

e-Bugle

Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 52

May 2005

No. 5

Law of the Jungle

The testosterone was raging as Garrett Park's suddenly all-male Town Council met on May 9. Things began decorously enough. Before a good-sized, well-dressed crowd, Mayor Shawaker welcomed two new Councilmembers, Peter Benjamin and Karol (despite the first name, a man) Soltan, to the Council. She also welcomed the reelected Tony Altar. In her brief report, she noted that we've gotten another grant for maintaining our archives, this one from the Cove Foundation.

Business quickly shifted to the rough and tumble of town maintenance. Councilmember Wegner said there is a 5 or 6 foot deep sinkhole developing north of town, which we're dealing with by means of barriers and plants. On Strathmore, he said, we've managed to get several of the new sidewalks "elevated," so as to improve safety. Also on Strathmore, we're meeting soon with the State Highway Administration to talk about future plantings, as well as about our desire for corrections in some existing plantings. The Strathmore street lights, Wegner continued, are supposed to have translucent panes rather than the clear ones installed. We're working with SHA to fix this. And the retrofitting on the town lights should now be complete.

The slightly late-arriving Gene Brantly, head of the Citizens Association, now rose to announce two items of interest to those who like mass ceremonial events. First, the Citizens Association is at work on not one but two town celebrations—the July Fourth parade, of course, with this year's Fourth (assuming the police agree to stop traffic

Garrett Park Citizens Association
Garrett Park, Maryland 20896-0456



Calendar

Sat., May 28	Swimming pool opens, 10 am; pool picnic, 5 pm
Mon., May 30	No trash pickup; Memorial Day
Thurs., June 2	Jam session, Town Hall, 7 pm
Tues., June 7	Deadline for summer calendar dates, to Mary Moyer
Mon., June 13	Town Council meeting, Town Hall, 8 pm
Tues., June 14	Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30 pm (last one until fall); Bugle deadline, 4 pm (to Barbara Collier)
Sat., June 18	Special Showing: Film Society, Town Hall, <i>Young Frankenstein</i> (see p 4)
Sun., June 19	Father's Day

for us) taking place on Strathmore, so the town can celebrate not only Independence Day, but the completion of our beautiful new thoroughfare. Second, the Citizens Association would like to organize an event to welcome the new lights on Strathmore. This, too, is still in the works.

Discussion then continued from last month on the variance requested for 11122 Rokeby Avenue. Although some on the Council and in the audience worried that in granting a variance in what seemed not an "exceptional circumstance," the

(continued next page)

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(continued from previous page)

town was possibly setting a problematic precedent, Councilmember Benjamin's motion to grant the variance—on the basis of the house's unusual location on its lot, the ability of the owners to build a much larger house had they wished, and the owners' wish to maintain the character of the house and land—prevailed. The variance was approved. He and a number of other Councilmembers maintained that this decision does not set a precedent.

Regarding the retaining walls along Strathmore, Councilmember Wegner said that we have two estimates for "cultured" (fake) stone, both around \$19,000. "Color and shape decisions need to be made," he said; we need the approval of home owners along Strathmore to put private contractors on their properties and get their agreement to do maintenance as needed on the stone in front of their houses. The "Fieldstone Irregular" design, Wegner continued, seems the most attractive, and lighter colors seem better than darker.

A citizen who lives on Strathmore then rose to complain that when she and the others along that street signed on to the project "it was going to be real stone. Now it's not real stone, and I'm a little concerned that this got changed, and I'd like to know why." The Mayor replied that "No one gave us a bid for real stone," although the town solicited them. "I'm disappointed," said the homeowner. "This is a historic district. I thought we'd do better." Peter Benjamin's motion to table this matter (pending various legal activities) passed.

