

John aims 10-speed at San Francisco for starving

By Tom Lonergan
Staff writer

John Dyer has peddled around Belle Isle more than once. He's circled the popular island park on his lightweight English 10-speed to the tune of 120 miles. Next month, however, the 15-year-old student will put his legs, knees, shoulders, arms and bicycle tires to a grueling test — a 4,200 mile trek from Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., to San Francisco. It's not a solo journey.

DYER WILL be one of 30 cyclists raising money for The Hunger Project, a San Francisco-based non-profit group that publicizes the plight of the world's starving.

Organizers of the marathon hope to raise up to \$500,000 for the hunger group, with the \$150,000 from the cyclists as the starting point. A Stevenson High School sophomore, Dyer, a two-year cycling enthusiast, was encouraged to join the cross-country biking marathon by his uncle, Wayne Dyer, a Detroit native and recently popular author of a number of personal "self-awareness" books, including, "Your Erroneous Zones."

"My uncle really got me into it," said Dyer.

Torture on wheels

But his uncle won't be peddling through the Kansas plains, two mountain ranges, nor the Nevada desert. "He's not crazy," the younger Dyer said.

The marathon will start in northern Florida June 13 and proceed through 10 southern, central plains and western states. Expected arrival in San Francisco is Aug. 16.

The cyclists won't be peddling to Ft. Lauderdale or home from San Francisco, however. Dyer said he plans to fly.

DYER IS among the youngest marathon participants. Only two are under 18 years old. The majority of the cyclists, who will range in age from 13 to the mid-50s, are from Florida. Dyer is the only Michigan participant.

He's been riding 30 to 40 miles daily — 70 miles on the weekends — to train.

The marathoners will travel 80-100 miles each day during their so-

journ and recharge in motels along the route. Dyer said marathon planners hope to conclude the trip in under 60 days.

What about the desert heat, mountains and other unknown factors a Livonian would be unfamiliar with?

"I think that's going to be a surprise," Dyer admitted.

EACH MARATHON rider is expected to have up to \$5,000 in pledges committed by next month. Dyer said his biggest contributor has been his uncle, followed by several small businesses and a few high school friends.

A spokeswoman for End World Hunger Inc., in Ft. Lauderdale, said the group and its San Francisco parent organization don't provide direct food aid but "educate and raise attention and awareness for ending world hunger."

"We are the spokespeople of the starving people of the world," said Jan Solomon.

The San Francisco hunger group, with a paid staff of about 20, was founded in 1977 by Werner Erhard, originator of est, one of the many pop psychology self awareness programs that started in the 1970's. Solomon said the group raised more than \$900,000 through newspaper ads that was channeled to direct relief agencies for Cambodian refugees two years ago.

She said the group recently sent a delegation to Somalia to report on which organizations were "giving direct food aid."

One of the group's purposes is to "make direct food organizations work better," she added.

Solomon said some contributors "want to know how much of their money gets into a person's mouth."

"There's just no guarantee," she said.

Dyer is still seeking contributors to his effort. Those interested can call him at 591-1922.



15-year-old John Dyer (right) is a teen-ager who loves a challenge — especially if it helps others. In mid-August, he will bicycle 4,000-plus miles from Florida to California to help raise money for the world's starving.

Planting guide

To receive a garden planting guide for a family of five, send a self-addressed, double-stamped envelope and 70 cents in coin to the International Food Storage Association (IFSA), P.O. Box 249, LaVerkin, Utah 84745.

Prof would mate frogs on Space Shuttle

Humans may be reproducing life in space in the not-too-distant future, but frogs will do it first, predicts a University of Michigan biologist.

Prof. George W. Nace, director of the U-M Amphibian Facility, has designed an experiment to study the effects of weightlessness on the develop-

ment of frog eggs to be fertilized on the Space Shuttle.

"On earth, fertilization and reproduction of vertebrate eggs always occur in the presence of gravitational forces," says Nace. "If the lack of gravity in space causes abnormal results in these biological processes, we want to know what they are and learn how to prevent them before humans get around to producing space babies."

Nace's experiment, supported by

the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, is tentatively scheduled for a late 1984 or 1985 Space Shuttle flight devoted almost entirely to biological studies.

His project focuses on the three-hour development period of the frog just after the sperm enters the egg. "During this time," Nace says, "the material inside the egg undergoes a crucial reorganization when gravity causes it to rotate."

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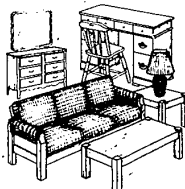
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