

PREFACE

The following diary from 1981, as understood, was originally recorded enroute by Marie Vreeland, Len's sister. The entire document has been re-typed for improved readability. All basic entries have been retained. The changes made involve more use of pronouns and in cases of food(s)/drink, just the items are listed. Our gratitude to Marie for meticulously recording the events of that grueling two weeks.

From this record the entire route was reconstructed except for the exact roads taken across New Jersey.

Began Monday, June 22, 1981 – 12:01am – Santa Monica, Ca. City Hall

Finished - Tuesday, July 7, 12:13:24 am—NY City Hall **15 days, 0 hours, 13 min, 24 sec**

Recap:

Miles each day:

Monday -	300 miles (270 miles of the route & 30 miles of detour & errors)
Tuesday –	168
Wed -	200
Thurs -	163
Fr -	169
Sat -	248
Sun -	176
Mon -	195
Tues -	255
Wed -	142
Thurs -	192
Fri -	150
Sat -	150
Sun -	161
Mon -	220 (approx.)
Tues -	2
Total	2891

Abbreviations:

CB	Citizen's Band Radio
B&M	Butter & Mayonnaise [on slice(s) of 7-grain bread]
DLT	Desiccated Liver Tablets
MC	Motorcycle
MH	Motor Home
PB&J	Peanut butter & jelly

Trivia Stat:

of beers Len drank! - **23**

Ray Hoffeld 8/21/22

“Avatar 2000 Trans-America”
June 22 – July 7, 1981

Len Vreeland
Broken Spoke – 918 Union Blvd., Allentown, Pa. 18103

Crew:
Carol Vreeland – Better-half & Chef

Tom “Who” Vreeland
1143 E. Marks St., Apt. 307, Allentown, Pa. 18103

Marie Vreeland
1415 W. Broome St., Lantana, Fl. 33462

Carmen Hagelgans
909 Stratford St., Bethlehem, Pa. 18108

Ed Kay
1104 Prospect Ave., Bethlehem, Pa. 18018

Neal Novak
1979 S. Idaho St., Allentown, Pa. 18102

Greg Yatko
969 E. Walnut St., Allentown, Pa. 18103

CB Handles:

Record Breaker	-	Len
Two-Wheeler	-	Motorcycle
Broken Spoke	-	Van
Fuji 1	-	Motor Home

This trip really began on the afternoon of June 13, 1981, when Len, Carmen, Greg, Neal & Ed left Allentown. They drove the van and motor home to Calif. Hitched to the van was a utility trailer that was used to transport the two Avatar bikes and the motorcycle.

They arrived at the home of Hans and Frieda Eckert, 165 Briarwood St., Irvine, Ca. 92714, Thursday afternoon, June 18.

Carol & Tom flew from Newark to LA on Saturday, June 20.
Marie flew from Ft. Lauderdale to LA also on June 20.

On Sunday, some of the crew enjoyed the beach.

After finishing preparations at Hans & Frieda's home we all left to meet Marty Ostrow of CCN-TV news. They interviewed Len and taped it for a program called "What's up America". This program is shown on Showtime cable tv. They said the tape should be released either in August or September.

Midnight Sunday-Monday June 22, 1981

12:01am Len on his way from city hall-Santa Monica, Ca.
Hans, Frieda (their children Michelle & Brian) and their friend Miner accompany us to lead us out of the city.
Lost 2 minutes looping the loop at Olympic Blvd.

2:44-2:52 am First stop after 40.9 miles. Len ate a banana, put on long pants and took a nectarine along.

3:05 am Hans & family wished Len good luck and then left us as we entered I-210.
It was a clear night, light breeze out of the west, temperature 78°. Greg rode the MC from midnight to 4:15am when Tom Who took over. Neal driving the van, Ed Kay navigating, Carmen driving MH, Carol & Marie took turns riding shot gun.

Seems Greg saw a woman, but guess what she didn't have a nose. Neal asked "how does she smell?" "Awful" was the reply.

4:45-4:51am Break time. Len had a sandwich of 7- grain bread & sharp cheese-changed t-shirt and short sleeved jersey and put on running shoes because of sort of sore big toe.

Under 15-E (now *probably* I-215) onto Washington St. to Barton Road. At intersection of Washington & Barton we inadvertently went west instead of East on Barton Road. We went about 3 miles out of our way.

5:40am Len had yogurt, bran & vitamins while riding.

6am Beautiful sunrise.

6:15am Long freight train holds us up. Changed to white cycling shoes & took a banana along.

7:01-7:08 Break time—he changed to white t shirt, white shorts, short sleeved jersey and took a peeled, sectioned orange with him.
Ed & Greg taking a needed rest. Neal slept for about 2 hrs. Carol had a short nap. Carmen still on first shift. Fuji Mom making coffee, keeping log etc.

8:44-8:54 Break time near Thousand Palms. Tom off & Greg on MC. Put on white spandex suit, desert ice hat. Drank some honey soda and changed into sneakers with yellow ties. Changed rear wheel on Avatar. Just before this break Len was doing 40 mph-cross tail wind.
Carmen taking deserved rest and “Big Red” Carol now doing a good job of driving the MH.

9:48am Fuzz-2 highway patrol cars stopped & chased Len off I-10 at Central “Indio” exit. Van with Len. Greg off for gas. MH continuing on I-10 to Desert Center where we will all meet. Len & Van on local route to Desert Center which is a real bummer.

10am Len & van stop in downtown Indio for directions and then two slow trains. I think they have some mighty long trains around these parts.

10:17am Off again.

Carmen driving the MH again. Greg now with MH on I-10. Greg out of contact for a while—was ahead of us. We were stopped at a marker “17 miles to Desert Center”. Carol & Greg on MC now back tracking on I-10, from Mecca. Atlas map identifies this as 195 – map #6 does not indicate a route #. Greg and Carol staying here. Carmen & Marie in MH at Desert Center exit. Trucker reports Len back about 15 miles.

