

Diane Callan's Tour of Hope At Home - July 2020

RIDE 1 = 76 KM

What a send-off! My entire family came to meet me at the gazebo in Robert Carter Park just before 9 this morning, in the rain, complete with hugs, cowbells, and signs to cheer me on. My heart was bursting! A big thank you to Maureen (so sorry that you had a flat and couldn't continue), Hope, Ken, Dwight, Barry, and Wayne who rode with me, in the rain, for 76 kilometers. You'll notice in the group photo that all of us held pictures of Kids. All of these children and their families have been affected by cancer and they battle for their lives every day. I feel proud to ride for them and, as my friend Michelle says, "to bring awareness and support to the families".

I would like to acknowledge the TTRW (Terwillegar Trail, Run, and Walk) team for their generous donation this morning, wow, that was unexpected! Three of the seven committee members rode with me today. I'd like to pass a sincere and heartfelt thank you to the TTRW Committee for making the decision to support the KWCS.

We had a terrific ride! Dwight & Ken changed up the route a bit so that we didn't have to ride next to the traffic on Garden Valley Road and the Devon Highway on the way out. Because of the route change, Wayne and I discovered new roads to ride on and some amazing scenery. In the second photo, we're at Blackhawk Golf Club. The rain slowed at precisely 10:55 (I know because I checked my watch) and then built to a torrential downpour at noon, continuing to the finish. I was reminded that this is what happens on the Tour of Hope, so today felt authentic. I'm looking for sunshine for the next ride and would love to have more company. Thanks to everyone today—I feel newly motivated and excited to log the kilometers during the month of July.

RIDE 2 = 80 KM

Ride 2 was done in the sun! Three Fabulous Female Tour of Hope riders + me rocked an 80 km. bike ride this morning! Newly retired Debbie wanted to start at 10:30...10:30, are you kidding me!!?? We compromised and began the ride at the Terwillegar Rec Centre at 8:30.

My amazing husband, bike maintenance man, the guy who's always in my corner and has my back walked over to the start line to get a photo and I think that he was surprised that the first thing we talked about was Debbie's retirement and André's imminent retirement. She's pretty excited about a gift she's getting - to André, from André, a new bike!!! We Tour of Hope women love our bikes and our charitable organization, KWCS.

Same route as Wednesday (Edmonton west to Blackhawk Golf Club and Graminia Rd.) except in the sunshine and oh, it was a fabulous ride. Yes, we talked the entire time but we kept a steady pace and enjoyed the competitiveness between the 4 of us. We each carried a picture of one of the kids. We talked about families that are strapped financially because of COVID-19 and how families with sick children have a double whammy during this difficult time. We're sure hoping to make a difference on the balance sheet for the Kids With Cancer Society. Ride 3 tomorrow and then a day of rest on Sunday. I'm off to a good start and grateful for friends.

RIDE 3 = 82 KM

With a crew of eight, we headed north from Ardrossan Recreation Complex this morning. 13°, virtually no wind, and a 'no rain' guarantee until 3 p.m. We road over the overpass on Hwy. 16, and continued west to Range Road 224, turned north and continued to RR 540 to Elk Island Park. Of course, it rained, not a downpour but rain nonetheless. I had not ridden as far east as Elk Island Park before and it was just terrific! No complaints about the slightly rolling roads. At 40 kms. we dismounted and walked over the cattle guard and into the park.

The clouds had dissipated and the sun was now high in the sky. Time to take off coats and arm warmers and enjoy the 5 kms. on the administration road which is a small portion of the riding you can do around the park. Apparently, there are 75 kms. of mountain biking trails and 20 kms. of road biking on the Parkway. I hoped that we'd have a photo op with a bison, not too close but from a distance, seemed like a reasonable ask.

We didn't get our 5 km. as planned because the bison was moving at a slow pace, all the while keeping an eye on us so we decided to turn around and leave his domain. Back to Ardrossan via Range Road 205, 542, and 222— all good, no flats, no rain, beautiful fields to look at, and lots of good conversation with friends who have sponsored me and who are determined to help me reach my goal. Riders today: Steve, Mark, Doug, Hope, Ken, Wayne, me, and Devon

RIDE 4 = 62 KM

Good Morning! Our amazing city is quite lovely at 6:30 a.m. when you're out for a mountain bike ride in aid of the Kids With Cancer Society. We rode for Declan and Mackenzie. Our route included the Terwillegar Off-leash Park, Fort Edmonton Park, Laurier Park, and Hawrelak Park. After that, we made our way up Groat Hill to the University Farms, through the Grandview area, then down 119th. Street to 23rd. Avenue, across Smith Crossing and home = 35 km.

