

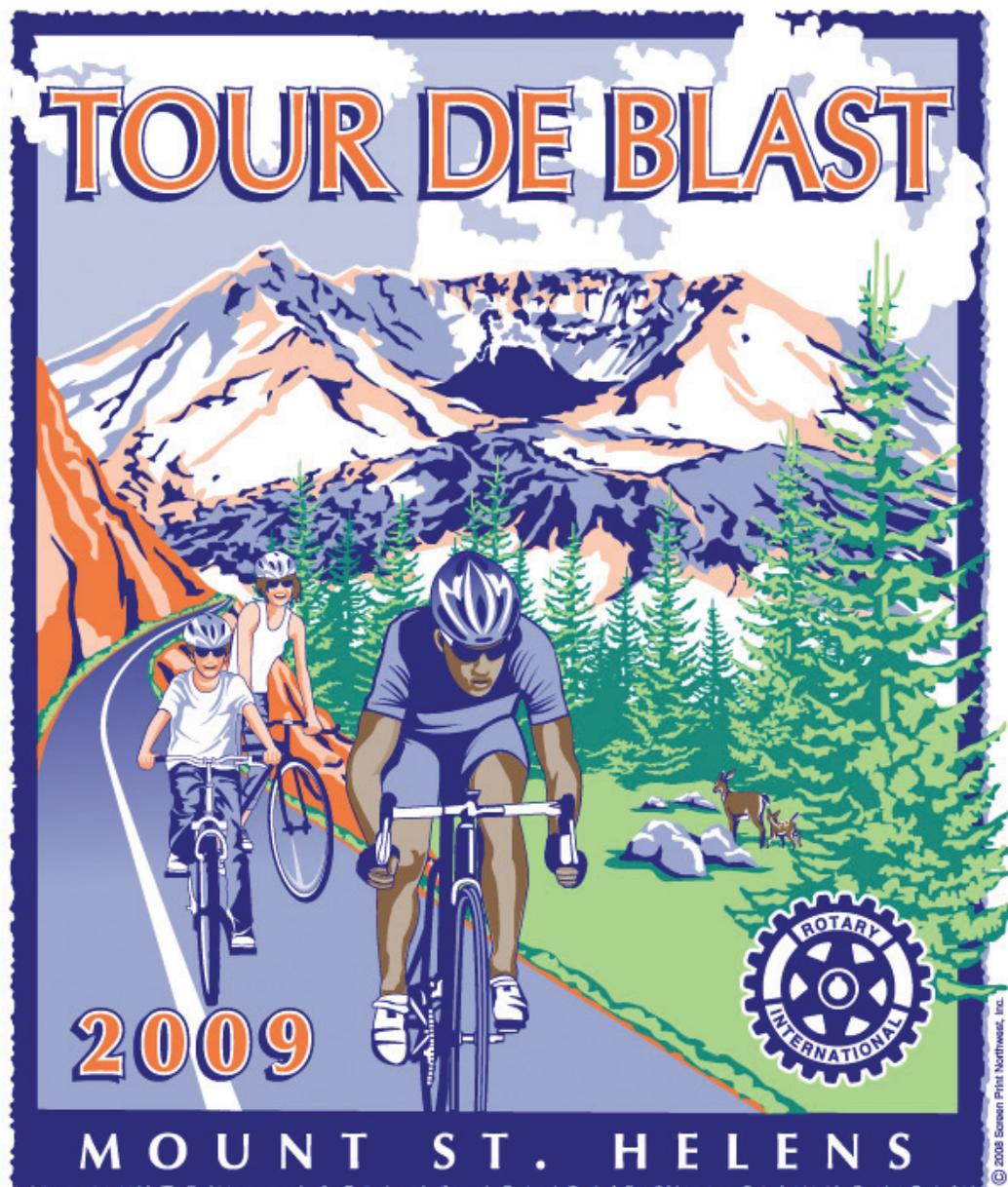
Presented by the Longview Rotary
Club Saturday, June 20, 2009
at Toutle, Washington

Rider feedback helps to make 2009 a blast!