1:44pm Len & van meet Carol & Greg.
Len & van apparently went off 195 and came on I-10 west of 195 at “29 Palms”.

2:14-2:19pm Break time.

2:50pm Len, van, MC, and MH all together again.

3pm Here comes the Fuzz again. Difference is this one stopped to see if everything was ok. However, at this point there was not a parallel road. Seems the law is if there is a parallel road the bicyclist must ride it rather than the interstate route.

Exchanged warm bottles of erg & water for cold ones. Temperature here 118°. Changed from white Saucony shoes into bike shoes.

4:09-4:12pm Paused only to remove walkie talkie from Avatar.

That nice patrol man just came back to bring a gallon jug full of ice water for Len and wished him good luck. Matter of fact most of that water was frozen.

About 5pm 1/2 bottle of erg, yeast, 10 DLTs, Vits A&D, drank water and more erg and used some cold wet cloths.

Please note-Carmen, Neal & Greg like this beach-only 1 problem-not warm enough-Think this day has been too much for them.

5:43pm Len stopped to rest for a snooze of a half hour.

6:33pm Off & really moving.

7:42-7:45pm Water stop 1 mile west of Colorado River.

8:30pm Stopped put on short sleeved jersey, racing shorts, white shoes & drank some water.

9:41pm Stopped 2 miles east of Quartzite, ready to quit, Len dissatisfied with driver's performance.

He is upset because drivers not following his request for one vehicle to stay in front & one behind him and to stay out of truck lanes. Sag vehicles were not traveling minimum speed in traffic lanes. Len says he will continue only if everyone operates under safe procedures. He feels responsible for everyone's life and would rather lose their friendship & have them alive. No single person in charge. Says he doesn't mind doing it if everyone will cooperate. Agreed to find a place to stop & sleep.

10:27pm Stopped for the night. Location Exit 26 Golden Nugget Road, 26 miles into Az. Good day, **300 miles (270 miles of the route & 30 miles of detour & errors)** We miss Al, Rick & Marshall. Len taking a shower in MH but ran out of water.

Tuesday-June 23, 1981

- 4am Off we go-temp. warm (80ish) Was very warm while we slept. Not a stir of a breeze. Sky was beautiful last night-all the stars that exist were visible, it seemed. Tom said it looked like a planetarium. He was so right. Before we left Len had yogurt, bran & vitamins.
Enroute he had ½ egg sandwich, ½ cup black coffee & honey soda.
- 5:32am Another beautiful sunrise.
- 6:11-6:16am Cold water on Len's feet, he had some ginger soda, and took dried fruit with him. Len said no rear-end problem this trip and because of that he has a positive outlook for today.
- 7am Salome-no gas stations open but found a phone booth and called a report to "Phone Booth". They report they had 117 inquiries on Monday.
- 8am MH riding beside Len gave him cold cloth for face & neck and gave him ginger soda. Covered 60 miles this am.
- 8:29-8:45am Break for a footbath. A slice of 7-grain bread B&M and a bowl of rice. We met two bikers on this break. A young lady and her boyfriend. In about 3 weeks they pedaled 1700 miles from San Francisco. The young lady had been touring in France when someone stole her bicycle. She was disappointed because she wanted to be there for the "Tour de France". At this event she says all shops close, and everyone enjoys themselves. But she came home and decided to tour here in the U.S. with her boyfriend. She told Marie about a book written by a ranger named Edward Abbey entitled "Desert Solitaire". She said it was excellent, so we'll have to read it.
- 9:39-9:42am Stopped to prepare for the desert.
- 11:02-11:04am Coming over Yarnell Mtn. we poured ice water over Len's feet. At a pull-over spot on Yarnell Mtn. 2 photographers took his picture.
- 12:47-1:12pm Bowl of rice, ½ egg sandwich and a foot bath. The sheik hat gets an addition here – a Broken Spoke cap, folded in half, filled with ice and pinned to the sheik hat.
- 1:45pm About a mile down the mountain, Len got drowsy very suddenly and next thing he knew he was off the side of the road. MH crew was grocery shopping & van was following Len. When they rounded a curve, there he was on the opposite side of the road. This was Len's plan for an emergency signal when not accompanied by the MC & no means of communication (to go to the opposite side of the road). He was not hurt, in fact he didn't fall, but did ride off the edge of the road. A note here-it seems Marino on one of his trips fell asleep & fell off his bike 4 times.

- 2:01pm Off again and Len is accompanied by Greg on MC. Tom is on a break. Not using the MC all the time. Len said only when there is heavy traffic or when he feels he needs it. (We learned later this wasn't the best of ideas. It was much better for him to have someone there to talk to. He took his radio with him many times but just wasn't the same.
We are alternating hand-feeding Len him cups of erg & ice water. Not taking bottles through the desert as much because they don't stay cold very long.
Tom relieved Greg on MC.
Taking vitamin C every hour.
- 3:28-3:33pm Stop 1 mile north of Wilhoit, Az. Puts on sneaks with yellow laces and put metal plates in the rat-traps for these shoes.
- 4:53pm Stop at north side of Prescott, Az. Ate a bowl of rice & had a cup of black coffee. Slept for half an hour.
- 5:55pm Up & at 'em, headed to Mingus Mtn. Has a tail-wind, moving very smoothly & easily. Seems 100% better after rest.
- 7:18-7:20pm Stop at base of Mingus Mtn., south of Jerome, Az.
- 7:28-7:30pm Pit stop and had two sips of beer.
Greg & Carol riding MC. Carol took some movies from MC.
10 miles to Jerome. Carol back in MH.
- 8:23-8:32pm Top of Mingus Mtn. (7,023') Stop to put Christmas trees & beacon flashers on Avatar & motorcycle.
What a ride he had through Jerome.
- 9:25pm Stop for the night. # miles from Cottonwood, Az. Len had a Coors at bedtime. Weather was hot. Len's spirit a little low but that downhill run at Jerome picked everyone up.
168 miles today.

