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Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club PO Box 112078 Tacoma, WA 98411

SEPTEMBER 2005



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| Thanks for becoming a member of TWBC! | [] Becoming a club officer |

9 pox

SEPTEMBER 2005

My First RAGBRAI!

(Register Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa)
By Carla "Raccoon" Gramlich

Over the years I have heard wonderful things about bicycling across Iowa. After spending a week bicycling with 10,000 of my closest friends across Iowa, I can now say I did it and got the T-shirt. During the week that we were there a new saying started that what "Happens in Iowa stays in Iowa." At no time did I swear to that motto, so I am now going to provide information about my adventure.

Earlier this year Anne Seago extended an invitation to TWBC members to bicycle Iowa. I had thought about doing this for several years and this year was the year that I was available to do it. I had the pleasure of TWBC members Ray and Peggy Fjetland, Debbie Hushagen, Anne Seago and Bob Myrick for company.

Anne told me that I simply needed to send her \$100.00, join the Happy Valley Raccoon Bike Club and then arrange for Pork Belly Venture to provide bus transportation to the start of the ride. I told her this smelled like some scam to provide additional funds for her retirement.

Ray, Peggy and I flew into Omaha, NE on Friday afternoon and found the temperature was over 100 degrees. The next day was supposed to set a record. I thought about turning around and catching the next flight back to Seattle. But I had come this far and was expecting hot weather. On Sat. morning the charter bus of Pork Belly Venture took us up to Lemars, Iowa, the first town of our Iowa trip.

Lemars is the Ice Cream Capital of the world, which is a nice place to be when it is 100 degrees. I had given up Ice Cream years ago but heard many good reviews for Blue Bunny Ice Cream. We got off the bus and moved our gear and bicycles to a shaded area. Peggy and I went to find transportation, while Ray started to put their bikes together.

We talked to some local ladies who were directing traffic and they informed us that our first night host was about ½ mile away. We asked if they knew anyone who would be available to help us get our gear moved and one of the ladies called her husband who drove out to where we had deposited our stuff and loaded it in his car. Peggy and I then got in this stranger's car and drove off. Anne had informed us that is what you do on RAGBRAI. The town is there to make your stay pleasant and most people know everyone in town. Giving a hand to moving all our gear was just showing how friendly Iowa was going to be. Peggy and I tried to offer him some money for his help but he wouldn't have anything to do with it. We did get his address so we could thank him when we got home.

I stayed with the gear and started to assemble my Bike Friday. It is normally an easy task but on this day, I was sweating in the heat of the mid day sun. Our host for the night invited me in and gave me some cold water. I was also offered a "tavern", which I declined because I had no idea what she was talking about. After I cooled off in the house, I went back to finish my bicycle. When I got it together, Anne and Bob Myrick showed up. I felt my trip on the plane and bus was tough but Anne and Bob had ridden their bikes from the Pacific Coast to the start of RAGBRAI. My heroes.

We found Peggy and Ray on their bicycles and our Tacoma group rode off to lunch. Even though Iowa is part of the USA, they do have some different terms that we were not familiar with. A "tavern" is also called a "maid rite". If that didn't help, you might know it as a Sloppy Joe. Also a sani-can is called a "kybo". Over lunch Anne, who is originally from Iowa gave us a quick lesson on talking Iowan. Then we did the RAGBRAI Expo, found Debbie Hushagen and met some of our other team members from Iowa.

Being part of the Lucky Raccoons, we had host families in every town that we were staying in. Some nights we camped out and had a shower available other nights we stayed inside and one night our host fed us. Being a Raccoon saved us from the group campsite with 8,000 other cyclists. There was a team bus that carried all our gear and provided cold refreshment when we got in for the night. This additional service was for another fee.

RAGBRAI is set up differently than any other ride I have been on. The fee that you pay to be a registered rider covers things like the route map, sani-cans, water and police at most major intersections. Other things like food, beer and showers comes out of your pocket. S0, instead of rest stops

RAGBRAI continued on page 5

The COG Home Page

Club Officers and Volunteers

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Deadline for articles, 3rd Friday (after meeting)

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Joyce Clifford, 253-759-2393



TWBC Ride Line 253-759-2800 UPDATED WEEKLY!

