

# waypoints

## TOUR OF KATRINA COUNTRY

In keeping with the theme of this issue, the briefs on these two pages are all about cause-related cycling. If you'd like to take your own ride this autumn while raising money for a good cause, there's definitely no shortage of opportunities. For one example, there's the Tour du Rouge, an inaugural 300-rider event going from Houston to New Orleans, October 18 through 23. While raising money for the American Red Cross – which, as almost everyone knows, is vital in helping out thousands of Americans when disaster strikes – riders will average around 90 miles per day for six days, viewing fine scenery, sampling a lot of good food, and witnessing the devastation that still lingers in the wake of hurricanes Rita and Katrina. The registration fee is \$100, and each rider must raise at least \$2,500 (a personal website and fundraising guidance are provided). The organizers stress that this tour is not for the inexperienced; you should be capable of riding 80 miles at an average speed of 15 miles per hour, including food and rest stops. Visit [www.tourdurouge.org](http://www.tourdurouge.org) for details.

## THE RACE OF HIS LIFE

Southern Californian rides to help fellow cancer victims



In 2007, Vinnie Tortorich was undergoing intensive treatment and chemotherapy for leukemia. Just one year later, in late July 2008, the ultra cyclist and professional trainer participated in the Race Across Oregon, a two-day, 535-mile odyssey involving some 40,000 feet of climbing.

“On Saturday, July 28, 2007, life as I knew it changed,” Vinne said. “Until that day, I was blessed with extraordinarily good health and a strong and able body. I was living my dream — or so I thought.”

At the time, Vinnie was in training for the Furnace Creek

508, a notorious 500-mile bicycle race across the Mojave Desert and Death Valley. “That afternoon they told me I had leukemia,” he said, “and I found myself facing the most important race of my life — the race against leukemia.”

Strapped to a chemotherapy pump 24 hours a day, Vinnie said winning had never been more important. As a result of that experience and with his cancer in remission, he decided to become involved in raising funds for other people affected by catastrophic illnesses. He raced the Oregon ride on behalf of the Maximum Hope

Foundation, which is dedicated to providing financial assistance to families who have been devastated by the excessive costs associated with caring for a terminally ill child or adult.

“Even with insurance, cancer is a very expensive illness. Not everyone is insured, and not everyone has someone to turn to,” Vinnie said. “Completing this race is my way of showing my gratitude for the love and care I received and for the second chance that I have been given.”

For more, go to [www.maximumhopefoundation.org/upcoming\\_events.html](http://www.maximumhopefoundation.org/upcoming_events.html).

## CONNECTING THE AMERICAS

Touring the U.S. for the sake of Venezuelan kids

Last March, Lisa Tylee of Great Britain set out on a planned 8,500-mile ride called Cycle Challenge USA. Lisa's primary goal, other than completing one huge loop around the Lower 48, was to raise funds for Veniños, a charity that she started. Registered in both the U.S. and the UK, Veniños is dedicated to improving the living conditions of Venezuelan children growing up in poverty and in dire need of assistance.

Beginning in Houston, Lisa's meandering route took her across the southern states to Florida, up the East Coast to New York, and west across the northern states to Colorado. From there, she plans continue on to California, down the West Coast to San Diego, and then back to Houston by late October.

This solo ultra-marathon ride is particularly impres-



sive in view of the fact that Lisa was born without a knee joint in her left leg. Because of this, she can use only one leg to pedal her specially-rigged bicycle. As she goes, she is giving both pre-arranged

and impromptu talks about Veniños and Cycle Challenge USA to schools, corporate groups, and community organizations. Visit [www.veninos.org](http://www.veninos.org) for information or to donate.

COURTESY OF VENIÑOS, VENEZUELAN CHILDREN IN NEED

SERENA SCOTT THOMAS

## BOY WONDER BIKES AND BIRDS

From the Yukon to Texas on the lookout for winged things

In a “bird year,” serious birders see who can identify the most species of birds in a 12-month period. Last June, 16-year-old Malkolm Boothroyd marked a year during which he had identified 548 species — a couple of hundred short of the North American record, but not bad considering that he and his parents, Wendy Boothroyd and Ken Madsen, did it all by bicycle.

Beginning from their

home in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, the trio pedaled to Big Bend National Park in Texas via the West Coast, raising more than \$20,000 for bird conservation as they went. In Texas Malkolm told *Victoria Advocate* reporter Tara Bozick that his fascination with birds began at age eight, when he would read bird books in the backseat while traveling with his father, who was working to save the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from

oil drilling. “Malkolm realized that trying to break a bird-year record would pollute the air with emissions if he used a vehicle,” Bozick wrote in a May 8 story, “so he decided to set a different record, only walking and bicycling to discover the birds.”

Malkolm estimates that the family flock saved nearly four tons of greenhouse gases by doing it their way. Go to [www.birdyear.com](http://www.birdyear.com) to learn more about their adventure.

## RACING FOR DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS

You've probably heard, read, or watched video clips about the two races that took place last summer on Adventure Cycling's Great Divide Mountain Bike Route. Both the fifth annual Great Divide Race and the first annual Tour Divide were loosely organized, self-supported, no-frills affairs (no awards went to the winners, for instance). The Great Divide Race, which went 2,490 miles from the U.S.-Canada border to the U.S.-Mexico border, had 18 starters and seven finishers. The Tour Divide, which tacked on the 221-mile Canadian extension of the Great Divide for a total of 2,711 miles, saw 16 racers lining up at the starting line in Banff, Alberta, with nine of them making it to the southern terminus at Antelope Wells, New Mexico.

Participants in the races came from throughout the U.S. as well as England, Germany, Romania, and New Zealand. In fact, the Great Divide Race doubled as a fundraising ride for Simon Kennett, a Kiwi from Wellington who is involved back home in a multi-faceted bicycle business ([www.kennett.co.nz](http://www.kennett.co.nz)). Simon's goal was to raise more than \$5,000 for his favorite charity, Doctors Without Borders.

“They are the first in and last out in these extreme situations,” Simon told reporter Jim Chipp of the *Wellingtonian* newspaper. “Their courage will inspire me.” Simon, who wrote about the race on his blog ([greatdividekiwi.blogspot.com](http://greatdividekiwi.blogspot.com)), covered the route in 19 days, five hours, and two minutes.