Wednesday, June 24, 1981

- 2:32am Len & Tom Who off. Weather forecast for Flagstaff area 100° high & overcast. Cooler temp-thank goodness-but slight headwind.
- 4:20am Downgrade into Sedona about 1 ¼ miles to Oak Creek Canyon. Tom trading places with Greg.
- 5:30 am Stops for yogurt, vitamins & ½ cup of black coffee.

- 6:45am Pretty darn chilly up here. In fact, it is darn right cold but is a welcome relief. Len is happy. He is making good time in cooler temperatures. All through this area now he should average 15-16 mph.
- 8-8:26am Stopped & ate a bowl of rice, 1 slice of 7-grain bread B&M, vit C, 1 cup of black coffee & cup of orange juice.
Work copy of this log & post cards Marie was writing just got an iced tea bath.
To travel in the MH, you must get used to tilted – never seems to be level – area to stop at.
- 9:42-10:08am Break time at Two Guns, Az. Alcohol foot bath, drank some cherry soda & took along a bottle of OJ. He took this break so he would continue to feel good. He asked that the log read that the road is not all downhill from Flagstaff to Winslow.
On the CB we heard some guy tell someone “There’s some guy down there riding a bike and he’s outrunning a MC”.
Rt. 40- around 239-mile marker only single lane traffic for 2 or 3 miles because of road construction. They made it through this area ok, but it was scary.
The remarks of the truckers are frequent – sometimes funny, usually they are amazed.
- 10:50-10:55am Stops for a cold foot bath & cup of ice water.
- 11:55am Takes a break – ate ½ of an orange and took a cold foot bath.
Today’s menu is: Breakfast - granola, OJ, & coffee
Lunch – tuna salad sandwiches
Supper – pasta with spaghetti sauce. Then for dessert we have those delicious chocolate chip / oatmeal cookies Pauline (Neal’s wife) made. She also made the good granola.
MC low on gas. Greg waiting to be picked up by van. He said our voices were getting further away so he came on to us (MH). Van came back – had gone to Winslow looking for erg. Spare wheels not in the MH – that was not a good idea.
- 12:15pm Len left. Van has MC in trailer. Len took a couple of tools with him. Travel plan now is one vehicle passes Len & goes on ahead. About 5 minutes after Len passes, other vehicle leaps frog Len & other vehicle.
Sonny Newson of Scottsdale, Az. Stopped & took some pictures. He signed a verification for us & I gave him a stamped, self-addressed envelope to send us a copy.

Now Tom Who is getting some beauty rest. Carol had been napping & she wanted to know if she snored. Marie didn’t hear her, but Tom said he had to get ear plugs-ha ha.

- 1:01-1:05pm Cold foot bath and drank some ice water.
This area also has long trains. They stretch from one spot on the horizon to a spot on the opposite part of the horizon. And there are not any mountains around here. It is flat, flat, flat.
- 1:30-1:35pm Bowl of rice, 1 slice of 7-grain bread B&M & a cold foot bath.
- 2:15-2:21pm Cold foot bath, cup of ice water, ½ bottle of erg & a banana.
- 4:03-5:13pm Stop at Painted Desert. He slept 1 hour then had a bowl of rice & drank some ice water.
We just got a call on the CB from “Pig Pen”. The residents of the van gave themselves this name.
- 8:30-9:00pm Supper break. Bowl of rice, 1 slice of 7-grain B&M, cup of black coffee and a piece of pecan pie. Also put a towel dipped in hot water on his knees.
- 10:02pm Sleep time. Stopped because of indigestion (pecan pie), rough road, and knee pains.
200 miles today.

Thursday, June 25, 1981

- 2:15am Take off time. Cup of black coffee, yeast in erg, DLTs & vit C. Tom on MC.
- 5:00-5:21am Bowl of rice, 1 slice buttered 7-grain, & cup of black coffee. Gallup, NM. 18 miles away. Weather clear, temp about 65° & breezy. Len started out with head winds & knee pain.
A trucker just said, “Look at that guy on a bike down there – he lost his handlebars”.
Asking for cough drops or lozenges, as he has a dry throat.
- 8:30am Bran, yogurt & vitamins enroute.
- 10:22-10:27am Cold foot bath near Thoreau, NM. A man from Georgia, on vacation, stopped & asked if he could take a picture with his son & daughter standing on either side of Len. And so, he did. These people saw us yesterday at the Indian reservation.

The headwinds are continuous all day. This is where they supposedly blow from west to east, but not now.
- 11:45am Len asked us to find a place to pull over. He decided to rest for a couple of hours & then to see what to do from there. So, he had some rice & chickpeas, ½ egg sandwich, cup of ginger soda, and then slept until 3 pm.

Now he is out there again, pedaling like hell in spite of the headwinds. The weather forecast is 20% chance of thunderstorms today & tomorrow and continued easterly winds. Dog gone.

Well would you believe while he was napping the crew found a KOA and took showers, the first since Sunday.

A trucker just remarked – he wondered how many miles to the gallon that machine gets.

Len really depressed. Really riding hard and not getting very far – 9mph.

Tom Who napping. We know why. The beginning of the week someone was going to take him to the hospital emergency because his eyes were so blood-shot. Too much beach on Sunday, but he is recovered. He & Greg doing a super job on the MC. MC usually off duty during afternoons.

6:10-7pm Bowl of rice, 2 slices bread, a beer, and a cup of black coffee.