Hey Riders... Use this handy-dandy chart to decypher the ride code listed on the Monthly Ride/Event Calendar

RIDE CODE CHART

Pace Code: Average mph on flat surface:

- 1 Easy pace, frequent stops to catch up and regroup, 9-12 mph on flats.
- 2 Moderace pace, occasional stops to catch up and regroup, 12-15 mph.
- 3 Steady pace, limited stops, cue sheets or maps provided, 13-16 mph.
- 4 Fast pace, very limited stops, cus sheets or maps provided, 16 + mph.

Terrain Code examples:

- A Mostly Flat (Inter-urban Trail)
- B Gently rolling with one or two steep hills
- C Rolling steeper hills (Kitsap Peninsula)
- D Difficult terrain with longer, steeper hills (Vashon Island)

Next Club Meeting:

Tuesday September 20

Food galore! Door Prizes! Great Program!

the Picture Page

RAGBRAI 2005



Banana Man & long line of riders



Anne Seago Birthday Tiara



Carla Gramlich holding a boa constrictor



Debbie, Carla, Peggy and Ray

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of the paper. Anne and Bob rode over 2700 miles and Anne gets her name in the paper. Peggy and Debbie walked into a church, something they do every week, and get a photo on the front page.

Other activities that were available on the ride was chicken poop bingo, Kybo roulette (remember a Kybo is a Sani-Can), a water slide that Debbie claims she saw a naked man on. I got to rope a horse one day, which I ended up roping myself instead. After miles and miles of corn and soy fields anything different to do was pretty exciting.

The last day, all the Raccoons tried to meet up so we could all ride the last 10 miles into town together. Some of the riders had the official club t-shirt on. TWBC members had on our jersey. It became difficult to get everyone together because some people had to get into Guttenberg and pack up for bicycles for UPS. Since I just had to put my Bike Friday away, I rode with the team and official dipped my tires and shoes in the Mississippi.

I then found the Team Bus for the Raccoons. Ray had moved my gear to the area where Pork Belly Ventures was meeting. (Hugs and Kisses for Ray carrying all my gear on that hot day.) After packing my bike and gear, we found a shower for a price. We got back in time to get a good seat on the bus. The buses rolled on time. And in keeping with RAGBRAI tradition we made an importune stop for the back of bus to buy some more Bud.

For Pictures and Stories from the Des Moines newspaper visit:

http://desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/section?Category=NEWS&theme=RAGBRAI_XXXIII&template=theme (Debbie and Peggy's photo is in the Friday photo section.)

http://www.dmregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050728/LIFE04/507280378/1044

(Anne's story and her partner, Bob, is in this story)



LAGBRAU II (Legacy Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Utah)

In order to bring the LAGBRAU II (Legacy Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Utah) to the attention of more bicycle club members we are offering a special discount. LAGBRAU II is only in its 2nd year and we are offering a \$100 dollar discount to those who sign up as a result of this offer, while there is still space available.

LAGBRAU is arguably "the most scenic bicycle ride in the world," and is less than 2 months away. We invite you and any of your club members to join us and see for yourselves that this is the most beautiful and scenic ride of a lifetime. We will shuttle you across the state to the beginning from St. George to Blanding, or back to Blanding at the end of the ride. Imagine the entire ride on a State and/or "National Scenic Byway" and "All American Road," with the opportunity to enjoy 3 National Parks, 3

The 2005 Oregon Coast Cycling Festival is September 10 – 11 in Gold Beach, Oregon. It's a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society and the Curry HealthFoundation. There's two fun-filled days of cycling planned – something for everyone. More information can be found at www.oregoncoastcyclingfestival.com

Cycling Revealed is a new web based "Cycling History" magazine. CyclingRevealed Go to: <<ht><http://www.cyclingrevealed.com/>>

This month we offer an original look at the Vuelta a Espana. Not only do we have our monthly feature (Quintessential Spain) but we offer our "First Impressions" on interesting stages throughout the Vuelta (updated weekly).

In August, we continue our Top 25 Tours of All Time (#22 and #21). Learn how past Tours compare with the modern Tours. As we countdown the years please let us know your opinion about our choices. We aim to give you an appreciation of the FULL grandeur of this great cycling event.

