

*Outdoor*

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# INDIANA

TOURING INDIANA

CHARLES DEAM

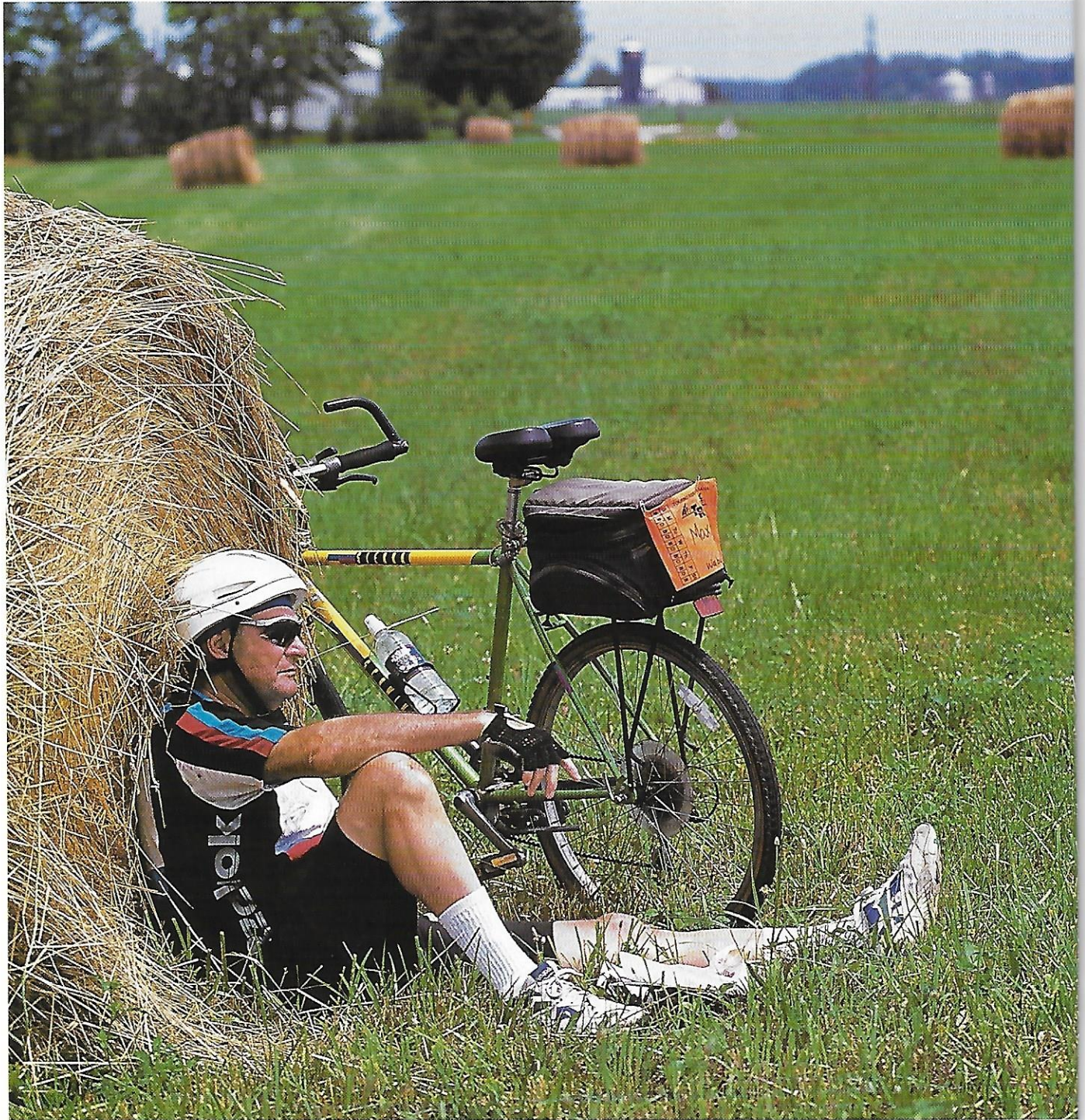
HERITAGE TRUST UPDATE

DNR RESEARCH

FERNS



# Annual ride cruises at



# different pace



## Rural Indiana bicycle ride is tradition

**O**n the road heading into Fairfield, just outside Quakertown State Recreation Area, a lone cow on a mission hobbled across the country road, oblivious to the throngs of bemused bicyclists who were approaching.

