

## From Porkers, April 2020

*Folks, here are more of the sweet and astonishing responses we received in the days after April 20. We got partway through the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, and we are into a 12th page of excerpts here. We'll have to stop collecting them for now, but to everyone who wrote to us, we thank you!*

*(Incidentally, we did not accept the many offers of donations that you'll see below. With gratitude, with humility, and sometimes with a lump in our throats, we gently declined and suggested the purchase of a gift card instead. What a month this has been.)*

Tammy, How can I make a contribution to help cover costs of PBV providing trailers and showers to hospitals? If not, then how/where can I contribute to help PBV with other expenses? Credit card or check? Or small unmarked bills?

--from Mark

Hey Guys, Please believe that you're in my thoughts. Last night, I was sharing with my girlfriend how disappointed I am personally about the cancellation, but how I'm even more concerned about you guys and possibly losing the fantastic experience you've created for me over the past six years. She was a little iffy about joining me this year, but she's now 100% committed to riding in July 2021 and I just registered her for tent support. Hang onto my money for two people now. I'm talking to a few others to try to get them to commit 16 months in advance - that's not a huge commitment for something as important as Pork Belly.

---from Randy

I have said many times that this is more than a business to you guys. You understand that for many Porkers the week in the Corn is a respite for us, and to that end you guys have provided the best experience we can have. You guys, the full time staff, and the summer help are in my thoughts! I am sure you are feeling the pressure and responsibility of how to get through this. Us riders who know you are, and care.

---from Tim

No refund is necessary. My wife and I are not loaded but we are doing fine and you and your crew are in a tighter pinch than we are. As per below consider 50% a donation to you and your crew to pay expenses to date and the remaining 50% can be for next year. Best to you and all the crew.

---from Blair

Tammy and Pete, Please consider our registration funds for 2020 as a donation to PBV for you, your families and crew. It's been a really tough couple of months for everyone, and it's not over yet. We are lucky enough to be at a point in our lives where we can do

this and it helps us feel like we are at least contributing in some way. Thank you for taking such good care of us and all the other porkers, we look forward to riding with you guys again in 2021.

---from Elise and Debra

Hi Tammy, Shocking world we live in right now. I applaud you, Pete, and your entire team for doing the right thing regard deposits and such. We weren't able to sign up last year or this year unfortunately, but we'd like to sign up now for 2021!! Can we do that?? Continue to be safe with your loved ones.

---from Julie

No refund needed for me. Pork Belly can keep my 2020 fee paid and use to help pay the crew. Great to hear about the shower trailers pitching in to help our healthcare workers. Just to be clear, no refund or credit required. I'll pay again when 2021 registration comes around. Crazy times! Looking forward to next year!

---from Yon

Hey, Guys, So, so sorry for all of this. Hang tight; this terrible storm will pass, and wildflowers, summer days and lush stands of corn will come again. PBV at RAGBRAI is a wonderful thing that you guys have created, a special slice of RAGBRAI that thousands have enjoyed. Keep that in your sights as all of us hunker down to weather these stormy seas. Hang on, we will come out the other side.

---from Todd

My heart is broken, but at same time I cannot make plans for next year. I truly wish you the best and hope I can be part of your fantastic charter company again some day. Best wishes!

---from Susan

Dear Pete and Tammy, Boy, talk about mixed emotions. I was afraid RAGBRAI would not be cancelled then I would need to make the decision whether I should go or not. On the other hand I was fairly certain it would be cancelled. I will consider your fall three-day trip when it is set up. I have been lobbying for the couch since you stopped hauling it around. I'll keep it short, you have lots of e mails to get to. Please tell everyone I said hello, and put it towards next year.

---from Ed

Hey Tammy, I can't remember if I paid, and I am too lazy to look it up....LOL. If I have paid, I just want to apply it to 2021. If I have not paid, let me know that too, and I will pay you early for next year. Thank you for all you do! Hang in there and stay safe.

