



This year, our team, my friend Marty, my sister Mariann and I took to the road from Frankfort, IL on Tuesday, May 30<sup>th</sup>. For the first time that I can remember on such a trek, the wind was at our backs, the temperature was fine and we rode into pleasant sunshine. Before we knew it, we were in Indiana! After a mid-morning break, we headed toward lunch at the River's Edge Bar and Grill in Shelby, which is about 17 miles south of Crown Point. Slight correction, this is a virtual restaurant, it only exists on Google Maps. My mother and I noted this when we scouted the ride in February. After a short scramble, we found Todd's. Todd's looked more like a bar than a grill and it was: The smoky haze made it impossible to see the far end of the room and the only food choice was pizza. We moved on to Frankies in Roseland. In a prior scouting trip with Mariann, we had discovered Roseland is known for the Ponderosa Sun Club (a nudist club). We did not visit the Pondersosa previously, nor did we do so on this trip. (Still, if you are so inclined, it received 4.9/5 stars of 22 reviews on Google Maps: Todd's received 5/5 on a single rating on Facebook.) Marty got our first and only flat here, which we fixed right after lunch.

Our 70 mile trek led us to Rensselaer, where a post-ride cloudburst produced many picturesque rainbows. Mariann photographed this one.

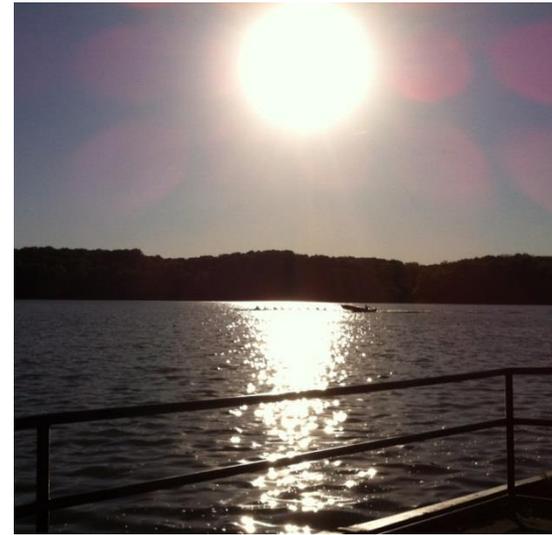


The first task the next morning was to remove a few inches of water from the wheel well of the trunk of our vehicle – my trusty 2005 Camry with over 230,000 miles. However, the cloudburst was not responsible for the water, instead a leaky Styrofoam cooler was the culprit (note to self – upgrade cooler). Marty and I headed south on the bikes for about 17 miles. The road then turned to gravel, and we phoned Mariann for help. Marty put his bike on the car for a few miles, whereas I changed bikes (had a spare in case of such mishaps) to a steel Peugeot Mariann bought in the 1980's with slightly wider tires. We re-routed on the fly. Next, the temperature increased a few degrees and a crosswind flowed. About three miles prior to lunch in Attica, that crosswind landed debris in my left eye. Immediate efforts from my water bottle were not fully successful in resolving this problem. “This (expletive deleted) day,” I muttered to myself.



At lunch, Mariann pulled out the eye wash from the medical kit, but I decided to forego that intervention as the expiration date was 10/2007 (note to self – update medical kit). A few hours later, my eye fixed itself, and we soon arrived in Crawfordsville hungry after an 80 mile day. An excellent dinner was served at the Creekside Lodge, named for the adjacent 93 mile long Sugar Creek (pictured left).

Our final travel day was the 45ish miles to our hotel in Indianapolis. We had biked much of this route on a prior trip several years back. However, this time the 20 mile long section of eastbound highway, IN-32, featured relentless semitrailer trucks. About 10 miles in, Marty and I took a break on the side of the road: An unfriendly dog barked and growled a bit, so we did not linger. We arrived, alive, shaken but not stirred, at a hip and cute lunch spot Mariann found in Lebonon. The final leg of the bike trek was quiet and warm with nearly calm winds. Marty was relieved to be finished with the riding portion as he has been struggling with a foot issue for the past month or so. That evening, we spent a few minutes at picturesque Eagle Creek Park. Note a crew with a sculling boat practicing before sunset in the picture on the right.



The following day, we visited the Indianapolis Zoo and took pictures of animals and butterflies. That evening, we joined Marty with some family, including his daughter-in-law, her husband and 9 year old grandson (who has a newer iphone than me!). As you may recall from last year's letters, Marty had a son, Jeff, who passed from brain cancer at 40 and is survived by this grandson.

June 3<sup>rd</sup> was the 5K. We were sobered in opening announcements by the fact that pancreatic cancer is now the third leading cause of cancer deaths having recently surpassed breast cancer. Yet, it was a beautiful and

healing walk along the White River in downtown Indianapolis shared with hundreds of other folks committed to battling pancreatic cancer. Perhaps because our route on this trip was less ambitious (both in miles and hills) than our prior efforts, we had no problem walking the 5K and returning to Illinois by car that evening. If you are wondering if I am one of those types who are planning the next trek before arriving at our homes, well, I guess you can ask Mariann and Marty about that.

Thank you again for helping with the efforts to address this illness through your generous gift to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network.

Mike