

2001 Annual report

to the membership October 16, 2001



Columbus Outdoor Pursuits
PO box 14384
Columbus Ohio 43214
Tel: 614 447 1006
Fax: 614 262 1001
office@outdoor-pursuits.org
www.outdoor-pursuits.org

Presidents Message

It's been a good year. We have rounded the bend, putting behind our historic affiliation with AYH. We have laid the groundwork for a whole new future.

When I assumed the position of club President two years ago, I proclaimed to any and all who would listen that we had nothing but the future to look forward to. Indeed

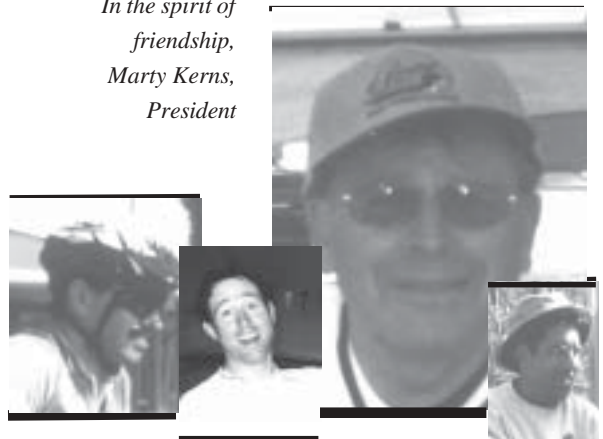
that has been more true than I would have ever dreamed. We have reviewed our risk management policies, ascertaining that we are offering the safest events possible in a world full of risks. We have completed a financial review and implemented a financial policy that will assure the continued financial viability of the club through good years and bad. We have continued our legacy of contributions to bicycling development, including contributions to the Ohio to Erie Trail and a pledge to the Johnstown to Newark trail. We have made a donation to the Highlands Nature Sanctuary to assure water access for boaters. We have enhanced the boating program with the addition of sea kayaks and safety gear. We have a new Bicycling Chair, a new Hiking Chair, and a new Caving Chair. We have many new volunteers and are still slowing learning to recognize their efforts in meaningful ways. We have implemented an annual recognition program which recognizes volunteers with life memberships, gift certificates, and other appropriate gifts. We have offered leadership classes more frequently than ever before, training more potential trip leaders than ever before. We will make available, to select club members, scholarships to nationally recognized outdoor programs so that they can partake of activity-specific training outside of the Central Ohio area and return with the know-how to enhance our programs and educational offerings. We have offered up to membership vote changes to the club constitution that the Board believes will make us more efficient and less burdensome.



I can't believe my two years as President are now history. I have chosen to take a few years off from the Board. Like many, the demands of my job have been exceptionally heavy during the last two years. And now, I am exhausted..... happily exhausted. I mention this not because I am prone to whining. But rather, I made a startling self-revelation that I want to share with you and ask you to give some thought to. As things became increasingly hectic, there was always a moment or two where I wished I hadn't made the commitments to COP that I had... as a GOBA volunteer, as a TOSRV volunteer, as a trip leader... as club president. But then, when things got REALLY hectic, I was really glad that I had made the commitment to volunteer! Almost as if a momentary miraculous change of perception came upon me, I realized how grateful I was to this club for the opportunity to make new friends, to experience new challenges, to give back to others as others before me had given of themselves to create the opportunities we have today. If I stayed chained to a desk and not volunteered, I would have missed all this. My volunteer involvement has been the greatest stress relief I could have ever wished for.

I'd like to leave you with one final thought. There isn't much real risk when you sit at your computer or on your sofa in front of your TV for hours everyday... nor is there much satisfaction nor reward. Life will always be what you make of it. The club exists so that, if you are inclined to enjoy physical outdoor activities, you can experience the enjoyment of that chosen challenge. For all the ups and downs this club has endured, we continue to make it happen!

*In the spirit of
friendship,
Marty Kerns,
President*



Backpacking Activities

A change for the backpacking activity this year was to add a co-leader, Pete Rogers. We shared a half of a vote on the board. Pete has since moved on to lead the Hiking activity. COP sponsored both myself (Kim Hiser) and David Lattanick for the Leave No Trace (LNT) Trainer course offered at the ICOR meetings last fall. David and I are now certified LNT instructors. Many thanks to COP for promoting the LNT principles. The beginning Backpacking school was filled be-



yond capacity again this year. Thanks go to Steve Breece and his assistants for teaching another great class! Ann Gerckens taught an Intermediate Backpacking class this year and trained several new trip leaders. Congratulations to our new trip leaders, Steve Crimm, Don Story, Laurie & Eric Batterton, and Gwen Uetrech.

