Wandering Wheels Newsletter, December 1994

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The nicest thing about December is telling our friends we care and remember.

December 1994

Holiday Greetings!

I'm not sure what the early signs of loss of memory are, but wasn't it just yesterday we sent out a Wheels' newsletter?

Somewhere in the space between last year this time and now Wheels people have gotten married, had children, grandchildren, become millionaires, gone bankrupt, been in and out of mid-life crisis, had learning deficit, anorxia, or discovered their family roots have a disfunctional taint!

Things here at Wandering Wheels continue to really be a BLESSING and, yes, most of the above has happened to us.

Spring Coast to Coast

for 1994 seem like a dream. We ran bike tours from early January through September. Each trip could provide enough data to fill a newsletter.

A big salute back to people along highway congratulating this summer's riders on their successful completion of a coast to coast.

Out in the middle of Montana. The summer crossing came across this "motor home". Notice the old Lazy Boy recliner on the stacked hay! Scenes like this provide the special ingredient for making it through some of the long days.
The summer coast-to-coast riders climbed enough hills and mountains that the total number of feet climbed added up to 84,000! One rider was asked several weeks after the trip if he would do it again. He said, "I never unpacked!"

We had a trio of gals on the Spring Coast to Coast who were marvelous. Two of them were 74 years young and the third one was 69! I couldn't have imagined launching out across the United States 25 years ago with anyone much older than 21! In fact, our first "old" guy, 45, was called "Grandpa" by the younger riders!

Ann James was the tiny one of the trio--just a wisp of a thing! I asked her one day how she was doing, and she remarked, "I only have a hairsbreadth left." (I used to think that was "hare's breath"... not so, according to the dictionary!) There were several days when Ann looked like she was on her last breath! I asked her what kind of car she drives. "A Saab, stick shift, turbo!" was her response.

Our other 74-year-old was just as tough and many nights came in after 80 miles too tired to eat and too tough to quit! Talent night arrived and we discovered she was a class yodeler... could really belt it out! And our 69-year-old, upon recovering from cancer, just up and decided she was not going to roll over and die, but instead decided to ride a bike 2,600 miles! Life becomes a pretty precious commodity hanging around people like these.

**Quotations**

"When your only tool is a hammer, everything else looks like a nail."

"When you love someone, hard becomes easy."

"Today I make the most of what I have and do not dwell on what I do not have."

"Your best friend is the one who brings out the best in you."

And then this beautiful quote from *Moby Dick*: "...the energy, the use of appropriate
tools, the good spirit that men have while working together while at the same time being aware that the ultimate result of work is not to be admired..."

The above quote hit me like a ton of bricks! On the side of our big, new, yellow truck we have the quote "Success is in the journey, not the destination." There are so many reminders in literature, plays, movies, philosophy, theology, the Bible, etcetera, that the quality of life has more to do with the activity between starting and stopping! The much overused word "serendipity", the gift of finding valuable or agreeable things not sought for, is a constant reminder that life's dynamics is like an OREO COOKIE...it's the WHITE STUFF IN BETWEEN that really counts! Most of the letters and phone calls coming back to us speak clearly to the point that it was friendships made and strangers met that made the trip so good! "The good spirit men have while working..." and "Success is in the journey..." are still the bottom line!

TEN CROSSINGS GOLD MEDALLION
Speaking of a FIRST, Janech Davenport made her TENTH coast-to-coast crossing this past summer. She is the FIRST gal to receive a gold medallion for TEN crossings! In fact, she picked up her ten crossings faster than any other rider, man or woman!

BORDER-TO-BORDER FACTS:
One of our Border-to-Border riders was told he was nuts for taking such a trip. "The least you could do would be to ride from Canada to New Orleans...it's downhill!" was the comment!

"I never had a flat tire, never had an accident, and never met a piece of food I didn't like!" said Bill Moor, one of the riders.

