Wandering Wheels Newsletter, December 2012

Wandering Wheels

Follow this and additional works at: https://pillars.taylor.edu/wanderingwheels-newsletter

Recommended Citation
https://pillars.taylor.edu/wanderingwheels-newsletter/23

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Ringenberg Archives & Special Collections at Pillars at Taylor University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Wandering Wheels Newsletter by an authorized administrator of Pillars at Taylor University. For more information, please contact pillars@taylor.edu.
 BORDER-TO-BORDER

I'm sure the route for the 2012 Border-to-Border cycling tour had never been attempted before. After the dust had cleared, our team had traveled 1,100 miles, almost "as the crow flies", from Jacksonville, Florida, to Cleveland, Ohio. The dynamics of the tour were enhanced by our route running perpendicular to, "smack dab" into, the Appalachian Mountains!

By the time we entered the mountains in northern Georgia and exited in southern Ohio we had climbed 53,000 feet, almost two Mt. Everests, and we were no "spring chickens"—average age about 70!

Connie Clark did most of the food preparation from the back of our small makeshift kitchen. We had overnights in 17 churches—always a blessing! (It's getting harder to get off the floor and negotiate the way to the nearest "john" in the middle of the night!) What a great reminder, the network of churches across America! Many of the pastors had good input. At the close of our 23-day run, we were hosted by a small Methodist Church in Grafton, Ohio. We could not have had a better benediction for closing out the Border-to-Border Tour. Rev. Delaine McGhee, a vibrant African-American pastor, cuddled us like a mother hen! Her "send off" prayer was a joy! It was as though she reached up to Heaven, grabbed God by His shirt collar, and said, "Now You listen up!"

VETERAN RIDERS

On the walls of the Wheels' Kitchen-Retreat House we have several paintings of symbolic significance. One shows a 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air, which, when new in 1957, sold for $2,400. The "57" is one of the most popular restored cars. Today, restored, it sells for as much as $42,000! The story we share with retreat people is that we humans are like new when restored in God! Hand in hand with the symbolic story of the "57 Chevy", the opposite wall has a painting of Christ in the sky with a planet, Mother Earth, and a satellite. The story we share with guests is that our last form of transportation will be a celestial one, not travel by bicycle, car, boat, train, or plane!

Wheels received word of the passing of five of our past Wheels' participants. They have made the Heavenly journey! What a ride!

Joe Romine, 1967 coast to coaster, took the journey October 20, 2012. Joe was a 30-year plus Taylor University faculty member.

Ralph Boyd, 1967 and 1968 coast to coaster exited Planet Earth June 26, 2012. Ralph was "Mr. Fix-It" for Taylor University for years. He did plenty in helping us launch our first coast-to-coast tours.

Tom Cheif, 1968 coast to coaster. Tom created a cycle touring program along with a bus ministry much like that of Wandering Wheels. He was a Taylor University football team mainstay.

Howard Hughes passed December 10, 2011. Howie rode on several of our Florida trips and a New Zealand trip. His good friend, George Bush, (real name!) was his riding buddy.

Steve Sommer, 2008 and 2010 Coast-to-Coaster, headed home late November 2012.

TRAILBLAZER RIDE

The Trailblazer weekend ride continues to fill a nice gap for families wanting to introduce their clan to cycling. The little guys are a real blessing and bring smilesy face surprises.

One of the youngest, eight-year-old Hannah Smith, rode all the nearly 70 miles! She rode a BMX style bike, very heavy with fat knobby tires! A future tri-athlete!

"I've learned that life is like a ten-speed bicycle. Most of us have gears we never use."
There is a Catholic Church on the Indiana-Ohio border on Indiana Highway 18. I have been driving this stretch of highway for 50 years, always tempted to stop and take a look inside. It's called the Trinity Church, built in 1885. Finally, after 50 years I stopped and went inside. The Trinity Church is located in the middle of corn and soybean fields, nothing commercial for miles. The interior of the church was like a piece of jewelry. It blew me away!

The visit gave me inspiration for our 2012 Fall Breakaway route. Much to my surprise, I discovered a network of these churches stretching south 75 miles from Celina, Ohio. There are 34 similar churches called “The Cross-Tipped Churches”. So, our route for 2012 was “Connect the Dots”, the “Dots” being the churches.
The 2012 Fall Breakaway received rave reviews. The church doors were always unlocked. Most often during a week-day visit there would be a scattering of parishioners silently worshipping, candles lit and smoke rising skyward.

We crisscrossed the Miami and Erie Canal which stretches from Toledo, Ohio, to Cincinnati, Ohio, 249 miles. It was dug by Irish, French and German immigrants between 1825 and 1845.

Putting a well-fed tummy to good use!

New Bremen, Ohio, is the home of the Bicycle Museum of America, probably the finest collection of bikes and accessories anywhere in the U.S.! They even had some Wandering Wheels’ memorabilia on display!

Metal “black cat on hot tin roof” across from bike museum.

We never complete a journey of hundreds of miles, with so many variables, without a feeling of gratitude! The possibility for mishap is as great as the joy of good things happening on the ride.

The 2012 tour (Holland, Michigan, ferrying across Lake Michigan to Manitowoc, Wisconsin, north through Door County and then a big circle heading north toward Superior, Wisconsin, and then back east toward St. Ignace and on back to Holland) was beautiful!

We continued to nurse the motor scooter tours. It’s always our hope that the people riding, and those we meet along the way, will be encouraged spiritually.

The 2012 tour (Holland, Michigan, ferrying across Lake Michigan to Manitowoc, Wisconsin, north through Door County and then a big circle heading north toward Superior, Wisconsin, and then back east toward St. Ignace and on back to Holland) was beautiful!

