

MESA Ride - Day 7 - The Final Day! - Mansfield-Shelby-Willard-Fremont
by Kurt Anderson



Fourth Annual Rotary Tour for MESA
July 19, 2008
Day 7: Mansfield-Shelby-Willard-Fremont

We greeted Saturday morning with anticipation; today we finish! Breakfast was hosted at the Mansfield Holiday Inn by welcome committee member Diane Brown, past president Arnold Haring, and District Governor David Daugherty.

We enjoyed reading the MESA article in the morning paper and teasing Jim DeSanto about the upcoming club fine for his photo.

DeSanto led our Tour out of Mansfield toward Shelby, as he proudly pointed out a new bridge, newly paved road, and other projects he supervised as Mansfield city engineer. The roads were certainly among the best we encountered during the entire Tour.

Now if he could just do something about those hills!

Fortunately, the chore of climbing out of Mansfield was eased by overcast skies, which kept the temperatures tolerable. After several hilly climbs, the terrain turned into rolling farmland with many enjoyable downhill runs.

Shelby Rotarian Reid Miller—our oldest rider at 73—led us into the rest stop provided by the Shelby Rotary, who provided refreshments and announced MESA contributions totaling more than \$500 in honor of Reid’s efforts (he had ridden every single mile!) Thank-you, Shelby Rotary, and thank-you Reid for your inspirational persistence!

Lunch was hosted at the Willard home of past District Governor Jim Smith, along with past Willard presidents Frank Chapman, Kathe Graham, Nancy Eldridge, and Brian Humphress. We marveled over Frank’s woodworking projects, including a checkered ash-maple cane which he has reproduced by request for such notables as Omar Vizquel. After lunch, our hosts presented us with a donation of \$250. Thank-you, Willard Rotary and Past District Governor Smith!

Leaving Willard, we were only 37 miles from the finish. Despite renewed headwinds as we turned west, and flat tires by both Reid Miller and Jim DeSanto (who set a MESA Tour record of four flats), we arrived on time at the pavilion outside Fremont Memorial Hospital where we had begun our journey.

CLOSING CEREMONY
DAY 7 : SATURDAY, JULY 19TH

4 pm : Arrival of Tour Riders
4:15 pm : Closing & Group Pictures
5-6 pm : Fellowship

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

Event of Interest: July 19
Farmer's Market featuring Art & Music
Fest. at Downtown Fremont,
9 am to 1 pm



Fremont coordinators and riders Angelica Rinehart and Helene Zielinski had arranged a police escort from the edge of town and a reception where we were greeted by Fremont

Rotary president Rob Lytle, District Governor David Daugherty, members of the Fremont Rotary, and the warm embraces of family and friends. Among the congratulations and announcements, president Lytle presented MESA with club and individual donations totaling \$1,600.

We are relieved and satisfied to have completed our journey, and to have raised \$30,000 from the 19 clubs visited during the 7-day, 430-mile Tour. Knowing there will still be contributions from many other clubs and from individual pledges raised by the riders, we are confident we will exceed the Tour goal of \$50,000.

We are very grateful to more people than our exhausted minds can remember: to all the Rotary clubs who have given logistic and financial support to this year's Tour, to the club coordinators who arranged meals and accommodations, to the host families who gave us a place to lay our weary heads, to District Governor David Daugherty for his constant involvement and unflagging support and encouragement, and to all the intrepid riders and their families. Everyone involved has shown the meaning of "Service Above Self," and how to put the "fun" in fund-raising!

Plans are already underway for the 2009 Tour! We are excited by the growth in club participation and look forward to what lies ahead. See you next year!



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.