Miss Lynn (Lynn Kueppers), always a lady. Lynn is a nurse out of Detroit. She serves as our nurse on many trips. This past summer was her FIFTH time across the U.S. Wandering Wheels proudly presented her the silver medallion. Congratulations, Lynn!

The '94 inaugural Border-to-Border Team.
Larry Stewart, another rider, left us with a quote from George Sheehan in which he said, concerning his one-hour run each day, "The first 20 minutes of the run are for the body, getting in touch with the aches and soreness in the joints and muscles as they limber up. The second 20 minutes are for the brain as it reflects on appointments and problems of the day. The final 20 minutes are for the soul as it soars above me and gives me an out-of-the-body experience!"

Recently, Sue asked me if, by chance, I'd seen Discovery Channel's story of "A Little Duck". Well, I hadn't. Her description intrigued me enough that I suggested we purchase the tape. I've now seen it twice and have told and re-told the story several times. At the close of our most recent bike trip, the Fall Breakaway in Canada, the devotional input led me to re-tell this delight "Duck Tail"...oops, "Tale"!

A mother duck chose a man-made pond in downtown Tokyo, Japan, to hatch her wee ones. People in surrounding office complexes delighted in watching the ducklings start their grooming for the real world. Day after day people gathered to enjoy the progress. After several weeks the ducklings were marched by the mother to a larger natural body of water. Only a few onlookers discovered that the mother, after much calculation, safely walked the family across six lanes of high-speed traffic to the larger lake. When word of this got out, short of a miracle feat, it made big news in the Tokyo media.

Come the following year word got out that the mother was back and, shortly after her return, was sporting 12 new babies! The crowds grew day by day and virtually every second of the mother's schooling was chronicled by pen and camera. A literal army gathered each day to see if she would eventually take her brood out across the six lanes of traffic.

Well, the Discovery video settled on a star. He is the runt of the litter and is nicknamed by the media as "Chibi" (or runt). The narrator reminds the audience that it is the nature of the mother to chase off or destroy the children who look like they are not going to make it. Chibi is last at everything and some things he just can't do. The crowd, watching this unfold, really champions the underdog and the little guy becomes a household word in Tokyo. Finally, one day mamma duck leads Chibi out away from the others and in so many quacks, tells him to get lost! You're talking tears now! Before long, one of the brother ducks goes and finds Chibi and brings him back into the fold. Wait a minute, you mean a mindless duck is sensitive enough to go find an unwanted brother and bring him back home? So the story goes. Chibi is back in training and continues to stumble along...always last!

Mom duplicates her training steps from the year before, with all eyes on her eventual move from the man-made pond to the nearby larger body of water. The day of judgment arrives and away she goes. She approaches the mega highway loaded with traffic and takes the children across to the bigger lake. Mission accomplished! No, it's just getting started!

After a period of time mom lines the gang up and tells them, "You're his brothers and sisters and I'm mother! You just don't get it! Timing's all wrong! Tears again! The squadron is ready for flight and off they go with little ole Chibi sitting on top the Duck Clubhouse roof, probably never to see his family again!

Be it instinct or what, Chibi starts practicing on his own the art of flying. He crashes and swaddles on several occasions. Eventually he gets better and can just barely sink the water top. A beautiful thing happens. The whole gang flies back after several days to see how he is doing. He tries in vain to join them, but to no avail. His family flies away again. Chibi keeps at his self-teaching and before long is flying over roof tops. Lo and behold, some days later, the duck family comes back to check out the progress of baby brother. After a few fly-overs Chibi revs his engines, takes off, and gloriously joins the flock in flight, and together they outdistance the video camera and disappear!

