

Wascana Freewheelers Bicycle Touring Club

President's Report To the AGM 2021

Prepared by: Geoff Ellis

2020 was a very different year. This was the year the world dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic. The usual season starting events and the half of the season's rides were cancelled in compliance with a provincial lockdown. We were unable to host a new member chilli night. The May long weekend camping was cancelled. The AGM that would usually have been held in the spring was postponed until the end of the year in the hopes that the pandemic would subside and we could return to business as usual.

We were able to resume group cycling events at the start of July. However we implemented a number of new event protocols to comply with provincial guidelines. The first was that we needed to maintain a minimum distance of 2 meters between participants while stopped and 4 meters while in motion. The second was a limit of 10 people per group during a ride. The remainder were common sense guidelines to avoid multiple people touching the same surface or sharing the same airspace. The other big change for this season was a prohibition on indoor post ride socializing. This was probably the most difficult change for the club to implement. We are a very social bunch and being unable to sit down for a beverage or a meal after a day in the sun was always a bit disheartening.

Wednesday night rides resumed July 8 and ran until September 2nd. Despite the pandemic and extra protocols, they were well attended.

Weekend events were somewhat curtailed by the new protocols. We had several Saturday adventure rides that were also well attended. Many of the usual club favourite rides like Gone-with-the-wind are impossible with the new protocols. Instead, we explored some gravel roads and made use of the new pavement on the highway bypass.

This was a year defined by risk calculations. All sports carry some element of risk. As cyclists, we are accustomed to dealing with vehicles that are not paying attention to the road, aggressive dogs, the occasional thundershower, and unexpected rough terrain. We are aware of the risks and we mitigate what we can. A new and unknown virus is an entirely different risk calculation. To the Freewheelers that accepted the risk, I am glad you were able to join us and I thank you for observing the new ride protocols as faithfully as you did. I am extremely glad that the protocols were never tested. As far as anyone knows, there were no contagious people at any of our events. To the Freewheelers that decided the risk was too great, please know that

we understand, we miss you, and we all look forward to a time when the world is a safer place and we can ride together again.

Finally, a big thank you to the executive and members that organized and led rides and just kept doing what you do despite a worldwide once-in-a-century pandemic. This club is successful because each of you continue to make it so.