

# Riding the green wave

Cycling trio treks west to raise environmental awareness

by **Katie Turner**  
Features Editor

Biking 2,000 kilometres would be difficult for anyone, but for Mount Royal student Eily Sweeney, cycling from Calgary to Victoria this summer was more than just a physical challenge.

To draw attention to the ever-growing environmental issues facing the world, 22-year-old Sweeney decided to cycle to the west coast in a tour she named Ride the Wave.

"Basically it's a bike tour to inspire young people through first-hand experience of Canadian environmental initiatives to get involved in the critical sustainable action of their own local communities," she explained.

The now second-year university transfer student began planning for the excursion in May, shortly after exams, but said her passion for the environment began long ago.

"I have a deep value for nature and when I see what's happening in the world, when I see a development across the road from my house . . . I really am uplifted to do something about it," said Sweeney.

Shortly after coming to college, Sweeney joined Sustainable MRC and her passion continued to grow as she saw "the potential of youth involvement."

"That was sort of the point when I felt that I finally could make a difference and it was that sense of fulfillment that I'm doing the most work that I can through my own campus," she said.

The concept of Ride the Wave

came to Sweeney while she was training for a triathlon. She approached her friend and fellow MRC student Alex Meyer, 23, and he gladly agreed to make the journey with her.

After over a month of planning, Sweeney was able to find sponsorship and raise \$5,000 to fund the trip and create a website.

The Ride the Wave duo put foot to bike pedal on June 21 and after 54 demanding days ended up in Victoria on Aug. 18.

"We were cycling the whole time and we were boycotting any use of cars," Sweeney said.

Along the way the two stopped at 23 sustainable initiatives focused on intentional communities and green building.

In addition to the environmental pit stops, Sweeney and Meyer spent three days at the Yasodhara Ashram, along Kootenay Lake, doing karma yoga, explained Sweeney.

At the Ashram, they met 26-year-old Mandi Walters, on her own personal bike tour from Spokane, Wash., who decided to join the Ride the Wave team for the remaining half of the trip.

"Having Alex with me and having three people, it was fabulous . . . cycling 2,000 kilometres by myself would not have been fun," she said.

After the three finally made it to Victoria, Sweeney said they all realized how much they had learned along the way.

"It's not just a bike ride, it's not just physically demanding . . . I grew spiritually, physically, emotionally, in every way," she said.



Photos courtesy Eily Sweeney

Alex Meyer weaves his way through the mountains during the 2,000 km trek to Victoria.

Seeing the numerous sustainable communities was a complete contrast from the hectic lifestyle of Calgarians, added Meyer.

"It really gave me a wonderful perspective on other ways of life," he said. "It changed me."

While summer is still months

away, plans for Ride the Wave 2009 are already in the works, said Sweeney.

"Why I know this works is I see Alex and I see Mandi and I see how they've changed over this trip and how they've changed through connecting with people along the way," said Sweeney.

Anyone interested in contributing to environmental awareness, Sweeney encourages to check out Sustainable MRC to make a change at the community level.

"It is the youth that's going to push things through . . . we have the power to do something."

## Reflect this!

Dear guy that I met a year ago and now see EVERYDAY. I don't remember your name so if you could mention it next time bump into you that would be great.  
-Forgetful friend

Hey Poli Sci teacher, stop pacing and make your fucking point!  
-Irritated scholar

Why can Mount Royal College afford a \$14 million expansion on Wyckham House but can't afford two-ply toilet paper? My ass is chapped.  
-Chapped ass

Hey Apex Credit Union! Fix the God-damned cash machine by the lib!  
-Debit-using drinker

Quit checking me out, checking you out you asshole and ask me out!  
-Leo libra girl

To the girl in the yellow tights: I want your yellow tights and I will take them.  
-That skinny bitch

Who wants a moustache ride?  
-Guy attempting to grow a stache

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## Words of Inspiration

For me, acceptance is the act of letting a person or situation be. Acceptance, though it implies "allowing," is still an active state. By allowing, I'm not suggesting that we enable inappropriate behaviour. I'm simply suggesting acceptance in terms of being in a conscious state of non-resistance. The intention of this article is to outline acceptance as one of the modalities of awakened living, and how it applies to our everyday lives.

In the space of acceptance, creativity can be born. New ideas come to life and energy within and with others shifts into peace. We drop the resistance to a person or a situation, that we may feel, "shouldn't be that way." Why shouldn't it? Why not accept a person or situation the way it is?

To explore what acceptance really means, let's examine the opposite of acceptance, resistance.

Have you ever been in a situation and thought, "this is not happening to me," but it clearly is happening? The voice, "this isn't happening" is your ego's resistance to what is happening in the now.

When we have inner-resistance to a person or

situation, we ultimately are creating suffering for others and ourselves. By resisting, we are actually building more of the behaviour that we don't like. By allowing the "other" to be the way that they are, a shift occurs in the energy vibration and the "other" will change naturally. This also changes the frequency of the energy between people, thus allowing for a more peaceful co-existence.

Acceptance is vital. One way to assist you with acceptance is to try to find something about the situation or person that you can be grateful for. Gratitude can also help you to attract more of the qualities that you do appreciate. Also, by being grateful, you may find that you are becoming more joyful. Acceptance, enjoyment and gratitude are modalities, which will help serve to inspire your life. Be grateful for your life, even the stuff you don't understand right now. And if you cannot, at least being in a state of acceptance will allow you to have inner and outer peace.

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