Back to the devotional in Canada, I turned to an often used portion of the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 13. The Duck Story overwhelmed me. How could dumb ducks demonstrate such caring? I mean, creatures that hunters delight in blowing out of the sky and Chinese use as a major staple in their food preparation? I'm not going to be a hopeless romantic in all this, but I find it both strange and encouraging that so simple a "sounding" can come from such a brainless creature: a brother duck has enough presence to go get an unwanted brother; that the family flies back on two occasions to see if Chibi can join them!
Paul's often read love discourse "ducks(tails)" so well with "A Little Duck Tale". The mother duck exhibited so much patience in training her little ones. Sure, she gave up on one, but had a better track record than many humans. She was going on animal instinct. Paul says that love doesn't boast, isn't proud, rude, selfseeking, or easily angered. The ducks really showed many of these attributes. Boy, they were good at not keeping records. Love protects, trusts, hopes, and always perseveres! "...And now these three remain: faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love."

'Tough said.

The timing of sharing these thoughts at the close of a one-week bike trip seemed so apt. As a group we rode a long distance in a foreign country, ate together, worked together, slept together, met each other early, early mornings, stayed up and sang, played cards and wished each other a good night's rest. All of these experiences together helped create a right mood for sharing Apostle Paul's wish for us. Doctoring it up with the Duck Story was frosting on the cake!

EQUIPMENT FACTS: Our cooking trailer has tagged along behind many vehicles very faithfully like an oriental wife. It's real easy to take this for granted. In Dallas last spring it showed some emotional strains and decided to break. The trailer tongue literally separated from the trailer. The safety chains would have been of no use if the worst possible thing had happened. Janech pulled into the church's parking lot in Mesquite, Texas, and when she stopped the truck and trailer, plop! the trailer and tongue separated! At a time like this we simply salute the Father and say, "Thank You for getting us to our home for the evening, for providing us with a local welder who brought his equipment to the church parking lot and got it repaired!" Most of the cyclists didn't even know we had a problem!

The welder is under the trailer tying tongue of trailer and body together. The picture represents a close call and a real watchful God!

Our like new 1991 GMC Truck. This is a REAL truck! We have named it "Big Bird"! A lot of custom work has gone into this rig. We sold the little Ford for a good price.

Chow time...anytime...anywhere in the USA.
The cooking trailer has been across America 12 times! Just keeps on going...
As you know, most of our equipment takes on an affectionate name—POSSUM, BIG BIRD, GRAY LADY, BIG BLUE, on and on. Two prized pieces of equipment have been the CAMELs. These are old school buses that were converted into trucks...kinda like camels, ugly, but they could go a long way and ask so little. We sold one this fall and our second one is soon "out the door". Upon cleaning the last one out we only had to look up at the ceiling to realize there in decals is chronicled much of our history...all kinds, shapes, and styles of places visited:

SHOP SHOP TILL YOU DROP!!!! That's normal for the cooks preparing food for 70! It brings them to their knees. BILLY GRAHAM CRUSADE in Florida where we even provided music for one of the meetings! DEVIL'S BAKERY at the base of Julian Mountain. Best bread and sweets in the world! SOLVANG and all the memories of our numerous trips down the California coast. RON JON! Ron DiMenna is a friend of Wheels. He owns this, the largest surf shop in the world. WALL DRUG, a sight for sore eyes on our long haul across South Dakota. Old Man Wall has spent time with the Wheels' gang. THIS IS NOT BURGER KING!! YOU CAN'T HAVE IT YOUR WAY!! The cooks love to point the riders attention to this one! "Good-bye Camel, you have been good to us!"

** BRIDGEVILLE AND REHOBOTH BEACH **

The Atlantic Ocean, like a carrot dangled in front of a horse, draws our cyclists across the U.S. The second greatest draw is looking forward to being at two delightful churches that host us each year. They provide us with homes the last two nights of the tour.

