

Edmonton man undertakes cycling journey in honour of late wife



An Edmonton man is keeping his wife's dream alive by cycling across the country to promote the Trans Canada Trail and cycling safety.

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An Edmonton man has completed the first leg of his trip across the country in support of the Trans Canada Trail.

Edmund Aunger said his mission was to fulfill a dream his wife, Elizabeth Sovis, had.

Sovis was killed last summer after being struck by a vehicle while the couple was on a cycling trip in PEI.

"It was supposed to be the safest place in Canada to cycle. That is how the government advertises it," Aunger told CTV News.

"On our first afternoon there we were forced to leave the trail. We had gone two and a half kilometers on the highway when she was struck and killed."

He explained that his wife had always felt unsafe cycling near motor vehicles.

"My wife decided that when she took her retirement this summer, July 1, 2013, she was going to work, especially here in Alberta, to try and get the government to keep their promise to finish the trail by 2017," he said.

Now, Aunger has taken up his wife's dream.

"Every summer I'm going to be cycling a different part of the Trans Canada Trail."

He explained he hoped to end his trip on the fifth anniversary of his wife's death at the very spot she was killed.

Loved ones will be meeting him at the location for a memorial service.

However, the first part of the trip, which took him from Victoria back to his home in Edmonton, has not been easy.

On his second day he nearly gave up after being injured cycling on a highway with a gravel shoulder.

"I slid on the gravel and I took a bad fall. I had to ride another 70 kilometers before I could get to the hospital, which was the only place that would give me stitches," Aunger explained, adding he received 12 stitches in his left knee.

Even though he felt discouraged, Auger said he was determined to ride on and has had much support over the last few weeks.

“All three of my sons have come out and cycled with me at various parts. My two nephews, my wife’s two nephews have come out and cycled with me.”

Friends, and also strangers, have joined him on his journey as well.

“People have come out and cycled from their community for a good part of the day.”

Despite the accomplishment he said he was not looking forward to arriving home.

“When you are coming home after a trip it’s not the house itself that you look forward to, it’s your family.

“I’m going home to an empty house. My wife is not there.”

Clarence Moase pled guilty to impaired driving causing death in the case and was sentenced to six years in prison last December.

Aunger told CTV News he wanted to see changes for cyclists in Canada, in particular the completion of the Trans Canada Trail by 2017.

“I’m trying to get the government’s attention to try and get this done.

He said his wife would have been happy to see him working for her dream, “but she would have told me not to do it because it’s too dangerous.”

Next summer, Aunger will be cycling from Edmonton to Winnipeg on the next leg of his journey.

With files from Nicole Weisberg.

PHOTOS



Edmund Aunger has completed the first leg of his ride across Canada in honour of his wife who was killed during a cycling trip in PEI last summer.



Edmund Aunger and his wife Elizabeth Sovis pose during a stop on July 13 in New Brunswick on their bicycle tour of the Maritimes. Supplied.