

Prudhoe to Palmer

An 830 mile bicycle ride across Alaska to cure cancer

6/30/10

It was so hectic getting started! I worked all night last night and was having trouble getting to sleep this morning, probably anticipation of the trip. Once I got to sleep, my mother called and woke me up. I never got back to sleep. I ran to the post office to mail my computer, showered, packed up my room, then at 3:00 pm took my bike and gear downstairs and packed it all on. The bike was so heavy and tippy that I wondered how I would ever ride it. Richard took some iPhone photos and then I rode over to the Flight Service Station and posted one on Facebook. Me and my bike beneath the Prudhoe Bay Hotel sign.

When I met Dan at the plane he told me he would not be back. He said that last year so I don't know if I believe him.

I rode out of Deadhorse at exactly 4 pm, headed for Palmer, Alaska, 830 miles to the south. It was still foggy and in the 30's but fairly calm with even a few snow flurries. I felt just great. At about 20 miles to the south I saw at least 20 caribou. They looked at me with great curiosity. Road conditions were good.

When I went to fill my water at Caren Pond, I was horrified to find that half of my filter pump was missing. I can't imagine why it was no longer with the rest of the pump. I had iodine tablets which saved the day. I used a Ziploc bag to gather the water. I knew I would miss that pump on the remainder of the trip.

As the evening wore on I became very tired. I had planned to ride all night but at pipeline mile 34 I was so tired I could hardly peddle. I hated to stop but at 10:30 pm I camped at a small turnout by a gas pipeline building. I hated to pass up the sunny night because the fog was now gone. But the mosquitoes were back.

7/1/10

It was a restless night, tossing and turning at first. Then around 2 am I saw the fog rolling back in and I could not get warm. I felt pretty rested so decided to break camp and hit the road. But by 4 am I was hit with the exhaustion again. I pulled into a side road around mile 40 and set up my tent again. The ground was so hard that the stakes wouldn't go in. I used rocks and got the tent standing, crawled in and tried to sleep. I rested but didn't sleep and again could not get warm.

I started out again around 6 am but was very slow. I would ride a few miles then have to rest. When the fog finally lifted, I took a couple of short naps in the sun. But as time wore on I felt terrible. So weak and so exhausted. When I reached pipeline mile 50 I started wondering if I would have to abort the ride. Road conditions were awful for a bike with many ridges of soft loose gravel. It took everything I had just

to stay on the bike. At times I would just walk it for a rest, but that was tricky because it was so tippy from all the weight. It fell over a few times and was quite a chore getting it upright again.

At pipeline mile 56 I hit wonderful paved road. I was finally moving again. But by mile 60 I hit some uphill. By then I had no uphill left in me. I had to walk it up the hill for several miles. Now I was sure the trip was over.

At mile 63 I pulled into the Last Chance Campsite, put up my tent, and called it a day. It was only 2:30 pm. But I felt done for. So tired I could hardly stand up. So I decided to stay there until I caught up on my sleep and felt like I could move again. I had to get water from a very small pond, but it looked OK.

7/2/10

This was a very long day. I woke up around midnight and felt that I had totally recovered from the day before. At least I was hoping so. It was nice and cool with no bugs, bright and sunny too. So I packed up and decided to give it a try. It was fabulous with paved road for the next 20 miles. I couldn't believe I had recovered so well. I stopped at the first pond I found and got some more water.

The pavement ended at around mile 80 of the pipeline and it was really awful road. Huge rocks were all over the road. It was very hard to ride and I did walk some of it. As it warmed up, the mosquitoes became unbearable. I had huge welts all over my body because, in spite of all the insect repellent I used, they would still bite right through my clothing. My face, knees, and ankles were the worst.

When I reached mile 90 I was very tired again so stopped and put up the tent. I slept there a couple of hours from 9 to 11 am. When I woke up, for a few miles they were grading the road and the water truck had turned it to mud. Then for about 10 more miles it was very smooth and I made some good time. By around pipeline mile 115, I was exhausted again so camped at a small turnout. I really wanted to get further. It was still 125 miles to Coldfoot. I doubted that I would make it there by July 4th to meet my friend Mark who was driving up from Palmer with his two friends. I was too slow and was tiring too quickly.

7/3/10

Well, let me see if it is possible to describe this day! Wow! I woke up at 4 am and it was totally fogged in but no bugs. I dragged myself up and started riding through the dense fog. I couldn't see the trucks until they were almost upon me. Still so tired, I walked a lot. Then came the wind. Icy, cold, damp wind. On with the down parka with my yellow biking jacket over it. About 5 miles and close to 2 hours later, exhausted from steep hills into the wind, I found a gas pipe and fence and camped again.

