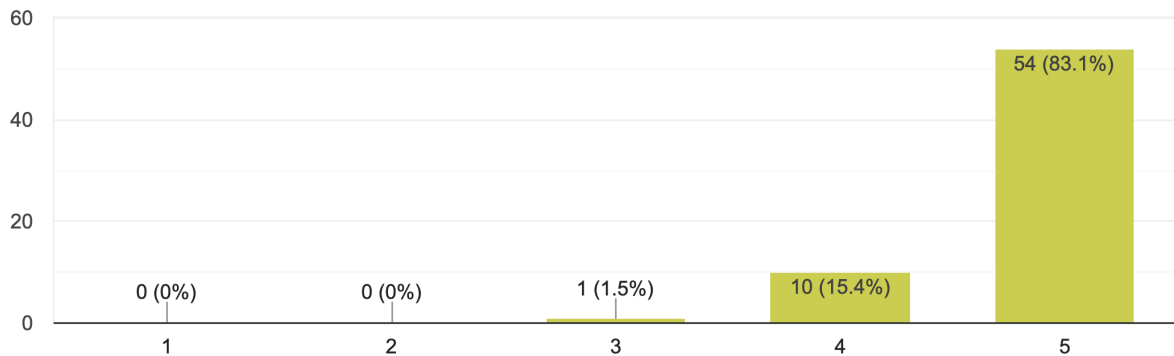


Portland Wheelers 2021 Season Volunteer Experience Survey

- Online survey conducted via Google Forms in late January 2022.
- An email with the link to the survey was sent to every 2021 Portland Wheelers volunteer.
- 74 survey requests were sent out.
- 65 survey responses were completed.
- Some survey questions used a scale of 1 to 5 where an answer of one was the most negative to 5 being the most positive, such as (1) Not good (3) neutral (5) Excellent
- This is a complete data dump of the survey results, only respondent names and email addresses have been removed, no other data has been deleted or edited.

How would you rate your overall volunteer experience with Portland Wheelers in 2021?

65 responses



Comments 23 responses

The whole vibe of PW this year was that of having fun!

Everyone I have been scheduled to ride with is always so welcoming and nice. New ride locations (well, ok all the ride locations were new to me this year), were easy to navigate and I felt safe. Our ride partners are awesome and well... then there are the wheelers - oh my heart! Each event is always so well organized.

What a great cause and great people.

Incredible training, facilitation, route leading, and communication!

Can't wait for new season!

The addition of Pete was fantastic!

Fun and fulfilling

ability to get some slots on schedule difficult as they seem to be filled day 1 by usually the same people

I can't wait to start again!!!!!! I miss all the interactions with the riders.

Very well organized

Thorough planning and support from all.

Looking forward to next season!

It is so rewarding to give rides to wheelers and enjoyable to do so with wonderful volunteers.

Always the highlight of my week both the Wheelers and volunteers.

Always worthwhile and fun.

Due to a change in my work schedule, I wasn't able to volunteer as much As I was hoping to, and then when I was scheduled to volunteer, either weather or Covid seem to cancel it! However, the few times I did ride, my experience was excellent. I felt prepared, received timely communication from the Portland wheelers leader team. It felt like such a well oiled machine, and Pete the transporter handled all the details so well, and was such a joy in terms of his photography, and how he interacted with both the volunteers as well as our clients. What a gem.

Having fun.

So fun. So rewarding ...!!!!

I found that a lot of board members/ very regular volunteers signed up for several shifts right as signups opened (or seemed like they were already signed up when the signup was released). This felt a little discouraging for a new volunteer with not as much availability.

Loved being a safety in 2021.