Discussion turned to the town's speed limit. In 1909, the town decided to set it at 6 mph, and now "History's repeating itself a hundred years later," noted Councilmember Altar, "as we again turn to the question of the town's speed limit." Because "people drive very quickly through town," he proposed a new speed limit of 20 mph, rather than the existing 25. (Such a change would be legal, since, except for Strathmore, the town has control of its streets.) "Seeing the 20 mph signs in town," Altar argued, "drivers will think, 'This is special; I have to pay attention.'"

Questions were raised about enforcement and about whether in fact people notice speed limit signs, whatever number they have on them. No motion on the issue was raised at this meeting.

Next, the Council discussed some Penn Place parking designs submitted by consulting engineers. As the Council studied these, a few questions came up. For instance, how will the farmer who each year sells his produce at Penn Place set up his market under various new configurations? And how wide should the proposed turnaround at the Rokeby end of the area be for safe turning?

Also on the question of Penn Place: Councilmember Altar suggested that we encourage Black Market Bistro to take reservations, to reduce the number of parked cars around the building and the number of people waiting for tables. Hans Wegner responded that "We can't mandate this.

It's a private business." "I wish," commented Councilmember Benjamin, in response to this idea, as well as an idea the Citizens Association put forward earlier in the evening to have the Blacks respond in a public forum to citizen questions, "we would get away from bashing the Blacks." He reminded everyone that the town was eager to attract a restaurant that would pay its own way, "and that's exactly what we have."

Some mildly hostile by-play then ensued within the Council, but the Mayor broke it up. She also had to stop a Councilmember from interrupting her in midsentence and decreeing that what she was about to say was better deferred. What she was about to say, the Mayor corrected him, was *not* better deferred, which he would discover once she finished her sentence. "It's always good when people can finish their sentences."

Finally, the Mayor announced an upcoming Council Workshop. The open meeting will take place on Sunday, May 22, at 8:30 am in the Town Office. Modest refreshments will be on offer.

This first meeting of the unisex Council made this Garrett Parker grateful that our mayor is a woman. Without her civilizing pressure, the innate barbarism of the male would have free rein.

Margaret Soltan

We're Green Again!

We're green again, courtesy of Hennie and Eugene McDowell, who remember many wonderful years in Garrett Park. We will be green through December of 2005. (If anyone would like to start the ball rolling for 2006, you know the drill.) And please pay your Citizens Association dues if you haven't; 4th of July planning has begun! If you would like to volunteer to help with the fun run, the parade, or the evening supper, please call Matt Stavish.

If you have any dates that need to be put on the *Bugle* calendar for the summer (June, July, August), please get them to me by June 7, as I will be out of town on the deadline day and need to have all my information ready to go before then.

Mary Moyer

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Jack Mandel

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Town Administrator Notes

Town Elections: Many thanks for the fine work of Chief Election Judge Barbara Shidler and Judges Susan Frant and Donn Mader at the polls on Election Day, and to Brenda Artim, who came and assisted with the count. Congratulations to the winners, Tony Altar, Peter Benjamin, and Karol Soltan, and thanks to Fred Koomanoff for making it a contest. Best wishes to the new Council!

New Trash Collector: The town has signed a contract with Montgomery County Sanitation and Recycling, Inc. (not *the* county) to replace Waste Management as the town's municipal refuse collector. The service will continue as before, but the days have changed. Trash will be collected, as before, on Monday and Thursday, but now yard waste and recycling will both be collected on Monday. In that the first Monday in July is a holiday, the first trash collection will be on Saturday, July 2. Yard waste and recycling will begin the next Monday, July 11. We'll be sending out a mailing with all the details.

Garrett Park Building Permits: We are well into the building season, and I would like to remind everyone to please check with the Town Office to find out if your project needs a Garrett Park permit. A town permit is required to demolish any building larger than 400 square feet. Also, a Garrett Park building permit is required whenever a new structure is to be built, including a new house, shed, garage, or similar structure, or when the size of a house is proposed to be increased with an addition, a deck, a porch, or the like. The town is concerned only with the rela-

tionship of the proposed construction to the size of the lot and its setback from the lot's boundary. The town also requires a permit for driveway or parking pad construction or repair. You should apply for a town building permit before applying for a Montgomery County building permit.

