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TWO SECTIONS

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Nancy Ellerston, of Battleground, stands with her bike in front of the Methodist Church in West Union. She and her schoolmates, and some of her teachers biked their way through West Union on July 29, 1976.



When the photographer called for a picture these cyclists responded. The ten youngsters are cycling across the nation and when shown here, they had just come from Oxford, Ohio. They eagerly awaited the showers at the High School.

Bicyclers Camp at Methodist Church

by Bill Stroud

Ten high school students, four teachers and two young children of two of the teachers passed through West Union July 29, already on the last part of a trip which began on June 14, which carried them across the rockies and over the plains, through

the Ozarks into the American Heartland and into the hills of West Virginia on their way to Washington, D.C. The group is from Battleground, Washington, near Vancouver. Most live in or near Battleground and attend school there.

The experience over the last 46 days

has been a great one for the youths. They had stops prearranged for them until they reached Kansas, and then the prearrangements stopped. From then on the nightly accommodations were the responsibility of Judy Muzzy who is a kindergarten teacher in Battleground, and is also the truck driver, and "church finder". Judy and her two boys Chris 5, and Mark 3 drive a little ahead of the riders. As she did here in West Union, she locates a church or a school to stay in for the night. In West Union, she found the Methodist Church and got in touch with Rev. Perry Stewart, who agreed to lend the adventurers the kitchen, and the floor to spread out their sleeping bags. After a shopping trip, the cyclists headed to the high school where Rev. Stewart had arranged with the county schools for the cyclists to take showers. After showers they returned to the church for an early supper and the sack.

Riding across the United States during one's summer vacation means getting up early, and so it is necessary to get to bed early. But there is also plenty of time for learning and growing, and laughter.

Syd Muzzy is the leader of the group and he is the chairman of the Department of Traffic Safety Education at Battleground and his wife Ann is a Librarian in Vancouver. Syd said the group has been enthusiastic ever since they left, and although there is a little groaning when he announces the number of miles left for the day, they soon all get into the act and little time is lost.

Somewhere in Wyoming the cyclists

got into bad drinking water, and spent three days waiting for two of the youngsters to get out of the hospital, but there has been no other delay and they have all kept their health.

One of the cyclists, Carl Garrison, a senior at Battleground High, said the trip was a lot of fun, and he had met a lot of people and he had done a lot of growing up. At Battleground Carl plans to run track and hopes to go to the University of Washington after graduation where his older brother had been a Collegiate runner. Carl says he wants to go into Math or some related field, and wants to be in ROTC.

The bike trip cost him \$900 or so and he raised the money himself at his part time jobs. He is a busboy in a restaurant in Battleground. He told of the rest with pride as he noted it would seat 300 and was structured of large logs.

Carl also caddies at a golf course and hunts and fishes with he has time. We asked Carl what he looked forward to most in D.C. and he said without hesitation "The Lincoln Memorial--that's the main thing." Syd Muzzy, listening in the background, said "That's funny, we really never discussed it but I, too, want to see the Lincoln Memorial before anything else." Another student, Nancy Ellerston, an 11th grader, had been to Washington before, but she too wanted to see the White House and the Lincoln Memorial.

Nancy really liked the trip so far, and when asked what her favorite place was she replied, Cincinnati. She

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liked the ball game, which Syd had also been looking forward to, he had been a Cincinnati fan since he was small.

Nancy and Tani Connor were the only two high school girls with the group, and got a lot of teasing from the boys. Got shot with water guns at a rest stop just before they got to West Union, but the water was cool, and the girls really didn't seem to mind the attention.

These young people who spent one night in West Union liked the town, and felt it was somewhat like home. Battleground has a permanent population of about 1500, but a very large High School. And it is in a wooded area, although most of the trees in Washington are evergreen.

These young people cycling across America in search of the Lincoln Memorial, exemplify the freedom which Lincoln dreamed of. The tone of the trip was set by Syd who declared Lincoln to be his hero, a man about whom he had read everything that he could get ahold of. Their trip ends soon and they get on their school bus, and will ride across the hills and plains and mountains which had resisted every muscle of their bodies such a short time before. And yet that, too, will get them another view of America. The work they put into it, both before and during the trip have made it worthwhile, and like pioneers, when they return home to see what change has done for their homes, they will have found that they have grown.

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