

Boldly Roll to DisCon 2018

There will be a group of Rotarians riding bicycles on a rails-to-trail trail from Indian River to Mackinaw City to start the District Conference on Thursday May 3. Our purpose is to raise awareness and money to eradicate polio and to have fun doing it. It is my hope to raise \$5000 (US) with this event. This is a very scenic ride to be enjoyed. Just think: Mackinac Island, no need for a bike rental and District Conference all in one week end – Life is good!

Non-Rotarians and Rotarians not staying for the conference are definitely invited to ride too!



The Trail

The trail is hard pack and crushed stone and is a very easy ride with a gentle grade. Riders will have 2 options. The full ride will start at Indian River and ride 18 miles northeast to Cheboygan. The Indian River is about 5 minutes off I-75 and features a parking lot and restrooms. Those looking for a shorter ride, can join the pack at the Cheboygan trailhead which features a large parking lot and restrooms. From Cheboygan, the group will continue 16 miles to Mackinaw City and finish at the Shepler's ferry dock.

Most of the trail is not paved and is hard pack with crushed stone. Hybrids, cruisers and off-road bicycles will be necessary. The trail is a very gentle grade and follows the western shore of Mullet Lake shortly after leaving Indian River. The 16 mile stretch from Cheboygan parallels US23, is wooded with occasional views of Lake Huron. About 2 miles from the finish, you can see the bridge and Mackinaw City.

For more trail info go to <https://www.trailink.com/trail/north-central-state-trail/>

The Plan

This is a FUN ride! Speed Racers need to relax and enjoy the trip; much like sailing vs motor boating. The plan is to finish as a group riding to the docks. To accomplish this, we will need to try to ride within a speed range that keeps the back of the pack within about 15-20 minutes of leaders on each segment. The Indian River riders will regroup at Cheboygan and join with the 16 milers. From there, the entire group will depart and regroup about a ½ mile south of the docks. We can then ride to the docks and the cheering multitudes (or maybe just a few of our fellow Rotarians and family). I am estimating riders will be riding between an 8 mph and 10 mph pace.

Logistics

Riders will be responsible for arranging transportation for themselves and bikes. I expect that some of us will have room on our bike racks to carry an additional bike or two if need be. Ride sharing is also encouraged. I am driving up with a non-rider and will have room for 1 additional bike and possibly passenger as well. I will ask one or two riders to lead and keep the front from getting too far ahead and have several riders in the back to keep people moving at the minimum pace and provide assistance/keep company for those that have breakdowns or need to be picked up. I am hoping we can have a few drivers that are willing to pick up those that are unable to finish. These SAG drivers can wait at Cheboygan and then Mackinaw City lots for calls for help. I will be planning for us to arrive at the docks in time for the 1:30 or 2:30 ferry to the island (tbd).

This should be an easy early season ride. I rode the 34 mile route October 1 with sunny weather in the high 50's. My conditioning level was lousy as I only had ridden about 50 miles all summer and the longest ride was maybe 20 miles. If I can do it, most or all of you can as well.

Sign Up

If you are interested, just email me (Russ Jones: rotary.russmjones@gmail.com) and I will keep you updated on the event, start times, ride share opportunities or needs and any other item that crops up. Weather is uncertain that time of year. I will keep watch as the date approaches. I hate cold but can handle it but water from the sky is another story. The cost at this point is simply as friends, family and your clubs to support polio plus and track the contributions. These should be incremental contributions in addition to what was already planned for The Rotary Foundation. I do not plan to audit the results, full 4-way test for fund-raising. As this is a group fundraiser and fun ride, I will only be announcing a total fund raising amount.