



EBC Bikewriter

December 2002

The Evansville Bicycle Club Newsletter



HAPPY HOLIDAYS



PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Annual EBC Banquet

Just a note to let everyone know that you will be receiving a flyer with the date for the Annual EBC Banquet and an RSVP form and all pertinent information such as where, when, cost, etc. Tentative date is January 18th with a possible alternate date of January 25th.

Newsletter Survey

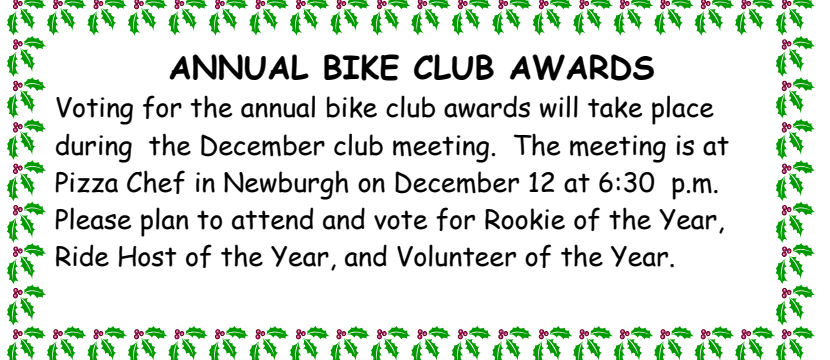
It has recently come to our attention that there is no longer a minimum number for printing the newsletter. This sparked some conversation at the club meeting on November 17th. Several people there said that they do not need/require a mailed copy of the club newsletter since they could download it from the web site. We were thinking about changing the membership form and adding a check box, which would omit the member from receiving a newsletter. Give us some feedback as to your opinion.



WELCOME

New members for November

Thys Bax Brian Esche



ANNUAL BIKE CLUB AWARDS

Voting for the annual bike club awards will take place during the December club meeting. The meeting is at Pizza Chef in Newburgh on December 12 at 6:30 p.m. Please plan to attend and vote for Rookie of the Year, Ride Host of the Year, and Volunteer of the Year.

An Adventure of a Life Time - Discover la Sologne Self Guided Bicycle Tour

By Darlene Wefel

After months of planning and anticipation, Nance & Wayne Fiester, and Darlene & Bob Wefel began a vacation that included a cycling tour of part of the Lore Valley in France. September 30, 2002 was the first day of a cycling trip that four EBC members will remember for a lifetime.

Our tour included small family owned hotels, dinner, breakfast, luggage transportation, and maps. We opted to rent bikes instead of taking our bikes for the five-day tour. We started the first day of the tour by catching an early morning flight from London, England to Paris, France where we caught a train into Paris, then transferred to the Metro Subway, and transferred to the local train for a 2 ½ hour train ride to the Blois the starting point of our tour. This was the most difficult part of the entire trip. It was a learning experience for all of us.

After departing the train station, we immediately looked for someone to give us directions to the hotel, which was a challenge because we spoke very little French. Wayne asked a policeman for directions, and he gave us directions in English to our hotel, which was within walking distance. Our hotel, Anne de Bretagne, was a charming three-story stucco building with shutters and a winding staircase up to the third floor where our rooms were located. The hotel was adjacent to a beautiful park, and within two blocks of the Chateau Royal du Val de Loire, the residence for the Kings and Queens of France for more than four centuries. The hostess spoke English fluently which we found was a great asset to us. We checked into the hotel then checked out the bikes that had been delivered to the hotel for us. The bikes were hybrid 21 speed bikes, with one pannier, hand pump, repair kit, and a huge map holder mounted to the handlebars. We quickly freshened up and went exploring the city of Blois on foot. First stop, the local pub for a cold beer then off to the center of the village and the local shops. Our dinner reservations that evening were at the L'Orangerie, the finest restaurant in Blois. Our dinner consisted of a seven-course meal that lasted 2 ½ hours. The meal was the most elegant and delicious food that I've ever had.

