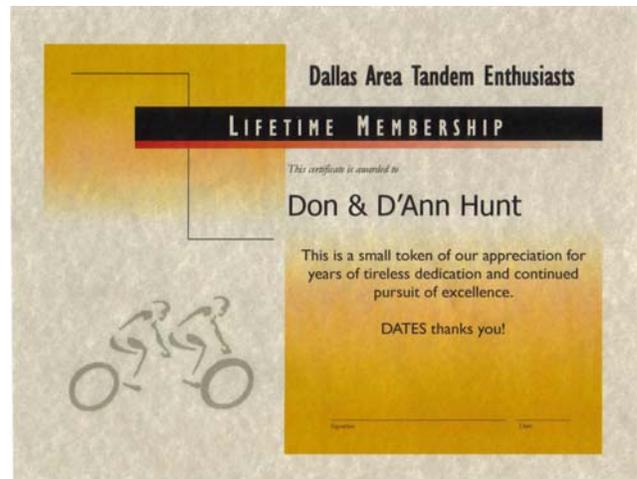




October DATES business meeting. Thanks to Ronnie & Nanette Bryant for the photo

Farewell to Don & D'Ann Hunt

Between 30 & 40 DATES members converged at Kevin & Linda Vinson's home for grilled burgers, bratwurst, hot dogs, salads, deserts & numerous other side dishes. This was the October DATES business meeting, but it was no ordinary business meeting. We enjoyed the usual excessive amounts of food, visiting with fellow DATES members, and discussing DATES business. But we also bid farewell to our excellent coordinators. Don & D'Ann Hunt have relocated to Tucson, AZ. We presented them with a well-deserved lifetime membership to DATES, and matching denim shirts sporting signatures of all the members who were present.



HALLOWEEN RIDE RESURRECTED

Saturday & Sunday, November 5 & 6, 2005



At the October 16 DATES meeting, the idea surfaced "Let's do the Halloween Ride...unsupported" What does "unsupported" mean?

- You'll have none of the food, features and services that Warren and Audre provided in the past.
- Everyone will carry their clothes, necessities, parts and tools on their bike – either in panniers or in a trailer.
- Everyone is expected to be able to read a map, have water, find food and make any necessary repairs.
- You'll need to make hotel reservations in Tyler. The selected place is Comfort Suites (903-534-0999). (Fairfield Inn, where we've stayed in the past, is fully booked.)

Obviously this is for experienced riders; but our club has a lot of these. Here are more details

- The ride is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, November 5 & 6.
- Official starting point is Norman Jr High in Kaufman. This makes the ride about 82 miles each way.
- An alternative is to start at Purtil Creek State Park, which makes for 50 miles each day.
- We'll use the same route out and back. For those of you who have done this ride in the past, we're using the return route.
- About the only lunch possibilities, other than bringing a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, is the Shed Café in Edom on Saturday and somewhere in Mabank on Sunday.
- You will be furnished maps and directions through Tyler. We'll include cell phone numbers for those carrying cell phones but service in East Texas is not good.
- In Tyler on Saturday night, we'll have a social hour and then dine at a local restaurant, probably Outback Steakhouse.

This is a unique event. I believe this is the first unsupported multi-day in the club's 16 year history. If you're up to it; be a part of it. In addition to making your motel reservations, let us know you're coming, where you're starting and cell number (if any). Call (214-321-6085) or email (john_j_mcmanus@yahoo.com) John McManus. And "yes", it'll go - rain or shine!



Two Flags Ride
November 20, 2005



Join Team Shaddox at the Courthouse square in Sherman Texas, for this annual fall classic. November 20th, 9:00am. Approximately 50 miles on lightly traveled country roads. The traditional ride season closer, this popular gathering is one of DATES' oldest continuously scheduled rides. It crosses the breathtaking Carpenter's Bluff bridge into Oklahoma.

Email res1rrzj@verizon.net for more info.

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@casteelsgn.com.



**Copperas Cove
Weekend
November 25 – 27, 2005**

Join McManus/Cole for a post Thanksgiving getaway in Copperas Cove. This will be our 3rd year to ride in this area, so we think this is a wonderful cycling area. Copperas Cove is located 44 miles west of Temple. The rides will be November 25-27, the Friday through Sunday following Thanksgiving. So, 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, with several options for Sunday. The local Chamber of Commerce, which is trying to make Copperas Cove "Bike Central Texas", will support the Saturday ride for us. On all 3 days they will supply maps and will deliver lunch on Saturday.

We have 10 rooms blocked at the Best Western in Copperas Cove. If you are interested in joining us please:

- 1) Call 800-518-4406 and book one of these rooms blocked under the name Double Dates and
- 2) Send a \$20 check payable to Brenda Cole (922 Easton Place, Dallas 75218)

Email [Brenda J Cole@yahoo.com](mailto:Brenda_J_Cole@yahoo.com) if you have questions. The \$20 per team will cover lunch on Saturday and refreshments. Each team will pay for their own lodging (\$73 plus tax per night) and other meals.

**Christmas Lights Ride
December 11, 2005**



Join DATES for the 2005 Christmas Lights ride, December 11, 2005.

We will gather at 6:00 pm in Snider Plaza parking lot near Penne Pomodoro. Headlights and taillights are required and a small flashlight to read the cue sheet is recommended. Festive decorations and costumes are welcome and will be awarded prizes. We will ride through Highland Park enjoying the sights and return to Penne Pomodoro, for a fabulous Italian dinner at 7:30pm. If the weather is bad or you just don't want to ride, join us for dinner. There will be a small gift exchange for those that want to participate. Please RSVP to Linda or Malcolm Cole by December 6th at: (214) 826-6779.