We also have our practice Quizzes in the Cycling Revealed Trivia section. Practice now, the contests will start in the fall.

TIRE BUZZ

By President

Tim Payne





Timothy Payne TWBC "The Prez"

WANTED TWBC SECRETARY

For those of you wishing that someone else would step up and take the position, your wishes have not been granted. TWBC is still in need of a Secretary. As of now Sandy Byrd assisted by Dena Wessels are helping out until we can find someone willing to do the job. As of this writing no one has yet stepped forward.

WANTED SPECIAL EVENTS POSTIONS

We have four (although it could be more with "co-positions") open in the special events area. We need a Special Events Director (who is also a member of the board), and ride directors for the 2006 versions of the Daffodil, Peninsula Metric Century and the Headwaters Classic. These events raise about three quarters of our annual revenue, so they are extremely important to the on-going viability of TWBC as we know it today. Thanks to several individuals stepping up, sometimes at the last minute, we have been able to continue to produce these rides. That does not appear to be the case for 2006.

Over the past four years Ralph Wessels has acted as the convening leader for special events. Ralph is now otherwise occupied. Without a coordinator, it would be difficult, if not impossible to continue our special events.

The Daffodil is the first event of the year, in April, and typically also the largest. There has been considerable discussion about making some changes to the ride to avoid some roads and reduce the amount of resources it takes to conduct support for the riders. However, if there is no team in place to oversee these efforts by early this fall, that task cannot be addressed, much less accomplished. Over the past several years the ride has been directed by a team of two, or more, people resulting in less burden to any one individual. That approach has seemed to work well so it seems logical to me to continue in that manner. Just one catch, we need some willing individuals.

The Peninsula Metric occurs next on the calendar in June. It usually benefits significantly from the organizational efforts of the Daffodil. Not that it is easy mind you, but there are some

benefits of being second out the chute. This ride has done well with the attention of a single ride director over the past several years. While there is no opposition to having a team in place, it is a ride that has been handled very well by one individual, assisted, of course, by a large team of other folks.

The Headwaters is last on the calendar in September. History has been that the ride, while benefiting from the earlier two rides, is challenged by much of the organizational work occurring over the summer months. It has been directed by one or two people very successfully over the past several years.

There you have it a brief outline of our needs to operate our special events for 2006. Threatening is seldom an effective motivator for any activity one wants to get accomplished in a way that makes people feel good about what they are doing. However, I will not hesitate to simply state a fact, if there is no one in these positions of responsibility, the rides will not occur. At some point the board will be faced with a very difficult decision to retire one or more of our rides temporarily or permanently. I will further point out that this decision point may not be as far ahead as you might think. Typically, to be effective in publicity and advertising one needs to have ride dates and materials in print very shortly after mid-December. There are many decisions to be made before one can publish ride information so a ride team has to be formed prior to that time. Some of the work can occur later, but the initial organizing work has to get done early to stay in step with the annual cycle of Puget Sound area cycling calendars.

I will not trivialize any of these positions by saying that they are easy, they are not. They involved real work. But there are always helping hands around to make that work easier. Most people who have directed a ride have found it both fun and satisfying. There is also a wealth of documented history on how each of the rides has been conducted over the past few years and ex-ride directors are always willing to share their experiences in putting on a ride. Go ahead, sign on for a new adventure. If you want to take on one of these open positions, please give me a call (360) 871-4478 (home) or (253) 219-4450 (cell) or drop me an e-mail at president@twbc.org or see me at the September 20th membership meeting. I will be happy to discuss any of these positions with you further.

LESSONS LEARNED: TWO WHEELS ON THE GROUND

This little "lesson" could have happened with any two wheel vehicle, but my experience happened to occur on a two wheeled vehicle with a motor. It sounded like such a great idea, put my motorcycle in the back of a truck moving a friend to Spokane and spend part of my vacation exploring eastern Washington by motorcycle. Yes, of course, part would also be spent on a bicycle. The only tricky part was loading my 650 pounds of motorcycle into a truck with a bed that was four feet off the ground. No problem, I told myself, I have already had it

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Tire Buzz continued from p.3

in the bed of a pick-up, twice, this should be a snap. The truck has a built in ramp, three feet wide and it isn't even that steep. I'll just ride it in.

