

Bluffton: Bicycle Capital of Ohio

Sunday, June 21, 2015

Here's what it means to all of us

IT
WILL
BE HUGE!



Get ready to:

- volunteer for the day
- help show off Bluffton
- know what to expect
- join in the activities
- turn the event into a fundraiser for your group
- or a selling opportunity for your business

Attention:

- Bluffton businesses • residents
- service organizations • non-profit groups
- booster organization • church groups
- athletic teams • scouts • restaurants

¶ Over 2,500 visitors will converge on Bluffton on Sunday, June 21.

¶ It will be huge.

¶ It is something we've not experienced for many years.

¶ To get everyone on the same page, this booklet provides, in the simplest terms possible, what June 21 means to Bluffton. Please read it. Please pass it on to others who may want to participate.

¶ This is our opportunity to shine - to be creative.

¶ We need lots of volunteers to make it happen.

¶ *(And, yes, there are lots of opportunities to make this a fund-raiser for your organization.)*

What is GOBA?

- Bluffton officials are currently planning entertainment and tour options for GOBA.
- Persons interested in offering ideas and assisting in this should contact:

- Liz Harner at CG Pro Bikes, lharnercgprobikes.com
- or Fred Steiner at the chamber, at blufftonchamber@gmail.com

GOBA stands for Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure. It is a project of a non-profit organization called Columbus Outdoor Pursuits. This year is the 27th annual GOBA.

Each year GOBA selects a different route to cover for one week. Routes are always in Ohio.

For example, this year's tour introduces bikers to historical museums in each community, a Miami and Erie Canal Lock, Sauder Village, Independence Dam on the Maumee River, Put-in-Bay (for bikers interested in a 100-mile side trip).

GOBA involves over 2,500 bicyclists. This year's route with dates follows:

Sunday, June 21 – Van Wert starting point
Sunday, June 21 - Bluffton Icon
Monday, June 22 – Defiance
Tuesday, June 23 – Defiance
Wednesday, June 24 – Bowling Green
Thursday, June 25 – Bowling Green
(with option to bike round trip to Port Clinton)
Friday, June 26 – Bowling Green
Saturday, June 27 – Ottawa and return to Van Wert

Mileage covered follows:

Van Wert to Bluffton – 52 miles
Bluffton to Defiance – 57 miles
Defiance to Bowling Green – 49 miles

Bowling Green to Ottawa – 54 miles

Ottawa to Van Wert 45 miles

In addition there are two options for side trips of 53 and 100 miles.

To ride the entire GOBA route costs \$245 for adults (\$260 if registering after May 1). Children 6 to 15, accompanied by an adult ride for \$95. Children 5 and under, accompanied by an adult are free.

Registrations are now being accepted. This year's GOBA theme is "Cycology University," as the tour includes visits to three communities with universities.

GOBA headquarter's contact information:

GOBA

1525 Bethel Road, Suite 100

Columbus, OH 43220

www.goba.com • 614-273-0811

gobainfo@goba.com • www.facebook.com/gobatour

Register online at goba.com

GOBA's staff includes Bill Gordon, director, and Mary Plumley, administrator coordinator and registrar.

¶ In addition to a major interest in biking, participants also enjoy exploring each community on the tour.

Here's where you come in

G - O - B - A

Those initials stand for Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure, or GOBA. Here's what it means:

Bluffton is on the 27th annual GOBA bicycle tour in June. Up to 2,500 persons – mostly on bicycles – will arrive in Bluffton from Van Wert on the morning of Sunday, June 21.

That means that on that weekend Bluffton will be the bicycle capital of Ohio.

While in Bluffton bikers will camp at Bluffton University. On Monday morning, June 22, they will depart for Defiance.

Their overnight visit will create a huge immediate economic impact to the community. They will need to eat, be entertained and check out the sites of the community.

Perhaps more importantly, if what they find in Bluffton interests them, many of them will make a return visit if they like what they find here.

There are many opportunities for service organizations, churches, non-profit groups and businesses to become involved in GOBA's Bluffton experience.

The Bluffton Area Chamber of Commerce, working with Liz Harner of CG Pro Bikes, coordinates GOBA's activities.

Several area required volunteers to step in to assist in specific duties during GOBA's visit. There are opportunities for persons of all ages to participate. These areas include:

- Campground logistics
- Transportation (shuttle bus service)
- Emergency planning
- Housing
- Food
- Entertainment
- Information booth



Volunteers
needed
here asap!