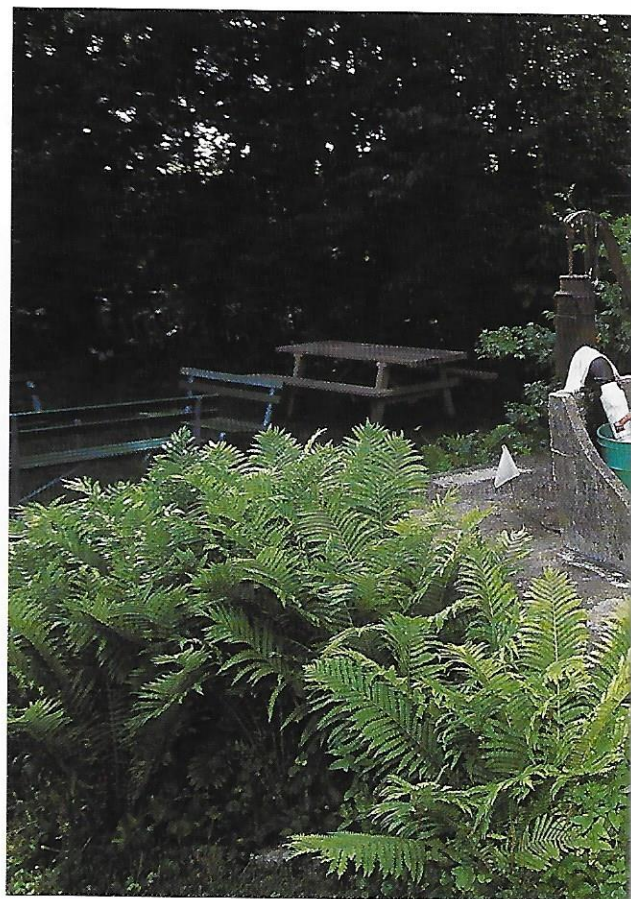
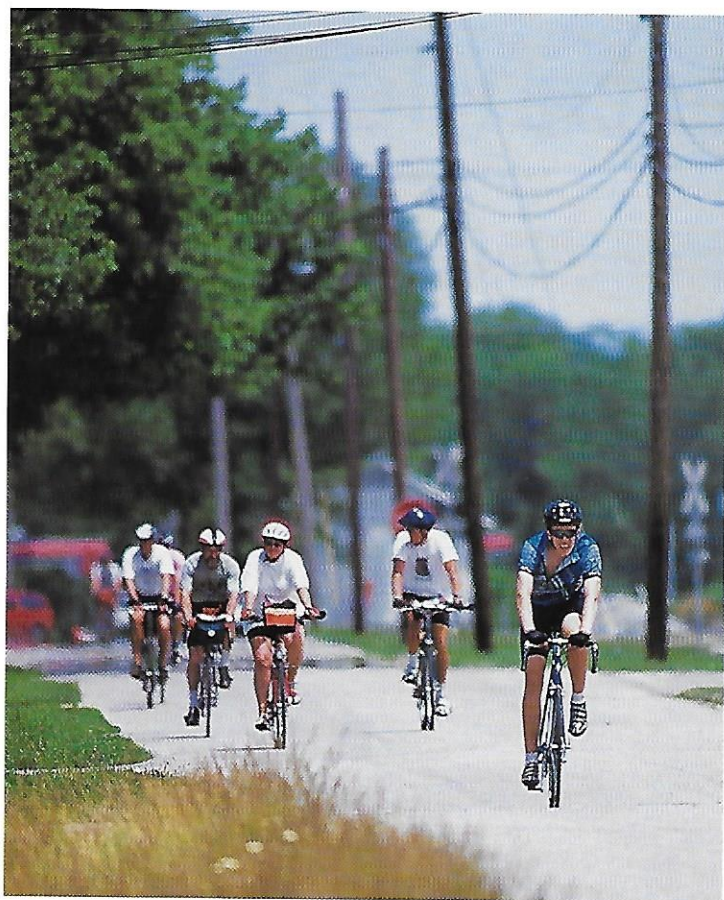
As the riders got off their bikes and watched, the adventurous bovine began to munch on corn. The cow flashed a look of contentment much like the smile seen on bicyclists coasting down a long, straight hill.

