

2015-01 Focus On Members

Our Focus this month is on Ernie Lee, long time Free Wheeler, "Team Social Security" member & dedicated supporter of others.

There are many roads that we take in life. Each day creates new blessing and opportunities. Some of these opportunities can be life changing. In 2007 a life changing event occurred when I met Dennis Whitney at a spin class at Robert Wood Johnson's gym. I was rehabbing from a knee replacement surgery. Dennis invited me to a ride out of Allentown, NJ. That chance meeting, invitation and my acceptance of the invitation has led to me participating in a healthy, activity, exhilarating, and relaxing activity that has led to a comradery with a great group of guys and their families.



I ride with "Team Social Security". As the name implies, we are riders of "a certain age." My first ride was a challenge. It was hard to keep up because of the pace of the ride and my being awestruck by the scenery along the ride. I am a city man, who grew up in Trenton. There is a big difference between the hard streets of Trenton and the sincerity of central Jersey county-side, riding at 15 miles per hour, seeing farms, horse and cow pastures, with rest stops in New Egypt, Jackson and Smithfield. Views and vistas of beautiful New Jersey that you don't see from the Turnpike.

That first ride and subsequent rides have led to a continual change of people, places and things in my life. I was encouraged by George Foradori to ride from the front. Like the military, I was assured the "no rider would be left behind." I have met people from varied backgrounds and cultures. The group of riders provides a wholesome interaction with me of similar ages. Eric Woisetschlaeger and Craig Lewis have shown me positive sides of life. I now have another support group of riders who give me advice from health issues, financial management and the best value on places to eat.

My family knows that I will be riding 35 to 50 miles Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, weather permitting. Earleen is supportive of my four to five hour rides. I recover and relax from the rides by taking a quick nap, then going to the gym to burn off excess lactic acid.

Perhaps the greatest benefit to being a member of the Princeton Free Wheelers is an improved health. At 74, I no longer require medications taken

prior to my riding with PFWs. My wife and life partner, Earleen, and I go out dancing regularly. People marvel at our ability to dance the night away. The \$30 annual membership fee to the Princeton Free Wheelers is a bargain compared to medical bills and medications I purchased prior to riding.

Earleen and I have a blended family of three children, three children, plus grandchildren and even one great grandchild. We are both members of the Shiloh Baptist Church in Trenton, NJ. We both serve as members of the Ushers Ministry where I was recently recognized by Shiloh Baptist Church.

Ernie