

Canal bike tour includes Orleans stops

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ALBANY (readMedia)-- More than 500 cyclists have registered for the "Cycling the Erie Canal" tour which starts July 11 and includes early stops in Orleans County.

The 400-mile trip takes riders from Buffalo to Albany, beginning Sunday. The 12th annual recreational ride runs through July 18 as it highlights the beauty, history, culture and recreational appeal of the Canal System and the Canalway Trail, a prime tourism destination in New York State.

Riders have come from as far away as France.

The first day of the ride will take participants from Buffalo to Medina where they will spend the night at Medina Middle School on Gwinn St. At the school they will have dinner and be able to swim in the pool. Tom Grasso, president of the New York State Canal Society will present a talk at 7 p.m.

Following breakfast from 6 to 8 a.m. Monday, riders will depart Medina for Rochester where they will spend the night at Nazareth College. Monday's route includes an morning rest stop at Holley's Canal Park, scheduled between 8 a.m. and noon.

Carmella R. Mantello, Director of the New York State Canal Corporation said, "The Canalway Trail provides numerous recreational, tourism and economic development opportunities throughout New York State as demonstrated through the success of Cycling the Erie Canal. Each year, cyclists from all over the country and the world participate in this popular event to experience firsthand the unparalleled history and beauty of the New York State Canal System and Canalway Trail. The Canal Corporation is pleased to once again partner with Parks & Trails NY to sponsor the Twelfth Annual Cycling the Erie Canal bike tour."

Robin Dropkin, Executive Director of Parks & Trails New York, said, "The 12th annual Cycling the Erie Canal tour is a great event that lets people of all ages and from 36 states experience the Erie Canal corridor in a unique way. Although the many historic and interesting sites along the way are a real plus for participants, the Canalway Trail itself is the real draw, as cyclists can relax and enjoy riding in a safe, car-free environment."

Roughly two-thirds of the 400-mile bicycle tour takes place on the completed portion of the Canalway Trail. When complete, the New York State Canalway Trail System will span more than 500 miles and connect numerous cities, towns and villages along the Erie, Cayuga-Seneca, Oswego and Champlain Canals, making it one of the longest multi-use recreational trails in the country.

During the bike trek, Cycling the Erie Canal participants will have the opportunity to participate in guided tours of the Canal, historic sites and museums, such as the Erie Canal Village, Fort Stanwix National Monument, and Old Erie Canal State Park.

Participants are scheduled to arrive in Buffalo on Saturday, July 10, to register and participate in optional bike rides and an opening reception.

The complete schedule for the 2010 Cycling the Erie Canal Tour is as follows (Arrival/departure times are approximate and are subject to change without notice):

Sunday, July 11--Buffalo to Medina

Overnight: Medina Middle School, Gwinn St., Medina

5:30am – 7:30am – Breakfast at Nichols School

6:30am – 7:30am – Registration at Nichols School

7:45am – Brief kickoff ceremony

8:00 am – Start of ride

8:30am – 12:00pm – Morning Rest Stop, Amherst Erie Canal Museum

10:30am and 12:30pm – Lockport Boat Tours

12:00pm – 5:00pm – Afternoon Rest Stop – Middleport, Municipal Park

1:00pm – 6:00pm – Swimming in Medina Middle School Pool

5:00pm – 7:00pm – Dinner at Medina Middle School

7:00pm – 8:00pm – Talk on canal history – Tom Grasso, President, NYS Canal Society

Monday, July 12–Medina to Pittsford

Overnight: Nazareth College – 4245 East Ave., Pittsford

6:00am – 8:00am – Breakfast at Medina Middle School

8:00am – 12:00pm – Morning Rest Stop, Holley-Canal Park

11:00am on – Escorted bike rides to High Falls in downtown Rochester

12:00pm – 5:00pm – Afternoon Rest Stop, Rochester–Genesee Valley Park; swimming, canoes and kayaks available

2:00pm – 9:00pm – Shuttle service to dorms and Schoen Place, Pittsford

5:00pm – 7:00pm – Dinner at Nazareth College in Pittsford

7:00pm – 7:30pm – Talk by Judy Ertel from the Susan B. Anthony House Museum at Nazareth College, Pittsford

7:30pm-9:00pm – Music

8:00pm – 9:00pm – Swimming at Nazareth College

Tuesday, July 13–Pittsford to Waterloo

Overnight: Mynderse Academy, Seneca Falls

6:00am – 8:00am – Breakfast at Nazareth College with representative from the Mormon Church and the Village of Palmyra

8:00am – 12:00pm – Morning Rest Stop, Palmyra Village Park hosted by the Palmyra Kiwanis

12:00pm – 5:00pm – Afternoon Rest Stop, Clyde Village Park; Town of Galan Historic Society open

3:00pm – 9:30pm – Shuttle bus taking cyclists to Seneca Falls museums and dinner in Seneca Falls and Vince's Park for swimming

4:30pm – 6:30pm - Wine & cheese reception at Peoples Park, Seneca Falls

5:00pm – 7:30pm – Bike repair at campsite

7:00pm – 8:00pm Community Band Concert and Ice Cream Social, Peoples Park, Seneca Falls. Museums in Seneca Falls open late.