Welcome to the 2009 Tour de Blast.

The Longview Rotary Club is pleased to produce one of the most awe inspiring and challenging bike rides in North America. We expect 1,600 riders to participate in today's event. That is 20 percent more this year than last, in spite of one of the worst recessions in history. Our permit with the Forest Service allows Rotary to host 2,500 riders. Our goal is to reach that target soon. We have heard from many riders tell us about the strengths and weaknesses of our event. We have "gone to school" on these comments and have made some adjustments to enhance the ride today. As you might imagine, the logistics of providing food and water along the course is a challenge especially given the changing weather. We try hard to balance the supply of fresh perishable food with the demand and the cost. This year we corrected some of our supply chain issues and hope you will like the result. We have enhanced our website and made an effort to make our registration process more user friendly. Please remember that nearly all the support personnel at the school and along the route are volunteers and many are not familiar with the needs of cyclists. We will do our best to provide for you but we have difficulty reading minds. If you need something or have a comment, please search out a yellow jacketed Rotarian and they will do their best to help. The proceeds from this event go directly to our community and international service projects.

You may note that we have more security related people on the ride and rest stops this year. As our ride becomes more widely regarded, so too do our security concerns. We work closely with the Cowlitz County Department of Emergency Management. Members of law enforcement, the State Highway department, US Forest



Service and medical response agencies have participated in the planning and you will see their representatives on the ride today. They know this area well having experienced incidents from prior years, hazards that come from weather, cycling on an active highway and the actions of wildlife along the way. Be thankful they are there for your protection and take their direction seriously.

In every ride there are many human interest stories that evolve. One of particular

note this year is the story of Olivia, age 12. She is participating for the third year in a row with her father Richard by her side. Richard wrote a compelling story after last year's ride about Olivia's tenacity to make it to the top and back. With Richard's permission we posted Olivia's story on our website www.tourdeblast.com.

Olivia rode 77 of the course's 82 miles before time ran out. This year Olivia is back with her dad. Longview Rotary salutes Olivia and her determination and asks all riders to join with Rotary in providing Olivia with encouragement along the ride.

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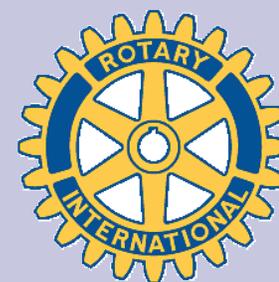


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**Service
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Good gear paves the way for a great ride

By Michael Bartlett, MD
LONGVIEW ROTARY CLUB

Anyone who has ridden the Tour de Blast knows the weather variations we experience. What with the elevation changes and locale, we have ridden through sun, fog, sleet, rain, snow and slush.

The ride starts at about 500 feet and winds up at 4,200 feet. However, if you complete the entire ride, you will have covered an elevation change of over 8,000 vertical feet. June temperatures, of course, vary with the conditions, but they usually range between the low 40s and 60-70s in the sunshine.

The first bit of advice is to prepare ahead for the weather, just as you hopefully have trained for the long fun ride. Use all available resources at your disposal: newspaper, Internet Web sites (weather sites, Mount St. Helens site, tourdeblast.com site, etc.). Check the forecast in the final week leading up to the ride and most importantly, the “morning of” before you leave the house, hotel, campground, etc.

Secondly, determine the type of rider you are. Your clothing choices and accessories may be different if you're a casual social rider who does not intend to ride the entire Tour. On the other hand, for the “roadie” who wants to set the Tour Record, your gear will be light and scant.

For all riders, I recommend some form of storage device. For some it may be their back pockets on their jersey, for others it will be a larger “Camelback” hydration system with storage compartments. For others, it can be an efficient saddlebag or other attachment to the bike. These devices don't have to be large, just enough to fit compact raingear, some tools (patch kit, tire irons, a rolled-up spare inner tube – don't forget to bring the pump) and quick energy “carb” food.

Speaking of food, fighting the cold wet weather uses energy. Plan to carry high-energy bars/food and liquids.