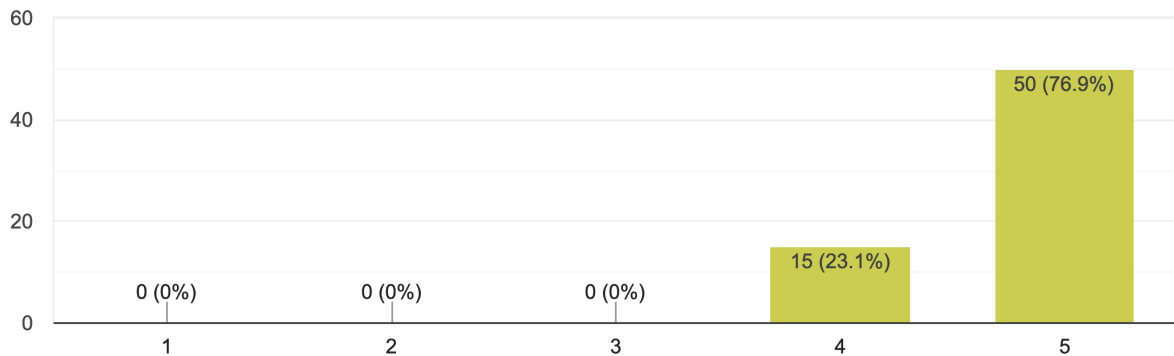
Did not ride because of medical and covid reasons

Everything seemed extremely well organized. However, my rise to "pilot" status seemed a bit rushed (I started volunteering mid-season).

Great experience

Did you find the Sign Up Genius (SUG) calendar easy to use when scheduling your shifts?

65 responses



Comments about using Sign Up Genius (online volunteer scheduling system)?

14 responses

Lots of pages to sift thru for later dates ... if there's a quick way to sign up for a date and be returned to the date u left on it would be great.

Great app

Yes, it was very easy to use. Hard for me to find shifts that work with my schedule, but I think that's more a knock on my schedule than the SUG.

much more friendly on a computer vs phone

Simple and straightforward!

It appears that some spots, such as Piper Shores, get taken up as soon as sign up opens and the same people take all the slots. Consideration could be given to limiting how many times the same people can take all the same slots so others get a chance at them as well.

Works well Easy to schedule a time, change if needed.

Changing to weekly updates helps, as my schedule can be fluid and it helps to be able to sign up nearer the event.

the software feels a little "clunky", for example a lot of clicking to the next screen and scrolling. A whole week/month view would be helpful although I totally understand this could be out of your control and overall the software definitely works!

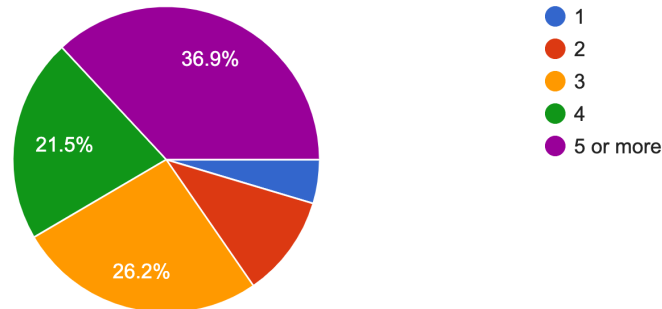
Some initial problems, but eventually got the hang of it.

Sometimes difficult to cancel or find subs

Very simple to use

At approximately how many different ride locations did you volunteer this season? (Birchwoods, Piper Shores, PCAL, CTU, Avita, Enclave, etc....)

65 responses



Comments 18 responses

Lots of fun seeing new routes. 😊

I would love to get to as many as possible.

I was new this year so I tried to get to as many different ride locations as possible just to try them out.

I was limited by my available schedule

Birchwoods and Barron Center

Some others were canceled

My volunteer time was limited to the storage place

I contracted Lyme disease in June and was sidelined with some harsh side effects, so this past summer was very abbreviated for me.

wanted others, but schedule was already filled

I was primarily at two locations; during the bonus season rides I expanded my horizons a bit and loved the places I visited.

Loved the variety and different locations and timed

It would be helpful to have a facility blurb - number to call if an issue occurs on ride, who to check in with, route....

Lately I'm tending to ride nearer my home and almost always in the afternoons.

