

# Cyclist laments his cross-Canada trip finally ends

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When Dave Procter gets behind a cause, he supports it by going to great lengths.

At the end of a 7,250-kilometre cycling odyssey across Canada, the Comax Valley Re/Max real estate agent wheeled up to the Comox Centre Mall on Monday afternoon to the cheers of more than 70 supporters.

Hugging his partner Leah Reichelt, who drove a 38-foot motor home as his support team, Procter told the crowd he could not have done it without her and the support of family back home.

"The first month and a half, it seemed like it was never going to end," Procter admitted. "Unfortunately, the last week, both Leah and I were totally depressed because it was coming to an end."

The payoff at the end of the epic journey was a contribution of almost \$40,000 to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

That included cheques to Heather Jones, a Victoria-based development officer with the CBCF, of \$8,000 from fuel sales at Gas and Go in Cumberland (run by Procter's brother Wayne) and \$5,085.93 from a portion of Procter's and Reichelt's real estate commissions.

In an interview, Procter said he did it because of the people they know who have been affected by cancer.

Other than a "major dehydration problem" in the final two days that necessitated a 12-hour hospital visit, Procter said he held up well physically. He averaged 120 km a day.

He handled the mental demands by carving up the cross-country journey in his mind into 20-km increments, which "made the day fly along."

Canada, Reichelt said, is "very big ... it took forever to get through Ontario, but we absolutely loved Ontario, going along the shore of Lake Superior, one of the most beautiful places in the country.

"We had beautiful weather ... the sun followed us."

Procter said Manitoba has the worst roads in Canada.

Nonetheless, he advised the crowd to not go south to Mexico or California for getaways, urging them to

explore their own country.

"If anybody gets a chance to go across Canada, don't rush across. Take it a day at a time, and see it.

"The best spots are right here. We don't know what we've got. When you go across it slowly you see all the little places, the Kenoras, the Wawas, Wasaga Beach, Pancake Bay (all in Ontario) ... Cavendish Beach (PEI).

"It just made us realize that the next few years we're going to be exploring what we've got here because it's the best place to be in the world. It's got the best people."

He got lots of encouragement along the way and had many letters of support waiting when he returned home from people he and Reichelt met along the way.

A video crew from Re/Max International in the U.S. spent a whole day shooting them, which will be presented on Re/Max's satellite network, Procter told the crowd.

He said he hopes that will continue the drive toward the goal of raising \$100,000.

Procter's efforts are appreciated, said Jones.

"We have a lot of people to organize fundraising events to support us," she said in an interview.

"Dave's stood out in the last little while," Jones added. "That's quite ambitious to ride your bike across Canada."

In an interview, Reichelt admitted to some doubt when they set out.

"I had reservations in the beginning that it might be a little too much to do, but he did it, and he did an awesome job.

"In the beginning, it was difficult," Reichelt admitted about being behind the wheel of a 38-foot home on wheels, which was towing a car. "I was really nervous about driving the motor home."

She almost got into a collision in Cornwall, Ont., and incurred one dent pulling into a campsite in Owen Sound, Ont.

After all that, she suspects this is not the final exploit with Procter.

"One never knows what he'll come up with next. It's always something. It's always an adventure with him."

You can still donate on Procter's website at [www.coasttocoastforancer.ca](http://www.coasttocoastforancer.ca).

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DAVE PROCTER FINALLY takes a load off at the Comox Centre Mall after months of cycling across Canada.

PHOTO BY CARL TESSMAN