

J. D. McCarty Center

for children with developmental disabilities



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News Release

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21st annual Norman Conquest set for Saturday, July 9

64 mile loop to honor fallen cyclist Michael Grimwood

Conquer the heat! Conquer the hills! is the rider's yell for the Bicycle League of Norman's 21st annual Norman Conquest bicycle tour.

According to Jerry Puckett, Norman Conquest chairperson, it's the choice of routes, the organization and support for the event that had *Bicycling Magazine* naming the Norman Conquest one of the 50 best rides in America in 2012. The ride has just gotten better since then.

This year's Norman Conquest will be held Saturday, July 9. The ride will begin and end at the J. D. McCarty Center for children with developmental disabilities, 2002 East Robinson, in Norman. Start time for the ride is 7 a.m.

Proceeds from this event will once again benefit the J. D. McCarty Center's Camp ClapHans. Camp ClapHans is a residential summer camp for children with developmental disabilities ages 8 to 18. The BLN has been supporting Camp ClapHans since 2008.

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There are three ways to register for this event. You can register online by going to www.bikereg.com; or you can register Friday evening, July 8 from 5-9 p.m. at O'Connell's Irish Pub at 769 Asp Avenue on Campus Corner in Norman; or you can register at the J. D. McCarty Center, 2002 East Robinson, Norman, the morning of the ride from 5:45-6:45.

Entry fees for the 2016 Norman Conquest are \$30 per rider if received by June 7. After June 7 the entry fee is \$35. The town tour is \$10 per rider or \$30 with a Norman Conquest t-shirt. All entry fees include a hot catered lunch after the ride, a 21st anniversary Norman Conquest t-shirt and a "carbo loading" pasta dinner at O'Connell's on Friday night. The pasta dinner for non-participants may be purchased for \$10. A t-shirt is not guaranteed if registering after June 7.

Puckett wants to remind riders that there have been some changes to the event from previous years. First is the addition of a fifth route. In addition to the family friendly town tour, the hilly 22 mile ride, the very hilly 46 mile trek and the seriously hilly 64 mile challenge, there is now a 10 mile "taste of the hills" route. The "taste of the hills" made its debut in 2014 and was an immediately popular route choice.

"This additional route was developed in response to our less experienced riders request for something more challenging than the town tour," said Puckett. "These riders didn't feel they were ready for the 22 mile ride, but wanted to sample a little more challenging route. Thus, the 'taste of the hills' was created."

Beginning this year, the 64 mile route will be known as the Grimwood Loop in memory of fallen cyclist Michael Grimwood. He was killed August 22, 2015, by an inattentive driver on U. S. 77 Highway south of Purcell while he and Puckett were returning from a ride to Pauls Valley. Grimwood was a long-time Norman area cyclist.

"I rode with Mike for two and a half years," said Puckett. "We put in about 5,000 miles together on bikes. Mike had been a rider for 20 years and I bet he had logged over 20,000 miles in that time. The Norman Conquest was his favorite ride."

The start time for the ride is 7 a.m. The start of the ride will be staggered based on the ride route. The Grimwood Loop riders will start first, followed by the 46, 22, 10 and town tour riders. There will be an approximate 5 minute delay between groups.

"We want to remind riders that the Norman Conquest is a ride and not a race," Puckett said. "We have something for all interests and riding levels."

The Norman Conquest is supported by rest stops along all routes as well as mobile mechanical support and SAG vehicles. The routes are well marked and maps are available at the registration tables Saturday morning. Besides a hot, delicious meal with air conditioning at the end of the ride there will also be free massage for the riders and door prize drawings, including a drawing for a bicycle.

For riders coming from out-of-town, a block of rooms has been set aside at the Marriott Conference Center at the National Center for Employee Development at the special rate of \$89 per night for July 8 and 9. Reservations include complementary 3 p.m. check out. Located at Hwy 9 and 24th Avenue SE, the hotel has easy access to the McCarty Center. The room rate is guaranteed until June 26. Reservations may be made by contacting the hotel directly at 405.447.9000 and identifying yourself as a part of the BLN 21st Annual Norman Conquest group. Online reservations can be made at <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/BLN20thAnnualNormanConquest>.

For complete Norman Conquest information and links go to www.normanconquest.bicycleleague.com.

The BLN supports and encourages the growth of recreational bicycling in and around Norman by organizing ride events, supporting bicycle safety and educational activities, participating in local government planning for improved bicycle access and emphasizing the healthful and social aspects of cycling. The BLN hosts semiweekly group rides during the spring and summer months and maintains the Clear Bay mountain bike trails at Lake Thunderbird. For more information visit www.bicycleleague.com.

The J. D. McCarty Center is Oklahoma's center of excellence in the care and treatment of children with developmental disabilities from birth to age 21. This pediatric rehab hospital provides the physical, occupational, speech and language therapy that these children need to reach their highest level of function and independence. For more information about the McCarty Center visit www.jdmc.org. Follow the McCarty Center on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

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Photo Cutlines:



Conquer the heat, conquer the hills. Riders leave the McCarty Center for a leisurely ride in the country on a hot July morning for last year's Norman Conquest. This year the 21st Annual Norman Conquest is scheduled for Saturday, July 9.



These riders from last year's Norman Conquest are riding what is now called the Grimwood Loop, a challenging 64 mile trek through eastern Cleveland County that proves that Oklahoma is not flat. The Grimwood Loop is named in memory of fallen Norman cyclist Michael Grimwood. The Norman Conquest was his favorite ride.



One of the interesting things about the Norman Conquest is the variety of riding jerseys worn by the cyclists. The jerseys represent rides, bicycle clubs, corporations, causes and whimsy. It makes for a colorful start to the ride.



Dr. Amy Cerato, OU professor of engineering, and her daughter Mia leave the McCarty Center to conquer the heat and hills of last year's 20th Annual Norman Conquest Bicycle Tour. Cerato is a member of the Bicycle League of Norman which sponsors the Norman Conquest.