For many unfortunate reasons several of the trips offered this year had to be cancelled including the Trail Days outing at Scioto Trails. Thanks to Don Story for organizing the event despite the horrible weather. Ann Gerckens led a trip to the PCT to Southern California. Ann Gerckens along with John Lunn, Tom Worsley, Kevin and Chris Oldaker worked with New Albany Schools to offer two backpacking sessions in the summer.

Kim Hiser, Activity Leader

Pete Rogers, Co-Leader

Boating

Thanks to the efforts of our volunteer trip leaders, school directors and other helpers, we were able to continue boating program offerings in line with Columbus Outdoor Pursuits mission of providing safe, sea kayak rentals began to be popular. Boating revenue was stable. Leader training availability increased. Equipment investment continued.

General Items

Local functions were well attended. Winter pool sessions were held at



the Greenhouse Aquatic Center. Despite some access and acoustic issues, this pool was a good site for practice and schools. Pool session fees stayed at \$5 for members and \$7 for non-members. The Alum Creek Beach sessions continued to be popular. It remains to be seen whether my concept of rotating the session day weekly was popular. The Wednesday Night Paddle sessions were increasingly popular. Several WNP had two dozen attendees. The large numbers of paddlers attending WNP may change the way we operate these trips. We had some late-season incursions with Columbus waterway rangers when paddlers were out after dark. It is hopeful that recommendations I made to Columbus waterway legislation for allowing paddling until 11 p.m. will be codified. Failing codification, we will need to apply for permits to allow early and late season WNP functions to continue after dark. We may explore offering "Sunrise Sunday" or similar paddles to spread out WNP participant load and timeframe pressures and make local paddling available to members who can't make evening sessions.



Mark Steinmetz still maintains the boating library and has been adding video and text titles. Bill Minot ran this year's COP whitewater filmfest in March which was well attended.

Boating Classes

This year's classes were well attended. Canoe I attendance was up, which is attributable to Jon Blake's capable instruction and better advance notice. Kayak I class rosters were full. Larry Krall and Dan Downes led these classes. Sharon Hsu's Kayak II attendance was slightly lower than usual. Her Kayak III was cancelled as a formal class and turned into a class III trip due to low enrollment.

Mark Steinmetz and Jeff Gentry each ran an Eskimo roll class at the Greenhouse pool. They put together a nice instructional format and had full rosters. Eileen Troutman's Canoe II was well attended. We put together an introductory sea kayak class and 10 students.





Trips

A variety of trips was offered. Guy Sheaffer ran Red, White and Boom fundraiser with a net of attendance than in 2000. Jon Blake ran the Mad often. Jeff Haven hosted a couple bike/paddle trips on the Shenandoah. Several leaders ran trips on the Upper New. Eric Gehres and Mark Steinmetz linked up to run the Cheat Dry Fork, Little Sandy and Big Sandy. Dave Seslar continued to lead intermediate whitewater development trips as well as the Pennsylvania icebreaker. We had trips on Mill Creek, the Kokosing River, the Olentangy, Rocky Fork/Paint Creek and the Big Darby. Lower New and Lower Youghigheny trips were held with both hard boats and inflatables.

At least one Upper New trip was cancelled due to low interest. A couple raft trips ran with fewer than expected numbers. Our trips are affected greatly by people who decide to cancel or go on a trip at the last minute. Floods in West Virginia this summer led to cancelling FWWWE due to high water.

Leader Training

Thanks to Ann Gerckens and Kim Sacksteder, we had a half dozen folks attend COP leader training and American Red Cross standard first aid and adult CPR classes. We also sent nine COP boaters to the weekend swiftwater rescue training offered by ODNR. Barbie Demmy and Chris Stover along with Ann Gerckens, offered raft leader training and ran rafting trips as well

Budget/Equipment/Projects

The 2000 revenue produced a whopping \$8,387 net. Given the ups and downs in expenditures, this gave the boating program a \$4,867 positive balance over the last 25 years. 2001 figures aren't available yet but it looks like a break-even year. This includes a large expenditure for sea kayaks and related accessories and a \$1,000 loss for the cancelled FWWWE. Some of the 2001 expenditure for sea kay-

aks will be rolled over into 2002 for accounting purposes.