Good Evening! Now for the special event of the day. This evening we met our "High-wheeling" friends just off of Whyte Avenue and road the residential areas from Whyte Ave. to the University, Millcreek Ravine, and across the Low-Level bridge to make our way back to 82 Avenue = 27 km. These are some of the people who donate to the Society every year and are supporting me during my Tour of Hope, At Home. Each of them carried a picture of one of the Kids that have been affected by cancer. Daughter Danielle joined up too.

RIDE 5 = 76 KM

Today we rode for these three sweet kids who are fighting the cancer battle: Jaxon (2.5 years), was diagnosed at 18 days old and started treatment the next day, Tessa (5 years), was diagnosed when she was 18 months old, and Paisley-Anne (3.5 years) was diagnosed about a year ago.

Little kids who love to paint, do puzzles, build lego, play sports, and love their pets just like all of our kids except for the fact that they also contend with scans, procedures, and treatments; they call this their beaded journey. "The beads are a vivid representation and validation of a child's progress, resilience, and bravery."

Maureen, Wayne, and I rode the west route to Blackhawk and on to Graminia Rd. this morning; it's becoming a favorite route except for the part at the beginning where, after much rain, a section of ground was a total mud bath, and... Yep, I was down and in it in a New York minute! No injuries just a lot of mud everywhere.

We carried on and enjoyed the sights and sounds of the Edmonton countryside: golfers were hitting the ball at the Petroleum Golf Club and at Blackhawk, the red-wing blackbirds were abundant in the marshes, hawk sightings, lots of horses, 2 newborn foals + plenty of canola added to the color of the landscape. Five rides in the books and 376 k. under my belt. Saturday we ride again. "CANCER DOESN'T QUIT...NEITHER DO WE!

RIDE 6 = 85 KM

Twelve of us road from Ardrossan to Elk Island Park today and it was a perfect morning. What a terrific group of people! From time to time, I get an opportunity to talk about the Kids With Cancer Society while I ride and today I told one of the riders about how I became involved with the Tour of Hope. As we all know, everyone has a story, and my fellow rider shared a bit about recent developments in his family. I was reminded that it's rare to find a family that hasn't been touched by cancer and when it's a child that's been diagnosed, it's the worst feeling.

We went directly from the Rec center on to Range Road 222, East on 540, North on 211, East on 540 again and into the park. This 85km. ride was an out and back. A couple of us saw a huge hawk in the field on Range Road 540 and I'm not one of those people who can ride and take photos so I looked for him on the internet and this Broad-winged hawk most resembles what we saw. For those of you who are cycling enthusiasts, I would recommend this route on a day like today. The roads are good, drivers are courteous and the views and serenity of the countryside will make you feel grateful to live in Alberta. Getting close to 500 kilometers now!

Ride 7 = 17 KM

During today's day of rest, I had a mountain bike ride with family: Daughter Shannon, son-in-law Jay, Grandson Nathan & Granddaughter Emma. We went out from 11:00 - 12:30, so we finished just minutes before the downpour. There were many, many people and families out riding, running, and walking near Fort Edmonton Park. How lucky am I to have my family cheering me and the KWCS on!



Ride 8 = 3.5 KM

I am not at all familiar with this area of the city so my BFF, Fiona, wrote the description of our ride from this morning: We headed from Cloverbar (across from the Muttart) and up Cloverbar Hill. We rode along Strathern Drive and hooked up to the trails going east, passing through neighborhoods that included: Forest Heights, Capilano, and Goldbar. Back onto the trails and up the hill to Rundle Park Golf Course and then Hermitage Park which is across from Sunridge Ski Hill.



Fact: there is 150 km. of paved trails winding through Edmonton's River Valley and ravine system. It was almost an out and back but going back to Fi's we opted for the stairs up to Rowland Road because a young, energetic guy was doing stair repeats and we thought we'd let him carry our bikes up. No dice; he barely said hello but I saw a tiny smile. We needed a few extra km. to get me over the halfway point of my July goal so we went across the Low-Level Bridge and along Louise McKinney Riverfront Park to get an up-close and personal look at the LRT Valley Line - the dedicated **Tawatinâ** Bridge (means Valley in Cree).



My forever friend, Fiona. Fi rode for Tessa & I rode for Naveed. We admire them and wish them happiness and good health!