The riders were part of an organized tour called TRIRI—Touring Ride in Rural Indiana, annual week-long bike journeys on well-planned routes and supported by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources' parks and reservoirs division.

By Michael Boo

Photography by  
Richard Fields

**M**ax Reed of Wabash pauses at a round bale to enjoy the view along State Road 229 south of Batesville.



This may well be the ultimate way of seeing Indiana. So much of the state passes by too quickly to be truly appreciated from the comfort of an automobile.

On two wheels, you feel the nuances of the fabric of the state that holds together the spaces between the destinations.

When you travel by car, you lose an understanding of topography. To a TRIRI bicyclist, each and every hill has a personality all its own. Every hill can be conquered, either by wheel or by foot. A good TRIRI riding buddy of mine put a positive spin on walking up hills. He called it cross-training.

Since climbing many of the hills—particularly in southern Indiana—is a somewhat slow process, I've found it a perfect time to let my sense of smell take center stage.

And, quite simply, Indiana smells different from the seat of a bicycle.

My TRIRI riding buddy once instructed me to "stop and smell the milkweed." I had never before given any thought to the sweet, pungent smell of this plentiful plant, and since that magical whiff, I have viewed cycling with eyes (and nose) wider open.

TRIRI is quite possibly the best way to see, and smell, Indiana.

Founded 18 years ago with only 25 riders on its inaugural run, the ride quickly grew to a maximum of 500

touring cyclists from the midwest and beyond.

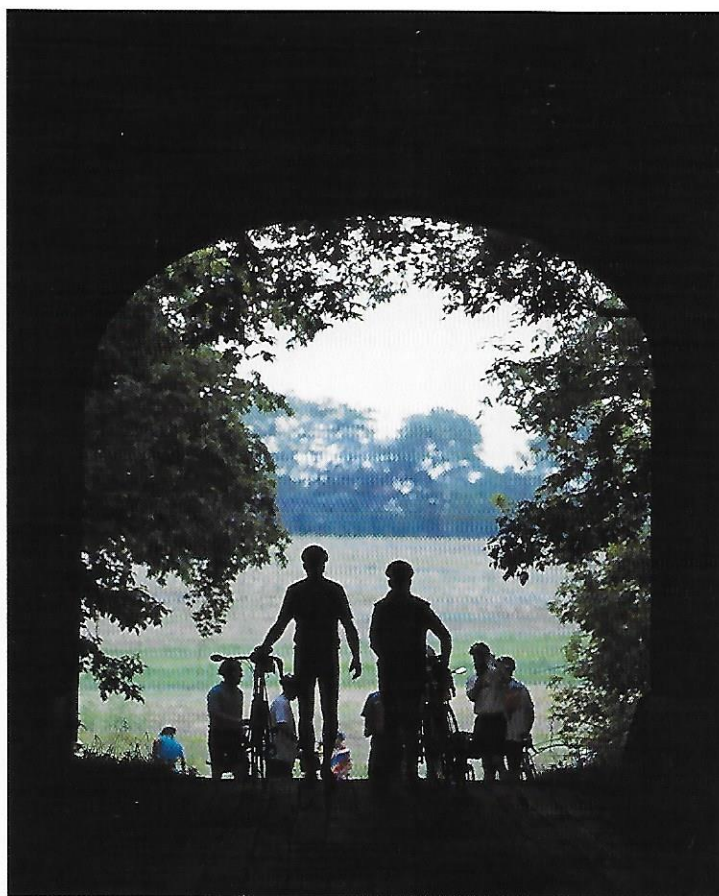
Joe and Barb Anderson have directed the ride ever since its third year, and welcomed the Indiana Department of Natural Resources on board about 10 years ago, which allowed for the ride to more easily tap into the vast Indiana state park system.

The six DNR employees who work the tour volunteer for TRIRI duty, giving an entire week to setting up the camp sites, picnic tables, and the traveling stage. Every night of TRIRI features entertainment of some sort. In addition to transporting the luggage from one campsite to another, the DNR employees also staff the water stops and support the riders along the route.

Employees of each individual state park bring in picnic tables, put up signs, make sure all the facilities are functional, and put up and takedown the food tent. The ride is unique in that a first-class caterer travels with the ride, preparing tasty and filling breakfasts and suppers.