The day came, the truck rented. We loaded my friend's motorcycle first, no problem, right up the ramp and into the nice long bed. As I watched I thought, "he took it up that ramp kind of fast and had to brake awful hard after breaking over into the truck bed. I think I will try to take it a little easier. After all I don't want to plow my bike into his." My turn. "Start it up, get up some speed, not too much, easy does it, on the ramp, almost there, uh oh, I have stopped, no momentum, no place to put my feeeeeeeeeeeee!" The crunch of the three foot fall was sickening. There I was, on my side, my cycle on top of my lower right leg, still running I might add. My friend scrambled to get me out from under the bike and shut it down. I am not sure what hurt worse, my right hip, where most of the weight landed or my pride from pulling the stupid stunt of the century. My pride would have to heal some other time, right then, my hip felt like something pretty major had happened. "Should I call 911?" the question came. By that time I was sort of on my feet and moving, I said no. "Do you want to go to the hospital?" My more common senses finally, although too late, starting to take over again, I said yes. By the way, my friend with assistance from my daughter got the bike back on its feet and into the garage, awaiting the tender touch of a mechanics wrench and several hundreds of dollars, (maybe thousands, it is, after all, a BMW) of new parts to put back to ride-able condition.

The trip to Tacoma General seemed to take forever, but we finally arrived. I got out of the car, tried to put weight on my right leg and promptly collapsed. The only thing that saved another trip to the ground was a lucky catch on the car door. Now, sensibly in a wheelchair, I wheeled into the TG emergency room. Mercifully it was very quiet and I was admitted and examined with very little delay. After x-rays and prodding the doctor says, nothing apparently broken, you are just going to have to stay off your leg for a few days. I will give you some pain pills to help you feel more comfortable. Three hours after the fall, I still had not taken any pain pills, I almost said, "naw, I can live without." But, once again, some part of my common sense came back and I said, "that would be great." By the time I got home, I needed them.

To make a long story short, here I am on the 5th "official" day of my vacation, six days after the crash, sitting in front of my computer writing this column. Still hobbling with crutches and with very limited ability to put weight on my right leg. It does seem, however, to be getting better, but oh so slowly. Suffice it to say, my vacation plans have changed a bit, no motorcycle, no bicycle, no boat (at least for a while longer, as I cannot get into it) and no beach, (my crutches do not work in sand). So I have knocked off two lengthy novels already and have soaked up some warmth from the sun plus enjoyed some time with family. Yesterday, I was able to wean myself off the pain pills, which also shows some progress.

What have I learned from all this? Probably several things, but here are a few of the more important:

- Never underestimate the value of family and friends in time of need.
- 2. Don't get so wedded to your plans that you are unable to change if that "unforeseeable" incident occurs.
- 3. Time off from everything is not so bad.
- 4. Keep those two tires (motor or pedal power) in contact with the ground, not on a ramp, Evel Knevel I am not.
- 5. Just because something sounds easy, does not mean that it is and re-thinking the risk of your plans, even at time of execution, can save a whole lot of pain.

I shall continue to convalesce and enjoy my vacation, despite my different choices for activities. See you soon, hopefully sans crutches.

Wish I have taken my own advice, but for you, keep it rubber side down.

Sawtooth Bike Ride

The Sawtooth Bike Ride is a 3 day, 150 mile recreational expedition through some of Idaho's most scenic vistas. The ride begins near Fairfield Idaho and ends in Banner Summer, Idaho. This freewheeling adventure is an annual fundraiser for the American Lung Association of Washington/Idaho and is open to novices and experts alike. This fully supported ride includes all lodging, meals and snacks, mechanical support and support vehicles. Join the fun September 10 – 12, 2005 in Idaho! Registration is \$65 with a \$400 fundraising minimum. Support a great cause and have a wonderful cycling adventure! For more information, please visit http://www.mrsnv.com/evt/ home.jsp?id=612 or call 1-800-577-5896

WHAT: Sawtooth Bike Ride supporting the American

Lung Association of Idaho/Washington

WHERE: Begins in Fairfield, ID and ends in Banner Summit, ID

WHEN: September 10 -12, 2005

WHY: Support the American Lung Association of

Washington/Idaho

Price: \$65 Registration fee, \$400 fundraising minimum

Description: 150-mile recreational bike ride through some of Idaho's most scenic vistas. The 3 day bike ride is a ride-at-your-own pace adventure for all levels of cyclists. The ride is fully supported and includes meals, lodging, support vehicles, bike mechanics, and massage!

