

Tour Director Guidance

The Tour Director (TD) is in charge of the day's operation for Cycling Schools. Since you are likely to be Tour Director only 2 or 3 times a year, it would be a good idea to review this guidance three to four days beforehand. As Tour Director, you will be coordinating the efforts of the volunteers to complete a successful ride. As such, **try to be available to direct and answer questions and not get too wrapped up in completing tasks yourself.** Kathy, Scott and board members are normally available to help and answer questions, but the idea is for each Tour Director to be able to complete the tasks in their absence.

This guidance provides more background information and details for the items listed on the Tour Director to do list or Checklist which serves as your guide the day of the ride.

These are guidelines on how to get the job done, but they are just guidelines, not rules. We save them in dropbox 2.4 so we can change them easily. If you see a better, smarter, faster way to do things, please feel free to suggest changing the set-up. The intent is to get the job completed, the "how" is best left up to the people who are doing the actual work. That said, this is intended to be updated regularly, so please share any suggestions for improvement with other board members. Kathy & Scott, when faced with new procedures/situations over the years, have had to make stuff up based on good judgement and common sense with a priority on safety. You should feel free to do the same.

As Tour Director the following documents will assist you with being prepared ahead of the ride: This **Tour Director Guidance**, the **TD To Do List**, the **TD Day of the Ride Fill in Form** and the **Job Assignment List** (if you have a day with two schools visiting). These documents are posted at the bottom of the volunteer section of the Cycling Schools website. Please review and use all of them in preparation for your ride(s).

You should also review the schedule and volunteer signups on the website or posted on the back porch ahead of your ride. It is important to know which school(s), estimated number of students, who the School Liaison is, whether all volunteer positions are filled and the expected number of volunteers scheduled on your day. Your preparation is best started at least a few days ahead of your ride.

As TD, you will accomplish the following the afternoon or evening before the ride:

- 1) Obtain the latest weather forecast for the ride.
- 2) Contact the School Liaison
 - A) Discuss with School Liaison the expected weather and any concerns
 - B) Using the Day of the ride fill in form, obtain their best estimate of:

- # students biking & # students hiking
- # squads
- # adults biking & adults hiking (teachers and parents)
- Any special needs students? School Liaison is to remind School Point of Contact to place students with medical concerns (asthma, etc.) in squads or hiking groups with a teacher who is informed of the student's circumstance and is carrying any necessary medication.

C) Ensure the Liaison has given the School Point of Contact a blank Day of ride checklist and reminded them to fill it out as soon as they leave the school and then text the Liaison a picture of the completed form. If the School Point of Contact needs a copy of the checklist, they can download it from our website on the schools page and print it.

D) Ask if the waivers are all set. The Liaison will remind the School Point of Contact to please separate any school permission slips from the waivers and that you will collect the waivers immediately when they step off the bus.

3) TD will then contact the Volunteer Manager to obtain the count of volunteers for the day and discuss any concerns (low volunteer #, jobs not assigned to anyone or changes to the line-up).

4) TD will then contact hotdog person with total count (# of students + # of school adults + # of CS volunteers).

5) TD will also contact snack person with total count.

The Tour Director should arrive at least a half hour prior to the volunteer show time to complete a few preliminary tasks. Kathy normally gets to the Hub early as she enjoys the "quiet time" before all the volunteers arrive, so do not be surprised if she is already at the Hub. Scott sometimes shows up a half hour prior to unload and place the cones out to save the bus parking space.

Located in the Tour Director's box there is a key to unlock the back porch, a binder containing this Guidance, the Tour Director's to do list, the TD's Day of the ride fill in form, a list of school points of contact, a list of volunteer phone #'s, volunteer briefing guides and Safety brief. Also in the box are the Incident Reporting Manual and Safety Manual. The Tour Director's box is stored in the garage and placed under the table on the back porch at the start of the day. On the bulletin board in the back porch is the list of volunteers who have signed up for each day and the schedule which gives you the school's name and the initial estimated arrival/departure times (in case you were unable to contact the School Liaison the night before). Also posted on the board are the position description and safety analysis for a Cycling Schools volunteer and discrimination policies for the park and Cycling Schools, Inc.