Len says a mistake in personal attendance. A lump on right shoulder blade has become inflamed. (Turned out to be a boil) Neal took a piece of rubber foam padding & cut a hole in the center (like a corn pad) and Carol taped it on to relieve the pressure. He had a low today but when he left at 7pm he was in a good frame of mind.

He doesn't like our Vick's drops or the lozenges.

This evening he asked Marie to call Chuck & Harald & tell them it will not be a record run & tell Harald not to come to NY. The calls were made. Harald said he would be in NY with bells on & to tell Len he is a hell of a man & Harald could not walk in his shoes. Chuck was surprised to hear we have 15-20 mph headwinds and said to tell Len to hang in there.

10:15-10:45pm 2 slices of 7-grainB&M and a beer.

12:30am Sleep time. Parked on side of road at crest of hill. City of Albuquerque lies ahead. BEAUTIFUL SIGHT

163 miles today.

Friday, June 26, 1981

4:20am Len & Tom off. Rolling down the hill Carmen says Len going about 28-30mph. He asked a bottle of iced OJ be passed to him. Crossed the Rio Grande River. Traffic not too bad On I-40 at this time, however some construction.

6:10am Stopped and took off long top and long bottoms. Yogurt, bran & vitamins and a sip of black coffee. MC retired to the trailer for a few hours.

- 7:40-8am Break time for hot towels for his knees. Rice, a slice of 7-grain B&M, a glass of grape juice & 2 Vit C.
A note about sleeping accommodations, Len, Carol, Marie, & Tom bunked in the MH. The van had bunks for Greg, Neal, Ed, & Carmen. But Neal & Greg have been taking the tarpaulin, their mattresses and sleeping bags to the 2nd floor of the MH. (that's the roof) They seemed to enjoy it up there. Last night we had a shower & we think the tarp ended up covering them.
- 10-10:09am Break time to change socks and stretch.
- 10:50-10:56am Stopped alongside the MH for a freshwater bottle and a cold cloth for his face & ice in the Broken Spoke cap.
- 11:30-11:34am Apple & took a fresh bottle.
- 12:43-1:10pm Cup of black coffee, ginger soda, & 1 slice 7-grain B&M
- 2:05pm Stopped just long enough to transfer the mirror from the sunglasses to tinted wrap-around goggles.
- 3:20-3:28pm Yeast in erg, DLTs and a banana. He took a grape juice bottle with him.
- 5:55-7:32pm Rest time. Slept for an hour. Vit C, black coffee, put Vaseline on his feet and had hot cloths on his knees. He took the fly swatter with him.
- 8pm Greg on MC
- 8:15pm Put on Christmas trees & beacon reflectors on Avatar and MC.
- 9:45pm Can of beer.
- 11:10pm Len requested we look for a place to stop for the night.
- 11:30pm Rice & macaroni salad, a beer, and stopped for the night. Had a cross-tailwind from 5:30 to about 10:30pm when it changed to a headwind, then the berm deteriorated & Len deteriorated. Headwinds about 15mph.

169 miles today.

Saturday, June 27, 1981

- 3:50am Len left with a tailwind. Chilly (temp about low to mid 60's) Gray suit, long sleeves & long pant legs.
- 4:30am Took off the gray suit.
- 5:45am BEAUTIFUL SUNRISE
- 6:11-6:40am Logan N.M. 2 fried eggs, butter bread, coffee, bran, yogurt & vitamins.
- 7:40-8am Pit stop. Black coffee & left with cassette music to listen to.

Through northern N. Mexico & Texas at times traveling 30-35 mph.

9am Yeast in erg & 10 DLTs, 2 vit A & 2 vit C. Alcohol foot bath & filled cap with ice.
10:45am Rice. 2 slices 7-grain B&M and a can of beer.
12:25-12:28pm Glass of ginger soda. Took a bottle of ginger with him and filled his cap with ice.

Really flying down the road today. These are the days Len is so happy. There are quite a few 18-wheelers on the road. And most of the truckers give Len a toot on the air horn & he answers by giving them the hand motion of giving them a toot. Sometimes he goes through the motion first to an oncoming trucker and then they give him a toot. He has a tape-player in his jersey pocket & he is having a ball listening to the music while pedaling right along. As a matter of fact, we just gave him a different cassette.

2:20-2:35pm Alcohol foot bath and then Vaseline on his feet. A beer & vit C.
3pm Passed a bottle of grape juice to him & filled his cap with ice.

3:30-3:50 Len stopped to say hello to Lon Haldeman who just approached us from the opposite direction. Lon was doing a double Trans-America. He, at this point is in his 8th day of the first leg. When it was over his trip east to west was 12 days, 18 hours, 49 minutes, 10 sec. His trip west to east was 10 days, 23 hours, 29 minutes, 40 sec. His total time was 24 days, 2 hours, 34 minutes, 40 sec.

This day we alternated bottles of erg, grape juice, orange juice, & water.

Yeast in erg, 10 DLTs, & vit C (2nd time today)

6-6:30pm Hooker, OK. Supper. Rice, fresh vegies, lettuce salad, 7-grain B&M and a beer.

7:30pm Stopped at Texaco station coming into Liberal, KS. For a pit stop. 2 glasses of water and a nectarine.

8:45pm Christmas trees & beacon reflectors on Avatar & MC.

10pm Len & Tom stop to gas up MC near Plains, Ks. Marie called a report to Phone Booth at the same place, and we bought popsicles here. We also received a verification from the manager of the grocery store / gas station.

11pm End of another day. This one ended on a nice note. Would you believe we were looking for a place to park for the night when the van crew saw a policeman. Neal asked him if he could suggest a place. The officer led us into a park in Meade, Ks. And told us to stay as long as we liked. He signed a verification and turns out he was also the mayor. Len gave him an Avatar t-shirt. Some of the crew went out for pizza.