I woke up around 11 am and started out again. Now drizzle and more fog, and more hills. Running low on water and I could only find small mud ponds. I was really getting worried when a car stopped and asked if I needed anything. I asked if they had any extra water. They filled my hydration pack and I was saved. The man also gave me a bag of trail mix. He was like an angel of mercy. It was quite a few miles later when I found the Kuparuk River so I would have been in trouble without that kind man.

I climbed the long hill after the river and was about frozen with not a shred of energy left. I found a small flat spot by the road and set up camp again at 4 pm. I was quite chilled but slept well.

I woke up around 7 pm and decided to ride some more because I was cold. I ran into a young couple on bicycles headed for Argentina who were camped at a turnout. I kept on going and found some wonderful long downhill stretches. I was still riding in fog but the drizzle had stopped. A guy on a motorcycle stopped and said there was sun 10 miles ahead. I passed Toolik Lake and never saw it for the fog. Finally I broke out as I descended into Galbraith Lakes. I went on a few more miles and camped at a pipeline access road below the pump station just north of Atigun Pass. It was now 11:30 pm.

7/4/10

Now for Atigun Pass.

I slept well and left camp at 7:30 am. The weather was perfect but once again I felt very weak and tired. I was walking a lot of the hills but slowly making progress. I was too heavily loaded. I ditched the spare tire. Once the big camera lens came loose, caught my foot and toppled me over, smacking my head hard. Thank goodness for my helmet.

I met James soon after, who stopped. He recognized me from Deadhorse. He is staying at Chandalar Camp and offered help if I needed any.

It was beautiful on the approach to Atigun Pass with long downhill sections. My gears kept catching and needed adjustment. Right before the base of the pass, I thought my gears were broken. Alyeska Pipeline Security stopped and offered help, but I decided to go ahead and do the pass. It was far too steep for me to ride so I just pushed the bike up the whole way. It only took an hour and a half to reach the top. I can't imagine riding up it but I am quite sure a good hard core biker would be able to do it with relative ease. The mosquitoes were terrible and I had to wear my head net the entire way. It was also very hot. At the top I ate a little food then had the scariest ride of my entire life as I screamed down the other side.

It was so steep with loose gravel and I was forced to hold my brakes the entire way hoping the loose gravel didn't cause me to skid out of control onto an oncoming truck! But fortunately, there was no traffic heading up that steep two-mile-long section. The downhill wasn't as steep after that and it continued for a few more miles. Once the downhill stopped, I did too. By then I was really beat. I camped at a pipeline access road after completing about 40 miles today. I'm still 60 miles from Coldfoot and 30 miles from Dietrich, so no chance of seeing Mark. I'm planning to unload my heavy camera gear on him once we meet up. I camped at 7:30 pm.

7/5/10

I woke up at 4 am but decided not to get up yet, since it was pouring rain. But the rain stopped around 5 so I got up and started south. I felt great for a change, probably because it was all downhill. It was so beautiful, just fabulous! I was hoping to get to Dietrich River where I figured Mark, Eric and Rick were camped. But they got up early too. I met them about 30 miles south of my camp, still with over 40 miles

remaining until Coldfoot. I gave Mark his birthday gift and about 15 pounds of stuff that I was sick of carrying. I unloaded my big camera with all the lenses plus my gun that I could barely use. I also gave him my heavy raincoat and broken water filter pump plus a few other useless things, like the hard drive that I had to bring home from work. It's amazing how much easier it is to ride now without that big load. It was such fun visiting with them.

After we parted, it was still mostly downhill and I felt great for hours and hours. Then it started to pour rain. It was actually very pleasant because my bike jacket kept me nice and dry. But when the rain stopped, along came a strong headwind. Then I had 30 miles into the wind plus another 27 miles of road construction. I was now covered from head to toe with mud. I wasn't having any trouble, but against the wind I was really moving slowly. I really didn't know how far I still had to go either.

I found a road construction worker and asked him how far it was to Coldfoot. He said 13 miles. That sounded so close. But it took at least 2 hours and by then I was totally exhausted again. I finally reached the Wiseman cutoff which meant only 10 more miles, now pouring rain again and still with the strong headwind. On and on, it seemed forever with no mileposts to judge my speed. At Marian Creek Campground I knew I was almost there. But still, the road seemed endless.