Here are some things to consider when there are two schools riding simultaneously:

Since there is no guarantee that the schools will arrive at the same time, it is best to treat them as separate events. Having one school go north and one school go south is the easiest way to keep things separated but is not a requirement. In the spring if the eagle's nest is active, this means one school gets to see the eagles and the other does not. If one of the schools is from Akron, it is best to send them south as they are short on time and rarely get all their groups through the eagle's nest. If the eagle's nest is active, you will need one wildlife watcher at the nest and one showing pelts. If you do not have a second wildlife watcher, have the squad leaders give the pelt presentation. You will need to remind the hiking leaders that they need to coordinate the hikes for each school.

The night before, talk with the School Liaison(s) and know which direction each school is going and how many squads you will need. It is helpful to start the job assignments the night before by filling out the assignment list. You can see who is signed up for the ride by taking a picture of the signup sheet posted above the Tour Director's desk on the back porch or the by going to the signup sheet on the web (like you were signing up for the ride) and see the first name and last name initial of everyone signed up (check both cycling and hiking signups). While there is no guarantee that those signed up will actually show up, it is easier to fill in 1 or 2 holes in the assignments than starting from scratch that morning. Make sure whoever is giving the safety brief to each school has a copy of the student safety brief to read from. There are two laminated copies available.

Try to use two different colors of expo makers for the schools when filling out the bike count white board, the resource white board (school names, phone # wildlife watcher) and the squad assignments white board. Blue for north and Green for south is a good approach.

In order to prepare for your role as Tour Director, you may also want to review the Incident Reporting Manual. Hopefully, you will not need to use it, but it is one of those things that if something happens, you need to be familiar with what to do. Emergency contact information for each volunteer is on their liability waiver. These waivers are filed alphabetically in the accordion folder in the Tour Director's box if needed.

Lastly, almost every needed supply or piece of equipment is located in the garage or on the back porch- from trash bags to chain lube it's there somewhere. If you can't find it, ask another board member or long-time volunteer.

Important Numbers

Ranger Communications Center 440-546-5945 (for emergencies)

La Donna Sifford 440-343-7041 (supervising ranger)

Josh Bates 440-503-7801 (borrow power washer, canopies, water jugs etc.)

Ohio Connection 216-324-8999 (bus company)

Akron Public Schools Transportation Coordinator 330-761-1390 (Angela Hendrix)

Tour Director To Do List Details For Ride Day

This is designed to follow the general order of the checklist and provide additional details and information as necessary. Please note all check list items are not included here as many are self-explanatory. The Instructions for Parking the Bus and the Severe Weather Plan documents are also at the end of this document.

Execute the Closing Checklist in Reverse

Who normally does this? The 1st person to arrive, often Scott or Kathy

The checklist is posted inside the garage to the right as you enter the garage.

Bus Cones

Who normally does this? Scott

Because it is sometimes difficult to get a space large enough to park the bus, try to put the bus cones out right away. We try to reserve the back right corner of the parking lot (facing the lot from the garage) where the trail starts. If there are cars there already then reserve a spot where you can that will be easy for the bus to get into (along the south edge works).

Volunteer Manager

Who normally does this? Scott Stuetzer, Ann Stuetzer, Geoff Neeson, Kathy Roth

What to do if that person is not there today: Do not worry about any of the paperwork that we normally do when a new volunteer arrives other than the volunteer waiver. We will catch up on any paperwork the next time when there is someone who normally does this present. The blank volunteer waivers are in the hanging file in the Volunteer Manager's box #1. Place the completed volunteer waiver at the back of the hanging file of blank waivers and make sure to text Scott that you had a new volunteer and they filled out a waiver.

Morning of the Ride

1. Set up for volunteer sign in on the porch.
 - a. Table, chairs, banner to porch
 - b. These should all come out of and go back into the Volunteer Manager's Box:
 - i. Set out the volunteer sign-in sheet (both pages stored in the clipboard) and clipboard.

- ii. Set out nametags and red/black pens.
- iii. Tape a grocery bag to the side of the table for trash.