**New Years Day Ride
January 1, 2006**

(fill in the blank with **YOUR** name)

Ride Leader: _____

HELP!!!

We need a ride leader for this annual event.

Q. → What's the best way to start the new year?

A. → Lead a DATES ride!

Don & D'Ann usually lead this annual tradition. With their absence, we need a new leader. Contact Ride Coordinators: Hudson/Croy at: HudsonCroy@sbcglobal.net

Where in the World were the DATES this year?????

We want to know where rode this year. Tell us where you went, and a little bit about your rides. We will recap everyone's trips & adventures in the January 2006 DATES-line. Many of you have already submitted ride reports <thanks>. We'll recap these, but there's plenty others who traveled that we DON'T know about. Send us a short note saying where you went & when...or a full-blown ride report. We want 'em all! Email to: dates@ntsk8.com AND...include Pictures. Everyone LOVES pictures!

Southwest Tandem Rally 2006

April 28 – 30, 2006!

Lake Murray Lodge in Ardmore, Oklahoma.

The 16th Annual SouthWest Tandem Rally returns to Lake Murray Lodge, near Ardmore, in scenic Southern Oklahoma. Ardmore is located halfway between Dallas & Oklahoma City. Gear up for three days of challenging, fun riding on low traffic paved roads, and discover Oklahoma does have hills, lakes & trees. Enjoy socializing with tandem friends old & new. Plan now to experience the tandem rally that just seems to get better each & every year.

Registration:

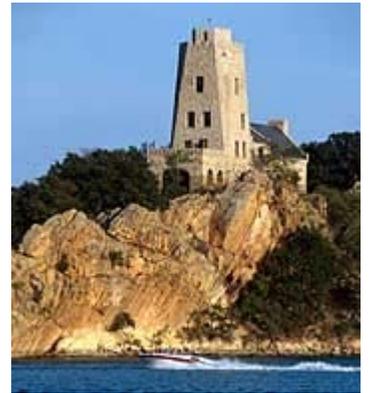
- \$200 per tandem team, received by April 7, 2006
 - Note: Registration is on a first come, first served basis and is limited to 125 teams

Rally Headquarters:

- Lake Murray Lodge will serve as the SWTR-2006 headquarters. Bike storage is available at the lodge.

Reservations (be sure to mention: SouthWest Tandem Rally):

- Lake Murray Lodge: 1-800-257-0322 or www.oklahomaparks.com (click on drop-down to select park)
 - Lodge rooms are \$55 per night +tax.
 - Cabins sleep 2-8 and range from \$48 to \$165 per night.
 - Campsites with full hookups may also be reserved through the park office: 580-223-4044
- Lake Murray bed and berth - floating villas: 580-223-0088 or www.oklahomabedandberth.com



DATES CLASSIFIEDS



Tandem For Sale -- 2003 Co-Motion Supremo. Perfect condition. Only 4,000 miles. Beautiful pearl white to royal blue fade paint. Not a scratch on it. Captain 5ft 8in Stoker 5ft 1in. Wound UP full carbon tandem fork, Chris King threadless headset, Chris King hubs with Salsa skewers, Velocity arrowhead wheels, Dura-Ace shifters and brakes, Ultegra cranksets, Dura-Ace 12-27 cassette (also extra 12-34 cassette) 2 Wound Up Carbon seat posts (also an extra RockShox telescoping seat post) Factory claimed weight 30 pounds without pedals. This is one sweet ride. We live in Wichita Falls but are in the Dallas area frequently. Can deliver in Dallas area. \$4,500.

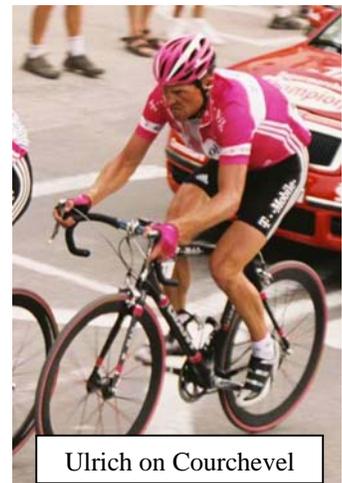
Email jimandjan@nts-online.net or phone 940-696-9660 evenings.



Lance on Courchevel

**2005 Alps. Seventh Heaven:
We followed Lance to the Tour de France
Pete Holverson & Laura Roberts
Part 2 of 3
(Stay tuned next month for more)**

Then we were outside watching the Tour Caravan go by. Strange carnival float vehicles throwing out all kinds of goodies: coffee, chocolate, caps, thunder stix, the perennial and favorite big PMU hand. Just like Mardi Gras everyone was clamoring for loot. By the time the caravan was done the crowd was cheering like crazy. By now the race was starting up the slopes of Courchevel and Discovery were tearing it up, dropping all of T-Mobile and launching Lance



Ulrich on Courchevel

up the final stretch with only Rasmussen, Valverde and another Balearic rider, Mancebo. Amazingly Popovych was the last Lieutenant to drop away. For us the rising whine of helicopters heralded the incipient arrival of the leaders, their rotors the celestial trumpets of mechanical angels.