Consider purchasing a thermos that fits into a water bottle cage (secured with some extra straps). Fill it with a non-alcoholic hot beverage for the ride back.

Clothing for cold conditions

For the newer riders, a rule of thumb for cycling states, “don't overheat yourself.” You want to be a little cold just before the ride starts. If comfortably warm at the start, you'll roast on the ride. Another rule involves the concept of “layered clothing.” This is a standard for most outdoor endurance sports. Layering allows you to add or subtract layers *before* you get to cold or too hot. Don't wait until it's too late, or you will have a very uncomfortable ride. Let us look at these three layers.

Packing for the Tour

Below we will discuss what to bring for the Tour, but first a hint for packing all that gear.

I recommend that you pack two separate bags, one for warmer, sunny weather and another for cool, wet conditions. Bring both on the day of the Tour. You never know what is happening on the mountain.

Be sure to check the up-to-date weather report for the most current conditions.

Inner layer, closest to skin

For this layer, you want “wicking” material, which takes moisture off of your skin and transfers it to the middle layer. Look for products with brand names such as Coolmax, Thermax, Drylete, or polypropylene.

Avoid cotton. Cotton holds the moisture in the fabric and will chill you on the ride back down the mountain.

For cold, wet rides, consider a long-sleeve version with a turtle neck/zipper.

Middle layer

This layer provides warmth and holds the moisture your inner layer “pulls off.”



“ The TDB offers some of the best scenic views in the world. It also offers a wide variety of weather conditions that a rider must prepare for in order to enjoy the ride to its full extent. ”

Dr. Michael Bartlett,
Rotary member

A simple T-shirt or wool jersey will do. Even the team jersey will suffice.

Short sleeves or even a “vest-like” style will allow arm movement and keep your clothes from bunching up.

Outer layer

This is a critical layer because there are multiple functions involved. You need material that is windproof, breathable, lightweight and rainproof. Gortex and Entrant are two products that provide these features.

One way to allow easy control of the changes in temperature conditions or level of moisture produced is to buy clothing with zipper features.

Look for turtlenecks with zippers, or full zipper jackets with “arm pit zippers” for ventilation. Pay a little more for these features, and you will thank yourself on the ride. Often, you will find you need less layering or will avoid many clothing changes on the road.

Head

Of course we all wear helmets for even the smallest rides. Right? Now, with all of the high-tech ventilation advances, you can get pretty cold on those long descents.

We can lose large amounts of heat through our head (more than others if follicularly challenged).

For extra warmth, add one of these under your helmet: cycling cap, ear bands, “Swix” earmuffs or a Lycra headband.

You can even buy a Gortex helmet cover that fits right over your helmet.

For eye protection, I advise wearing a pair of glasses with interchangeable lenses. Insert the yellow or clear lenses to help in lower light conditions. They help keep your eyes warm in windy descents and offer vision protection from other riders' “tail spray” in the rain.

Hands

All cyclists should wear biking gloves. They save your hands in a fall, offer a quick clean of your tires if you ride through glass and provide critical warmth when needed.

For cold weather, use silk glove liners under full finger gloves. Up the glove size if you find the fit is too tight. I suggest that you try both the liners and gloves together at the store before you buy both.

Pack some “hot short” finger warmers for the descent or extreme windy rides. Be careful to allow for good grip on the handlebars. You want to have full control of the bike and brakes at all times. Don't let the warmers interfere with bike control.

Descents can make fingers extremely cold, decreasing response time. Resist screaming down the mountain. Okay, so I'm spoiling your fun. If your bike starts to wobble or shimmy, you run the risk of crashing.

Braking in a shimmy can be dangerous and difficult. Apply brakes gently over longer periods of time

Cont. on page 3



Photo ©Bill Perry

Mt. St. Helens ~ take another look

During the years that have passed since the 1980 eruption of Mt. St. Helens, the landscape has staged a remarkable recovery, as plant and animal life have returned to stake a claim. Today, the volcano and the surrounding blast zone serve as a unique, living laboratory, open for public viewing and enjoyment.

Four world-class facilities have been built to help visitors comprehend the dramatic events of 1980 and the recovery that has followed.