I only volunteered at places where I knew the routes well. However, one time I offered to help out when there was a lack of pilots and Sue kindly sketched out a map which made it very clear what was the route. I would gladly sign up for different shifts if I was confident what was the route, if it was a ride leader position. It made me wonder if it's possible to have route maps for all locations, or even some thing that we could plug into our phones for directions. For those who use Strava, something like that to plug the route into phone and then follow. But it doesn't have to be electronic. Look forward to learning about more locations in 2022

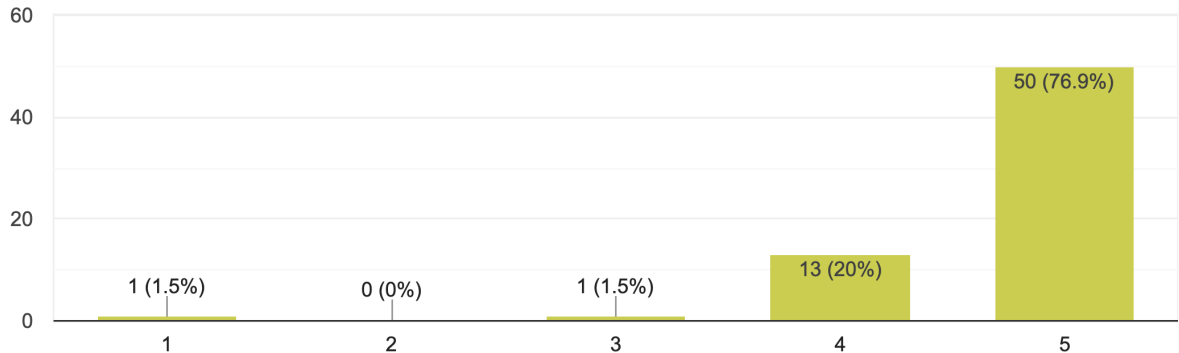
NA

Not enough experience with any 1 site's ride options to be a "lead pilot" yet

All were well organized and well attended

How would you rate the one-hour veteran refresher or four-hour new volunteer training session you attended?

65 responses



Comments 13 responses

I was a brand new pilot this year - loved the training.

I didn't get to experience the joy of the full day training in past years - but it would have been hard for me to carve out a full day so I am appreciative of the shortened time. I also felt like the 4 hours was well planned and thoughtful. There was always something to learn and it was not rushed or too full in my opinion.

My four hour training was really a lot of fun.

Ray, Sue and Mark are excellent instructors and were very patient with the students

It was paced well, and very useful to experience both the pilot and rider positions.

It was so fun to do the volunteer training with real people in person after a year of virtual experiences. You all did such a great job leading the training!

Well, actually, I did miss the training. But I'm sure it was wonderful.

I took the four hour course; I didn't have a great deal of confidence going into my first ride but received SOOOO much encouragement! And the trainers were correct- we were ready!

The Covid related training as well as the technical side of the training was excellent. I felt very supported and it was done in a relaxed but professional way. The one piece of training I wonder about is the non-technical/safety piece of training that might be useful. Meaning, pointers of how to engage Wheelers, like stopping if there is something interesting to look at like the egrets on back Cove or along Scarborough marsh. Or a fun Halloween decoration or interesting plant or flower,

could be anything along the ride that might be of interest. I have been on some rides where I felt we should pause briefly to admire something, I and one time I did stop when the ride leader didn't because my wheeler seemed really interested in the birds along back Cove. We fell behind a little bit but I thought it was worthwhile to take the time during the ride to stop, admire, and let the Wheeler share what they were thinking about. It's hard to communicate with Wheelers when you're piloting, especially with Covid and not wanting to lean over to get close and try and chat. So stopping allows for a bit of conversation, and also I think it is part of the ride experience for Wheelers. Sue as a ride leader is particularly good at making observations and stopping to admire a bit of nature, or or to talk with eg a dog walker And engage in a little bit of conversation between the wheeler, the pilot, and another person who happens to be along the trail.

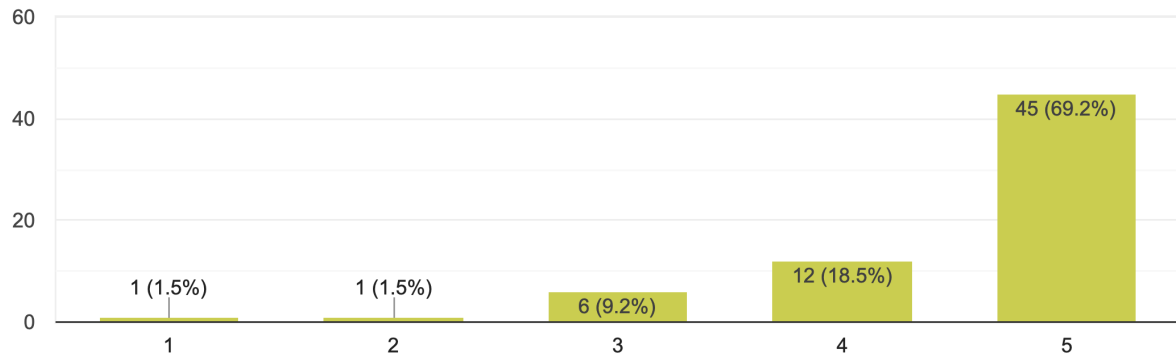
The training session was perfect for teaching me the ropes. I was grouped with a few new volunteers who seems to feel not as comfortable piloting the bike when I was the guest rider. I did wonder if they were going to be offered additional training sessions, or strongly encouraged to practice prior to a piloting shift.