We knew we were into a good thing the first day out. The temperatures were around 100 degrees and we were scheduled to camp! “Boy, what a miserable night that’s going to be,” I thought! On a whim I phoned a couple of churches in the area. Bingo! A Methodist pastor invited us in for the night. He was blind and has had to leave his professional calling servicing air conditioners. So, we landed in a wonderful church on our very first night with a professional “air conditioning preacher”, temperature outside over 100 degrees! We knew we were in Good Hands!

We had a great over-night with Wheels’ friends, Gary and Anne Appel, in Eagle River, Wisconsin. The Baptists offered us a home in St. Ignace, Michigan, the same in Williamsburg, Michigan, and the Methodists a home in Bear Lake, Michigan.

You know you are in Wisconsin when they make tree ornaments out of kayaks!
People are as impressed by the feat of the small motor scooters covering the miles they do as they are by the miles covered on a bicycle. They still ask, “How fast will it go, how much do they cost, and what kind of mileage do you get?”

We took advantage of great fall weather for touching up the “kitchen”. The “biggy” was the painting of the swimming pool floor.

The pool had to be drained of thousands of gallons of water, scraped and brushed clean, and chemically prepped. A beautiful blue special paint was applied and left to cure for a couple of days and then refilled. All in all about a two-week turnaround. Sure looks good!

The pool continues to be the kids’ favorite.

Along with the pool the fireplace has been launched into its late fall-winter usage. While the kids swim, the adults chitchat around the fireplace. Cold weather doesn’t slow down the use of the miniature golf course...always a good activity for grandpa and the kids! Our big grassy field gets plenty of use, especially with snow on the ground.

A footnote to the “Kitchen” update. Taylor University’s campus minister phoned concerning the possibility of using the Wheels’ swimming pool for a baptismal service. “Come on down!” Several students accompanied the one to be baptized. Not quite like the Jordan River, but it got the job done!

Almost every night of November and December of 2012 is booked for the “kitchen”. Either a verbal or written note of thanks often follows kitchen guests’ use of the facility.

KITCHEN-RETREAT HOUSE

The “kitchen” continues to receive high praise.

Wandering Wheels’ Kitchen-Retreat House

“Dear Bob, I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your kindness and generosity! We REALLY enjoyed having Korbin’s 13th birthday party at the Wandering Wheels’ facility on September 8-9. The facilities are wonderful and all the staff is excellent.”

“Thank you for providing such a wonderful facility for my family’s reunion on July 7th.”

“The Hall Family Reunion was a great success. We laughed, we hugged, we ate, we planned next year’s reunion to be at Wandering Wheels. It is a great place for it; also for all ages. The younger children wore themselves out on the stairs. I’m sure they all slept on their way home.”

Almost every night of November and December of 2012 is booked for the “kitchen”. Either a verbal or written note of thanks often follows kitchen guests’ use of the facility.
FLORIDA #1 AND #2

The same route, same daily destinations, and, in many cases, the same riders, make up the January-February Florida rides. The fellowship and stories of trips past create a “homecoming” spirit.

A lone rider heading out over the Seven-Mile Bridge leaving Marathon, Florida. Rainbow, a good reminder of God’s special touch.

Marilyn Lehman and Connie Clark, our chief cooks of many years, make returning for the Florida rides a real joy. The Florida rides are a good introduction to group cycling and propel many novice riders into a real lifestyle change.

If you’re going to put your foot in your mouth, make sure it’s your mouth!

Because the rides are low-key, the dynamics for peoples’ lives being impacted come weeks later, as the following letter suggests:

“I can’t begin to thank you enough for all you have done to enrich my life. The challenges presented each day I spent with you all help me more than I can tell you. I continue to ride (mostly the trike) every day possible. Enclosed is one of my leather doodles. I did them randomly, no two alike, and give them to people who enrich my life. Light and delight your way!”

“Grow your own dope...plant a man!”

Appropriate sign for Motor Scooters.

Sign leaving campground.

“Slow old horses!”

Great times around the campfire.

“Light and delight your way!”

Jenny (Peters) Halterman, veteran rider, visits with her gang.
IN CLOSING...

A former "coast to coaster" recently wrote thanking us for making his crossing possible. He was comparing the current trail fees of other outfitters with past Wheels' trail fees. In most cases Wheels' trail fees were one-half to two-thirds lower than those of other outfitters.

His thank you was a fresh reminder of the continued outreach our program has and the "fairness" with which we treat riders and those who use the Kitchen Retreat-House.

Wheels continues to be a resource for many in the community in times of need. And, it goes without saying, YOU, our NEWSLETTER TEAM/RECIPIENTS, are the backbone of our outreach!

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!  

Bob & Staff

PS. 2013 will be filled with shorter and closer-to-home bike trips. Our two repeats are the January-February Cocoa Beach to Key West, Florida, tours. Always good to touch base with our Florida friends of many years.

2013 TRIP SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FLORIDA TRIP #1</th>
<th>JAN 13 - JAN 23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cocoa Beach to Key West</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLORIDA TRIP #2</td>
<td>JAN 27 - FEB 06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocoa Beach to Key West</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPRING BREAKAWAY Southern Indiana</td>
<td>JUN 09 - JUN 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRAILBLAZER</td>
<td>JUL 20 - JUL 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaston, IN to Losantville, IN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29th FALL BREAKAWAY</td>
<td>SEP 06 - SEP 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center out of Wandering Wheels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOTOR SCOOTER</td>
<td>OCT 03 - OCT 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky and South</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>