

2024 American Randonneur Award

SUSAN GRYDER, RUSA #9931

BY PAUL ROZELLE

That Susan Gryder's first-ever randonné was a 1000k brevet that she rode to assist Hector Picard (#9171), a double-arm amputee, in his quest to qualify for Paris-Brest-Paris reveals Susan's selfless support of others and contagious conviction that anything is possible for those who try. Randonneuring is said to be an individual sport; a test of one's mettle and determination. In reality, none of us achieve our goals without a lot of help.

In her decade of randonneuring, Susan has always lent a hand. Sometimes it's a good wheel – Susan has accumulated over 60,000km of randonnées on three continents – a remedy from her extensive medical kit (whatever her “Chinese oil” is, it's magic!), or encouraging a rider to summon the inner strength to carry on. Countless

riders have finished brevets and pushed beyond what they thought themselves capable of thanks to Susan's assistance on the road.

However, off the bike is where Susan's contributions to the randonneuring community truly shine. Susan has volunteered on all of the Grand Randonnées held in Florida since she

joined RUSA. She traveled to Ohio to support the 8k600 recently held there, where several riders remarked that their finish would not have been possible without her. And when a reckless driver seriously injured her two months before PBP '23, Susan still made the trip to France to cheer the riders on. She wanted to be there for them, even if she could not ride herself.

Susan's service extends well beyond helping others complete brevets. When the Gainesville and Southern regions in Florida needed an interim RBA, Susan stepped up. When the RUSA Store needed a dedicated volunteer to ship us gear, apparel, and mementos of our accomplishments, Susan answered the call, investing significant time behind the scenes organizing, sorting, stuffing, mailing, inventorying, and ordering. Indeed, when Susan arrived at the dinner where she was surprised with the American Randonneur Award, she came bearing a package of store items to hand-deliver to one of the attendees. And, on a personal note, when Susan learned that my RUSA Cup was among the things I lost in Hurricane Helene, she quietly helped arrange its replacement.

However great or small the task, national or personal its impact, if Susan can help, she will. Susan Gryder is an unsung hero and because of her service, RUSA and our members are stronger and better cared-for than we could hope or ask for. Thank you, Susan, for your service, and congratulations! 🚲

Susan supporting a 600k in Ohio.

—PHOTO PATRICK CHIN-HONG