Montgomery County Building Permits: Montgomery County requires building permits for any structure above ground level (not patios or driveways) including sheds, garages, decks, fences, etc. A county permit is also required for any alteration to a structure (other than ordinary repair or maintenance) and for demolition. The county is concerned with zoning, health and safety, plumbing, structural issues, electrical work, and the like. For more information, contact the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services at 240-777-6300.

As always, the Town Office will assist you in any way possible. I will be away on my annual vacation in the Isle of Man from May 28 to June 15. (If you would like to see a photograph of one of my Harley-Davidson racing motorcycles at the Isle of Man in 1975, go to www.harleykxrtrt.com/images/01p-1976-xrtt-tt-1sm.jpg.) Laura Krupp will hold the fort while I am away. I am sure things will carry on smoothly in my absence.

Ted Pratt
Town Administrator

PO Notes

The collection box for out-of-town mail has been moved at the request of the town to the top of the hill. In postalese, it is a "snorkel" box. You can drive by and drop your mail into it, thus avoiding parking. It is located in the same spot as it was before the renovation.

Not to beat a dead horse, but please redouble your efforts to get your PO Box number on all mail. The Postal Service has a goal of 85% for all mail to reach its distribution destination in delivery sequence. Garrett Park mail is about 60% in delivery sequence now. We have a way to go.

I will be retiring as your Postmaster at the end of May (another reason to have your box number on your mail: a new person will not know everyone the way I do). It has been lovely to work at the Garrett Park Post Office and meet all the wonderful people in town.

Veronica Sauvain

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Wrong Impression

At the most recent Town Council meeting, I asked that an item be placed on the agenda, in response to citizen requests, to consider reducing the speed limit in town from 25 mph to 20 mph. At the Council meeting I made clear that I supported such a reduction, but commented that just changing the speed limit signs in town would not produce the desired effect. That would have to be accompanied by an educational campaign to encourage town residents to obey that limit. However, the May 11 *Gazette* article on this discussion did not include this context, leaving the impression that I was not in favor of the change. I would like to emphasize that I have been consistently in favor of enhancing safety by reducing auto speeds, exemplified by the major traffic calming project on Strathmore for which many town residents and I labored long and hard.

Peter Benjamin

GPES

The Garrett Park Elementary School has had a severe case of idol worship. In need of computers (the old ones are being replaced by the Board of Education, but short 25 of the number we have now), the staff decided to throw together (throw being the operative word) an "Idol" show of their own. Sixteen acts performed before the Idol judges and took their just (and sometimes unjust) criticisms in good form. We are well on the way to raising the \$25,000 needed to fund the missing computers. Plus the staff has had a good time adjusting to performing for adults!

The Spring Fair was a success in spite of the rainy day. The PTA provided a very nice lunch during Staff Appreciation Week. And Project ACES (All Children Exercising Simultaneously) was enjoyed by the whole student body as well as staff and parents on May 4. A half-hour of dance, exercise, and fun was had by all.

If you have any empty toner cartridges from computer printers that you are saving, bring them by the office of the school. For each cartridge turned in to a recycling center the school earns \$1, which is then used to help buy more cartridges. This collection will continue throughout the summer and all next year. So store up a stack of empties and donate them to the school.

The end of school is fast approaching. Kindergarten Orientation brought in enough students so that there will be four all-day kindergarten classes again next year. The rest of the class numbers are still being decided. Forms were sent home asking if children would be returning next year to Garrett Park, and the forms are slowly drifting into the office.

