

The Oregonian/

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## Riders put their pedals to their mettle

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By JOHN FUREY

Correspondent, The Oregonian

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"I keep it for those who start complaining," Riggs said. "It's my binky."

The complaints are likely to occur, said Tilson, 21, a Lakeridge High School graduate who has made three long-distance bicycle tours across North America.

But Tilson and six other bicyclists were all smiles Wednesday as they left Tilson's family home shortly after 9 a.m. on what they call the "Arctic Expedition."

The trip, which will help raise money for youth groups in Fresno, includes eight states and four Canadian provinces. The cyclists will travel into Washington, northern Idaho, British Columbia and along the Alcan Highway through Canada.

They plan to skirt the Alaskan border and ride to Inuvik, a Canadian town that is on the northernmost part of the continent accessible by

public road. The road ends about 60 miles from the Arctic Ocean, but the cyclists plan to reach the ocean shoreline however they can.

They then plan to take a 600-mile flight to Yellowknife, capital of the Northwest Territories, and resume their trip on bicycles. They will pedal to Edmonton and on south to Calgary.

They plan to ride through Glacier National Park in Montana; Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming; Salt Lake City; Reno, Nev.; and Yosemite National Park, Calif. Their final destination is Fresno, the hometown of five of the cyclists.

Tilson, a recent graduate in mechanical engineering from Stanford University, is the only Oregonian on the trip. The others, including Rob Wishon, 21; Mark Epperly, 26; Alex Michas, 17; and Mark Scheeff, 22, are from California.

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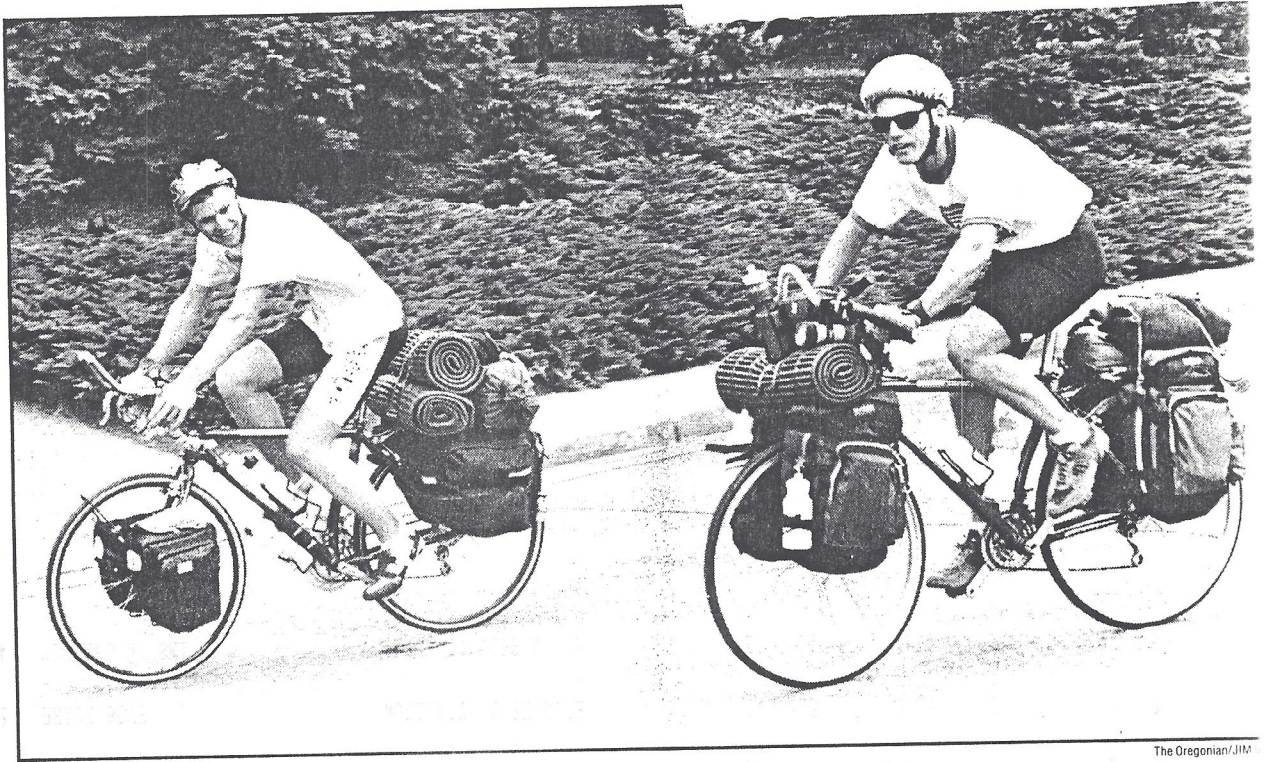
Tilson developed the idea for the trip two years ago. He became interested about the northern region after reading works by Farley Mowat, whose book was made into the film "Never Cry Wolf."