Wednesday, July 14 – Seneca Falls - Syracuse

Overnight: Burnett Park, Syracuse

6:00am – 8:00am – Breakfast at Mynderse Academy

8:00am – 12:00pm – Morning Rest Stop, Port Byron Middle School

12:00pm – 5:00pm - Afternoon Rest Stop, Camillus; Sims Erie Canal Store/Museum

3:30-4:45pm – Reception – Rosamond Gifford Zoo at Burnett Park, Syracuse; drawing for Terry Cycling saddles and repair kit (must be present to win)

2:00pm – 9:00pm – Shuttle Service to Erie Canal Museum (until 8:00) and Armory Square

5:00pm – 7:00pm – Dinner at Rosamond Gifford Zoo

7:00pm – 8:00pm – Sam Clemence, talk at the Zoo on the engineering of the Erie Canal

7:00pm – 9:00pm – Music by Chris Farrar at the Zoo

Thursday, July 15 – Syracuse to Rome

Overnight: Fort Stanwix National Monument, James Street, Rome

6:00am – 8:00am – Breakfast at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo at Burnett Park

8:00am – 12:00pm – Morning Rest Stop, Chittenango; Chittenango Landing Boat Museum Canastota. Free admission to the Canal Town Museum

12:00pm – 5:00pm – Afternoon Rest Stop, Verona Town Hall

2:00pm – 5:00pm – Visit Erie Canal Village in Rome; tour the Rome Sports Hall of Fame; tour Fort. Stanwix National Monument; swim at YMCA

4:00pm – 9:00pm – Shuttle buses to area restaurants and enjoy live music by Caribbean Steel Drum Sound at the campsite.

7:00 – 9:00 – Entertainment at Fort Stanwix

Friday, July 16 – Rome to Canajoharie

Overnight: Canajoharie High School, 136 Scholastic Way, Canajoharie

6:00am – 8:00am – Breakfast at Rome YMCA

8:00am – 12:00pm – Morning Rest Stop, Town of Schuyler Town Hall

12:00pm – 5:00pm – Afternoon Rest Stop, Little Falls, Herkimer Home Historic Site

3:00pm – 9:00pm – Shuttle bus to downtown Canajoharie

4:00pm – 6:00pm – Swimming at the Canajoharie Middle School

5:00pm – 7:00pm – Dinner at Canajoharie High School

7:00pm – 9:00pm – Music – George Ward, Erie Canal Music & more

Saturday, July 17 – Canajoharie to Scotia

Overnight: Collins Park, Mohawk Ave. Schonowee Avenue, Scotia

6:00am – 8:00am – Breakfast, Canajoharie High School

8:00am – 12:00pm – Morning Rest Stop, Fultonville Town Hall

12:00pm – 5:00pm - Afternoon Rest Stop, Mabee Farm Historic Site

Until 8:00pm – Swimming available at the park

2:00 - Walking Tour of historic Stockade Area, walk over as a group

4:00pm – 5:00pm – Reception at Collins Park

5:00pm – 7:00pm – Dinner at Collins Park

7:00 pm – 8:00pm – Program & Celebration

7:30pm – 9:00pm – Music at Freedom Park area at Collins Park

Sunday, July 18 – Schenectady to Albany

6:00am – 8:00am – Breakfast at Collins Park

8:00am – 11:00am – Morning Rest Stop, Peebles Island State Park, Waterford

10:30am – afternoon – Riders finishing at Corning Preserve, Albany

The New York State Canal System is comprised of four historic waterways, the Erie, the Champlain, the Oswego and the Cayuga-Seneca Canals. Spanning 524 miles across New York State, the waterway links the Hudson River, Lake Champlain, Lake Ontario, the Finger Lakes and the Niagara River with communities rich in history and culture.

The Canal Corporation is a proud sponsor of the 2010 World Canals Conference to be held in Rochester, N.Y., from Sunday, September 19, 2010, through Thursday September 23, 2010. For more information about the World Canal Conference please call 585-355-6037 or visit www.wccrochester.org .

The New York State Canal Corporation is a subsidiary of the New York State Thruway Authority. Since 1992, following State legislation transferring the Canal System from the New York State Department of Transportation, Canal operating and maintenance activities have been supported by Thruway toll revenue.

Some Cycling the Erie Canal events are open to the public. For more information on Cycling the Erie Canal, contact Parks & Trails NY at 518-434-1583 or visit www.ptny.org.

For more information regarding events, recreation and vacation opportunities along the Canal System, please visit www.canals.ny.gov or call 1-800-4CANAL4.