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HELLO...

from good ole Upland, home of the Wandering Wheels!

Yes, we are still moving! We have a lot of news this time around. Before getting into the newsletter, we have a NEWS FLASH! Zane Huffman, a senior staffer and friend of so many of you, received a real blow on Thursday evening, March 17. He collapsed during an intramural basketball game. Zane had developed a valve problem in his heart. It was first noticed at age 14 and finally showed its ugly head at age 30. In a period of less than one week, he has had the valve replaced and for the time being has been placed on the recuperation shelf. If you know Zane, you know that he'll come out fighting, hopefully, within about five weeks' time. He would love to hear from you. You can send mail in care of Wheels.

And now for the "rest of the news"...

we had a fantastic summertime meal and Glen and Skip Day took care of the group in Westerville, Ohio. The fantastic hospitality of the people in Bridgeville and Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, has now become a tradition with Wheels and continues to be a great way to finish a trip.

The third basic element of a cross-country trip, sleep, can be done most anywhere and that pretty much explains our sleeping accommodations this summer. We slept in parks, churches, schools, armories, fire stations, army barracks, campgrounds, a Salvation Army complex and the Wheels' Kitchen. This, of course, doesn't include the various parking lots, sidewalks, storefronts, 7-11's or any other place you just may fall asleep while taking a break. We want to thank our own Carl Bierdeman for again doing a great job in finding us "homes" each night!

It is our hope each year that God will use the basics of a coast-to-coast trip as a medium through which He can work in the lives of individuals. Using this idea as a theme, as a staff, were able to share basic ideas of Christianity each morning in a time of devotion—simple thoughts, Christianity without frills. We have the privilege of knowing God. Unclean vessels cannot be used by God. Attempting to reach God on our own standards doesn't work. We need to learn to go God's pace and not our own. These were a few of the ideas shared. The coast-to-coast medallion reads: "To ride coast to coast, to grow up in God, to give God away." The 1987 coast to coast accomplished those goals as we mixed the basics of riding with the basics of Christianity.

--- Contributed by Paul King.

England

Walking off the plane into a surprisingly sunny Scotland...viewing Edinburgh from the top of the Castle...riding through Scottish hills and valleys covered with endless stone walls and countless dots of sheep...kids following us from farm to farm on their bikes...the beautiful, the beautiful...
Our riding was challenging, taking us down the Columbia River valley in Oregon and through the bleakness of the "nuclear ocean", an area in Idaho where the first nuclear plants were established. We crossed the Tetons and moved into the plains of Wyoming. Following the North Platte River through most of Nebraska we then tackled the hills of Missouri and the flat lands of Illinois. In Upland, we received a super reception from the home crowd, then headed into the farmlands of Ohio. West Virginia, the mountain state, always provides a few tough days before hitting the friendly terrain of Virginia, Maryland and Delaware. Variations of this route are becoming a popular standard for us as they supply a good selection of terrain, weather, and people.

Jean Hand, on her sixth coast to coast, along with Kelly Hairfield, were this year's cooks, and they didn't let us down. It really is amazing to see how much variety of food is possible off the ol' Camel. We had spaghetti, chicken, BLT's, burgers, salads, sub sandwiches, turkey, rice, beef tips and a whole lot more. Of course, there's always plenty of peanut butter and jelly, as well. We also had our share of community "feeds"! In Oshkosh, Nebraska we were invited to join the town's 4th of July picnic and, in exchange, we offered to sing a few songs. It was neat to see the people pull up their lawn chairs and blankets and listen to the group sing about Jesus. The Wheels' gang in Upland made sure

While England is our "mother country", we seldom realize that our spiritual roots also are from there and I don't mean just C. S. Lewis. While in Oxford we were blessed through an opportunity to stay at the St. Ebbs Church of England. The rector, a very outspoken evangelical, told us that there had been a church on this spot since A.D. 632. To imagine a body of Believers meeting 1,300 years ago is a little hard for me to comprehend, but I appreciate even more those that have passed on the faith to me.

-- Contributed by Ted Bowers.
On this year's January Southwest bike trip we had many wonderful experiences. It was a combination of great kids, generous weather and a trip relatively free of accidents. These three combined to make for good teaching and sharing. Monterey, Carmel, Hearst Castle, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Long Beach, Oceanside, Ramona, Brawley, Blythe, Wickenburg, Phoenix and Tucson all played host to us. About the time we thought we had learned it all, up popped another good lesson.