Suddenly they were in view, Lance poker faced in virtual Yellow, the leader on the road, but still wearing Discovery blue and gray for the last day ever in his career. The other three riders bobbed in his wake. Then there was a long gap before the Basso, a few riders then Kloden and Ulrich riding together, later Popovych, his elbow still bloody, Hincapie and Ace. Jens Voight riding in Yellow lost over 30 minutes on the climb, meaning he still would have beaten us by an hour. Later, on the highlights we saw Lance zipping up his jersey with 2km to go and realized how badly he wanted to win the stage. In the end he was pipped at the post by Valverde, but he seized the Yellow jersey and never let it go. Lance didn't helicopter back to his hotel as we expected. When all the fuss had died down, Woody saw him ride back past our hotel, carrying a US flag. There was much celebration all over Courchevel that night and in our group in particular. We ceremonially finished the bottle of Genepy liquor I had found. The bottle had a sprig of the herb inside, with sugar crystallizing on it like tiny icicles. Laura had christened this the "Weed drink" and it attracted enough of a following that John & Susan Branning brought a fresh bottle down to Provence.

The next day was a big one for the Tour, Cols de la Madeleine, Telegraphe and Galibier. And it was a big day for us too, as we had to be over la Madeleine by 11:30 before it shut down. The schedule precluded taking the Tandem – on these roads it was slower both down and up. I rode the Madone and Laura leapfrogged ahead in the van to ride part of the climb. I left the hotel at 7:15 rather nervously, as I had had about 2 minutes flat test riding on this bike and I knew the only limit in the next few km would be the strength of my intestinal fortitude. Fortunately the bike's handling was much like my trusty Trek 5200 and my comfort level grew quickly. The road was familiar but much quieter than the day before. Soon I was joining my companions in passing motor-traffic as we ripped through 1650. I was cornering new school with the top-tube gripped between my legs, keeping the bike more stable at speed. Through 1550 and the gradient steepened; I pushed my butt further back to keep a little weight on the rear wheel and feathered brakes as gently as I could. My cyclometer was not working so I have no idea how fast that descent was. Probably a good thing.

At 1300 the official Stage Start was still a ghost village. A quick, familiar thousand foot climb to Meribel and then everything was fresh, a tight zig-zag road down to Moutiers. I have to admit to concentration overload on the long descent. Fast S-turns running into hairpins. Always the desire to go just a little faster fighting with the uneasy feeling that you don't know just what lies around the corner. After about a thousand feet, it's about as long a hill as you'll find in Texas and I was ready for a straightaway. Three thousand twisty feet down to go.

At Moutiers the route card called for us to ride on a still open autoroute, prohibited to cycles. Since a group of about 20 "Trekks" had formed, I went along. The section was short, but included a 1400m tunnel with no shoulder. Fortunately we made it through with no collisions and no arrests.

The Col de la Madeleine had no gentle introduction, just a stark series of narrow hairpins jumping out of the valley. After two zig-zags my arm and leg warmers were stripped in a big hurry. I caught the back of a small group from Berne who were striking the perfect pace for me, at least for a while. I tried to show appreciation for their pacemaking, hampered somewhat by a lack of German and oxygen. The road widened out, rolled through a couple of high alpine villages and started straight up



Top of La Madeleine

2005 Alps. Seventh Heaven (continued)

a hanging valley. The Swiss guys picked it up and I let them go. It looked like the crux was done, but then a final two switchbacks came into view, campervans perched precariously everywhere. The switchbacks were actually not quite as steep as the last straight rise, but they were very intimidating. I stopped to take a rest and some pictures by a friendly Texan flag and someone offered to ride to the top with me "It's only a mile!" (note to self: don't make jokes about throwing up whilst looking nauseous). Suddenly I was at the top and Laura was greeting me. It was 10:50 and just in time. By 11:05, the Gendarmes were already trying to close the road.



Last switchbacks: la Madeleine

We rode about 4km over the pass, then stopped at Cheval Noir Hotel (where the Trek travel drivers had been staying) for lunch, a shower and TV tour viewing. Soon celestial clarions of choppers once again signaled the advent of the racers.

High on the Col, the riders seemed silent and graceful, swooping slowly downwards. Then suddenly they were sweeping around the corner in front of us in a cacophony of sirens and horns, incredibly fast, chase car tires squealing as they struggled to keep pace. Lance, in yellow, was led by a long stream of blue Discovery jerseys. Laura was delighted when he bunny-hopped a drain cover right beside us.



The blue train descends La Madeleine

The riders flashed by one by one and in small groups, then the sweep van was by us and we rushed to grab bikes and belongings, trying to get ahead of the big rush off the mountain. The descent was one the guides described as "technical", which meant mile after mile full of switchbacks, bikes and assorted motor vehicles. With an extra bag hanging in front of me, I felt a little off balance and made an extra trepid descent. I was especially glad of that when my front wheel found a rock in the middle of a hairpin corner and jumped about 4 inches. Someone in our group hit a

soft tar patch and ran off the road, but pride seemed to be the major casualty.

At St Martin la Chambre, the tour riders headed off up the Telegraphe and Galibier, but we were able to rejoin our buses, ready for a 4 to 5 hr trip to our next hotel in Provence, Hostellerie de Crillon le Brave. When I realized how long the bus ride was, I was very glad of the quick shower at the Cheval Noir. Most of the people sitting close probably were too. We prevailed on the guides to negotiate a very late dinner at the hotel, so we didn't have to eat in our lycra. Tired as we were, we were captivated by the atmosphere, dining by candlelight in an outdoor medieval courtyard.