Mary Moyer

Saturday Night at the Movies

Get ready to join all Garrett Parkers at Mel Brooks' cult classic, *Young Frankenstein*, one of the funniest movies ever made, on Saturday night, June 18, at the Garrett Park Town Hall. Attention all Garrett Park kids! Have you thought about a gift for Dad on Father's Day? Treat your dad to a night at the movies! He'll love it! And it's about the cheapest gift in town, so the whole family could show up, as well. Admission is \$1 per person, unless you're already a member of the Film Society, in which case, it's free. We'll be selling hot dogs and hamburgers and candy and popcorn and drinks, too. Maybe even some sort of ice cream or cake for dessert. We're not exactly sure how much we'll charge for these, but chances are it'll be a dollar or so for the food and maybe 50¢ for the others. We'll start selling food at 6 pm and show the movie at a little before 7 pm.

Let's add all this up: A classic comedy for all ages! A great way to treat Dad to a movie he'll love! Hot dogs and burgers and ice cream! On a Saturday night after school has ended for the year! At a price that's hard to beat! With lots of other friends and families from all over Garrett Park! It's going to be a fun, wonderful event, and we look forward to seeing you on June 18.

Finally, we're sure there are lots of folks who won't be coming with their fathers. To everyone in the community, we say, "Welcome!" We'll be just as excited to see you, too!

Jack Mandel

GIVES

GIVES is looking for volunteers! GIVES is a Garrett Park tradition. Since the early 1970s, the organization collects money one Saturday a month at the post office. (You can also pick up an envelope at the post office, and donate that way.) The proceeds are split between the Zacchaeus Soup Kitchen and the American Friends Service Committee.

The original gang that started GIVES, as a way to make 100 percent of Garrett Parkers' charity money arrive at its destination, needs new recruits. Would you be willing very occasionally to sit at a table on a Saturday at the post office for two hours—once every six months or even once a year? All it takes is a smile. It's a great way to see your neighbors. Kids can join their parents and—if they're 12 and over—handle the table by themselves and collect student service learning credit at Montgomery County schools. (First they have to fill out a request form though; it's on the Internet at <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/ssl/pdf/560-50.pdf> and also at their schools.) And then there's the annual soup dinner, where you can discover soups beyond your imagination.

If you're interested in volunteering occasionally, please contact Glenda Ingham.



Arboretum Notes

Three important and successful events took place during the splurge of new spring color.

If your grounds don't exhibit the subtle shades of spring colors, then you missed the April 30 *Plant Swap*, where the best things in life are free, especially when you know out of whose yard they came. More than 17 participants walked around and then out with virtually all the booty, dwelling mostly on the native offerings. Margaret Goldsborough, Leah Brennan, Kay Hager, Florence Gootenberg, Marian Green, and Ann Atlee were among the big contributors. Honorable mentions go to Dale Chua and Jack Mandel, late arrivals with Japanese maples and a wide selection of seed-grown greenhouse veggies, respectively. A few indoor exotics (walking iris) were noted in the mix of native flower plants and young trees, and were eagerly snapped up. Special mention goes to Leo Bradford, who transferred the heavy tree and bush containers to and from the Plant Swap site for participants. Special thanks go to Jennie Rothwell and Kay Hager for organizing the timely event on a perfectly drizzly Saturday morning. Paul Dickson, Tance Harris, and others want to see this event repeated again next year.

Weed Warrior Day was held on Sunday, May 1, in Porcupine Woods for the first time in 3 years. Normally, we alternate between the town-owned Porcupine Woods and Cambria Park each year for our cleanout of invasive plants and trees. So we had some catchup to perform in Porcupine Woods, and catch up we did, by taking down climbing ivy and clearing out around our *Magnolia grandiflora* and American chestnut tree saplings, while preserving and giving room to delicate native flower stands. Kenny Ingham (certified warrior) showed up before normal starting time and weeded out much of the wild mustard plant, before it could go to seed again. One warrior arrived by bike, and several others arrived with needed shovels, loppers, and tree saws. Matthew Nau's forester expertise helped guide us as

we were clearing out bigger understory invasives, like Norway maple and bush honeysuckle, with the help of a ladder. Nick Farr applied his leverage technique to uproot bush honeysuckle.

