

Bikers jump on 'the bandwagon' for Music Therapy Ride

Kristi Alexandra / Now contributor

September 9, 2014 03:36 PM



Last year's Music Therapy Ride was able to help out patients by providing access to a Bandwagon, a mobile recording unit.

Last year's Music Therapy Ride was able to help out patients by providing access to a Bandwagon, a mobile recording unit.

SURREY — When you hear that someone is “jumping on the bandwagon,” it’s rarely a good thing. For bikers who are joining in on Saturday (Sept. 13)’s Music Therapy Ride, which will start off at Coquitlam’s Hard Rock Casino and roll up to Whistler, jumping on the bandwagon is exactly what they want to do.

The charitable ride, which this year will roll over the Sea to Sky highway, has helped raise over \$650,000 in the past 13 years to put toward music therapy services. One of the many projects funded by the annual ride are two “Bandwagons” — mobile recording studios designed for music therapists to use with their clients.

One Surrey-based music therapist in particular has had great success with the bandwagon, and a sneak peek of her Bandwagon project has gone live on her YouTube account.

Sheila Lee of She.Lee.Music said that without the help of the Music Therapy Ride, which loaned She.Lee.Music the Bandwagon on a six-week residency, she and her clients wouldn’t have been able to have so much fun exploring and experimenting with the mobile recording unit.

“I brought (it) to a high school in Surrey and inside there’s an iMac and a midi keyboard and cables and recording software — everything you need to just make a recording project, or to make music in a lot of different ways with clients,” Lee told the *Now*.

“Just having the bandwagon alone is not music therapy,” she said, “but it’s just an excellent bonus thing that helps enhance the session or helps with some students that maybe I wouldn’t be able to connect with as easily. Now we have technology and that just gives me another tool to use with that client.”

For Lee, who works mostly with children and adolescents, the six-week residency with the Bandwagon was an experimental process.

“The first week was sort of an experimentation and everyone got to try it out and see what they wanted to do and what they liked,” she said. “Then, I started working with clients individually and in small groups and then we more specifically honed in on what goals we could work on with them. That could be things like speech, communication, social skills and that sort of thing.”

This year’s Music Therapy Ride will aid in the building of a third Bandwagon, as well as continuing to financially support music therapy services.

Country band, The Road Hammers, will be the celebrity riders on the Music Therapy Ride. 2013’s special guest was Surrey’s own Chin Injeti, who releases his third solo album today (Sept. 9), called *The Reverb*.

To reserve a spot on the ride, go to Musictherapyride.org. The ride includes breakfast, BBQ lunch in Whistler, a live auction and custom t-shirts.