248 miles today.

Sunday, June 28, 1981

Left at 4:15am and took his tape player with him. Weather clear with about 20mph crosswind. Estimated temperature – low 70's.

- 5:30am Carmen gave him a 7-grain B&M on the run and ½ cup of coffee.
- 6:05am Passed back the tape player & took yogurt with bran & vitamins enroute. The tape player was in his jersey pocket so in order to eat while riding his bowl. had to go into the pocket.
- 6:50-7:02am Stopped to change to shoes with yellow laces, put on smoked goggles, took iced OJ & his radio. MC stored in the trailer.
- 7:20am Len requested egg sandwich be passed to him, ½ at a time and ¾ cup of coffee.
- 8:15am Intersection Rt 54 & 154. Pedaling about 15mph. He said he just saw a brown snake slithering along the road.
- 10:30 am Yeast in erg, 10 DLTs, vitamins & cup of ginger soda. Changed clothes and took a nectarine with him.
- 11:00am Trucker on CB just said “There’s that fellow on a bicycle that had a MC with it yesterday. He has that front wheel smoking & he’ll Bar-B-Q it before he gets to Pratt”.
- 11:30-noon Radio station KWLS-Pratt, Ks. DJ heard us on the CB and came after us. Asked us to stop at the station, so the MH stopped. Len couldn’t afford the time to stop. They made an announcement about Len’s trip and dedicated Some songs to him. They sent a KWLS cap for Len. A country-western station.
- 2:15pm Those crosswinds are so strong when they pick up the dirt it stings your legs. Len is in a low. He stopped for a fresh bottle, a beer, and a banana.
- 3:30pm Stopped for fresh bottle and ice in his cap.
- 3:58-6:35pm Nap time. Ate a banana & left with a ginger soda bottle.
- 8pm Passed a bowl of macaroni to him enroute.

While circling Wichita, Ks. We looked at 3 motels – all unsatisfactory. Eventually we camped along Rt. 254 east. Len had two close calls on the road where we were looking at motels. He had something to eat & called it a day at 11:30pm. Marie called Phone Booth as there was a phone in these wide-open spaces.
176 miles today.

Monday, June 29, 1981

Left at 4:30am with Greg on the MC. Wake up time was early as Carmen woke us up 1 hour earlier. Only disappointed person was Carol. She had to get up & go back to bed one extra time.

Cross tail-winds feel about 10-15mph.

5:11-5:15am Cup of coffee, 2 slices 7-grain B&M & took his radio along. Greg also had same. Greg & Len eating the same to see if each is eating good things.

Another CBer wants to know what kind of bicycle that guy is riding.
Passed $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of Morning Thunder Tea to Record Breaker.
A trucker on CB just said, "it looks like a bicycle".

Would you believe we are having a small conference here between Ed, Greg, Len & Carmen (while traveling no less) comparing where we are right now to where Marino was last year.

7:40-7:50am Breakfast stop. Macaroni, yogurt, bran, vitamins, slice B&M bread, & cup of Morning Thunder Tea. MC in the trailer.
Weather is hazy-sunshine, temp 75°, rolling terrain - a few down-hills.
Just passed Len and he is singing with the radio.

8:50-9:05am Pit stop. Took some orange slices with him.

9:45am Going downhill & wide load behind him & wide load also coming toward him. Looked like an iffy situation but everyone made out ok, but no picture. Since we don't have a photographer with us, we can't always be ready for good shots.

9:50am Neal taking a picture of Neal, Ks. Not exactly your big city.

11am One slice of PB&J, yeast in erg, & 10 DLTs , & vits.

Noon Another slice of PB&J.

12:30pm Reporter from _____ Register stopped & asked if he could take Len's picture. Len agreed if the reporter would take it on the run as he was trying to make time & so he did. The crew gave the reporter the info he requested. Marie asked him if he just happened by. He said no, someone had called their newsroom with the story, and they got the reporter/photographer out of the dark room and told him to chase us to get the story.

1:30 pm Doing well – 122 miles so far today. Passing him lots of erg, water, & a Pabst now and again.

The "which way weeds" are looking good - cross tailwind.

6pm Yeast in erg, 10 DLTs & vits.

6:30pm Dish of macaroni & a beer.

7:15-7:20pm OJ. Greg went out with him on the MC.

7:30pm A lady CBer is telling someone they ought to see that bicycle some man is riding up the hill. Nevada, Mo.

When we went through a town today you should have seen the people gather. Children, adults, and anyone around. A fellow on a MC was riding in the opposite direction but he watched Len as far as he could. The van first, "Broken Spoke" then "Pig Pen" and now "Orka". They say it was a movie about a whale. Well, anyway Ed Kay always sounds like he is under water on the CB. But we must admit the mike on the van CB is not working properly.

10:03pm Quit for the day 5 miles west of Collins, Mo. Len really down. We stopped at just the right time. Thunderstorms, and did it rain. Carmen said he wasn't coming over to the MH until he saw lights in the MH. Front wheel changed on the Avatar – slow leak.

195 miles today.

Tuesday, June 30, 1981

Len & Tom left about 4:30am. Raining lightly – temp. in low 70's. Tom has raingear on & Len has his Gore-Tex top . Travel this a.m. very slow due to the weather. *Last night Len realized record is out of sight.*

This a.m. there was a discussion as to which route to take after reaching the Ozarks.

5:30am Took off Gore-Tex top. Ate ½ egg & cheese sandwich & ½ cup coffee.

6:30am Truckers wishing Len good luck.

6:45am Other half of egg/cheese enroute.

7am MH stopped for gas, so Len also stopped for a pit stop and a cup of fresh brewed coffee that Neal got for him at a restaurant.