When we pull into BRIDGEVILLE, DELAWARE, it feels like a parade is about to happen! The church people greet us in the church parking lot and take the riders to their homes for showers and refreshments. Many volunteer to do our laundry. Our riders return to the church with the church hosts "reborn"! There is a buzz in camp, each rider comparing notes with another regarding how kindly they were treated. Many of our coast-to-coast cyclists are unfamiliar with the graciousness of the church crowd. Over the course of six weeks real spiritual encouragement is offered. This church kitchen at the Union United Methodist Church in Bridgeville is bustling with ladies putting their best touches on a "Meal for Wheels"! This has gone on for nearly 20 years! We then reciprocate and share in an evening meeting. We wake up the
next morning to the smell of breakfast being prepared by the church men...fruit, drink, pancakes, eggs, and scrapple! Bridgeville is the town where scrapple is made. I love it, but when the riders find out the ingredients, they turn a little ashen! I guess everything the butcher can't sell over the counter gets tossed into the scrapple, along with some cornmeal. We are sent on our way that morning headed the 35 miles to Rehoboth Beach and the Atlantic Ocean.

REHOBOTH extends the same "Welcome home, Friends!" feeling. The Epworth United Methodist Church is located less than a block from the ocean. To have the privilege of celebrating the last night on the streets of this wonderful beach resort town and feel like you own it is the perfect stroke to six weeks of cycling. In a sense, the real parade starts at REHOBOTH BEACH, DELAWARE! The church rolls out the carpet in the same fashion as the Bridgeville church. It has been our destination mecca for over 20 years! We have been entertained by numerous mayors and have even met governors at Rehoboth. The tender touch comes from the year-round residents. They make sure we have parking places in this crowded little beach town, parking less than a half block from the Atlantic Ocean. We feel like Royalty! After our greeting at the boardwalk by friends of years past and the nice ego stroking of photographers and reporters, we are the "cock of the walk" for a day! Our wonderful friends at the church open their beautiful spotless church up to us providing us with a wonderful meal, hot showers, soft rugs and air conditioned rooms for the night. Our hosts are always at hand to help us secure any kind of help we need to close out the six-week journey and head home!

A WHEELS' LEGEND

The title "legend" is slow coming for some and fast for others. Scott Grubnau is definitely overnight material! He works for the county as a sheriff with most of his time spent in the courtroom. We received a newsclipping, recently, where he performed some heroics in the courtroom. Word has it that a prisoner attempted an escape and Scott did a rodeo-lasso-and-tie-up, handcuffs, and bang! saved the day! [Dale Thomas, a three-time coast to coaster, had a similar cops-and-robbers problem in Peoria, Illinois. A gal was being mugged in an uptown garage and Dale put the heavy hand on the mugger and quite literally saved the gal's life! Two Wheels' heroes!] Back to Scott...Scott's early claim to fame was riding much of the day without any hands. The back pocket of his riding shirt carried so much stuff that he looked like a kid who had a load in his diaper! After a week, most of his white clothing had chain and sprocket imprints covering them. Every evening there was a Scott "sighting" or "sounding".

Near the close of the summer coast to coast Scott was navigating a narrow bridge going into Romney, West Virginia. He lost control of his bike, went down in serious traffic, splat, flat on the highway! Just prior to the accident he had purchased a giant zucchini squash and had it bungied to his back bike rack. When Scott hit the pavement, squash, toothpaste and brush,
eating utensils, drinking cup, and numerous other articles were scattered from side to side across the bridge. Drivers that had miraculously screeched to a halt came to his rescue, concerned about his physical safety. Realizing he was okay, several drivers proceeded to retrieve the unusual assortment of items spilled off his bike. One brought his toothbrush, another his toothpaste, someone his drinking cup, utensils by another, and, finally, the giant zucchini squash! Traffic is backed up in both lanes and finally our lone rider is back on his bike and headed for camp! Yes, we believed the whole story!

**MEXICO** Almost a year ago Wheels sent a Possum bus to El Paso, Texas, and across the border to Juarez, Mexico. The Bethany Presbyterian Church out of Lafayette, Indiana, along with several other churches, used the bus to transport a team of high schoolers and adults to build a small home for a pastor and his family. It was a very modest little shack, so much so that by U.S. standards one would question using it for an animal shelter. The home was located on the outskirts of the city reminiscent of an old shanty town.

Shanty-town gal in Juarez, Mexico. We watched her each morning as she went to the corner store and then headed home with a small parcel and 3 cigarettes. Her family had their economics honed down to just existing.

