

Our glorious start-up plans for the 2020 season have taken an unusual turn due to the pandemic. Your Club Communications team wants to reach out to provide some enjoyment until we can ride together again.

***Pandemic Possibilities,
.... Saucy Seclusion,
.... Resilient Ramblings,
.... Pandemic Play Time...?***

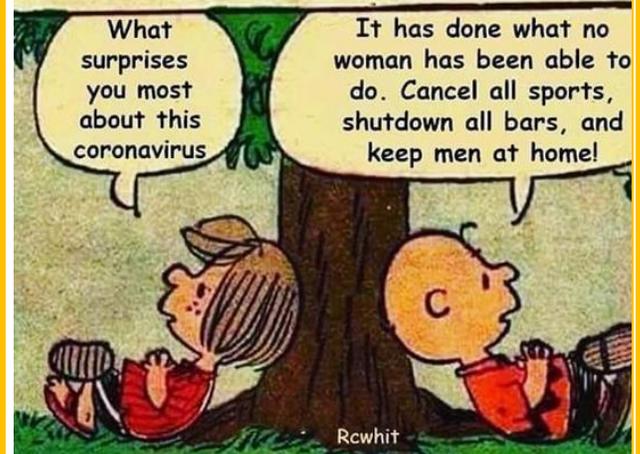
We are looking for a fun title for the next few newsletters planned to provide some interesting, entertaining and uplifting items during our time of social distancing and isolation.

Prize for best title!

Send your ideas to the editorial team at:

pamelalester@shaw.ca

PEANUTS



Inside this issue:

- About the Penny Farthing
- Book Reviews
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The Brilliant Penny Farthing

The Penny-Farthing bicycle depicted in our club's logo looks like the most ungainly, screwball, hazardous contraption ever invented. It was a significant advance in the development of the bicycle.

The first bicycle was the velocipede or the "running machine," invented by German Baron Karl von Drais in 1818. It consisted of a wooden beam on which to sit and two equally sized wooden wheels with iron rims and leather tires. The rider propelled the bicycle by foot on the road surface. In the 1860's three Frenchmen added pedals attached to the front wheel. These early machines, termed "boneshakers", were never popular.

In 1869 a Frenchman, Eugene Meyer manufactured the first high wheeler, made of metal, embodying a large 1.5-meter front wheel and a smaller wheel in the rear for stability. The giant wheel allowed the rider to go faster and further with the same cadence as with the earlier bicycles. Engineers had not yet invented chain and gearing. The top speed with the new bike rose to 28 kph from a mere 13 kph with the boneshakers. It also made for a smoother ride over the rough, cobbled, potholed roads of the day.

In 1871, a British engineer, James Stanley, popularized the high wheeler with a model named Ariel, which became better known as the "penny-farthing". It had a hollowed metal steel frame, wire-spoke wheels, ball bearings, solid rubber tires, nickel-plated handlebars in the shape of a mustache to allow room for the rider's knees.

The “penny-farthing” nickname stemmed from the low denomination, bronze coins in circulation at that time: the more substantial, 31 mm diameter **penny** representing the **big wheel**, and the smaller, 20 mm diameter **farthing** speaking for the **little wheel**. In 1870s Britain, and until the change to the decimal system in 1971, there were four farthings to the penny, 12 pennies to the shilling, and twenty shillings to the pound. The penny was worth today’s Can\$0.87.

The penny-farthing bicycle became a prime method of transport lasting 20 years, a symbol of the late Victorian era. A curious explanation for the onset of the bike was that a “volcano killed all the horses.” Clubs and organized races helped spread ownership and use. In 1884, an Englishman, Thomas Stevens, rode a penny-farthing around the globe. In 1886, an American, William Rowe, rode a penny-farthing for an hour, paced, at an average speed of 35.4 kph, a world record still unbroken (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6V79819qZ3Q>).



The penny-farthing had drawbacks. The high center of gravity led to frequent spills, especially hurtful, sometimes fatal when the rider tipped forward over the handlebars. Some passengers had difficulty mounting the machine using the small peg attached to the frame above the rear wheel (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-Ocy0SPgcM>). Stopping was awkward, achieved by applying backward pressure on the pedals, and in later models, with a spoon brake applied to the front wheel. Women with their long skirts refused to ride the high wheelers, opting for tricycles with big wheels instead if they could afford them. The penny-farthing was expensive, at US\$125, somewhat of a status symbol for well-to-do urban men.

In 1885, John Kemp Stanley, a nephew of James Stanley, created the first commercially successful “Safety” bicycle, with two equally sized wheels, which he named the “Rover.” The pedals powered the rear wheel with the help of a chain, keeping the rider’s feet safely away from the front wheel, and within reach of the ground for stopping. Women welcomed the new bike. Later, an American, John Dunlop, introduced pneumatic tires. That doomed the penny farthing.

Nowadays, aficionados, specialized clubs, and organized races keep the penny-farthing bicycle alive. Wouldn't it be fun for our club to stage a penny-farthing ride through Eau Claire? Imagine six of us outfitted in yellow Old Spokes jerseys, britches, and peaked caps waving to the crowds.

Peter Bradbury

From Wikipedia and other online sources

April 2020

Book Reviews

There is a reason why *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins is on everyone's book club list. It is impossible to put down as you follow Lydia and her eight-year-old son Luca in their escape from the cartel in Acapulco. Having had no time to get their passports before fleeing they are forced to ride la bestia, the trains that make their way north to America. It is a story of courage and survival that has the power to change the way you think about Mexico and the refugees that travel through it on their way to el norte.

A Long Petal of the Sea by Isabel Allende tells the story of two young people who flee the aftermath of the Spanish civil war, giving a history lesson about the war in the process. It follows Victor and Roser across the ocean to South America where their lives continue to be shaped by the political landscape as well as their deep connections to family and culture. This is one of Allende's best!

Linda Edwards-Green

Hobbies

Practicing for music lessons floats my boat. Technology of early 19th century (transverse flute) can provide deep satisfaction every day.

Jiri Bartek

Joining ukulele music jam friends 2-3 times a week through Zoom video calls. We take turns leading and others on mute play along with us. Not quite the same as blending our music together, but fun anyway.

Pamela Lester

Getting back to doing something I really enjoy. Creating stained glass ornaments and panels for family. Now I am making jewellery for my children and grandchildren.

Tyrone Lester

Reflections

And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created

Viewing Recommendations

Andrew Lloyd Webber is giving us the gift of seeing one of his famous musical productions beginning each Friday afternoon for 48 hours.

Search for ***The Show Must Go On***

<https://www.youtube.com/theshowsmustgoon> to find a video introduction from Andrew Lloyd Webber and the links to the videos.

(for those more technology-challenged... 😊)
Click on the broken box on the extreme right on bottom of the window where the audio controls are, you can see it projected full screen.

new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

Kitty O'Meara

To learn about the author who is a retired teacher & chaplain, go to

<https://www.oprahmag.com/entertainment/a31747557/and-the-people-stayed-home-poem-kitty-omeara-interview/>

Then just hit Esc to go back to a regular screen.

After years of wanting to thoroughly clean my house but lacking the time, this week I discovered that wasn't the reason.



The FLC Cycling Club

Promotes health and fitness for cyclists 55+