For more information and to register: www.mrsnv.com/evt/home.jsp?id=612 or call 1-800-577-5896



| Day | Date | Time | Dist- ance | Ride Code | Leader | Contact at (253) | Ride or Activity |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| Sat | 09/03 | 9 AM | 60 | 2 C | Gene Smith | 272-6747 | Headwaters Pre-Ride. Start: Mackenzie Bridge. |
| Tues | 09/06 | Call | Call | Call | Call Ride Line | 759-2800 | Tuesday AM Ride. Call Ride Line for details. |
| Tues | 09/06 | 7 PM | 00 | 00 | Bob Myrick | 473-7455 | Government Affairs Meeting @ the Guadalajara Taqueria in the Stadium neighborhood @ 1st & Tacoma Avenue. |
| Sun | 09/11 | 7 AM | 45, 65, 100 | All | TWBC | 272-9682 | Headwaters Century; Start: Enumclaw High School. |
| Tues | 09/13 | Call | Call | Call | Call Ride Line | 759-2800 | Tuesday AM Ride. Call Ride Line for details. |
| Tues | 09/13 | 6:30 PM | 00 | 00 | Tim Payne | 360- 871-4478 | Board Meeting @ the Kim Ahn Restaurant across from TCC on Mildred. |
| Sat | 09/17 | Call | Call | Call | Donna Daily | 884-4473 | Ravensara down to Jo Emma Beach on Key Peninsula for lunch & back. Start: Hwy 302 & 118th St. |
| Sat | 09/17 | Call | Call | Call | Bob Myrick | 473-7455 | Overnight ride to the brewery in Centralia. Call for details. |
| Sat - Sun | 09/17 - 09/18 | Various | Varied | All | www. roundandround .com | 509- 455-7657 | Tour des Lacs , Spokane. 2 day benefit cycling tour w/ multiple routes/mileage options. |
| Sat - Mon | 09/17 - 09/19 | Various | Varied | All | www. alaw. org | 206- 441-5100 | Trek-Tri-Island , San Juan Islands. 3 day benefit ride to raise funds for the Amer. Lung Association; limit 500 riders, \$450 pledges. |
| Tues | 09/20 | Call | Call | Call | Call Ride Line | 759-2800 | Tuesday AM Ride. Call Ride Line for details. |
| Tues | 09/20 | 7 PM | 00 | 00 | TWBC | 759-2800 | September Club Meeting @ South Park Community Center, 4851 S. Tacoma Way. |
| Sat | 09/24 | 7 AM | 25, 50 & 100 | All | www. mikeutley. org | 800- 294-4683 | Dam 2 Dam Thumbs Up Tour, Wenatchee. Ride along the Columbia River. Benefits spinal cord injuries group. |
| Sat - Sun | 09/24 - 09/25 | Call | 60 | All | Apple Valley & Prosser Kiwanis | 509- 966-4475 | Kiwanis Wine Country Trek, Yakima. Ride through wine country to Processer. www.desertvalley.com/rides |
| Sun | 09/25 | Call | 62 & 100 | All | Salem Bicycle Club | 503- 363-7725 | Peach of a Century, Salem. Routes through the countryside around Salem. www.salembicycleclub.org |
| Tues | 09/27 | Call | Call | Call | Call Ride Line | 759-2800 | Tuesday AM Ride. Call Ride Line for details. |
| Sat | 10/01 | 7:30 AM | 33 miles & 104 km | All | Ellensburg X Country Ski | reillym@ cwu.edu | Manastash Century & 1/2 Century, Ellensburg. routes through some of Central WA's most scenic cycling country. www.elltel.net/XCski/ |
| Sat | 10/01 | 7 PM | 00 | 00 | Bicycle Alliance of Washington | 206- 224-9252 | BAW Auction, South Lake Union, Seattle. 24 seats reservered for pre-paid TWBC members. www.bicyclealliance.org |