NA

Very clear straight forward instruction with opportunity to review ask questions and give feedback
I was a safety - had no formal training

How well prepared did you feel for your first volunteer pilot session of the season?

65 responses



Comments 19 responses

Felt nervous and had trouble with the bumpy and narrow passages, but this passed.

I learned so much by watching Sue and some of the other more experienced pilots interacting with wheelers.

My 3 rating isn't a result of the training which was excellent. I just needed time to get comfortable.

As prepared as I needed to be!!

It was good to be a safety first

you can never be fully prepared for your first, but training team did an outstanding job preparing me for it. You just have to get the first one under your belt and the nerves go away.

I was unsure but received every bit of help I needed.

I was a safety person but felt well trained

There was a long period of time between my training and my first ride. I am thankful for the other patient volunteers.

As always, the first couple of rides I'm on high alert even with the training. Once I have in a couple of rides I start to relax and it all comes back.

Wasn't sure what to expect. Training is different from having a wheeler in the seat.

Only trained as a safety. I would like to train to be a Pilot this year to be able to have more sign up opportunities.

Safety is a great vantage point to observe the experienced volunteers

NA

More tips on how to interact with wheelers might be helpful

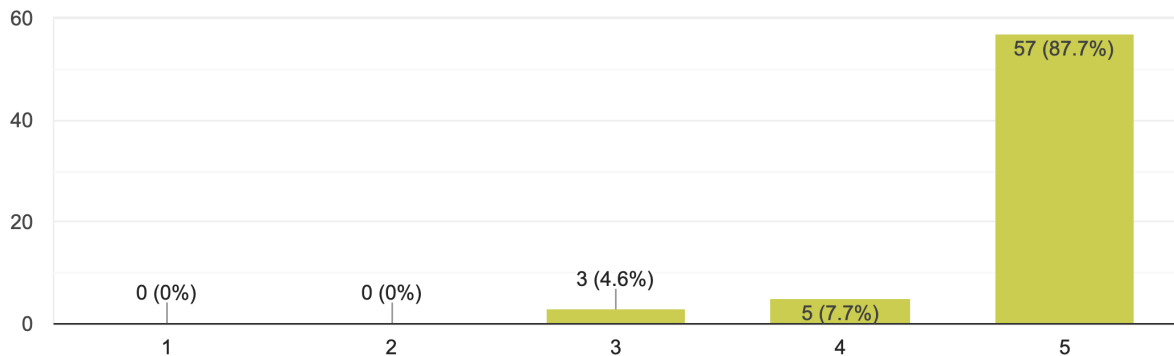
I wasn't confident until after my 3 ride or so

Needed reminders on putting the bikes back on the trailer...thank goodness for Pete!

I'm an avid cyclist and member of Bicycle Coalition of Maine

Do you feel that you received appropriate communication during the season concerning any changes, updates, or anything to do with the Wheelers program?

65 responses



Comments 9 responses

the newsletters are THE BEST EVER. :)

Sign Up Genius is great to sign up, but I felt a little better once I got going and knew who I was volunteering with and what their personal phone numbers were. This was handy when there was very iffy weather and we weren't sure which way it was going to go

I never really had questions, we were always given all information we needed.

Notified us of any changes promptly

I was great to get email updates. I really appreciated the texts before a ride to let me know about changes and / or cancellations. Since I travel 45 to 60 minutes these messages save me a unnecessary trip.

The newsletter looks fantastic, the best I've ever seen us produce in terms of content and design/layout.