8:40am Mack's Creek, Mo. Population 106

9:30 am Yeast, erg, 10 DLTs & 2 vit C

What beautiful Ozark Mountains. Lake of the Ozarks is a very large lake. Cute little bunnies running around.

10-10:20 am Pit stop. Bowl of macaroni, 7-grain B&M. Further discussion as to the route. Should we take Rt.54 to Jefferson City to Rt. 50 vs. Rts. 42 & 28. The decision was made to take Rt. 54 to Jefferson City because it is supposedly a better graded road & 4 lanes. (p.s. – After we covered this stretch Len said this route was not the best choice and besides it was 14 miles longer.) 50% chance of rain. Very cloudy.

- 11:30am Banana & an apple on the fly.
- 12:15pm ½ PB&J enroute.
- 12:30pm Other half of sandwich.
- 12:50pm Len's request is: He wants to feel the power of a hundred charging buffalos. That means he wants a cup of Morning Thunder Tea. This tea is black tea combined with Matte (a popular beverage in South America) It is an imaginative alternative morning drink with the "power of a hundred charging buffalos. So, when your 'get 'em up won't, Morning Thunder will! So says the labeling. Also, it states the Americans have more food to eat than any other people in the world & more diets to keep them from eating.
- 1:45pm Weather trying to clear. Sunglasses on, yeast in erg, 5 DLTs, whole wheat pretzel, and took a bottle of pineapple juice along.
- 2:45pm Jefferson City – wrong way, but not too bad.
- 3:30pm Pit stop and a bowl of macaroni, 2 slices bread, cold cloth, and filled his drinking bottle with pineapple juice. Filled spritz bottle with ice water.
- 5:30-6pm Pit stop. He says the only thing he has seen of a flat is a flat diamondback rattle snake. (dead in the middle of the road) Bowl of macaroni, bread B&M and a beer. Greg on MC, left with him.
- Truckers again talking about Len's bike. They want to know what kind of contraption that is. And, when one of the crew tell them, they all wish him good luck and remark what good time he is making.
- 8pm Snack time. Bowl of macaroni, butter bread, & a beer. We are trying to get through St. Louis tonight before we quit. Actually about 2:30am if things go well. If we had stopped and taken our 3-, 4-, or 5-hour rest & then resumed, it would put us in St. Louis during rush hour – a no-no. They saw more snakes, so Carmen is driving the MH with his right wheels on the white line. MH is in front of Len.
- 9pm Tom relieving Greg on the MC.
- 9:40pm They stop so Tom can put on a jacket & Len has a cup of coffee.
- 11-11:10pm Short stop for macaroni, butter bread, & a beer.
- 12 midnight Pit stop. Morning Thunder and a banana.
- 1:30 am Nap time for approx. 2 hours on Rt. 100. Roll-time @ 3:30am then continue through St. Louis before the traffic begins to move.
- 255 miles today.**

Wednesday, July 1, 1981

- 3:30am Cup of coffee, then he and Tom took off. We had our 2-hour nap in a shopping center parking lot. We were almost ready to pull out of the lot when a nice policeman came along & asked if we were with the bicyclist. We said yes and we

are leaving. He seemed surprised that we were leaving. We probably could have stayed longer.

- 4:15am Erg bottle, vit C, half an orange in slices & a banana.
4:40am 1 minute pit stop.
5:20am Crossed the Mississippi River.
5:45am Another pit stop. Took his radio along.
6:18am Masonic Temple parking lot – Fairview Heights – 10 miles east of St. Louis. Time to get a little more shut-eye.
9:30am Off we go again.
10:50am Passed him a bottle of erg & he requested an egg sandwich. We are out of eggs now. It is difficult to keep supplies available as not always near a store. Carol now at IGA getting eggs & fresh fruit while Carmen is getting a verification.
11:25am Spritz bottle and half of an egg sandwich.
11:45am Other half of egg sandwich.
When Marie called the Phone Booth today they said they had 197 calls yesterday.
- A reporter wants to meet Len in Carlyle, IL. He has a friend in the media who he is going to get in touch with and they are going to meet us on Rt. 50. (We never did see them.)
A trucker just asked how far Len is going and in what length of time. When Carol told him, he said he didn't know if he could do it in his truck, never mind on a bicycle.
10-15 mph NE headwinds.
- 12:20pm Water & a spritz bottle enroute.
Fellow riding with Len says he is Paul Revere & took Len's picture.
Now with his radio, suggested am station 55 – country-western.
- 1:05pm Passes back empty bottle and took a nectarine.
1:14pm Looking like a downpour. Thunder / Lightning.
1:25pm And the rains came. We were looking for a place to pull over when a state trooper from behind, told us there was a school just ahead. It was Sandoval High. Good time to have lunch. By the time we ate the rain stopped and he was on his way again at 2pm.
First real flat.
Out again only 15 minutes and drenched again. 2nd clothes change. Very bad lightning so Len & Carmen trying to take a nap. The flies are driving everyone crazy. Tom & Marie trying to get rid of them in order to get some sleep.
- 3pm And so we try it again. He is out with rain gear. Len made the remark that he thought yesterday was his best day. It was tough physically but made good mileage. It is raining again but not lightning.
- 4:15pm Apple enroute.
4:50-5pm Another shower. 2 dishes macaroni, 2 slices bread, a cup of coffee, & a Pabst.

Set out again with rain gear.

5:10pm Lightning / thunder. Doesn't look good.

5:25pm This is discouraging. It was pouring so he asked us to find a safe spot for both vehicles. When we did, it quit raining, sun trying to come out, so Len stayed out.

6-6:40pm Flat on MH. Carol went with the van to follow Len until the tire is changed. Flat was left-rear inside. On the trip west the MH also had a flat – right-rear outside. This time there was a chain link in the tire.

