

The Andalusia Star-News

Couple enjoys □bicycle built for 2

Wyches participate in 500-mile ride in New York state

By **Jeremy Henderson** (Contact) | Andalusia Star-News

Published Wednesday, September 17, 2008



Photo by Jeremy Henderson

Pam and Guy Wyche stand with their tandem bike they used to participate in the Great Hudson Valley Pedal in August. The Wyches say that biking has improved their overall health and their outlook on life.

Biking began as a pastime for two Andalusia retirees, but has now become a passion that they hope to see grow in popularity through Covington County and Alabama.

Pam and Guy Wyche, who took part in a biking event in New York in August that took cyclists through the Hudson River Valley, said biking has become a part of their daily routine.

“We got our tandem bike back in mid December 2007,” Guy said. “We had been thinking about it for a while. It has a little over 3,300 miles on it now.”

Guy said their trip to New York for the 2008 Great Hudson Valley Pedal was a small portion of their biking experience up north, which totaled more than 500 miles of travel.

“We were gone for a month,” he said. “The highlight of our vacation was a trip down the Hudson River Valley, which was just beautiful. It was put on by the New York Parks and Trails.

“There were approximately 125 people who took part in the trip,” he added. “We started in Albany, N.Y. and pedaled down the Hudson Valley to New York City. It was a little over 200 miles. There were a lot side trips. We stayed at churches and schools along the way and they provided trucks to carry our things along the way. It was just beautiful.”

According to Guy, biking had always been an interest for him, but really did not become a hobby until after he retired from a career in forestry.

“I have enjoyed riding bikes all my life, but I have taken several spells of not riding them much,” he said. “After I retired I picked it back up.”

Guy said the exercise has helped him in the doctor’s office.

“I have lost some weight and it has been great for my cholesterol,” he said. “My doctor told me that it would be highly beneficial to ride as much as possible. The routine is low impact on joints and you usually have a nice breeze during the ride.”

Pam said she has been able to decrease her diabetic medication since she began riding bikes routinely.

“I am diabetic and I have been able to cut down on my medication since we starting riding the bike often,” she said. “I have lost weight and I have definitely experienced a positive change in my physical health.”

Pam said the popularity of biking is “exploding” throughout the state and she will not be surprised when bikes become commonplace along country roads.

“People should be aware of bikes,” she said. “Bicycles are considered vehicles. We are required to signal prior to making turns. Bikes are not legally allowed on sidewalks. Motorists should always been cautious and courteous when they encounter a bike on the roadway.”

Pam added that, through her experience, log truck drivers have been the most courteous vehicles on the road.

For more information about Alabama bicycle laws and safety requirements visit <http://www.massbike.org/bikelaw/bikelaw.htm>.

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