The cyclists have accepted donations of about \$2,500, according to Kampling. Money will be donated to New United Way in Fresno, Calif.

Some of the equipment donated for the trip, according to Kampling, and each cyclist expects to spend about \$1,300 for food during the 75-day journey.

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# Arctic outpost revels in sun's fleeting return

## It pokes above horizon after long blackout; town of 3,000 parties

REUTERS

INUVIK, Canada — Jubilant residents of Canada's arctic set off fireworks, danced and ate caribou in celebration of their first fleeting glimpse of the sun last week after more than a month of frigid darkness.

The sun peeked above the horizon for just a few minutes Friday at Inuvik, but it was reason enough for a party in this rugged outpost of about 3,000 people at the northern extreme of North America.

"After the period of darkness, people are happy and feeling good to know the sun is back. It's a relief and a time for a new beginning," said Eddie Kolausok, an Inuvik teacher.

Local residents — who include the Eskimo, or Inuvialuit people as they prefer to be called — last saw the sun in the first week of December, although indirect rays have given the sky an orange glow in recent days.

Due to the earth's tilt as it rotates, the sun disappears from view above the Arctic Circle around the winter solstice Dec. 21. The exact length of this dark period varies from place to place because of the earth's pronounced curvature in the far north.

Once the sun reappears, the period of daylight lengthens each day until the summer solstice in June, when the sun never sets and Inuvik becomes the capital of the land of the midnight sun.

To cheer the return of daylight to this remote area, the town for the eighth year in a row put on a festival called Sunrise Celebration.

It began Thursday night with a feast of caribou and arctic char fish, native singing, dancing, drum-

fires. Despite temperatures of minus 28 degrees Celsius (minus 18 F), most of the town turned out on a frozen lake for the festivities.

"This revives the spirit. It can get pretty bleak in the dead of winter here, so we came up with this idea to liven things up," said Fire Chief Ian Orbell.

But the main event came Friday. Happy townspeople converged on a nearby hilltop on foot and in sleds, snowmobiles and cars for the sunrise at 1:38 p.m. MST. They cheered and applauded as the sun crested, painting the sky vibrant orange, red and lavender.

"The sunrises here are the most beautiful on earth. If you can take the cold, this is a wonderful place to be," said local resident Esther Gessner.

The sun was above the horizon for less than a half hour, but the festive mood continued into the weekend with square dancing and other activities.

The Sunrise Celebration has become a much-awaited feature of life in Inuvik, where it helps combat cabin fever and winter depression brought on by light deprivation.

The town is the government and service center for Canada's western arctic, a frozen and thinly populated frontier region of barren tundra where some hunters and trappers still live off the land.

Some locals had never seen fireworks before the festival was started. Although pyrotechnics are standard fare in southern Canada on the July 1 national holiday, there's little point in mounting such a display in Inuvik because of the constant daylight in the summer.

"It never gets dark enough here on Canada Day for fireworks, so this is a big treat," said Orbell.

In past years, frigid cold played havoc with the festival's traditional Inuvialuit drum-dancing display, so this year it was moved indoors.

"The drums froze and wouldn't make a sound. We learn from exper-

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By **LESLIE CONSTANS**  
Staff Reporter

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The route is more than twice the length of his previous trips.

The idea for the trip came last summer when Tilson rode from Portland to New Hampshire via Canada.

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"It's a book report coming to life," joked Josh Kampling, 30, one of the bicyclists on the trip.

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"For a lot of us, it's a transitional time and a good way to evaluate where we've been and where we're going," said Tilson, who has a degree in mechanical engineering. "There's a lot of uncertainty about the next 2 1/2 months, but that's part of the attraction."

Wishon, a sociology major at Cal State Humboldt, agreed.

