



MANATEE

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“You get to see a lot more on a bike versus driving 70 mph in a car.”

ANN NEWBY, Manatee County tandem bicyclist

From sea to sea on a bike built for two

The couple plan to start their 4,700-mile adventure this week near Seattle

By CHRIS ANDERSON

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They are a rolling Rockwell painting, two people pedaling their way through a past long forgotten.

Tim and Ann Newby have navigated their tandem bicycle throughout the world, finding great pleasure in all that is obvious and yet overlooked.

They have heard fog horns in Nova Scotia, and church bells in France, and the distinct bugling sound a bull elk in California makes.

They have smelled fresh-cut hay from farms, and redwoods from forests and salt water from oceans.



STAFF PHOTO / E. SKYLAR LITHELAND / elaine.skylar@heraldtribune.com

Ann and Tim Newby — seen last week in their Terra Ceia neighborhood — will ride across the country on a tandem bicycle.

They have seen old country churches with the windows wide open, just inviting them to sit underneath and listen to the Sunday sermon.

Their life atop a bicycle seems to be one of the last great adventures, a modern-day version of hopping a train with a harmonica and a can of

baked beans.

“We like to experience those things that are leaving us,” Tim Newby said.

The Newbys are about to embark on a new adventure on their bicycle built for two. They are about to see America in a way a car could never show them.

Starting with their back tire in the Pacific Ocean, they will leave from Anacortes, Wash., for St. Augustine, where they will dip their front tire in the Atlantic Ocean.

From there, they will return to their home on Terra Ceia Island.

The journey on their 27-speed bicycle will cover roughly 4,700 miles and will take about four months to complete. They are leaving for Washington on Thursday.

The planned route will take

PLEASE SEE CYCLISTS ON 8A

Manatee couple to bike coast-to-coast

CYCLISTS FROM 1A

them through Glacier National Park in Montana to Fargo, N.D., and then south through Iowa, Missouri, Tennessee and Louisiana along the Mississippi River.

Once they reach St. Francisville, La., they will travel east to St. Augustine and then home.

They plan on covering a minimum of 50 miles a day, six days a week.

They will take between 80 to 90 pounds of equipment, and everything from a laptop computer to a 5-pound tent to tweezers to cinnamon has been factored in.

For the first month, a motor home will carry their gear. After that, they're on their own.

They will be joined by a couple from Dunnellon, and they will sleep in a tent each night and make coffee over a fire each morning.

"There's something magical about leaving your campsite on cool morning and riding into the day and watching the whole world wake up," said Tim Newby, who owns his own management company.

If you live in Manatee County, perhaps you've seen them. Tim is 50 and Ann is 47, and they don't watch much TV. Most nights they are on their bike.

Sometimes they even ride up a parking garage to simulate hills.

They put about 62,000 miles on their old bike, and their new one has roughly 2,000 miles on it.

A Cannondale tandem bicycle costs between \$3,000 and \$8,000.

The bike also costs \$50 to transport on a plane, and you should see the looks they get in airports.

They have ridden in coun-



STAFF PHOTO / E. SKYLAR LITHELAND / elaine.skylar@heraldtribune.com

Tim and Ann Newby will ride a tandem bicycle across the country starting this week near Seattle and finishing in Manatee County in November. They plan on covering at least 50 miles a day, six days a week.

tries such as France, Germany, Austria, Belgium and Holland, and have seen the Eiffel Tower from their tandem bike.

"There are all kinds of beautiful scenery," Ann Newby said. "You get to see a lot more on a bike versus driving 70 mph in a car."

They have been riding since 1985, and they have only fallen twice. Once was on some railroad tracks on a rainy day.

On an average ride on their upcoming trip, they will travel at speeds between 15 to 18 mph. However, they have had their bicycle going over 60 mph.

And what is that like?

"Ann prays the whole time and it handles great," Tim Newby said. "Just like a motorcycle."

Tim Newby is the front rider, and he is called the cap-

tain. He shifts the 27 gears and steers the bike and gets hit by the occasional low-flying bird.

His steering skills are quite sharp, however. Once, in Switzerland, he had to navigate their bike around an abundance of manure as cattle were being herded from one field to another.

Ann Newby is the rear rider, also known as the stoker. Among her duties: She keeps a close eye on the rear-view mirror and sprays the occasional stray dog with her water bottle.

Normally, they can communicate with each other verbally, but they also have signals in case the wind is too strong or the traffic is too noisy to hear.

Usually, the signal is Ann's fingernails in Tim's back.

They are surprised by the large number of baseball caps

they see on the side of the road, as well as the number of 5-gallon buckets that blow out of trucks.

You'd think it would be more, but they have found two wallets over the years and returned them both.

There was no monetary reward.

Who needs one anyway?

How can you beat walking into a restaurant full of strangers in some small town, and the next thing you know, 12 farmers are trying to buy you lunch?

How can you beat sitting on the steps of a cathedral in Germany wearing bicycle gear when a stranger suddenly asks you inside to witness the baptism of his child?

"It's the fun of the little things and the people you meet," said Tim Newby. "You enjoy the experience."