Our last hours of the tour were spent at the beautiful Sonora Desert Museum near Tucson, Arizona, a place Dr. Tim Burkholder uses for testing the students on some of their biology. It had been our best day for "sun rays". Arizona sun in January, for Midwesterners, brings out the worst in vanity. Like lizards on rocks the riders were soaking up every last ray to guarantee as much tan as possible. For many there is no greater mark of a successful trip in the sun belt than bronze skin. There was only one thing left to do and that was to board our ever faithful bus, Possum 7, and blitz back to Upland—a meager 2,200 miles! Most of the gang was excited because we had told them that we would be back in Upland in about 45 hours—a little over two nights and one day.

Shortly after boarding the bus, however, we discovered a dead battery! No problem, we thought, as we pulled our van alongside of the bus and used it to jump-start the big guy! One hour down the road the electrical system went blank. We wisked the bikers off to an exotic mall and probed for the problem. We located a garage that knew its stuff and the prognosis was bad—the alternator! A rebuilt alternator would cost $1,200, not to mention the delay! Needless to say, the troops started getting a little antsy. All of their plans were going down the drain and all because of something called an "alternator"—something to which most of them couldn't relate. Murmuring and all kinds of theological speculations started coming to the surface. "Jonahs" were being searched out! I was starting to feel the unrest. I sure didn't need this on the tailend of such a successful run!

There was some consolation in the fact that we found a gracious friend in Tucson who pulled some strings to get us into a beautiful church as late as ten o'clock that evening. The next morning this same friend gave me a $100 check to ease the pain. I started to feel something in the air! Maybe the most important part of the trip was yet to come!

As I was driving the Possum late that night I felt impressed to remind the riders that a kind of miracle had taken place in our dealings over the van alternator. We all were pushing to get home, and every little obstacle was such an irritant to us. At a lunch stop in Amarillo as we gathered on a curb outside a Wendy's I rehearsed the previous evening's little miracle.
to us until late in the afternoon. A cheer came from the parking lot sun-bathing crowd! Now there were new calculations as to our arrival time in Upland. Almost all had been forgiven. We were on our way again after a 24-hour delay! However, we were not even out of Arizona yet when the oil light came on in the bus. in fact, it shut the engine down! The men piled out of the bus and pushed it across the intersection. Fortunately, we found ourselves in a nice little town called Wilcox, Arizona. After a phone call back to Upland to one of our Wheels' mechanics we discovered what the problem was, fixed it, and once again we were on our way!

The van had been used to provide light while working on the bus problem. Wouldn't you know it the van battery went dead so we pushed it across the street to a 76 station, got a jump-start and discovered the alternator on the van was now shot! I felt like we were caught in the "Alternator Bermuda Triangle"! Were the troops happy? No! It was spiritual speculation to the max now!

We found a very "iffy" garage with equally "iffy" personnel and decided no way were we going to put our fate into the hands of this rag-tag crew. They charged us $12 for telling us what our problem was. To make matters worse, we failed to pay the $12 right then and shortly after left to search for a van alternator on our own. The garage man came looking for us in his beat up pickup which, by the way, had a big pistol on the dash with several empty cartridges spilled throughout the cab! He hollered from across the street, "Where's my $12?" This was no time to get a "red-neck" mad, so we paid him and then he took us to the house of the parts' man. This man was not real happy either. We had told him we would be at his shop before closing, but we didn't make it in time and he charged us overtime for having to go back to the shop. All around us the atmosphere was tense!

We got an alternator and started to install it while parked under a street light. Half way through installing it we discovered it was the wrong part. Boo! What now, we wondered. On a whim we went back to the parts' store manager's house and he told us he didn't have another alternator. However, there was a change of heart and he decided to go with us to take a look for himself. He went back to the store and, fortunately, found the one we needed. About two hours later we put a recharged battery in the van, turned the key, and we were off once again. Our fingers were crossed as once again there was an updating of calendars. By now one gal had already changed her flight out of Indianapolis three times. It was now about ten o'clock Wednesday evening and we were about thirty hours behind schedule. I kept telling the team to be happy they weren't in a plane 30,000 feet in the air or on a boat 300 miles from shore when the problem occurred, but most just scoffed at that and simply wanted to get home!