While Mt. St. Helens is the centerpiece, Cowlitz County and the surrounding area are loaded with recreational and cultural opportunities. Bike or hike on the side of an active volcano. Fish for steelhead, salmon, and trout. Test your golf game on one of three outstanding courses. Or simply soak up the rich local history.

The Cowlitz County Tourism Bureau invites you to discover the magic of Mt. St. Helens and Southwest Washington on your next vacation!

For more information at:
www.visitmtsthelens.com

Current State Route 504 Visitor Center's Hours:

- Silver Lake Visitor Center: Open 7 days, 9-4
- Seven Wonders Museum: Open most days, 9-5
- Hoffstadt Bluffs Visitor Center: Open 7 days 9-5
- Fire Mountain Grill Open 11-5, closed on Tues and Wed.
- Weyerhaeuser Forest Learning Center: Open until Sept. 7, Fri-Sun 10-4;
- Gift Shop & Restrooms Open 7 days a week 10-6
- Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center: CLOSED
- Johnston Ridge Visitor Center: Open 10-6 through October

Visit TourDeBlast.com

for registration information,
testimonials,
accommodations and rider info



www.visitMtStHelens.com

COWLITZ COUNTY TOURISM BUREAU

Good Gear— cont. from page 2

with on and off motions to avoid locking up the bike or overheating the pads.

Conclusion

If you remember only two things from this article, plan ahead with clothing options and use layers. The Tour de Blast offers some of the best scenic views in the world. It also offers a wide variety of weather conditions that a rider must prepare for in order to enjoy the ride to its full extent.

A little preparation will give you the ride of a lifetime. See you at the top!



**Good gear =
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Have a
**safe ... and
fun ride!**

JOHN LEBER
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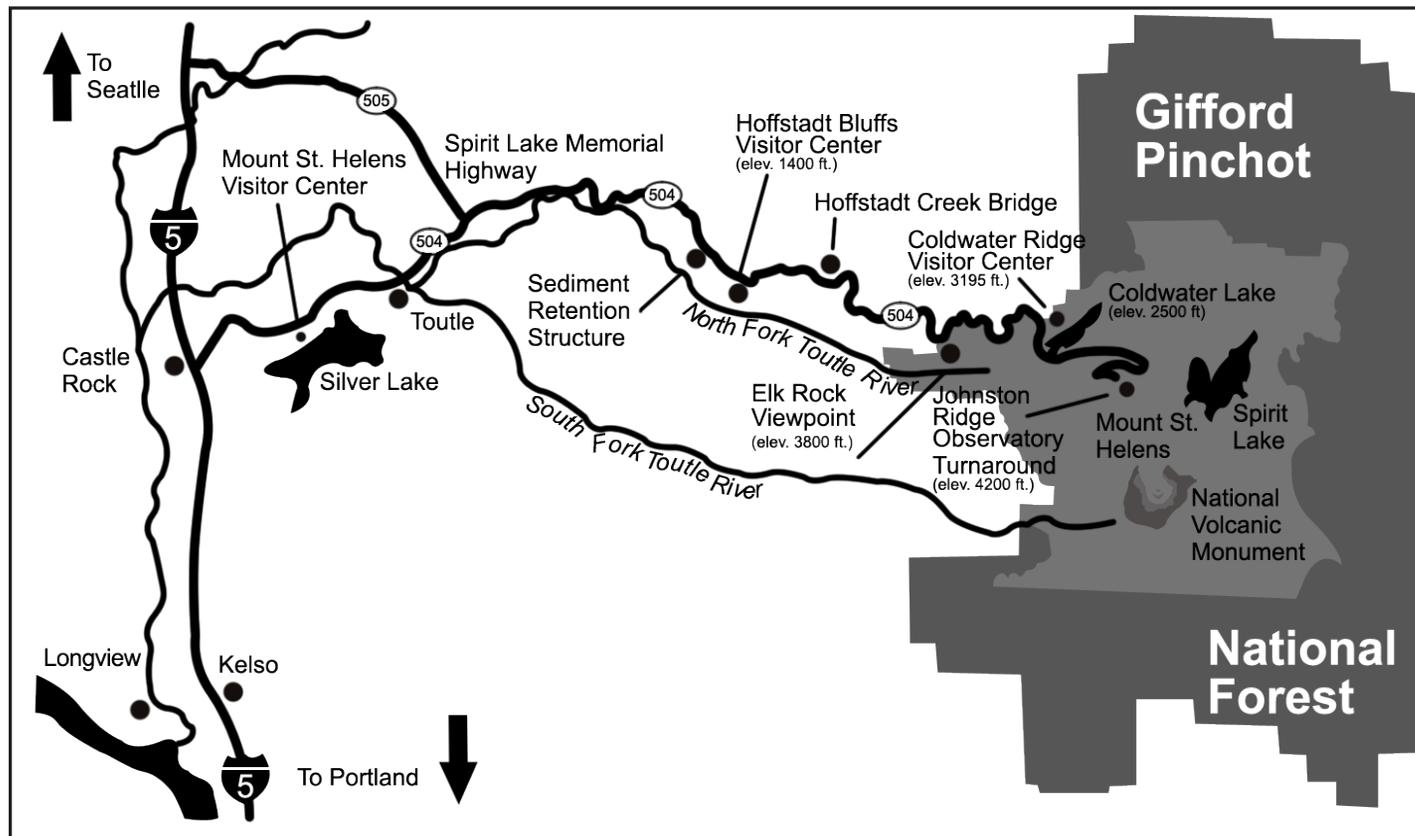
A Mile-by-Mile Guide to the Tour de Blast

