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Wandering Wheels Newsletter

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12-1-2015

### Wandering Wheels Newsletter, December 2015

Wandering Wheels

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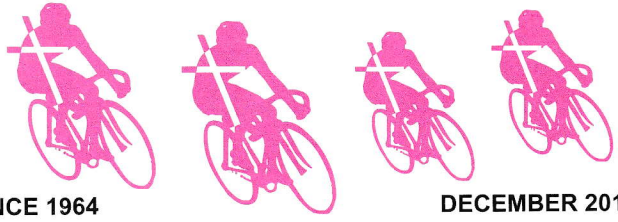
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“...Still More Water to Go Over the Dam...”

We are headed into our 51st year of ministry. God has blessed us with hundreds of staff over the years. We now continue to do most of what we’ve always done, but with a smaller workforce. Janech is our “ramrod”, keeping us on our toes. Sue, of course, steadies the whole operation. Dana is “Mr. Fix It” (hard to get along without his input). The Trees family keep the “Kitchen” respectable, and I just stand around acting important!

One year at a time! We still look forward to each new year, mostly because of the spiritual encouragement offered by the program!

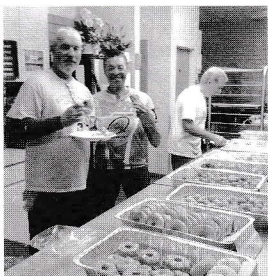
## FLORIDA 2015

Never know what a day’s ride will bring. Just north of Stuart, Florida, last January, mayhem! Police cars speeding up and down A1A, go figure. We were stopped for the better part of three hours. A “guy” in a rented U-Haul, shotgun in hand, was on the loose harassing drivers. We were in the middle of it. He was finally stopped and used the shotgun on himself. As always, our January rides bring color to our yearly rides.



U-Haul involved in high-speed chase!

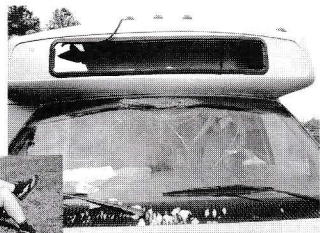
In Juno we were graced by an “out-of-luck” guy who took it upon himself to pick up day-old bakery goods and distribute them to the homeless. He saved a couple of dozen for us!



The “donut man” at Juno Beach sharing some of his bounty!



A little respite in the Florida sun.



Mishap on our way to Florida. Ice slipped off back of our yellow truck and smashed the windshield of mini-bus. Our friend, Billy Moberg, was “Johnny-to-the-spot” and fixed us up in Cocoa Beach.

## 16-DAY BIKE/BUS COAST-TO-COAST

We shared in 2014 our plans for a leisurely Coast-to-Coast bike/bus ride. It happened! We rented all the vehicles and housed the team in motels. No food preparation, either. Pretty nice! It was a trip down memory lane. The team was composed of former Wheels’ Coast-to-Coasters.

The inspiration for the ride was the result of an ever so clear dream. I couldn’t shake the clarity and specifics of the dream. We pulled it off to the letter of the dream. People ask me, “Had any dreams recently?” My response, “Only those you shake off by morning.”



The magic of the open road.



Last leg before ending Bike/Bus Coast to Coast.

## COUNTING SHEEP!

Some people count sheep to get to sleep. I retrace the Southern Coast-to-Coast route. The older I get, the greater the challenge of getting all my ducks in a row. With each re-tracing there’s always a glitch. The Texas towns give me the biggest problem. Minden, Louisiana, and Pelahatchie, Mississippi, are two others. I can, in detail, remember everything about the towns, but the names, sometimes, are slow in coming. All the memories are cause for celebration! What a great way to go to sleep, recalling the 37 “overnights” on the Southern Coast to Coast!

“I Dream on Two Wheels”



## GAIL, TEXAS

Sarah Sharp, a friend of Wheels, faithfully met and greeted the Coast-to-Coast teams over the past number of years. We surprised her in 2015, gave her no notice of our arrival. I phoned her the morning of our passing through Gail, Texas. As always, she gave us the warmest greeting. She phoned the local store and told the owner to put our purchases on her tab! Really brought smiles!

