

Brady selected as host for 2011 BRAN kickoff

Written by Deb Egenberger
Thursday, 13 January 2011 22:28 -

When Fred Jalass called Brady village clerk Pam Diehl and asked if the town would be interested in hosting the kickoff for this year's Bike Ride Across Nebraska (BRAN), all Diehl could say was, "Oh my gosh!"

"I just felt so honored that they would want to come to our little town," Diehl said.

She made a couple of phone calls and the next thing she knew Brady was officially named the starting point for BRAN 2011.

"I've been picking the route for BRAN since 1991," said Jalass, a co-chairman for the event in its 31st year. "Each year I try to give it a little different twist."

Jalass was attempting to make a "Killer B Tour" using all towns beginning with the letter B. He wanted the trip to start in south-central Nebraska and loop north, curving back to near Omaha.

"But that didn't work out," he said. "It was going to be too far between towns."

With a map on the wall and darts still marking all "B" towns, Jalass narrowed his choices for the starting point and landed on Brady.

"We like to get away from busy highways," he said. "North and south of the interstate is where you get to see the real beauty of the state."

The annual bicycle ride gathers roughly 600 cyclists from 35 different states besides Nebraska.

Riders also come from other countries.

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“We get a lot more exposure thanks to the Internet,” he said.

The cyclists, their families and the ride personnel will converge on Brady beginning Friday afternoon, June 3, with pre-ride meetings Saturday afternoon June 4.

Most will camp in tents on the football field at the school. Some may bring campers. Others will bunk with local hosts.

All activities will be centrally located at the school.

“We will add 725 to 750 people to Brady’s population in one weekend,” Jalass said.

Diehl was stunned when she realized what that meant.

“My first reaction was ‘Who’s going to feed all these people?’” she said.

So she contacted the largest group of cooks in the community—the funeral committee—and got the ball rolling.

“These women know how to cook for a crowd,” Diehl said.

The funeral committee will put together a supper meal for the large crowd on June 4.

Another organization will serve breakfast early Sunday, June 5, before bikers venture south on

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Banner Road toward Gothenburg. Concessions throughout the weekend will be provided by the Talon Power Booster Club.

“It’s going to take a lot of coordination,” Diehl said. “This is bigger, by far, than any Brady Days.”

Jalass said the BRAN group prefers small towns for overnight stays because

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<p>ABOUT BRAN</p> <p>The 31st annual Bicycle Ride Across Nebraska will begin in Brady with kickoff activities on Saturday, June 4.</p> <p>The ride starts Sunday, June 5. Cyclists will travel south of Brady on Banner Road to Gothenburg and then north on Highway 47 to Callaway for their first night's stop.</p> <p>Other overnight communities on the trip include Burwell, Bassett, O'Neill, Battle Creek and Oakland with the final destination at Waterloo on June 11.</p> <p>The trip is 437 miles.</p> <p>BRAN is open to all cyclists. Officials say the age of riders ranges from 9 to 95 and participants come from</p>	 <p>BRAN - INC Bicycle Ride Across NEBRASKA</p>
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