I finally stumbled into Coldfoot, dripping wet and covered with mud. A man saw me pull up with mud dripping off my bike helmet and asked if I was having fun. I said "totally!" I got a wonderful shower there and cleaned up. I set up my tent on the grass, still pouring rain. I used his phone and called my mother and the Deadhorse Flight Service Station to report my progress. I also packed the food supply I had stashed there on my way up. I have too much food! It might last all the way to Palmer.

I had a good meal in their restaurant, then off to my tent in the rain.

Ha ha ha, that didn't happen. My tent and all of the ground around it was totally flooded. So I had no choice but to pay for a room there for the night. \$199 but they even let me bring my bike inside and my tent is hanging up to dry. What a mess!

7/6/10

What a wonderful night's sleep and clean up in Coldfoot! I had a nice hot breakfast and left in the pouring rain at 8 am. Leaving a note in the restaurant for Mark since I knew they would be heading back down after reaching Deadhorse. Just out of Coldfoot was a gigantic obnoxious hill and I was still so tired that I barely had my eyes open. I can hardly remember but I'm sure I walked most of it. It poured down rain for hours and hours but I stayed warm with my Gortex rain gear and my waterproof bike jacket. On top of that hill it was really perfect temperature for riding. The rain didn't bother me, it just kept me cool. The road was in good condition and except for some steep hills, it seemed predominantly downhill. For some reason, my chain kept jumping off, which was really annoying.

I found the Diet Pepsi Mark left hanging under the Jim River 2 bridge. It was there that it finally stopped raining and I took off my rain gear.

I really wanted to make the 60 miles to the Arctic Circle crossing, hoping that Mark, Eric and Rick might be thinking of camping there on their way back from Deadhorse. But after 40 miles, I was really dragging. They showed up 18 miles from Arctic Circle just as I was facing an enormous hill. I gave them my camping gear, so they could have me all set up when I finally got there. That also lightened my load for climbing that hill. There were some huge hills and a few showers, and to my delight, some enormous 2 to 3 mile steep downhill stretches. I love those signs that look like a big triangle with a truck headed downhill, warning truckers of a steep grade. It's always a thrill to see one of those! The last 3 miles into Arctic Circle were like that.

The long hill up to Connection Rock, though, was almost enough to do me in. I thought my friends might be setting up one of those white cross roadside monuments to me next to it. I felt like the grim reaper was riding on my handlebars! The view was amazing though, with thunder showers, blue sky, and sunbeams through the clouds. I was so glad to reach Arctic Circle. I'm staying in Mark's camper tonight. Such luxury! Phew, long day of 60 miles.

7/7/10

A very short day today. So comfy in Mark's camper that we didn't wake up until almost 10 am there at the Arctic Circle campground. Oh it was so hard to get up! They had milk, so we had cereal for breakfast. What a treat that was after all those days of dry granola bar breakfasts.

I didn't get on the road until 11:30, which was a ridiculously late start. The day began with a long downhill followed by an uphill that seemed to last forever. Soon I was walking. About 2 miles along a friend, Jim from Anchorage just happened along in his car. He played leapfrog with me for a while as a kind of support vehicle for the day. That was a treat that I had not expected. You don't expect to run into people you know along that lonely road.

It was a terribly difficult day and I only did 28 miles. There were long 2 mile uphills followed by long downhills. The weather was perfect, but the hills were killers. I stopped around 8 pm and camped. Jim camped here too.

My left big toe looks really bad, but with Ibuprophen I can still ride. Those shoes are getting replaced as soon as I get to Fairbanks. I think they are a half size too small. Plus, they are hiking shoes rather than bicycle shoes. My toes tend to jam into the front of my shoe with the pedal toe clips. Jim had some ice in his cooler, which I'm using to soothe my poor toe.

7/8/10

I got up and started around 8:30 am with a wonderful long downhill. No clouds, no rain and no bugs. But as the day wore on the heat became unbearable. I filled my water bottle at Kanuti River and No Name Creek. I also found another Pepsi that Mark had left for me under the bridge abutment at No Name Creek. I was down to my T shirt and shorts and was crawling up the many undulating hills in the blistering 80 degree heat. Sweat was pouring off and mixing with the dust kicked up by passing trucks.

But what a beautiful day! Bright sunshine and enough of a breeze to keep the bugs down and make the heat semi-bearable.

