

## ***'Bike for Your Life and Beyond - A Community Conversation' – a Summary based on notes by Erik Bjorgan as people spoke and on-line registration comments.***

***Prelude:*** 20 people gathered on Thursday at 6:30 p.m. March 1, 2018 at First United Church Hall, Salmon Arm. 7 people provided written comments at the time of on-line registration. Mail Chimp Invitations were sent on Feb. 14 to 145 BFYL Cyclists who live in School District #83 and have registered 2015 – 2017. Email invitations were also sent by local outdoor group e-News the week of February 21 to members of the Larch Hills Nordics, Shuswap Cycling Club, Shuswap Trail Alliance and some cycling members of the Shuswap Lady Striders. The conversation was facilitated by Erik Bjorgan, hosted by SABFYL Century Ride event host committee (Pat Danforth, Ian Wickett, Pat Hutchins, Roger Beardmore, George Zorn) with a BFYL 7-minute slide show prepared by Clive Bryson. *Participants were asked to gather seated in a circle with their host provided refreshments.*

***Process:*** Each person introduced themselves and briefly commented on what she or he most valued about their BFYL experience. We numbered off in 5 groups of 4 people per group and sat together facing each other to discuss the four questions. After about 7 minutes of small group conversation each group in turn reported what they had heard to the group at large. Participants moved to self-selected new 4-person groups for each new question. For the fourth, final question the large circle of participants re-formed. Participants were asked to write their name, email address and phone number on a sheet if they had an interest in a follow-up meeting. Eight people provided their contact information. A Summary of the Community Conversation and notice of a follow-up meeting will be communicated to each participant and invited non-participants.



See Event website [here](#)

### ***The Four Questions We Discussed and What was We Heard:***

#### ***1. “Think of a moment when you felt especially proud of the Bike for Your Life Century Ride. What was the significance of that moment for you?” (Why? – Values)***

- Togetherness
- Beauty
- Showcase our community
- Collaboration
- Joy

- Proud of fundraising dollars
- Family – Intergenerational (youngest 3 years old, up to 80+ years old)
- Not elitist.
- Social and Health benefits
- Cyclists helping each other (when a bike gear breaks, strangers help)
- Seeing the cyclists enjoying themselves
- “Real Community Event”
- Good Introduction to cycling events
- Being part of a successful event
- Social aspect
- The comradery between cyclists and the Communities of the Shuswap.
- Everything about this event is awesome. Food is wonderful. Music is so enjoyable.

2. ***“In your opinion why does a typical participant register for this event? What aspects of the event would be complained about if people showed up and it was not present?”***  
***(What? – Format)***

- The largest cohort selects the longest ride distance 100K (the most difficult) is the most popular, 75K is second most popular. *Typically, over the past 5 years about 80% of cyclists register for one of these longer distances with about 15% of cyclist registering for the 35K and 5% registering for the 10K. The largest cohort of cyclists is age 51 to 60 years.)*
- Food is very important
- “mellow, low-key, fun community event.
- The “Cyclists Celebration” after most all cyclists return is important to many.
- Aid stations are important
- Like cycling and its’ a nice place to do it
- A fun, challenging event that is well organized
- NOT a race – a personal challenge
- Companionship + Big Group of cyclists
- Signage and Course Marshalls/ route information
- The route is gorgeous; safety of the ride is paramount and obvious; checking in on the ride day is always smooth; food after is always great..
- I love that I get to share my ride with so many people. These are the roads I ride on a weekly basis and I love celebrating my love for them with others
- Low key family/community activity.
- I don't choose to get a medal! I can't imagine letting go of any aspect of the day. The spirit is amazing.
- The after-event lunch. Basic replenishment and snacks would be sufficient. I have never eaten the lunch in the 4 years I have rode.

- Allow more riders to come by allowing the electric assist bikes so that those who want to ride some distance but for some reason or other but cannot do the hills are able to. This will allow them to still be active and feel good about participating! Any way you can keep older people active is a bonus.

**3. *Past organizers of Bike for Your Life have said that while they are fond of the event and want to see it continue, they are getting “tired” of hosting each year for the past 7 years since 2011. What counsel do you have to give them? (Who? Enablers)***

- Give a map to experienced 100K cyclists to reduce number of volunteers and 100K route signs
- Reduce the number of course marshals and routes
- Reduce workload rather than increasing number of volunteers. What could be cut? What large task can be subdivided?
- Recruit volunteers who are not cyclists
- Concern that the event has become less “family oriented”. Consider need for a separate Family Ride. Promote it.
- Let a new group of event organizers make appropriate changes.
- Ask someone to take over your role and mentor that person with your time and written references
- Recruit actively. Build in succession planning for event continuity.
- Get advice outside the Shuswap and collaborate with other event leaders
- Approach High School Leadership education students (but event date is just after school starts)
- Consider paying for some BFYL Event Coordinator positions
- The event needs to grow! We need to build upon all the hard work that has been done by all the committed volunteers over the years!
- Less support for the longer distance riders...they will and do regularly ride without support. One aid station at the turn off at Schubert for both 75K and 100K cyclists is adequate. John's Family Farm at the bottom of Grandview Bench hill could be an optional stop for those that would like another. Drop the Course marshals at Reid's Corner. They were an annoyance to some drivers. There IS a Stop sign on Foothills Rd. at this corner. Cyclists and that riders should follow the rules of the road, stopping at Stop signs as usual.
- Prizes could be done earlier somehow.