The short of it was that we, as a team, had driven to California, had ridden bikes 800 miles down the coast and into the desert, and now were headed home—all of this maybe just for the little miracle involving a man and an alternator!

I guess the thing that so impressed me was that the rather ugly attitude on the part of this parts' store manager CHANGED after he met us, learned of our mission, and simply had time to exchange stories and allow us to unapologetically share our Christian faith with him. We learned that he had hitchhiked through this small town many years ago while in the military, met a waitress, married her and had never left. It is a pretty tough place to make a living and it is the kind of territory that turns a guy into a coyote in order to become a survivor! After talking to him we were better able to understand why they were milking us for all we were worth. When he had charged us $5 for being five minutes late a few hours earlier, I couldn't imagine what he would charge us after a couple of hours of helping us!

It was late at night by the time the tools were put away and a final "thank you" was spoken. I asked the parts' man what we owed him. Standing under the dingy street light, with the kids in the bus and anxious to go, our bearded friend paused, and then he said, "You don't owe me a thing!"

We had been looking for a miracle by having God put His finger on the alternator or some other cute trick, but the miracle was actually in the change of heart that our parts' man experienced!

After rehearsing this story with the riders while they were sitting on the curb at Wendy's, I felt that the miles of travel during our four-week tour were worth the encounter with the man from the auto parts' store!
Our four Possums continue to travel the highways of America to the tune of 70,000 miles per bus per year! That figure in itself is reason to give thanks to God for His continual watch-care over, above, and around us. A more important reason for thanks is the 2,500 lives that those miles represent. That is the number of people who have been on the Possums and have been challenged in their own personal understanding of, and walk with, the Lord. After all the glamour and excitement of traveling and visiting places wear off, the relationships that were established and strengthened with other people and with God are the lasting results. Two recent events have been a good reminder as to the effectiveness of Possum trips.

Many of you may not realize that about 30% of our Possum trips are now with adults. One particular group of people in Fort Wayne has been on eight different trips, including our three-week trip to Alaska. The leader of this group called, recently, to tell us that one of their crew had died of a heart attack. She told of the special closeness that those who had traveled on the Possum felt at that time. Two ladies, in particular, told her that their best and closest friends are the people whom they had gotten to know on the trips. These friends were the ones they gathered with and drew strength from during this tough time.

On a recent ski trip to Colorado with a singles group we had a guy along who was invited to join the group by a couple of business associates. He was a beginner when it came to skiing, but he learned quickly and was always the last one to come off the slopes. He told us on the way home that he had been running with a tough crowd and when he told them that he was going on this ski trip with a church group they laughed at him and told him he'd have a terrible time. He went on to say that they were wrong, that he had had the best time of his life and was looking forward to seeing everyone in Sunday School next Sunday. It was neat to see the other people reaching out to him throughout the trip and making him a part of their group. That obviously had an effect on him.

These are just two examples of the exciting and life-changing experiences that adults have on Possum trips. We thank God for keeping the buses running well, for safety, and, most importantly, for using the Possum program to bring people to a deeper relationship with Him!

-- Contributed by Curt Anderson.

This winter I have received letters from two youth pastors who had just been on Possum trips. Both remarked that the growth their kids were showing because of the trip was

path into Georgetown. From there we cruised downtown D.C., seeing the museums, statues, White House, and many other sites. Our church home was located about one mile from the Capitol. The kids were able to see the work of an inner-city church and experience the love the young Christian executives have toward the people of the tough, inner-city community.

We took the scooter gang back to the memorials that night. The lights cast a sacredness on the men being honored. Sunday we did more scootering and got involved with some kids on bikes. One had a flat tire so we fixed it for him. It was interesting to see the Fort Wayne kids respond to our staff's interest in helping the inner-city kid. You never know what God will use to sweeten the pie. On several occasions tourists, especially Japanese, took pictures of our gang.

Well, as you probably have guessed, there will be more scooter trips in the spring! Join us for a scooter run!

![Spotlight]

Remember the three-ring circus...the spotlight shining on the ring where there is action? Well, this spotlight is on Ginny Springman!