My toe feels a bit better, but probably isn't. I wrapped it in moleskin so I can't see it. I'm sure it is hideous but I will not try to look again until Fairbanks.

I made Yukon Crossing at 2:30 pm and took a 3-hour break eating a big lunch in their restaurant. I got to wash my face in their restroom too. I made another phone call to my mom while I was there. She was in very poor spirits and said she was trying to sign herself out of Belmont Village, the assisted living facility in Sunnyvale where she was staying. Then I called Belmont and told them the same thing. I know it won't be as safe for her to be on her own at home, but I don't like her being that miserable either. I'm learning a lot about self-suffering and the importance of freedom from this trip and from discussions with my mother, as she struggles to live on her own in spite of her deteriorating condition.

Then I rode another 5 miles and camped by a beautiful little lake. I rode a total of 38 miles today. It looks like I have about 3 more days before I reach Fairbanks.

7/9/10

I woke to a beautiful morning by the lovely little pond. I got a late start this morning and didn't really hit the road until 9:30 am. I got hot quickly. Not a cloud in the sky this morning. I did great on the first hills but as the day wore on and the sun got hotter, 83 degrees, I found myself walking up the steep hills. There was a long stretch of 2 mile uphill at a 7% grade followed by the same downhill. I roasted on the uphill and froze on the downhill. Then there was a miserable construction area between mile 25 and 28 of the Dalton Highway. The road was mud, soaked by the water truck, followed by the grader. Plus, it was mostly uphill. By the time I got done with that, I was covered with mud from head to toe. I was a huge mess!

Water was scarce but someone passing by gave me some water, so I didn't have to resort to swamp water in desperation. By 6:30 pm I was so tired and so hot that even on the flat I was hardly able to pedal. I decided to camp at the 21 mile overlook. A huge thunderstorm rolled in and it poured for a while then cleared. I only made it 30 miles today. The long hills were really slowing me down. There are only 20 more miles of the Dalton Highway and I hope I can ride them all tomorrow.

7/10/10

Another sunny hot day. I took off from milepost 21 at 8 am on lots of steep uphill followed by equally steep downhill and very rough road. It was blistering heat with barely a breeze. Water was so scarce that I was forced to drink some water that was so bad that it was brown and kind of tasted like dirt. But at least it was water. If I do this again, I'm bringing lots more water! I made the last 21 miles of the Dalton Highway by 1 pm. It was like crossing a finish line because I suddenly left the extremely rough gravel Dalton Highway onto the beautifully smooth paved Elliot Highway. When I stopped, a woman in a Jeep gave me a bottle of ice cold clean water. That was fantastic! There were a bunch of motorcyclists gathered the Dalton Highway sign. They were amazed that I had come all the way from Prudhoe Bay on

my bicycle. The folks who gave me the water took my picture with my bike by the Dalton Highway sign. I still have 81 miles to Fairbanks but crossing that line and hitting paved road was a special moment. Now I can say I biked the entire Dalton Highway!

I continued another 15 miles on the smooth Elliot Highway and camped at Colorado Creek Trailhead. I am now only 66 miles from Fairbanks. I expect to make it there tomorrow. It looks like rain again.

7/11/10

Well, so much for making Fairbanks today. Today was filled with horrendous hills. But worse than the hills were the horrific strong 40 mile an hour headwinds, all day long! Even on very steep downhill runs, I still had to pedal with everything I had to keep the bike upright against the wind. The road was beautifully smooth and lacked the extreme up and down hills that the Dalton had. Although the hills were not as steep, they went on for 4 or 5 miles at a time. If I stopped, it was impossible to get back on the bike and get moving again against the wind.

After about 30 miles of struggling, a thunderstorm came along and soaked me through and through with icy cold rain. I camped at the Wickersham Dome Trailhead shortly after the rain hit. I was so tired that I knew I couldn't make it another 36 miles to Fairbanks. So, I will leave that final push for tomorrow. The winds got a lot worse and there were several more heavy showers. A good time to call it a day.

Tomorrow – Fairbanks. I really mean it this time!

7/12/10

Slept in a bit too long but managed to get on the road by 8:30 am. The wind was still blowing and for the first time in many days, I was actually cold. I wore my long pants, inner jacket, hat and gloves. I started out with a 3 mile long downhill that was freezing cold. But then came a long 3 or 4 mile uphill that I managed to ride the whole way. There were lots of long uphill but much longer downhills. I quickly tossed all the warm clothes as I got lower and left the wind behind. The miles flew by. 38 miles from camp to Fairbanks. The road was so smooth, and my lower gears would work up to a point, but never quite make the lowest gear. So, I was forced to walk some of the steepest hills. I found that sometimes walking was good just to rest the riding muscles. Even the long downhill runs would leave me breathless, probably just from holding so tightly to the handlebars. My right hand tended to go numb and my arms really ached after each long downhill run. Many were for several miles. Again, the miles flew by.

