

Heart-to-Heart



Welcome to the Heart-to-Heart Newsletter! As the new newsletter editor, I welcome any ideas, input, suggestions for content. The newsletter is our way to communicate information to our members, and our members are the HEART of our bicycle touring club!!!

MEMBER RECOGNITION is important to us. Please send me any suggestions on WOW! things that our members are up to at cdorecycle@gmail.com

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD 2024 GOES TO KEN CONDREY!!!!

At our Annual Membership Meeting on October 19th, we had the honor of presenting this award to Ken. Ken has been an HeartCycle member for over 40 years. In this time, he has led multiple tours for the club, in addition to leading our weekend training rides when we still did them. He has trained and mentored multiple members to the role of tour leader, so important for the longevity of our club. Ken participated in hundreds of HeartCycle tours over the years and has recruited members from Washington and California after his move from Colorado to these States. THANK YOU, KEN!



The Board of Directors

Mark Lestikow (303) 919-0426 (2026)
President - president@heartcycle.org

Janet Slate (303) 683-6128 (2025)
Tour Director - tourdiretor@heartcycle.org

Alan Church (303) 489-1789 (2026)
Treasurer

Laura Davis (970) 581-1361 (2026)
Secretary

Cindy Dore (303) 249-3718 (2025)
Recruitment/Newsletter

Ron Finch (303) 656-5573 (2025)
Safety Coordinator & Insurance

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

Scott MacCormack (720) 939-6099 (2025)
Webmaster, Special Projects

Tom Kissinger (303) 475-8669 (2026)
tom_k@pipeline.com

Judy Siel (720) 519-9401 (TBD)
Assistant Tour Director

Working Members

Richard Crocker (520) 539-8019
Asst. Registrar - registrar@heartcycle.org

Graham Hollis (720) 323-6479
Asst. Treasurer

Jeff Messerschmidt (303) 904-0573
Sag Supply Manager

Dan Palmquist (303) 638-2535
Sag Vehicles

Jimmy Schroeder (260) 450-2007
Ride with GPS Coordinator

Tour Director Musings

Thank You 2024 HeartCycle Volunteers

HeartCycle had a successful and fun touring year in 2024. A big thank you to all of the tour leaders who worked so hard to plan and execute 15 bike tours this past year: Jim Schroeder, Tina Vessels, Judy Siel, Cindy Alvarez, Helayn Storch, Ron Finch, Carol Fredrickson, Janet Slate, Lisa Evans Jim Bethell, Cindy Dore, Rita Kurelja, Steve Kamp; Robin Heil, Gail Golderman, Barry Siel, Kurt Arehart, Graham Hollis and Guy Kelley. We also want to thank our amazing SAG support: Kathleen Schindler, Mayoma Pendergast, Martha MacCormack, Danna Korak and Carol Fredrickson.

Behind the scenes is all the dedicated group of working members: Rich Crocker, Graham Hollis, Jeff Messerschmidt, Dan Palmquist, Jimmy Schroeder and Barry Siel.

The Board of Directors have also spent many hours in meetings throughout the year driving the "club bus" down the road and planning for the future: Mark Lestikow, Janet Slate, Alan Church, Laura Davis, Cindy Dore, Ron Finch, Rita Kurelja, Scott MacCormack and Judy Siel. Thanks to all these wonderful and hard-working volunteers, HeartCycle is a great club.

Tuscany, Italy 2024

By Roderick Lee

Day 1 September 5, 2024, We began our tour arriving at the Social Hub Hotel in Florence where we meet Debby and Tee also on the tour. A relaxing rooftop poolside evening buffet catered by the hotel including drinks gathering all tour participants in this beautiful rooftop terrace get together to meet and greet riders with Cindy Dore, our Heartcycle tour coordinator, and tour guide, David Charnes, owner of Charnes Tours, who emigrated from Colorado 30 years ago and I might add is very fluent in Italian. Coincidentally, we celebrated David's 60th birthday tonight. The panoramic view from the top of the hotel showing off the beautiful Florence countryside was only a hint of what we were about to embark upon over the next two weeks.



Day 2 September 6, 2024, Our first cycling destination from Chiesanouva was to a scheduled 16th century Chianti Family Winery whose family gave up its most pious sons to be the Roman Pope. At the Chianti Winery we learned of all the products and activities of most Italian wineries. Also, extensive work processes are needed to produce fine wines. Our winery tour guide was our one and only tour guide, David Charnes (impressive)!