Ginny first rode with Wheels
Over the years, one of the reasons for the success of the Possum program has been the balancing of fun and the spiritual aspects offered. We do try to show the kids (and adults) the best time possible. It's important that their Possum trip be a one-of-a-kind trip, but our spiritual input through devotions and time spent talking one-on-one has to balance out with the fun side or our purpose will not be attained. It is kind of an inside/outside balance. Thomas à Kempis wrote about this kind of balance in our lives. He states that we should "inwardly be such as outwardly we seem to men. And with reason there ought to be much more within than is perceived without."

While much of our time is spent on the beach, climbing in the Smoky Mountains, or running around Disney World, much more is going on inside each guy and gal than we know, and that is what we are hoping to achieve—to challenge both the outside and the inside.

**Contributed by Ted Bowers.**

### SCOOTERS

Have you seen the SCOOTERS? They are all the rage now and were high on the Christmas gift list this past year.

I am not talking about the motorized type, but the push-and-go foot-type. Some of you older readers probably had one when you were a kid! Well, they have put some high tech touches to the old version and...wham, away you go! The colors are bright and the gadgets clever! The kids really like them—that's "kids" as in ages 4 to 80!

Wheels purchased several of these scooters. We wanted to experiment with a new idea, so we loaded up a group of high schoolers from Fort Wayne, Indiana, and bused them to Washington, D.C. The "idea" was to scooter around D.C. for two days. These little scoot-abouts allow you to move at a jogger's pace with real ease. There is hardly a place within a five-mile radius that cannot be reached with ease on the scooters. They are just new enough that they allow for some novelty and a little feeling of specialness. So, after an all night bus ride and a little roadside park breakfast, we started scootering on the famous Chesapeake and Ohio tow-

In 1970, her serious biking started after she was well into her 30's, a time when most people start thinking about hanging it up! Her first trip was a coast to coast! Since then she has ridden on virtually every major tour we have offered—Circle America to China! I don't think anyone, outside of our Wheels' staff, has ridden on more trips than Ginny has.

Over the years she has spent time on mission fields and has developed a ministry of sharing her mission stories with various churches and then sending her honorariums back to the various mission organizations. As a result of her Wheels' trips, she has developed church and civic programs that tell of her experiences on the highway and the things she feels God has done in her life and the lives of others. "The programs are never just a travelogue, but there is always a message. As long as God blesses me with the privilege and good health to ride with Wheels I will continue to honor Him in this way," remarked Ginny in a recent letter to Wheels!

As a result of her avid picture taking and story telling she continues to share her experiences as a way of serving God. Now get this: to date Ginny has given 225 programs sharing the stories of her bike travels; and, she has sent hundreds of dollars to the Wheels' office as a result of this! This is one of her ways of giving thanks back to God! We feel privileged to have a lady like this in our lives!

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1987 CIRCLE AMERICA team at close of tour New Smyrna Beach, Florida

It looks like we will try a "half perimeter" this next year. Starting January of '89, this will be a single semester run from Florida to California and up to Seattle, ending in late May. Plans are to put together a Circle America III starting January of 1990!
STAFF CHANGES

Wheels has experienced a rash of staff changes, but that is the nature of the beast with our program. We have always been a place where people can test themselves, a place where transition can happen. We would lose some of our "zoom" if we did not have turnover. We cannot run hard with the kids God gives us and not expect burn out. While some of our older staff have learned how to pace themselves, for most of our staff life here at Wheels is more like a sprint!

1) Our last newsletter indicated Galen Glasson was leaving Wheels and getting married. He and Carol are located in Denver and are experiencing the normal adjustments of new living quarters, jobs, satisfaction, etcetera.

2) Mike Manganello, although still active as a Wheels' bus trip leader, has, for all intents and purposes, left Wheels and is developing a similar ministry with his own custom touches put to it.

3) Kent Merrick, our resident high tech bike mechanic, is looking at finer nuts and bolts to thread. He may be going to Indianapolis where he would also have some schooling opportunities, or, he may relocate in the Chicago area. At either place he would be able to work in a very fine bike shop. (There is a hint of a girl involved in the transition, too!!)

4) David Burns has been doing a slow transition and is rather officially in other employment, but occasionally drives for us. Dave will some day be host of a TV show or something having to do with meeting and greeting people!