I could hardly contain my excitement when I finally reached Fox and the sign that read Fairbanks 10 miles. In that 10 miles I was mostly on freeway on the Steese Highway with 3 or 4 miles of a long steady uphill. But it was not a steep grade and I was able to make it without my lowest gear.

Elated, I pulled into the gas station that has great ice cream at exactly 2 pm. In Fairbanks!

I called Mark but he wasn't home. My mother was also not home. I left progress messages for both of them. I called Deadhorse Flight Service Station and passed on the good news to Dave. I was so thrilled. Then, of course I got a double deck ice cream cone that was so big I couldn't even finish it.

I looked in the phonebook and found Greatland Sports Bicycle Shop. I rode over there and left my bike for a tune-up. They had some awesome biking shoes in my size, so I bought them. I stayed in a nearby hotel and resupplied at the Fred Meyers store. Checked my email, talked to my mother and sister and had a big dinner. I slept well in a clean dry hotel room and enjoyed a much-needed shower. I threw out my old shoes and looked in horror at my poor toe. I think it will survive with a little moleskin and the new shoes. I plan to stay in Fairbanks two nights to get my bike back in order and recover before I head south again to Palmer.

7/13/10

I just hung out in Fairbanks all day. I also bought a new bike seat and bike bag and mailed the old stuff home. A nice rest day in Fairbanks.

7/14/10

I didn't exactly get up early and hit the road as planned. I finally left my hotel room at 10 am. It took a whole hour to make it through the city of Fairbanks. Several people told me it was all downhill to Nenana. Those people are nuts! There were so many hills and strong headwinds all day long too.

I met a man named Bill who was riding his bike doing Adopt A Highway cleanup. We had a nice chat about biking.

Halfway to Nenana I stopped at Skinny Dick's, a strange bar filled with obscenities. But they were such nice people despite my first impression. I filled my empty Pepsi bottle with Diet Coke from the fountain. I also filled my hydration pack with water and bought some Fritos and a Snickers bar. I thought about camping there because it was starting to rain. But I had only gone about 30 miles and it was only 5 pm. They assured me that the one hill right there was the only hill and after that it was all downhill the 25 miles to Nenana. So, I put on my raingear and went for it. It was really cold, and I had to add my warm coat. The strong wind continued. It really was mostly downhill with only gentle uphill. I made it to Nenana by 8:30 pm. The campground there is fabulous. I put my tent up under a log shelter so my bike can even stay dry too. It is raining again so that shelter was a welcome site. I got a nice hot shower and they had flushing toilets and running water. They even had a laundromat. I think it may be the nicest campground I have ever seen. I should sleep well here tonight.

7/15/10

I certainly did sleep well. Too well! I didn't wake up until almost 9:30 and then only because my sister called. By the time I broke camp and finally got on my way it was 11 am.

The blasted wind was still with me almost all day. The road was almost flat except for a few shallow hills near Healy. I stopped and had a hot meal at Clear Sky Lodge around 25 miles out of Nenana. I had fun sharing my adventure with some of the local characters hanging out there.

There were not a lot of hills today, but it was still a lot of work because there were no long downhills to give me a break. I was peddling hard all day long. Both knees are starting to hurt a little. I went 56 miles today all the way from Nenana to Healy. I did make it all the way to Healy by 8:30 pm.

I'm thinking of heading to Cantwell, only 40 miles tomorrow. I expect it will be a long uphill trip to Denali Park area, so it may be slow going. I hope it is done raining. I didn't get too wet today, but I did wear my raingear most of the day, partly because of the wind.

7/16/10

Wind! All day long the wind blew in my face. I got a reasonable start out of Healy at 9:30 am, for a change. It was a long hill out of Healy but a big surprise because it was mostly downhill all the way to Denali Park entrance. But after that, it was either flat or slightly uphill. It wasn't bad uphill but was enough to keep me peddling hard all day long. Especially against that absolutely horrible wind.

