

## Book sale continues at Eggertsville Library

A book sale will continue at Eggertsville-Snyder library. The hours are 1 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 24 and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 25. Thursday's sale is a bag sale for \$3 per bag. The library is located at 4622 Main St. near Burroughs Drive.

# 'Bike 50 at 50'

## Amherst High grad to bike across America

by KATE MOCKLER  
Reporter

For his 50th birthday, David Miller wanted an adventure.

Miller, a graduate of Amherst High School who has lived in Mexico City for nearly 20 years, initially wanted to participate in 50 triathlons during his 50th year on Earth. After a few weeks of research, though, it was apparent that the plan wasn't going to work. Then, he had what he calls a "3 a.m. epiphany."

He realized that there were 50 states in America and 52 weeks in a year.

"It was the number 50 that was the important theme there," he said. The idea of a cross-country bike trip was born. He researched it and realized it was feasible.

Miller named his endeavor "Bike 50 at 50." On Oct. 31, the day after his 50th birthday, he will leave San Diego by bike. He will visit all 50 states in the course of a year, taking a boat to get to Alaska and a plane to get to Hawaii.

"I wanted an adventure," he said. "Doing it by car probably would have been really easy, but it wouldn't have quite been an adventure. It never even occurred to me to do it by car."

Miller has registered with couch-surfer.org, a website that connects travelers with people who are willing to open their homes to them. On occasion, he will also camp, stay with friends or family, or get a hotel room.

He has reached out to cycling clubs in many of the communities he'll be visiting, along with friends and family on his route. He is hoping that people will

choose to join him for parts of his trip, but he will have one constant companion: his 5-year-old Weimaraner, Max.

"Originally, I wasn't going to take him with me," Miller said. "It's a tough adventure."

Then, in speaking with Max's vet, he learned that during their year apart, Max would go through a process. He would likely enjoy his first couple of weeks at the kennel, until he realized Miller wasn't coming back anytime soon. Max would go through a period of depression but would then come to accept the kennel workers as his new family.



David Miller and his Weimaraner, Max, will travel the country by bike during the coming year to mark his 50th birthday.

"There's a whole process where you risk losing your dog," Miller explained. "I didn't want to lose my dog." Max will walk beside Miller's bike for a short time each day but will spend most of his time in a trailer that Miller will pull behind his bike.

Miller is also using the trip to raise awareness for several causes important to him.

"My dad, at 33, was diagnosed with angina. He's lived with a heart condition for 41 years, and the important word there is lived," Miller said. "My mother has had two bouts of cancer and has survived and come through very well. It was early detection and an early response."

"They're wonderful, happy, vibrant, healthy human beings. I wanted to find a way to give back a little to organizations that have kept them healthy and happy."

As such, the American Heart Association and the Cancer Research Institute are two of his beneficiaries. He will also use the trip to help raise money for The Nature Conservancy and for a charity in Mexico that he is still selecting. He will link to them directly from his website, [www.bike50at50.com](http://www.bike50at50.com), which is under construction.

Aside from the adventure factor, Miller is looking

forward to simply seeing more of the country.

"I'm very excited about just being on the road. Of the 50 states, I don't think I've been in more than 14 of them. I'm going to be learning about the country where I grew up and that I honestly know very little about."

Miller said he is especially eager to see all of the country's national parks and to visit Washington, D.C., one of the few major American cities that he has yet to visit.

His family and friends have been supportive so far. "At this point in my life, they're never too shocked about the news that I might share with them," he said. And he's hoping that the public responds as well.

"Follow us, send us emails," he said. "I think people like myself who decide to do crazy things like this are self-motivated and independent people, but even they have doubts. You're never sure if anyone's listening or anyone cares. I hope the word gets out there, and I hope people follow us."

To follow the adventures of Miller and Max, visit [www.bike50at50.com](http://www.bike50at50.com) or go to [www.twitter.com/bike50at50](http://www.twitter.com/bike50at50).

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**BIKE 50 at 50**

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