5) Brian Carter, our "Apple" man or "IBM" man or whoever the guy who put us in the computer business, has his fingers in several computer pies in the community. He is moving on to other terminals! (Bad, huh?)

6) Dave Otto, who was with us just a few short months after CA II ended, but who had expected to be around for a long while, had to head back to Iowa to plug into the family business.

7) I don't believe I ever mentioned Phil Sommerville’s leaving. He and Deb Vogler both left just after the last newsletter was written. Phil was a real mainstay in leading trips and will nicely complement his leadership ability with his studies while at Fuller Seminary.

8) Deb was our "Kitchen Retreat Lady" for a

God rewarded our step of faith with a good, safe trip and one that blessed each individual in a very unique way. Yes, we could sense the strife and division between Arab and Israeli, but actually the weather gave us more problems than the pockets of unrest. I could say much about our experiences in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Galilee, the Jordan Valley, En Gedil, Masada, Ashkelon and Tel Aviv, but our tour of Israel was more than just places; it was people and feelings, as well. So instead of just writing about the trip I thought I would share some of the observations and thoughts of those who participated.

"I guess that being so far removed from Israel all my life the reality of Jesus was based totally on faith and I could only imagine in a distant sort of way what His life and death were like on earth."

"I have found a much better selection of chocolate in Israel than home!"

"I was planning on learning about Jesus and where He walked, not on how I need to change, but the two go hand in hand."

"I got baptized and I feel so clean. It's almost like I have a new perspective on life!"

"When we got to the rooms I took a shower. And believe it or not, it was hot! I even got to shave my legs!"

"It's kind of weird eating next to guys with machine guns!"

"I'm tired! I've also gained an appreciation for some of the smaller things in life. For example, that orange I had for lunch was the most delicious thing I have ever eaten!"

"We strained up a few hills laughing at each others' faces when we saw the mud that had been sprayed up on us!"

"I am beginning to appreciate how God chose Israel over all the nations because this place..."
C was deeded to a nearby community hospital as a lab technician. She still lives close by and brightens the office with daily visits!

9) When Amy Anderson vacated her secretary's desk to be a full-time mother, we were able to acquire the services of Becky Lantz. "Beck" is a super gal and is fast becoming a "Wheels' gal". She is just what the doctor ordered for being a plus to Sue and she is not intimidated by the computer! She comes equipped with a beautiful singing voice! (She has even produced a cassette tape!) Ladies and gentlemen...Becky Lantz!

10) Joe Salvato is a new staffer who comes to us from New York City area. He is a Kings' College graduate. Joe is great with the kids on the trips.

We continue to be blessed with good replacements and at the same time we know the joy of wishing those well who have found jobs and fulfillment elsewhere!

TRAILER COURT

A couple of years ago the Taylor University Trailer Court, which borders the south edge of the Wheels' property, was deeded to Wandering Wheels. Its intended use was to develop staff housing. Recently, a duplex was constructed and one side was sold to Larry Kleindienst, our bus mechanic, driver, and sometimes "scooterer"! Larry is taking his time finishing it and has had the blessing of his folks' visits from New Jersey to help do some of the interior work.

Peg Matthews purchased the other unit and she and Sue Savidge share that unit. We at least have our foot in the door in getting this project underway.

We thank God for a great experience in His land! We would also like to thank Win Corduan and Chuck Gifford for the good job they did each night lecturing on the history of the land, the people and the politics of Israel, as well as the teachings of Christ.

Israel has been, and probably will always be, a land of contention; but in spite of the unrest, it continues to hold a special place in the hearts of those who make the journey through its ancient ruins and modern cities, lofty hills and Dead Sea region, plains filled with fruits and vegetables and the deserts of the Negev, the land of the Jew and the land of the Arab. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

-- Contributed by Paul King.

UP DATE ON  THINGS PAST

Boy, it seems like a long time, over half a year now, since we successfully closed out "Circle America II". It ended with most of the riders anxious to get back to life's demands. It is interesting to note that so many of the cyclists have since written or phoned and commented on what they wouldn't give to be back out on the road!

I don't think good things were meant to sustain themselves for very long. Too much of anything seems to make us hungry for something different. Too much work and we want rest; too much rest and we want work! That seems to be true for most of us, at least. Life seems to be a tug-and-pull—an antithesis! What an exciting adventure to be about the business of balancing...painting a pretty picture for the Father, using all the colors at our disposal...blending!

