FM 3286 at Lucas Foods.) Turn left (East) onto FM 3286 and continue going East for another 1.4 miles. The Hunt House is hidden behind a 4-rail wooden fence on the South (right-hand) side of the road. Look for the DATES poster by the black mailbox at the end of a long paved driveway. Drive on around to the back of the house where Don will have you park on the "South Acre." BTW: If you get to the bridge, you have gone too far.

January 2005 DATES-LINE Schedule:

Mailed by: January 2, 2005

Notices & Articles due by: December 25, 2004

2005 DATES Annual Meeting and Dinner

Mark your calendar for the DATES Annual Meeting and Dinner. This event will be held Sunday, February 6th, 2005 at The Abbey Grill in Frisco. Be sure to join us for a scrumptious buffet as we take care of club business and award the *GOLDEN SPROCKET* to this year's contributors. The details are:

When: Sunday, February 6, 2005

Where: The Abbey Grill, 7185 Main Street, Frisco, Texas

Time: 5:30 pm meet and greet with cash bar
6:00 pm dinner buffet

Cost: \$25 per person (includes tax and gratuity)

RSVP: Please send a check for the total in your party to Linda Vinson by January 29th. Make the check payable to Linda and mail to: 7013 Fox Drive, The Colony, Texas, 75056.

Contact Info: Questions can be directed to Linda at linda.vinson@eds.com or at 972-625-6110 (home) or 972-605-6000 (work).

Directions: The Abbey Grill is located in old downtown Frisco, North of SH121 and East of the Dallas North Tollway (Parkway). Driving directions can be found on The Abbey Grill website at: <http://www.abbeygrill.com>



GOLDEN SPROCKET UPDATE

The nominees have been determined, contribution time-line ended, the excitement builds. WHO will go home with the coveted *GOLDEN SPROCKET* for contributions to *DATESLINE* 2004? And the nominees are . . .

The Award for Reflections on International Travel

And the nominees are:

- Tour of Switzerland by Tommy Hayes
- On the Road, but NOT on the Road by John McManus

The Award for Most Frequent Contributor

And the Nominees are:

- Colleen Hering with contributions in March, June, July, August and September.
- John McManus with contributions in March, April, May and September (2).

The Award for Multipart Series

And the Nominee is:

- Rolling Along the Katy Trail by Warren Casteel

The Award for Product Review

And the Nominees are:

- U2 by Brad Heppler, with lovely assistant Tacey.
- Flight Deck by Brad Heppler
- Thudbuster ST by Warren Casteel

A BIG **Thank You** to everyone who contributed in 2004 including Bruce Hudson, Sean Thomson and Kevin Vinson. To be eligible you must submit articles and reviews to ddateseditor@aol.com.

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SWTR 15

Help Wanted

Since last month's DATESLine, Carol Croy and Bruce Hudson have volunteered to produce the Rally Program and Don Hunt has volunteered to design the route maps. With many of the key areas covered we still need volunteers to spearhead a few activities as well as additional volunteers to assist in areas with Activity Primes. We currently need volunteers for the following:

- **Fun & Games Committee.** This group, led by Pete Holverson and Laura Roberts, will determine what cycling and/or non-cycling games we'll play at the rally. There's a two-fold objective: more fun and getting to know other people. If you'd like to help, call Pete and Laura at 214-826-3584.
- **Ride Director.** The basic routes are determined; lunches are planned and map preparation is under way. But we need someone to take charge and follow through with the marking of the routes and determining what we need to do concerning safety and support. Of course, rides are the **THE** most important part of the rally so this is an important job. If you're interested call John McManus at 214-321-6085.
- **Music Director.** We need a team to plan different types of music that will create the proper environment at several events, to record the music and then be sure it's played at the events. This will be a fun project for the right person. If you're interested call John McManus at 214-321-6085