By Buz Ketcham
LONGVIEW ROTARY CLUB

Many of our Tour de Blast riders today were not alive before that incredible Sunday morning May 18th, 1980. I and many of my Longview Rotarian colleagues serving you today remember it very well. The global media had spotlighted Mt. St. Helens during the winter of 1980. Volcanologists from around the world had seen the signs of a dormant volcano returning to life. The physical science world descended upon Southwest Washington to watch the rebirth of Louwala-Clough, the Indian name which means "Smoking Mountain." The Captain George Vancouver expeditions in the Puget Sound area in 1792 caused the mountain to be renamed to the Anglo "St. Helens" in honor of the British diplomat Baron St. Helens Alleyne Fitzherbert.

The scientists told us it was simply a matter of time before the mountain would erupt. Speculation was rampant as the media shared countless opinions from scientists who actually knew something, to those that just wanted to make headlines by forecasting all manner of happenings.

One of the many credible scientists serving the United States Geological Survey was volcanologist David Johnston, PhD. He was manning his post a few miles NNW of the mountain when he called via radio at 8:22 am that the eruption had begun. Dr. Johnston had considerable experience with active volcanoes in Alaska. Johnston and his close associates understood better than most the hazards of explosive volcanism. They promoted remote monitoring techniques and helped persuade the local authorities to limit access to the area around the volcano, thereby holding the death toll to a few tens instead of thousands. Dr.



Johnston was swept away in the blast. The Johnston Ridge Observatory was named in his honor.

The following is a mile-by mile guide to The Tour de Blast:

MILE 0

We begin our trek today at the Toutle Lake High School, home of the Fighting Ducks. For many years, the good folks at Toutle High have made their facility and staff available for this event and we are very grateful to them for their excellent hospitality. The Registration Area is near the parking lot. Here you will be assigned your rider number and given a packet of helpful materials including this insert. The High School serves as the ride headquarters for all services provided. The Start-Finish line is here. After your ride, you will be welcomed back to the high school where hot showers and a celebratory pasta feed will refresh your weary bones and muscles. You will see riders from all ages and ethnicities today. We have registrants from all over North America including riders

from as far away as Massachusetts, Maine, the Virgin Island and even Bulgaria. Today we also welcome back to the Tour de Blast, Olivia Rhodes, age 12. Olivia and her dad Richard made it to the top 2 years ago riding a tandem. Last year Olivia made an incredible effort to make it to the top on her own power but fell just short of her goal. She rode 77 of the course's 82 miles. Today, Olivia is back and intends on her own power to defeat the mountain. If you see her, give Olivia, all 80 pounds of willful determination, some encouragement. Welcome to all, as Rotary International — founded in diversity — supports your effort today.