The two Circle America trips were quite different from each other. Number one trip was a "first" and it had its wrinkles; number two trip was able to make adjustments off the first one. Interestingly enough, in the end the two seemed to come out about the same. As I have said over and over again, man's best planning, when it comes to spiritual results, seems no match for just skipping along and responding to the mix of things that comes our way with the application of Jesus' teachings.

We had a combined total of nearly 22,000 miles in the two trips and all of that with virtually no accidents. Twenty-two thousand miles! Oh, the mix of high adventure with plain, old-fashioned, day-to-day living! As a sidelight, we continue to have "boy-meets-girl things" happening, and as a result of the Circle America trips, Brian Carter, a Wheels' staffer, met Terry Arnold, a GA II participant, and they will be married in May!!
It was in 1963 that the seed thoughts for coast-to-coast cycling were planted. It wasn't until 1966, however, that our first U.S. crossing took place. Way back then it was only the young, tough, and reckless boys who undertook such an adventure! Nine years later the ladies joined the Wheels' ranks and our coast-to-coast tours became fully co-ed.

Who said that you can't teach an old dog new tricks? (A friend of mine said that that statement was started by some lazy, old dog!) Anyway, if someone had told me that Wandering Wheels would eventually be escorting an age group across the United States whose average age would be between 55 and 60, I'd have said, "Impossible!"

ALASKA... a Wheels' FIRST! The spirit behind this trip is to simply touch a part of the world that we have yet to touch under the leadership of Wandering Wheels. We are like artists who keep trying to master their trade. We need Alaska as a cycling trophy! God has allowed us to be on the cutting edge in cycling adventure and it is important to service the cycling crowd that looks to our program for touring leadership. "Serendipity" is still a big part of our teaching experience. God has a marvelous way of teaching through the high-adventure experience.

The trip will start on the United States/Canadian border 165 miles south of Calgary. We will ride northwest to Prince Rupert and there board a giant ferry and cruise for three days to Haines, Alaska. We will get back on the bikes at that point and cycle to Anchorage via Fairbanks. The biking miles will be about 2,000 while the trip from Anchorage back to Upland will be about 5,000 miles of bus travel! Wow!
A couple of "old" folks!

Guess what! By the time you receive this letter Wheels will be into another "first"—a coast-to-coast tour with a group of 25 cyclists whose average age will be in the late 50's! This should be a "really big trip" a la the Ed Sullivan generation! We will leave the San Diego area April 16 and plan to arrive on the Atlantic Coast in world famous St. Augustine, Florida, the city of the "Fountain of Youth", on May 26. Hey, the "Fountain of Youth" will be found in the bike trip that takes us there!

**CHINA**

We have been waiting for a response to an invitation sent to the China Youth Travel. About a year ago a rather elaborate proposal was made inviting thirty Chinese university students to travel via bicycle coast to coast. The departure time for this trip was to be late September of 1988. We expected a response to this no later than February of this year. Any hope for seeing this trip materialize, however, was given up as February closed out. Then, on March 12, we received a letter from one of our guides who wrote to say that a "yes" to our invite was on its way. So, as of this newsletter, it looks like Wandering Wheels will be taking a group of Chinese men and women across the United States! This will be seven weeks of cycling and one week of bus travel from Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, back to Chicago.

At the time the proposal was made I simply felt led to tell them that I would in some way raise the funds to enable the Chinese cyclists to experience America. It is Wheels' intent to house the "Far East" bikers in churches along the way as is Wheels' style. I really believe we will wind up with a foot in the door, relationally, that will lead to a wonderful exchange of feelings, ideas, and life-changing experiences down the road.

Those of you who have gone coast to coast, expect an invitation to participate financially in this venture!

P.S. At 7:45 a.m., March 16, I received a phone call from William, our Chinese guide, who confirmed the acceptance of the Wheels' invitation! The Chinese are coming to ride coast to coast!!!

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**Upcoming Trips**

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<td>July 2-August 7, 1988</td>
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<td>COLORADO MOUNTAIN RUN</td>
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<td>CHINA COAST TO COAST</td>
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<td>(Inviting some guests riders to join on part-time basis.)</td>
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<td>AMERICAN SOUTHWEST</td>
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<td>CIRCLE AMERICA III</td>
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As you can see, we have a tremendous amount of good things coming down the pike. I trust the activities over the past months have been encouraging to you! Really, you are our family! Who, more than the readers of the newsletter, would we want to please?