Mark Your 2006 Calendars for these popular events:

SAR: the Stoker Appreciation Ride → Saturday and Sunday, April 1st and 2nd, 2006. We're setting the date early this year so everyone can get a room. An annual highlight on the DATES ride calendar; two day ride from Weatherford to Glen Rose and back. RSVP to Tom Shaddox: res1rrzj@verizon.net, then reserve your favorite B&B or a room at a Glen Rose motel now. ---> Limit 20 teams <--- SAG, wild flowers, great Saturday lunch stop, group dinner, Stoker Poetry (tm) & champagne. Captains: most stokers love B&Bs, but there's also the new motel in GlenRose: America's Best Value Inn and Suites, almost across the street from the nice Best Western. <http://www.glenrosetexas.net/accomodations.html>

DATES Century ride, 2006: The Mountain Course, a fresh challenge. Sunday, September 24th.

December 2005 DATES-LINE Schedule:
Mailed by: November 30, 2005
Notices & Articles due by: November 28, 2005

Adventure Racing/Mountain Biking/Off-Road Riding:

3 STORES, BIG MOUNTAINS OF COOL MERCHANDISE, AN OFF-ROAD SELECTION THAT'S A REAL ADVENTURE AND IT'S ALL INDOORS (UNTIL YOU TAKE A TEST RIDE).

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MINUTES: DATES Business Meeting Sunday, October 16, 2005

LOCATION: Home of Kevin and Linda Vinson, 7013 Fox Dr, The Colony, TX

OFFICERS PRESENT: Teams: Hunt, Vinson, Hudson/Croy, Kemp, Jenkins, John McManus

WEBMASTER: Kevin Vinson

OTHERS: Hering, Glenz, Carlson, Muholland, Boggess, Shaddox, Logan, Thompson, Seggerman, Bryant, Rusty Tether, Lee Wilson

OUTLINE: Opening – by Don Hunt 7:25
New business
Reports
Next Meeting
Adjournment

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Need new coordinator team as Team Hunt departs immediately for Arizona.
2. According to By-Laws Treasurer becomes the coordinator. John McManus will act as coordinator for the annual meeting.
3. Team Logan will arrange a location for the annual meeting.
4. Team Carlson will assume nominating and phoning duties for the meeting.

REPORTS:**Rides:** Hudson/Croy

1. Recap of recent rides
2. Upcoming rides:
 - a. 10/23 – Pilot Point – Hudson/Croy
 - b. 10/29 – Texoma Tandem Tour – Jenkins
 - c. 11/5-6 – Self Supported overnight Halloween Ride, Kaufman to Tyler – Bryant & McManus
 - d. 11/20 – Two Flags OK/TX – Shaddox
 - e. 11/28-30 – Copperas Cove – McManus/Cole (Thanksgiving weekend)
 - f. 12/11 – Dallas Christmas Lights Ride – Linda & Malcolm Cole
 - g. 01/01/06 – New Years Day Ride (Need new leader...in absence of Hunts)
 - h. 04/01-02/06 – SAR (Stoker Appreciation Ride) – Shaddox

Membership: Vinson – No report.

Website: Vinson – SWTR 2006 info to be on club website.

Newsletter: Jenkins – No report.

Secretary: Kemp – No report.

Treasurer: John McManus

1. Closed SWTR 2005 account to avoid loss
2. \$1350 passed to SWTR 2006 (\$1340 passed to SWTR 2005)
3. Moved by Laurie Boggess, seconded by Tony Hering, and passed unanimously: that \$500 be donated to Texas Bicycle Coalition.

Next Meeting: TBA.

Thank You:

1. Autographed shirts and thank you card given to Team Hunt.
2. Hunts awarded lifetime honorary DATES membership.
3. Team Logan awards milk carton and wine bottle.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:00

Melon Patch Tour Weekend**Weekend of August 5th****Ride Report By Kevin Vinson**

The Melon Patch Tour weekend has become a popular event for DATES members. Members of DATES converge on the tiny town of De Leon, Texas for three days of socializing, eating, cycling, drinking Dublin Dr. Pepper, and attending the Peach & Melon Festival. The coordinators of this weekend are Don & D'Ann Hunt. Team Hunt works with a local hotel in Stephenville, Texas to block off a number of rooms for DATES members.

The weekend starts off on Friday evening at Pastafina's in Stephenville. Pastafina's is a family-owned Italian restaurant that serves up wonderful Italian dishes. Dinner attendees were: Teams Hunt, Boggess, Schmitz, Bryant, Jenkins, and Vinson. During the dinner, Don & D'Ann presented all of us with Melon Patch socks. D'Ann and her mother took some basic running socks and colored them to resemble watermelons with seeds. They were very cute.

Next, D'Ann took a moment to recognize two couples that have anniversaries during this time of the year. Jerry & Laurie Boggess would be celebrating their 36th wedding anniversary on August 9th while Linda and I would be celebrating our 20th wedding anniversary on August 10th. During the announcements, Greg & Barbara Schmitz told us that they had celebrated their 29th wedding anniversary on July 16th.

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Saturday 9:30-6:00
Tuesday 9:30-8:00

After partaking in some wonderful Italian dishes and enjoyable conversations, the teams started making their way back to the hotel or to De Leon to pick up their packets if they hadn't done so already. The next morning, Linda and I made our way down to the hotel lobby for the continental breakfast. Teams Boggess and Schmitz were down there during the same time. While having breakfast, I noticed Linda glancing towards the lobby with a puzzled look on her face.

