



# DECEMBER 2024 / JANUARY 2025 CLUB NEWS



## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Hopefully you managed a few late fall rides in November and are ready to switch up the seasons. Just because the weather changes doesn't mean you can't still enjoy your favourite cafes. A shout out to some of the best that we visited this year: the Market Cafe in Port Colborne, the Leisure Cafe in Welland, the Grill on Canboro in Fenwick and Silks in Virgil. Each one is unique and all offer a generously full plate of delicious food for a reasonable price, as well as being very welcoming to cyclists.

We were saddened to hear last week of the passing of Walter Henning at the age of 77. Walter joined the Freewheelers in 2012 and enlivened many of our rides with his good humour and interesting stories. We extend our sympathy to his wife Pat and family. The Freewheelers have made a donation to Heart and Stroke in his memory.

December will bring the Mandarin Lunch (December 13<sup>th</sup>) and once again Frank is looking forward to seeing all his friends and meeting new ones. He enjoys a good visit and you can drop in anytime to Room 224 at Niagara Gardens (off Niagara St., St. Catharines), the building on the left as you drive in.

Looking forward, we are going to have two positions open on the Executive for next season. They are for the office of Secretary and for Publicity Director. A Club can only operate if there are generous people who are willing to step up and give back. Please consider putting your skills to use on behalf of the Club in one of these positions. Elections will be held in March at the AGM. All positions are for a period of one year. If you have any questions, reach out to Dianne ([secretary@thefreewheelers.com](mailto:secretary@thefreewheelers.com)) or Ian ([publicity@thefreewheelers.com](mailto:publicity@thefreewheelers.com)).

On behalf of the Executive, we thank you for the wonderful times we have had this year, and we hope that all of you have a joyful Christmas with family and friends, and good health and good cycling in the New Year.

*Rita Dillon, President*



## ATTENTION FREEWHEELERS!

We are back-peddling (pun intended) a wee bit and wish to apologize for any inconvenience and confusion this may cause our members! After further examining the logistics of posting Winter Fanatic ad hoc rides on the Ride Schedule on our website in a timely manner (as outlined in the November 18, 2024 email we sent), the Board of Directors has decided to discontinue the process effective immediately.

As a result, while ad hoc off-season rides and hikes may continue to be organized and communicated between individual organizers and their personal contact groups, the Club will not be posting information about them on the website. As before, these off-season activities are not covered by the Club's insurance policy and the sign in Liability Release form should not be used. Anyone choosing to participate in off-season ad hoc activities does so at their own risk.

[Contact Us](#) if you have any questions about this return to past practice.



Join Us



## TRAVELLERS' CORNER



Interested in cycling, sun and fun in the [Guadeloupe Islands](#) in February 2025?  
Contact: *Dan Toppari* 905-341-4335 or [safetyandeducation@thefreewheelers.com](mailto:safetyandeducation@thefreewheelers.com)

CYCLE CENTRAL/WEST CUBA - FEBRUARY 4 TO 15, 2025

Perhaps you'd like to cycle in Cuba instead. Tom Robertson ran a successful tour there in October/November 2024, despite all the negative news and government warnings and so is offering another one in February 2025. Details can be found at [www.cuba1tours.com](http://www.cuba1tours.com) or reach out to Tom at [tom@cuba1tours.com](mailto:tom@cuba1tours.com).

## ♥ RIDING WILD RAISES \$6,700 IN SUPPORT OF CANCER RESEARCH ♥

On September 15<sup>th</sup>, 13 Freewheelers from the Riding Wild Cycling Club took part in a 100 km ride to support the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Terry Fox Run. This was the fifth year the Riding Wild team has participated and they raised **\$6,700** for cancer research.

This year the team rode from Beamsville to Dunnville and back and the weather could not have been better. "It felt like a mid-summer day," said organizer Wendy Leger. This year's slogan was "**No Matter What**" which is a mantra the RW members have all seemed to commit to over the years. Team members wish to thank all their generous supporters for helping them exceed their \$5,000 fundraising goal *and* rank in the top 10% for Team fundraising across Canada out of over 4,300 participating teams. **Bravo Riding Wild!**

*On the Shores of Lake Erie near Dunnville*



## DON'T FORGET TO RSVP!

The **Barnsley Mandarin Christmas Lunch** on **Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>** is fast approaching! Our sole FW centenarian+2, Frank Barnsley (yes, he's 102) will be there and is looking forward to seeing old friends and meeting new ones. Please RSVP to Rita Dillon, [President](#), if you are planning to attend.