---from Macy

Rank me as a ZERO; I will see you next year. Yes, my business and my circumstance have been hurt. I am a person of faith. I have no doubt that at the end of the day, all this will turn out O.K. because the Lord is faithful and steadfast. However in the interim, there will likely be some harder days. I pray for the wellbeing of the PEOPLE of PBV.  
---from Bill

Tammy, Believe I am paid in full. Please retain all and apply to 2021. Good Luck! As we say in baseball "Just wait till next year."  
---from Jon

Sorry to hear but next year will come before we know it, again my position on refund is 0. Keep what I have paid. I hope it helps.  
---from Charles

"Thanks, Pete and Tammy, for everything you have done for me and my friends. I am already looking forward to spending our week in the corn with you and the Pork Belly crew in 2021 and beyond. Keep what I have paid and apply it to next year. Stay safe and healthy."  
---from Albert

Good afternoon Tammy and Pete, As much as I'd like to let it roll, I will have two in college this coming year and need all the help I can get. By leaving the money with you, I would have to borrow it for tuition, sorry. Thank you so so much for understanding! In 4/5 years my funds should be flush again. I hope to make it next year!  
---from Luke

Please keep what I have paid. I cannot imagine how COVID-19 is impacting your business and understand that you will have to make some very difficult decisions. I did want you to know that since 2015 when I first started participation in RAGBRAI, I have used Pork Belly Ventures. The last 5 years have been amazing and Pork Belly Ventures has been a major part of my overall RAGBRAI experience and awesome memories. The service that you provide along with the nightly food and entertainment such as Maddie Poppe has always been outstanding. I cannot imagine a RAGBRAI without Pork Belly Ventures. I hope to see you in July, 2021.  
---from Mike

Please keep my spot and hold my reservation till next year. Best Wishes to the crew and staff during this challenging time! (Understatement!)

---from Matthew

We will curb our enthusiasm for now, keep riding, we will be absolute cycling animals, true Porkers, for 2021! It will be a fabulous time, just needing to wait a bit longer. We are thrilled the course will be the same! We are thrilled to stay with you then and wishing you well during these trying times. We WILL be there in 2021 for the Ragbrai of all Ragbrai's!

---from Deni and David

Tammy and Pete, My friends, you are incredible human beings. Thank you for the vivid illustration of how society can and should work. Seriously, you've renewed my faith in humankind. And I'm sure as heck going to be joining you next year. Looking forward to seeing you again

---from KC

As you probably know, I was in with Frank and Gaines and had paid my Pork Belly registration fees. Anyway, I am with them as far as letting the money ride until next year. We are all in this terrible time together and we need to all recover together. See you next year.

---from Mike

Hello! Know that we LOVE YOU. I have not had time to do Ragbrai in years, but every time I receive a Pork Belly email I am amazed that tears start running down my face. Your humor, your kindness, your commitment is something I value and it moves me. We will get to the other side and have the cleanest hand habits for life. All the best!

---from Shelly and Lizette

Hey Tammy, We are doing everything to support small businesses, especially our favorite. Let it ride please.

---from Mike and Shelly

Tammy & Pete, So sorry to hear about RAGBRAI. I know that this is a huge blow for you both and your team. Please know that we are thinking of you and praying for the entire Pork Belly team. You can keep my payment and let me know if there is anything else that we can do. Keep me posted if you do a ride later in the year, will want to be a part of it. God Bless you both!

---from Troy

Tammy and Pete, In addition to holding my spot for 2021, please accepted the enclosed as a donation in support of PBV. You are a huge part of the RAGBRAI joy, and I look forward to riding with you in 2021.

---from Cheryl

Tammy, Let it Ride; apply to 2021. Here is another option that is OK with me: You take out 10% as expenses to keep your staff and let the rest ride to 2021. Let me know if you want to do this.

---from Ronald

Hi, Tammy, Gosh, I started crying again as I read this email. I had a flashback because the last time I cried about any email was the issue you sent back in the fall. I have no idea why I can ignore the news, barely read the paper, hear about issues on FB from friends ... none of that affects me as deeply as the spirit of your emails. Perhaps it's the combination of the energy of RAGBRAI with the more relatable effort you guys put in to your jobs. You have a great way of saying "This Sucks - But We're Still Smiling." So, Tammy and Pete, just a thank you for being such pillars always.