Day two - After the typical European breakfast of hard rolls, butter, jam, and coffee, we exchanged our original map and directions, which were in French for the English version. We deposited our luggage at the hotel desk, retrieved our bikes, made last minute adjustments, and we were on our way to a great adventure—Blois to Mont Pres Chambord 38K. The sky was a clear bright blue and the temperature was about 60 degrees, which was perfect. We quickly discovered that our perception of directions were different from theirs. We became lost in Blois and had a scenic tour of the city. After stopping several Frenchmen (everyone was friendly and tried to assist), an hour of wandering the narrow twisted streets, and our attempt to communicate where we needed to go, we finally were given directions we could understand in broken English/French for our way out of Blois. Several times throughout the day, we either failed to make a turn, or made a wrong turn even though our maps were good. We found alternate routes that intersected with the correct route. The route took us to the Chateau de Chambord, which is the most fascinating chateau in the Loire valley. It was a hunting lodge for royalty constructed between 1519 and 1545. The Chateau has 440 rooms 365 chimneys, and 84 stairways. To say that the chateau was breathtaking would be an understatement. Along the way to the hotel, we passed several vineyards, and we stopped at a family owned vineyard hoping to do some wine sampling, but the owners were in the fields harvesting the grape crop. We arrived at our hotel for the evening, Hotel Saint Florent in Mont Pres Chambord, where our luggage awaited us. The owners did not speak English, but Nance had been practicing her French and became our interpreter. Our hostess gave Wayne and I directions to the local winery, and we went exploring. We found the winery where we sampled several types of their wine, and we purchased several bottles. We packed them in our panniers and headed for the local

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grocery store where we purchased some snacks for the next day's lunch. Dinner that evening was at the hotel's restaurant. We did not think that any meal could be better than the first night's. We were pleasantly surprised. It was not as elegant, but it was just a wonderful. We had a six-course meal, which took us two hours to eat. Life is good!!

Day 3 - Mont Pres Chambord to Contres 33K Again, we woke to perfect riding conditions and the usual European breakfast. We were on our way. The route today took us through the countryside where we seemed to have gone back in time. The roads were narrow well maintained. We passed through several small villages, past wine vineyards, and many farms. We stopped several times along the way for photo opportunities and at a winery for sampling and purchasing wine for our lunch. One of the largest towns we went through was Cheverny. We went to the center of the village where we found a bakery, and grocery. We purchased several cheeses, fresh grapes, more wine, and a fresh loaf of French bread for lunch. We passed several small chateaus along the way to Contres, which was only a few miles away. We were greeted upon our arrival by our host/chef for the evening. He made us feel very welcome and asked us to only speak English to him. He was practicing his English for his upcoming trip to Florida. We had our picnic lunch (wine, cheese, fresh fruit, and bread) on the terrace before we went exploring and shopping in the town while waiting for our luggage to arrive. That evening, we had the most enjoyable dinner of the entire trip. The food was excellent, but the service and friendliness of the owners made the evening fun and wonderful. Again, dinner was a seven-course meal, which lasted more than two hours.

Day 4 - Contres to Blois 34K That morning, we woke to overcast skies. Breakfast was an American style continental breakfast. We headed out for Blois with the hopes of getting there before it rained. We rode through the beautiful countryside for most of the route. The route this day was more direct, and the closer we came to Blois the more traffic we encountered. With about an hour remaining in our ride, it began to rain. After a while, the skies opened up and the rain poured down. By the time we arrived in Blois, the rain turned to a drizzle. We checked into the at Hotel Anne de Bretagne about two hours early. We quickly showered and changed clothes then off we went to Chateau Royal for a self-guided tour. We spent the next two hours exploring the Chateau and learning about its history. Nance and I spent the next couple of hours walking through the local shops and purchasing gifts to take home with us. While we were shopping, the guys purchased train tickets and hired a cab which would take us to the train station in Tours where we would board the bullet train for a non-stop trip to the airport in Paris. That evening, we took a long walk to the restaurant in Blois where we spent the next two hours feasting on a six-course meal. We strolled through the streets of Blois on the way back to our hotel talking about what a fantastic trip this had been.