At the end of the winery tour was a luxurious gourmet lunch highlighting three generous tastings of Chianti Wines, the olive oils, cheeses and four courses of your choice of a meat or vegan meal. Italy is famous for cooking and wine! Bon Appetit

The next destination was the finish of the first day riding to Radda where we checked into an incredibly beautiful 4-star 18th century villa. This was a complete resort with a pool and restaurants within the grounds. We, stay in this wonderful place for 2 nights. There, the first night Alex and I walked to town a short distance to the local wineshop, and each bought a bottle of red. A short walk back to the hotel reading room balcony. We went ahead to imbibe in a relaxing evening of conversation enjoying the evening balcony views. Later, Robin & Tee brought take-out pasta from the restaurant below since we were late for reservations. This pasta was delicious and fulfilling as my bottle of red! Also having the company of Randy and Debby.



Tasting our way through Tuscany wines and delicious food! Sunset in Radda.



Fitting our bikes for our adventure



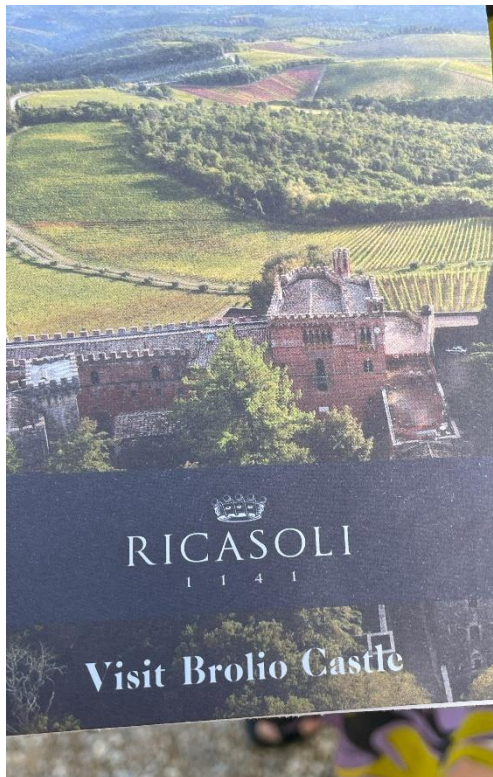
Courtyard at the castle



Wine time!!

Day 3 September 7, 2024, will be to the beautiful Brolio Castle 43k. It is amazing how a single family can manage to own such place for nine hundred years. There must be extensive wealth accumulated over that amount of time especially in wine...Italy is the world's largest producer of wine in the entire world!





The castle

Day 4 September 8, 2024, takes us from Radda to Volterra 61k 1070 mt up and 1220 mt down. Along the way there is an Etruscan necropolis tomb from the sixth century BC. Although the skeletal remains of this necropolis have since been removed, we climb down to see these sacred and eerie burial caves! Surviving the ghosts of the necropolis, on we go as a group for a nice, planned picnic luncheon at a little park area on the town terrace – Colle Valle D’ Elsa. On our way to the city of Volterra we climb up the Italian countryside full of rolling terrain to the city of Volterra. Our hotel, Albergo Etruria (2 nights) is right in the center of town and after a bit of Sunday rush hour we finally make our way. Our (fourth floor) hotel room windows overlook the busy center of town square with a gelato shop voted “World’s Best Gelato 2024” and not less than 15 people in line up to 100 people in line all day!



Best Gelato Italy 2024



Volterra

Day 5 September 9, 2024, A beautiful day from Volterra to San Gimignano is a 90k day with bit of up and down. Certaldo is our first stop. After Robin and I have our gelato brunch, we explore Certaldo and the only fortress wall that is still intact. Robin and I took a tour of the castle wall and coincidentally meet a friendly couple from our home state Washington. Like our times with covid this area of Italy suffered from the black plague of 1348



Andy, Anita, Clare and Alan out on the town



San Gimignano at night



The Tuscany group at the fountain San Gimignano

Day 6 September 10, 2024. San Gimignano loop ride and hike to Castelvechio After our hilly countryside ride, we stop at the Fenzi Farm Restaurant for a wonderful sit-down lunch. Nancy and I are the first e-riders to this majestic restaurant as the roadies struggle up the hills. This is an area famous for Vernaccia white wine. After lunch we hiked through the woods to the abandoned village of Castelvechio. We meet David's arranged caretaker for a guided tour of the abandoned village (abandoned around the time Columbus sailed to America!) This village was very remote, hidden in the woods and private with a church and about five hundred residents.

Day 7 September 11, 2024, San Gimignano to Siena Today we rode only 44k with 590M up and down to the 13th century castle of Monteriggioni. A historic town with a circular wall surrounding the entire village.





The Duomo in Siena



Fountain in Siena



Front of the Duomo in Siena. Beautiful!!!