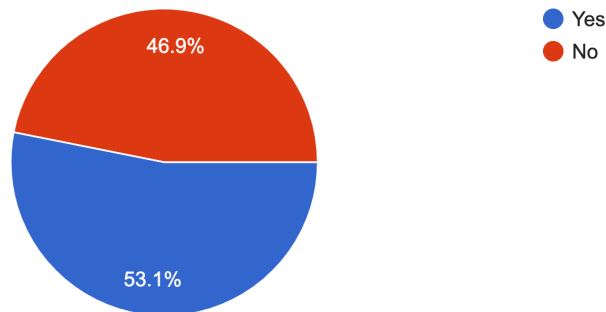
Text messages for news/cancelations day of are very useful!

As checked off above

Wonder if the weather looks bad the day of the ride if the cancellation notice can go out the night before for planning purposes...?

Do you follow Portland Wheelers on social media (Instagram and/or Facebook)?

64 responses



Comments 16 responses

Great posts!

I do not have social media

ha!

I don't do social media

i don't follow anyone on social media and don't have any social media accounts (I don't think they do much good for our world).

I don't do SM.

Only Instagram. I dislike Facebook so gave it up a couple of years ago

I don't do facebook but follow instagram

Love the photos!

Do not belong to social media

I'm not an avid Facebook/Instagram user but do use them as a primary information source for clubs and groups I belong to that use those platforms for news and announcements.

I don't really do social media.

Love seeing the pictures!

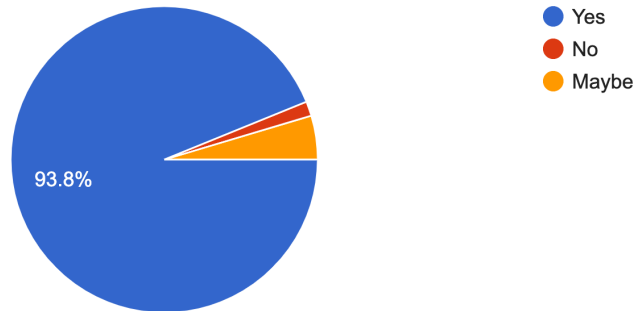
I don't have any social media

I do no social media "stuff".

I believe in text communication and frequency of email

For planning purposes (this is not a commitment), do you plan to volunteer again in 2022? If your response is no or maybe, please consider letting us know the reasons why in the comments section.

65 responses



Comments 12 responses

Definitely!!

I have a busier schedule than last season, so I am hoping I can commit the required number of rides per month.

I did not feel comfortable on the uneven surfaces with the bike and trike.

Can't wait to start!

It was a great first year and I look forward to another one.

I've been waiting on a hip replacement since June and hope to be done by spring; however, I'm not certain, and I don't know how rehab will go.

I will have more opportunities to volunteer this season as my work schedule has gone back to what it used to be.

I would like to train as a pilot this year. Hope to be back in Portland around May.

Would like to continue as a safety, but get trained as a pilot and move in that direction as well.

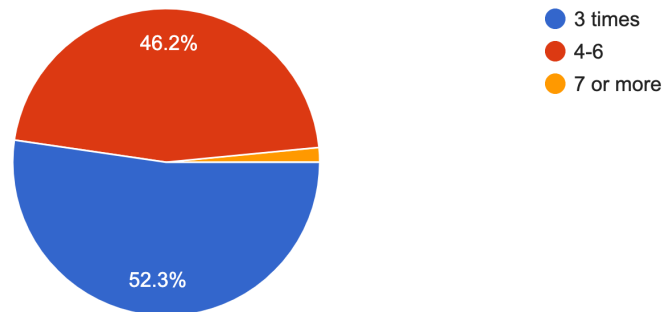
Looking forward to volunteer as a pilot

Availability of time

Pretty sure I will do it again this summer- keep me posted on schedules- Thanks

How many shifts do you plan to sign up for each month, on average?

65 responses



Comments 19 responses

Well, that's the plan.

I am not sure I can commit to 3 shifts per month --- I didn't satisfy this requirement this year.

Once a week seems to be an average for me.

I will stand by as filler to the extent my schedule allows

Probably 4 shifts

I would likely sign up for 2-3 slots a month

I will not be volunteering this season

1 or 2 if that is an option

Will vary as needed and as possible.

depends on availability

I can't wait to get started!!!