2002 purchases will include tandem canoes to re-

place our aging Blue Hole whitewater fleet and some needed kayak accessories. We may purchase two sea kayaks to increase the availability of solo boats for classes and rentals.

The Yough Stop roof will need to be replaced in the near future. Paul McPherson will be investigating this. Kevin Gagnon built several new canoe racks at Tom Pace's. Kevin also organized the construction of a kayak storage facility at Tony Sasson's. The facility is very nice. We owe Tony, Kevin and the helpers thanks for this! Jon Blake mentioned the possibility of building a small shed attached to his garage for storing newly purchased plastic canoes. Paul McPherson donated a camcorder. The inflatables will need some work before the 2002 season begins. Barbie Demmy is in charge of this.

Special Events/Community Service

Several boating instructors helped a Boy Scout troop prepare for a sea kayak trip last May with wet exit and general instruction. Jeff Haven led two kayak intro sessions for school age children at an aquatics camp at the Dublin recreation center pool this summer. Each fall, an outdoor roundup is held at Battelle-Darby Creek Metro Park. Jim Shaffer has organized a kayak demonstration in the past but last fall's event was cancelled due to high water. Eileen Troutman volunteered to teach canoeing to Ohio Turkey Federation members at their women's outdoor retreat.

Given the depth and breadth of boating experience in Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, we have the capacity to provide education and training to various groups. A challenge exists in that it is sometimes difficult to find enough helpers with schools and other functions. The occasional requests for volunteer help from outside agencies often go unmet because of a lack of volunteers. My recent stint on the Columbus Waterways Advisory Council has led to increased requests for assistance.

Rentals

Rental rates continue to be \$10 for whitewater kayaks, duckies, raft seats and aluminum canoes. New rates will be set for plastic



tandem canoes when they are purchased. Sea kayak rental rates are \$25 per day, \$45 per weekend and \$15 for WNP. Kayak rentals are available by contacting Sharon Hsu and Dave Seslar. All other rentals contact John Lane. Right of rental refusal is retained if paddling skills are questionable or a safety risk is perceived.

Goals

2002 goals for the boating program include:

- Maintain positive budget
- Increase number of winter pool sessions (through March)
- Identify and train potential leaders
- Invest in equipment and leader training
 - Increase or at least maintain trip diversity
 - Explore WNP alternatives/strategies
 - Increase sea kayak school/trip offerings
- Add additional pool school offerings (1 KI and 1 roll)
- Continued involvement of boating council in decision-making

John Lane, Boating Activity Leader

Bicycling

The bicycling group carried a lot of momentum into 2001 from years of hard work and experience in organizing and leading the traditional tours and weekly rides we have come to enjoy over the years. These include the SPOT budget tour organized by Dick Seebode, Ride the Darby by Dave Brokaw, Tour of the Hocking Hills by Jon Schaer and many other tours and special rides. Several COP leaders rallied to fill in for a scheduled organizer who was unable to lead the tour as planned. These pinch hitters included Kathy Walaszek, Tim Faigley, Ron Doran, Ric Miller and Jim Scowden and others whose work is equally appreciated.

Our traditional weekly rides continued pretty much as usual, with the Dutch Kitchen ride meeting in both Dublin and Hilliard, the Wednesday morning group

enjoying regular attendance and the Hoover Dam and New Albany rides picking up speed among the experienced crowd who came most every Tuesday and Thursday nights. Many other weekly rides had regular attendance and committed leaders.

Helping keep the momentum going were Eve Holland and Barb Renick, who cajoled many of us into leading tours and weekly rides and were instrumental in organizing several tours themselves, including the Columbus Fall Challenge. They also unofficially represented bicycling on the club's board of directors for most of this year.

The 2001 season was our second in a row without a designated leader following the resignation of Gail Falkenburg, whose hard work and enthusiasm for bicycling over more than a decade helped build the program to its current depth and scope. In August, I decided to take on the challenge of leading the Bicycling Activity, the largest in COP's menu of outdoor pursuits. I am giving myself a term limit of two years, with the hope that someone else will step forward by summer 2003.

As we gear up for the coming season, several of us are working toward bringing back some of the important activities that we did very well a few years ago. These include providing consistent and well trained leadership for new riders and diligent record keeping, including collection of nonmember fees at weekly rides. We also are discussing a vigorous advocacy effort and ways to expand and improve our safety education. One more key area under discussion is outreach to underrepresented groups, including youth, families and young adults.

