

2014-01 Focus on Members

Our Focus this month is on Dan Zorovich, relatively new member who has made his mark quickly with the weekday “Social Security” riders.

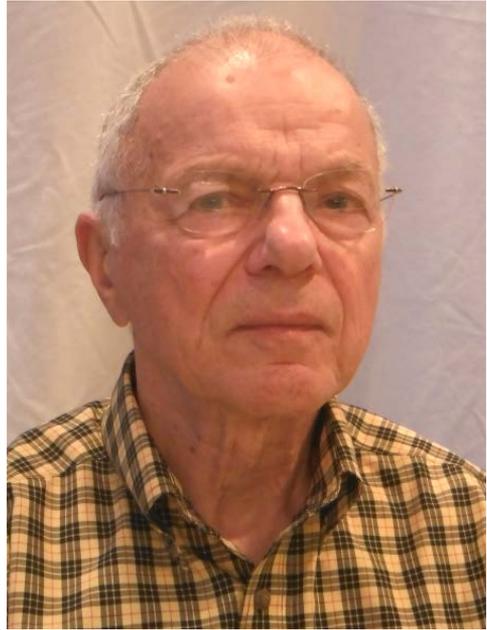
A relatively new member of PFW, I joined in January of 2012, but did not start riding until late May after I came back from vacation.

Growing up in Italy (it is Croatia today) during World War II I had a small bike that I shared with two younger siblings. The third one was a baby and not ready to ride yet. Once the tires wore out we could not replace them because they were not to be found anywhere. Everything was diverted to the war efforts. I came up with the idea of replacing the tires and tubes with thick old rope that was discarded from ships and was easy to find. They were bumpy, but had the advantage that they would never go flat.

After enduring the miseries of communism for 9 years, my father, with encouragement from his older brother, who lived in the US, decided to escape by boat with the entire family of six. We left in the evening of early January 1954 when the nights are long and the weather stormy. Many people were escaping during this time and the communists had patrol boats and powerful searchlights to prevent the escapes. They never caught anyone, but one night they killed two innocent fishermen, who were fishing for sardines, and brought them to the pier in their fishing boat so that everyone could see them.

We arrived in Italy the next morning and asked for political asylum. After extensive repairs to the 55-ft boat and changes to make the ocean crossing, we left in April and arrived in Miami in mid-July, six months after we left home.

When I retired, my son, who was a member when he lived in the area, encouraged me to join the PFW, but I was too busy coping with my wife's cancer. I did ride by myself, starting at 10 miles and gradually increasing to a maximum of 20 miles a few times a week. It was on a Wednesday in late May of 2012 when I rode to Byron Johnson Park in Allentown, less than a mile from my house for a C+ ride of 40 miles. I told Al Porter who was the leader, standing in for Dennis Whitney, that I am only used to a 20-mile ride and didn't think I could make it to 40. But I made it to the end, with some struggle. In the heat of the summer it took me a while to be able to keep up with the group. I kept riding ever since, three times a week, on Wednesdays from Byron Johnson Park and on Mondays and Fridays from Etra Park. Occasionally I ride on Saturday with Pat Van Hise or Sue Moser.



I am not as serious or knowledgeable a rider as some of the people I ride with, but I do it because it is more fun than riding alone or going to the gym, and you get to know many nice people. It is also a good way to stay in shape and not gain weight.

Sometimes it's hard to imagine the life of growing up in a war-torn country and the sacrifices made by so many just to survive. A piece of my heart will always be with the brave people of Croatia, which I make a point of visiting once a year. However I also feel blessed to have met some wonderful folks through my