

Sandy Criswell, 49, a Police Communications Assistant with Fairfax County Police, and Steve Jakubowski, 47, a Computer Specialist with the US Marine Corps at Quantico, met each other briefly back in 1998 on the Cannonball Century. Their paths did not cross again until 1999 when Sandy joined the Fredericksburg Cyclists Club. Steve, a Fredericksburg Cyclists Club member, was leading a ride and volunteered to accompany Sandy, who was a new rider to the group, to ensure that she did not get lost. After riding several club rides together, Steve and Sandy became regular riding partners along with several other members of the club. During one ride in 1999 called the SERVE, a local ride out of Manassas, Sandy crashed suddenly, directly in front of Steve. With no time to react Steve attempted to jump over her, but to no avail. Unable to clear her, his rear wheel landed on top of her neck and chest, rendering Sandy unconscious. Bleeding and lying on the roadway, Sandy appeared not to be breathing. Rescue was immediately called and she was taken to a local hospital. Fortunately she did not suffer any serious injuries and was back in the saddle for the next big ride a week later.

Over the next several years the two of them rode numerous local and out-of-state rides and became regular participants on Bike Virginia; Steve a veteran of Bike Virginia since 1991 and Sandy since 1999. Over the years they have met a lot of good friends through cycling and together they now do several week long tours each year.

Two years ago Sandy and Steve became not only riding partners but also partners in life. Steve sold his house in the rural area of Stafford and moved to Sandy's house in Hampton Oaks, located in North Stafford. It was then that their "stable of bikes" grew from 4 bikes to 9 bikes. In May of 2005, they expanded their cycling horizons, completing rides in Michigan, New York, the Carolinas, Florida and Colorado. That year they also decided to explore cycling in Europe with a trip to southern Spain. It was their first European bike trip and was quite the experience for both.

A month after returning from Spain, Steve purchased a diamond ring for Sandy. He proposed on a dock at sunset after a lovely dinner at one of their favorite restaurants. Befitting their relationship, the proposal took place just hours after completing the Bay to Bay Century in Betterton MD.

A week later they rode Bike Virginia's Valley Byways Tour and their curiosities were peaked as they spoke to Mary Turnball during the You Did It Celebration in Roanoke. They were intrigued by the proposition of possibly having a cake to feed hundreds if they were to have a wedding on a bike ride. Mary suggested that they exchange nuptials on Bike Virginia 2006. It was still unclear as to where they wanted to get married, but they knew that they wanted to do something that was a little different.

In the fall of 2005 they learned that Bike Virginia would tour the Emporia area in 2006 with a rest stop scheduled in Valentines, Virginia at the internationally recognized Valentines' Post Office. This made their decision clear; they wanted to get married in Valentines. This area of the state was familiar to them as it has served host to the Great

Peanut Tour for 25 years. They knew that several couples had tied the knot at the Valentines' Post Office and being that it would serve as a Bike Virginia rest stop, it would be the perfect place for a wedding.

Their first step of action was to contact Bobby Wrenn, the tour director for the Great Peanut Tour since its inception, who also served as the Clerk of Court for Greenville County. He agreed to perform the ceremonies, which will be witnessed by the Clerk of Court from Brunswick County, the county in which the Valentines' Post Office resides.

After getting married on June 28th at the Valentines Post Office they will set sail on a Windjammer cruise of the British Virgin Islands for their honeymoon. The thought of another bike tour as their honeymoon crossed their minds, but decided to take a break from their bikes and ride the waves instead of the saddle.