The bicycling program in 2001 continued to accommodate cyclists of many speeds and styles. With the help of everyone in the club, we hope to grow our program for the benefit of all who want to enjoy this mode of transportation and recreation.

Kathy Hoke, Bicycling Activity Leader





Climbing Program:

The climbing program has had a successful year. Attendance at the wall sessions has been steadily improving. A good group of locals has taken a strong interest in the wall and is helping to manage the weekly sessions.

Dennison University students also continue to provide a steady stream of interested participants. Recently, a new member has asked to establish a children's climbing team in association with COP. We look forward to an even stronger year as we continue to expand and improve the climbing facility and program.



Tom Lester

First Aid Training

Red Cross First Aid

Kim Sacksteder went through American Red Cross Instructor Training, then ran a standard first aid class and cpr training. The following members took the class:

Red Cross CPR only: John Markiel, Sharon Hsu, Maera Flynn

Red Cross CPR and First Aid: Kevin Gagnon, Louis Fernando Caro, Susan Brauning, Mark Steinmetz

Wilderness First Aid 2001

Camp Mary Orton provided facilities for the February, 2001 weekend class. A staff person was available to assist with set up and with the portable heaters. Portable heaters were donated by a generous benefactor in return for our letting some boy scout leaders into the class. 2 portajohns had to be rented.

2 SOLO instructors flew in from New Hampshire and one from Cleveland to conduct training.

19 COP members were among the 40+ students enrolled, several of whom were Boy Scout leaders. Despite the very cold temperatures (in the low teens), every student made it through both days of training. The training included not only classroom lecture, but mock scenarios outside.

The feedback from the students was very positive and future classes are recommended. COP members who took Wilderness First Aid: Craig Hartman, Jen Marie Raven, Katie Dick, Chris Stover, Kevin Hartman, John Markiel,

David Mitchell, Paul McPherson, Jane Leiby, Sharon Hsu, Joe Griffith, Jeff Greator, Colleen Finlay, Doug Eldridge, Alan K Edmonds, Barbara Benutto, John Barca, Roy & Kathleen Wagner.

WFA 2002 is scheduled for February 9 & 10th. We will be using Camp Ken Jockety in return for helping put up their tents in April.

Jennifer M. Raven

Wilderness First Responder

After 5 years of lobbying the folks at SOLO, we were pleased to offer the very first Wilderness First Responder class to be held over a series of weekends. By using Friday nights and making two of the weekends long ones (Monday too), we managed to complete the 80 hours of instruction over 3 weekends. Steve Kelso gets the award for the student most traveled. He came from his home in Chicago for all three weekends.

Camp Mary Orton provided the facilities which included 2 large, poorly heated indoor rooms for classroom instruction and practice, plus the run of the camp for outdoor scenarios. The weather cooperated by constantly changing so we were able to practice under many conditions. Both SOLO and COP were pleased with the results of the weekend format and we expect to run the class again in a few years.

COP members who took the Wilderness First Responder class: Ann Gerckens, Don Story, Levent Mehmetli, Dave Seslar, Dylan Crawford, Dan Downes, Steve Kelso, Barbie Demmy, Ashley Hart, Jim Maurer, Matt Schillig, Ali & Josh Laughbaum. There were also 4 non-members in the class.

Don Story was the organizer of this class with help from Kim Sacksteder and myself

Ann Gerckens

COBA

From June 16th through the 23rd, the route through southeastern Ohio, while not an exact repeat of the '97 route, did come through with the expected beautiful scenery, kind hospitality, long lines for food and toilets, changeability in weather, road rash and dehydration, lively entertainment, and hills, hills, hills and more hills! Overnight host towns were Gallipolis, Wellston, Nelsonville, Marietta (2 night), New Lexington, and McArthur.

Registrations (after accounting for cancellations) numbered 2,988 at the start of the week. On the route on Sunday the 17th, the counters counted 2,561 riders leaving Gallipolis; and on Saturday, there were 2,238 counted leaving McArthur.