Not far away were major U.S. manufacturing establishments. I mean big names! Thomson Electronics was half a mile away and would rival any factory in the U.S. There were several other brand name companies nearby. The locals told us that the shanty town will gradually be replaced with nicer homes, paved streets, sewage, etc. The people were real survivors. The kids got by with the simplest of toys and games. Stickball was the biggie. The kids used anything for a bat and the bases changed as cars pulled in and out of parking areas. They used the cars as bases. The back tire of the Possum made a permanent first base! Janech and I scoured the area for plastic bats and balls, but there were none to be found. I purchased some crazy balls that have ten times the bounce of a normal ball. Wham! One hit and the ball was gone! The kids were great! The church’s gang did a professional job on the house. Janech and I had taken six bikes along to give to pastors. We customized them into single speed, no-nonsense bikes. We put thorn tubes in the tires and, basically, made them like little tanks. It has always been a dream of ours to get involved with Third World people. Maybe this is the start. When the kids found out we could repair bikes, several junkers were brought to us and we did our best to fix them.
The kids in Mexico seemed to play 24 hours a day. Janech is poised helping a little gal take aim at the ball.

We took 6 totally un-assembled bikes to Mexico and assembled them there. Oh, that's Coach!

Young pastor and wife receiving a "like new" bike...an old "mule" converted to single speed. Some of the church work crew looking on.

Many, many years ago a former friend from Tim's area had gone on a Possum trip and was inspired to build a bus and start a Possum-type program in conjunction with the United Methodist Churches in Southern Indiana. The "NIGHTCRAWLER", like the "POSUM", grew and grew, changed leadership, and continues to grow. What a surprise when Tim phoned to say he is the new man in charge and asked, "Can you bring me up to speed on what's happening?" In 25 years so much has happened! The "NIGHTCRAWLER" was our first birthing and then came Tom Chelf's "MEN IN MOTION". Next, Rudy Moberg started the "LYNX" program in Florida, shortly followed by "RETREAT IN MOTION" in Northern Indiana. The Ohio Methodist Districts started a program in the mid 80's. Several smaller operations have blossomed and who knows how many have been inspired by our offshoots.

Following are excerpts from a recent letter from the youth sponsor of a Presbyterian Church in Kentucky relative to a Possum trip experience with her youth group this fall: "Thank you for your commitment and efforts in providing "Possum Runs" for groups. Our kids had a great trip. Marjorie's letter [enclosed] is an additional thank you. My own children want me to keep sponsoring P.B. trips so that they can go when they are in high school! I don't know if I can do that because we don't know
what the future holds. But, I do hope that the P.B. ministry continues. If I'm still around here and able to spearhead another trip, I'd like to incorporate the use of the P.Bus in a mission trip. Best wishes in your very extraordinary ministry!"

Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco and a cute group of Girl Scouts who make a pilgrimage each year from Indiana to the West Coast.

"Possum Boss", Bob Lincoln, leading a gang down from the top of the Chimneys in the Great Smoky Mountains. This continues to be a favorite.

The Possum is used for many transportation needs. This group of students from Cedarville College in Ohio is on its way to Iowa to aid in the flood relief.

Rachel Nelson offering some female staff touches on a meal on the road of one of the Possum's long runs out West...6,000 miles and nearly 2 weeks of travel.

A bus retreat gal with one of the new staffers...Frank What's-His-Name?!

