Louie and Rebecca Berry of Portland, Oregon, head out to the 17th annual Mount Adams Country Bike Tour.

Photos by Joel Hart IV

Cyclists Take to the Trail at Mount Adams

Cyclists and volunteers gather near Mount Adams for annual event

By Caleb Flowers

Folks come from throughout the Pacific Northwest each year to breathe in the fresh mountain air and participate in the Mount Adams Country Bike Tour.

More than 250 riders journeyed to Trout Lake the last Saturday in June to take on the southern slopes of Mount Adams, marking the 17th year of the gathering.

The quaint town doesn't see much bustle throughout the year, but the community pulls together to host cycling enthusiasts, families and friends alike. Exceptional weather and splendid mountain views create the ideal location to cruise around paved roads, whether you take the easier routes or more challenging courses.

The event is sponsored by the Trout Lake Area Business Association. Proceeds go to local nonprofit and community service groups. Since 2003, the event has raised as much as $7,000 annually to support school programs, fire departments and other local interests.

"Pretty much the whole thing is only possible due to the enormous number of volunteers from the community," says Dalton Hance. "They man the registration tables and rest stops, operate the ham radios for communications support and drive sag wagons to patrol the course."

Dalton and his wife, Emma, took over as directors of the 2019 event. As residents of Trout Lake, Dalton and Emma saw the need for someone to take the reins at the coordinator level.

Justin Black of Doctor Roscoe's Holistic Bicycle Repair puts the finishing touches on Louie Berry's recumbent bike before the Mount Adams Country Bike Tour.

"I don't own a business and am not a member of the TLABA," Dalton says. "I just like bikes and Trout Lake. Somebody needed to step up, so my wife and I did. I felt like if we didn't take it over, it might not happen this year."

Other notable volunteers who pitch in each year are Bev Meyer of the Trout Lake Store, Cheri VanLaar of the Trout Lake Café and Nancy Lucas, who coordinates the considerable cookie baking forces of Trout Lake.

Donald Moore, call sign WA7KME, is an officer with Radio Amateurs of the Gorge—a special service radio club out of Hood River. Each year, Don oversees radio communications with other FCC-licensed radio broadcasting volunteers.

Don't let the term "amateur" fool you, though. Together, they cover more than 100 miles of roadway via the airwaves to ensure medical, mechanical and other tactical resources are available for bikers in need. Each cyclist is accounted for via check-ins by the six radio controllers. No one is getting lost on the mountain on their watch.

Another volunteer who offers his expertise each year is Justin Black, better known to the cycling community as Doctor Roscoe. Justin is the owner and operator of Doctor Roscoe's Holistic Bicycle Repair in Bingen. With his makeshift mobile pit stop, he ensures each bike is in peak performance and no rider is stranded by malfunctioning equipment.

"The early riders know their stuff, but by the time the family groups roll in, it's lots of pumping tires, setting chains and checking brakes," Justin says.

The hardcore cyclists—those who ride every weekend, according to Justin—show up early and take on the 105-mile Infinity Ride. It's a combination of two 50-plus mile rides. Altogether, these routes see more than 6,500 feet in elevation gain.

For those looking for a more leisurely outing, there is the 11.5-mile Family Fun Ride. While it's not so demanding, this route still strategically affords multiple panoramic views of both Mount Adams and Mount Hood.

Dalton hopes to be able to introduce a few gravel routes to next year's ride to enrich the tradition.

Louie and Rebecca Berry are two of the skilled cyclists who turn out every year from Portland. They enjoy the quiet country roads and going at their own pace on a pair of recumbent trikes. Together, they have been riding around Mount Adams for 21 years.

This year, Louie and Rebecca brought along Punkin, their service dog who assists Rebecca following multiple back surgeries.

The town collectively takes pride in how its fantastic routes bring riders back year after year. ■

Find out more about the Mount Adams Country Bike Tour, including updates on the 2020 event, at www.troutlakewashington.com/the-rides.