



For Immediate Release – The Rigid Riders – A cycling club that shouldn't exist

Toronto, ON, July 2019 - Members of the Rigid Riders Cycling Club suffer from a debilitating illness, but the club offers no comfortable refuge. Instead, organizers Steve Iseman and Mike Loghrin compel them to do things that make them uncomfortable, anxious and afraid. Yet every week their numbers grow. In one month they will endeavour to do something that most of our members dread and some think impossible.

Their creed is clear: we are the RIGID RIDERS; a team of “reluctant” cyclists in training to ride 40 km on July 13th in the Pedaling for Parkinson Canada cycling event in Prince Edward County, Ontario.

The ride is to raise funds and awareness for Parkinson’s research but for this group it is also about the journey there. According to Team Captain Steve Iseman it’s the steps on the path to the ride that matter most: “A Parkinson’s Disease diagnosis is hard news. It’s what you do next that really counts,” he shares. Steve rode in his first Pedaling for Parkinson’s event last year in Parry Sound and wanted to be sure he extended that meaningful opportunity to others – even the reluctant cyclists.

Iseman says, “I was astounded by the experience of Pedaling for Parkinson’s last year. The organizers who ran it were so committed to the cause, and so beloved that it was immediately home for me. When I got my diagnosis, had this experience, and saw that there was something proactive I could do about it, it became really important for me to spread the word. If you’re an athlete of any sort and you can continue to do it, great. But that’s not who our team is for. If I can get them over the hump of just giving it a try, I think I can help make a lifestyle change for the better.”

Co-Captain Mike Loghrin is a Parkinson Canada Support Group Facilitator who sees the importance of going the extra mile to connect with people, and supporting them through their full Parkinson journey. People connect to groups in many different ways, including through Parkinson Canada’s Information and Referral program led by I&R Associate Maria Marano.

Maria notes the importance of leaders like Mike and opportunities like this, particularly for those living with Early Onset Parkinson’s: “Knowing I am sending potentially vulnerable clients with early onset Parkinson’s to Mike’s support group gives me such reassurance because I know they will be taken care of and guided through the diagnosis with endless support and friendship. Mike often talks to newly diagnosed individuals on the phone or meets with them in person. Outside the support group, the members often

meet for BBQs and rounds of golf. These non-traditional settings, like participating in the Rigid Riders, are so important in forming bonds of mutual support along with the benefits of exercise.”

It takes great effort to encourage people to choose to fight at the very moment that they feel their weakest. This is where the RIGID RIDERS come in; a collection of people living with Parkinson’s who have no intention of giving up. They support each other with a clear message, “We have strength to spare – strength in numbers, strength in our convictions, and strength in the knowledge that good people love us and want to help.”

The group is training people with Parkinson’s to cycle. Many have doubts or fears that they will not succeed. But together they build our skills as a team, allay fears as a team, and on July 13, will be riding 40 km as a team, in the Pedaling for Parkinson Canada, Prince Edward County event. 100% of the funds that riders generate will be dedicated to the Pedaling for Parkinson’s Research Grant through the Parkinson Canada Research Program.

Team Captain, Steve Iseman and Co-Captain Mike Loghrin would appreciate any inquiries or opportunity to speak about what we are doing in an effort to raise awareness, raise funds and even more important maybe reach to that person living with Parkinson’s that would wish to be part of this.

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For more information, and to arrange an interview, contact:

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Multimedia Assets

Rigid Riders interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5NxCJdZ8DE>

Team Photo:



Upcoming Ride Schedule

- June 23 – Port Credit Go along lakeshore returning to Toronto, joined by coach Sunhan Anderson. 9:30am.
- June 25 – Spin class with Parkinson’s instructor; Randy Brotman. 1:30pm. [Prosserman JCC](#).
- June 27 – Spin class with Parkinson’s instructor; Randy Brotman. 1:30pm. [Schwartz/Reisman Centre](#).
- June 30 – Group 30km ride. TBD.
- July 7 – Group 30km ride. TBD
- July 13 – Pedaling for Parkinson’s. Mount Tabor Fairgrounds. Milford.

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About Pedaling for Parkinson's

In 2011, long-time friends Peter and David founded a new event, "Pedaling for Parkinson's," to raise awareness and research funds for Parkinson's. The inspiration was David's father and a close friend/neighbour of Peter's, who were both diagnosed with Parkinson's. Over three days, cyclists pedaled over 100,000 pedal strokes: 1 pedal stroke for each Canadian diagnosed with Parkinson's. 20 riders participated and over \$18,000 was raised.

Each year since, the number of riders and the amount of money generated has increased. This culminated in a 2018 ride that saw nearly 350 participants raise \$700,000 as part of a lifetime total of \$1.7 Million.

2018 was the final year of the ride in Parry Sound. However the incredible spirit of Parry Sound ride, built on a strong community of support, fundraising success and commitment to stand together in mutual support of one's Parkinson journey lives on in communities across the country.

This year's flagship ride is organized by Jim Redmond (who lives with Parkinson's) and his wife Krista Simonett.

About Parkinson Canada

Parkinson Canada is the definitive voice of Canadians living with Parkinson's disease. From diagnosis to discovery, Parkinson Canada provides education and services to support people with Parkinson's, their families, and healthcare teams; online, by telephone and in person. Since 1965, Parkinson Canada advocates with federal, provincial and territorial governments on issues that matter to the Parkinson's community in Canada.

The ***Parkinson Canada Research Program*** funds discovery research to improve our understanding of Parkinson's disease, related disorders, and the impact these disorders have on society. Investigators and clinicians focus on better treatments and one day, to find a cure. Parkinson Canada is a founding partner of the Canadian Open Parkinson Network. Since 1981, Parkinson Canada has invested close to **\$29 million** in **552** research projects across Canada. Parkinson Canada is an *Imagine Canada* accredited organization. Connect with Parkinson Canada: www.parkinson.ca Twitter: [@ParkinsonCanada](https://twitter.com/ParkinsonCanada) | Facebook: facebook.com/ParkinsonCanada