The buses really have a serious ministry slot. The big rigs require a lot of caring. Their ages make them more and more demanding, maintenance-wise. The road salts mixed with engine fumes and all the chemicals going into the air conditioning system make for monster corrosive problems for the steel frame, stainless steel sheeting and various aluminum parts. It's like a million termites all wanting a piece of the action! The simple problem of just keeping the electrical system coordinated...10 speakers per bus with the multiple of switch options, drivers' earphones, passenger speakers, microphones and tape decks; interim lighting system allowing for personal reading and passenger compartment
lighting; not to speak of the multiple of normal lighting features...all require week-to-week servicing. A big tire sets us back over 400 bucks, plus the super effort to mount it. Just keeping tires supplied enough in advance is a job. And when the brakes are ready for repair, watch out! This leads to the constant monitoring of the air supply system for braking and the big bellows that serve as springs for the chassis. The giant engine in the rear of each bus is a real sweetheart, but don't ever take it for granted! It swallows oil by the gallons which makes changing the oil filters a constant need. The air conditioner motor, oversized alternator and bus starter are not without sticking their heads up now and then, "Hey, what about us?" Did you know the routine for dumping freon is like getting rid of nuclear waste? Getting rid of tires is almost as bad. It's not who wants an old bus tire, but how much do I have to pay you to take it?! You can't paint one of these giant buses for anything less than $5,000. The interiors are always in need of a patch here or there. Wash 'em, polish 'em, sweep 'em, is a week-long job. The bus barn that allows all this to happen needs cleaning as a result of the bus cleaning!

A CDL driver's license is like getting a mini Ph.D. Oh, yeah, the doctor gets 50 to 100 bucks for a physical! Take a shot at finding 25 to 30 qualified drivers who have the personality to drive, play, and minister to 30 hyper teenagers who are on the ride of their life! Insurance companies are not standing in line to insure the above. In fact, getting one million in liability, only, is about as far as they will go! Make one little mistake and bang! you're looking for another company. YES! It has all been worth it and continues to be! Bob Lincoln and his drivers keep the THREE-GIANT-POSSUM-BUS-THING going!

New hood ornament for Possum 6!

Jelsema Family Goes COAST TO COAST

In 1965 I conducted the second WW trip. We traveled through six states a total of 1,000 miles. A young man from Grand Rapids, Michigan, joined us. His name, Jim Jelsema. Jim has long since become one of my dearest friends. We linked up again on a motorcycle trip in the early 70's. This time twelve of us traveled from Mexico to Canada, on dirt roads and trails, 2,000 miles. It was one of those "fly-by-night" experiments or dreams. I thought this could be a good format for encouraging young men in the faith.

Mark Miller, Chief Mechanic, keeping us on the road. He'd rather be playing a guitar, painting, playing the piano, or on his way to Alaska!!

Now this is a bike seat! Soft, warm, llama lined! Joel, #2 son of Jim Jelsema, is waiting his turn. Caley Jelsema, Jim's 14-year-old and youngest gal to cross, is all smiles!
Over the years Jim and I have been in and out of experiences on a regular basis. We have traveled the world over. However, it wasn't until this past summer that he finally made a coast to coast. It was a family affair! His wife, Cathy, a home economics major, cooked for the team. Caley, his 14-year-old daughter, the youngest gal to ever cross with Wheels, and his #2 son, Joel, all joined the team. His brother, Jack, rounded out the family thing.

The steel structure for the Kitchen-Retreat House, bus barn, and bike shop were all donated by Jim's former Atlas Building Company. After having done so many crossings I needed a little inspiration or spark for yet another trip. Jim and his family provided much of that spark for '94. It has been one of my life's goals to see Jim cross. He and his family did a great job! I think he is hooked! (By the way, Jim is on the Wheels' board as Vice President.)

Every summer the bike gang passes through a small village in Capon Bridge, West Virginia. We normally hit it early in the morning. There is a country store we customarily hit for refreshment and fellowship. The owner, Mike Bullis, collects our biographical handouts each year and proudly displays them. His wife pulled out a devotional from a 1987 Our Daily Bread which had a story about a gal on one of our crossings. The jest of the one-page devotional had to do with "hanging in there". A quote from II Corinthians 4:16 was used which suggested God allocates strength in daily amounts. Paul said, "...the inward man is being renewed day by day." How refreshing to have this friendly reminder that the dynamics of trips past are still impacting people. Mike's wife, Irene, included the following note when she sent extra copies of the devotional to the office: "...We sure do look forward to seeing you all (almost) every year. It really is enjoyable to talk to everyone. We hope you all had a safe trip and God willing we will see you next year. Our prayers are with you all. P.S. A special 'Thank You' to the young man that gave me the 'Bead Cross' and the gentleman that remembered to bring us the Wandering Wheels' book."