I probably will only be able to sign up for 2-3 a month.

About one-half of shifts were also transporting

Since I do travel it is great when I can do an AM and PM shift on the same day.

I'd like to volunteer more this year than last, it was such a great experience!

If I become a pilot I could possibly sign up for more. Last year I was a safety so volunteering was limited. Hopefully I can be trained to be a pilot!!

Piper Shores each week, plus others

Unknown at this time, but will adjust around already scheduled family plans

Prefer two shifts due to available free time

Overall, what did you like most about your Portland Wheelers' volunteer experience this season? 57 responses

The passengers

The joy of spreading biking joy to others.

Our volunteers rock! I love watching the pilots interact with their Wheelers. Some pilots frequently visit the same locations and develop quite a bond with the residents.

I LOVE PW.

Miles of smiles!

I enjoyed making a contribution to society and meeting new friends among the wheelers. Also ran into old some old friends !

Fun!!! rewarding yet sometimes exhausting.

The people! Both the volunteers and our riders were consistently friendly, enthusiastic, and happy to be a part of it. It is a wonderful program, which attracts down to earth, warm volunteers, and the community made me want to sign up as much as possible.

Interacting with the seniors and providing them a service

I really enjoyed going back week after week to the same locations and getting to know the staff and wheelers on a deeper level. All the Portland Wheelers staff and volunteers were amazing to work with! I learned so much during my first season and was leading rides at Birchwoods and Barron Center by the end of the season.

The people

I enjoyed meeting the clients who took our rides and meeting other volunteers.

Being outside. Great group of volunteers. Providing some outdoor experiences for the elderly.

Meeting new pilots, getting out to sites again

Hearing at the stories the Riders had to tell

The fun was back!!!

Providing a much needed service

(And being part of a well oiled organization, social networking and getting some fresh air and exercise)

The Come to Us rides & the Bike4Trikes fundraiser

Meeting so many wonderful volunteers and feeling that the Wheelers were really enjoying themselves.

Was limited to watching them go by the house, but that WAS nice.

Very Organized and love the experience of talking with the riders

The smile on our rider's face.

our clients and staff at the facilities

THE INTERACTIONS, THE SMILING FACES, THE HAPPINESS OF OUR RIDERS.

opportunity to get residents out.

The people and organization!

Going to different homes and meeting the staff and riders

The Wheelers themselves! When we can chat a bit, they are always interesting folks. Their gratitude is embarrassing because I get so much more in return for pedaling.

Spending time helping people.

Spending time with riders

The people: riders and other volunteers.

Interacting with wheelers and volunteers and enjoying nice rides outdoors

I loved the energy of the riders and thought the other volunteers were very helpful when I started.

The great reception from each facility and the overall attitudes of the volunteers.

well organized, appreciative recipients, and flexibility of schedule

Getting to know the other volunteers and our wheelers! I loved seeing the happiness on the Wheeler's faces and knowing we can provide them with quality outdoor experiences is just priceless.

Sharing life experiences with the Wheelers and riding in neighborhoods/areas that I wouldn't normally visit.

Except for not giving my Mom any rides, it was great.

Making Wheelers happy, and meeting other pilots.

I just love connecting with people who don't have lots of opportunities to get outside, and providing them with that opportunity and hopefully providing them with an experience that has positive impact on their day. I also love and was extremely impressed with how the organization became volunteer lead after the ED position was eliminated. Hats off to Ray, Sue, and all other volunteers who stepped up into basically a full-time position to ensure a quality program continued, and continued in such a fantastic way, and in a pandemic! Thank you, thank you, thank you for all that you do.

Sense of freedom at sites to make decisions on the spot, guided by group input of volunteers, general maturity and experience, with mission of FUN for all at top of mind.

good fun and satisfying

Extremely rewarding both for me and the riders. Great people to work with. Very well run by Sue and Ray and Pete. I have no complaints. Only praise. ❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️

I always enjoy the interactions with the wheelers

Meeting clients and interacting with Wheelers.

I loved giving someone else the ability to go for a bike ride, a feeling of joy and freedom I hope everyone (who wants it) can experience regardless of their ability to ride a bike.

The smiles on the Wheelers after their rides!

meeting Wheelers - that's always the best part

NA

Talking to Wheelers about their lives. Somewhat uncomfortable interacting with dementia riders.

