

# In Memory

Friends of 2008 Bluegrass Bachelor Larry Goodrich share their stories

By Kim Thomas

Last Thursday began on a high note as the Ace Bluegrass Bachelor issue hit stands, and readers were introduced to this year's Class of 2008. Preparations were underway for the Sunday night celebration.

By Friday morning, Ace received the tragic news that the bachelor profiled on page 7, Lexmark's Larry Goodrich, 30, had died Thursday evening in a motorcycle accident.

After much discussion with his friends, it was decided that the event—a fundraiser and adoption awareness event for Woodford Humane Society—would continue. Ace readers were updated via Ace's facebook page. There would be no auction, just a quiet celebration, and an opportunity for everyone to gather and honor Larry's memory, in the charitable tradition that's always characterized the annual Bluegrass Bachelor program, and the Ace readers.

His friend Heather Auman (the one who nominated him as a Bluegrass Bachelor) commented on Ace's facebook page, in a bittersweet note that established the tone for a fitting memorial tribute, "I'm sure this is what Larry would have wanted, he loved his friends and animals (some were both)." She mentioned his dog, Ivy, as one of his great loves. (His Herald-Leader obit also suggested memorials to the Lexington Humane Society.)

At 6 o'clock on Sunday evening, in an incredibly moving gesture, Heather and a group of Larry's friends came directly from the funeral, to the Bluegrass Bachelor event, and presented Woodford Humane Society with the funds they'd spent the weekend collecting.

As Heather put it, Larry was "there in spirit."

I had the opportunity to meet some of the friends who attended, and asked them to share some of their small moments and private laughs with Larry.

They have responded, and we wanted to share a few of their tributes with the Ace readers, many of whom knew him from his work at Lexmark, his days as an engineering student at UK, his many years at Scheller's bike shop, along with those who only recently became acquainted with Larry in his profile in last week's Ace.

## Larry Belle

By Heather "Thumper" Auman

There's so many stories...I've only known him for one-and-a-half years and saw him nearly every day for the first year both in an office down from work and hanging out drinking PBR's, hashing, or one of our many projects. The best stories come from our local hash house harriers club, The Horse's Ass Hash House Harriers. I think he would have joined because he could belong to a fun

Club with the word "ass" in the title. This is a global club known as a "drinking club with a running problem"—though you aren't forced to either drink or run on these scavenger hunt-style events. His "hash name" was Peter Poke-her—

mainly because of his obsession with Spiderman and his superhero ability to climb upward and do countless pull-ups.

One of the best memories of Larry was when we decided to form a team and be part of the Belle Brezing Bed Race last summer. We had one hash team and another sister team comprised mostly of hashers. Larry and I were the fabricators (along with an incredible bicycle builder, Alex Meade) and built the frame with bikes donated by Scheller's. Larry had extensive knowledge from working at Scheller's for over five years. It was the "Cadillac of the beds" with steering, an old, rusty Sears bed frame, canopy, brakes; even the Front wheels toed-in. She was covered in gold lamé, red velvet, and silk fabric with plenty of ruffles and even donned an illuminated red light in her canopy!

It took our team nearly two weeks (and many hilarious rounds of e-mails) but we settled on Larry's name of "Squeals on Wheels." Along with two of the other members, Gwen Thompson and Margaret Trafton, I was on the decorating team with all the fabrics and costumes. Earlier that week, we had a meeting on costuming with our "mascot," Terry Franey, and realized that we had four girls and a guy. Gwen suggested playing reverse gender roles and we all immediately looked at Larry for his reaction on being dressed like a lady of the evening. Our Larry, knowing he would get plenty of laughs said, "Hells, Yeah!"

The night before the event, our fifth team member, Sarah Stykes, came by and we did a test run down Ballard Street with Bill and Sally Johnston. We let Bill, our neighborhood President, take the maiden voyage as wore his BGT hardhat..."Just in case" but with four engineers creating this bed, he was certainly safe. We had some great laughs as we rolled the bed down Short Street, with Larry in drag and the four gals wearing business style white shirts

with vests, pocket chains, bowler caps, and boxer shorts with old style sock garters.

In just the past six months, Larry participated in several fundraisers including the Belle Breezing Bed race (where his team raised money to support music education) and Thursday Night Live (where he served beverages to raise money for a historic house museum). And, of course, he was

scheduled to be "auctioned" off this past weekend to benefit the Woodford Humane Society.

His participation in these events reflect both his zeal for life and his generous nature. (Therefore his family and friends were not surprised by his final generous act, the gift of organ donation.)

We ended up being awarded fan favorite and best dressed, while our sister team, "If This Bed's a Rockin'" got first in the exciting speed category.

We will certainly be doing the event again, in Larry's



Larry and Susan Wilson (a.k.a Big Sooz)

honor, possibly with a "Spiderman" theme.

Gwen sums it up on her Facebook page, "Larry, you made an ugly woman, but were a great man."

## Fellow Yankee

By Mike White

(Mike White met Larry when he moved into University Commons his freshman year at UK.)

"I was from Detroit, and he was from New York. The other two guys in the apartment were both from Kentucky. So we were the "Yankees" of the apartment, as our Kentucky roommates called us. He was in the room right next to mine, and we became fast friends. He had the same goofy sense of humor I did, but he was so much more gregarious and outgoing. He worked at a bike shop on Woodland and picked me up an abandoned bike for free so I could save on parking and parking tickets. I met so many people through Larry I can't remember them all.

I remember the day of the big snowstorm (98/99?) when class was canceled, we all piled into my pickup truck and had rolling snowball fights with other students while we drove through campus, with Larry leading the way.