Every week brings different groups of people to the Wheels' Kitchen. Week days are normally filled with business meetings, birthday or anniversary parties, reunions, et cetera. Friday nights start with people coming from as far as Chicago, IL, Dayton, OH, Indianapolis IN, and even Southern Michigan. The weekend groups normally stay two nights. They fill up the days with biking and a multiple of games inside the building. We just purchased a commercial Pac-Man which will get hours of use. Winter coming on means a ton of wood for the fireplace. The building still serves as a warm catalyst for opening people up to the teachings of Jesus!

The following pictures are representative of a weekend at the Kitchen. The
leader of this group was Paul Gearhart. Paul is the Youth Pastor of Southport Presbyterian Church in the Indianapolis area. I first met Paul as a junior high schooler in the 70's. He was just like the junior highers pictured below...maybe worse!! Yeah, come to think of it, Paul was a real handful! What a job he does with his kids! That's Paul with the sweeper! He told me the kitchen really works and it is so affordable!

"Feed me!" That's the cry three times a day. Notice the table tops? They are made out of barroom shuffleboards. It's hard rock maple, indestructible. A lot of blood, sweat and tears got rubbed into that wood before we made tables out of it.

The SPC Junior Highers participating in some pre-devotional activity.

The Player Piano with its "three horsepower engines"! We overhauled this 1918 pre-computer instrument. Some of the young people think this is a new invention!

"Wheels" 7/2/94

We were all sitting "wheels"
Thinking of the past
Of all the things we used to do
And how it went so fast

We'd laugh, play games,
And steel together
Those great times
Seemed like they'd last forever

We went through some hard times,
Don't forget the good times too!
These memories mean so much
All the things we used to do

All the kids playing and talking,
And just having fun
Playing washer whileface
In the summer sun

As we say goodbye,
Sadness is what everybody feels
Remembering all these great times
Happened at "Wondering Wheels"

Lyndsey Noffs
An added note, the Kitchen is often used during summer months for family reunions. One family in particular, some of whom live in Upland, always gather for a weekend once a year. A lot of the grandchildren come who really enjoy the Kitchen with all its entertaining features. One of the granddaughters from that family wrote the poem that is on the preceding page and we felt impressed to share it with you.

**Closing Thoughts**

The summer of 1996 will make Wandering Wheels' 50th U.S. crossing! We have been so fortunate as a program to have the privilege of being involved in so many lives. The years scream by. Rex Reinhart dropped in the other day. His wife was with him. He showed us the pictures of his five kids. Rex was 16 when he first joined us. He rode on several tours after his coast to coast. Rex would stutter. I can sympathize as I also used to stutter and I remember it clearly. Rex was still fighting a bad case when he joined us. In fact, it was pretty hard to get his name out of him. Five cocky peers let Rex join their group and he became one of the boys. I could really stretch this story out, but suffice it to say that Rex was talking pretty smoothly by the time the trip was over. His folks thought it was miracle stuff! Five little urchins just bouncing along and accepting Rex for who he was performed a little surgery. Rex's daddy awarded Wandering Wheels several thousand dollars as a thank you and this money was the seed money for starting the Wheels' Kitchen! What a privilege it was to walk Rex across the street to the beautiful building he and his family helped build. Rex had not seen it before. I encouraged him to bring mom and dad down from Michigan to see it.

Your gifts continue to help keep us going! We continue to be a link between people and their going higher in the things of Christ. I wouldn't want to be in this business if that were not the case!

Warm "cuddly" wishes for this Holiday Season!

Bob

/P.S.