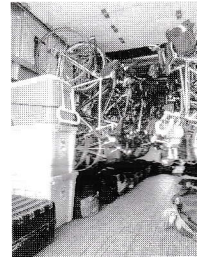


Florida, here we come!

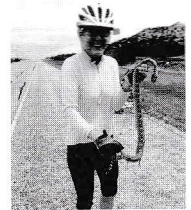


Sarah Sharp and Coach in Gail, Texas.

Inside rental truck before Wheels’ “cosmetic” job.



Rental truck “tricked out”.



Judy Welch with new pet!



Bike/bus Coast-to-Coasters on Atlantic Ocean.





Annie Pugsley enjoying Sarah Sharp's generous offer of a free meal in Gail, Texas.

## TRAILBLAZER RIDE

The spirit of this ride is to get families involved, using the established bike paths. It's interesting the changes in the "kids" one year to the next, advancing from one bike size to a bigger one. Kinda like the way they outgrow shoes and clothes, only new bikes get to be an expensive proposition. Some of the kids ride heavy department store bikes, asking no quarter. They are a real inspiration.



Trailblazer "Gang".

Hand in hand with the Trailblazer Ride, we have assisted in two local trail rides, each about 30 miles in length. Many "little ones" do these rides, as well.



Steve Morley, Grace (age 6), and Jacob (age 8) rode ALL 64 miles!



## FALL BREAKAWAY

The 2014 Fall Breakaway was such a plus, we did a re-run in 2015, using the Wheels' "Kitchen" for our "overnights" and visiting various points of interest during the daytime rides.

SATURDAY - we rode to Alexandria, Indiana, taking in their small-town street festival, about a 50-mile round trip. Good shakedown ride! SUNDAY - we cycled to the small community of Shamrock Lakes (Hartford City, Indiana, area) for a morning church service. The preacher, Wes Rediger, is a former Coast-to-Coaster. We dovetailed the morning service with cycling to the Matthews (Indiana) Covered Bridge Festival.

MONDAY - a full day in Hartford City with a visit to the Presbyterian Church to see and hear a lecture on a very historic stained glass window. A half-mile down the road, visited, "up-close-and-personal", a salvage yard. TUESDAY - we rode a bike path much of the day, visited a major operation manufacturing Christmas decorations. WEDNESDAY - the team based and cycled to Berne, Indiana, picking up Amish presence along the way. Biked back to Upland on THURSDAY, hitting a favorite restaurant called "I.D.C." ("I Don't Care!"). FRIDAY - a



short day, with a visit to Gaston, Indiana, lunch at the "Barking Cow", and lesson on photography from Dan Boyd, a former Wheels' staffer.

Fall Breakaway gang gathers in front of famous landmark in Berne, Indiana.

"Welcome" sign at our Berne, Indiana, "overnight".



Carol McEachern-Lee has her hands full! One of our many Fall Breakaway visits took us to Indiana Wesleyan University's state-of-the-art nurses' training facility.



Cookout at the Davenport.

A tradition from the start of Wheels' has been to encourage the riders spiritually. This year we collected 30 devotional books from Amazon, God's Little Devotional Book, a real hit! Some quotes from the devotional book:

*"Choice, not chance, determines human destiny." (Deuteronomy 30:19)*

*"Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself." (Matthew 5:6)*

*"Two things are bad for the heart -- running upstairs and running down people." (Ephesians 4:27)*

*"No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of anyone else." (Romans 15:1-2)*

It's always good sharing. In fact, most of the success of the Fall Breakaways is the FELLOWSHIP!

## REMINISCENCE AND THANKFULNESS

We started our Wheels' rides in the summer of 1964. The first was a 1,000-mile ride on The Great River Road which ran parallel to the Mississippi River. No big deal. Thought we'd never try that again. In 1965 enough splash about the 1964 ride had created interest to do a second ride, a Five-State Tour. Before long I was thinking about a Coast-to-Coast ride. Lo and behold, in 1966 we had a team of 25 dipping their wheels into the Pacific Ocean, and six weeks later, doing the same in the Atlantic!

