

## Summer 2019 Member Focus

### MUNISH DUGGAL



My earliest memory of riding a bike is of my Dad holding the back of my seat, keeping me stable (and more importantly upright!!), as I took my first few pedals without training wheels. From there, I graduated to my 'big boy bike' with its yellow banana seat and then to my neon orange 10-speed bike. I fondly remember my brother and I pretending we were Officer Poncherello ("Ponch") and John from the 70's TV show "CHiPs", riding down the street in our intricate crisscross patterns and chasing down

(imaginary) bad guys. Back then, we were on our bikes for hours. We didn't have cellphones, just a few quarters tucked into our socks so we could get a Popsicle from the local corner store.

This is my first year with PFWC, actually this is my first year cycling. Why did I start? The short answer is quite simple:

Peer Pressure!!!

Last year, my younger brother signed up to do a two-day, 135 mile charity bike ride to raise money for Cancer Research. Up to this point, my brother was not a cyclist either; he didn't even own a working bike! He signed up in March and with a bike he borrowed from a friend, he completed the ride in early June! So, if my younger brother could do it, then I COULD AS WELL!!!

While keeping up with my brother was part of what drove me, the real motivation came from something a lot closer to my heart. Like I mentioned before, the ride was a way to raise money for cancer research, a cause that has become more significant in my life. In April of 2017, my youngest son who was 10 at the time, was diagnosed with Leukemia. Thankfully, his prognosis is very good and he is responding well to his treatment. However, the doctors said that his road to recovery would be a long one, 3 ½ years to be exact. From my son's journey, I have learned that you have to focus on the end goal, while pushing through the challenges and obstacles that are in your immediate path. I also learned, that you need the support and encouragement of others to help you along the way. These are all lessons that I carry over to cycling.

In early June (of 2019), I completed the charity ride after months of training! I enjoyed it so much that I have already signed up for next year's ride! I have also registered up for another charity ride for later this season to benefit the Cancer Institute of New Jersey (where my son is being treated).

I have to thank everyone at PFWC! I remember my first ride with the group in early April... 29 miles! I remember coming home and excitedly sharing the mile-by-mile details of the ride with my family. Two days later, I was back for another 32 miles!! I was hooked!!!!

It is not only the satisfaction of seeing my odometer click over another mile that keeps me going, but it is the support that I have received from everyone that I have met and rode with in the club.

Thanks again and be safe!  
Munish