Two former Wheels' bike mechanics are now daddies--Galen Classen and Kent Merrick! Congratulations to Galen and Carol and to Kent and Tonya!

And while we rejoice with the Classens and the Merricks, we also send our sympathies to the Ron Magnuson family. Ron rode on the 1990 Breakaway Coast-to-Coast Trip. His wife phoned to say that her husband passed away early this past summer. She went on to remind us that his trip was a dream come true for him. One of the walls in his house was decorated with pictures and maps from his trip. It's a good feeling to have been a part of Ron's life for such a short period of time!
“I’m fired?” Scott Johnson has been with Wheels 3 years. He has served wonderfully. Scott will be a tough one to replace. “He fills up the room!” Scott will be serving with World Impact, an inner city work. (Going from the frying pan into the fire!)

Scott will be a tough one to replace. “He fills up the room!” Scott will be serving with World Impact, an inner city work. (Going from the frying pan into the fire!)

Dave Gabriel, measuring his growth! Some day he’ll be as long as a VW bug! Dave has “flown the coop”. Our bike mechanic and life of the party, his home now is Columbus, Ohio. Going after his “PHD”…play hide and disappear!

Bill Lang, one of our year-to-year trip faithfuls, did half his coast to coast in ’93 and finished the second half in ’94. Work can really be a bummer!

Gloria Harriman rejoined the 1994 coast to coast after only completing half of her trip in 1992. She fell, seriously injured her leg, and vowed to finish. Always a special feeling when people like her come back and knock out their miles and receive the medallion!

Bonnie and Dick Marx. Bonnie fell on the ’93 crossing, was quite literally blown off the mountain. She’s a tough lady and turned around and joined the ’94 crossing and successfully completed the journey. Congratulations, Bonnie!

Fifteen teachers all in a row! I’ll bet their classes got an ear full concerning the summer coast to coast!

High school gang from Franklin, Indiana. We took them to Florida for a one-week study program. Study?? Not a new religion…just drying out a tent.

Looks like the start of a race. Not really. This is part of a 70-person team we took to Mackinaw area for a retreat. They are Taylor Resident Hall Directors and Personnel Assistants.

Dairy Queen is simply the most consistent pick-up from 11:00 a.m. to late evening. We’d kill for a Blizzard!

The famous Wheels’ hot shower, like the Energizer Bunny, just keeps on going! This little $500 unit has showered hundreds of bikers!
January 13 - January 28
FLORIDA KEY WEST
A Wheels' first. Two weeks pedaling on both coasts of Florida.
Start in the Tampa/St. Petersburg area to Naples; bus to Key Largo and ride to Key West.
Round trip transportation from Upland to Florida and back.

February 24 - March 4
SPRING BREAK FLORIDA RIDE
St. Augustine to Vero Beach
Full transportation from Upland to Florida via sleeper bus,
2 meals per day, lodging, and loads of pure cycling fun and fellowship.

March 18 - April 27
SPRING COAST TO COAST
Southern California to Brunswick, GA
Eighth spring coast-to-coast; designed with shorter daily mileage
averaging 75 miles per day; full sag, 2 meals per day and lodging; do all or part.

May 19 - June 4
BORDER TO BORDER
Gulf of Mexico to Canada
Eighty-mile days, food, lodging, and transportation to and from; join for part or all.

June 19 - August 3
SUMMER COAST TO COAST
Seattle, WA to Rehoboth Beach, DE
This is our premier trip and will make our 48th time across; join for part or all.

July 11 - July 28
(tentative dates)
ALASKA
Anchorage, Kenai Peninsula, Valdez, Fairbanks, Denali are all en route.
Fly from Indianapolis, IN; ride a bike 800 miles and fly home.

September 15 - September 24
FALL BREAKAWAY
Outer Banks of North Carolina. Great couples' trip.
Modest riding distance; round trip transportation from and back to Upland.

For more information on above tours, please contact
Wandering Wheels, P.O. Box 207, Upland, Indiana 46989
Telephone: 317-998-7490

Since 1964