

Cycle of Hope

The History of Cycle of Hope

In July 1993, Habitat for Humanity Manitoba hosted the Jimmy Carter Work Project (JCWP), which was the first time outside of the U.S.A. Fifteen hundred volunteers from four countries came to volunteer. They gathered for an orientation in a school gymnasium in north Winnipeg, when 75 cyclists, called the “Cycle 500” arrived from Minneapolis. Not only did they choose to cycle to Winnipeg, they tithed 10% of their fund raising to the Winnipeg project.

Cycle 500 inspired two of the volunteers, Lorraine Petkau and Olenka Antymniuk, whom both loved to cycle. In 1994, the JCWP was in Eagle Butte, South Dakota and they began to dream and plan a Winnipeg ride to support Habitat for Humanity Manitoba.

March 1994, Lorraine and her husband, Erv, armed with a mitt full of letters drove down to South Dakota to scout the route, dropping letters into church mail boxes and following up with phone calls. Lorraine pursued



the logistics of the ride, had it sanctioned by the Board of Directors and it became an official Habitat for Humanity Event with the first ride entitled, “Bike to Butte”, a mere 1,000 km down the road.

12 cyclists and 9 support people signed up for the Bike to Butte 9-day ride. They gathered at the 1993 Jimmy Carter Work Project site in Winnipeg for a big send off with local artist, Steve Bell, blessing them with word and song, “On the Wings of an Eagle.”

In Eagle Butte, the Bike to Butte cyclists were greeted by thunderous applause and great excitement by the Cycle 500 group and JCWP volunteers, and each cyclist was personally greeted by President & Mrs. Carter. A thrill to remember for always!



The 1994 ride fundraised \$36,000 – enough to provide four foundations for four houses being built that summer. What a grounding way to start!

Plans for 1995 JCWP in Los Angeles were already underway, so naturally the next year's ride, "Bike LA 95" was born. Each year since the group has continued to ride and along the way created a new name for the event, "Cycle of Hope".

Cycle of Hope has cycled from many destinations: Kelowna, the Canadian Shield, Chicago, Green Bay, Kansas City, Fernie, Denver, Nashville, Marquette, Yellowstone Park, the Great Lakes, Lewis & Clarke Trail, Waterton Park, Louisville, St. Louis, Omaha, Niagara Falls, Jasper, and completed two legs of the TransAmerica Trail (Astoria to Baker City, OR and Baker City, OR to Yellowstone, MT).

To date, Cycle of Hope has raised over \$4 million dollars and 25 families have a home thanks to the overwhelming support of the donors. Each year the ride will accommodate up to 40 cyclists and a team of support volunteers.

If you love to cycle and would like to change the lives of a local family, consider joining Cycle of Hope for an incredible and rewarding experience.

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