Ride 9 = 80 KM

Today was a special day because I rode with my brother, Len, who lives at Pigeon Lake. Perfect weather, terrific route, and we did 80K. From Gilwood Beach, we rode east on 616 X to AJ's Trading Post and then north on Range Road 778, which took us to Thorsby. We had a following wind along this stretch and our speed reached 49k/hr. We flew! West on Highway 39 was a bit busy and that's where the excitement started. A young bull moose came out of the ditch ahead and towards us. He was amazing to see but he was so confused that I thought he might run right into the traffic. Len waved his arm frantically and whistled this sound that can only be described as a melody. Len has a whistle that he uses to get people's attention, to get riders to get on their bikes and get a move on when beginning a ride and then there's this whistle. It must be just for moose. Is there such a thing as a moose whisperer or is Len the first? The moose moved up toward the highway and back to the ditch a few times and then he understood that Len was telling him to get back down and take off. Oh, how I wish that one of us had had a GoPro!! We carried on to Warburg and stopped to say hi to a supporter of Len's at Buck Mountain Co-op. After leaving Warburg we turned east on 616 to get back to Gilwood Beach and because we needed a few more kilometers to get our 80, we rode south on 771 to Sunset Harbour, took a little spin through the area and hammered it back to Len's.



Thanks for the ride today, Len!



Sunset at Pigeon Lake

Ride 10 = 80 KM

Today's ride was more like those that I have experienced while on the Tour of Hope. The wind was absolutely brutal and we had to endure it for much of the ride. Nine of us rode from Sundance Beach at Pigeon Lake at 10 AM. Our dear friends, Doug & Caren were our hosts and as is always the case, we had a terrific time. Everyone carried a picture of one of the Kids and we all wore stickers on our helmets that read:



Friends commented to me that when life gets tough these days, they think about what the Kids go through in their treatments and they adjust their attitude. My 'Tour At Home' is my way of helping the organization that I believe in and I see that my group of friends that ride with me time and time again has become personally engaged in what this Tour is for. I thank them. I'd also like to thank all of you who don't join me on my rides but cheer me on from the sidelines by taking the time to comment on my journaling. I love hearing from you!

We rode west from Sundance Beach, past Rundle's Mission, and up the hill to 771 where we turned north to make our way to 616 which is the road to Bretton, AB. This road is a challenge when there isn't a lot of wind because it's very rolling; with the wind, it's what Doug calls 'a character builder'. We really got pushed around today and two riders had flat tires along the way. We regrouped at the Bretton corner having ridden 38 k. Some riders turned to go back to the start while others, including me, turned north on Highway 20 continuing for another 10k to the Alsike Corner which is at the junction of highways 20 & 39. The crosswind along here gave us a bit of relief but not much.

It makes total sense that a headwind out = a tailwind back. Thoughts of that well-deserved tailwind were on my mind as I rode back and turned east to retrace on 616. No tailwind. The wind had shifted and it became a crosswind. The four of us worked hard on the return trip and then Wayne & I added 4 km. to get to 80 km. Steve did 140k today; I'm certainly glad that that mileage was not on my radar for today or for any of the remaining days in July. We were rewarded for our efforts with a fabulous hamburger BBQ (Doug & Caren 🍌) complete with a frosty beer, tasty salads (Fran & Bev 🍷), and an award-winning dessert that Hope made. 🏆

Thirteen days left in July and 327 kilometers to ride. Onwards and upwards!

Ride 11 = 81 KM

On the road again today and this time with my esteemed Tour of Hope friends, Debbie (roommate) & Gord. We were riding for Everett, Cheyenne, and Mackenzie today.



We started at this donut shop in Devon because we wanted to be rewarded by having one of their donuts when we finished. Too bad that it's only open Thursday - Sunday. Apparently, the donuts are a Delight!



From FDD, we road through Devon and turned west at Halicz-Glidehurst to enjoy the country roads to Thorsby, and that we did. Sunny and 26 didn't happen while we cycled but 16 degrees, light wind from the south, and the overcast sky made for perfect conditions.

At just over 8 km. there's a steep downhill on this road and I was breathing on the installment plan by the time we reached the top. These roads are not pristine but there's hardly any traffic and the countryside is amazing: canola, potatoes, wheat, and corn.

Left at range road 272, right at range road 502, left at 275 and there's Hwy. 39 straight ahead. Instead of turning south again and riding into Thorsby, we took 622 and continued west until we had 36 k. under our belts and then we turned around and retraced.

We stopped for a few photo opportunities and the final stop was to take a look at two mares with their foals in a corral. Honestly, they were only days old and one of them was still figuring out how best to stand. We finished at 76k. so I road down to the Devon Gulf Club and back up (another steep one) to get just over 81k today.

RIDE 12 = 80 KM

The start of my ride today.



This is the "Colchester Mural" which was installed in 2001 at the Strathcona Olympiette in Strathcona County. If you have an interest in murals, Legal, Alberta, 50 minutes north of Edmonton, has 35.