I will NEVER forget his laugh: full and booming, and always genuine.

We kind of drifted apart as I graduated and moved back home, but four years ago I was in town for a wedding and ran into him in downtown Lexington on the street...literally walked right into him by accident. We shook hands, hugged, and started talking and picked up right where we left off...it was like I had never left. That's the kind of guy Larry was. I texted him two weeks ago about the news of my engagement, and in true Larry fashion, he said congratulations and that he was going to show up unannounced and crash the reception. It was the last time I heard from him. Larry was a kindred spirit, and was taken from this Earth too soon.

## What Can You Say?

By John Berry

What a great man. What more can you say about Larry Goodrich that hasn't already been said once before? He was always such a giving person and so outgoing making friends with anybody and everybody he came into contact with.

The short time I lived with Larry it seemed like he could live so happily on two hours of sleep every night because he was either consistently helping someone with something, doing what he loved most, working on his bikes, or he was just out having a good time with all of his many friends that he always seemed to make time for.

There's no doubt he was the life of the party, no matter what the situation was.

He would do anything for his friends or in some cases a complete stranger, because that is just the kind of person he was. He was always willing to help out no matter what it was that someone needed. He was a great man, a great friend, and he will be missed, admired, and honored always.

## Worst Voice, Best Heart

By Susan Wilson

Good God! I don't even know where to begin. I have known Larry for about 7-8 years. I affectionately called him "Larr-bear."

Everyone I have met and have befriended through him (and there have been a lot) doesn't know me by my name, but by the name he gave me when we first became

Friends—"The Big Sooz"—an oxymoron for sure! Each time I meet someone who knew Larry and has heard of me, they say they were expecting a big girl. (The story that accompanies my name is not an appropriate one for this publication—[as is true] of most stories attached to Larry.)

This is one of the things that we all loved about him so much. Larry so easily balanced the craziest, most inappropriate, and wildest nature while also being the kindest, gentlest, most loyal, and having the largest heart of anyone any of us have ever come across. I think one of his friends, John Huang, said it best at his funeral service. He said that to everyone who knew Larry, he was their best friend, and that is the truth. I have never, in my life, known anyone that could make each one of his friends feel like they were his best.

To this point I have only mentioned his kind heart. It was his most attractive quality. However, having said that, he was the craziest and happiest person I have ever known.

I sang karaoke with him for the first time, which was one of, if not his favorite past-times. He had the worst voice I've

ever heard, but loved to karaoke more than anyone I know. He brought out in me my silly, goofy nature that I enjoy so much.

He "LIVED" life. He honestly put a full life into his short 30 years. He lived more in that time than many do in 90 years. Not only did he take advantage of his time to enjoy it—he influenced so many more lives in his short time than most ever do.

We could each learn and live from Larry.

Be kind. Love your friends and family with all that you

have. Get over your pride and just be happy. Don't dwell on what you may lack—instead, revel in what you have. Appreciate your friends, your family, your life. LIVE your life. Enjoy your moments. SING your heart out. Dance whether you know how to or not. Stop worrying about looking like a fool.

When I look back on my life I want to be able to say, "I LIVED!!! I lived like Larry would have—without regrets."

I love you, Larry. I will always be your "Big Sooz." ■



Larry competed in the Belle Brezing Bed Race earlier this summer, prompting his friend Gwen to observe, "Larry, you made an ugly woman, but were a great man."

## Where the Funds Go

By Sandy Davis, Woodford Humane Society

Months prior to Ace's Bachelor Party, the Woodford Humane Society was generously selected as the organization to benefit from the event. Back then, Ace decided to direct money raised to go into our special SAVE Matching Gift & Endowment Fund. This Fund supports our mission of SAVE (Spay/neuter, Adopt, Volunteer and Educate). We have honored this request and each loving donation made to the Woodford Humane Society in Larry's honor goes twice as far helping our homeless animals.

Each bluegrass bachelor showed tremendous character with their willingness to participate in the event—selfless volunteers helping homeless animals. We are so grateful to all involved with Ace's Bachelor party for supporting the animals and are truly inspired from the love shown to honor Larry. Thank you.

Donations sent to the Woodford Humane Society in Larry's memory will help us provide loving care for approximately 1,300 homeless pets this year alone. There is no time limit for the animals in our care and some have waited over a year before they have been adopted. We have maintained an adoption rate of 90 percent since 2006. (The national average for similar groups is around 25-

30 percent.) We are a non-profit organization without government funding at any level so we are completely dependent on private contributions to keep all pets comfortable, happy and healthy while they stay at our Adoption Center. Larry is lovingly remembered in each animal's bright eyes and hopeful heart.

Ace's special Bachelor issue on October 30 highlighted, in addition to the bachelors, seven adorable and available dogs looking for love. The special bachelor event gave Tanner



Tanner was adopted by an Ace Reader Sunday.

(the beagle with one blue eye) exactly what he needed, a loving home! He was adopted by an Ace reader on Sunday.

Tanner's happily ever after is the hope that fills our hearts everyday. Larry's legacy lives on and his memorial gifts will help so many more animals like Tanner find exactly what they need, a forever loving home. ■

To make a memorial gift in honor of Larry, send to The Woodford Humane Society, PO Box 44, Versailles, KY 40383. Please visit [woodfordhumanesociety.org](http://woodfordhumanesociety.org) to give online or to learn more about the Woodford Humane Society or our SAVE Matching Gift & Endowment Fund.



Larry's friends came from the funeral to present the funds they'd collected all weekend to Woodford Humane Society at the Bluegrass Bachelor event on Sunday evening.