Turning onto State Route 504 you begin your easterly climb to your goal. The first several miles are flat and varied, lulling you into a misplaced sense that the ride will be a breeze. About a mile out you first encounter the Toutle River. You are now entering the Mt. St. Helens Tree Farm run by the Weyerhaeuser Company. Douglas Fir trees are the

species popular in this area due to its fiber strength and willingness to flourish in the mild and wet climate this side of the Cascade Range.

MILE 5

State Route 505 merges from the North into SR 504 here. At mile 6 the evidence of the blast's devastation on the Toutle River begins to be ever-present. At mile 7 you cross the North Fork of the Toutle River which will be your companion for much of the ride. The small community of Kid Valley is encountered at mile 8. Many drivers have ignored the warnings that this is the last source of gasoline to be had for 60 miles. Up ahead is a dilapidated A-frame home that was demolished in the pyroclastic flow of the blast. It is here that you can glimpse the supports of bridges that failed under the torrent of water and debris rushing down the mountain that day.

MILE 10

You begin to feel the pull of gravity on your legs now as the road turns upward toward your destination.

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Challenging ride offers spectacular views

It's not the longest or biggest ride in the Northwest, but if you've ridden in the Tour de Blast before, you'll agree no ride offers participants more spectacular scenery. If Mother Nature cooperates, you will be rewarded with breathtaking views of Mount St. Helens' crater and the aftermath of the volcano's devastating May 18, 1980, eruption.

The ride, with a total length of 82 miles (132 kilometers), follows Spirit Lake Memorial Highway from Toutle, Wash., past the Coldwater Lake Visitor Center to the Johnston Ridge Observatory.

The completion of the final seven-mile leg of highway in 1997 opened up new vistas of the mountain and the blast zone.

Johnston Ridge, the turnaround point for the ride, is a scant five miles from the crater.

This is an open-highway ride.

It will be challenging, but you will be rewarded with spectacular views of a dramatically damaged, but healing and evolving landscape.

We've tried to take steps to make the ride enjoyable, memorable and safe.

There will be three pit stops along the route that will be equipped with bathrooms and fully stocked with beverages and an assortment of nutritionist-designed snacks. Hot showers will be available at Toutle

Lake High School following the ride. Please bring your own towel. An end-of-ride pasta feed will help ease your hunger.

We've taken a number of steps to try to ensure riders' safety:

Rotarians and members of the Goldwing motorcycle club will patrol the route to assist with breakdowns

adequate visibility. A two-mile section of older roadway will be marked and patrolled, so riders and drivers can take extra precautions. Single-file riding will be required in that stretch. Otherwise, riders should not ride more than two abreast.

Please obey all traffic signs and speed limits – even when you're

The ride starts and ends at Toutle Lake High School, located along Spirit Lake Memorial Highway – listed on maps as SR 504 – about 10 miles east of Castle Rock and Interstate 5, exit 49.

The drive to Toutle from Seattle is about three hours and less than 1.5 hours from Portland.

Check signs for parking

Signs will direct you to parking areas at the high school. Registration opens at 6:30 a.m. on ride day.

You can pick up your T-shirt at registration, but don't wait too long. Late in the day, we could be out of your size.

Starting area is open from 6:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. You choose when you want to start. The end-of-the-ride pasta feed will be from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

In the packet of information you are receiving today, you should also find a ride number with three coupons and three safety pins. Be sure to bring your ride number with you and wear it at all times during the ride.

It is your ticket for food, drink and help along the ride. Please fill out the emergency information on the back of the ride number. The coupon is for entry to the pasta feed.

Stay on the roadway

Remember that most of the ride is within the boundaries of the 110,000-acre Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument, which was established in 1982 to preserve the volcanic landscape in an undisturbed condition. Try to keep human disturbances to a minimum. Stay on the roadway at all times, and please do not litter.