---from Rich

Thank you, Tammy. Good luck with everything. Such a challenging time. Thank you so much for all the goodness & caring support you have shown your local hospitals by loaning your shower trucks. Pork Belly is definitely part of the love & many blessings that have arisen during this Pandemic. We thank you & are grateful for it all.

---from Gail

Greetings, Tammy and Pete, I hope all is well with you and family, as well as all of the Porker staff. With all of this uncertainty, I am sure you have a very challenging crisis to deal with this year. I just want you to know that I will hang in there with you.

---from Art

Hello Tammy and Pete, Keep reservations for three people: Alexander, Huck, and Kirk. I wish you the best as you work to get through this difficult time, and hope to see you next year.

---from Kirk

Tammy & Pete, I am so sorry to hear of the RAGBRAI cancellation but I am not surprised. Please keep everything I've paid and apply it to RAGBRAI 2021. We will hope that the world is back on track by then and I am sure it will be a great celebration next year. Thanks for all you're doing for your employees and the community. I was very gratified to learn of your donations of your shower trailers to local hospitals.

---from Tom

We are planning, not hoping, to ride RAGBRAI in 2021! Please sign us up for the usual services. Team Rhubarb returns! See you then.

---from Bill and Donna

Tammy and Pete, We're sorry for the financial hardship that this is going to place on you, your employees, all the other vendors/suppliers, and the towns of Iowa. It is absolutely awesome what Pork Belly is doing in providing your trailers for the medical personnel. I believe in karma; there is a special place for you! Please hold onto my deposit and reserve my spot for 2021.

--from Janice and John

Hey - You guys are the best. I've used your service twice and each time it was spectacular. Couldn't have asked for more, especially your crew. I just wanted to wish you all the best. Please stay safe. I wasn't riding this year but do have plans on 2021. Peace to you all.

---from Jim

I currently have the 10% deposit on file, please keep that for next year. Additionally, although it may be too small to be of much help, I am more than willing to front the rest of the PBV fee now to be held until next year. I believe that this is what my good buddy Dr. Bergstrom is doing also. Hang in there, let me know what you would like me to do.

---from Bob

Tammy/Pete, it has been a few years since we have joined you. We want to express our concern for you, your people, and all the people that your wonderful business touches. As I have told you previously, you guys have done a great job getting where you are with PBV. And what you are doing in support of the hospitals, in our view, not a surprise, given your commitment to your Iowa brethren. Keep it up, we know you will. And we will hope to see you in 2021.

--from Rick and Cassie

Hi Tammy & Pete,

Steve and I are super disappointed but understand and were expecting this to happen. Steve and I want you to keep our deposits and put them on next years ride. I understand how much this affects you. I'm a small business also with a full time employee. We are all taking a hit. Let me know if you host any other rides that Steve and I might be interested in doing. Thanks for all you do. Sending hugs and prayers.

--from Lori and Steve

I hope y'all get through this difficult time! Please hold our spots for 2021, and stay safe.  
---from Kevin and Jean

Please send my refund for Nancy, David and Emily Drees to this address. We would like to do RAGBRAI next year. Stay safe, stay healthy, and thank you for supporting those in need. We're looking forward to better days with you!  
---from Nancy

Since the event has been cancelled, please credit and I will plan on using y'all next year. -  
--from Claude

Tammy-Pete, The sun will shine again over Iowa, Ragbrai and Pork Belly. Reading your news and the RAGBRAI announcement reminded me of the movie, It's A Wonderful Life. Remember the scene of the run on the bank? Everyone wanted their money and George Bailey had to convince everyone to have faith? I have faith in you guys and Ragbrai and God willing, I'll be riding with you next year! Keep my deposit for next year!  
---from Chuck

Tammy & Pete, Thanks for that sad but great update on this years RAGBRAI, and sharing more of your story. God bless you for taking care of your people the best you can. Please keep my deposit for next year. If it would help, be happy to send you the outstanding balance now. Let me know and I'll take care of it right away.  
---from John