**4. *What Struck You Listening to the Responses to these Three Questions?***

- No suggestions to change the BFYL Ride format. (examples mentioned “Slow Food Ride”, Pancake Ride”)
- Importance of asking for help directly
- Not much talk about collaborating (help has been requested from Shuswap Cycling Club members, local Rotary Clubs, Children's Festival loans).

- Cultural change in the world of cycling over past 20 years – really growing as an activity
- I'm eager to get involved
- A super event but some organizers / event coordinators miss cycling in the event because of size of their event jobs
- Need to narrow the focus of the event a bit
- Hard to keep volunteers for the 10K ride distance – very few cyclists
- Focus on strengths of this event
- Event is too good to quit doing.
- New faces out tonight are inspiring!
- Open to event having a new face
- Every organization has a hard time recruiting volunteers
- Not all members of the event host committee need to be cyclists
- Much is done quietly behind the scenes to host the BFYL that participants didn't know about
- Separate the BFYL Century Ride from a possible Family Ride. Don't do both as one event on the same day.
- Collaborate with local schools to encourage kids to ride bikes – similar to the Larch Hills "Pirate Loppet"?
- Not much talk about how much money the event raised – (\$30,000 from 2012 to 2017 to Shuswap Second Harvest Food Bank and Shuswap Trail Alliance - [see BFYL website](#), cyclists informed after event)
- Could do a different concept riding from community to community (100K ride passes through Salmon Arm, Silver Creek, Enderby, Grindrod)
- There is real interest and passion to keep the BFYL event going
- Support strong for youngsters on bikes
- Viable (fun & enjoyable) routes from Blackburn Park for kids are difficult (foreshore trail suggestion). The 10K route is boring. The 100K, 75K and 35K routes are awesome!
- We need new and willing event coordinators to run this event.
- Shuswap Cycling Club members invited to this evening's conversation. Two members attended.
- To continue the event needs people to step up. Current event Coordinators will mentor new volunteer Coordinators.
- I look forward to this ride every year. I have done the 100k the last four years and one of my goals is to do it ten years in a row. Or more if possible. I'd be sad to see it go.
- BFYL has been an important part of my life for many years, even though I had to miss one I registered for because of a broken wrist. I was happy to contribute the \$\$ to it. Huge THANK YOU'S to ALL the people who have organized and worked on this each year. (I do my volunteer work in other ways. There's so much to do!!!)

**The BFYL Century Ride Event Coordinators listed below are stepping down after 4 to 7 years of volunteer service. We are seeking willing volunteers to replace us. Volunteers do not need to be cyclists. We are willing to provide mentorship (but not necessarily in September 2018). This assumes that the current BFYL Ride format might continue and evolve:**

1. Course Marking & Marshalling (100K, 75K, 35K and 10K routes) & 100K or 75K Driving Sweeps:  
Roger Beardmore and Nan Prittie: [beardmore@telus.net](mailto:beardmore@telus.net)
2. Lunch Coordinator of Shuswap Lady Striders Volunteers:  
Susan Rothlisberger: [S-rothlisberger@hotmail.com](mailto:S-rothlisberger@hotmail.com) or Marlene Roy: [mgroy@shaw.ca](mailto:mgroy@shaw.ca)
3. Publicity, Website & Event Chairperson:  
George Zorn: [gizorn@shaw.ca](mailto:gizorn@shaw.ca)
4. Volunteers and Materials Coordinator for Venue Set Up and Clean Up and Musicians:  
Pat Danforth: [danforthpat@gmail.com](mailto:danforthpat@gmail.com)
5. Sponsors & Draw Prizes: to be confirmed

These BFYL Century Ride Event Coordinators will continue if Ride 2018 or some variation of the event goes ahead:

1. Registrar, Treasurer and Permits: Ian Wickett
2. Aid Stations and PA System: Rob & Beth Savage
3. Starter / Finish: David Van Bergeyk
4. 100K or 75K Driving Sweep: Angela Carson
5. Mobile First Aid Attendant(s): 2 paid people

The BFYL Century Ride has been held since 2011 on the Saturday in September following the Salmon Arm Fall Fair. The Bike for Your Life Tour started in 1998 with the hopes of promoting a healthy lifestyle, family solidarity, and community involvement through a fun cycling event in which all ages and abilities could participate. See Event website [here](#)