Janet Wegner attacked English ivy to preserve our snowdrops. Chris Keller put in a cameo appearance. New homeowners Dan Marsh and Jenny Knivanek (Modine house) gave valuable time to our ongoing effort, and seen near the main path in the late afternoon was Art Heyman, doing his thing. Special mention goes to Pat Keating, who devoted significant clearing time while recovering from a recent knee operation. And conversation was ringing throughout the woods, partly because of the contested Council election for the following day. In all, more than a dozen warriors each spent as much as 3 hours to return our Porcupine Woods to its native condition. All the uprooted invasives have been placed in piles to decompose and enrich the soil. Please look for the next semi-annual Weed Warrior Day in the fall. There is still more to be done.

Last, through the generosity of Ann Atlee, Porcupine Woods is richer with even more native flowers and ferns planted by her careful hand. Remember to stay on the footpaths as you observe nature's treats in your woods.

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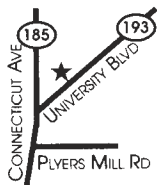
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Bugle Notes . . . Sweet and Sour

- ♪ Jeffrey Lepak (U.S. Army) is now in Iraq. He is a Master Sergeant in the Arizona National Guard and was deployed to the Persian Gulf in December of 2004. He is with the 729th Transportation Unit headquartered north of Baghdad at Anaconda. Jeff's family (wife Annette and two children, Alex and Debbie) live in Phoenix. Those friends and ex-neighbors who wish to write to Jeff may reach him at: 729th Transportation Company, APO AE 09391.
- ♪ Our condolences to the Griffin family on the death of Michael, son of George and Sybil, who died on May 1. He leaves behind his wife, Sheri, and children Kaitlyn, Allison, James, and David; another son, Kenneth Eugene, predeceased him. Memorial contributions may be made to Kaitlyn and/or Allison Griffin (College Fund), c/o Chevy Chase Bank, 2801 University Blvd., West, Kensington, MD 20895.
- ♪ Our condolences also go to Tom and Elaine Kennedy on the sudden death on May 1, of their son, Thomas James III. He died at his home in Churchton, Maryland. He leaves his wife Charlotte; sisters Ann of Austin, Texas, and Joan of West Hartford, Connecticut; and brothers Paul of Silver Spring and Christopher of San Francisco, California. Donations may be made to the Thomas Kennedy Memorial Fund, c/o Cape Anne Citizens' Association, PO Box 58, Churchton, MD 20733.
- ♪ Kitty Barclay has been spotted out walking with a cane, after months of recuperation.
- ♪ Look at where our "Garrett Park Stone" has now been located (at the top of the driveway by the PO entrance). No more island by the train station waiting room?
- ♪ Barbara Shidler is looking for some volunteers to help with the Town Archives at Penn Place. Are you good at sorting things?
- ♪ Bonnie Tyler and Barbara Shidler paid a visit to Marguerite Murray, who is living with family in Alexandria. They had a splendid lunch, and Marguerite sends love to all her friends left behind here. She would appreciate phone calls or visits.
- ♪ The Progressive Dinner in April was a smash hit with over 100 Parkers participating. Thanks go to Elin Quigley for orchestrating the event.
- ♪ Constantine Seferlis' funeral at the Washington Cathedral was well attended. In honor of all of his work for the cathedral, a Quarter Peal was rung on the bells after the service. Ted Pratt mentioned that he once saw Constantine working there in the early 70's.
- ♪ Back home from the hospital, Philip Moyer is still recovering from his bout with pneumonia. He has managed to go back to work, but still has a hacking cough. Any other hospital stays of town residents to report?
- ♪ The Kentucky Derby/Azalea party held at Donal McLaughlin's on May 7 attracted around 50 people. A good time was had by all, even if a surprise horse did win the race.
- ♪ MaryPIRG (the Maryland Public Interest Research Group) sent us a press release about its campaign to protect the Chesapeake Bay. The group is working to pass legislation that would require large chicken farms to help fund efforts for cleanup; these farms produce 200 tons of chicken waste every year, which contributes to the nitrogen-produced dead zone in the bay. So expect to see some MaryPIRGers on your doorstep, asking for support. For more information, visit www.marypirg.org or call (410) 467-0439.