Day 5 - We had breakfast at the hotel, then our cab picked us up for a pleasant two-hour drive to Tours. The bullet train to Paris was fantastic. The ride was very smooth and quiet. We were traveling so fast that the telephone poles were a blur as they whizzed by our windows. We asked the conductor how fast were traveling. He took out a stopwatch and timed how long it was between telephone poles, did a little math calculation, and told us that we were traveling at 186 mph.

To sum up our trip, I must say it was fantastic; almost everyone seemed genuinely friendly and gracious. Everyone greeted us with a friendly Bonjour. Unlike Americans, the French make the evening dining experience very seriously and make every meal a memorable experience. Nance said, "*The fact that no one spoke English (or very little) gave us a real feel for the country and the people. We never had a problem communicating! We spoke a little French and we were happy we were able to use it. The country was beau-*

A September Minnesota Meander

By Mac Jackson

On Friday the 13th of September 2002, I drove my bicycle laden station wagon north to Indianapolis, IN to meet three other cyclists for the drive to St. Paul, MN the next day. Saturday morning, Chuck, Mark, Jim and I loaded Chuck's van for the drive North toward Minnesota. We made it as far as Black River Falls before we stopped to camp for the night. Sunday morning we were only about 165 miles from our destination, which was Leon's house in St. Paul. We arrived late morning, but Leon was still at work. After some lunch, we returned to Leon's house to find him waiting for us with his van already loaded for the trip to Baxter, MN, which is just west of Brainerd, MN. Approximately four hours later, we were at our Beginning and End campground. We set up our tents and checked our bikes in anticipation of Monday, the first day of our loop ride. After dinner in Brainerd, we made a campfire and looked at the maps provided by Leon, which he made using DeLorme map software.

Monday morning, we packed all our gear, (tent, sleeping bag, sleep pad, panniers and handlebar bag) on the bikes and rode up the hill to State Route 210 and West to Pillager for breakfast. The day was cool (60F) but sunny with a South breeze to help us roll through the beautiful countryside around the Crow Wing River Valley. Our destination for the evening was Nimrod, MN approx. 60 miles up the road. As we pulled into Nimrod (Pop. 75), we stopped at the grocery store to get a snack and check on dinner plans. Three of us (Chuck, Leon and I) had been here back in Sept. 1985 when a group of us (5) rode from International Falls to St. Paul. We rode to the primitive campground (Frames Landing) used primarily by canoeists and fishermen. Pit toilets and river bathing in the Crow Wing River (55F), which was refreshing as we swatted at the mosquitoes. Next was a walk or a ride back into Nimrod, (approx. $\frac{3}{4}$ mile), for dinner. Back in the campground, we had a campfire (which seems to be a ritual on our Sept. trips) and discussed the next day's ride.

Tuesday morning, we went into Nimrod for breakfast and up the road for lunch in Park Rapids. As we rode along, there were many lakes and groves of trees scattered among the farms and rural homesteads to make for a very pleasant ride. As we exited the restaurant, Mark was heard to exclaim, "Oh No!" His front tire was flat. After the tire repair, it was north along US71, a scenic road. The terrain was becoming more rolling and wooded. As we entered the south entrance to Itasca State Park, trees of all sizes and species surrounded us. We stopped at one of the campground check-in kiosks and secured a site, which overlooked the lake. The site was only about 100 yards from the bathhouse. After erecting the tents and cleaning up, we mounted our lights for the ride south to the park Lodge for dinner, a trip of approx. $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. It was an adventuresome ride back to the campsite on the bike path through the woods then another campfire and discussion of the next day's destination.

Wednesday morning as we went north in the park, we stopped at the source of the Mississippi River as it flowed out of Lake Itasca. After pictures and exclamations, we rode past the north entrance of the park to a small café for breakfast. The morning was cool and overcast with occasional mist. Some of the day's roads had just been blacktopped and were as smooth as you could wish for. There were more hills today and, with the fully loaded bikes, it was slow going over some. Three of us (Jim, Mark and I) were on standard bikes and Chuck and Leon were on recumbent bikes. We pulled into Bemidji in early afternoon. After a nice lunch at a deli, we visited the lakefront to see Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox and have pictures taken. We asked directions to a supermarket for supplies for supper at the campground in Lake Bemidji State Park. After showers, supper and a campfire, we turned in and had been in our tents for about half an hour when the rains came. It rained off and on all night long.