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Bicycle Alliance Auction – October 1, 2005

TWBC has reserved three tables (24 chairs) at the 13th annual Bicycle Alliance of Washington auction. As has occurred in past years, TWBC will pay half the cost for members to go. Instead of the regular \$55 price, you can attend for only \$27.50. The savings hopefully will give you the funds needed to out-bid your fellow attendees

This is a really fun event and the tickets for it normally do not last long. Plus it is a good opportunity to get some items that at a great price provided you are the successful bidder. In the past, TWBC members have brought home ski vacations, fancy bicycles, rafting trips, hard-sought ride entries, and lots of other cool stuff. Why not join in the fun and help support statewide bicycle advocacy?

The new location will at the Naval Reserve Building on South Lake Union in Seattle. More details will be posted on the BAW website www.bicyclealliance.org as the auction approaches. If you would like to contribute something to the auction (what would an auction be without something to bid on?!), contact the bicycle alliance at info@bicyclealliance.org or call them at 206-224-9252.

Remember, the tickets go fast and they are only for TWBC members. The first 24 people to send their funds to the TWBC mailbox or give to the Treasurer get to go. No payment, no reservation!



We would like you to come out and ride with us... but you have to wear a helmet!

Bob's Back and going to McMenamins

On Saturday, September 17, I am proposing a bike and train trip to Centralia, Washington. Lodging will be at McMenamins 1908 Olympic Club Hotel-Theater. Reservations can be made at 360 736-5164. The best deal is the Hammerhead Package. It includes lodging for two in a Queen European-style room, dinner and dessert in the Olympic Club Pub, two pints of McMenamins Hammerhead Ale(one pint per person) and breakfast the following morning. Cost is \$89 per couple. Unfortunately, this package is only available Sunday thru Thursday, but ask about it anyway. Presumably, the Roy Gardner Package is available on Saturday night. It costs \$99 and includes a bottle of Edgefield wine and everything listed above. Anyway, you may have to just settle for a plain old room. Bunks are \$40 and Queens are \$50. All packages include admission to the movie theater.

This trip is 100 miles thru Eatonville and Morton for those who can't afford the train on Saturday. The ride back on Sunday is for everyone and is about 55 miles to Spanaway following the STP route backwards. The trip will leave the Spanaway McDonalds at 8AM, not the Parkland McDonalds. For train riders, there are about two options. Call 1 800 872-7245 or visit the Amtrak Station in Tacoma. Train 501 leaves Tacoma at 8:18am and arrives in Centralia at 9:18am. You would then take a bike ride around the Centralia-Chehalis area, possible back tracking to the 100 mile riders. Train 507 is the best choice. It leaves at 2:33pm and arrives at 3:33pm. Both trains have space for six standard bikes and the extra cost is \$5. You should reserve in advance to quarantee a space. The alternative is a bike box that costs about \$10. Tandems have to be boxed. Train 507 would allow you to start partying about 4pm since the hotel is just a block from the station.



Bob Myrick TWBC Director Community and Government

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with free food, every town was setup with food and beer for a price. Another thing that is different about RAGBRAI is beer gardens at 8 am.

After a hot day, I have been known to get in from a ride, shower and have a cold micro brew. On RAGBRAI, beer is available in the first town to the last one on the route and your choices are Bud or Budlite. It is not uncommon for the breakfast stop to include a Bloody Mary at the local tavern. I guess this a way to make the ride interesting. During the whole week of the ride we only had a handful of cars on the route. But we had to be very careful of the cyclists that may have been drinking since 8 am.

Part II What to See and Do on RAGBRAI

RAGBRAI is billed as bicycling from the Missouri River to the Missisippi. But starting right on the Missouri is problematic since most towns are not big enough to accommodate the crowd. So the local fire department fills a tank with Missouri River water and a small trickle is placed on the road. This allows us to start the ride by dipping our tires in the "Missouri River". The ride officially started at 6am and the temperature was officially 80 degrees. We had 65 miles on the first day and it was looking like it was going to very hot.

