



Invitation to All Rotary Clubs of District 6600 To Sponsor a Rider



An Open Invitation to the Rotary Clubs of District 6600:

As you have heard over the last few years, the MESA project organizes an annual Bike Tour to raise awareness and funds for the project. Since 2005 the Tour has raised over \$150,000 for MESA, making it the primary means for financial resources for the project. Our goal this year is to top our goal of \$50,000 that was reached in 2008; this year we want to shoot for \$60,000. And for that we are asking for your club to participate in this major event.

The Tour will occur this year between July 12 and 17 with riders from numerous clubs covering around 400 miles on bicycles. The route this year starts and ends in St. Marys, Ohio. Along the way they will stop at about 20 clubs who will host them for rest stops and/or overnight stays. That means the Tour will visit in some way about one-third of the clubs in the district. It also means that two-thirds of the clubs will not see them this year. But that doesn't mean all clubs cannot participate - that is what this invitation is all about.

I am personally inviting your club to send one of your members to ride with us this year. That could be for the whole week or for any single day on the tour, or even half a day. If your club does not have any members who are bicyclists able to ride for 65 miles a day, we will find a rider who would be willing to ride on your behalf. When your club sponsors a member or other rider it will provide a unique way for your club to be a big part of a big event.

All we ask of riders is for them to represent a minimum of \$50 per day ridden either in direct donations or pledges to donate. A weeklong rider would be responsible for \$300 or more in club or personal donations. Many of the riders will bring donations from their club but also they obtain pledges from other members, friends and family. Some riders represent many thousands of dollars in donations to MESA.

So, how do you do this? First ask among your club membership who might be interested or willing to ride for the week or part of it - you might be surprised at who rides bikes on a regular basis. If no one from your club is available, perhaps someone from your community would like to be sponsored. If you still cannot locate a willing rider, contact me and I guarantee we will find a rider your club can sponsor.

One of the really interesting things we do on the Tour is to post a daily log with photos of places we've visited and people we've met. In this way your club can also follow the progress your rider has made on the ride. After the Tour someone from the MESA project would be available to make a presentation to your club about the Tour, as a follow-up to your sponsorship.

Each year since its inception in 2005 the Tour has grown significantly. We look at 2009 to be even bigger and better than last year - and that is a hard act to follow. Including your club in the Tour will help make it all the better. I encourage you to have your club be a part of this event in 2009 with a rider who is a member or one you sponsor to ride on your behalf.

If you have any questions about the Tour and how your club can become involved, feel free to contact me, Ed Stewart, Tour Coordinator: 440-323-7200; ed@stewartadv.com. There is more information available on the MESA website: www.RotaryMESA.org.

Thank you - we look forward to riding with your club as part of the Tour.

Ed Stewart
Rotary Tour for MESA Coordinator
Elyria Rotary Club