

'Safari Arie' finds best of humanity en route to west coast

BRAD BROWN
The Forum

The story of Arie Hoogerbrugge's second long-haul bicycle trip is, first and foremost, one of renewed faith in the human spirit.

The Grimsby, Ont. product was fresh off a broken engagement and six-and-a-half years delivering cookies by truck between Ontario and California when he set out Nov. 12 from St. John's, Nfld., on a ride he expects will cover 50,000 kilometres and eventually take him to Argentina.

"When I started this ride initially, especially given the start time and how it came about, what I was dealing with, and what I guess you could say I'm still dealing with, is just the failure of that engagement," Hoogerbrugge told The Forum during a lunch break in Emerald Park, on the Saskatchewan leg of his journey in late July.

"And so when I started in Newfoundland, November 12, my anticipation and expectation of this ride, at least for the winter, was that every single minute of every

single mile would suck. You're either strong enough or you're not.

"But it turned out that it didn't suck. It turned out that it was the most amazing experience of my life. And I never anticipated any of it."

After an extended stay with a relative in Ontario due to COVID-19 related travel restrictions this spring, Hoogerbrugge made his way down Highway 48 to Vibank on July 18, and continued on to Regina the next day. Somewhere on or around Sept. 6, he arrived in Vancouver.

What he says he's found along the way is a spirit of kindness and generosity that's exceeded his wildest dreams.

His stories of being gifted cash, food and hotel rooms in the Maritimes specifically are nearly endless, as is his praise for the dozens of hosts across the country who have opened their homes to him for a night or four.

That in itself was a big change of pace for Hoogerbrugge, who previously completed

a 6,500 km bike ride through Canada in 2011, without staying with a single host.

And it all started with a chance meeting during a wind storm in Prince Edward Island.

"I needed an entire lane (of highway) because of the way the wind was, literally in order to navigate down the road," he said, setting the scene.

He arrived in Charlottetown at 1 a.m. without a place to stay and eventually found a place to set up camp for the night. The next day, he said, the temperature dropped to about -15 C so he went to a local Tim Horton's to work on his blog (www.safari-arie.ca).

Through his website, it was there that he received a message from a local resident he'd never met offering him a spare bed for the night.

"And I said Arie, Arie, you do not say no to any offer ever, because you do not know where it's going to lead," Hoogerbrugge said. "So I message her back and said 'If it's not inconvenient, I'd be



Arie Hoogerbrugge stops to say hello (above) on Highway 48 just east of White City while traveling through Saskatchewan earlier this summer, and adjusts his gear (right) after an extended lunch break with a pesky reporter in Emerald Park. Forum photos by Brad Brown



happy to stay,' and from that moment forward I've stayed with as many hosts as I possibly can.

"Any time a local says 'Hey,' I say yes before they even finish what they're offering."

Now biding his time on the west coast, the next chapter in the trip remains to be seen. The original plan would have seen Hoogerbrugge pedal down the Pacific coast (with a detour to Las Vegas) before zig-zagging across Central America and down

to the southern tip of Argentina, en route (via about the longest way possible) to his second home in Belize.

Now? Who knows? Ending the ride early, however, is an unlikely scenario.

"Will I finish the ride? There's no reason to suggest I won't. I

don't know what COVID has in store for us, and I also don't know if there's a way for COVID to stop this ride," he said. "My attitude from getting back on the road was, as long as the highway allows me to keep moving west I will move west. As long as I have options I will keep moving."

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We're looking for workers on election day (Oct. 26) and for the 5 days of advance voting. Work together with your spouse, your teenager, or anyone else from your household. Every job is a paid job!

Working safely is our priority.

Like your local grocery store, we're providing all of our workers with masks, sanitizer, and clear dividers from voters.

Apply to work at: elections.sk.ca/takepart or call 1.877.958.8683.

SK VOTES 2020
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Town of White City Call for Nominations

September 11, 2020

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that nominations of candidates for the offices of:

MAYOR: Town of White City

COUNCILLOR: Town of White City
NUMBER TO BE ELECTED: 6

will be received by the undersigned on Wednesday October 7, 2020 until 4:00 p.m. and between 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday from September 17, 2020 to October 7, 2020 at the White City Town Office.

Nomination forms may be obtained at the White City Town Office, online at whitecity.ca or by emailing townoffice@whitecity.ca

A Criminal Record Check must be submitted with the Nomination Form per Town of White City Bylaw No. 657-20.

Dated this 11th day of September, 2020

Voula Colbow
Returning Officer

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