

JANETTE RODEWALD – WPS HALF MARATHON

EXCELLENCE IN VOLUNTEERING AWARD

Janette has been a dedicated volunteer within her local community for the past 20 years, participating in variety of roles such as coaching her kids' sports, sitting on the daycare board and contributing to community club events. In 2006, she joined the Cops for Cancer team to help raise money for the Canadian Cancer Society. This endeavour led her to begin volunteering with the WPS Half Marathon, initially running an aid station with her family for the first couple years, and then taking on the role of volunteer coordinator, a position she continues to hold. Janette also helped organize the Patrick Riddell April Run Series from 2015 to 2017 and then served as Race Director in 2018 and 2019.

Janette's mantra in life is centered around active participation in the community and fostering meaningful connections with others. She believes those interactions help us find true value and purpose in life. In an effort to share her philosophy with her family, she can often be found volunteering or participating in local running events with her two daughters beside her.

In addition to her volunteer work, Janette has balanced her time between raising a family of five kids, working full time with the federal government, and dedicating time to her own passion for triathlon and running. Over the years she has completed dozens of races, including several marathons, Ironman triathlons, and more recently some ultramarathons. Janette also enjoys hanging out with her dog and traveling with her husband Trent, particularly if it includes a destination race.

In the words of Nick Paulet, Race Director of the WPS Half Marathon:

Janette has been with our WPS Half Marathon team since year 2. She started as running an aid station and then took over managing all of our volunteers. For context, this includes almost 500 positions over race week each year

She developed an email group listing, by area and also incorporated online sign up process which volunteers can automatically sign themselves up for a set duty. Canned instructions are then sent to the volunteer. The coordinator of that space (Finish Line, Aid Station 6, or Kitchen for examples) then receives a complete list and the ability to communicate directly with that group of

volunteers. There is a reason that the WPS Half Marathon has never run short of help and Janette's organization is a key element. What also make her so well received by the team and volunteers is her endless compassion, patience and the rapport she builds which forms the relationship that draws them back year after year.

Janette is a cancer survivor. I know she is fine talking about this and she wears the scars of that battle with pride and strength that I cannot comprehend. The cause of our event is Cancer research so while the cause is close to her heart, her battle was a lightning rod for our team, to rally and join her battle and therefore the broader battle of others. Janette brings people together. She is the quintessential example of a volunteer. She asks for nothing. She does anything and everything and does it with pride and a view to help others.

Leslie and I are so lucky to call her our friend.

Janette's work of course, goes well beyond the WPS Half Marathon. Here are a few examples of her years long dedication; including other MRA events!

1. Member of the Iron Cops for Cancer group. A precursor to the WPS Half Marathon where she helped with dunk tanks, fundraising and also completed the Ironman (her first of many!) in 2008.
2. Helped race direct the Morden International Triathlon for 2 years in 2009 and 2010. She was a big part of keeping that race alive in those days as there was a transition period. She wanted to do her part to ensure the race survived.
3. April Run Series. Helped organize from 2015 to 2017. Took over as Race Director for 2018 and 2019.
4. In St Francois Xavier, her home community, she was avidly involved volunteering at the daycare (2007/8), community club (on the board, canteen and fundraising work), also at the local school and daycare and to this day still helps with events like bartending and working the canteen.
5. Soccer coach in St FX and Elie 2008-14
6. Auxiliary member of the RCMP from 2009-2012
7. Headingley United Church dinner theatre 2008-12