Thursday morning, the rain let up a little so we could pack and get on the bike path on the east side of Lake Bemidji. As we started south along the lake, it started to rain. As we entered Bemidji, we continued on south to a truck stop (recommended by a local) for breakfast. As we rolled into the truck stop, Chuck had a flat on his front tire.

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Full of breakfast, we headed south toward Walker, our destination for the evening. As the day progressed, the sun came out and warmed us so we made good time. We arrived in Walker in time for a late lunch, after which we went to the local bike shop to get some spare tubes and a tire, and to find out about our intended campground for the evening. As we rode south from Walker to the road of our intended campground, we decided to continue on to Hackensack for the evening. We found the Police Chief and received permission to pitch our tents in the City Park on the shore of Birch Lake. I felt sponginess in my rear tire and discovered a snake bite leak. The City Park had no showers so I opted for a Motel this evening. No campfire this evening just good food and rest.

Friday morning, we rode out of Hackensack on the Paul Bunyan Trail (which was an asphalt paved abandoned rail grade approx. eight-feet wide. The grades were nice and gradual making for some great riding. We had lunch in Pine River and then back on the Trail and points south. When we came to Niswaga, we were faced with a decision of staying on the Trail or going around the west side of Gull Lake, which is a scenic roadway (and more miles) that puts us closer to Baxter when we get back to SR210 and our vehicles. We took the scenic way with its hills, twists and lakes. We arrived back at the vehicles, changed clothes, and packed the gear and bicycles for the drive back to St. Paul and Leon's house. We stopped in Clearwater and had supper and fueled the vehicles. At Leon's, we all showered and found spots to sleep before the drive back to Indianapolis on Saturday.

It was a very enjoyable trip with good friends, great scenery and 292 miles of self-contained bicycle touring. We try to take a week-long trip each September to a new or favorite part of the country. Past trips have been The Natchez Trace, S.E. Missouri, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Ohio, near Lake Erie and one trip using Adventure Cycling maps of the Great River Road from Hannibal, MO to near Dyersville, IA. Not all of the people in this group (which numbers about ten) can go every year so the size can range from two to seven. It makes for an interesting and eclectic experience. Happy cycling.

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FOR SALE - NEW ITEMS

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Mavic Ksyrium SSC SL Road Wheels
Mail Order Price - \$800 Sell for \$650
Contact Randy Silke at 437-9122 ;
rsilke@sigecom.net

"There is nothing, absolutely nothing, quite so worthwhile as simply messing about on bicycles."

—Tom Kunich

"Bicycling is the nearest approximation that I know to the flight of birds. The airplane just carries a man on its back like an obedient Pegasus; it gives him no wings of his own." —Louis J. Halle, Jr.,
Spring in Washington

The Evansville Bicycle Club, Inc.

Membership Application 2002

Name _____ _____ _____	Age _____ _____ _____	Release of Liability Evansville Bicycle Club, Inc. is organized for sole purpose of providing it's members with notification of central meeting points and times. Members freely elect to ride together as a group, following a route of choice. In signing this form for myself and/or my family members I understand and agree to absolve EBC, Inc. and it's organizers or sponsors for all blame for any injury misadventure, harm loss or inconvenience suffered as a result of participation in any ride or activity associated with or sponsored by the EBC, Inc. I further understand that I, as an individual am responsible to abide by all traffic laws and regulations governing bicycling and take full responsibility for my actions. Make Checks payable to: Evansville Bicycle Club, Inc. Mail to: Randy Silke 516 Sandalwood Dr. Evansville, IN 47715
Address _____	Individual \$12	
City _____ State _____	Family \$20 +	
Zip _____ Phone _____	\$1/child	
E-mail Address _____		
Signature _____		

President	Darlene Wefel (490-0686)	Membership	Randy Silke (437-9122)
VP	Dave Ashworth (426-2489)	Statistician	Rusty Yeager (402-1787)
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EBC Bikewriter

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