"Once the squads leave the HUB on their ride"

1. Review the volunteer Sign-in sheet **making sure the # of adults (Teachers and Parents from the school) and students (total hiking and biking) is recorded** at the top of the sign-in sheet (this is the real count from the waivers, not the estimated numbers we used to decide how many bikes to get out). It is important to get these numbers correct as at the end of the day, we need the same number to have returned to the Hub as the number that left in the morning. Review names on the sheet once the furor dies down and make sure all the volunteers actually signed in. Sign in any names not already entered.
2. Place the completed sign-in sheet with the school waivers in an envelope in the Tour Director's box. Scott will eventually collect the envelopes.

Bikes and Rows

The small, numbered bike cones are placed in the grass field such that the rows of bikes run north/south from the cones. The number of rows is determined by the number of students expected to ride and the number of volunteers available. This is best coordinated with the School Liaison based on their discussions with the School POC. South facing squads are numbered 1-4 (#1 closest to the garage), north facing squads are numbered 5-8 (#5 closest to the garage). If there are less than 8 squads, adjust accordingly.

The number and sizes of bikes in each row is determined by the number of students and grade level(s) we are expecting. 6th graders likely need more of the blue taped bikes, 4th graders may need more of the red taped bikes. In addition, an appropriate number of teacher/parent bikes (blue/green taped bikes) will need to be brought out and set up together, slightly closer to the garage, but not in the way of general access and traffic to and from the garage.

Write the count of the various tape color bikes on the "bike count" white board, along with the total number of students and adults riding, so all volunteers helping to set up bikes know what should be set up in each row. The board provides a reference and eliminates the need to keep repeating the bike count and type per row.

Do not start getting bikes out until volunteer arrival time. Our volunteers want to feel included. If most of the bikes are already out before arrival time, volunteers feel excluded.

Helmets

The helmet bins can be placed in the middle area of grass between the two groups of bike rows. The blue (sm/m) helmets are placed on the bikes with the other size helmets used as necessary.

One of the large blue bins from the back porch should also be set out in the same area as a place to return helmets which were tried on but not used for the ride. These helmets need to be sanitized prior to another use.

Canopy, Tables and Hotdog Set-up

Four tables and the canopy are set up along the side of the house. The equipment for hotdog cooking, table clothes, etc are stored in large black and yellow bins. These bins, the grill and propane tank are placed near the tables and canopy once it's set up. The hotdog chef normally sets up the cooking equipment as they wish, when they arrive. One table is set up in the shade near the picnic tables for the school lunches.

Hot Dogs and Chef

Who normally does this? Hotdog John or whoever is listed on the Hub assignment sheet as chef. Mike Appel or Doug Shimko brings hotdogs, buns and condiments.

If the hotdog chef is not there today and if the cycling group is staffed with extra volunteers, ask if someone is willing to stay back and cook. If you have a SAG driver, you can cook hotdogs or you can decide "no hotdogs today".

Dry erase Resource Board

Who normally does this? Tour Director

You or any volunteer can do this. Fill in appropriate names and phone numbers on the dry erase board and hang on the face of the garage. Don't forget the return time, 30 minutes before the bus departure time.

Squad Assignments

Who normally does this? Kathy and Josanne will be assigning squad leaders and possibly the entire squad board.

What to do if that person is not there today: Assign it to someone or do it yourself. Just make sure black nametag volunteers (not background checked) are with a red nametag volunteer. The person doing the oversight can start by checking with you on how many squads we are having that day. Also consider how many teachers will be riding and use them to fill in where needed.

If you are short volunteers, put only one volunteer (experienced like Ex-Mayor Bob) with a teacher. If you still do not have enough volunteers, reduce the number of lines and add more students per line (instead of 8 squads of 6 students, use 6 squads of 8 students). Whatever works. We have had rides with 14 students in a squad with only 2 volunteers, not ideal, but doable.

Technique: Who are the volunteers that are willing to be leaders – if you don't know just ask the person. Not everyone wants to lead. Volunteers will give you an honest answer of yes or no to the assignment. Who makes good sweeps? They get added next. Then fill in the middle if you have extra volunteers and new volunteers. Teachers, especially ones that have ridden before, are great as sweeps or middle people. Sweep/last volunteer rider carries snack/medical bag.

Ex-Mayor Bob is always leader of squad 1 (when he is there). Kathy asks her teachers to put the fastest students in the first group. If there is a first-time volunteer, try to put them with Ex-Mayor Bob. That way they get a good experience. (Not that other volunteers aren't good!) If Ex-Mayor Bob is not here, Geoff Neeson is a good leader for squad 1.