Thanks

Thank you once again for joining us. Your participation has helped the Longview Rotary Club fund charitable causes locally and internationally.



and injured or tired riders. They will also carry first aid kits and tire tubes.

Castle Rock Ambulance will station an ambulance along the route. We have staggered starting times to avoid congestion and clumping up.

But it also up to the riders to help us avoid injuries.

On a sunny June day, auto traffic may be heavy.

If your party included a mix of riders and sightseers, arrange to meet at the viewpoints or the visitor centers at Coldwater Lake of Johnston Ridge.

Most of the two-lane roadway has wide shoulders and more than

making the long run down Elk Rock and back down from Johnston Ridge. The Washington State Patrol will be ticketing.

The most difficult portions of the ride will be a gradual eight-mile climb to 4,200 feet elevation on Elk Rock. From there you descend to Coldwater Lake, elevation 2,530 feet, and then begin the four-mile climb up Johnston Ridge.

This is a mountain ride, so bring along some warm clothes and remember that alpine weather can change quickly.

Don't forget your camera. The views are spectacular.

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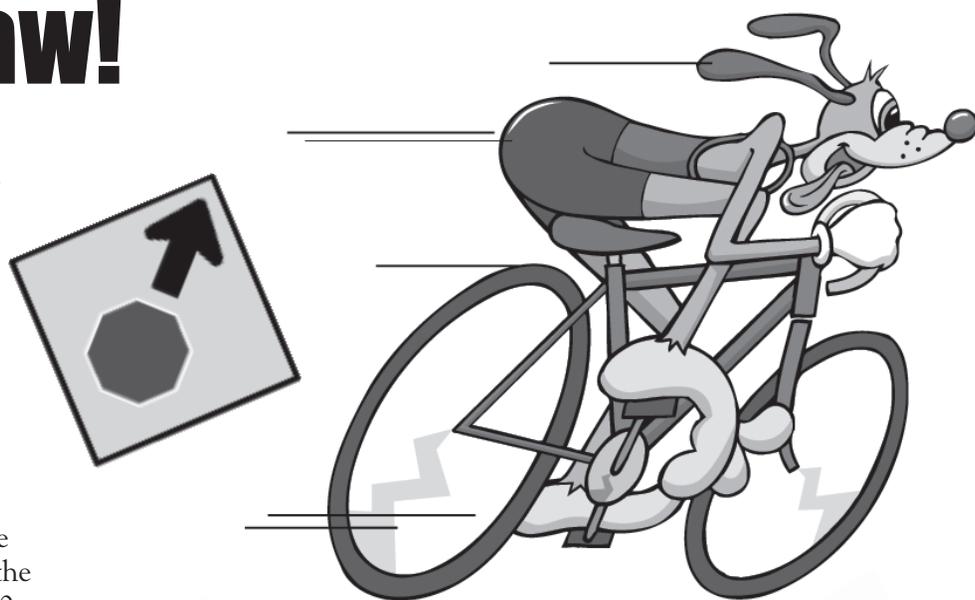
Obey the Rules of the Road ... it's the law!

Participants in the **Tour de Blast** need to keep in mind the fact that the ride takes place on a start highway that remains open to vehicular traffic. That not only means that riders need to take normal precautions for their own safety, but also that the Rules of the Road adopted as state law in chapter 46.61 of the Revised Code of Washington apply throughout the ride. In particular, RCW 46.61.750 provides that the Rules of the Road applicable to bicycles as found in RCW 46.61.750 through 46.61.780 apply whenever a bicycle is operated upon any highway. Violation of those rules is a traffic infraction subject to monetary penalties.

We have received a number of reports in past years from folks driving the highway on the day of the Tour de Blast that they have encountered bicycle riders in groups riding three or more abreast. Riding in that fashion creates an unreasonable risk for the riders, particularly so in light of the limited visibility encountered at various points along the route and the weekend traffic levels experienced in the Spirit Lake Memorial Highway.