Working with clients and other volunteers

Getting to know the riders

Helping those in need of feeling the excitement of fresh air and care for their experience

Lots of fun!

The riders!!! Always the time spent talking with the riders! I learn so much in my short time with them!

I love the idea of Portland Wheelers

How can the Portland Wheelers' volunteer experience be improved? 36 responses

Possibly a checklist of post ride debriefing topics/questions so ride leaders do this more consistently.

By cloning Pete! Seriously!

early retirement :)

more snacks

I know it isn't useful to only have positive feedback, but I think the program was run quite successfully. For me, the only issues that ever arose were technical (glitch in the electric assist, squeaky wheel, etc.), and the problems were solved quickly.

Can't think of much. Sometimes it's hard to wait around (for wheelers) when you'd prefer to be piloting, but I suppose that's par for the course.

I think you all did an amazing job!

One thing I would reiterate during training is to check in with the other pilots if you are the lead to make sure you clearly understand everyone's experience with the bikes. Some pilots seemed confident but didn't fully understand gearing and e-bike power levels so they made things harder than they needed to be. I had one bad experience when I was first leading. A pilot almost didn't make it up a short hill at Birchwoods because they were in the wrong gear and power level because I didn't fully understand their experience level. I should have more clearly checked in with the pilot before leading the ride but learned my lesson and then did a better and more full job of explaining better gearing and power level best practices.

Thank you all!

Keep doing what your doing.

I think things are extremely organized and a great the way they are

Get more like Pete

Tough to improve on perfection

Keep up the good work and excellent communication. The Wheelers has a terrific board.

I'll think on that.

Not really sure how to answer that. Look to feedback given to leadership

I'm honestly not sure....the only thing that worries me at all is the path of new locations I haven't been to. But, I plan to take my bike to a location beforehand or bring it and ride along as an extra safety on a Wheeler ride or just go (as I did on bonus rides!)

Can't think of a thing. I really love it!

Keep the positive momentum going

Not sure

It would be helpful to have a facility blurb - number to call if an issue occurs on ride, who to check in with, route.... Maybe a (live) document that can be accessed via phone.

Come to Lewiston-Auburn??????

I wish my Mom could have gone out for more than one ride; she may not be here for the upcoming season. It made me cry..

Hard to improve on a great program....

This might be tricky, but Ray and I sometimes used to bounce around ideas about destination rides, like a trip to Peaks Island on the ferry to get an ice cream, or maybe a ride to watch a concert on the East End, the Thursday evening series or something like that. Or a ride that involves stopping for an ice cream, or watching a bit of a sports game at Payson Park Like baseball. Or "volunteering" at a kids event like the kids duathlon at Portland Payson Park, being at a water stop or something like that for part of the time, cheering and being engaged in something. The logistics and some cases might be challenging, and maybe it might work for one particular location but not all. Anyway, a response might seem to be related to the Wheelers experience, but as a volunteer I would be delighted to provide a unique opportunity to get involved more in the community or a fun event. But again, I'm sure as fun as these things sound it could be really challenging. But maybe there's something small that we could try.

More volunteers serving as ride leaders.

I'm in Florida vacationing at the moment so let me think about that question.

I would love it if there were some rides north of Falmouth. I live in Brunswick. 😊

Meet ups/bike rides not including volunteers shifts to get to know each other. Loved the end of the season social idea although I wasn't able to make it.

Cannot think of anything.

I don't have any suggestions.

None

Don't let volunteers sign up for most desirable locations all the time. Try to spread that around
Safety on some of the rides could be improved with more signage for drivers to encourage them to slow down

Train your pilots to utilize safeties consistently. I had some lead pilots who told me to stay at the back because they really didn't need me - and others who expected me to be at the front anticipating traffic and clearing the way. What are the expectations? The lack of direction makes us safeties feel definitely second-rate - and yet we are told by the powers-that-be how important we are.....

please no vaccine requirements ever so that anyone who is willing and healthy and capable can participate!! please don't segregate healthy humans from partaking!

Nothing comes to mind

Have access to routes typically used at different facilities with notes on potential challenges of route as to provide guidance if route is suitable for all pilots to be reviewed by leader prior to ride with wheelers. Mirrors on handlebars of bikes.