

And they're off Day 1 MESA Ride - Fremont-Bowling Green-Perrysburg
Kurt Anderson, MESA Rider, Elyria Sunrise Rotary Club



Fourth Annual Tour for MESA Day 1: Fremont-Bowling Green-Perrysburg

After a restful night at Eagle Isle...including watching the Sandusky River fireworks from the hot tub...we boarded the LifeCare bus to meet the Fremont Rotary Club for a delicious catered breakfast at Fremont Memorial Hospital. We were met by Fremont Rotary President Rob Lytle, District Governor Dave Daugherty, and Fremont Mayor Terry Overmyer. We were also met by the remaining “through” riders (who would do all or most of the trip) and several “day” riders (who join us for certain days or sections of a ride). All combined, the group leaving Fremont consisted of:

From Fremont: Angelica Rinehart, Helene Horvath-Zielinski, Karen Vargo;

From Bowling Green, Wayne Bell, Ed Marks and Jeff Snook (celebrating his 60th birthday!);

From Elyria Noon: Ed Stewart, Tom Herberger;

From Elyria Sunrise: Herb de la Porte, Eric de la Porte, Judy Keys, Kurt Anderson;

From Bryan, Bill Pepple;

From Findlay Noon, Tom Brumley, Deborah Brumley, Mel Petty (honorary member, Columbus resident);

From Shelby, C. Reid Miller;

From Ottawa-Glandorf, Kim French;

From Mansfield, Jim DeSanto;

From Maumee, Robin Syrek;

With so many riders, this year the Tour has 2 support vehicles, LifeCare bus driver Gary Sherrill (Elyria) and MESA truck driver Gary Davis (North Baltimore).

**SEND OFF CEREMONY
DAY 1 : SUNDAY, JULY 13TH**

7:00 am : Breakfast
8:15 am : Welcoming & Group Pictures
8:45 am : Flag Off

VENUE
President Rutherford B. Hayes' Barn
710 Cleveland Avenue
(adjacent to Herbert-Perna Center for Physical Health)
Fremont, OH 43420

Event of Interest: July 12-13
Fremont Flea Market at Sandusky
County Fairground, 9 am to 4 pm

The Fremont Rotary’s “Send-off Committee”—past-president Al Gorman, Julie Kreilick, Dave Fahrbach, President Rob Lytle, and Sarah Pietrykowski—capped off the festivities with a starter’s flag and police escort out of town. We look forward to reaching the finish line back

here on Saturday...but for the moment our sights were set on Bowling Green.

The riders rapidly sorted out into the typical “aggressive” and “casual” groups, with the “A” group led by a MESA first: the tandem-riding team of Herb de la Porte and his son Eric. The “A” team arrived in Bowling Green so far ahead of schedule that BG Rotarian and car enthusiast Jeff Snook took a group to tour “Snook’s Dream Cars Museum” before returning to a local park for lunch.

Bowling Green Rotary president Dr. Jeff Grilliot and his team not only refilled our gas tanks but also provided additional inspiration with a \$1,000 donation to MESA from the BG Rotary club. Thank-you, Bowling Green Rotary!

In Bowling Green we were met by Perrysburg Rotarians Rick Gilts and president Jeff Normand, who provided last-minute map corrections due to road construction. Unfortunately, the expected 18-mile “sprint” to Perrysburg turned into a grueling crawl as we encountered persistent 25-mph headwinds. Perrysburg Rotarian and Wood County Sheriff Mark Wasylshyn (he suggests pronouncing it like “botulism”) arranged a rear-guard escort to shepherd everyone safely to Fort Meig State Park. There we rendezvoused for a group ride to Carranor Hunt & Polo Club, where—after the requisite post-ride libations—Perrysburg president-elect Ken Robinson introduced us to the Rotary families that would host us for the night. Once showered and restored to social acceptability, we met for dinner at the home of consummate “event planner” Sandy Blackstone-Carmen. Sandy, her daughter Beth, master grill sergeant Jeff “Mr. Clean” Ruggiero, and “Super Suppers” caterer Cassie Egli treated us to a scrumptious dinner, complete with 2 cheese-wheel hors d’oeuvres which rapidly disappeared, grilled chicken sandwiches, mountains of pasta salad, and 2 courses of dessert! (Once again, the MESA tour continues its reputation as a charity dinner event; the cycling merely avoids excessive weight gain!)

56 miles and a well-sated appetite are the perfect end to a wonderful first day. Thanks again the Rotary Clubs of Fremont, Bowling Green and Perrysburg for your gracious Rotary hospitality and support for MESA!



This article was written by Kurt Anderson

Kurt is a member of the Rotary Club of Elyria Sunrise.

This is the 4th year Kurt has been a rider and has been the contributing author all four years.