

Alumnus rides different route this year

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Larry Ploetz, AU Class of 1968, has been a member of the AU Reunion Bike Ride crew for a number of years, but decline the opportunity to join in this year in order to cross off one of the items on his bucket list. But he is still “riding” in spirit with his AU alumni cyclist friends as he and a long-time biker friend traverse the Lewis and Clark explorer trail, embarking from Seaside, OR.

Larry explained the history of the 2014 venture:

“I have been riding with my best friend, Seth Patton, nearly every week for over 25 years. We generally do between 35 miles and 70 miles every Saturday morning. Longest Saturday ride was 126 miles. With our wives we have done many long, one- or two-week bicycle adventures to places like Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Wisconsin, Wales, and Niagara Falls, and like to travel overseas to explore other cultures.

“Now that we are of retirement age, but not retired, we have both allocated two months to ride one of our bucket lists, the routes of the 1805-1806 Lewis and Clark expedition. I have family in Oregon and Idaho and love the scenery out in the Northwest ...”

On May 29, Larry and Seth began their adventure by warming up with a short ride from Seaside, where the Lewis and Clark Trail ended to Fort Clatsop where the expedition wintered and back to Astoria, OR. On May 30, the long ride began leading to St. Helens, OR; then Portland, OR; Hood River, OR; Maryhill State Park, WA; and Umatilla, OR. As of Wednesday, June 4 they had ridden 338 miles along the Columbia Gorge.

“The weather and winds from the west have been perfect, truckers have been courteous, and the scenery has changed from lush green to arid except in the many areas irrigated for grapes and fruit orchards. Wind farms and wineries abound.”