Come to find out, Linda recognized a gentleman that she knew from her days at Occusystems in Dallas. This gentleman is one of two doctors that founded the company. Linda hadn't seen this gentleman since 1996. Come to find out, the other doctor that founded Occusystems lives in De Leon. This particular doctor that Linda ran into was in De Leon with his wife, visiting the other doctor and his family. The two doctors were also riding in the Melon Patch Tour. It is definitely a very small world.

Once we finished our breakfast and visits, we made our way back to the room to get everything together for the ride. Since all of us were staying in Stephenville, all of us began a short trek to De Leon. It's about a 30 minute drive from Stephenville to De Leon. Linda and I have always enjoyed this weekend event for many reasons. One of them is the change of scenery from the DFW area.

It's such a nice change to spend time in towns such as Stephenville and De Leon where the townspeople are very courteous and the countryside is very scenic. Once all of us found a place to park and prepared the tandems, we made our way to the starting line. The Melon Patch Tour has a special start time for the tandems. When we arrived at the starting line, we discovered that there were more tandem teams in town for this event than just the six DATES teams that met for dinner the night before.

If memory serves me correctly, there were approximately 15 to 20 tandem teams riding in the Melon Patch Tour. We had beautiful weather for the start of the ride. Prior to the start, Linda spotted both doctors that founded Occusystems at the start line. She spent a few minutes visiting with both doctors. Once the ride instructions were delivered, the tandems were led off by a group of motorcycles. We were escorted through De Leon until we reached the city limit.

There were routes of 8, 18, 29, 42, and 71-miles. Linda and I knew in advance that we were going to be doing the 71-mile route in preparation for the upcoming Hotter N' Hell Hundred.

Melon Patch Tour Weekend (continued)

As we settled in on the ride, we found ourselves with Pat & Charlie Jenkins and another tandem couple we had met at the start. We could see the lead group ahead of us that included Team Bryant. During parts of the ride, my thoughts were that we would eventually fall behind Pat & Charlie and the other tandem couple. Much to our surprise, we found ourselves staying with Pat & Charlie. This was a first for us.

Pat & Charlie are very strong riders and we had never been able to keep up with their pace in the past. Linda and I were pleasantly surprised at how well we were doing. As we explained to Charlie & Pat during the ride, Linda and I had been getting in a lot of miles on our singles and also the Tuesday and Thursday spin classes at the Plano YMCA. Plus, we have been pushing ourselves to get ready for our cycling trip to Girona, Spain in September.

Our small group utilized the rest stops when necessary. As usual, the rest stops were well stocked with all kinds of goodies. This has always been a staple of the Melon Patch Tour. Along with the goodies, the volunteers at the rest stops were wonderful. Anyway, as we made our way through the scenic countryside, making our way back to De Leon, we noticed Ronnie & Nanette Bryant heading the opposite way on Highway 6.

Come to find out, they were looking for a group of tandems to ride with on the final stretch of the ride. So, at around the 54-mile mark, Team Bryant, Jenkins, Vinson, and the couple we had met earlier were working on small pace line. As we rolled our way into De Leon, all of us took time to thank each other for a wonderful ride. Once we got to the car, Linda and I packed up the tandem and made our way over to the football stadium for showers.

I can't say enough about the Melon Patch Tour and the town of De Leon and the townspeople. It's such a wonderful event and that is so well supported. The shower really hit the spot. Once Linda and I got cleaned up, we made our way back to the downtown area for lunch at the Blue Moon Café. In the past, Linda and I have always had the spaghetti luncheon that is part of the Melon Patch Tour and the Senior's Activity Center at the finish line. This year, we decided to try the Blue Moon Café since we had heard so much about it.

The café lived up to its reputation. We had a very nice lunch and due to the number of patrons in the restaurant, Linda and I shared a table with two gentlemen that had participated in the Melon Patch Tour. They were also from the DFW area and were having some lunch before making their way back home. Once we finished lunch, we decided to take advantage of the festival and in particular, the car show.

Linda and I both felt there were more cars entered in the contest this year than in previous years. There were some beautiful cars on display. We spent almost two hours viewing the cars. As we were winding down our tour of the cars, we noticed that the wind had picked up and that storm clouds were rolling in. At that point, we decided to head back to the hotel in Stephenville for some rest and relaxation.

After the Melon Patch Tour, most riders make their way downtown for the festival activities. One of those activities is the seed spitting contest. Unfortunately, Linda and I missed out on that event so we have nothing to report on. Maybe next year! Once we got back to the hotel, it began to rain. Perfect timing to say the least. Linda and I decided to kick back in the room for a while.

For dinner that evening, we went back to the family-owned Mexican restaurant we went to with Larry & Nancy Pond a couple of years ago. This particular restaurant has some of the best chips and salsa. The food was just as good as it was two years ago. For some reason, I cannot remember the name of the restaurant but it is located on Business 377, on the east side of the Tarleton State University campus.

On Sunday, the same teams that met for dinner at Pastafina's participated in the Post Melon Patch Tour Ride hosted by Don & D'Ann. There were two distances available, 18 and 30-mile. Out of the six teams from the Friday dinner, five teams took on the 30-mile route. We put together a very nice pace line with the role of lead team being rotated every three or four miles. This really made the ride very enjoyable.

