

SHORE-TO-SHORE RIDE CANCELLED

It is with a heavy heart that I announce that due to several factors, the Shore to Shore (S2S) ride is being cancelled for this year, and as it was to be the last year, there are no plans by me at this time to resurrect it. I hope that someone may wish to pick it up, and if they do, I am more than willing to help with obtaining the necessary permits and other related matters.

The reasons for the cancellation are primarily the following, any one of which could serve on its own for cancellation, but when put together, make the ride not possible, for me:

- South Branch Trail Camp was recently found to be already reserved by another group for the opening weekend of the ride, and while we could stage out of River Road camp, it just isn't that enticing to me;

- My head veterinarian is unavailable to me, and as I consider her the best equine veterinarian in the state, I really couldn't consider having the ride without her, even though other vets are very capable;

- Despite kind and generous donations by many of you over the years, the ride expenses were never fully met by the income, and I am not in a position to continue that financial drain, no matter how much fun it was to attend; and,

- With our youngest son going into the work force in a few days, and getting married just a week before the S2S ride was to be held, and with no other "nestlings", it was difficult, if not impossible, to have adequate help for me to manage the ride at the quality I wished to do – especially with regard to rig-moving and hauling water, even with the tremendous help of our resident Michigan water provider (and we all know who that is!)

I am not an old man, but I am also not a "spring chicken", and the work of putting on the ride, coupled with my other volunteer and work commitments, isn't as effortless as it once was. I am the only person to have attended every day of every S2S competition distance ride held; 1985-1991 and 1997-2018. It has been an experience I cherish and won't forget.

I am not dropping out of the distance riding scene completely, so I will see most of you again, as it is my intention to continue being at rides and doing timing, P/R's, etc. as I have in the past. I am sorry that this will negatively affect many of you, and for those who were planning to come to the S2S ride for the first time this year, I am very sorry. I hope someone will pick it up and run with it in the future, and give you the chance to do this unique and memorable trek across the beautiful state of Michigan.

Sincerely,
Bruce Birr