Fifty years have passed since our 1964 ride, and over 3,000 riders have ridden Coast to Coast. Five beautiful travelogs have been filmed and hundreds of speeches have resulted during the course of these fifty years.

I share this with you because, not only have we been the front runners of long-distance group rides, our rides have resulted in the creation of hundreds of cycle touring groups. Wheels is the Granddaddy of the long-distance group cycling phenomenon!

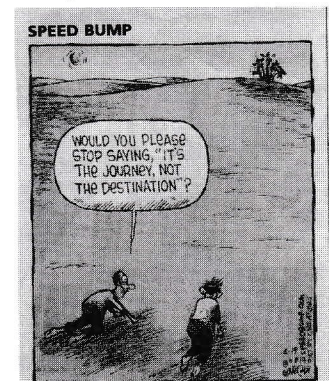
## OUR FAITHFUL YELLOW TRUCK

If you could imagine the Wheels' Yellow Truck as a real "living thing", it would go down in the books as the hardest working, most faithful beast that has graced our program! With a half million miles under its belt, and still kicking, it's on its way to the auction block! Selling it will be like saying "Goodbye" to a dear friend!



Ole' faithful!

Our truck has traveled the U.S., Coast-to-Coast and Border-to-Border, several times. Its load, usually the riders' personal gear, hot shower, sleeping pads, and all the bike repair equipment. On top of the bikers' gear and tour support items, "she" pulled the large cooking trailer the half million miles!





## WHEELS' MINI-BUS

The small 15-passenger mini-bus is no longer with us. It had seen its better days for long hauls. Like the Yellow Truck, the small bus provided great transportation for several years. A church group "rescued" the little bus and plans on using it locally.

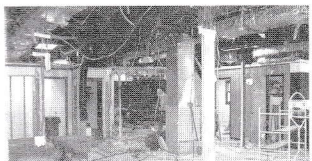


Little Bus!

## WHEELS' DORM (aka STAFF HOUSE)

We told the story in our 2014 newsletter of the "passing of the torch", the Wheels' dorm and bus barn, to a young family. Their intent is to use the dorm and adjoining bus barn as a training facility. Eric plans on training six to eight young men at a time in various trades along with spiritual input.

Dorm before...



...dorm after!



New dorm occupants--  
The Blossers.

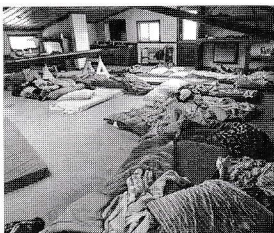
They have done a marvelous job of re-doing the dorm, now home to the Blossers. Their little "guys", Noelle and Tyson, bring a special sparkle! Put the family on your "Things To Pray About" list.

## KITCHEN-RETREAT HOUSE RESPONSES:

"Thanks so much for the use of the Wandering Wheels' facility. It has been a blessing to our family." (Gloria Wilson)

"This was a huge blessing for our family. We were able to just laugh and play and be together. Much needed break after a stressful year." (Harris' Crew)

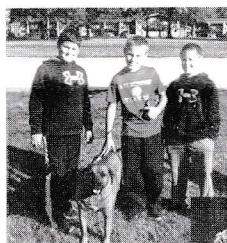
"I want to express our appreciation for providing an atmosphere where the teens could interact and make some great memories, while also experiencing Christ in an impactful way! The use of your pool was something that everyone enjoyed and the interactive games made it possible for teens who don't normally interact together to talk and share in each other's company! The fall retreats our youth group does have become a pivotal and foundational stepping stone in our youth ministry offered at our church. Thank you for providing us a place where our group can escape daily routines to find spiritual renewal! Thanks!!! You have a great place." (Andrew Miller, Youth & Senior Adult Pastor, Bluffton Church of the Nazarene)



One giant bedroom!