Day 8 September 12, 2024, Siena to Montalcino 63k – On our way back, we met torrential stinging rainfall that caused all of us to seek shelter and dry out or call for help. About six rain drenched riders stopped at the closest restaurant for a warm bowl of soup and a roof over our heads. Later that evening we visited Montalcino Castle for a tour with an evening of Brunello wine tasting with bread, salami and cheese pairings. This wine was so expensive that no one could afford a single bottle at 90-200 Euros each. Montalcino is home to scenes from Oscar award winning movies and its claim to fame is Brunello di Montalcino wine (This became my favorite wine of the trip).



Day 9 September 13, 2024, Montalcino to Sant'Antimo loop ride. 32k 590M up and down.

We visited the Abbey of Sant'Antimo a historic abbey founded by Charlemagne in the ninth century with a winery tour of Poggio Antico Winery. A short uneventful ride for Friday the 13th.



Day 10 September 14, 2024, 37k 580m up and 610 down Montalcino to Pienza
After 9 or 10 days of riding, we need a bath, said the Roman soldiers of Medieval Times!
What better or more beautiful place than the fortress of San Quirico's natural hot springs!
Well after a short kilometer hike touring the spa town and seeing the hot spring sources, we opted for a soak and sun in the natural hot springs which was a destination resort for relaxation and rejuvenation for ancient, elite class Romans! Robin, Tee, Nancy, Debby, others and I enjoyed a relaxing soak in the extensive spring heated pools of San Quirico. We ride to Hotel Corsignano for another two-night stay in a room with views that will take your breath away!



The Brunello grapes



Bob, Cassie and Lee



Torture chamber

Day 11, September 15, 2024, 69k 1010 m up and down Pienza to Radicofani Castle loop ride. Today, a few riders took a day off to shop and rest in Pienza but missed a visit to the historical Radicofani Castle and a barbecue feast for carnivores and vegetarians alike. The ride to Radicofani Castle was a bit steep since the castle in 300-500AD, built for its elevated military vantage point was a checkpoint for all travelers to this region! Personally, I might easily be persuaded to avoid this castle after seeing the torcher chambers just inside the castle walls. But as a tourist this place was mystical! Do you realize that they began building this castle almost 1200 years before Columbus sailed to America. From my Viewpoint to the Mediterranean Sea, it still looks flat instead of round!



Anita, Laura, Andy and Doug



Radicofani Castle

Day 12, September 16, 2024, 19k Pienza to Montepulciano 290m up and 200m down
Today we visited the sustainable organic cheese farm “Il Casale” with an excellent guided tour from one of the owners followed by an organic sustainable lunch at their farm restaurant with food entirely produced on the farm. The farm has forty-nine full-time employees, and it is still exceedingly difficult to support a profitable sustainable operation. About the same number of employees as we saw sheep in the pasture. Staying at Hotel Duomo.



Day 13, September 17, 2024,
Montepulciano to Cortona 44k 460m up &
570m down.
This is where the film “Under the Tuscan Sun” took place. Our final group dinner is at a local restaurant with our twenty-four riders, tour leader David and sag driver Giulia. This has been a wonderful tour with no flats or bike crashes reported. Staying at Hotel San Michele



Day 14, September 17, 2024, Today’s ride from Montepulciano to San Michele was the steepest short climb of the entire trip! Alan was almost begging to trade my -bike for his roadie as he said that the climb to Hotel San Michelle was one of the hardest climbs he had done! I was tempted to trade because Allan sounded like he was about to blow a gasket. Clare enjoyed the climb with fewer complaints since Alan carried the weight advantage. Anita and Andy were strong climbers since they train in the Sierra foothills. Debby climbed with the best of them floating up the hills like a feather. Bob Clump was a trooper as he was not far behind Cassie on her road e-bike! Michael and Petra did great! Not sure how Alex, Cheryl or Lee felt about the climb. Cindy and Patrick were good to go, Doug and Laura rode

strong up the hill!

All others were on pedal assist e-bikes which were an ideal alternative to the road bikes since they all had wider tires for the rough and cobbled roads along with more traction when it rained.

As our tour ends, we say goodbye to new friends and old acquaintances as we shuttle to the Camucia-Cortona Train Station and to catch trains to our intended destinations.



2025 Tour Openings

SIGN UP BEFORE THEY FILL UP!!

South Island, New Zealand, March 6–22

Just four spaces are available on this fully supported, small group tour with experienced local guides of the lakes, mountains, and coasts on the beautiful South Island of New Zealand. As we bike from Christchurch to Queenstown, we'll see glacial lakes and stunning snow-capped mountains, after a couple days off, we continue to the south taking in more lakes and spectacular coastlines. Come experience one of the best places to ride a bike.



