

# RUSA Board Member Candidates



**Brenda Barnell, RUSA #2362**

I'm excited about the opportunity to serve as a board member for RUSA. It would be an honor to give back to a wonderful organization that I have thoroughly enjoyed over the years, help spread the word about RUSA by getting others involved, help other members achieve their cycling goals and help promote the RUSA mission. If elected I will support RUSA's membership, board and provide valuable input to keep our organization growing and evolving.

I started randonneuring in 2004 and have been active ever since that first 200k. I participated in Boston-Montreal-Boston in 2004, Paris-Brest-Paris in 2007 along with the Cascade 1200k and Last Chance 1200k in 2010. I was honored to receive the Mondial Award in 2009 and have received the R-12 award for 6 consecutive years. I started with the Lone Star Randonneurs and was happy to be one of their K-Hound (over 10,000k) award members for several years. Recently, I moved to Southern California and I now ride with the Pacific Coast Highway Randonneurs.



**Jonathan Berk, RUSA #4415**

At some level I think all of us worry about the safety of riding. I know I do, especially in a PBP year. And as the inside front cover of the American Randonneur sadly attests, our fears are not without justification. In the four years I have been a member of RUSA, 4 people have died on brevets. Of course, we are talking about a very small sample, but to put this number in perspective, this frequency implies that if all Americans were members of RUSA, brevet riding would be the 8<sup>th</sup> leading cause of mortality in the country. It implies that brevet riding is more dangerous than motorcycle riding and we have a 50% higher chance of dying in an accident.

Bike riding is not the only dangerous activity I enjoy. I also backcountry ski and I think we could learn something from that sport. Because of avalanche research, backcountry skiers can reduce their risk if they choose. But brevet riders do not have this option. I would like to change that. As a social science professor, I would like to initiate a research study that could ultimately be used by our members to make our rides safer. My goal is to provide riders with enough information so they have the option to

improve their own safety and reduce their chance of an accident. If you are interested in more details about this initiative, have thoughts on this issue, or would like to help, please visit <http://saferando.blogspot.com/>.



**Rob Hawks, RUSA #2515**

I started my randonneuring career in 2004 when I rode my first fleche event with the San Francisco Randonneurs (SFR). In 2007 the SFR RBA was stepping down after many years of service. The club had once been brought back from dormancy and I wanted to make sure that didn't have to happen again, so I stepped forward to take on the role of RBA. My goal then was merely to keep the local club going so the next person could take it over and help the club flourish. Learning as I went, it soon became clear that this was the way I could give back to the local randonneuring scene, and four years later I'm still RBA and the club has grown considerably. The most central point of my efforts with SFR has been to make volunteering for the club easy, and on top of that, desirable. If left to one person, the club might not have grown as it has. That growth happened because many people have stepped up to

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contribute. I get so much out of the randonneuring community here in Northern California so I plan to continue to give back locally as the SFR RBA and by supporting the other NorCal brevet clubs in whatever way I can. A strong national organization will happen when many people step forward to contribute at that level, which is why I'm honored to have been nominated to run for a seat on the RUSA board.



**Paul Johnson, RUSA #1168**

It was a surprise to be notified that I had been nominated to the board of RUSA, especially as I have amassed a decidedly un-outstanding rando palmares. I rode my first brevet in September, 2001 and have since earned the Super Randonneur a couple times, annual distance medals of 1,000 through 5,000Km. The R-5000 and the R-12. I've completed five 1,200Km grand brevets, including PBP twice.

I'm more proud of the volunteer work I have done for our local club, and to a lesser degree RUSA. It always amazes me that such a large organization, with fairly complex international obligations gets all of its work done by the good will of its members. We have grown tremendously in the time I have been a member of RUSA and that could not have happened without lots of volunteer effort.

A vote for me is a vote for the consideration of change. Some say "If it ain't broke don't fix it" to which I say "You don't have to be bad to get better". Randonneuring has a rich tradition that should guide us but I will look for improvements that attract more people to the sport.



**Eric Vigoren, RUSA #2942**

As I sit at my desk on this sunny Sunday afternoon, pouring over spreadsheets and IRS forms, I ask myself, do I love RUSA conference calls, processing membership and insurance checks, writing quarterly insurance reports, preparing IRS tax forms, paying vendors, reconciling credit and bank statements, making sure we earn the best rate of interest on our money, and keeping us so flush with cash that RUSA dues are still only 20 bucks a year? Well, not exactly, but...

Do I love this club, our community, the members, the sport, the spirit of volunteerism that makes it all possible, and the satisfaction of working hard to help RUSA grow and thrive? Absolutely! RUSA is a fabulous organization, and it's been an honor and, yes, a pleasure to serve on the board and as treasurer. I'm eager to commit to another three years, and I hope you'll give me the opportunity to continue to work on behalf of our club, its goals, and our members. Thank you!

## RBA Liaison Candidate



**John Lee Ellis, RUSA# 153**

It's an honor to be nominated for the chance to continue what has been a very interesting and enlightening job as RBA Liaison! As an RBA I personally benefit from seeing the many bright ideas and new perspectives that other RBAs come up with. I get to work with fresh, new RBAs each year, and with folks who've been doing a great job since the founding of RUSA.

More than I'd like to admit, a "silly question" has turned out to be a very pertinent one. Why in fact did we decide to do things this or that way? What do I do if such-and-such situation crops up? How many ferry crossings can we have?

Just as randonneurs' goals have mushroomed - whether it's the R-12, multiple SR's in a year, or a 1200k each year (... or more than one!) - so have RBAs' schedules and aspirations. Many RBAs support R-12 hopefuls with brevets in more months. Some offer all or part of multiple SR series. More are organizing intriguing, well-produced 1000k's. And five of the seven 1200k grand randonnées in the world this year are RUSA 1200k's (four of them new!). What are RBAs thinking??

I think this is a great time to be an RBA, and to share in the energy and growth. And if I can help out as RBA Liaison, I am pleased to do so.