



Jim Winkler  
Cyclist 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012 and 2011

Jim Winkler was on the hunt for a long-distance ride to benefit a cancer charity. After cancer had touched his life in so many ways, he bought his first road bike in 2010 and started training to ride at least 100 miles. His hunt ended when he found the Closer to Free Ride and, five years later, he's still riding.

Winkler's mother fought and beat kidney and lung cancer and his mother-in-law fought valiantly and lost her battle with AML with the FLT-3 gene, a rare form of Leukemia. Rather than just writing a check to a cancer center, he wanted to take on a challenge and feel some form of pain to connect him to the patients battling cancer. The longer the ride, the more he felt he would add to the fight.

In January 2011, there was a setback when Winkler was diagnosed with atrial fibrillation and had surgery in May to correct it. Training couldn't start again until July and that's about when he discovered the Closer to Free Ride. In September, he rode his first century on the first Closer to Free Ride. "I was hooked," he recalls. "The ride was beautiful and allowed me to reflect on the many people I know that have fought, won...fought, lost or were still fighting this disease. The stop outside Smilow is breathtaking, emotional and inspirational."

Winkler has now created a CTF Ride Team...Team "Tour for a Cure"... and he is challenging his friends to join him on the 2015 Ride. He hopes to have at least 6 team members this year, and to grow the team for the event he loves.

"The fundraising is easy, and the minimum each rider needs to hit is very attainable and not financially painful to endure," he says. "It's one of the main reasons I chose this ride compared to the one that launches from my home town. It is great to come back each year and see the same friendly faces both on the road, at the rest stops and at the Yale Bowl!"

Jim, we're thrilled you discovered the Closer to Free Ride and we look forward to many more centuries with you and your team in the years to come.