Snacks and Backpacks

Who normally does this? Carl Polisena normally brings the snacks.

What to do if that person is not there today: Since the person assigned brings the snacks to the hub, you may have to forgo snacks. You still must put the backpacks out, so each squad has medical supplies.

If snacks are available, volunteers help put them in plastic bags and into the backpacks after seeing the line count and assessing the number of snacks needed per backpack, including the hiking groups' backpacks.

Water

Who normally does this? Scott or whoever is listed on the Hub assignment sheet for the 5-gallon coolers, Kathy for the 2-gallon cooler for hikes.

What to do if that person is not there today: You can check out 5 gallon or 2-gallon coolers from the Volunteer Management Office or Ranger Josh Bates. You will need to walk over to the VMO building to check them out (Josh works in the VMO building). There is normally someone in the VMO by 9 AM. You can wash and fill the coolers in the deep sink at the Savacoal House.

Wildlife Watcher

Who normally does this? Whoever is listed on the Hub assignment sheet.

What to do if that person is not there today: This is a "nice to do" program so it is okay if you do not set up a station today. You can look for a volunteer to fulfill this function, hopefully someone who has at least seen the presentation before. They should depart the Hub by the time the bus arrives in order to set up before the first squad arrives at the station.

In the spring we set up spotting scopes at the eagle's nest if the nest has an eaglet. We have a wagon with spotting scopes, the eagle backpack, chairs and signs. Any volunteer that can set up a

spotting scope can fill in. They need to be able to load the wagon in their vehicle and drive to the parking lot at Station Road bridge, unload the wagon (by themselves unless there are two volunteers) and walk to the eagle viewing spot.

In the fall we have pelts, briefing cards, a bench and chairs in the wagon. We set up at Red Lock, the turnoff to the Stanford House or the Savacoal House front porch. The volunteer can drive to Red Lock or pull the wagon across the street to the Savacoal House or down to the Stanford House turn off and set up. Be sure you are clear where they will be setting up so it can be shared during the volunteer briefing.

If there is construction on the Towpath changing the usual ride plan of heading north to Station Road and the eagle's nest, the above outline will need adjustment according to the revised ride plan.

Hike Leader

Who normally does this? Whoever is listed on the Hub assignment sheet.

What to do if that person is not there today: The school is required to have a teacher assigned to the hikers. We have a hiking backpack with all the instructions, so they can do the hike without our involvement. Experience has shown it goes better with one of us along, so if the cycling group is staffed with enough volunteers, see if someone is willing to hike that day.

Make sure you have the hiking leader's phone # and the hiking leader knows not to leave the area until you give the okay when all biking groups have been tested and departed in case you need to have a biker that will now be hiking instead.

Important Phone Numbers to Have

It is important for the Tour Director to have the phone numbers for each squad leader as well as note the important phone numbers on the dry erase Resource Board (Wildlife Watcher, Hiking Leader, etc.). Squad leaders should note their phone number on the squad white board. Consider creating a group text and test it in advance of the squads departing the hub. In addition, if you miss obtaining the phone number of the School Point of Contact for that day, it is listed in the Tour Director's notebook. A list of all volunteers and their phone #'s is also located in the Tour Director notebook.

All these numbers will be useful in the event you need to alert squads and hikers to take shelter due to impending thunderstorms or for other emergency situations which may arise during the ride.

Volunteer Briefing

Who normally does this? The Tour Director using the Volunteer Briefing Checklist.

The brief should be conducted at least 20 minutes before the bus arrives. If you assign someone else to do this, provide them with the Volunteer Briefing Checklist. Make sure they know to introduce any new volunteers and or NPS personnel and go around the circle for questions.

Bananas and their Distribution

Who normally does this? Kathy brings the bananas.

If they are not there that day, then you will not have any bananas. A couple of volunteers should be positioned along the path from the bus to the safety briefing to hand out the bananas to the students who want a banana as they pass by.

Bus Greeting

Assign someone to direct the bus. If they are not familiar, be sure to give that person the “Instructions for parking the bus” sheet and ask them if they have any questions after reading it.