Volunteers Needed

The five working groups of the Garrett Park Infrastructure Committee are soliciting volunteers to participate in the long-term planning and prioritization of projects for these important areas. If you wish to make a difference in the quality of life in Garrett Park, please contact the head of a working group within the next week:

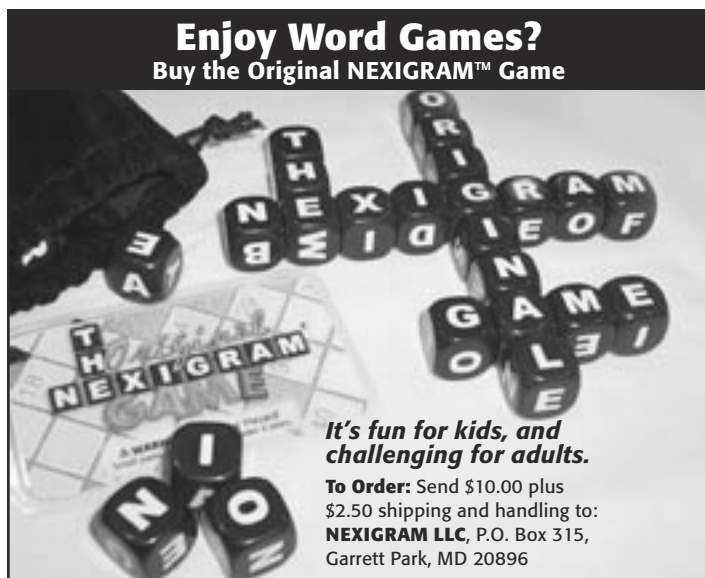
Tom Rodes	Arboretum
Dave Almy	Buildings & grounds
John Bennett	Parks & open spaces
Donn Mader	Rights of way
Susan Frant	Streets and drains

Tony Altar, Town Council Representative,
Ted Pratt, Town Staff Representative, garrett-park@comcast.net

Our Heartfelt Thanks

The annual Musicale on April 10 was another big success, raising \$582 for the Ilah Gieser Music Scholarship for a beginning musician for one school year. Thanks go to Sue Petito, who organized the program, all the participants, and generous supporters. Please let us know if you are interested in participating next year.

Megumi (Meme) Lincoln



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Letter from the Mayor

Last Saturday evening we were visiting with a few neighbors while standing in Kenilworth Avenue. We were admiring the flowers and the beautiful late day sunlight. One of the children was running a lemonade and dog biscuit stand. Another neighbor came home with several bags of groceries. One father and son left our group briefly to go carry in the groceries, and the lemonade/dog biscuit salesgirl ran up the street in her stocking feet to sell the lady a few dog biscuits for her "helper" dog.

This sort of thing happens fairly often in the spring, summer, and fall in our town. It can only happen because we don't have very heavy traffic and if our drivers go slowly. Members of the Town Council have become concerned about the many drivers who drive well above the town speed limit of 25 mph, and there was talk of lowering the speed limit to 20 mph. In 1909 the town speed limit was 6 mph. I don't think that we need to lower the limit to the 1909 level, but I do urge every driver to drive slowly in town to protect our children (who often play in the street), our pets, and our community way of life that allows for friendly and pleasant street conversations, as well as lemonade and dog biscuit stands.

