

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

RIDE 1

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 = 82 KMS

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 KMS

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 KMS

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 = 27km.

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.