The Tour Director, School Liaison, volunteer leading students to briefing area and a couple of volunteers to carry lunch coolers should be at the corner of the parking lot when the bus starts to discharge the school personnel. The Tour Director should introduce themselves to the School Point of Contact and then collect the waivers. The Tour Director will also give the Cycling Schools evaluation form and return envelope to the School Point of Contact. These forms are located in a plastic bag in the Tour Director’s box.

Counting Waivers

Who normally does this? 3 board members on the back porch, during the student safety briefing. It is helpful to have the School Point of Contact remain outside the back porch to expedite resolving any issues with waivers. Sometimes there is a problem that requires a decision regarding liability exposure. The board members must make that decision. The waivers are then placed in Scott’s briefcase (the waivers are stored for 10 years). If Scott is not there, place the school waivers (both adult and student) in a large envelope stored in the Tour Director’s box. If Scott knows he will not be there, the envelope will be marked with the school’s name. Place the volunteer sign in sheet from the front porch in the same envelope at the end of the day. Place the envelope back in the Tour Director’s box for Scott to pick up next time he is there.

Should additional blank copies of adult waivers be needed for teachers or parents, they are in the Tour Director’s box in a yellow folder.

Student Safety Briefing

Who normally does this? Ex-Mayor Bob, Mike Appel, Geoff Neeson, Ron Ring

What to do if that person is not there today: Ask for volunteers to do the brief or assign it. Give them the Safety briefing guide well ahead so they can go over it before briefing. You will normally be counting waivers, so try not to do this yourself.

Student Squad Assignments

The School Liaison should coordinate with the POC to announce the student squad assignments in a manner which lessens the potential for chaos. It may be helpful to announce the hiker groups first so those groups can leave the area ahead of the bike safety brief. As each group is announced, they need to follow the assigned CS volunteers and promptly move to their assigned row of bikes.

After Squads Depart

Please fill out the bike usage chart (# of 4th, 5th & 6th grade students will need the teacher to estimate). The numbered cones and unused bikes are returned to the garage and the paddles and rubber bands are returned to the Tour Director's box. A helmet return station should be set up with the helmet bins, lysol and a large blue return bin. Rags should also be placed outside the garage for bike cleaning when the squads return. If time permits, sanitize any helmets which were tried on but not used then buckle the strap and place in appropriate helmet bins.

Buckled=sanitized and ready for use.

Sag Driver

Who normally does this? Whoever is listed on the Hub assignment sheet.

What to do if that person is not there today: Most often, there is no Sag driver. You can fulfill this role if there is no one else. Hot Dog John or John Chmielecki can hold down the fort should you need to make a run to deliver a bike or pick up a student.

Maintenance issues/Equipment Manager

Let Capt. Mike, Equipment Manager, know of any maintenance issues. If he is not here, then see if one of the volunteers can fix the issue (flat tires, loose seats or handlebars can usually be repaired at the Hub). If no one can get to it right away, make sure the bike is tagged with what is wrong, so it does not get used until repaired. Repairs that need to be done by Spin Bike Shop can be arranged by Capt. Mike, Ralph Mlady or Scott.

School Feedback

When the Tour Director meets the School Point of Contact at the bus give the teacher one of the self-addressed envelopes with a blank feedback form inside to fill out and mail to Bob Esper. The envelopes are in the Tour Directors' box in a plastic bag.

Volunteer debrief

Who normally does this? Tour Director using the Volunteer Debriefing Checklist. Try to ensure this is of value to all volunteers. It should be the place for new volunteers to ask questions more than just volunteers stating they had a great ride. That's important but doesn't provide much value to new volunteers.

Garbage

Who normally does this? Capt. Mike or Scott

What to do if that person is not there today: Find a volunteer to take the garbage to the dumpster at Hines Hill Conference Center. Because there is food in the garbage, placing it overnight in the garage can (and usually does) cause quite a mess since the racoons will find it.

Towels/rag

Who normally does this? Find a volunteer to take them home for cleaning or store in the garage until a large enough quantity needs cleaning.

Execute Closing Checklist and Lock Garage

As Tour Director, you should ensure the checklist has been completed and the garage has been locked such that either lock can be opened for garage access.