Debbie and I were both on our Bike Fridays and we wanted to stop a lot to see all the sights and take pictures. So we stayed together and saw the sights. I wanted to see all the animals. During my stay in Iowa I held a baby goat, a baby pig, a chick and a boa constrictor. I also got my picture taken with a camel on Weds for hump day, and a baby cow on Thursday. Don't worry boa constrictors and Camels are not indigenous to Iowa, they were just visiting.

Most days Debbie and I didn't get in until 5pm. It didn't matter how many miles we rode during the day we could kill time. When we arrived we asked about what choices the town had for dinner. Some nights we ate with the Methodists, others with the Catholics and another night with Lutherans. It just depended what you wanted and you found the denomination that had the meal.

Sheldon, was the second night and our host had a vacant house, with air conditioning for inside camping. After dinner we noticed that it was going to rain so we felt fortunate to be inside. At 1:30 am, Peggy and I were up watching rain, lightening and winds that made us very thankful that we were inside. During this storm a tent setup a couple blocks from were we were staying was struck by a tree limb killing the young cyclist that was in the tent. A car of some friends that were visiting our group had a branch break the front passenger window. A tent that had a couple of young people from our team was picked up and tumbled across the yard. Peggy and I yelled for them to get in the house for cover. Stories of 5 inches of rain in people tents were told to us the next day. Our hardship was the power went out and we lost air conditioning for ½ hour.

The next morning we left Sheldon not knowing if the team bus was going to get out of the driveway that was cluttered with downed branches. The storm did have the positive effect of bringing relief from the hot weather. Most people started the day in jackets. We headed out of town looking for breakfast.

On RAGBRAI, it was a guarantee that each town had food for a price. Most towns were 15 miles apart some closer some a little farther. But between towns there also food stands. In the morning there were breakfast burritos and cinnamon rolls. In the afternoon there was the famous Mr. Porkchop who sold huge pork chops for \$6.00. Everyday had an ice cream stop with homemade ice cream. New to RAGBRAI were vegetarian options and smoothes. So finding something to eat was only as long as the line you wanted to stand in.

Standing in line was a big part of RAGBRAI. If this is something you don't enjoy, RAGBRAI or any big bicycle event is not for you. Standing and watching the other riders could entertain me. Costumes and unique bikes are very common. Some teams had "uniforms". Our team "The Happy Go Lucky Raccoons" didn't have any official outfit or motto. We had trouble keeping our name straight. Debbie and I did see our mascot, "Rocky" on the side of road with beautiful beads but he was dead. Another decorated road kill brought to you by Team Road Kill. They have all the fun.

By the end of the week, Debbie and I became the Bike Friday Girls (or Ladies). Kind of team within a team. We just had to answer all the questions that people had about Bike Fridays. Our favorite comments were that Bike Fridays were not very fast; this was usually made when we were passing someone. We also found some other Bike Friday and enjoyed talking to other members of our "family".

Debbie was new to the Bike Friday but she had warned that people were going to be talking to her about the bike. One afternoon we were enjoying our lemonade and a couple started chatting with us about the ride. We said we were from Tacoma and were riding our Bike Fridays and the next thing I knew she had a pad of paper and was interviewing us. The reporter was from the Des Moines paper, the sponsor of the ride. She wasn't too interested in my quest to pet and hold farm animals. Debbie and I had talked about finding a reporter to brag about our good friends Anne and Bob and their ride from the Pacific Coast to Iowa. We gave them the information on where we staying that night and they promised that they were going to track them down. Anne, being the wife of newspaperman, found the Des Moines Newspaper van in the next town and volunteered her story. She was a little surprised when they had notes from us about their trip. The next day, a little story about Anne's adventure was listed in the paper. Bob was listed us her partner. We had a good time with Anne getting the credit for Bob's trip.

Everyday a special section of the paper was devoted to the ride. On Friday, we were in a little town called Protivin. This town had a beautiful Catholic church that Peggy, Debbie and I went into visit. I left to look around and a reporter took Peggy and Debbie's picture. It was featured on the front page

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