

# *Louise Wedge*

## *Cofounder of Hands Across the Bridge*

My name is Louise and I love organizing party fashion shows, formal dances, and tea parties. While I was in prison, I even helped to organize a revolt. This was probably the least successful event I have ever helped to organize.



Patty Katz, Alan Levine, and I, were asked to think of a way to celebrate Recovery Month. After much deliberation with many people, Hands Across the Bridge was born. We worked for months planning the event. We had fundraisers and a lot of flyers were handed out. We made a great deal of friends and many became willing to donate their time and money to the event.

Personally, I felt that we were going to march right up to that Bridge, conquer it, hold hands from Washington to Oregon, say the Serenity Prayer, and march off proudly. Then, we had a pre-event walk through at the Bridge. I have driven across the bridge many times, but I never before considered the length of it. I thought I was going to have heart failure. My soul shriveled. It was too late to back out now, so I just fluffed up and kept on.

The pre-bridge ceremony was excellent. It was real people celebrating real recovery who were truly glad to be there. Ten year old Eli Hardy sang AMERICA and everybody cried and cheered. It was a day filled with happiness and gratitude. I marched to the bridge; but instead of marching proudly, I marched with serenity and a feeling of wellbeing (I am going to end for a moment as I can feel the tears welling up in the back of my eyes). I left the Bridge not as a conqueror, but as a person filled with humility and thanking my Higher Power for allowing me to be a part of this.

When people ask me what Hands Across the Bridge is like, I say, "you owe it to yourself to come feel it." I could tell you how I met Bikers there on their Harleys that were perfect gentlemen. Or how a couple talked about becoming reunited in recovery and how they now have their children back. I could tell you how everybody cried when they called their children to the stage to introduce them. Yet, as the old saying goes, "you had to be there?"

That day I made a personal commitment to help organize further Hands Across the Bridge events. And this is now our ninth annual event.

Louise Wedge,  
Hands Across the Bridge  
Co-Founder/Organizer