

2013-06 Focus on Members

Our Focus this month is on Accomplished Ride Leader Kyle Nylander.

I started riding as a child & rode off and on until I became a PFW member. My father was a contractor so I grew up building and taking things apart. I still own the first spoke wrench I used for truing wheels I bought at age 8! Truing wheels, cleaning and adjusting bearings, all became second nature to me. I even repainted frames using my father's spray compressor. My first real bike, a Columbia had balloon tires because my father told me he wanted it to last! At age 12 I got a 5 speed Schwinn and took my first long bike ride of 40 miles with a neighbor – and there were hills! In college I rode a 10 speed Schwinn, and 2 years after I graduated I bought a new friction shifter 10 speed Fuji. Then I read about the PFW forming but didn't join! I felt I wasn't riding often or far enough to join a fancy bike club! Boy was I wrong. In 2005 I upgraded to a K2 27 speed. At the time I also owned a MTB and enjoyed riding through the woods. All the while working on my bikes making sure everything was in perfect working condition.



I rode that K2 everywhere, work, pleasure, shopping sometimes pulling a children's carrier behind me with my groceries. And in the winter, getting out of my development I rode on shoveled sidewalks. When I only put 2,500 miles on my car that year, I decided to take the car off the road and tried going carless for a while. And I still haven't put it on the road yet.

Shortly after I bought the K2, I did 2 rides with Norman & joined the PFW. I did my 3rd PFW ride at the 2006 Spring Fling and was asked by Larry Goldsmith, 2nd V.P./Ride Captain to become a ride leader. My weekly riding became the 2-3 club rides I led plus 3 nights I rode with 2 outside groups. One group rode at a B+ pace through Washington Crossing every week while the other group rode two evenings a week at a slow A ride through Roosevelt.

Unfortunately I was forced to stop doing these rides when I came down with Lyme disease, a serious bacterial infection of my brain & nervous system. This slowed me considerably but did not curtail my enthusiasm or frequency of riding. For two years & two PFW Events I rode with an intravenous line from my heart coming out of my arm for a daily infusion of antibiotics while keeping a waterproof arm sleeve with me in case of rain to keep the skin opening dry. I felt blessed to have had an understanding group of riders that stayed with me through my Lyme infection though I had slowed substantially. I remember being totally exhausted on rides and could not even change a flat, and not knowing why. Eventually I was back to leading as many as 3 rides a day for the PFW and sometimes 8 rides in a week, unfortunately still not having regained my previous speed.

I try to offer club rides that are different, visiting the McGuire Air Show, museums, cycling to ride a steam train with our bikes, going to cycling races, riding Rails to Trails, or remote flying of scale airplanes, and at times going down roads that unexpectedly led to stream crossings! I offered evening rides to improve bike handling and speed with varying bike drills such as rear pace line surges, intervals. And always freely sharing what I've learned from my training, experience, and education helping riders become safer, smoother, faster, being able to ride further, or becoming more

comfortable and at home on their bike. But most of all, no matter what the speed, learn to enjoy the ride.

Since I've been a member, I've tuned, upgraded & fitted many members' bikes & have built from the ground up many a bike for club members. Being there on rides to help with breakdowns with my trusty and very complete multi tool.

As a ride leader, I've never forgotten it's always the riders ride. I am only the organizer. I listen to where the riders want to go & quit when riders want to quit.

It's never about where you go, the roads you ride on, how fast you go, how far you go. It's all about the ride. Just enjoying the ride. Kyle