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See **HISTORIC**, page C2

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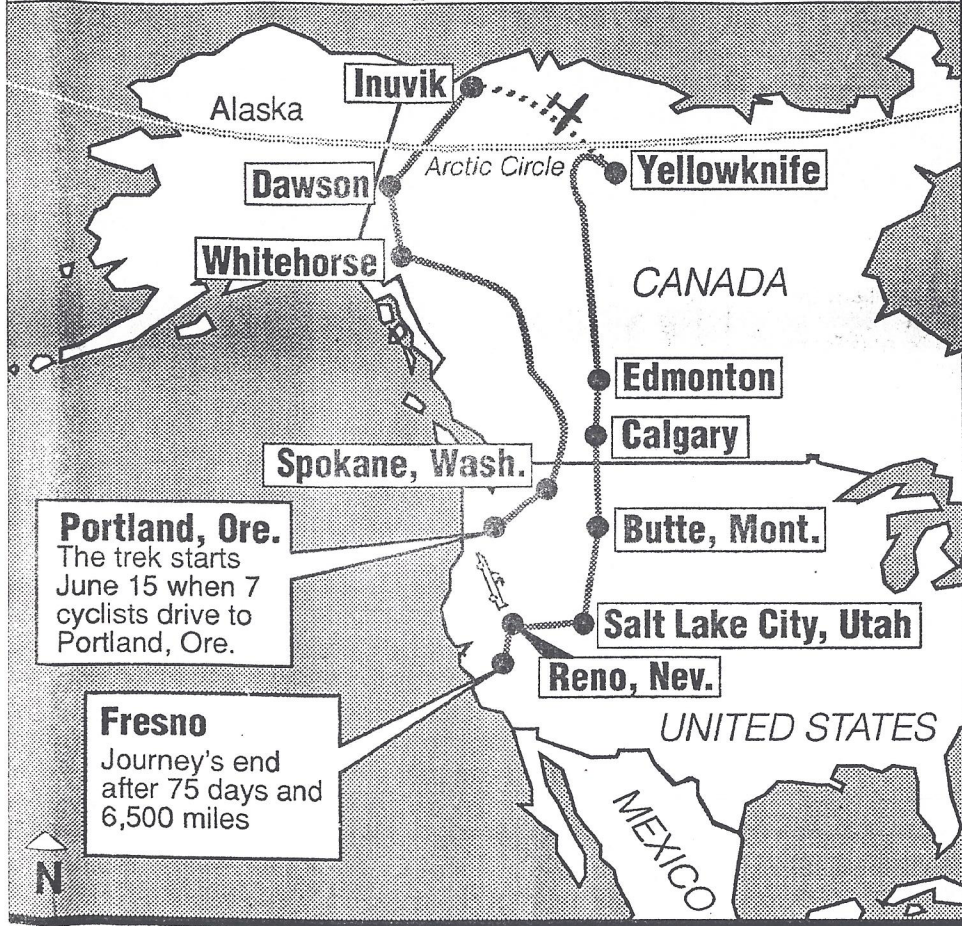
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Anyone interested in pledging money to the Arctic Expedition '92 should write to 4270 N. Blackstone



ex Michas and Mark Epperly prepare for their upcoming trek.

# The Arctic Expedition



David Owens — The Fresno Bee

make an impact on the community," said Kampling. He and Riggs are the group's veterans, having amassed five transcontinental bicycle trips between them.

"It's a personal challenge, both mentally and physically," said Riggs. "It's an opportunity to see a beautiful part of this country and Canada. You can appreciate every hill and the flowers."

Epperly said he expects to feel exhilarated at the end of the 75-day journey that will take the cyclists to Inuvik, a Canadian town near the Arctic Ocean

"It's a break from society, a chance to rethink life, to not worry about the rat race. It's sort of the ultimate test

"He was scared, nervous, pinned in," said Sgt. Jeff Motoyasu, a SWAT team leader. "That's why he came out."

Police began looking for the boy and an alleged accomplice, 14, about 7 a.m. Sunday after residents reported a rash of burglaries.

The alleged burglars, whose names were not released because of their ages, were reported to be

Please see SWAT, Page B3

# Hispanic majority for Sanger council

By Charles Milos  
The Fresno Bee

SANGER — No matter who wins in the June 2 election, Sanger is assured of having a Hispanic majority on the City Council for the second time in its 81-year history.