Team Bryant split off from the "peleton" to add on some miles in preparation for their upcoming 300K ride. They made their way over to Dublin and back to Stephenville. The rest of us continued our pace line back into Stephenville and the hotel parking lot. As part of the weekend events, all of us hook up for lunch at Hard 8's Barbecue in Stephenville.

Once all of us got cleaned up and checked out (excluding Team Bryant who were still on the road), we met up in the parking lot and discussed directions to the restaurant. Here is where the adventure begins. Don & D'Ann told everyone where Hard 8 was located at and took the lead of the convoy. While making our way along US 377, we spotted Ronnie & Nanette making their way back to the hotel.

Melon Patch Tour Weekend (continued)

Don led us off of US 377 onto a state highway that took us south. After several miles, Don realized this was not the right way to go so we made our way back north to US 377. Next, Don took us south on an FM route. Again, Don realized this was not the right way. So, I decided to call information on my cell phone and find out where the restaurant was located. It had been two years since Linda and I had been to the restaurant but I remembered the restaurant being located at the intersection of two US highways.

After a brief discussion with one of the hostesses at Hard 8 on the cell phone, we found out that the restaurant was located at the intersection of US 67 and US 281. The barbecue was well worth the adventure. My apologies to Don for bringing this up in the ride report. Sorry Don, I couldn't resist! The lunch was the perfect ending to a wonderful weekend. Many thanks go out to Don & D'Ann for putting this weekend together for another year.

One thing I forgot to mention regarding the weekend spent out in Stephenville and De Leon is the access to the original Dr. Pepper. Having an original Dr. Pepper from the Dublin bottling plant is another popular aspect of the Melon Patch Tour weekend. For members that have never participated in this event or have spent any time in Dublin, Texas, there is a Dr. Pepper plant in Dublin that still uses the original recipe which consists of Imperial Pure Cane sugar instead of corn syrup.

As I stated earlier, the Melon Patch Tour weekend is always a wonderful weekend spent with good friends and offers some great cycling. Also, many thanks go out to the town of De Leon and the wonderful volunteers of the Melon Patch.

Valley View Ride (aka Pre-HHH Ride)***August 20th, 2005******Ride Report By Kevin Vinson***

As I prepared to write this ride report, I noticed that the wonderful hosts of this ride, Harry & Janette Thompson, wrote a ride report for this same ride titled, "Everyone loves a parade". Their report can be viewed in the September issue of the DATES-Line Newsletter. With that in mind, I will try not to duplicate what Harry & Janette wrote.

First off, I would like to take a moment to thank Harry & Janette for hosting this ride. As Harry & Janette stated in their report, there were six couples that started from the quaint downtown square of Valley View, Texas. A seventh couple, Franklin & Trisha Kemp arrived later and rode the 37-mile route. Linda and I rode the 56-mile route since we missed out on this distance when Ronnie & Nanette Bryant hosted the North by Northwest ride starting out of Valley View.

As all of you probably know by now, I like to provide a brief synopsis of the weather in my ride reports. For this edition of the Valley View Ride, the weather at the start of the ride was very pleasant, a little more humid than what it had been in previous days. All six teams took off from the downtown square, making our way west. At the time, Linda and I were under the impression that we would be doing the 56-mile route along with Pat & Charlie Jenkins while the other teams were intending on riding the 37-mile route.

Since there was a lunch planned at Miguelitos in Sanger, the four of us decided to pick up the pace so the others wouldn't have to wait for us at the restaurant. Early in the ride, Herb & Sandra Bloomer hooked up with us and the three of us took advantage of the tail wind and made some good time along FM 922. When we hit the turn off for the 37-mile route, we were down to Team Jenkins and Linda & I.

As I stated in the report title, "aka Pre-HHH Ride", this ride was indeed, a great preparation ride for the Hotter N' Hell Hundred. As the ride went on, the winds started to pick up and the temperature started to increase. Mixed with the high humidity, we had the makings of a day perfect for the HHH. Not only were we dealing with the weather, we were also dealing with the endless rolling hills. Again, Linda and I rode the 37-mile route back in June so we had no idea what we were in for. When we reached the rest stop in Forestburg, we discovered that a parade was beginning to start. After downing some Powerade and some energy bars, Pat, Charlie, Linda, and I decided we should get going before the parade starts. While riding through Forestburg and the throngs of parade observers, Linda made a comment about how nice it would have been to have candy with us so we could toss candy to the kids waiting for the parade.

Feeling refreshed, we picked up the pace a little bit and made our way back to Valley View. As we were approaching Era, Texas, we noticed a tandem couple ahead of us. As we got closer, we realized it was Franklin and Trisha. They had arrived late and they were riding the 37-mile route. When we caught up to them, we asked them if everything was alright and if they needed any help. They both stated they had dropped a chain and that they felt they had the problem taken care of.

Valley View Ride (aka Pre-HHH Ride) (continued)

With that in mind, we continued on our way back to Valley View. Once we arrived in Era, we took advantage of the Buzz General Store. We all agreed to stop to pick up some more Powerade. The temperature was getting warmer and warmer. After our brief stop, we finished up the last 8 miles into Valley View.

Once we arrived at the square, we noticed all the vehicles were still there except one. We became a little worried since we all thought that the other teams were doing the 37-mile ride. After putting the bike in our SUV and changing clothes, we decided it would be a good idea for me to drive out and see where everyone was. So I made my way back out on the course to make sure everyone was alright. I had driven the 8 miles to Era and the Buzz General Store and there was no sign of any of teams, even Franklin & Trisha. As I continued west, I reversed the riding route so I would make sure to come across the teams. About four more miles down the road, I came across the remaining teams, including Franklin & Trisha.