The activities that have been listed through January of 1990 should help you to appreciate the fact that WE ARE NOT SLOWING DOWN!

As always, your financial input is such an encouragement... kinda like a big smile of appreciation with an exclamation mark!

Keep THINKING about and PRAYING for Wheels!

God Bless you!

Coach

Bob ("Coach") Davenport
In the last newsletter I shared some thoughts regarding old hymns and the special relationship between the writers and God. I have often commented that we all have similar songs within us. Most of us can't put music to our thoughts, but that is not nearly as important as getting our thoughts out!

Many of the songs and hymns written today seem to be in the spirit of David's Psalms of old. I believe we all have a poetic strain running through us. I often encourage our riders to put together their own God-

feelings in a poem, something in a format similar to the Psalms.

Well, I have "harped" on this long enough that I decided to respond to God with a PSALM THOUGHT of my own. Really, it came almost like one would respond to a lover. My PSALM THOUGHT is a "thank you" back to God for the wonderful four-week tour down the coast of California which we recently completed. The success and good feeling generated by the tour made me want to write a type of love letter!

1. 0 GOD, thank You for travel and people with whom to travel; people who share themselves enough to allow friendships to develop and, yes, even be cemented!

2. OUR God provides a peace even though we sleep and continue to move in the night while all those around us sleep.

3. HE allows for places along the way to be visited: two hundred miles of canyon stiched away by life's forces leaving a beauty that stretches the senses; the desert city of glamour. Oh, the joy of viewing man's efforts at entertaining himself momentarily an anticipation of pleasure and then emptiness. Man is so carniverous; he, worse than the beast, feeds upon his own.

4. GOD, for the tar and mix of rock that lengthen endlessly in all directions, the black lanes trimmed in white that provide a surface for which rubber is smoothly glide distances undisturbed, thank! Man made it, but You made man! The black lanes knife through mountains at the proper angle creating little strain on the engine and drive chain. And, God, the uncanny skill of man to extract fuels from Your earth, fuels, when forced into air tight chambers, explode and help turn a multitude of gears and things! Oh, the wonder of it all!

Just the glass that separates us from the wind's blast allowing us to peer through with eyes undisturbed — glass made from Your melted rock. We who are land locked, hundreds of miles from the great oceans, to think the highway and steel cocoon extract us from our farmlands and large cities and place us next to the waves splashing on rocks that have not yielded to the enduring power of the sea. Again, God, thank You for the highway and combustible engine!

5. SANTA CRUZ! God, so many of Your California towns honor a saint of old! Who was he, Saint Cruz? He had to do something wonderful in Your name! How moving! How moving to be one who has been honored in Your name! Strung around our commitments and to inform this honor on Him? Not only were our God-

12. SOUTH, on to yet another city named after a saint, San Diego. We are accompanied by what seems like millions of ants... cars, cars, and more cars! God, it seems that the lowly ant has more concern than this hurrying man! The living along the way is so refined. Families work night and day. What a price to pay! God, the pace! Each one hoping to just stay a step in front of the other... wound like a top to spin out of control! And yet, God, in all the breakneck living there are some slowed down, gentle streams of activity that serve as peaceful coves of rest. The harbor master at Oceanside — he liked at Oceanside, where You allowed us to experience the tempest! What a storm!

You covered up benches, fire rings, pavement and, unfortunately, tossed a nice sized boat onto the rocks! Rather comical, God, to see man with all his equipment spend days cleaning up the results of Your blow! They keep talking about earthquakes. What an unsettled feeling for those who place so much hope in an ultimate environment!

13. OH, the variety of encampment! Pendleton, where shaven headed young men learn the savage art of killing! What a precision instrument — coiled and ready to strike! Not many smiles, and many of the warriors are simply sharpening already hostile attitudes... "A few good men!"