To help us remember earlier times of our town, Town Archivist Barbara Shidler has been helping select pictures and other items from our

archives to frame and hang in the street level hallway and the post office lobby. Please enjoy them. The people who came to the First Monday of the Month Coffee and Tea Break on May 2 had a great time looking at the pictures. The next Coffee/Tea Break will be June 6. I have invited Senator Jennie Forehand to join us: 10:30 in the street level lobby of Penn Place. Be there!

The New Infrastructure Committee has made a good start under the leadership of Councilmember Tony Altar. The committee will be reviewing the town's infrastructure, identifying problem areas, analyzing the effectiveness of previous infrastructure work, and working with other town committees to establish 1, 2 and 5 year plans for infrastructure work in town. Please note the article on page 6 and consider becoming a volunteer on one of the new committee's working groups.

As one of the candidates noted during the candidates' forum, Garrett Park is a beautiful town, and this is much to the credit of our very hard-working and dedicated town staff. Please remember to thank them as they go about continuing to make this a wonderful place to live. When I first moved here almost 36 years ago, I said this is the only place east of Montana I want to live. It's still true.

Carolyn Shawaker

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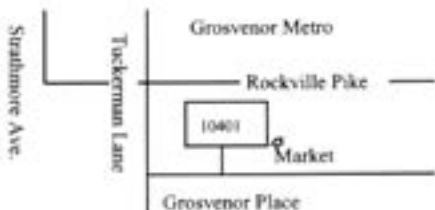
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Road Trip

Excerpts from emails from former Council-member Ken Schwartz, bicycling from San Diego, California, to Jacksonville, Florida, this spring. (This is his retirement gift to himself.)

April 2. In Sun City. Well, I have made it through the first 10% of the trip. The first 2 days out of San Diego were rough—right off the start, we had some significant climbs. And, of course, we are carrying about 35–40 lb of gear, including tent and sleeping bags. My strength seems to be holding up reasonably well. We have 12 in total, including our 25-year-old female leader. And I am only the third oldest. I think that the biggest trials are in front of us. We have, for example, an 8,000 ft pass to go through in New Mexico. I am not looking forward to that climb.

April 8. Still Doing OK. I am now 2 weeks into the trip; today we crossed the continental divide. The trip has been beautiful and tiring. It takes almost 2 hours in the morning to get going: repacking, taking down the tent, eating breakfast, and packing lunch (invariably a p&j sandwich and a meat and cheese sandwich). We get off sometime between 7 and 8. We bicycle for the better part of the day and usually haul into an RV park about 3 or 4. To date, our rides have been a minimum of 20 miles and a maximum of 75 miles. The weather has been great, but I am getting a bit tired of the relatively high wind. Yes, on several occasions I have questioned my sanity in undertaking this trip. My legs feel a bit rubbery

with the recent climbs, but I am faring reasonably well. The past couple of days have been particularly beautiful—not too much road traffic, and wonderful desert vistas. Yesterday, after cresting a 6,300 ft pass (a 2,700 ft climb), we passed through a deserted ponderosa pine forest.

April 17. Texas and More Texas. Yesterday we were supposed to ride 75 miles. However, that trip was aborted when one of our riders fell ill from heat exhaustion, and we ran into some fairly stiff easterly winds. At one point, we were barely averaging 4 miles an hour on flat ground, and the wind pushed us around severely.

April 29. Middle of Texas. Well, I was able to survive the 90 mile day, and I am now just east of Austin. I met up with Nancy and spent the past couple of days with her and her two sisters in and just outside of Austin. I have enjoyed sleeping in actual beds. It has been a welcome break. I have also seen Emma Lincoln, a Garrett Park friend who is visiting UT/Austin for the first time; Emma will commence graduate work at UT this fall. One of our riders had an accident and is now recuperating. Apparently, he lost control of his bike on a downhill and crashed. He has some facial injuries and an injured spleen. The hill country of Texas has been quite attractive, lots of wildflowers. While the heat may get us, at least we won't be struggling up steep hills (or so I think). The trip is now more than half over and I continue to do well. —Ken