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Cycling tour kicks off **([http://journal-](http://journal-register.com/local/x66809139/Cycling-tour-kicks-off)**



Matt and Rose Olszewski of Skaneateles rest Sunday on the lawn of the Medina High School. The two are participating in the 13th annual "Cycling the Erie Canal," which this year has more than 500 cyclists making the trip from Buffalo to Albany. Holly Toal/staff

[register.com/local/x66809139/Cycling-tour-kicks-off](http://journal-register.com/local/x66809139/Cycling-tour-kicks-off)

Staff Reports

The Journal-Register (<http://journal-register.com>)

MEDINA — More than 500 cyclists are participating in the 13th annual "Cycling the Erie Canal," event a 400-mile bicycling tour that kicked off Sunday and continues through July 17.

The eight-day recreational bicycling tour from Buffalo to Albany highlights the beauty, history, culture and recreational appeal of the canal system and the Canalway Trail as a prime tourism destination in New York state.

Participants arrived Saturday in Buffalo to register and participate in an opening reception. Their first leg of the trip took them past Lockport and Middleport to Medina, where they set up "Camp City" on the lawn of the Medina High School.

Matt and Rose Olszewski of Skaneateles are participating in this year's event. It's the fourth year for Matt and the first year for Rose.

"It's a good ride," he said Sunday on the lawn of the high school. "It's one people shouldn't be afraid to try."

Matt, a volunteer with the event, said it is developed for people of all ages. The average age of this year's riders is 50.

"The youngest rider is 6, and the oldest is 89, I believe," said Rose, who made a stop in Lockport earlier in the day to take a tour of the canal locks.

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.

Brian U. Stratton, director of the New York State Canal Corporation, said, "The Canalway Trail provides numerous recreational, tourism and economic development opportunities throughout New York state, demonstrated by 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."

During the bike tour, Cycling the Erie Canal participants will have the opportunity to join in guided tours of the canal, historic sites, museums, and attractions such as the Women's Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls, the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge in the Finger Lakes, Fort Stanwix National Monument in Rome, and the Erie Canal Museum in Syracuse.

Riders picked back up on their journey this morning, and are scheduled to make it to Pittsford by nightfall. The ride ends Sunday in Albany.



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