14. PEOPLE sleeping in bushes, under stairwells, and simply roaming the grounds... shouldn't be a part of all this human success. God, this is a story of travel. You let us meet travelers who haven't fared so well. Self abuse, genetic flaws, accidents, something placed there on the shelf. In and out of reality. Show a little concern and they cut us alive; turn away and our own hearts break! Your Son, God, would He allow them to nibble at His flesh? We think so! But isn't enough, enough! Her face was made up like a clown. Her pink tights covered with cut-off jeans. Her cute little blouse, a rabbit fur coat and frilly little boots made for a curious spectacle. "Who are you?"

"I'm a writer. I just got a job. Got a few bucks to tide me over till I get my first check?" "You're lying! We won't support your habit!" God, we still feel empty when we chase her kind away. She needs help! So do we! God, we need her reminder! Too many reminders come our way. It seems so unnatural in all this splendor and squall!

15. WE'RE going to the desert. God, Coach said that some of Jesus' best stuff happened in the desert. Life is not as obvious here. It doesn't take itself for granted. The beauty is best realized at a distance or up close. At a distance with the right sun, the rocks, sand, and jagged peaks are beyond description, but only for a moment. Help us to recognize the same hidden answers in people even if that sunset shows but for a fleeting moment!
6 GOD, You gave us a caring friend in Monterey. He is important because he likes (LOVES) us! He is the caretaker of a church building. He senses our needs and more, our host. Monterey is even more beautiful because of Your servant. He owns nothing he wouldn’t share, especially time. Your aquarium in Monterey, over forty million dollars’ worth, is child’s play compared to the real one! But thanks for allowing us to capture a few of these delightful creatures. A special thanks for Your beloved sea otter. He makes us smile! This area has gone from Steinbeck’s “Cannery Row” to being the haunt of the wealthy. Next door, Carmel, sacred, but cold and looof (look, but don’t touch). Thanks for allowing us to just view and know that it is all the possessing we need. The mission of Carmel is a subtle reminder that Your men came first to the Indian. However misguided, the early priest carried a love for the inhabitants, built a community and fortunately man has seen fit to revive that history and remind us of Your early concern by rebuilding hundreds of years old buildings.

7 AND now, God, our even more wonderful bodies remind us how marvellous Your creation! The auto and truck engines don’t compare to the matchless engine that is ours! So resting. Able to go even when it runs out of gas. We can draw upon an invisible vapor: guts, emotion, drive, desire, ego, just Our presence. If our parts break, they mend themselves; not so the motor car. And, God, the fun of covering our bodies with a variety of garments! Some aflow for warmth, others for coolness. More importantly, the opportunity to mix styles, colors, and cuts. How boring to live with the same outer skin! Oh, how much more privileged we are than even the most decorated bird. Our colors and shapes can change all day long!

8 GOD, what a gift, the highway! Even our calling this well manicured stretch of pavement HIGH-WAY seems a tribute to You! What good insight man has to engineer a piece of road crowded between the ocean and cliffs, stretching dangerously for hundreds of miles along the Pacific. The roads cut into and lay back a hidden beauty like a surgeon’s knife: towering redwoods pierce foggy morning skies; soft mushy ground never quite able to dry out, ground that欢迎toolstricks and the latest of ferns. The road twists, turns, rises and falls almost like a living thing.

9 THANKS for the reminder of life in the sea ... watching the whales show their hiding place by plumes of water in the air. We know the unnumbered friends that accompany the whales. Will they, too, allow similar sightings?

10 GOD, we continue to be reminded of Your presence by the names of towns along the way: San Simeon, San Luis Obispo, Santa Maria, Santa Ynez, Santa Barbara... all placed in our path. Who were they? What wonderful things did they do? Could we but have an obscure street or lane to remind people of our past presence? Do the people of these communities even associate “saint” with their town’s name, but, rather, enjoy the sweet sound of the name? The names now all sound of wealth, but we’re sure the wealth the namesake represented came from knowing You!

11 LOS ANGELES, the City of Angels! Where did we go wrong? The policeman warned us not to travel down a certain lane... no angels there! Plenty of grief, poverty, savagery, and not caring! They cut her finger off to get a ring! Why? God! When did gold become more valuable than the wholeness of a hand? The City of Angels is a harsh reminder of taking our eyes off the road. Maybe the path that hangs over the city is a kind of omen. The ugly, dirty grey with a hint of acid blue streaking through it, “smog”, is like a veil of death. Thank You for the rain and wind that wash it away. The washing serves as a brief reminder of how You work! How many washings will it take?