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Cycling Duo Expect to Reach Manitoba as they Cross Canada to Raise Awareness for Huntington Disease

(KITCHENER, ON) May 31, 2016 – When Marty and Jim decide to get involved they go big, really big. The dynamic duo is crossing Canada on bicycles to raise awareness for Huntington disease. Expecting to reach Manitoba on June 2, 2016 from Gull Lake, Saskatchewan, the two are cycling across Canada to raise awareness for Huntington disease. The bike ride will wind through Canada with a goal to finish in St. John’s, NL on July 31, 2016. The pair expect that it will take them 79 days to complete the entire bike ride, covering an average of 120-125 km per day with a total distance of 7500 km. The route through Manitoba includes stops in Brandon, Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg, as they make their way through the province.

For Jim, having his bike signed at the send-off in Windsor by an individual with Huntington disease (HD) has been his most memorable moment so far. For Marty, that memorable moment occurred when meeting and talking with a couple affected by HD at a tourist site in British Columbia. Marty and Jim have traveled 1524 km so far, with a total riding time of more than 118 hours – and they show no signs of slowing down!

But for the duo, the idea to ride cross-country really started when Marty Denonville’s sister-in-law found out that her three children had Huntington disease (HD). Marty knew he had to do something - something big! He teamed up with long-time friend, Jim Stewart, and the two decided to cycle across Canada this summer to raise awareness and funds in support of families who are affected by Huntington disease.

Volunteers are at the heart of the Huntington Society of Canada (HSC). Our volunteers tell a powerful story of caring people who pull together to improve the quality of life for Canadians impacted by Huntington disease (HD). Marty Denonville and Jim Stewart are two such volunteers who are sharing their own story by cycling across Canada. As Denonville describes it, “One of them started exhibiting symptoms of the disease and the other two were tested and diagnosed as well,” he said. “It’s a brutal disease and has a devastating effect not only on those who have the disease, but on their families as well. It’s just not fair.”

Two guys, four wheels, and one cause - with a goal of raising \$25,000 and ensuring that all Canadians know about HD and its ferocious impact. Many liken the symptoms of HD as having ALS, Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s – simultaneously.

“Volunteer dedication and support are the fabric of the Huntington Society. Volunteers like Marty and Jim who go above and beyond help us grow, achieve impactful results and reach our goals,” says Bev Heim-Myers, Chief Executive Officer of the Huntington Society of Canada. “We are incredibly fortunate for volunteers like Marty and Jim and the thousands of volunteers who stand beside us and make us the best that we can be.”

Huntington disease (HD) is a debilitating brain disorder that is fatal and incurable. About one in every 7,000 Canadians has HD and approximately one in every 5,500 is at-risk of developing the disease. Many more are touched by HD whether as a caregiver, a family member, or a friend. HD causes cells in specific parts of the brain to die. As the disease progresses, a person with Huntington's become less able to manage movements, recall events, make decisions and control emotions. The disease leads to incapacitation and, eventually, death.

The **Huntington Society of Canada (HSC)** is a respected leader in the worldwide effort to end Huntington disease. HSC is the only Canadian health charity dedicated to providing help and hope for families dealing with Huntington disease across Canada.

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