

From: Karen Richards [mailto:bikerchick@karenrichards.com]
Sent: Monday, September 20, 2004 8:45 PM
Subject: Changing Gears - The Adventure of a Lifetime! - Chapter 3

Dear Friends,

I wanted to update you on the preparations for my big Changing Gears event. It's coming up so quickly I can hardly believe it!

Since I bought my motorcycle a month ago, I've been getting lots of practice. Some of it is amazing - nice long winding roads with no traffic or lights - and some of it is not so much fun (city streets with speed bumps and stop signs on every corner, and crowded expressways...), but all of it great experience. I've put nearly 900 miles on the bike already. Yesterday Nathan and I joined nearly 600 other bikers on a 110 mile Cure for Autism ride it was an incredible experience, and excellent practice.

Aside from my fundraising efforts, I've also been trying to get some local media interest stirred up. To that end Thursday night I decided to contact some local media, and sent out a bunch of e-mails to editors. I got a call back from one Friday, followed by a call from a reporter who scheduled an interview and photos for Saturday afternoon. It's a local paper called The Skyline, and I just discovered that their circulation tops 88,000! Its distribution covers downtown Chicago, the Gold Coast and Lincoln Park as well as the entire north shore.

I figured I would try to leverage the media coverage for some sponsorship, so we rode out to our local Harley dealership (Illinois Harley in Berwyn) early Saturday am and came home with 22 great shirts donated for all the event participants, and was also promised sponsorship by the dealership from the owner himself.

The editor wants the article to run the week of the ride, so it will come out on October 7th. It is a print only publication, so I'll have to scan the article to share with everyone after the ride. While it won't help much with my fundraising, the reporter did promise a mention of my newest sponsor in the article.

For those of you have contributed either funds or words of encouragement, I thank you SO much. This has been an incredible experience already, and I haven't even left yet! I've "met" most of the other riders via a chat group on yahoo. It's quite the active discussion list, and we're having a ball with it. It feels like we are so connected already. It's going to be incredible meeting them all and sharing this time together.

I'm just over halfway to my fundraising goal of \$5,000. If you are planning on contributing, remember that we leave in less than 2 short weeks, and I'd love to meet my goal by 9/29, when I leave for California. There's no time like the present, and every dollar helps. Just click on the link below, go to www.changinggears.org, or contact me for a sponsorship form to contribute offline.

I am paying tribute to those who are fighting or have fought breast cancer by collecting names of women to ride in honor or memory of, so please let me know if there is anyone that I can add to my list for you. Feel free to include a message to or about them.

Thanks again for your support & encouragement!

Karen

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