Not only can tired riders look forward to a bountiful meal upon getting into the next campsite each afternoon, but if they want, they can get their tired muscles worked on by one of the three professional masseuses who spend the week working the tour. Relaxing the muscles helps increase blood flow and flushes out lactic acid that contributes to muscle soreness.

The Andersons try to schedule two-night stay-overs



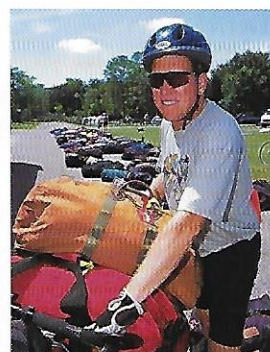
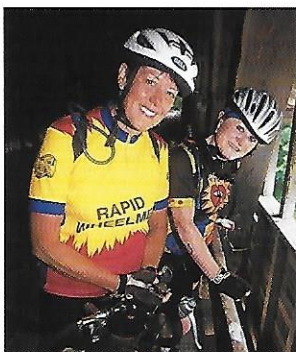
at one or two campgrounds through the week, allowing riders to take a day or two off for sight seeing, hiking, or shopping. More eager riders elect to ride the optional loops that return to the campground.

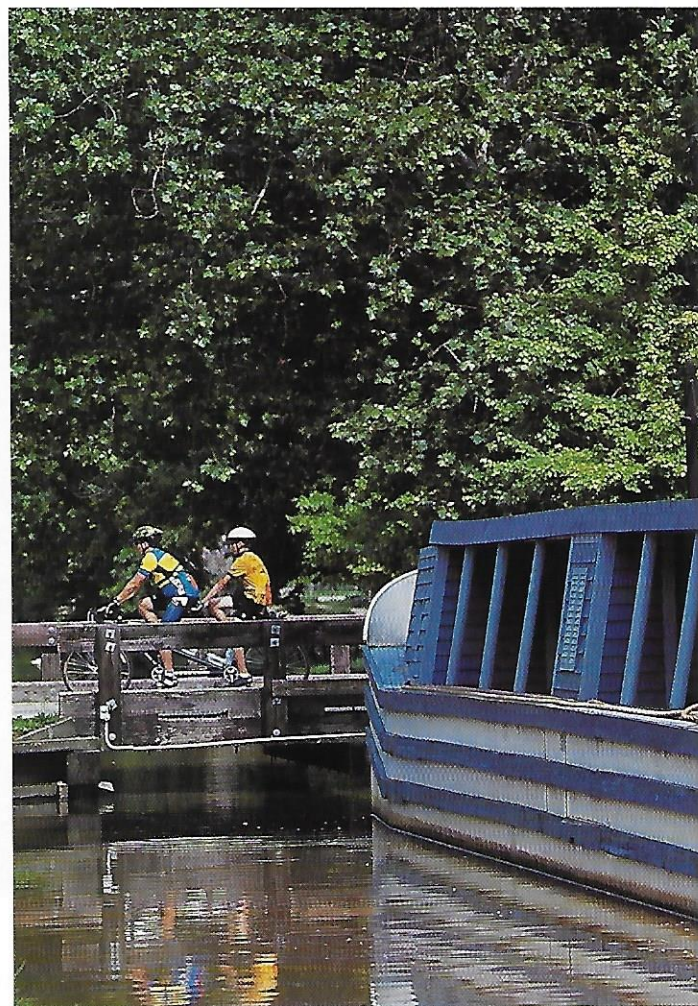
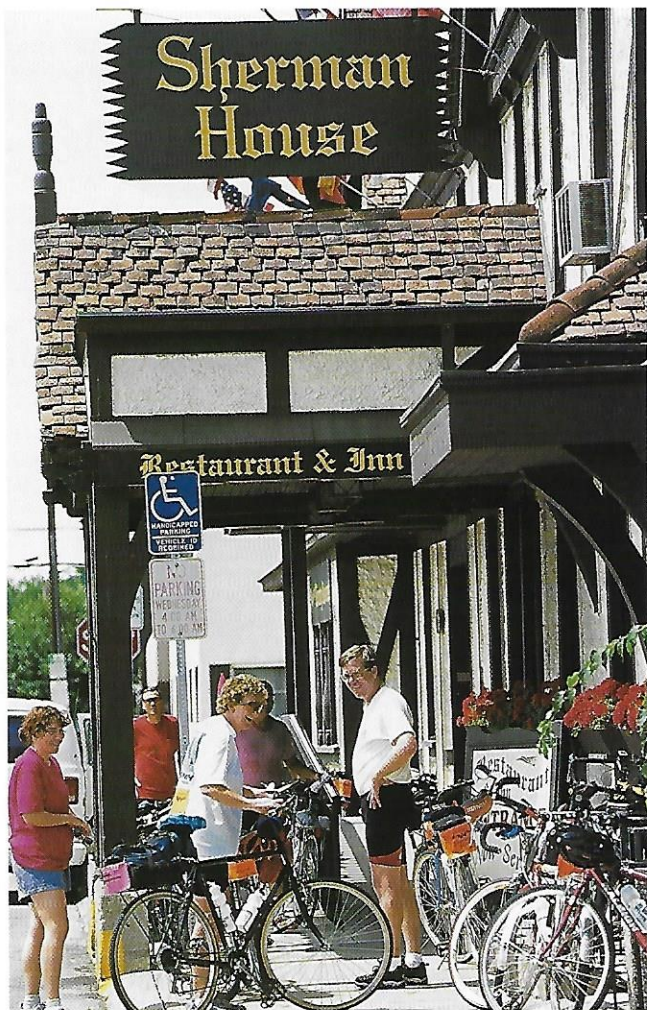
The 2000 TRIRI allowed riders to spend a day in the