Hello Tammy, Please apply my RAGBRAI deposit to the 2021 ride. Mary & I look forward to the same plan as this year. Good luck with this EXTREMELY challenging situation.  
---from Jim

Tammy, I would like to just move my reservation to the BAM for next year JUNE 13-18. Please confirm. Thanks for sending the email and best of luck during these trying times.  
---from Ted

Hi Tammy, I had been signed up with the bike across Missouri and was really frustrated that everything is being canceled this year. I have also done Ragbrai. I was notified by a friend today that you all might try to organize your own ride by the end of the summer, and was hoping I could get in on that. So if there is anything I need to do please let me know. Please sign me up for email updates.

---Sue

Hi Tammy and Pete, Please hold my deposit for RAGBRAI 2021. Sorry for the postponement and resulting dysfunction, but it's the correct decision given the uncertainties this summer. Wish you and your team the best through these challenges. Hopefully a doubly nice week in the corn next year! Stay safe!

---from Chris

My wife and I are disappointed, but not surprised by the cancellation. We were very much anticipating our first RAGBRAI! Keep our money for next year, and keep your loved ones safe and healthy. We will look forward to 2021!

---from Kevin and Jean

Betty and I are so sorry that RAGBRAI 2020 is not happening but look forward to seeing you in 2021. Please hold our spot!

---from Tom and Betty

Hi Tammy, Hopefully this year will go fast and before long we'll all be under the red & white canopy again in July 2021. No refund; rather, a reservation and a credit for next year's RAGBRAI. Looking forward to another great adventure with Porkbelly. Hope everyone stays safe!

---from Bob

Please keep what I've paid. Wishing you the very best for good health during these trying times. Thank you for all you've done in the past. Looking forward to seeing you again on the next RAGBRAI. Best regards,

---from Guy

Tammy, For us, Let it Ride to 2021. Hope that helps you a little to get through the remainder of this year. Keep up the good work. Would it help if we sent you the regular full week support registration fee for next year to help with your cash flow this year?

---from Lee

Tammy, maybe RAGBRAI could be two weeks next year so I can keep my string of attendance intact? I was going to miss this year anyway, need a new hip, and two knees. I'm still riding though. Hoping to be bionic for next year!! Will let you know about the fall ride. Will miss seeing you guys.

---from Terry

My wife and I have been doing all we can to support local businesses in our town in Illinois, and even though I have never used your services before I have been on your email list for a while and have enjoyed your comments on RAGBRAI every year. You mention below that you would appreciate it if those who can would keep their reservations with you to help your cash flow during this awful year, and I feel enough of an attachment to you to want to help you with that if it turns out that a charter is my best option for next year. I have made no final decisions about next year yet, but I am wondering if you would consider taking new reservations for next year right now?  
---from Ken

So sorry that the ride is off, but really appreciate how hard you've worked and how clear and timely your notes have been. Please keep anything we've paid thus far and apply it towards a 2021 ride. We'll anxiously await 2021. Stay safe.  
---from Tim and Kim

Guys, Thanks a lot for your email today. I'm sure it's extremely difficult what you're going through and have to do. Some of my friends have done it many times and this was to be my first RAGBRAI. As I mentioned in the subject, I am in the 0 category! Keep my payment. I very much look forward to it next year! Thanks and best of luck going forward.  
---from Mike

Hi Tammy and Pete, Please keep my payment for the next time. I'm so sorry for the terrible position you are in, and I'll miss seeing you all this year. Being in this part of the country, I could see no alternative than the choice to cancel. It's all very frightening and sad. Wishing you and all the other Porkers health and safety!!  
---from Chris

Hi Tammy, I realize this is not the right time to ask this other than to hope you will think about offering this soon. I realize you are very busy staying organized with your refunds. What I'm asking, to help with your cash flow, would you consider taking full payment for 2021 from someone that was not signed up for this year?  
---from Wendy

As I noted above, when I finished reading your email, I was sad. I was also very moved by your care for your employees/friends and your generosity in making your trailers available to local hospitals. I'm not at all surprised. I'd like to help by donating my entire deposit. No need to apply it to the July 2021 ride - I'll re-up next winter with a new deposit. Hope it helps a little. I wish you all God's best as you negotiate this horrible situation. And I look forward to seeing you next year. I'll miss you all in July.

