Catherine Friesen

Board Candidate — Sovereign Lake Nordic Centre

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SLNC Member | Vernon / SilverStar

Catherine Friesen is a high-performance athlete, certified wellness professional, community builder, and chartered accountant whose life's work sits at the intersection of sport, service, and human connection — making her an ideal candidate for the Sovereign Lake Nordic Centre Board of Directors.

As a competitive athlete, Catherine brings a deep, personal understanding of what it means to pursue excellence in sport. She is an Ontario Masters Road Race Champion, the winner of numerous duathlons, and the winner of multiple amateur cycling races including the Niagara Gran Fondo and cyclosportifs in France. An avid nordic skier, Catherine has spent years not only competing at a high level but supporting nordic athletes in their own journeys — understanding firsthand what athletes at every stage of development need from the clubs and communities that surround them.

Catherine's commitment to inclusive, people-centered community building is best reflected in her second career. As a certified Yoga and Pilates instructor, she founded and grew her own studio from the ground up — building not just a business, but a thriving, welcoming community. She has developed athletic and wellness programming for participants aged 8 to 88, with an unwavering focus on accessibility and inclusion across all ages and abilities. Her certifications span yoga teacher training, certified Pilates instruction, trauma-informed practice, Yoga Nidra, hospice care, and Red Cross First Aid (intermediate) — credentials that speak to someone who shows up for people across the full range of human experience. Through her studio, Catherine has raised significant funds for causes close to her heart, including youth support via Pathways to Education and the Nature Conservancy of Canada, personally contributing over $40,000 to charitable giving.

Catherine is also a gifted organizer with a proven track record of delivering complex, large-scale events. As Chief of Procurement on the S2S Organizing Committee — a role she has held since inception in 2021 — she manages detailed logistics and supplier relationships that keep one of the region's most beloved Nordic events running seamlessly. She has also driven the S2S Silent Auction since its inception, raising over $45,000 for KidSport (Greater Vernon area) a charity that gives access to sport to children who would otherwise miss out. These contributions reflect both her organizational precision and her deep belief in the power of sport to change lives.

> *"From managing procurement for a major Nordic event to raising $45,000 for KidsSport Vernon, Catherine combines the organizational rigour of a seasoned professional with the heart of a true community champion."*

Before her life in sport and wellness, Catherine built an equally impressive career as a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA, CA) with Ernst & Young, specializing in the not-for-profit sector. Her client roster included the YMCA Toronto, YWCA Canada, University Health Network, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the Gardiner Museum, among many others. This experience gave her direct expertise working with Boards in financial governance, accountability, and strategic oversight that organizations like Sovereign Lake Nordic rely on to thrive.

Catherine's connection to Sovereign Lake runs deeper than sport alone. She has a profound appreciation for the forests, landscape, and natural environment that make SLNC so special — values reflected in her longstanding support for the Nature Conservancy of Canada. She understands that stewarding a place like Sovereign Lake means

caring not only for the athletes who use it, but for the land itself. Warm, empathetic, and an exceptional communicator, Catherine is a connector of people and a builder of belonging — and she is ready to bring that energy to the SLNC board.

CERTIFICATIONS & SELECTED CREDENTIALS

- ✓ Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA, CA)
- ✓ Certified Pilates Instructor
- ✓ Trauma-Informed Practice Certification
- ✓ Red Cross First Aid Certified
- ✓ Certified Yoga Teacher
- ✓ Certified Yoga Nidra Instructor
- ✓ Hospice Care Certification
- ✓ Masters Ontario Road Race Champion

References: Marcus Boyle & Cyndy Flores (S2S Organizing Committee)

Submitted March 2026