



RAGBRAI Letter #3-Final?

15 July 2024

It's time to get serious-or perhaps well past that time... As I write this, we are 4 days away from time to just do RAGBRAI LI 2024. So I guess the fence-sitting, "getting those training miles in," and all that stuff is past now. I believe the experts say to give your body this week to rest and recover from the training miles, so that you start fresh on Sunday morning.

Here is the best content/info I can provide to you, in bullet form:

1. Note that there is a "Meet and Greet" at Single Speed Brewery in Waterloo on Friday evening to begin to get to know each other. IF the crew is prepared with packing and logistics, we will be there to join you. I look forward to seeing many of our out of town guests there.
2. Departure is from the Central Middle School in Waterloo per the earlier notes. Be there at 7:30 so we can load your bike. Bring your blanket, but we have spares. Your pedals will need to come off. Don't forget your helmet. The bus will be there at 8:30 for you to put your bags on it. Be sure to sign in!
3. I'm including a Packing List updated from previous years. The big deal this year is that you will be loading and unloading your bag from the baggage truck. Thus you can easily find it, and it will be dry in case of rain. We will have both a set of steps into the truck

and a ramp. At the risk of repeating myself, pack lightly, with several lighter bags if necessary.

4. We will have a little wagon and a John Deere Gator along to help with relocating your bags if the campground gets spread out from the baggage truck.
5. There will be a single page information sheet in your packet at check-in with key person phone numbers, protocol, etc. I will also attach it to this note. NEVER, EVER LEAVE THE RIDE AND GO HOME WITHOUT NOTIFYING US. This is a big deal to us and all your fellow charter members.
6. There will NOT be the traditional RAGBRAI book included in your packet since they made that virtual this year. As a registered RAGBRAI rider, you should have a recent e-mail with a link to the virtual book. Be advised that you may or may not have good internet service on the ride to Glenwood, or in any of the towns, so it would be good to scan it before time. (I previously used it to burn up a bunch of time on the bus ride to the starting town)
7. Also important, the RAGBRAI organization has made available on their website a set of two maps for each town. One shows the location of ALL the charters and campgrounds, etc. The other shows the vendors. The print is small, but I found them to be very useful, especially since there is a consistent format. If all else fails, they could lead you to our campsite each day, but again only if you have a printed copy or internet access. I highly recommend you take a look at them and consider having a downloaded or paper copy.
8. Likewise, but much less critical is that there are downloadable maps of the daily route. Nice, but not critical. Just follow the crowd, and watch for our signs in the overnight town. Can you tell by now, that I'm a map-geek?
9. Troy Buzynski, the president of Cedar Valley Cyclists, created routes in Ride with GPS software that will take you directly to our campsites each day. I've included the link to his routes in the mail. You can download and read/print the routes if you have an

internet connection. However, to track your location on the route if you do not have internet, you need their “premium membership.” Many more details at ridewithgps.com

10. A word of caution about bugs. I normally haven't had problems with mosquitoes, etc. on RAGBRAI, but this year may be different. My lawn at home is terrible with them because we've had a lot of rain this season. Thus I expect they may be a problem on the ride also, especially the first night when we are in the most forested site of the week. Come prepared with your remedy of choice!

11. For the newbies, (and Old Bob, me) the secret to success on a long, hot, hilly day on RAGBRAI is to get up and out early, put in a few miles, stand in line and relax for breakfast, and press on for several walks thru towns. It is nice to have the bulk of the ride behind you when the heat and breeze of the afternoon arrives. Some of my best naps ever have been on a shady hillside at the top of a hill in the mid-afternoon. Note that southern Iowa has fewer towns than the north, and that ad hoc water stops, etc. may not be as common as usual. Sometimes the towns or counties discourage little stands, but not always. So....be prepared with a good water supply, and re-fill it at every chance you have.

12. So we've got you thru the first day. Life is good. You should roll into our campground at Red Oak ready for a chair in the shade and a beverage of your choice, and hopefully a warm shower. I have good news and bad news. Our campsite in Red Oak is easy to find. It is directly under the large orange water tower. You can't miss it. The Bad News is that they put water towers at the top of the highest spot in towns, so you will have one more hill under your belt than everyone else!

13. Speaking of Beverages, Coolers under the CVC canopy are stocked with iced beverages (beer, soft drinks, sports drinks, water). We do not sell these items, so there is no transaction or change made. We ask that riders contribute to the money box or utilize the QR code displayed under the canopy commensurate with beverages consumed so we can replace the inventory daily.

**The suggested rates are:
Water and pop - \$1.00**

Sport drinks - \$2.00
Domestic Beers - \$3.00
Craft beer - \$4.00
Coffee - \$1.00

If you drop a \$10 or \$20 into the cash box, keep a mental tally of when you have exhausted your contribution as it is entirely on the honor system. The beverage selections have expanded greatly in the past few years so it will be impossible to respond to every request. **Our goal is that the Beverage Fund, which includes all the beverages and lots of ice, is self-supporting. I've challenged the Hospitality Team to search out and find your brew of choice, if you communicate it to them. I have provided them with the input from you on the earlier survey. Our goal is not to nickel-and-dime you to death, but rather accommodate those who just want cold water as well as the folks with a highly developed taste for brews.**

We are going to try something new this year for the last day. It is always a challenge for the slower riders (like me) to hurry along to make it to the end town, and equally frustrating for the faster riders to wait the hours for everyone to show up for the bus. We ask that you plan to be at the loading site at 2:30 pm on Saturday.

IF things go well with our shower and hospitality trailer concept this year, we may come to the end town and set up showers and the refreshments for the folks to have a more relaxing time waiting for the full group to show up. That is a commitment to consider, but not a promise!

This note is just getting too long, but there is one more topic I want to touch:

The culture of RAGBRAI and the culture of the Cedar Valley Cyclists Charter

When I rode my first RAGBRAI 13 years ago, I noted to Roger White that by the end of the week, I had never heard an f-bomb uttered, except for one and that was in our camp, and how nice people were. That person no longer rode with CVC. A lot has changed in our culture and the language in the past 13 years, but I still find RAGBRAI folks to be exceptionally friendly, sharing, and nice. It is why I'm still in the game, and hope to continue. There is a little Catholic Church about a half mile from our campsite in Glenwood. I plan to attend 5:00 pm Mass there Saturday afternoon and pray like crazy that all goes well and our best laid plans come to successful and satisfying fruition. But God has a sense of humor and with your help we will just roll with whatever comes our way. As I heard many times last year, "It's RAGBRAI!"

Cheers, and Welcome Aboard. Let's have some fun.

Bob Recker

Deb Bartels

Cedar Valley Cyclists