historic Ohio River town of Madison while staying at Clifty Falls State Park, and later gave riders a chance to explore the shops of Nashville during a two-night stay-over at Brown County State Park.

According to Barb Anderson, it's easy to lose track

*A group of cyclists follow Railroad Street through Osgood (upper left). Water bottles and spirits are refreshed at the Michaela Farm environmental ministry in Oldenburg (above). Riders walk skinny-wheeled bicycles across the Forsythe Mill Covered Bridge in Rush County in order to avoid damage to the rims (upper right). Nancy Vander Kolk and Toni Reeves of Tennessee take in a view through the bridge's open windows (lower left). Jacqueline O'Mara of Oak Forest, Ill. searches for her belongings among hundreds of bags at Versailles State Park (below). Bruce Brixey of Washington, Ill. collects trucked-in gear at the end of a day's ride (bottom right).*





of the world while on TRIRI.

"Your whole day is geared towards riding a bicycle. After the first day, you don't know what day it is, you don't know what is going on in the world. There's no television, and campers are in bed by sundown, ready to get up early to beat the mid-day heat. You stop caring about the outside world."

Indeed, TRIRI helps people of all ages get back to nature.

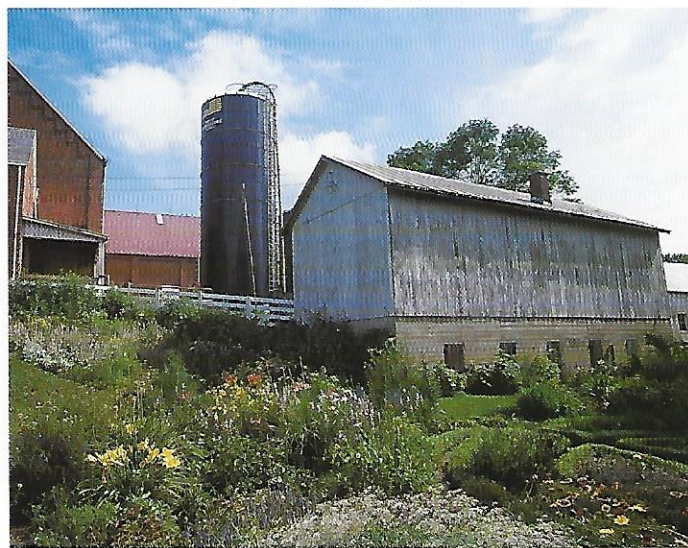
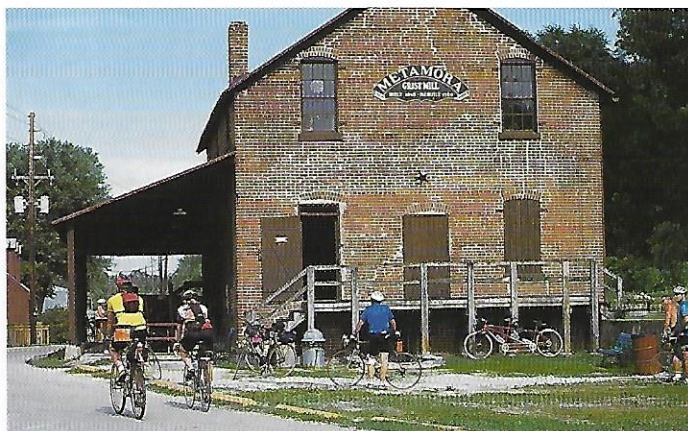
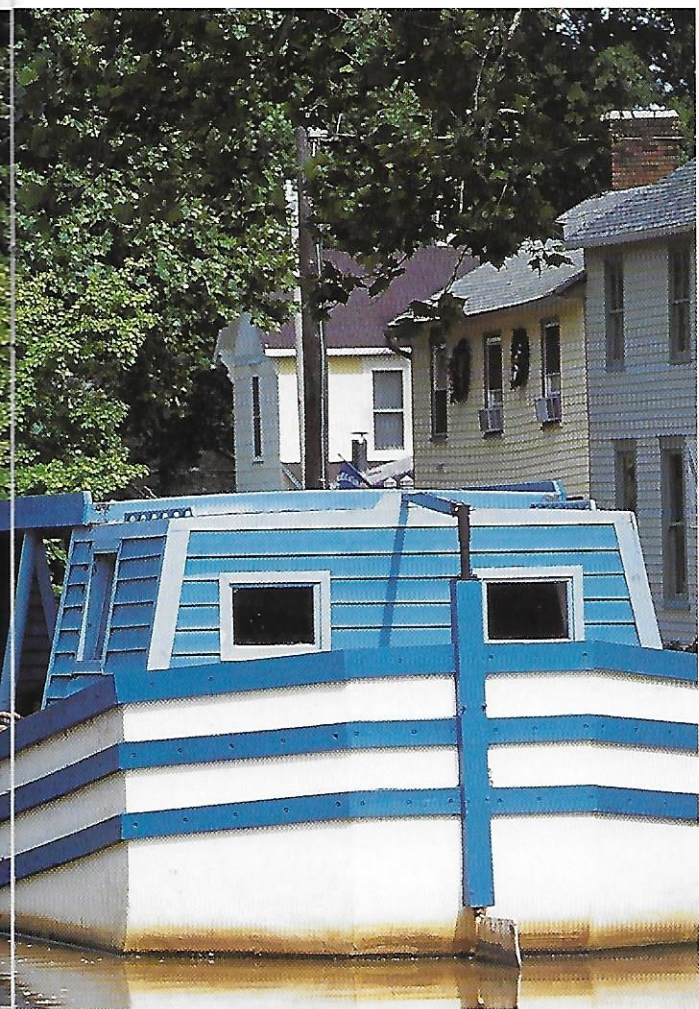
Last year, riders ranged from 10 to 82 years old. Entire families go on the ride, such as the Allan and Diane Roden family from Noblesville, who pedaled their fourth TRIRI with their 17-year-old son Andrew and 15-year-old daughter Jennifer. The family found that the ride is something they can all do and enjoy, and it brings them closer together.

It's not unusual to find riders who have been on several previous TRIRI events, even though there are only four alternating routes. Three routes cover the entire southern region of the state and one, the newest, is in the north. Believe it or not, the northern route, hitting Lake Michigan and highlighted by the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum in Auburn, does have hills that are bigger than those that cross interstate highways.

The 2000 TRIRI offered many special memories to its riders, such as the astounding beauty of riding the friendly hills on Duck Creek Road into the old canal town of Metamora, location of the Whitewater Canal State Historic Site and the Duck Creek Aqueduct.

This engineering oddity is the only known covered wooden aqueduct still operating in the United States, carrying the water of the canal—and tourists—16 feet

*The Sherman House Restaurant and Inn in Batesville is surrounded by bicycles as riders stop to sample its Old World cuisine (upper left). Tandem riders pass the Ben Franklin III canal boat at Metamora's Whitewater Canal State Historic Site (above). The casual pace of a TRIRI event allows participants time to explore local attractions such as the Metamora Grist Mill (top right) and the Michaela Farms ministry (upper right). Dave and Janet Day of Englewood, Colo. take a break near Versailles State Park (right).*



over the creek. Nearby is a working gristmill, with its Italian granite wheels grinding corn meal and grits for sale.

