

Over the last ten days, I pedaled about 600 miles. I woke up on Saturday the 18th and meandered over to Rollins Park in Concord, NH, to do a 25-mile bike ride in honor of my parents (both cancer survivors, who lost four friends in eleven days last month to cancer) and in honor of my dear friend, Martin Capodice, who is struggling with a rare type of this ubiquitous affliction.

I flew around the course on my electric assist bicycle, which is on loan to me through the conclusion of the 2011 Clotheslines Across America Tour, scheduled for July 5 through October 4. Much thanks is due to the S & W Sports for their generosity and their un-ending patience with a neophyte who desires to show the world that millions of us could bike to work without breaking a sweat. *Trek and Ride + are marketing my bike as the no sweat solution!*

On Sunday morning, I left Concord and headed north. My first brief stop was in Andover, NH, at Carr Field. This was exactly a marathon into my 82-mile day. I took another break 9.1 miles later at Dick's Village Gas in Danbury, NH, and then made it to Salt Hill Pub in Lebanon for a 1:03 PM lunch. Boy, did I eat like a horse! I was in West Hartford by 3 PM and then I started to slow down. I made it to McCoullough's Quick Stop in Bethel by 5:30 PM, having stopped at the food market in downtown South Royalton less than hour prior to wolf down a grapefruit. At the Quick-Stop, I made a long stop and called the owner's brother, an old friend, and my anticipated host to see if he would zip down in his pickup and drag my tired, aching body up the long hill of the North Road to their cozy home.

That night, my hands hurting from poor form and inadequate preparation, I shared an incredible dinner with that beautiful family. It was the first of my amazing house stays on this adventure. We had a feast of chicken and potatoes and peas as Phyllis and Frank's two daughters and four of their grandchildren huddled around the table. The three granddaughters, whose mother home schooled them for a while and who still keeps a TV-free home, were a complete joy, like the daughter in Wendell Berry's [*To a Siberian Woodsman*](#). They all love to read and lacked the freneticism so common in other children their age, who are more plugged in to our technologically-burdened culture. The fourth grandchild, Raven, was three when I last saw him. He is a boisterous, very alive deceptively angelic-looking ninth grader so full of life it seems to bursting from his seams.

I woke in the morning and set out for Middlebury, instead of turning around. Stopping at Green Mountain Bikes to ask a couple questions and eating at the books and food place in Rochester, this was my easiest day--a mere 45 miles total that included an ascent of Middlebury Mountain.

I took the battery from 100% charged to zero in three short miles. Fully-loaded the promises of Trek that the bike should take you eighteen miles on level 4 (200% assist) did not pan out. I made it, though, and zipped down the other side past Bread Loaf, peeling off in Ripton to see if Bill McKibben was home and dropping in on the Kings, Otter Creek Audubon friends from a score of years past who live "atop the world."

Mid-afternoon after a couple hours of wireless catch-up on office work at Sama's Market, I knocked at Charlotte Chase's door and she asked, glibly, "Are you looking for a place to stay?" With an open invitation to stay with my beloved cousin Charlie, I demurred, but she insisted and we had a wonderful afternoon of catching up before I hopped in her new car to join friends at Mr. Ups for supper and drinks. One of the friends, Anne Klinck Cluss, RN, asked me why I was not staying with her and Bob--the dean of curriculum at Middlebury (my *alma mater*) and also her husband. "There is always the ride home," I said. Indeed, the lure of a hot-tub and getting to know them both better was irresistible and so I would come to stay with them...but we are not there yet. First, I must get to Canton, NY.

I left Charlotte's, my belly full of OJ, bacon and eggs, at 7 AM and wasted a good bit of time getting turned around for I had forgotten that just out of town Seymour Street takes a sharp turn to bring you out by the Morgan Horse Farm. I was at said farm by 8AM, though, and continued northward following Google Maps bike directions out Green Street into the beautiful hinterlands of northern Addison and southern Chittenden Counties. I zoomed up the hill to Vergennes and wended my way to the country store in Charlotte (travellers beware: they don't share their bathroom even with patrons). Here I gobbled up a power bar and raced for Burlington, pulling into the ferry a few minutes prior to its departure at 11:30. It was a good ferry ride and then I struck north to Plattsburgh, meeting former PLL Board Chair Bryan Wentzell's cousin at the Champlain Valley Transportation Museum. (The private tour was fun even for somebody not that interested in old cars. They have a quirky VW and one grand old car that looks like a wedding cake on wheels. I recommend this stop, which will hopefully be a memorial to the automobile in a few more years when we all take to buses and bikes.)

Fifteen miles out of Plattsburgh the next morning, I broke down and had to be fetched. Who to call? What to do? I phoned my planned hosts and Bill Trumble, a former dean at UNH who moved to Canton for a term as provost there, altruistically dropped everything to come fetch his boarder. We had a jolly 1.5 hour ride through Chateaugay and Malone returning to their home in Canton, NY.

Their home was delightful. They had a hot-tub and a big garden that was producing yellow cherry tomatoes with abandon. The yard was an arboretum of different local tree species. For

the next four nights, as planned, I made my home here. The three classes I taught at St. Lawrence, my meeting with their environmental group, and my keynote address at the Local Living Festival of the Sustainable Living Project went well. Louise of SLU Sustainability Office and the crew of SLP organizers who took me to The Club after the festival were great.

More coming soon....