

Mom + Bicycle = Birthday

Rick Roop rides from Cumberland Gap, Tn to Jonesville, Va for 62 miles to celebrate his 62nd birthday! He was assisted by his Mother Anna and Aunt Brenda who furnished Rick with lots of needed liquid refreshments seeing that it was very hot and humid on this day. However, to Rick it is more than just food and water to help complete such a challenging task of riding your birthday miles on a bicycle. Moreover, it takes someone like mom to give you the gift of life give inspiration to ride and to achieve one's goal of riding a birthday bike.

To recall accordingly, it was my Mom and Dad that gave me the first bicycle. A nice bike for someone in need of transportation riding quickly from one place to another. It would also be free. Not new or very expensive but it served the purpose that mom and dad intended it to be. Their idea was to make me free to get me out of the house to be movable. I was really excited to ride with my brothers to ride with my friends. Able to recognize that I was human. The era of



the 60's and 70's did not include electronic social media. No iPods, headphones, or FaceTime. I could use my eyes, speech, and ears rather easily no distractions. Not conformed or restrained by such a device I could see clearly the objects before me and associate more effectively. This was a gift.

The bicycle was a metaphor of life to come for me. When the hills were high and the roads were long lots of sweat drops just ahead. I felt a presence leading not alone by myself someone or something was there to speak to say keep pedaling even when I wanted to stop. Time with family showed me patience and endurance and faith to preserver in life. It is their love and inspiration that is truly achieving and well advised and well observed.

Next it was the gift of the bicycle that my Mom and Dad had given to me. My bicycle fits. Not a very fancy or expensive brand but a very meaningful bike. Something that would last a lifetime. A somewhat spiritual lifetime. I was excited with faith not worried about how shiny it was or how super fast it would go or how spectacular the paint job gleamed. I was not consumed about that. However, i was very excited about where this bike would take me. Perhaps it would be a ride with my brothers down to the grocery store, over to a friends house to play ball, or to the swimming pool. That was more important to me. It was sort of a peaceful experience no interference with the cares of life, No bills to pay, no job to clock in to, and no worries about life. I guess one of the greatest blessings ever came from my Mom. It was the bicycle. A yearning to recapture my childhood and to ride on my birthday bike. Thanks Mom!