

Doug and Nancy Claycomb

Meet our new Ride Leader duo

Douglas Claycomb is hard to miss. Sitting tall on his Schwinn with upright handlebars, he towers over fellow HBC riders. And he's more likely than not to be living up to his "educator" moniker, holding court on an esoteric subject. Nancy Claycomb, also an educator, has a quieter voice, but don't underestimate this Bryn Mawr graduate - she's got a few opinions of her own. Both Doug and Nancy are new 2022 ride leaders, having passed ride leader training with flying colors under Ron Jenseon's mentorship.

In 2019, Doug tried a progressive meet-up ride, and Haggith Nadav proved to be a worthy club ambassador. Doug praised Haggith as "really something." After the ride, he "went right home and said to Nancy, 'We're joining.'" The couple's first foray into the club was on a "relaxed" ride. Nancy worried that they would not be able to keep up. Any of you who have seen the Claycombs zipping past other riders on the Round the River ride will know that she did not have to worry. On that first ride, Doug even noticed one rider smoking a cigarette (something this author has never seen), and he decided that the club had "a place for everyone." Unfortunately, 2020 put a damper on group rides, so they didn't get to know many other HBCers until last summer.

Nancy and Doug met at the Atlanta airport on their way to serving in the Peace Corps in Ecuador in 1991. Doug successfully wooed Nancy during that stint, despite the fact that "Nancy's a city girl and I'm a hick." Nancy hails from Boston, and Doug grew up in Maryland. When asked what his courtship strategy was, Doug said, "I was the only English-speaking man in the village, and I had a hot shower." Don't get the wrong idea; Nancy showered while Doug cooked dinner for the two of them. At least, that's what they both said.

Their first bike ride together was a high-altitude venture in the Andes, and they refer to the experience as "difficult." Nancy recalls, "I was falling behind." Eventually, Nancy's rear axle broke, and they had to push her bicycle back to the start. Fortunately, they have fared better on HBC rides. Both say that the Round the River ride is their favorite, especially the Big River Trail climb and the post-ride Sea Salt socializing.

When not biking, Nancy teaches Sociology at Normandale Community College, where Doug teaches Geography. Both got PhDs at Texas A&M, breaking up their seven-year stay in Texas with a year of fieldwork in Ecuador. They have two adult children, 26-year-old Alexander, who now lives in Texas and works as a deputy clerk at the Texas Supreme Court, and 21-year-old Ruth, a Macalester senior. As recent empty nesters, they find club riding a "good thing to do, a new part of our lives."