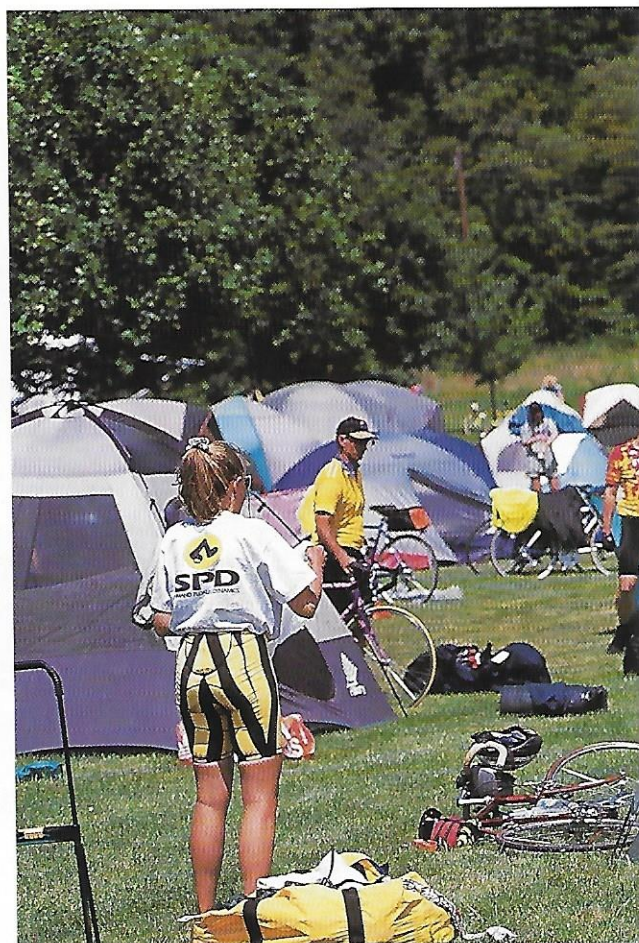
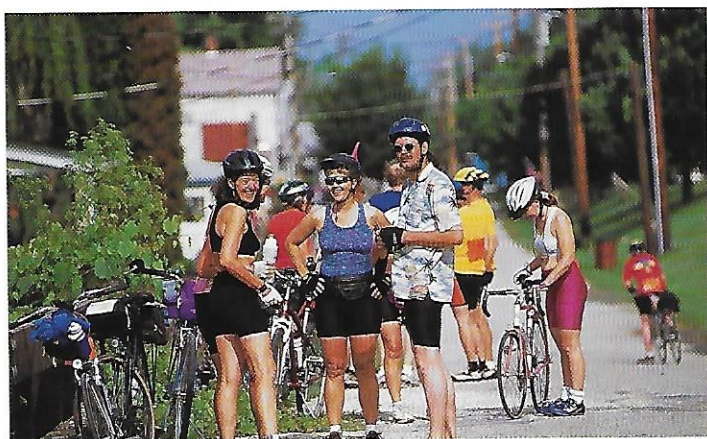
In Oldenburg, where streets are all referred to by the German name of "Strasse," cyclists took time to absorb the tranquil beauty of the Sisters of St. Francis

Michaela Farm, a working, organic vegetable and flower farm.

In addition to being informative about the ways of gardening without pesticides, the flower garden offers a lovely place for serene meditation and contemplation.

The 300-acre farm has existed since 1854, and was





purchased by the order in 1907. Interns are trained in how to garden organically and bio-dynamically, which involves working in harmony with the earth, planting at the time most conducive for the cosmos to influence the plants. Interns also learn homeopathic remedies for soil conditioning. To this end, 45 head of cattle provide manure for the gardens.

The order produces vegetables for co-op members and sells flowers at a farmers' market in Cincinnati, and has a donor tree program in memory of loved ones. Without a doubt, cyclists leaving the farm had an enlightened view of the nature around them.

Judging by the number of bicycles outside the Sherman House German restaurant in Batesville, one could be forgiven for thinking this was a mandatory stop on the way to Versailles State Park. At the edge of the park, in the town of Versailles, the carillon playing at the ultra-modern Tyson Temple was ringing out Beatles' hits, including "Yesterday" and "Lady Godiva." I'm still trying to figure out the ecclesiastical connection.

