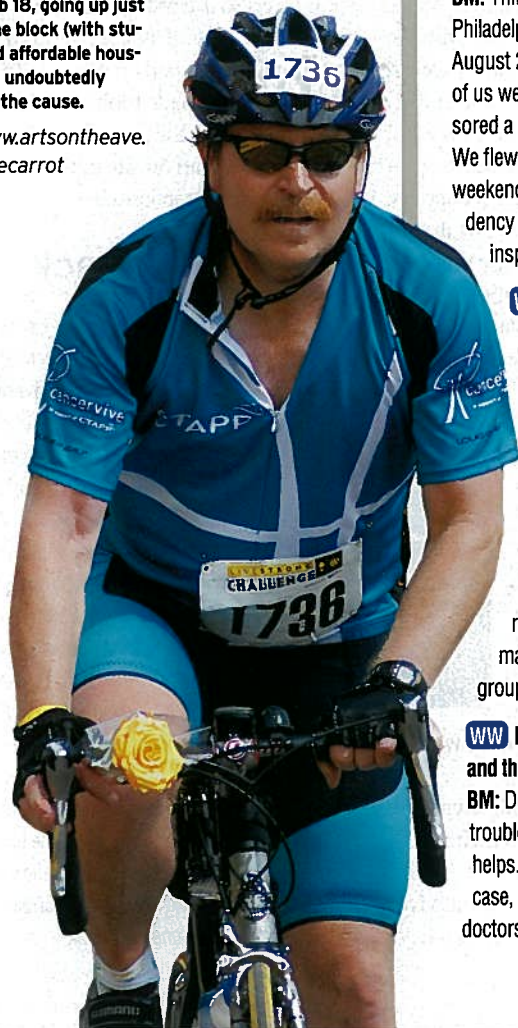


### THE CARROT-AND-BRUSH APPROACH

Edmonton's The Carrot Community Arts Coffeehouse, opened in June 2007, follows Cézanne's credo: "The day is coming when a single carrot, freshly observed, will set off a revolution." Run by local artists determined to bring positive change to Alberta Avenue, the café offers storytelling evenings, art shows, improv and live music . . . not to mention excellent coffee. September 26-28 features Arts Alive Festival. ArtsHub 18, going up just down the block (with studios and affordable housing) will undoubtedly further the cause.

**i** [www.artsontheave.org/thecarrot](http://www.artsontheave.org/thecarrot)

(top) The Carrot Community Arts Coffeehouse, (right and top right) Brian McGregor



## INTERVIEW



**Five years ago, Calgary Brian McGregor** (bottom left) discovered he had cancer, and had undergone surgery and was undergoing chemotherapy when seven-time Tour de France-winner and cancer survivor Lance Armstrong happened to visit the hospital where he was being treated. "Lance told me I could beat this, no problem," says McGregor, and those words of hope inspired him to create CancerVive. *Westworld* caught up with McGregor just after the foundation's fourth annual charity bike ride.

**WW** Your charity ride's route changes each year. What was the route this year?

**BM:** Thirty of us rode 4,000 km from Calgary to Philadelphia, starting August 12 and finishing August 21, for Lance's Livestrong event. Some of us were cancer survivors, and all of us sponsored a "warrior" – someone battling cancer. We flew them down as our way of giving them a weekend off. It takes away some of the despondency after their diagnosis and gives them inspiration and a new focus.

**WW** Where do the monies raised go?

**BM:** Each rider commits to raising at least \$10,000 – ideally through grassroots events. Some riders hold a bowling party, for example; others a pub night or silent auction. The money is then used to cover each warrior's airfare to the event and the rest goes to Calgary's Wellspring, a centre for cancer survivors who have just completed treatment. It helps them find their "new normal" by offering coping skills, support groups and treatments such as reiki.

**WW** Do you see parallels between the rides and the battle to overcome cancer?

**BM:** Definitely. Teamwork is one. If a rider has trouble making it up a hill or has a flat, everyone helps. With cancer, it's the same thing. In my case, I had my wife and my sons and all these doctors to help me fight it. The road was long

and the hills got harder and harder. But we worked together to make it through.

**WW** What strikes you the most about cancer survivors?

**BM:** You attract many hardcore cyclists to an event like this, and they're doing it for the riding. But the cancer survivors are doing it to prove something else to themselves – that they have control over their lives again. Also, cancer survivors tend to not sweat the small stuff anymore. Every day for them is a great day.

**WW** What is one moment you will always carry with you from your rides?

**BM:** I still remember one night in Wyoming from last year's ride. We had a blustery crosswind and the rain was turning to sleet and it was cold and miserable. I was riding with a few other cancer survivors, some of whom had overcome life-or-death situations, and we'd stopped for a rest. But one rider said to me, "Let's just keep going. Let's stop taking breaks and just ride it out." And another agreed and said, "If we can do this, anyone can."

**WW** What message would you like to share with others battling cancer?

**BM:** Existentialism is accepting that we all die one day. The positive side of that is thinking, "I don't know how long I'm going to be here, but I'm going to enjoy myself." I myself am probably going to go saying, "Oh s\*\*\*!" because I'm flying over a cliff on my bike.

**i** [www.cancervive.ca](http://www.cancervive.ca)