

## Day Two: Port Clinton to Elyria

Today was one of the more unusual days the tour has ever seen in its five years' history. What made it so unusual? A shuttle to a remote start, a buffet brunch that "forced" us to eat the equivalent of three normal meals, a route broken into four short segments, we stressed over being late all day but still arrived early at the end, two golf courses, a yacht club and a fisherman's festival. All in one day.

On the comical side, our group of 20-some bikers stuffed themselves into the small bus for a start of today's ride on the east side of the Sandusky Bay Bridge (being a limited access highway, bikes are not permitted to ride on the bridge). With bikes and other gear inside we were all squeezed in like sardines. Once we unpeeled the lid on the can and escaped our cramped quarters we got our bikes together and headed off for the Sandusky Yacht Club for their Sunday brunch. We had no idea what we were in for. It seems the Sandusky Yacht Club likes to prepare the most outstanding brunch imaginable; there really isn't enough room here for a list, but it combines breakfast, lunch and dinner entrees and sides all in one scrumptious offering. And we ate everything. Okay, not EVERYTHING but we ate the equivalent of three meals each. Not exactly the best decision prior to riding 50 miles on a bike but we just couldn't help ourselves. Gene Koby of the Sandusky Rotary had made all the arrangements and he proudly introduced his large club's Social Committee Chairman and a member who recently announced he wanted to begin moving through the chairs of leadership.

From the yacht club the group moved through the east side of Sandusky, going the opposite direction of the Cedar Point traffic. Other than the traffic going west, it was a nice quiet morning. Our next stop was Huron where the Huron Rotary Club was participating in the city's annual Fisherman's Festival. It was only a 9-mile trip but we still welcomed the chance to escape the heat and to refill our water bottles. The local club was very busy getting ready their booth, from which they would be selling beverages and fries and other typical festival foods. It was here that we met Mark Hamilton, the man in charge. In yesterday's journal we erroneously named Mark Hamilton as the person who coordinated our stop in Oak Harbor; that person was really Doug Ricci. Our apologies to both men for the mistake.

Leaving Huron required us to negotiate around the festival and soon we were back onto Rt. 6 headed for Vermilion. This is a nice route with light traffic and occasional views of Lake Erie. Again, our distance was short and we gladly pulled into the Vermilion Country Club to get out of the rising sun and elevating temperatures. We were a little ahead of schedule so we took the opportunity to socialize and enjoy sandwiches and salads provided by the Vermilion Rotary. Sue Hunt, along with rider Bob Matejesic from that club, presented the club's donation to MESA.

Then it was on to Elyria, 25 miles away. The air grew hotter and more humid as the day saw us progress through the quiet countryside and lightly rolling terrain of Erie and Lorain Counties. One of our riders commented how nice it was to tour Ohio this way, how this tour allowed them to see cities they've heard about but never been to before. Riders who have ridden often have had a wonderful geography lesson about northwest Ohio.

Somehow we were ahead of schedule when we arrived in Elyria at the town square. Nonetheless we continued our own fellowship until the "landing party" arrived. Mike Rounta from the Elyria Sunrise Rotary and Marty Kelly from Elyria Noon Rotary were the ones in charge and they brought with them other members from both clubs. Soon all riders arrived and we looked like a flash mob of Rotarians, half of them dressed in flashy spandex outfits. Passersby did a lot of staring.

Host families paired up with some of the riders to take them to their homes, others rode to the local Holiday Inn and the riders who lived in town gladly spent some time with their families. Later we all met at the

Forest Hills Golf Course for more fellowship and dinner. The crowd of about 40 included all the riders and representatives from the two local clubs. Mike Jaworski, president of the Elyria Noon Rotary gave a brief talk about how MESA is an important part of his club and presented his club's donation to the project. PDG Jim Hunt talked about the history of MESA and how the bike tour is so important to the financial stability of the project. Tour Coordinator Ed Stewart put the day into perspective and how the tour is evolving and growing.

That concluded Day Two and we all looked forward to what the next day will offer in the terms of new geography, new friends, new understanding about Rotary. Tune in tomorrow to read about another day that promises to be different from any before.