



MP ANDREW SCHEER (L) with cyclist Rob Montgomery (R) preparing for the day's ride.

# MP Scheer rides along to help build wells in Africa

MICHELLE NICHOLSON  
THE STAR REPORTER

Cycling 4 Water's four-man team gained another cyclist as Member of Parliament Andrew Scheer joined them for 2,000 kilometers of their cross-Canada fundraising bike ride on Tuesday.

"One of the organizers came to see me in Ottawa and mentioned they were going to be riding through my riding," Scheer explained as to how he got involved, "they were going to be going from Regina to Wolseley, which is the bottom half of Regina-Qu'Appelle so I thought I've driven that stretch a lot, but I've never been on a bike to do it." So I thought I'd give it a shot." Scheer said his record biking distance is 30 kilometers and that he used to bike to work as a teenager. He's been including time on the stationary bike in his training at the gym.

The Cycling 4 Water team is taking on the challenge of pedalling across the country to raise money for the Global Aid Network (GAIN), which engages in development work around the globe. This work includes building water wells

in rural Africa. The team's end goal is to raise enough money for 60 wells to be built.

"We're at 21 wells as of last night," said Mike Woodard, a cyclist on the team. "The place we stayed at last night, the church we spoke at, took a well. So that made it 21. Twenty one out of 60. We're excited. We've had just the most incredible cross-country, heart warming experiences." The tour started in Victoria, British Columbia on June 30 and the plan is for a finish in St. John's, Newfoundland on August 23.

Woodard and team talk of children emptying their piggy banks and two motorcyclists handing over the cash from their wallets at a truck stop. The Cycling 4 Water team found sponsors to cover costs for the trip. When individuals provide lunches, a place to stay or parking and plug-ins for the RV that drives along behind them, sponsor money that would've been used is then rerouted toward the fundraising goal.

Scheer's office team engaged in a "Make your Boss Sweat" fundraiser and raised \$200 for the bicyclists. The team posts regular updates at [cycling4water.ca](http://cycling4water.ca).

## Statistics & Facts - Taken from [cycling4water.ca](http://cycling4water.ca)

- Each year, 3.4 million people die from water, sanitation and hygiene-related causes.
- 780 million people lack access to clean water.
- Today women spend a combined total of 16 million hours and children spend four million hours each day collecting drinking water.
- One child dies from a water-related disease every 21 seconds.
- Children lose 443 million school days every year due to water-related illnesses.
- Women bear 62% of the responsibility for collecting water in sub-Saharan Africa; while children bear 9%.
- 75% of households have to travel great distances from their place of dwelling to collect water.
- 15% of the population still practices open defecation in fields, forests, bushes, bodies of water or other open spaces; representing 1.1 billion people.

UNICEF WAO 2007 WAO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation (2012)  
UNICEF WAO 2007 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2006  
UNICEF Programme Drinking Water and Sanitation 2013 WATER AND SANITATION - World Health Organization WHO



THE CYCLING 4 WATER TEAM bikes leaning up against their RV. The RV is being driven by Jacquie Baschek, the wife of one of the cyclists.



MIKE WOODWARD and his bike adorned with stuffed animals his grandchildren sent along to keep him company on the cross-Canada trek.