Central CO Rockies, July 9–17:

Escape the heat of summer as we ride in the Rocky Mountains in central Colorado. Each day, we will increase our mileage and elevation gain. The summer flowers will be in bloom. This semi fixed-base tour with just two hotels covers many great routes in the high country. We have room for you and your group of friends.



LINK TO SIGN UP FOR 2025 TOURS:

<https://www.heartcycle.org/tours>

ALASKA August 2-9

Can you think of a better way to see the amazing views of Alaska than from the seat of a bike? Us either! This loop tour through the central part of Alaska includes three meals per day and bike rental. This is your chance to bike the Last Frontier, Alaska.



Steamboat Springs NextGen, August 17–22:

Grab a younger relative and cycle with us in beautiful Routt County, Colorado! Our daily rides will have optional gravel additions to challenge you. This fixed-base tour has Old West ranches, lightly traveled roads, and scenic lake (FYI-All are welcome to sign up for this beautiful tour!)



LINK TO SIGN UP FOR 2025 TOURS:

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Paso Robles, October 18–26:

Come ride with us in the heart of Wine Country, California, on this classic fixed-base tour. Many sag stops are at the wineries, so you can stash a new bottle in the van to enjoy post-ride. October in Paso Robles is uncrowded with mild weather—a great way to wrap up your biking season.



**LINK TO SIGN UP FOR
2025 TOURS:**
<https://www.heartcycle.org/tours>



Colorado HeartCycle 2025 Tours

South Island, New Zealand

Christchurch, New Zealand

March 6-22 2025 Status: Open
16 Days, Int./Adv. \$5,100.00
Janet Slate jslate@totalspeed.com

Shikoku Pilgrimage, Japan

Koyasan, Japan

April 6-18 2025 Status: Wait List
12 days, Intermediate \$4,500.00
Tina Vessels tina.vessels@gmail.com

Springtime in Solvang

Solvang, California

April 12 – 19 2025 Status: Open
6 days, Int. \$1,660.00
Mark Lestikow mark.lestikow@closetfactory-colorado.com
Polly Lestikow
pollyb.lestikow@closetfactory.com

Underground Railroad Year 2

Mobile, Alabama

May 10-25 2025 Status: Open
14 days, Int./Adv. \$3,500.00
Jim Schroeder, jimmyschweb@gmail.com
Ron Finch, blouie-rfinch@comcast.net

Randonee 'en Dordogne, France

Bordeaux, France

June 1-13 2025 Status: Wait List
12 days, Int. \$3,500.00
Fred Yu frederickyu@comcast.net

MN-WI: Mississippi River Weave

June 21-30 2025 Status: Open
9 days, Int./Adv.
Minneapolis, MN \$2,000.00
Jim Schroeder jimmyschweb@gmail.com
Ron Finch blouie-rfinch@comcast.net

Central CO Rockies

Frisco, CO

July 9-17, 2025 Status: Open
8days, Int/Adv \$2,160.00
Guy Kelley guy.kelley@comcast.net
Scott MacCormack
SAMacCormack@gmail.com

Jackson Hole, WY

July 24-29, 2025 Status: Waitlist
5 days, Easy \$1,800.00
Clare Bena cbvamoots@gmail.com
Cindy Dore, cdorecycle@gmail.com

Alaska, the Last Frontier

Anchorage, Alaska

August 2-9, 2025 Status: Open
7 days, Intermediate \$4,280.00
Scott MacCormack
SAMacCormack@gmail.com

Steamboat Springs NextGen Tour

Steamboat Springs, CO

August 17-22, 2025 Status: Open
5 days, Intermediate \$1,350.00
Mark Lestikow mark.lestikow@closetfactory-colorado.com
Greg Lestikow glestikow@gmail.com

Acadia: Rocky Coastal Maine

Bar Harbor, Maine

September 8-16, 2025 Status: Waitlist
8 days Intermediate \$2,700.00
Patty Menz pattymenz@verizon.net
John Pennick jdpennick@gmail.com

Colorado HeartCycle 2025 Tours

Le Monastere in Southern France

Limoux, France

October 4-11, 2025

Status: Waitlist

7 days, Int/Adv

\$3,350.00

Tom Kissinger tom_k@pipeline.com

Paso Robles Wine Country

Paso Robles, CA

October 18-26, 2025

Status: Open

8 days Int/Adv

\$2,450.00

Cindy Alvarez sindelou2@gmail.com

Helayn Storch Helaynstorch@hotmail.com

**LINK TO SIGN UP FOR 2025
TOURS:**

<https://www.heartcycle.org/tours>