The weather for the first half of the week was very hot, with daytime highs in the 80's and 90's, clear blue skies, but humidity that was tolerable. Nights were comfortable for sleeping. Midweek was punctuated by increasing humidity and thunderstorms that built into a crescendo on Thursday. Unbelievably, we missed the worst of the storms (Marietta





had damaging hail and 45 mph winds just after we left), but with the threat of severe weather late on Thursday, we called for moving the participants to shelters. The riders who were already in the camp in New Lexington moved into the coliseum. The 300 or so riders who were still out on the route were "caught" by our volunteers at the PM Snack stop at Crooksville High School, where we enjoyed the local hospitality much longer than expected! Then, with a break in the weather and an expected 2-hour window of time before the next wave, we shepherded the riders into a convoy for the final 10 miles into camp. With a law enforcement cruiser at the front and one at the back of the convoy, the riders made it safely into camp in the most orderly fashion ever observed on GOBA. Friday and Saturday saw low humidity, highs around 80 and lows in the 50's.

Highlights of the week included: the bicycle parade in Gallipolis led by Hope Taft, Ohio's First Lady, on a bicycle, and Bob and Jewell Evans; opening ceremonies with a powerful speech by Ohio Governor Bob Taft; seeing Venus in the noon-day sky in Oak Hill; the whole town turning out for the food stop in Shawnee; the rousing Song Contest ("I found my thrilllllll....on a GOBA downhilllllll" - to the tune of "Blueberry Hill"); the unusual shuttle into town in Nelsonville...by scenic railway; the CHALLENGING hill at Sharpsburg; the 6:00 am sternwheeler ride up the Muskingum River (a good time to catch a few ZZZZZZs); the inspiring bike races in Gallipolis and McArthur; square dancing; the high density of tie-dye t-shirts; the outstanding food, canoeing, horse-back riding, games and other activities at Bob Evans Farm; the Hocking



College security patrols on bicycle; air-conditioned bathrooms at Warren Fire Department; the abiding hospitality of McArthur; and many other poignant memories.



The Wednesday optional loops out of Marietta offered 74 miles and 95 miles, not a bit of which was flat. Both routes returned to town via SR 26, designated as an official Covered Bridge

Scenic Route. Reportedly, about 200 riders rode this day. A lunch stop was organized on the short route, food was available in Woodsfield eateries on the long route, and a water/banana stop with Century Award buttons was provided on the homecoming stretch. The Wednesday optional field trips were operated by Ohio Travel Treasures and included one bus (55) for a combined tour of Fenton Glass and Blennerhassett Island and another bus-full for a day of white-water rafting in West Virginia.

Interesting data:

This year's participants came to Ohio from 43 states, plus Washington, DC, Canada, and the Virgin Islands.

Age Breakdown	2001	2000
0 - 15	15%	18%
16 - 30	10%	10%
31 - 50	40%	41%
51 - 70	33%	30%
71 +	2%	1%

The oldest registrant, a male rider from Grand Rapids, Michigan, is 82 years old.

Other interesting data

	2001	2000
Male riders	62%	59%
Female riders	38%	41%
First-time GOBA riders	36%	38%
Veterans of 10+ years	9%	3.5%

Last, but not least, I want to thank all staff and volunteers for making my life worth living this past week. Everyone worked very hard so that others could play, and they always did so with a big smile.

*Julie Mills, GOBA
Director*



Hiking

The hiking season for 2000-2001 produced 28 trips with a total of 342 participants. We had 3 weekend trips, thanks to Marty Kerns leading a group to Oak Openings and Paul Brower for a campout weekend at Tar Hollow State Park and Roberta Moore lead a group out of state to Virginia for day hikes in Shenandoah Valley.

Special thanks for the new leader's, Earl Reisinger for a fall hike to the Hocking Hill area. Julie Mills signed up to lead a Wednesday night walk, but due to illness, Richard Van Winkle filled in for Julie. At Fograscher and Larry Staats, with the assistance from Roberta Moore lead a group of 20 hikers to Malabar Farm State Park during the maple syrup season. Rick Kritzer took a group over to Highland Nature Sanctuary for a hike around the Barrett's Rim area. Mary Maloney led an evening equinox walk around the Labyrinth at OSU. And Ruth Rusk filled in at the very last minute to lead an evening walk at Alum Creek Dam. Phil Smith for leading the largest hiking group of the season all 31 hikers to Big Hollow and Long Hollow located in the Hocking Hill area.

Thanks to the other leaders that lead hikes on regular basis: Pete Rogers, Cheri Thrash-Worsley, Gina Buckey, Tom Worsley, John Lunn and Glenn Beachy.

The fall backpacking class has 24 students registered along with the great volunteer staff of Pete Rogers, Marty Kerns, Tom Worsley & David Latanick.