Come to find out, Franklin & Trisha broke their chain. They called Harry & Janette to let them know what had happened. As for the other teams, they had decided to do the 56-mile route and got caught in the parade at Forestburg. Getting back to Franklin & Trisha, Herb Bloomer was able to fix the chain so they could get back on the road. I checked with everyone to make sure they were alright. I told everyone I would be waiting for them at the Buzz General Store and see if anyone would like a ride back to Valley View.

Once the teams arrived at the Buzz General Store, I checked with each team to see if anyone would like a ride in. Franklin & Trisha took me up on my offer. Franklin seemed to be dealing with dehydration. It's understandable considering the conditions and also, the problems Franklin was having with his chain. Also, there is very little shade along those country roads outside of Valley View.

While Franklin & Trisha were taking in fluids and having a snack with the other teams, I loaded their bike in our SUV. Franklin, Trisha, and I remained at the Buzz General Store while the other teams began the final stretch back to Valley View. For Franklin, he was starting to get some color back after drinking water and Powerade. He also took advantage of the facilities to douse himself with cool water.

I got Franklin & Trisha back to the square in Valley View. A short time later, the remaining teams made their way into Valley View. Once everyone loaded up their bikes and gear, four of the teams made our way over to Miguelitos in Sanger. We had a very nice lunch with everyone. Getting back to Herb Bloomer, many thanks go out to him for getting Franklin's chain back to working condition. This isn't the first time I have seen or heard of Herb helping someone out from a mechanical standpoint.

Again, many thanks go out to Harry & Janette for hosting a great ride with great routes. We really enjoyed our visit to the Buzz General Store and the lunch at Miguelitos. We had some challenging weather at times but we had great group of teams to ride with.

Hotter N' Hell Hundred Weekend
Weekend of August 26th
Ride Report by Kevin Vinson

From the time the pay rides start rolling out each cycling season, the discussion among cyclists is about getting ready for the Hotter N' Hell Hundred. This year was no exception. It seemed that each pay ride Linda and I rode in, people would ask, "are you doing the Hotter N' Hell Hundred?". For Linda and me, we really hit the pay rides hard this year to get prepared for the HHH. We put a lot of miles in on our singles and the tandem plus the YMCA spin classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

This was our fourth year to participate in the HHH weekend. Last year was our first time to ride the 100-mile ride. We really got lucky with the weather last year with the early morning rain and unseasonably cool weather. We didn't expect that this year. Plus, Jim Goins assured us at the Consumer Exhibition that "it never rains" during the HHH.

Linda and I arrived in Wichita Falls late Friday afternoon. We got checked into the La Quinta, and made our way over to the MPEC for the Consumer Exhibition and Spaghetti dinner. We hooked up with Tony & Colleen Hering for a short visit. We also visited with DATES members Roane & Juanita Logan and Ronnie & Nanette Bryant. We visited the Plano Cycling & Fitness and Richardson Bike Mart displays. While at the RBM display, we saw Jay & Becky Lewis. Jay was outfitted with an "Uncle Sam" hat. The exhibits were packed. It seemed like this was the largest crowd we had seen at the consumer show during the four years we have been attending.

Hotter N' Hell Hundred Weekend (continued)

After picking up our packets, we decided to get in line for the spaghetti dinner. We invited Ronnie & Nanette to join us for spaghetti at the MPEC. Once we finished dinner, we decided to go back to the hotel for the evening and get ready for the Saturday ride. Saturday morning, we walked over to the Waffle Time restaurant for a nourishing breakfast. We joined Bruce Hudson & Carol Croy and had a nice visit with them.

After breakfast, we got ourselves ready and rode over to the start. There had to be around 20 or more tandems at the start. We saw quite a few DATES members including Dick & Patty Young from Groveland, Illinois. It was great seeing them. The tandems were started shortly after 8:00 AM. The weather at the start of the ride was very pleasant. The pace was fast from the outset. Linda and I had decided that we would ride our own pace and see how things go.

As it was, we fell into a pace line of tandems and the first 10 miles were complete in no time. We skipped the first rest stop as was planned. We had decided to hit every other rest stop on the 100-mile route. We hit the second rest stop and that is where we ran into Jay & Becky Lewis. Jay & Becky were kind enough to invite Linda and me to ride with them since they were also doing the 100-mile route.

After taking in some fluids and snacks, the four of us made our way down the road. Somewhere between 30 and 40 miles into the ride, we ran into a storm front and this lasted for about 30 minutes. I have to say, it was very refreshing to have this rain accompany us for several miles. At times, it was a little difficult to see. Once we got through the rain, it remained overcast for most of the remaining ride. The first thing that came to mind when we encountered the rain was, the statement by Jim Goins about how "it never rains during the HHH".

The four of us maintained a strong pace throughout the remainder of the ride. As we had planned, we hit every other rest stop. Jay & Becky did a great job of pushing us. We ended up with our best pace ever for 100 miles. Thank you Jay & Becky! Once we finished the ride, we hung around the finish for a little bit for refreshments. From there, the four of us rode back to our respective hotels to put the bikes up and meet for lunch at Whataburger for some protein! It just so happens that Ronnie & Nanette and another couple sat behind us at Whataburger.