After the election, the first in which candidates are being selected by districts, three of the five council members will be Hispanic.

In District 1, Erlinda F. Martinez has a free ride — no opposition.

In District 3, Council Member Joseph O. Kretsch is opposed by Richard M. Estigoy, who works

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# Alex Michas gets northern exposure

## Michas traveled 100 miles a day on bike to reach Artic Circle



Senior Alex Michas, with six other cyclists, is geared up and ready to start their trip to the Artic Circle

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**Tami Fitzpatrick**  
Charger Co-Editor

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With a few bags full of belongings filled with the bare necessities needed to survive, Senior Alex Michas traveled on bike this summer about 100 miles a day for 81 days to the Artic Circle.

"It was a big challenge. It was the hardest thing I've ever done," said Michas.

Michas, the youngest of the six other cyclists on the trip, began the journey in Portland, Or., where they started their trip, June 17, the day after school was out. They ended in Fresno on September 6, two days before school started.

With their tight itinerary, which they completely followed, the cyclists were on their bikes 12 hours a day in order to get to their destination, which was usually a city park or campground where they were to stay for the night, before dark.

Every sixth day was their rest day, which usually was in a big city. This gave them time to do their laundry and a few other necessities. "There wasn't any time for sight-seeing," said Michas.

Michas said that it took him two months to finally get use to the trip.

"I wanted to go home a lot, but other times I had a lot of fun so that made up for it," said Michas.

Michas said that the trip was more of a mental strain than physical.

"You really can't prepare yourself mentally. You just try to do your best," he said.

During the middle of the trip, Michas' knee went out and he had to rest for eight days in Canada with a family one of the others knew. He later took a bus to catch up with the group.

"I was kind of nervous

about riding again. I took it easy and used my other leg more," Michas said.

Michas, who has been riding his bike to school for five years, said this was the first time he had gone over 50 miles on his bike. "I wanted to see Canada and this was probably the only time I will go to the Artic Circle," he said.

The trip was made possible by numerous sponsors including Northface who gave the cyclists half off on equipment and Alpine Star who donated a bike to each cyclist.

This was Michas' first long bike trip and he said that he wants to go on another, possibly to Europe or through the United States next year, but definitely not as intense of one.

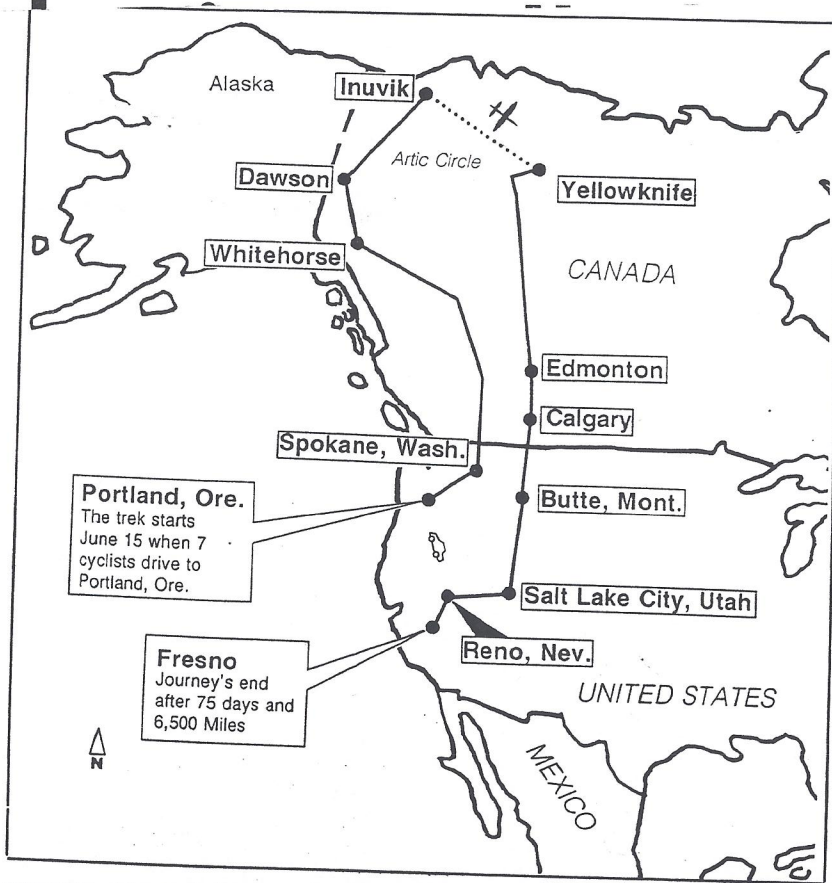
He said that he's still riding his bike, but just not 100 miles a day.

