

MESA Ride - Day 2 - Perrysburg - Toledo - Swanton
by Kurt Anderson



July 14, 2008

You're sure growing up, Tour. Today you showed your maturity with a special interest in history and culture.

Breakfast in Perrysburg was hosted by Toledo Rotarian Gary Murphy at the 577 Foundation, an organization dedicated to promoting environmental awareness, particularly organic gardening and renewable energy sources. There we were joined by day-riders from the Toledo

club (Sue Hochberg, Chuck Stocking, Joe Tafelski and Rick Yokum), Archibald (Randy Box), Maumee (Phil and Helen Kirk), and Bowling Green (Bob Rex).

After breakfast and a tour of the 577 Foundation grounds, past-district-governor Chuck Stocking led us on a "National Treasure"-type scavenger hunt, following successive clues to Perrysburg historical sites such historical sites as House of Four Pillars, Walcott House, Fort Miamis, Dudley's Massacre, and others.

Crossing the Maumee River we rode into Toledo, past the Toledo Zoo, and enjoyed a ride around the "Rotary Trail," a 1.5-mile loop paved by the Toledo Rotary. A police escort then guided us over the Martin Luther King Bridge into downtown and a fabulous lunch at the Park Inn with the Toledo Rotary. There President Helen Bolanis presented MESA with a check for...yes...\$10,000! What an inspiration! Additionally, past-district-governor (and past MESA rider) Jim Shrader appeared to present MESA with a check from the Findlay club for \$6,000!



The lunch program featured a presentation by Honduran Rotarian Julio Villarta, representing Uniendo America...a Rotary International project in Central America featuring micro-investing and which has benefited from MESA equipment donations.

After lunch we stopped at Fifth Third Field, home of the Toledo Mudhens. We then met the Maumee club at their "Centennial Pavilion" at Fallen Timbers State Park, where Dave Langendorfer, Bill Haupright and Joe Ludwig presented MESA with a check from the Maumee Rotary of \$2,000, bringing club contributions for the day to a stunning \$18,000! We were also joined by Maumee rider Tom Wysniewski.

The last piece of history was a 10-mile ride down the Wabash-Cannonball rail-trail, where the A-team riders practiced their drafting in preparation for tomorrow's century ride.

At the end of the trail we were met by a pair of Swanton police cruisers who escorted us to Swanton High School. After showers at the recently remodeled high school, we met for dinner with the Swanton Rotary at a pavilion outside Dental Health Associates, the professional home of Swanton Rotary president Tim Thetford. We were impressed and inspired by the turn-out of this 45-member club; with spouses and children, well over 100 people appeared to greet us and enjoy a beautiful evening picnic.

Today was an example of what the Tour has grown into. A different style of ride, a more casual pace engaging the local history, culture and club personalities—and enormous club contributions, both financial and motivational. Although the physical effort of the tour may draw curiosity and inspire some financial contributions, today's leisurely style expands the accessibility of the Tour, particularly for day riders of various skill levels. More importantly, it provides more time to interact with local clubs and strengthen the bonds of our mutual interests in Rotary values, goals and projects.

It is deeply inspiring to see new clubs making substantial contributions to the Tour and to MESA's objectives. With today's club contributions alone nearing 40% of the total Tour goal of \$50,000, we have huge inspiration for tomorrow's challenge... a 100-mile leg through Archibald, Bryan, Edgerton, Hicksville and Defiance.



This article was written by Kurt Anderson

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