Marie had reservations to fly home Saturday evening. Since Len will get to NY later than planned, she asked Stan Judd to change the reservation to Sunday evening. She also asked Larry to pick her up on Sunday at noon in Chambersburg. Len said he would like Larry to accompany them to NY & to bring a CB.

7:05pm Couple of wheat pretzels & a beer.

8-8:10pm Pit stop

8:30pm MH goes back about 3 miles to have flat repaired.

9:45pm MH catches up.

10:20pm CBer asking what Len is doing. Riding from where to where & in how many days?

10:30pm Over the border from Illinois into Indiana.

10:41-10:46pm Orange & banana. Put on a shirt over the Broken Spoke shirt.

11:10-11:30pm Hot cloths for his knees. Bowl of rice, 1 slice bread & cup of coffee.

11:45pm Quitting time for tonight. **142 miles today**

Thursday, July 2, 1981

6am Take-off time. Chilly with scattered fog.

7:30-8am Breakfast. Montgomery, In.

8:20am Truckers again asking about Len & the bicycle and wish him well. Then a trucker said he thought the bike was upside down.

10:15am Yeast, erg, & vits. Took an erg bottle with him.

11:20-11:30am Pit stop. ½ bowl macaroni, 1 slice bread, & bottle of erg.

11:45am Passed road construction crew. All stopped and watched us go by.

11:50am Bedford, In, Temp 74°, overcast. Looks like rain.

12:20pm Pit stop. Cup of coffee.

1:20pm PB&J & small bottle of honey pure soda. Filled the spritz bottle.

1:40-1:50pm Changed rear wheel & his shoes.

2:30pm Cup of Morning Thunder Tea.

2:45-3pm Brownstown, In. State Farm Co-op Car care Center. Purchased a tube for the MH tire that went flat yesterday for insurance as they couldn't guarantee the patch job.

3:30pm Nap time. Bowl of macaroni, 2 slices bread & a beer. Slept for an hour.
5:15 pm Just as he gets out & going again the rains come again. He stopped & put on his Bill Rogers jacket.
5:45pm Stopped raining – took off jacket.
8:40pm Bowl of mac & 4 slices bread, cup of coffee & a beer. The crew had pizza.
10:30pm Took two aspirin & ate a plum.
12:05am 4 slices bread, cup of coffee, beer(Pabst), vit C & 2 aspirin.
2:45am Sleep time. Just past Fairfax exit out of Cincinnati. Missed a turnout of Cincinnati and traveled a mile out of the way. During the night we had a downpour which came up in a hurry. Neal & Greg were sleeping on the roof. They scurried to the van drenched.

192 miles today

Friday, July 3, 1981

6:15am Off with gray suit, long sleeves, & long pants. Took erg bottle. Tom on MC. Rainy/cool. Not very nice.
7:30am Passed to him: egg & cheese sandwich, Morning Thunder, a nectarine, orange slices, & an erg bottle.
8:45am 2 slices bread & ½ cup coffee. Vera Cruz snake in middle of our lane. Dead, thank goodness.
9:25-9:40am Pit stop. Yogurt, with bran & vits. Greg on MC.
10:10am Carmen passed ½ egg & cheese to him.
10:15am Banana
11:25am Yeast in erg & 10 DLTs
11:55am Removed gray suit. Nectarine.
12:20pm Lunch time. Macaroni, 2 slices bread, ½ cup coffee, & a Pabst. Sun coming out. Spritz bottle.
1:15pm Carol relieves Carmen in MH.
2:40pm Again, CBer “What in the world do you call that thing?”
2:50pm PB&J & cup Morning Thunder.
3:33pm Len takes 1-hour nap at Ratcliffburg, Oh.
5:50pm Yeast in erg, 5 DLTs & vit C
6:50pm Banana & nectarine
8:32pm Banana
9pm 2 aspirin
9:45pm Macaroni, 4 slices bread, 1 cup coffee and a Pabst.
10pm Len off again. He just asked the crew if it was possible to get to NY city hall by 5am Monday. If not, it may be necessary to abort the ride when they arrive in the Lehigh Valley.
10:45pm We quit for today. Maybe the end of the ride. Len does not feel safe on the highway. Carol reminds him of all the people at home who are counting on him finishing the ride – safely. **150 miles today.**

Saturday, July 4, 1981

- 4:50am Off & Greg is on MC.
- 5:45am ½ cold egg sandwich and then requested a hot egg sandwich – to help him wake up.
- 5:48am Stopped to eat the above with Morning Thunder. Leaves at 6:20.
- 7am More Morning Thunder.
- 7:20am Tom now takes over MC.
- 7:56-8:10am Stop to change clothes. He said before leaving, those that need to leave should take the MH back & those that stay would remain with the van. However, the decision to be made tonight whether the MH will return or stay.
- 8:58-9:03am Pit stop.
- 9:35am Macaroni, rice & cup of coffee.
- 9:50am Stop to sleep for an hour. Needless to say, he is tired.
- 10:48am Off again. Greg back on MC.
- 11:25am Passed erg & vits to him.
- 12:30pm Chain came off on the Avatar. Probably on the inside as Len was able to put it back on with the derailleur. Greg says it turned out ok but could have been a disaster.
- 12:45pm Nectarine. Tom back on MC.
- 1pm PB&J & cup of coffee.
- 1:30pm Banana
- 1:57pm Yeast in erg, 10 DLT, 2 vit C & 2 vit A
- 2:10pm Nectarine
- 3:10pm Greg takes over from Tom.
- 3:40pm Bottle of erg & PB&J sandwich to Len.
- 4:25pm Macaroni, rice, 3 slices bread, and some watermelon.
- 7:36-7:56pm Macaroni, rice, 2 slices bread, cup of coffee, & watermelon. Tom back on MC.
- 8:15pm Morris Rosen & wife (West Palm Beach Bicycle Recreation Club) are spending their vacation in W. Va. And were riding along when they recognized the Broken Spoke van. They stopped & talked for a while & then went on to take some pictures of Len riding one of these W.Va. hills. (There were three – 1615 ft. Laurel Mtn, 2597 ft. & Cheat Mtn 2746 ft.)
- Carol talked to Chuck. He told her Jim Black quit in Illinois. He was also riding from west to east. Chuck said the report was he quit because his MH broke down.
- 9pm Stop to put on gray suit & had a sip of Marie's beer.
- 9:30pm Three MCs roared past us. Shortly thereafter as we rounded a turn, there was a MC laying on the left lane of the road, a person sprawled in the center & a helmet on the right side of the road.