I met a French man on his bike heading to Fairbanks then down to Haines. We exchanged cards and took pictures of each other. It rained a bit but never hard. I pushed for Cantwell and arrived exhausted on my last breath. I decided to add another 2 miles and ride on up the Denali Highway to stay in the lodge. I really needed a good rest.

7/17/10

Well, that was a wonderful night's sleep. Last night's dinner at the lodge really hit the spot too. There is no more civilization for the next 95 miles until I get to Trapper Creek. There are camping choices at 45 and 65 miles before that. I would like to make Beyers Lake tomorrow but probably won't since I didn't get moving until 10 am this morning. So I set my sights on Little Coal Creek.

The wind was unrelenting for most of the day along with the rain. I had to wear my down parka under my raincoat most of the day. The terrain wasn't too bad though. Lots of ups and downs but no steep grades. Towards the end of the day my knees started having sharp pains, so I ended up walking up a few hills.

When I got to Coal Creek there was a sign that said No Camping. But it also said there was a campground 1.2 miles south. I took off for that campground. It was a delightful place to camp. It's the Denali North lookout. It cost \$10 but there is even a campground host and bathrooms. If I get lucky the clouds might clear and I'll have the magnificent Denali view. The host gave me some water. The wind stopped which meant the mosquitoes came back. But they weren't too bad. I'm hoping to make Trapper Creek tomorrow.

7/18/10

I woke up and it felt so cold I wanted to stay cozy in my sleeping bag. I heard a couple of little ticks against my tent and realized it was starting to rain. It was only 6 am but the sky looked very gray and I didn't want the rain to start before I had the chance to pack up my camp. So, I hurried and packed up and put on my raingear, jacket and hat and headed south. I no sooner left when it started to pour rain. I was mostly downhill or just gentle slopes, and fortunately, no wind. But after 20 miles, I was freezing. My only choice was my down parka even though I knew it would get wet because I could see that both my Gortex and bike jacket were already totally worthless against the rain. I asked a State Trooper if

there was anything between where I was and Trapper Creek. He said, only Princess Lodge. I hoped to stay warm until I got there to dry off.

I got to the Denali South viewpoint then right after was Mary's McKinley View Lodge. It was open so I parked the bike and went inside, soaking wet and dripping on everything. They had a really cute fleece lined weather resistant raincoat that fit, so I bought that. I also had a nice real breakfast.

Then I was off into the downpour, wearing my soaking wet pants and just the pink coat and a nylon T-shirt on top. Surprisingly, I stayed dry for the next 20 miles then coasted into Trapper Creek and paid for a room at the Trapper Creek Inn. I threw all of my clothes into their dryer and bought a sturdy yellow raincoat they had in their store. I figured it would keep me dry all the way to Palmer if the bad weather continued.

It will be a long haul but I think I may be able to make it all the way home tomorrow. The store opens at 7 so I can get my bike out of their garage then be off. I hope to make it home, but if not, I can stop in Willow for another night on the road.

7/19/10

The last day. I slept for 12 solid hours at the Trapper Creek Inn. I woke up to pouring rain and considered rolling over and waiting until their final checkout time. But I finally got up, packed up, ate a quick breakfast at the store, put on my new Trapper Creek raincoat and pushed off into the pouring rain.

I stayed dry and kept going and going with thoughts of home. There were more hills than I had hoped for, but not too bad. The traffic was horrible and so loud. I missed the quiet of the Dalton Highway. I reached the terrible road construction mess north of Willow where my bike and I got tossed into a pilot car for a couple of miles. That part was not possible by bike and barely so by car. I arrived at the Willow Store at 3 pm and called Mark. It was much too early to stop, but still over 40 miles to home. But I decided to just keep going. I didn't want to stop and camp in Wasilla, so close to home!

There was a bike trail but it had a lot more hills and curves than the road, so I stuck with the side of the road for most of the way. The closer I got to Palmer, the more determined I was to go the whole way. It seemed like eternity until I got to Wasilla. Once there it seemed like a second eternity to the Palmer-Wasilla Highway. I called Mark and Becky from Fred Meyers to let them know I was only 10 miles out, not counting the last 7 up to my house. I never noticed how many hills the Palmer-Wasilla had, up down, up down. It seemed endless on that bike trail. I finally stumbled into Palmer and met Mark at the Palmer Visitor's Center for some arrival photos.

Then I struggled the last 7 miles up to my house, in the pouring rain of course. I had to walk a little part of the Wolverine hill but not the last part. I happily coasted down Teresa and Heidi Drive to my front door. 90.2 miles in one day.

I did it!

FINISHED!