"I want to keep it going. I do like it and hope more people get into it," said Michas.

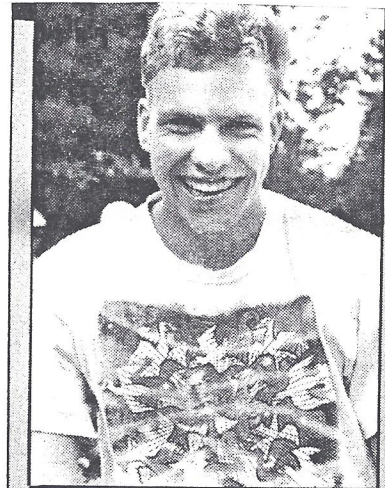


# Review

Thursday, June 25, 1992 50¢



RIDERS WILL follow this 6,500-mile route on their 10-week trip.  
(Graphic by Don Erickson)



Stanford grad sets out on a cycling adventure  
See Community, page C1



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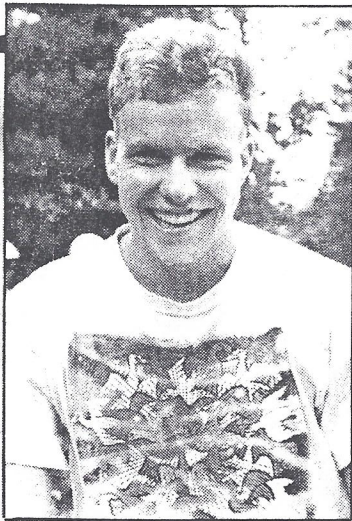
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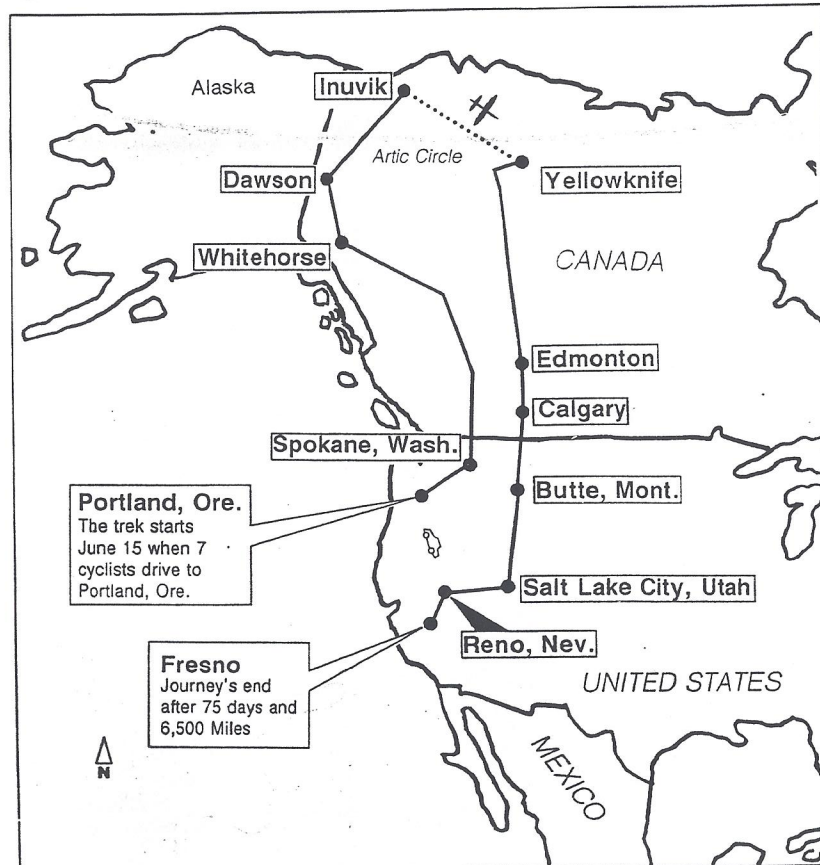
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