GOBA provides each host community with funding for several of these areas. In addition, bikers pay for their own food and provide tips for persons assisting with luggage handing.

GOBA officials held a safety-emergency services meeting in Bluffton earlier this winter.

At 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 17, in the third floor of the town hall, GOBA will make presentations to all groups interested in selling food in June 21-22. Groups interested need to send a representative to that information meeting.

Additional meeting are planned in April to coordinate other areas to be covered in GOBA's Bluffton visit.

As a starting point, persons wanting to know how they may assist or offer to provide services should contact either:

- Liz Harner at CG Pro Bikes, lharn@cgprobikes.com
- or Fred Steiner at the chamber, at blufftonchamber@gmail.com

Watch for additional GOBA comes released each week until the June event.

**THE NEXT PAGE SHOWS PHOTOS FROM
NEW BREMEN ON THE 2014 GOBA TRIP**

DAY 6: New Bremen

Optional 49 or 100 miles

THURSDAY, JUNE 20

- Layover Day
- Optional half-century to St. Mary's & Wapakoneta, or century to Cridersville, with snack stop at Botkins Local School with students and staff, and lunch at Wapakoneta Middle School with football parents
- Bicycle Museum of America
- Community pool
- Entertainment at Crown Pavilion
- Miami-Erie Canal
- Bus tour to Armstrong Air & Space Museum and Airstream Factory



"The Bicycle Museum of America was my favorite part of GOBA." - Lenora Bruckdorfer, #1112, Baltimore, MD
"I really enjoyed the water feature in Dayton and the Bicycle Museum." - Christie Brown, #1677, Navarre, OH
"I loved the shower truck! I want one for my four teenage daughters!" - Laura, #2249, Peebles, OH
"I made my first HAM radio contact during GOBA!" - Todd Johnson, #135, Chillicothe, OH
"I came on GOBA this year because of the stop in New Bremen for the bicycle museum." - anonymous

"I had never done a century before...but I began riding and chatting with Sue. She talked me through the point of no return. Turns out we were PERFECTLY suited to ride together (14.4 mph), were the same age, and so we talked away the last 75 miles. A memorable first century for me... even though I'll likely never see her again, she was just what I needed on Thursday."
Hank Langknecht, #1441, Buxley, OH

Here's what we told GOBA

Here's Bluffton's first contact with GOBA riders.

This article appeared in the March GOBA newsletter as an advance notice about Bluffton:

A word or two about your visit to Bluffton: Washington never slept here, but John Dillinger robbed our bank. (When you come to Bluffton, we'll show you some of the chips on buildings caused by Dillinger's bullets.)

This proves to be an exciting year for the community of Bluffton as we look forward to all the GOBA riders.

We are the smallest community on your summer trip – a village of just over 4,000. So, knowing this you get a sense of the impact your visit will have.

We are in the early planning stage of your visit, so there's lots of tentative events planned now. By next month we'll have a much clearer picture.

In the meantime, here are some websites to check out about Bluffton:

- - Bluffton Area Chamber of Commerce – www.explorebluffton.com

On the top right side of the chamber's home page you will find a 36-page visitors' guide in flipbook format. It includes all businesses (places to eat and motels), plus community features and a three-page map.

- - Bluffton News - www.blufftonnews.com
- - Bluffton University - www.bluffton.edu
- - Bluffton Icon – www.blufftonicon.com

For a quick overview of Bluffton, you'll note that we have:

- 1 – A new community swimming pool
- 2 – Bike paths – one goes to the fast food restaurants following an abandoned AC&Y Railroad bed. Another goes under I-75 to a large village park.
- 3 – 18-hole golf course
- 4 – Movie theatre
- 5 – Very attractive Main Street retail area lined with lots and lots of flowering plants - and no empty store fronts
- 6 – Main Street Bluffton was originally part of the north-south Dixie Highway. The highway celebrates its centennial year in 2015.
- 7 – Bluffton Family Recreation (next to the community swimming pool) offers exercise equipment

That's enough for now. If you want immediate, specific Bluffton information contact the chamber at:

blufftonchamber@gmail.com

Follow us on Facebook

www.explorebluffton.com

419-369-2985, ext 118

Want to help? Here's who to contact

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