Moreover, RCW 46.61.770 prohibits riding bicycles more than two abreast upon any roadway. It also requires any person operating a bicycle upon a roadway at a rate of speed less than the normal flow of traffic to ride as near to the right side of the lane as is safe, except for appropriate turning movements or while overtaking and passing another bicycle or vehicle. Again, these regulations apply to Tour de Blast riders.

Law enforcement officers from both the Cowlitz County Sheriff's Office and the Washington State



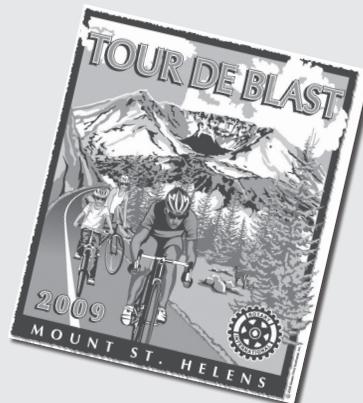
Patrol will be patrolling the highway the day of the ride. Riders should expect those officers to enforce the law where they see violations creating safety hazards.

In short, obey the law. It exists to protect all highway users. Ride to the right, no more than two abreast.

Information provided by the Cowlitz County Sheriff's Office.

Stay up to date - join our mailing list:

Longview Rotary Club
Tour de Blast
P. O. Box 1105
Longview, WA 98632
Or e-mail us at
support@tourdeblast.com



Buses available to shuttle riders

In past years, we have used the traditional SAG wagons to transport riders to and from various rest stops one the mountain. This year, we will use busses that can accommodate more riders and bicycles.

Sincere thanks to CAP in Longview, Monticello Park Assisted Living and Koelsch Senior Communities for the donation of their buses. These buses will operate in three distinct areas. One will go from Toutle to Hoffstadt Bluffs, the second from Hoffstadt to Elk Rock and the third will go to Johnston Ridge. Please remember that we cover a large area and it takes time for the busses to travel from point to point.

The hill support for the ride begins to close at 4 p.m., plus you will not make it back in time for the pasta feed.

In past years, we have made every effort to stop individual riders to inform them that the services are closing.

We will continue to do our best to alert riders, but please use common sense. We cannot hold mountain staff in place for just a few riders.

As a registered rider, you have access to all monument areas for no additional charge. Although support vehicles are always welcome (copywriter's note: On page 6, paragraph 13, it is stated that Personal Support Vehicles are not allowed), non-riders will be charged an admission fee to the attractions.

Thank you for your support!

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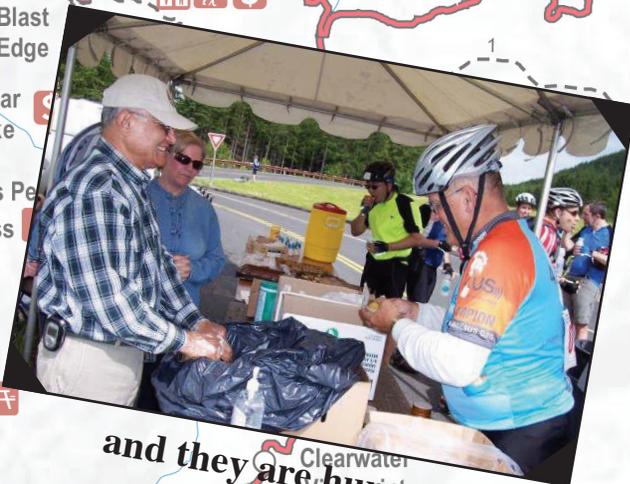
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Looking back ... 2008 riders rock at the Tour De Blast!



Road warriors thirst for more ...



and they are hungry!



Carbs to keep you pumpin' ...



or is that dessert?



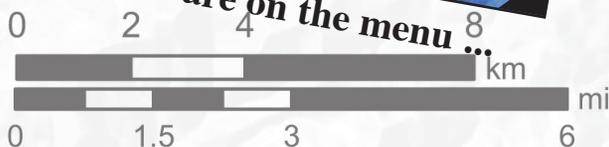
Tall tales are on the menu



Swift, it was awesome, Dude!

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