

MESA Ride - Day 6:: Marion-Galion-Mansfield

by Kurt Anderson



Friday morning the Marion Rotary hosted us at a Perkins Restaurant. Marion welcome coordinator Cherie Carroll and friend Marsha Steele joined us for today's ride, and we also welcomed Assistant District Governor Jan Garverick who took over driving the MESA support truck. After breakfast we reviewed maps and directions, and said farewell to the Marion Rotary. Thank-you, Marion Rotary! We appreciate your continuing hospitality for the Tour riders and your contributions to MESA!

Today's shorter, 45-mile route was a relief after yesterday's 75 mile trek. It was only 27 miles to Galion, where president Lisa Dye-Hoffman and District Governor Nominee David Dayne hosted us and other Galion Rotary members for a buffet lunch at the "Varsity Grill." Mr. Dayne also presented MESA with a significant personal donation to MESA. Thank-you Dave, Lisa and Galion Rotary!

The remaining 18 miles were harder work, as we entered the hill country surrounding Mansfield. The tortuous climbs in the 95-degree heat were rewarded by the refreshing wind chill of 25-mph descents down the other side. Several riders even took the "max climb option" up steep Apple Hill (which rises 300 feet in 1.5 miles), for the personal satisfaction of having conquered the highest elevation in the region.

We were greeted in Mansfield at North Lake Park by welcome committee chairman John Stoddard, immediate past president Arnold Haring, and District Governor Dave Daugherty. Mansfield rider Jim DeSanto reprised last year's role as Tour spokesman, surrounded by a crowd of newspaper, radio and TV reporters.

After showers at our host homes, we met at the Mid-Ohio Convention Center for the Mansfield Rotary's annual charity auction and dinner to support the Rotary Adult Day Care program. Jim DeSanto recognized the MESA riders and announced that the Mansfield Rotary was contributing more than \$2,200 toward the Tour goal. Thank-you, Mansfield Rotary!

Several riders won bids on items such as ski tickets and autographed sports memorabilia, while Herb won the 50-50 raffle. He promptly bid most of the winnings on a wheelbarrow... which he justified by the fact the wheelbarrow came loaded with soon-to-be-collectible "Great American Lager."

The evening embodied Rotary's commitment to service and improving the lives of others, while having fun doing it. We look forward to more of the same tomorrow...and arriving home!



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.