Sheila Sands,



Membership

As of October 1, 2001, we have 2,372 memberships in Columbus Outdoor Pursuits and at least 2922 individuals who are members. There are still many family memberships that only list one person. This is a 3% growth for the year.

613 of these memberships are life memberships (26%)

504 are new members this year (21%)

1,255 renewed their membership this year (53%)

Newsletter

The January 2002 Newsletter issue will mark the end of the first full year for the existing newsletter editor team. The team consists of Tammy and DASH Dutro and its advisors: Barb Renick and the Webmaster.

The newsletter "activity" had no activities, no trip-per-days, no accident reports, few revenue-generating opportunities, and incurred expenses of around \$25,000.

The newsletter team took a proactive approach toward producing a newsletter that conforms to the USPS Publication 417. In addition to providing or including photographic, graphic, editorial comment, and page layout for the newsletter — the editors solicited and encouraged new member-contributed content and conducted a poll.

The results of the poll, with twelve members responding, indicated that short articles were preferred, how-to articles were desired, and it generally did not matter if the newsletter was less than sixteen pages in length or published less than twelve times per year. Although not obtained from the poll, it is also noted that the members prefer a timely delivery of the newsletter, and care deeply about the schedule and classified ads.

Changes made by the editors included settling on a "standard look" for the publication that they hope convey the image of a substantial and credible organization. It was also decided to make the "highly desirable" classified ads a benefit of membership. Previously, non-members could place ads for a nominal fee. A newsletter of fewer than sixteen pages has

been published when content warrants, and the groundwork has been laid to publish less than twelve times per year in the colder months. Archives of newsletters in electronic form have been created quarterly and distributed to the office, Barb Renick, and the Webmaster. The "archive" can be used to publish a newsletter in the event the newsletter team is unable to.

Plans for the upcoming year include a search for, and transition to the next newsletter team. There is a desire to re-visit the concept of a "universal trip application form" in the coming year. Finally, the editors wish to spearhead two crucial initiatives that they will present at the Board Retreat.

Respectfully submitted — DASH & Tammy Dutro



Paul Fishman - bicycling
 Barbara Benutto
 Mike Folman- backpack, hiking
 Lou Frasure- backpacking
 Johanna Garber- bicycling & backpacking
 Bob Havreburg- boating & hiking
 Janice Hogrefe- boating
 John Lane- boating
 Bill McKinley- boating
 Levent Mehmetli- backpacking
 Mike Michaels- bicycling
 Karen Paoletti- backpacking & skiing
 Steve Park - boating
 Gary Ragsdale- backpacking
 Jen Mari Raven - hiking
 Chris Russell - boating
 Joel Schmidt - backpacking



Office

2001 was a year of change in the COP office. Kathleen Boston was hired as a part-time-as-needed Goba Assistant, freeing me to spend more time on leadership training and program development.

Leadership

We made a major change in leadership training this year by replacing our once-a-year training with a modular system that can be taken as independent modules over the course of 5 evenings, or all at once in a full day training. We have tried to offer one evening module and one full day training each month. The modules are: Risk Management, Paperwork, Trip Planning, Participant Screening and Leadership

The following members have taken at least one of the modules in the past year:

Rick Allison – boating
 Eric Batterton – backpacking
 Lori Batterton – backpacking
 Mary Lou Briner - bicycling & hiking
 Steve Crim - backpacking
 Tammy Dutro - boating
 Dash Dutro - boating
 Deborah Evans - bicycling



& skiing
 Don Story - backpacking
 Jennifer Thurmond- boating
 Sharon Todd- bicycling
 Eileen Troutman- boating
 Gwen Utrecht - backpacking
 Bob Waddell- bicycling

We also worked on documenting what needs to be taught for future instructors, and made notes on needed changes in future editions of the COP Trip Leadership Manual. Many thanks to Kim Sacksteder, Cheri Thrash, Dale Lofland and Mike Wadkowski for their help with this project.

Program Development

We tried to increase the number and variety of trips this year. Three meetings were held with bicyclists to find out what kind of trips they wanted and work on how we could make that happen. Unfortunately, there have been no immediate results from these meetings.

