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Hello One and All!

My 15<sup>th</sup> year of the Trans NH Bike Ride is done and I wanted to report in, to you, my faithful supporters! Lindsey could not do the ride this year due to both a conflict she had and the injuries she suffered last year on the tandem that we could not correct with new seats and multiple adjustments. That meant that I would ride my 22-year-old steel framed touring bike. An old warhorse, similar to its rider!

The ride started on Friday morning, June 26, at the NH/Canadian border. There were just over 100 riders, most of who were on high tech road bikes. The day started well and then went down hill fast... and I am not talking about the roadway. The conditions came together to create a "perfect storm" and created, for me and many other riders, a very, very hard day. Those conditions were heat (well into the 80's), humidity (I would guess at least 60-70%), a head wind (10-15 mph right in our faces), and, for me, hydration. By mile 50 of the 100-mile day, I could not feel the bottoms of my feet. That was better than the pain that came next. Also my calves were starting to cramp. By the time I made it to the end line and got on the massage table, my legs were cramping up so badly that the massage therapist had to push my toes towards my knee to relieve the cramps. When she massaged my shoulders, I felt it in my feet. That afternoon and evening I drank at least 8 bottles of fluid and never had to get up in the night to pee. I was definitely de-hydrated.

Saturday and Sunday's rides were both much better for me. While we had rain off and on, it was not debilitating. The constant thumping caused by lousy pavement for at least 20 miles made Saturday's ride memorable...as in, I would like to forget it. I was happy to see I could still bike well both days. It proved once again, that I am still alive and kicking. And my old warhorse of a bike just keeps on tickin'.

But, by far, the biggest plus of the ride was re-connecting with Dan Hebert. Those long-term supporters among you...and that is most of you... might remember Dan. I rode in his honor for several years. He has MD and went to Concord High. He went on to college, started his PhD program, quit, got his driver's license, traveled to Thailand (just missed the tsunami), works for IBM as a programmer, and is just now buying his own house so he can live independently. This was the young man whose life expectancy was about 15 years. He is now 27. He met us at the finish and proudly showed me his van on which he has about 25,000 miles. Now, you want to talk inspiration and why I ride, there it is.

And as for the money...this year...because of you, I was able to raise over \$3,000. That, dropped into the bucket with everyone else's, means that, as a ride, we raised close to \$135,000 at last count. Considering our national economy, we felt we did extremely well.

So thank you all for your financial support and best wishes. I am glad it is over for this year but am already looking forward to year 16.

Tom