

Bike and Build team rests in Holyoke

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

After completing one of the longer days in their 4,173-mile bike ride from Providence, R.I. to Half Moon Bay, Calif., 30 Bike and Build riders bunkered down at the Phillips County Event Center Thursday, July 18.

The riders arrived in Holyoke after a 100-mile trip from McCook, Neb. on day 43 of the 76-day journey. While the ride was longer than the average day of 73 miles, Doug Johnson, one of the four leaders in the group, said the path through Nebraska was a bit windy but the overall ride wasn't too bad because the state is fairly flat.

The longest day of the trip was the 116-mile ride between Huntington, W.V. and Paris, Ky. According to Johnson, the hardest portion of the ride so far was the 92-mile section between Moberly and Richmond, Mo. because of the heat and wind.

"It was 100 degrees and very windy," Johnson explained. "You feel like you are biking hard enough to be going 20 miles per hour but you are only doing 10."

The college students came together for the ride from 17 states and one from China, representing a total of 26 universities. Donations from First United Methodist Church, Pete Fagerlin, Beth and Abby Britton, Merna Olson, Laura Beth Schroetlin, Laura Schafer and Pat Wiebers helped feed the bikers.



While on a cross-county bike ride to California, 30 Bike and Build members stayed the

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night at Phillips County Event Center. Those who made the trip are, pictured from left, front row, Lydia Guo, Jason Castillo, Annamaria Viazzo, Charlotte Perkins, Johnny Foster, Marlayne Saidnawey, Kathryn Small and Amanda DeRoche; second row, Yudi Fu, Michelle Peterson, Kathryn Doster, Rachel Miura, Sarah Rosenthal, Anna Whitney, Stephanie Ebner and Sarah Sarah Lounsbury; back row Doug Johnson, Rogelio Ayllon, Matt McFarland, Nicolas Montejos, Mark Pryshlak, Eric Wilcox, Nicholas Cotton, Maya Ito and Catherine McGrain. —Enterprise photo

The cross-country expedition began June 9 and will come to an end Aug. 20.

The group hopped back on their bikes and left Holyoke Friday morning, July 19 on their way to Fort Morgan. They will stop in Loveland Sunday, July 21 for one of the 14 planned build days. A build day is also planned for Sunday, July 28 in Montrose.

The group will help with whatever they can during build days. They have put up siding, built sheds, done trimming work, painted and shingled homes during the trip.

As of Thursday, July 18, the Providence to California riders had raised \$168,981 for affordable housing.

Seven other Bike and Build groups are also pedaling their way across the country to raise money.

Bike and Build is a nonprofit organization that raises money through cross country bicycle trips.

A portion of the proceeds will be donated to Providence Habitat for Humanity to help fund a student-built house in Providence. The rest of the funds will be distributed to affordable housing groups throughout the country.

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Another goal of the program is to prepare young adults for a lifetime of philanthropic service.

A website for the organization can be found at www.bikeandbuild.org .

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