Instructions for parking the bus

Go out to Boston Mills Rd at the driveway entrance to the parking lot 5 minutes prior to scheduled arrival. Look to the west (left) for Cleveland buses and look to the east (right) for Akron, but they do not always come the way you expect. Know what bus you are looking for (Ohio Connections, Akron Public Schools or Urban Community) because other buses may pull into the lot or drive by (if your bus drives by, let the School Liaison know and they can call the teacher to get them turned around). When your bus pulls in, **direct them to the drop-off point** (the northwest corner of the parking lot) and then walk there to the driver's side window. Ask the driver if they will be staying or not and if they have been here before. If they have been here before and are staying, they probably know the routine. Explain to park where the cones are set up and then go over to the cones to assist them with whatever they would like assistance with. Once parked, welcome the driver and let the driver know they are invited to ride bikes with the students or just come over to the Hub and chill or visit the Boston Mill Visitor Center. Let them know they are welcome to come over for a hot dog later. Regardless if the bus stays or departs, bring the cones (4 tall and 3 short) back to the southeast corner of the garage from the parking lot.

Severe Weather Plan

Begin watching the weather the evening prior. If thunderstorms are predicted in high enough percentage during the timeframe of the ride, consider canceling.

The Tour Director needs to be able to monitor the weather in near real time. The radar app on a smart phone is probably the best tool (Some of us use MyRadar app, it is free and has only a 10 minute lag). If you do not have good cell coverage in the valley, you can always hook into the Wi-Fi network at the Savacoal House.

SSID: SAVACOAL

PW: VIP4CUVA

If Severe Weather Occurs After Squads Depart

One technique is to have a group text with all of the squad leaders and test it before they depart the hub. This way, if you can see a cell approaching the area, you can text all squad leaders with one text to head for shelter.

If any of the leaders observe a thunder cell, hear thunder or see lightning, they will head for shelter for at least 30 minutes after the last observation. They should report to the Tour Director their location and what they observed as soon as possible.

Shelter areas to the north are the Stanford House, the porch of the primitive toilet at Red Lock, and the railroad pavilion at Brecksville station.

At the hub, we have the front and back porch as well as the garage, the Savacoal House, the Boston store rear lobby and eastside porch, the visitor's center and adjacent pavilion.

Shelter areas to the south are the rail tunnel between the boardwalk and Peninsula, the railroad pavilion at Peninsula, the rail tunnel just past deep lock, and the porch at the Hunt Farm Visitor Information Center.

If Severe Weather Occurs Before the Squads Depart

Based on the expected length of the severe storm, it is the Tour Director's discretion to either have all the students remain on the bus or have the squad leaders and hiking leaders take their squads to the following locations to wait out the storm. These locations were confirmed with Ranger Pam Machuga as acceptable for use in a severe storm based on ease of access and available space.

Squads 1&2 Savacoal House conference room and kitchen area (note an access code is needed)

Squads 3&4 Hub garage and back porch

Squads 5&6 Boston Store **rear** lobby and eastside porch

Squads 7&8 Remain on the bus

Hikers Bus drives to Visitor's Center to drop off hikers and returns with squads 7&8 to wait in parking lot

Any Cycling Schools volunteers, parent or teacher assigned to a squad goes with that squad. Severe weather string bags (bright green, stored in bin on back porch) should be distributed to each squad leader ahead of dispersing the squads from the bus. These bags contain game ideas and "tossable" object for use with the games listed. The intent is for the squad leaders and volunteers to use this resource to occupy and educate the students during the delay. If the severe storm is known ahead of the volunteer brief, these bags and the above shelter locations should be discussed during the brief.

Once an all clear has been determined (at least 30 minutes after last observation of thunder/lightning), all squad leaders and hiking leaders must be notified. Squads should reconvene at the Hub and the hiking groups can begin exploring outside.

Depending on the length of the delay, the Tour Director may need to modify the ride plan for the day.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a concern under certain weather conditions. Cooler temperatures with the addition of wet conditions can cause some people to experience mild hypothermia. Symptoms include shivering and mental confusion. Cycling schools has raincoats and gloves available should conditions warrant their use, though caution should be used in cool weather not to remove raincoats if students are getting warm. The students could be sweaty/damp which could lead to mild hypothermia should the air temperature be right.

If a student experiences shivering, it is important to address the situation by getting them in warm clothing or in a warmer place, if possible. It should be noted that physical activity can help alleviate the symptoms of mild hypothermia.