

They follow road to endless summer

Robert Downes
Staff writer

When Greg and Anne Millard started on bicycles from their Berkeley, California home 10 1/2 months ago, a lot of people were skeptical of their plan to ride around the entire perimeter of the United States.

Even the Millards were a bit in awe of the thought of more than 14,000 miles of highway before them. "It started out as a joke," Greg remembered. "Anne came home one day and said she wanted to buy a bicycle and go around the country. I laughed it out at first, but then over the next few days I couldn't stop thinking about

Although Greg, 27, and Anne, 20, had never traveled more than 10 miles before on a bicycle, they bought a couple Schwinn 10-speeds and loaded them with camping gear, hitting the road on July 1 of last year.

The first day of their trip, they rode 10 miles and a raccoon stole their peanut butter when they stopped for the night. They forgot to bring along tent stakes and had to anchor their tent to their bicycles.

SINCE THAT TIME, they've traveled 9,880 miles and have become seasoned campers. They arrived in Michigan last Saturday for a few days' visit with Chuck and Dorothy Jones of Bloomfield Township. The Joneses were introduced to the Millards by their daughter Lisa, who is a park ranger at Shenandoah National Park. They invited the Millards to stay with them when they reached Michigan.

"If there's a story line to this trip, it's in the people we've met," Greg said. He said that the couple have been wel-

comed at dozens of homes along the route and are corresponding with about 200 families. They've spent 40 percent of their trip with people met on the road, with the remaining 60 percent spent camping. In the 10 1/2 months they've been gone, they've stopped at a motel just three times.

Thus far, the Millards have traveled down the California coast and across Arizona, New Mexico and Texas into the Deep South. They remember the ride along the Rio Grande as the most grueling stretch of the trip because of the 70 miles or so of steep hills along the route. They spent three or four months of the winter exploring the south, including a trip down the Florida peninsula to Key West.

WITH SPRING in the air, the Millards began peddling up the Atlantic coastline and then through the Appalachian mountains towards New England. Greg said that his favorite sections of the trip were spent along the Blue Ridge Parkway in North Carolina and in northern Maine.

Riding from Maine to Michigan, the Millards put in 132 miles on Saturday to reach Bloomfield Township, the most they've ever cycled in a single day. They left Tuesday morning for Traverse City to stay with friends met in Arizona.

The couple intends to ride through the upper peninsula, Wisconsin and Minnesota before dipping down into South Dakota for a stretch into Wyoming. Upon reaching the Rocky Mountains, they plan to ride north along the Continental Divide before proceeding across Montana towards Seattle, Oregon, and the trip back down the west coast.

"The only thing we're concerned

about is making the Rockies by September," Greg said. He noted that if winter blocks their path, the couple will swing south along the Mississippi, back through the Deep South, New England and the Midwest for a try at the mountains again next year.

"We love this trip, really," Anne said. THE MILLARDS had been married just five months when they set out on their cross-country tour. While in the service, Greg had met Anne in her native Zurich, Switzerland and brought her to Switzerland. He was employed as an accountant, while she was a secretary.

Although they'd never done much biking or camping, the Millards decided that the trip would be a good way to introduce Anne to America. In the 14 months that she's lived in the U.S., Anne has learned to speak fluent English.

Once they return, they plan to write a book about their experiences. They've received plenty of advance publicity so far and have been interviewed by 45 newspapers at stops along the route.

"It's been great," Greg said. "That's one thing that people can't believe: We've never had a bad experience on this trip."

He said that the biggest setback they encountered was the time he broke an axle in Texas and had to walk 12 miles for a new one. He's also changed 36 spare tires along the way, carrying extra inner tubes and tires for the inevitable flat.

AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED, the Millards are well-tanned and in enviable physical condition from their trek.

They average 70-80 miles per day, with Greg carrying 115 pounds total on his Schwinn Varsity and Anne carrying 100 pounds on her Schwinn Traveler.

They carry up to 15 pounds of canned food, fruit and peanut butter in amounts which can last them three to five days on the road. Greg concedes that their bikes and some of the camping equipment they carry might be deemed inappropriate by other cross-country cyclists, but so far, they have no complaints.

Greg estimated that the couple has spent approximately \$4,500 during the course of their trip, which has included stops at attractions such as Disneyland, EPCOT and the space center.

Anne said she dreams of making the two-wheel trip through Europe. She said that she and Greg have become accustomed to all types of terrain and feel free to go anywhere. "When the land is flat, it's easy to peddle and when there are mountains, it's pretty, so you don't mind so much," she said.

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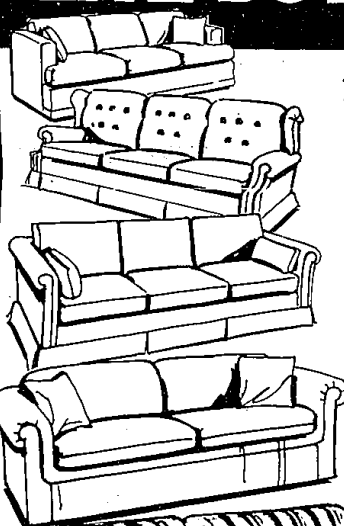
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Yearbook duties reap rewards

Stuart McConnell of Farmington Hills was the photography editor for Central Michigan University's award-winning 1982 yearbook. The Associated Collegiate Press' National Pacemaker Award will be presented at the Hyatt

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Yearbooks were judged in five areas — photography, art and graphics; copy; layout and design; coverage; and concept. The book also must be an outstanding example of yearbook journalism.

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