The rafting initiative went better. Fourteen members showed up for





a special "How to Run a COP Raft Trip Training", another 8 showed up for an evening session on paddling and guiding a raft. This session was held at Alum Creek beach. Barb Demmy, Chris Stover, Mike Wadkowski, myself, Tony Skrabak and Tom Hardin all lead whitewater raft trips. The weather god gave us some challenges in the form of high water early in the year. Our New River Gorge initiation trip became an Upper New Float trip when the level came up to 22 feet! Our June "Scout the Yough" trip became a day of rafting the Casselman, followed by a quick trip on the Yough with an outfitter. At 6', the river was too high for our small rafts.



An Intermediate Backpack School was held in May. The curriculum included all 5 leadership modules, backpacking topics of interest to the participants, and three trips to get additional backpacking experience. These trips were lead by the participants so they would all gain experience leading. We also made a point of going where none of the students had been before so they added more trails to their knowledge.

A beginning backpacking class was taught for New Albany High School as part of their Wellness Program.



10 students thought the class worth going to summer school. Classroom sessions were mixed with hikes and two overnight backpack trips in southern Ohio. John Lunn, Chris Oldaker, Kevin Oldaker, and Tom Worsley helped make this class a reality. A special thanks goes to the New Albany bus driver who let us back in the bus after we fell through the "dry" lakebed at Lake Vesuvius.

Nuts and Bolts

After years of talking about it, we finally got the access Event Database up and running, also the Access Membership database. As with all computer programs, the tweaking continues. These databases are accessible from three computers in the office, so it is finally possible to have up to three people working at once.

Information on how to become involved in some programs was also added to the membership fulfillment package sent to new members. Boating, backpacking, climbing and leadership training have all provide information for new members who indicate an interest on their membership form.

Ann Gerckens, Office



Manager

Tosrv

is on a seperate report



XOBA



The Fourth Across Ohio Bicycle Adventure was a week of good food, tailwinds, heat and rain and the 180 riders enjoyed each day. Although there were three instances of emergency room visits, only one sent someone home. The other two riders, one with a bee sting and one with an elbow gash, kept on going. For the director, this was a record and not one I wish to repeat!



The official start was at Westlake YMCA where we ate gourmet pastas and salads and many rode to Lake Erie, only 1.5 miles, and began the shore-to-shore journey. On Sunday we enjoyed the Emerald Necklace and the Cuyahoga Valley Tow Path Trail on the way to Peninsula for lunch. Then there were some hot, difficult climbs that even got the director on his feet! Medina was a welcome site and a very nice new Middle School helped us forget the hard day. I shortened the day to



Ashland because of the heat and reports of heavy truck traffic on the original route. The YMCA in Ashland put us up in their new addition with A/C and nice lounge. Next we rode the Mohican and Kokosing river valleys on the way to Mt. Vernon. Amish farms and cool creek roads made the few climbs seem easy. The Nazarene College put us up that night, we were praying for the heat to subside!



It did. On Wednesday it rained, nay, thunder stormed, as we made our way to the Legion Park in Marysville. There were a score of flats from riding in glass in a median in Mt. Vernon, but the riders helped each other make it to the Delaware bike shop and get tubes replaced. The wet day did not dampen the spirits as we enjoyed dinner, massages and yoga class at the Legion Hall. Thursday was a tailwind romp to Xenia. The longest day at 73



*Randy Bennett,
XOBA Director*



miles, most were in quite early and raving about the great weather and route and drying clothes on the fence at Xenia High School. The place looked like a refugee village! The route to Lebanon was the short day and many ate breakfast at the Der Dutchman in Waynesville before the climb up to the largest YMCA in the United States. The facilities there were endless, as the riders had their choice of 2 pools, saunas, racquetball, carpeted locker rooms, snack bar, large grounds and workout equipment for those who needed more! It was our last night together and many chose to celebrate at the Golden Lamb Inn.

The rains returned for the last day down the Little Miami Scenic Trail, through Milford, and on to The Ohio River, east of Cincinnati. The coffee shop in Loveland was surprised by about 20 noses pressed up against the window at opening time. By the time the riders were hitting the parking lot where we had left the cars, the heavens had let loose and we stood in the rain and took the obligatory photographs of each other at the end. The largest group to do XOBA yet had done it in style and still smiled in the face of adversity.

We covered about 380 miles. Six different Directors Of The Day, allowed me to ride nearly all week. Thanks to Century Cycle, Best Bikes, Why-Not Cycling, Breakaway Cycling and Xenia Schwinn for mechanical support along the way. Also, thanks to Ann Gerckens and the COP Board for their continued support. The financial outcome will be in the treasurer's report, but we did make some money. Next year XOBA will be July 20-27.