Registration is now open

It's never too early to register. You'll need to register for the rally and to make plans and reservations for your accommodations in Fredericksburg. And don't forget: this year's rally begins Friday morning so you need to travel to the hill country on Thursday, April 21. Make arrangements to be off from work. Registration details available at www.doubledates.com/swtr2005



Double DATES Rides & Activities

RIDE - EVENT	DATE	START TIME	START PLACE	PHONE # / EMAIL	DISTANCE	DETAILS
Copperas Cove Weekend	Fri- Sun Nov. 26 - 28	2PM Friday	McManus/Cole host at The Best Western, Copperas Cove, TX 254-518-3363	214.321.6085 or Brenda J Cole@yahoo.com	Several to choose from	A wonderful cycling area. See details in newsletter. RSVP
Christmas Lights Ride & Business Meeting	Sunday Dec, 12th	6:00 PM	Hosted by Malcom & Linda Cole at Penne Pomodoro in Snider Plaza	RSVP by Dec 5 th , at 214-826-6779	8-12 miles	Headlights and Tail-lights required. Business meeting starts with dinner at 7:30.
New Year's Day Ride	Saturday Jan. 1st 2005	10:30 AM	Home of Don & DeAnn Hunt, Lucas Texas	D2h@airmail.net or call 972-442-6622	30 miles	Enjoy "Mom's Good Soup" after the ride. See details and directions in newsletter

RIDE REPORTS AND OTHER NEWS:

Rolling Along the Katy Trail

Detailed by Warren Casteel

Part 2 Lessons learned:

1. **Choose your tires carefully!** We rode 26" x 1.25" tires with some tread, but not knobby, the first three (3) days. They were great speed wise. Hard, narrow, semi-slick = low rolling resistance. BUT – we had two flats. One was my fault (riding where one should not ride), the other a very small sliver of limestone that worked through the tire into the tube.

On the fourth day, it rained early, and looked like it might rain more. We went to wider mountain bike tires that had a groove of solid rubber down the middle. These took everything the trail could dish out, but did not roll as easily!

The best tire: A compromise of the above – maybe 1.5 to 1.75" with moderate tread, but not super knobby. A hybrid type tire (like my sister was riding) would be about perfect – except that all of us were on mountain bikes!

2. **Type of tandem:** We took our new (used) Ibis mountain bike tandem, and enjoyed it. This said, I see no reason to not do this on a road tandem. Except for the fourth day, mentioned above, we could probably have done it on a 700C x 28 tire, although I would go for 32 or 38 width with some tread. Susan had a full suspension mountain bike, but we locked out the rear suspension, and made the front fork as stiff as possible – thus the suspension was not worth all of the extra weight! Melody was on a non-suspended bike, and did fine. If you have a mountain bike tandem, use it, but if not, I see no reason to not use your road tandem with wider tires. (If it rains, I have no experience, so take this with a grain of salt!)

One silly thing – I would have loved a kickstand. Our friend, Brad Smith, who first interested me in the ride, swears by one, and as geeky as they are, I think he may be right!

3. **Food along the way:** Call ahead and have alternatives set up. Lots of places are closed on Monday. Hours vary a lot also!

4. **Lodging:** Choose your cost. You can do B & B's almost everywhere, and are nicer. We mixed in hotels and motels to save money. If you are going fully loaded, with no vehicle, your choices will be sometimes limited by riding distance to the lodging, but many of the motels and B & B's will carry the bicycles if you call them, and some are right on the trail. Be sure places that will pick you up know it is a tandem!

Looking back now, it was a great experience, and we enjoyed it immensely. The terrain is nice – probably 75% of the ride is under the trees. The contact with nature is inspiring, and the lack of contact with cars is even better! It is flat – if you hate hills, this is the place for you! The services along the trail are regular and good. We will do it again soon!