A lovely and relatively hill-free road near the Ohio River outside Vevay offered a relaxing and captivating ride into historic Madison. Riding into Madison is like entering a mid-1800s time capsule. In Madison, 133 blocks including 1,350 buildings are entered on the

National Register of Historic Places. It's a good thing that the camping at nearby Clifty Falls State Park was a two-day overnigher. It took about a day just to go through the eight house museums and meander through the downtown.

Today, it's shocking to hear that in the 1960s, there was a movement to tear down many of the increasingly aged historic buildings and replace them with modern structures. Historic Madison, Inc. succeeded in preserving the buildings, and the city now is a veritable theme park of preservation and tourism.

While in town, the TRIRI bicyclists were able to get close and personal with some of the hulking hydroplane boats that were to compete in the 4th of July Indiana Governor's Cup Regatta.

Just outside Madison, an optional loop led riders through Hanover College, one of the most scenic campuses anywhere, with an elevated view of the Ohio River that has inspired post cards.

Many views during TRIRI were not quite so dramatic, but were equally elegant. The plethora of orange ditch lilies and red trumpet vines outside Uniontown come to mind. As with milkweed, the invitation to stop and admire their beauty was irresistible.

And, as expected, the TRIRI riders contributed



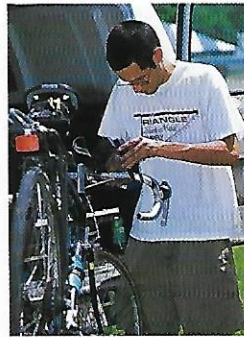
heartily to the local economy of Nashville while staying at Brown County State Park for two nights.

The 2001 TRIRI will be held June 24-30, and will cover the southwest Indiana route. Starting in Huntingburg,

riders will spend their first overnight at Spring Mill State Park, site of a beautifully preserved historic village and a refreshing boat ride into a cavern system.

The second day's ride will follow a picturesque route

*Interpretive naturalist Tammy Davis introduces a barred owl to relaxed riders during an evening program at Versailles State Park (top left). Friends from Illinois and Michigan reunite on the streets of Metamora (above left). A TRIRI tent city springs up beside Versailles Lake (above). Massage therapist Kathy Shadrick of Carmel soothes Eric Blank's sore muscles during an evening massage (upper right). Mike Ryan approaches the end of a 60-mile segment (lower left). TRIRI organizers Joe and Barbara Anderson relax on the portable stage before evening briefing and the daily puzzle challenge (below). Bicycle Garage mechanic Chris Phillips provides on-site service (right).*



to Patoka Lake's Newton-Stewart State Recreation Area. During these first two days, there will be opportunities to stop at the awesome West Baden dome and the luxurious French Lick Resort. The Andersons also are working on arrangements to allow cyclists to ride the steam train between Cuzco and French Lick.

Riders will next pedal to Lincoln State Park, where a two-night layover will provide them with plenty of time to visit to the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial and the famous burg of Santa Claus. Before leaving for the remainder of the tour, cyclists will be able to visit the stunning St. Meinrad Archabbey, home to one of the midwest's most impressive pipe organs.

Two nights at Harmonie State Park outside New Harmony will follow, with an entire day made available to either ride a loop to the Ohio River or visit the New Harmony State Historic Site.

For riders who like somewhat cooler weather, the week-long September Escapade offers a chance to enjoy a relaxed tour of southern Indiana with fewer riders and lodging options at state park inns. This ride will be held Sept. 16-21, 2001, and will stay at Brown County State Park and Spring Mill State Park for two nights each and McCormick's Creek State Park for one night, with overnight inn options at each park.

It's amazing what you can accomplish on just two wheels. ■

*For more information and a registration packet for both TRIRI and September Escapade, write to: TRIRI, P.O. Box 439, Clear Creek IN 47426, or call 812-332-6028. You may also visit TRIRI on the Web at [www.bloomington.in.us/~bbc/triri](http://www.bloomington.in.us/~bbc/triri)*

Michael Boo is a freelance writer living in northern Indiana.

**O***range day lilies line roadsides throughout TRIRI's southeastern Indiana tour (below). Each flower lasts only one day. Author Michael Boo spends some quality off-saddle time with his bike after a hard day's ride (right).*