After lunch, we said our good-byes to Jay & Becky since they were going over to the MPEC to help Jim & Rhonda break down the displays and drive back to Dallas before heading home to Arkansas. As for Linda and I, we went back to the hotel and took the bike out of our SUV to wash it since it went through quite a bit of rain. I always take my bike stand with me on weekend trips just in case I need to do some mechanical work. In this case, I needed to clean up the bike. We set the stand up in front of the hotel and gave it a good cleaning.

After cleaning up the bike, we loaded it back up into the SUV and went up to the room to relax for a short while. As has been the case the last several years, there has been a dinner hosted by Jim & Janice Goins Saturday evening for DATES members. This year, the duties of hosting the Saturday evening dinner and the Sunday ride were taken over by Linda and me. We had planned on using the same restaurant, Oxford Street Grill, as was the case in the past but we were informed by Jim Goins two weeks earlier that the restaurant was no longer open.

Jim and Janice were very nice to offer to find another restaurant. They came up with several choices and Linda decided on the Pelican Steak & Seafood restaurant. It turned out to be a very good choice. Originally, our reservations were for 10-12 people. It ended up being Bruce & Carol, Jim Goins, and Linda & me. We had a very nice dinner and nice conversation.

On Sunday morning, we met Bruce, Carol, and Jim Goins at the Waffle Time restaurant for breakfast. When we arrived we saw four couples from DATES having breakfast before leaving Wichita Falls. We all sat in one area of the restaurant and had a nice visit with everyone. Once we finished breakfast, we walked back over to the hotel to get the bike ready for the Sunday ride. We rode over to the Boys & Girls Club about a mile from the La Quinta Hotel for the start of the Sunday ride.

For the Sunday ride, we had Jim Goins, Team Bryant, Team Hudson-Croy, Team Kailer, and another couple from the Ft. Worth area that are friends of Ronnie & Nanette. Even though Linda and I were the "hosts" of this ride, Jim Goins led us out since he is more familiar with the area. The Sunday ride turned out to be 30 miles. We had a nice ride with very nice weather and very little traffic.

Wichita Falls and the surrounding area offers up some of the best riding. The roads are smooth and the traffic is almost non-existent. It was another nice weekend of cycling and visiting with good friends. We want to thank Jim and Janice Goins for their leg work on finding us a restaurant for Saturday evening and sharing their maps and cue sheets with us. We had another nice weekend in Wichita Falls. We plan on keeping the tradition going on having a Saturday evening dinner and a Sunday ride.

DATES Rides and Activities

RIDE	DATE	START TIME	START PLACE	RIDE HOST	PHONE # / EMAIL	DISTANCE	DETAILS
Halloween Ride Resurrected as UNSUPPORTED	Sat - Sun, Nov 5 & 6	Contact John McManus	Long: Norman Jr. High, Kaufmann, TX Short: Purtis Creek State Park	John McManus & Brenda Cole	214-321-6085 john_j_mcmanus@yahoo.com	82 or 50 miles each day	Unsupported means you carry everything you need for this two day event on your bike or in a trailer. You use the map to find your own way, bring your own food and water for the ride and make your own repairs. Make your hotel reservation at the Comfort Suites (903-534-0999) in Tyler and let John know you are planning to attend.
Two Flags Ride	Sunday, Nov 20	9:00:00 AM	Courthouse Square Sherman, TX	Tom & Brenda Shaddox	res1rrzj@verizon.net	Approximately 50 miles	Crosses the breathtaking Carpenter's Bluff bridge into Oklahoma
Copperas Cove Weekend	Fri-Sun Nov 25-27	Friday 2:00 PM	Best Western Copperas Cove, TX	John McManus & Brenda Cole	Brenda_J_Cole@yahoo.com	30 miles Friday, 60 miles Sat, options Sunday	Make your own reservation at the Best Western (800-518-4406); rooms blocked in the name: Double Dates. Send a \$20 check payable to Brenda Cole (922 Easton Place, Dallas, TX 75218) to cover Saturday lunch and refreshments. Each team pays for their own lodging (\$73 plus tax per night) and other meals.
Christmas Lights Ride & Dinner	Sunday, Dec 11	6:00 PM	Snider Plaza Dallas, TX	Malcolm & Linda Cole	214-826-6779	TBA	Headlights & taillights REQUIRED. See Newsletter for additional info
Stoker Appreciation Ride	Sat - Sun, Apr 1 & 2, 2006	TBA	Weatherford, TX	Tom & Brenda Shaddox	res1rrzj@verizon.net	65 miles each day	Captains - make your motel or B&B reservations in Glen Rose, write your poems and chill the champagne. RSVP
2006 Southwest Tandem Rally	Fri - Sun April 28 th - 30 th , '06	TBA	Lake Murray Lodge in Ardmore, Oklahoma.	Rick & Kay Watson	Registration: 903-463-1516 swtr@ntsk8.com	TBA	For detail information, visit www.doubledates.com/swtr2006.html
2006 DATES Century Ride (The Mountain Course)	Sunday, Sept 24, 2006	TBA	TBA	Tom & Brenda Shaddox	res1rrzj@verizon.net	TBA	Watch website & newsletter

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DOUBLE DATES, the Dallas Area Tandem Enthusiasts, is a recreational club for riders of tandem bicycles. Membership dues are \$18 payable annually in January. If a team joins mid-year, the dues are: Jan – June \$18; July – Oct \$9. Teams joining in November or December pay \$18 and are paid up for the following year.

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