...and we'll
buy our tandem at

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Co-Motion Litespeed Cannondale

THUSBUSTER ST SEATPOST

Contributed by Warren Casteel

Captains know that it is most important to keep our stokers happy, comfortable, and thus . . . pedaling hard! The first task is to get them fit on the bicycle exactly as they need to be, crank length, stoker bar style and position, stand over height, etc. After fit, foremost is a comfortable saddle. Next is a suspension seat post – at least for this team! We have tried / owned several, and have seen many posts come and go. Some are expensive, some cheap, some break, some quit working, and frankly, we have never found a really great one.

I am not sure we are there now, but we are closer than we have ever been. We recently bought a mountain bike tandem for some rails to trails and other riding other than on smooth pavement. After two (2) rides I was notified that the bis frame was much less comfortable than our Ti Co-Motion Java (which has a traditional suspension seatpost) – and that action was required. I started thorough research, looking at all of the telescoping, shock absorbing posts. Ron Clipp, formerly of Plano Cycling, now owner of The Hub Bicycle Company in St. Louis, and an active tandem rider, recommended a product which was not yet widely available at the time – the Thudbuster ST. The original Thudbusters were large parallelogram seat posts with a lot of movement primarily for mountain bikes.

Cane Creek has recently taken over Thudbuster, and introduced the Thudbuster ST, which has a smaller parallelogram, fitting road bikes and tandems with ease in most situations. It also weighs less than the larger models. Plano Cycling managed to get one as soon as the post hit the market. The post came with three (3) elastomers of different stiffness, plus you can order even softer and harder ones. Audre has settled on the softest one. In taking it apart to change the elastomer, I was very impressed with the quality, precision, and fit of the parts – it is very well made. The post comes in several diameters, plus Cane Creek offers enough machined shims to fit most any seat tube diameter. On the web: <http://www.thudbuster.com/products.html>

But, the proof is in the ride. We rode the bike on road, on a gravel road or two, and many miles on the White Rock and Plano bicycle trails. We took the Co-Motion out a couple of times for comparison. The bottom line is: This is by far Audre's favorite seatpost. It moves easily, you cannot feel a sticking point, in that it pretty much moves all of the time. Movement is very fluid. I was concerned about pogo stick action, in that it does not have any "stiction". Audre calls the pogo action "bouncing",

which is a factor on the old post on the other tandem. This one does not do that. An interesting thing is that when the Thudbuster ST moves down, it also moves backward, thus changing the leg extension much less, if at all, compared to a simple up and down suspension seatpost. My biggest concern is that I have to buy another one for the Co-Motion tandem!

BOTTOM LINE: This is the best suspension seatpost we have found to date. Many up sides, only downside is high price (List is \$ 139.00).

GOLDEN SPROCKET SCALE: 8.5 out of 10

Club Officer Positions Open

DATEs-Line Editor: Publish the newsletter 10 or 11 times per year.

Being the Editor of DATEs-Line is actually pretty easy. It doesn't require any particular writing or editing skills, MicroSoft applications are great at keeping the articles in line with spelling and grammar standards. The only real aptitude required is a familiarity with MicroSoft WORD and Excel applications. From the perspective of the amount of time it takes, it isn't much, less than 5 hours a month. And that includes the time the printer takes to copy, collate and staple the papers. When I started I thought the challenge would be dedicating the last few days of every month to get the newsletter out. That really turned out to be much less of a challenge than I thought. Even with my travel schedule, which is about 6 to 8 times a year, it hasn't been a problem.

Secretary: Record the minutes of business meetings

The Secretary role does not require much time. By being the Secretary of the club, you know you will be invited to around 6 dinner parties a year. Who doesn't like to have a busy social calendar? The hardest part is remembering to record the activities during the meetings while you are having fun. If you can't make a meeting, not to worry, there will be someone to fill in and take minutes.

The best part about being involved in the club is that it allows you to interact with some really great people on a regular basis. The varied interests, careers and ages of club members are fantastic. On the rides or at club meetings you will not lack for interesting conversation or fail to learn about new things. *Get involved, you won't regret it.*

