

BG bike riders reach final goal; ready trip home

Battle Ground's long distance bicycle riders are in Washington, D.C., this week, getting VIP treatment from the nation's leaders.

The 13 riders pedaled up to the Lincoln Memorial, their ultimate goal, after having ridden 3,600 miles from the parking lot at Battle Ground High School. They left June 14.

Syd Muzzy, Battle Ground High driving instructor and one of three adults making the ride, said in a telephone interview Wednesday that the entire group arrived in the nation's capital intact. "We are getting a bit homesick," he admitted. "We are anxious to return home."

Muzzy said the riders were greeted Monday by Rep. Mike McCormack, D-Wash., who gave them a special tour of the Capitol. They have also visited the State Department, FBI, Pentagon and George Washington's home at Mt. Vernon.

Muzzy said the group will be given a special tour of the White House Saturday morning. He was uncertain whether President Ford would be present.

The return trip will begin Saturday afternoon, Muzzy said. The group will go by truck to Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. There Muzzy will pick up a school bus for the Seattle School District. The riders will return to Battle Ground in this bus.

Muzzy said the most dangerous part of the trip was the last leg, riding over the Appalachian Mountains. "The road was full of coal trucks, and they wouldn't give us room," he explained. "They really had us on edge."

He added that some of riders, most of them students at Battle Ground High, have already taken their bikes apart and stowed them in a trailer for the return trip. Others, however, are continuing to pedal around Washington, D.C.

He said they expect to arrive in Battle Ground on Saturday, Aug. 14, two months to the day after they left.