And, if you'd like to have a jersey or one of our new t-shirts in time for Christmas, please let Rita know which jersey or tee you would like (M/F/style/size) and she will bring it along. [FW Clothing](#). Hope to see you there!

## FREEWHEELER RIDE SCHEDULE – THUMBS UP OR DOWN?

It's not too late to offer your feedback on the rides you participated in or the Ride Schedule in general. We want to make sure you enjoy the rides you do with us.

Please let us know:

- What your favourite FW rides were?
- Which rides need tweaking – a change in distance, pace, start location, destination?
- What new rides you'd like to see added (again: distance, pace, start location, destination?)
- What rides should be cut from the schedule?



[CONTACT US](#) so we can make the 2025 cycling season another memorable one!



## SPEAKING OF MEMORABLE RIDES & FW FELLOWSHIP...

### *Fall in Fonthill*



### *Lunch in Elora*



*Speedy Turtles Take a Break*

*Post Ride Refreshments at the Leisure Cafe*

## HOLD THESE DATES – DETAILS TO FOLLOW IN FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

- Sunday, March 23, 2025 – Annual General Meeting
- Wednesday, April 9, 2025 – Annual Open House
- Saturday, May 3, 2025 – Spring Social

## KILOMETER CLUB

Each year we recognize members (men & women) for the distance they have travelled on their bikes in the past year. How many kilometers did **YOU** ride in 2024? We hope you kept track so we can recognize your achievement.

Please send Rita Dillon, [President](#) your total kilometers by Friday, February 22, 2025. You will be recognized at the Annual General Meeting in March. If you are not be able to attend the AGM and wish to receive your certificate, please send an email to Dennis Munn, [Tour Director](#), and it will be mailed to you.





## CHASING END TO END (E2E) BADGES: MY GANARASKA HIKING ADVENTURE



***FW Eveline Stout (orange shirt) and the Silver Six Hike the GHTA***

We had no chance of achieving the coveted Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association (GHTA) E2E badge, because we knew we would never do the Wilderness crossover.

Then the Wilderness Club and GHTA came up with an alternative plan of doing four hikes totaling 65kms to qualify for a new Wilderness E2E badge, which would then qualify us for the GHTA E2E badge! We were in!

Then, as a bonus, Wilderness President Rob Halupka offered to lead us 70-something women on two private hikes in the very remote areas. We were dubbed the “Silver Six”.

Our four hikes were as follows:

1. September 12<sup>th</sup> - Sheldon Lake loop (19km)
2. September 17<sup>th</sup> - Victoria Falls to Sadowa (17km)
3. September 18<sup>th</sup> – End of Kawartha to Sheldon Lake (13km)
4. October 22<sup>nd</sup> – Ragged Rapids loop (16km)

Over these four hikes we were treated to such striking, spectacular landscapes. And the solitude! We would never have had the opportunity to see this beautiful, rugged piece of Ontario if this new E2E badge had not been offered. These hikes are not a ‘walk in the park’, but experienced hikers will find the effort so worth it. Be prepared with lots of water, food, proper footwear and poles. We were awed by the beauty of the Queen Elizabeth II Wildlands Provincial Park. You will be too!

Our group was pretty proud to have completed the Wilderness E2E and become the first hikers to receive this new badge. Thank you to each of the Wilderness folks who made this adventure such a great experience. We couldn’t have done it without you. You were patient, encouraging, and entertained us with stories, songs & jokes.

Submitted by Eveline Stout (FW member and former President)



***The Silver Six Cross a Beaver Dam***

**HAVE A STORY YOU’D LIKE TO SHARE? SEND IT TO:**  
[communications@thefreewheelers.com](mailto:communications@thefreewheelers.com)