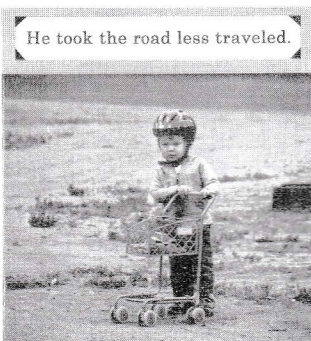
The Center Chapel United Methodist Church used the "Retreat House" in combination with a local work project. Some raked leaves (or took a break in the leaves!).



Even walked dog for friends across the street.



Making applesauce for the "Seniors" in Upland.



## NO LONGER WITH US

Bob Carr	passed January 2015	1997 Coast to Coast
Ray Maddox	passed March 2015	1970 Florida and Spring Break Trip
Dave Snelling	passed April 2015	1968 Coast to Coast
Anita Tatman	passed August 2015	Part-Time Staff 1994 Coast to Coast
Rex Reinhart	passed October 2015	1977 Coast to Coast
John Ruckman	passed November 2015	2001 Coast to Coast, plus others

## JOHN RUCKMAN EULOGY

John was a highly decorated Army Master Sergeant. He spent most of his service time in Burma. Parachuting became a hobby. He was part of an elite Army jumping team, jumping before many major ceremonial events. He was a "Dear Friend" of Wheels! We will miss him!



John and friend, Bridger!

DID A CARTWHEEL  
THE OTHER DAY,  
THINKING  
IT WAS LIKE RIDING A  
BIKE. IT'S NOT.



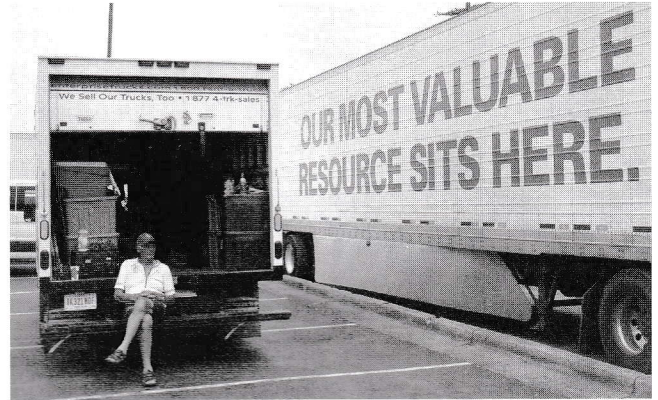
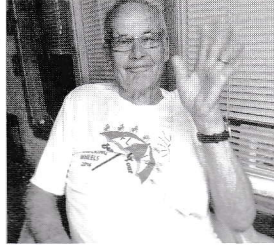
## IN CLOSING...

I take my cues about aging from those of you around my age. More of us are opting for duffel bags with wheels, are slower getting up off the sleeping pads, lobbying for ground level motel rooms, and finding a sleeping spot nearest the bathroom! And now, the memory problem...I can't remember where I left my coffee cup!

It's been wonderful sharing this stage of life with you, our "Newsletter Recipients"! We consider sharing last year's good reports a blessing and continued evidence of His Hand on us!

"2016 ...Still More Water to Go Over the Dam..."  
Your dollar support still a major factor in our "hanging in there"!

*Bob & Staff*



This photo added by Janech and Sue. ;)

## 2016 TRIP SCHEDULE

### FLORIDA TRIP #1

Cocoa Beach to Juno  
Return to Cocoa Beach

JAN 23 - FEB 01

### FLORIDA TRIP #2

Cocoa Beach to Juno  
Return to Cocoa Beach

FEB 06 - FEB 15

### BIKE PATHS

Wheels will search out several State Bike Trails.  
Ride different stretches each day.

MAY 14 - MAY 21

### TRAILBLAZER

Gaston, IN to Losantville, IN - Return to Gaston

JUL 16 - JUL 17

### 32nd FALL BREAKAWAY

Biking and Fellowship - Center  
out of Wandering Wheels

SEP 09 - SEP 16



P.O. Box 207 • Upland, Indiana 46989

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