

The Similkameen Spotlight
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Cycling for the love of his life and the Trans Canada Trail

Lisa Carleton

On July 1 of this year, avid cyclist Elizabeth Sovis from Edmonton, was to begin her retirement and spend it working to see that the Trans Canada Trail would be completed, be accessible and safe.

Sovis and her husband Edmund Auger, cycled many areas of the Trans Canada Trail and it always bothered her that there were so many incomplete and unsafe areas which forced them to ride on roads and highways.

On July 14, 2012 Elizabeth Sovis' retirement plans came to an abrupt end when an impaired driver took her life and forever changed her husbands.

With tears in his eyes Auger said, "I can't tell you how hard it was to tell my kids... I quit my job 10 days later—it was so obvious as to what it was that I had to do."

Auger has taken up his wife's cause.

In five stages, he will cycle the Trans Canada Trail from Victoria to Charlottetown. He began the first of the five stages on July 1 of this year.

Stopping in Princeton on July 15 for a break at Phifer's Fountain, Auger told the Spotlight of how he had met a wonderful local lady by the name of Kelley Cook, while at the B.C. Trails annual general meeting that took place earlier this year.

Cook spoke with Auger about the trail and area locally and also offered him a place to stay when he came through.

"I was very touched by her," said Auger, "It is very encouraging how people reach out, and Kelley shares the greenway vision."

A Greenways vision

Since its founding, the TCT's vision has been one of a Trail stretching from coast to coast to coast. A Trail for the enjoyment of hikers, walkers, cyclists, horseback riders and, more recently, canoeists and kayakers in summer, and cross country skiers, snowshoers and snowmobilers in winter.

Travelling with his youngest son, his wife and a couple of friends, the group spent

the night of the 14th in Tulameen at the Otter Sleep Inn.

“It was the first anniversary of my wife’s death. We (the group) spent a quiet, peaceful night in a beautiful area,” said Aunger.

From Tulameen, they made their stop in Princeton and then made their way out to Thirsk Lake for an overnight stay before heading for Penticton.



Colette and Richard (Edmund’s youngest son and his wife), friend David, Edmund and friend Margaret, travel the trail together from Tulameen to Princeton, Thirsk Lake and then on to Penticton, where they would rest for a few days before continuing on.

During this journey that will take place over the next few summers, July 1, 2013 to July 14, 2017, Aunger’s goal on behalf of his wife, is to “promote the completion of a Trail that will be accessible, passable and safe.” The ride he hopes, will promote the development of the trail, rally support and even raise funding.

He has petitioned the Government of British Columbia to publish an Action Plan to ensure the completion of it’s section of the trail by July 1, 2017, just in time for Canada’s 150 anniversary celebrations.

To support the cause, Edmund Aunger and Elizabeth’s vision, please sign the petition when you visit www.ridethetrail.ca.