

Spin-offs 2012 GAP Weekend Cycling Tour

Frequently Asked Questions

Registration

What are the deadlines for registration?

We are taking reservations until all available spaces have been reserved. We are maintaining a waiting list in the event the weekend is at full occupancy and a cancellation occurs. March 1 is our commitment date to Paddler's Lane Resort. On that date we will need to have at least 12 registrations to proceed with the tour. April 1 is the final payment date. After this date, we need to remit our final rental payment and begin purchasing supplies for the weekend.

Why is March 1 so important?

Paddler's Lane Retreat will refund the first night's rental deposit if we give them sufficient notice of cancellation. Twelve is the magic number of registrations which is the break even point for this trip. We simply can not afford to proceed with the trip if we do not reach that level of registration.

How was the price of the trip set?

A budget was set that included the cost of food, beverages and house rental which was then divided by twelve registrations. Any registration fees in excess of expenses will be available for future Spin-off events, Meetup.com fees and other expenses such as brochures. The Spin-offs aims to offer events such as this one as close to break even as possible.

Accommodations, Food and Dining

Where will we be staying?

The main house at Paddler's Lane Retreat has been reserved for the nights on May 18 & 19. You can view photos and information about this house on their web site at <http://www.paddlerslane.com/id9.html>.

How are accommodations assigned?

Accommodations are assigned on a first come, first served basis. The home has 3 bedrooms, a bunkhouse loft and sleeper sofas in the great room. We are going to make every attempt to keep traveling companions together and meet your wishes. We reserve the right to shift people around to maximize our accommodations.

Are there private baths?

The home has four full baths that will be shared by all residents. Two rooms do have private baths.

Where are dinners and breakfasts served?

All included meals (Friday and Saturday evening dinners and Saturday and Sunday morning breakfasts) are served in the dining room of the main house. The home has a beautiful, modern fully equipped kitchen that allows us to prepare these meals for the weekend..

What is on the menu?

We have some ideas, but this is still up in the air. These are going to be full meals with a goal to keep food preparation at a minimum. Closer to the tour dates, we are sending out a survey and questionnaire on your food preferences. We are preparing dishes that appeal to the majority of the cyclists.

What about lunches on the ride?

Since we arrive around lunchtime on Friday we plan on eating at one of Confluence's restaurants. On Saturday, we will eat lunch at one of the many casual eateries in Ohioypole. Dining in this rural area of Pennsylvania is quite reasonable.

Do we help with meal preparation?

It's your choice. We plan on organizing some teams for meal setup, prep and cleanup. It's your choice to participate or not.

Can I bring my own snacks or foods?

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Of course. We have a fully equipped kitchen with a large refrigerator and freezer. Feel free to bring your favorite food. We are providing a nice assortment of snacks and beverages.

Can I bring alcoholic beverages?

Yes. Alcoholic beverages are permitted in the house,. Please drink responsibly. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on the GAP.

What are we doing in our spare time?

We have a very nice home base with a huge great room and gathering area. Confluence is pretty quiet at night. We are planning some social time in the evenings. Look for some trivia, card or other game night activities. An evening walk along the river and into Confluence is also a nice option.

GAP and Cycling

Will I have to cycle on the road?

Road cycling will be at a minimum. The house is approximately 1 mile out of Confluence on a paved flat country road. We will cycle another mile through Confluence, a very small community, to reach the GAP. All other cycling for the weekend will be on the GAP, a trail very similar to the Towpath Trail.

How far is the rental Home from the GAP?

Well, a few hundred feet across the river. Since we can't cycle on water, we'll need to cycle about a two miles through Confluence where we will join the trail.

Will I be cycling uphill much?

The GAP has a 1-2% west to east uphill grade through this part of Pennsylvania. Half of our cycling is uphill and the other half downhill. The trail to Ohiopyle has a small elevation gain. The trail east to the Pinkerton Horn has a steeper grade. We will take plenty of rest stops. It is definitely doable for anyone who cycles the Towpath and all of our members.