---from Greg

I was touched by your generosity with your equipment and crew, and have mailed a check for you to put towards whatever you want! I also shared your YouTube video, so I'm hopeful that sends good actions your way. Thinking of you all and knowing somehow things will get better!

---from Lori

Hi Tammy and Pete, Thank you for all that you do. I was moved to tears when I saw pictures of your volunteer efforts for the medical staff and local hospitals! You are clearly GOOD PEOPLE! This would have been my first Ragbrai. Please keep my funds and save a spot for me for RAGBRAI 2021! My friend, Scott, will be doing the same and will email you separately. I can't wait to experience RAGBRAI with you. See you in 2021!

---from Lauren

Tammy and Pete, Please hold our deposit. However, we are tentatively planning a trip to France next July (Tour de France spectating for my 60th birthday!). So we may be asking for a refund before next March. Best wishes and stay healthy!

---from Tom and Bridget

Thank you for your well worded informational email on the cancellation of the 2020 RAGBRAI. Regretfully I am requesting a full refund despite my knowledge of the difficulty small businesses such as Pork Belly are facing during the pandemic. I will continue to recommend PBV to my fellow Canadian cyclists as the best way to experience the greatness of RAGBRAI and hope to use your charter in the future.

---from Ian

Tammy, We have been business owners for our entire life and can understand what your going through. Keep what we have paid. Since we can afford it, it is the RIGHT THING TO DO.

---from Greg and Kathryn

HOLD my funds. Can't wait to see you in 2021 for my very first RAGRAI! Until then, Stay Safe!!!!

---from Tonsa

Tammy and Pete, Best wishes for keeping the wheels on during this crazy time. Please hold my deposits for next year; as we get closer to 2021, let me know if it'll help for me to raise my balance and (my cash flow permitting) I'll do so.

---from Creighton

My deposit can be retained for the 2021 ride. Your email was very well written and heartwarming. I might suggest you start a Go Fund Me (or similar) before you sell needed assets. I would gladly give you a donation, as I am sure many would as we understand the hardship this has caused for you and so many. Hang in there!

---from Steve

Let it "ride"! We'll get through this and enjoy next year that much more. Send my well wishes to the entire gang!

---from Bry

I'm so sorry Tammy, but I have not worked since 3-12 and don't know when I'll have any income. I sent my kids money after the first week of Corona not realizing how long this would last. Now tapping into retirement funds way early. My "will do wheelies for food" sign isn't producing either.

--from Brad

Thanks Tammy and Pete. I (Mr. Green) will miss seeing you, family, crew, and the great friendly folks of rural Iowa in 2020 - especially the church ladies they are so sweet and old school. It's great to hear you are helping the hospitals in your area with some of the PBV equipment. I'll look forward to seeing you and riding in 2021. It will be epic. Stay safe, healthy, and happy!

---from John

I am grateful to see your trailers sitting outside of a hospital providing protection for healthcare workers who fear for their families. My husband is a physician who is doing "platoon work" where he and his colleagues alternate work weeks...7 days on and 7 days off. On his work days, he strips to his underwear in the garage and goes straight to the shower. On his off week, we watch for COVID symptoms. Our family is relatively young and healthy, so my husband can come home and, if infected, we'll most likely be fine. But, we have friends who are not so fortunate and they have had to find alternate housing to protect their families. Please keep my registration fee and apply it to next year's ride. I am praying for you, your staff, and your company. Keep up the good work.

---from Chris

Tammy and Pete, I think I'm paid in full. Hopefully, I'll be back in 21. I expect everyone will be kicking themselves come July, but it was the only decision that could be made now. Relax and enjoy the summer for a change.

---from Mark

Good Morning, You all have handled this situation wonderfully! Kudos to you. I hope to be able to ride with you sometime in the future, perhaps RAGBRAI next year, once all this COVID stuff is behind us. Please send my refund to this address. Thank you for all your hard work!

---from Dan