What a scare. A lady came running to the MH (we were the 1st on the scene) asking if we had a CB – to please call an ambulance. Well, that didn't work so well as the CB range in the mountains is limited. The ambulance was called from a short distance back. There were two couples on two MCs & a young fellow on the other cycle. The lone rider was just going too fast & he hit the edge of the road which threw him. Neal took a cover from the van to keep the injured warm until the ambulance came. Since Len & Greg were ahead and didn't know what had happened, Neal was able to maneuver the van around and past the accident to catch up to Len.

The MH stayed on the scene until the ambulance & the police arrived. The policeman remarked if that fellow had not had his helmet on, he would have been killed. One scene like that was more than enough for the trip. As fast as they were going, kind of glad that they did not catch up to Len. It was learned later that they had heard about Len & his bike and were trying to catch up to him.

10:30pm Time to quit for today. Aurora, W.Va. Just west of the Md./W.Va. border. It was decided Carmen would take Ed Kay & Marie to Chambersburg, Pa. by noon tomorrow where Larry Vreeland would pick them up & Carmen would wait for Len & the crew to meet him on Rt. 11. Ed had a class to teach Monday & would rejoin the crew at Pete's Place.
Neal & Greg got chased off the roof again by thunderstorms this night.

150 miles today

Sunday, July 5, 1981 375 miles to go.

5:30am Take off time. Tom on MC.

6:15am Stop to change clothes & ate ½ banana.

6:30am Backbone Mtn, Md. Elev-3095 ft. ½ bottle erg & cup of coffee.

7am Egg & cheese sandwich.

7:30am Greg on & Tom off MC.

8am ½ bottle erg.

Horse along the road here looking at Len as much to say, "I know it's early in the morning, but what kind of strange creature are you?"

8:30am Passes banana to Len.

9-9:07am Stop for PB&J & some OJ.

We transfer to the van what we think Len may want out of the MH, as Carmen now leaving with Marie & Ed for Chambersburg, Pa. As we were leaving, we had a 5-mile decline. The MH left first but Len passed us & led the way.

Plan now is to make Carlisle, Pa our destination today. Pete's Place (favorite local bar in Allentown) about 4-5pm Monday & the Holland Tunnel 6-7 hours after leaving Pete's.

Note here: Earlier this morning Len observed some people sitting on their porch this early Sunday morning. A damp, dreary Yankee-type of day at that. He thought it unusual, nevertheless there they were. They were friendly & waved. Most people along the way did wave.

We stopped for verification & gas for the MC. at Mt. Storm this morning. The advance crew had stopped here on the way west. The gentleman here remembers them stopping earlier and said he was glad to see Len and the rest back safe as he wished us good luck.

Here in the W.Va. mountains where we thought we might not find phones, there are lots of them & well marked by signs – "Phone ½ Mile".

12:15pm MH arrives in Chambersburg. Larry, Sue, & Pat Judd are waiting there for us. Sue (Len's daughter) has decided to join the crew for the rest of the trip.
3:55pm Carmen & Sue meet Len & crew at Winchester, Va. (Rt. 11)
5:40pm Stop at Martinsburg, Va. For a snack of macaroni, salad, bread & a beer.
6:02pm resumes ride on Rt. 11.
7:50-7:55pm Fruit & erg.
8:20pm Green Castle, Pa. Made phone call to Morning Call. Cup of coffee & 2 vit C
10:45pm Stop for the night in Shippensburg, Pa. at the Kandlelite Motel.

Miles today 161

Monday, July 6, 1981

4:54am *Begin last day.*
6am PB&J, coffee
7:14-7:25 Another PB&J and for directions through Harrisburg.
Several stops unrecorded.
11:35-11:50am Lunch of noodles, bread & a beer.
12:25pm Morning Thunder & is listening to his portable radio.
2pm Short break for snack, change of clothing and an ice pack on left shin splint or whatever & takes 2 Tylenol.
4:27pm Pete's Place for about ½ hour. Carmen leaves the crew here. Large crowd is here to greet Len & welcome him back.

Chuck McCullagh (an Allentown resident and editor of Bicycling Magazine) rode with Len from Allentown to NY. Len was very happy to have Chuck ride with him. The ride through NJ was difficult as the heavy traffic boxed him in.

11:48pm Holland Tunnel and we learn one of the tubes is closed for repairs. Heavy traffic provoked by the construction threatened to postpone Len's entrance to the city. A NY transit policeman, however, proved to be a guardian angel when he led Len and the crew through the closed section of the tunnel. The workmen in the closed tube were cheering him along the way.

12:13:24am Tuesday, July 7, 1981 – New York City Hall

Len's 52nd birthday.

Coming out of the tunnel the crew & Len's friends in the van sang as loud as possible "Happy Birthday". Len was met by relatives, friends, Harald & other representatives of Fomac, Inc., the Wilmington, Ma. manufacturers of the Avatar 2000. Among others were Ed Kay's wife, Len's daughter-in-law Lori & her sister. There was champagne and a cake decorated with an image of the United States and a birthday greeting. **Miles today approx. 220**

4:30am Back home in Allentown. A tired but happy group.