<https://www.legal.ca/experience/local-tourism/mural-walk>

A little rain to begin the ride today but soon the jackets were off as Andrée, Len & I started our ride for the Kids with Cancer Society at 8:30. We road east on Township Rd. 520 to Range Road 214, heading north towards Fort Saskatchewan. Cross over Highway 16 and just keep riding and riding until the turn-a-round at Township Rd. 550. Like most others that I've described, these township roads and range roads are less traveled and if a car happens to come along, the driver is very considerate of cyclists. Andrée and I yacked our heads off, stopped for photo opps and snacks, and Len put the pedal to the medal.



No encounters with wildlife today but we did see these strange animals.



Twenty-six participants in the Tour of Hope, At Home 2020, 702 donations = \$182,677.56 to date.
Thanks for your encouragement.

RIDE 13 = 85.25 KM

We were off like a herd of turtles this morning from Ardrossan: six guys and 2 gals riding for the KWCS on a chilly morning (13 degrees), with a plan that had to be changed up just before we were ready to leave. The wind was gusting and the consensus was to keep away from it as much as possible so it was decided - ride to Fort Saskatchewan and beyond.

I think that this was my very favorite ride in July; I just loved the route and had not been on most of it before.



Sure nice to have a girlfriend on the Tour of Hope, At Home...Hope is her name.

- Red dot start at the Ardrossan Rec Centre,
- Hwy 16 to Range Road 224, turn north to Fort Saskatchewan
- Into the Fort and follow Saskatchewan River Road, past the Turner Park Sports Field, to 125 Street
- Still riding north, now we're on RR 221 and then on to Township Rd. 554 - see the picture in front of the refinery
- South on Range Road 220, northeast on Hwy 15, south on 214, and then Township Rd. 544, to RR 211,
- RR 542 is where we took the headwind for 12 k
- Turn south on 222, uphill and cross wind back to Ardrossan, but with a quick add on through an Ardrossan neighborhood, which is north of the finish to clock in with 85.25k.

The awesome fields that we are used to seeing on these rides are in stark contrast to the industrial area north of Fort Saskatchewan -



ALBERTA STRONG!!

Great ride, great company and all for the Kids.

DAY 14 = 78 KM

Well, everyone, today was my last long-distance ride...are you going to miss hearing from me? 😊

Three "Tour of Hope, At Home" women out for a little ride in the heat today: Andrée, me, and Debbie. We road 78km as an out and back today.

The ride was from the Olympiette on Range Road 224 in Sherwood Park, with a few zigs and zags: Township Rd. 520 to get us onto RR 231 South, Township Road 510 west, and ultimately Range Road 233 south, through the Rollyview and Beaumont areas towards Leduc. It was 19 degrees when we started at 8:00 and 29 degrees when we finished. Not a single complaint and a hip hip hooray when we rode on 10km. of brand new pavement, before the turnaround.



After the 78 km., we enjoyed Americanos at the café at Halfmoon Lake and Debbie had a cinnamon bun = fuel.



The coffee break ended and Debbie & Andree carried on to complete 100 km. Strong women!



After the ride, Andrée was officially finished; she rode 5X100km. for a grand total of 500km. Congrats Andrée!

Debbie will continue to ride into the fall and tally up the km.

To finish my 1,000 km. on Friday, July 31st., my family and I will take a 2.75 km. cruise: 3 on road bikes, 4 on mountain bikes, 1 on a two-wheeler, 1 on a bike with training wheels and 1 on a One-wheel - start with family, end with family, that's the Callan/Taylor/Pavelich way.

I'll be back...

DAY 15 = 2.75 KM

Today at 4:00 I rode the last 2.75 km. of my 1000 km. in aid of the Kids With Cancer Society, with my family. The ten of us decided to ride for all of the nineteen children that were entrusted to me by the Society and I carried their laminated pictures, complete with the story of each of their journeys with childhood cancer, in my jersey pocket. Many of you have had the privilege of carrying a child's picture too and I know that it has meant a lot. I cycled and you supported me by donating to the KWCS and I want to thank each and every one of you for caring about this charity, for following along with me over the hills and dales of Edmonton and area and for cheering me on. You are incredible people and I am lucky to know you. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.



I'm proud to say that this is my family:

Son-in-law - John, grandson - Calvin, daughter - Danielle, me, grandson - Nathan, daughter - Shannon, husband - Wayne, granddaughter - Sloan, son-in-law - Jay, and granddaughter - Emma. Lots of love to all of you and thanks for finishing with me today!

Diane, Mom, Grandma