How long are the rides be?

Friday afternoon we'll cycle about 20 miles to/from the Pinkerton horn. Allowing ample time for photos and rest breaks, we should be able to easily do it in less than 4 hours. On Saturday we will cycle about 30+ miles to/from Ohiopyle and Ohiopyle State Park. This will be a casual day of cycling with many stops along the river, in Ohiopyle, sightseeing and rest breaks. We'll probably be on the trail the majority of the late morning and afternoon.

Do I need to cycle the whole weekend?

No. You are free to cycle as much or as little as you wish. This area gives you plenty of opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. There are plenty of hiking trails, river rafting, canoeing, kayaking, and fishing. Frank Lloyd Wright's Falling Waters is very close by. You can enjoy the river flowing by from the house's back porch.

What should I wear on the rides?

The GAP is very similar to the Towpath. This area is also very comparable to NE Ohio weather. Watch the forecast and bring some rain gear in the event of a sudden rain. The GAP is beautiful even in the rain.

Do I need to carry anything special on the ride?

We ask that you have at least one spare inner tube (preferably two), tire levers, a patch kit and a frame pump. This trail is somewhat remote and you may need to do a minor repair or fix a flat.

How does the GAP compare to the Towpath?

It is very similar to the Akron and CVNP sections of the Towpath, perhaps a little wider. We will always be along a river, sometimes at river level and other times 100 feet above the water. The trail surface is packed limestone and is well maintained. It has a 1-2% east to east elevation gain that is really not a problem.

How fast will we cycle?

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We are cycling our normal Towpath speed of about 10 mph. We will take the elevation gains slower and allow for plenty of rest stops. Our rides are not races but chances for you to experience some of the most scenic trail riding you will ever see.

How far will we go on our rides?

Our planned excursions are 20-35 miles a day. We are stopping for photo-ops, lunch and sightseeing. They are casual rides where the miles pass quickly.

What if it rains?

We will cycle in light rain. We will not cycle in heavy rains, thunder and lightning. It is your choice to cycle or remain at the house.

Can I walk down to the river along the trail?

The river is very accessible between Confluence and Ohiopyle. West of Ohiopyle, the river is far below the trail. East of Confluence, the trail quickly gains altitude above the river and is not accessible.

Local Attractions

What towns are we visiting?

Confluence is our home base. It is a small town with a nice downtown around a village green. Ohiopyle is a major tourist destination in Ohiopyle State Park. It has a good assortment of dining, shops, and river outfitters. If you plan to cycle on Sunday, Meyersdale is another small town surrounded by wind turbines. You will be cycling along the Youghiogheny and Casselman Rivers crossing numerous rail trestles. The scenery is quite scenic with mountain vistas, mountain laurel and heavy woods.

Are there other nearby attractions?

Frank Llyoyd Wright's Falling Waters, the most famous area attraction, is about 8 miles from the house. Ohiopyle State Park is Pennsylvania's largest and most popular park with a lot of outdoor activities. There is a visitor's center in the Ohiopyle train station where you can check out other tourist attractions.

What types of restaurants are in Confluence?

Surprisingly there are several dining options. The River's Edge Café is a fancier dining option along the river. Sister's Café is the typical small town diner. The Lucky Dog Café and Smokehouse BBQ are other casual Confluence restaurants.

What types of restaurants are in Ohiopyle?

There are numerous casual eateries. There is an ice cream shop, sit down restaurants, and a convenience store.

How far is the Flight 93 memorial?

The memorial is near I-76 and Sommerset, about 45 minutes from confluence. It is an easy drive.

Is Falling Waters close by?

Yes. It is about 8 miles from our house. We are planning an optional Sunday excursion to the house. It is well worth a visit. The tour costs \$20 and you must have a reservation. We are going to coordinate a group visit as the time nearer to our departure.