

From: Karen Richards [mailto:bikerchick@karenrichards.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 30, 2005 10:15 PM
To: bikerchick@karenrichards.com
Subject: Changing Gears - Australia: August Update

Dear Friends,

I'm long overdue for an update on my Changing Gears event preparation and fundraising so I'll cut right to the chase here!

As most of you know, I was chosen this year to be one of 20 young breast cancer survivors to ride Harleys up the coast of Australia in the third and final leg of the 2005 Changing Gears Global Run. The incredibly successful first leg in the UK just ended last Sunday, and the US leg in California will kick off in a few weeks. My turn comes in about 6 short weeks in mid-October, and you'll have to visit my website (www.karenrichards.com) to see the brand new model Harley that I get to ride this year – it's AWESOME!! (and black, of course)

This year in addition to fundraising, my efforts have focused on becoming a more experienced rider. To that end I've put nearly 1500 miles on my motorcycle this season despite a late start to my riding. Since the event last year was at the end of the season, starting to ride again this year felt like starting all over again. I was very tentative and nervous in traffic or riding alone, and I had a hard time earlier this summer finding people to ride with. Finally though, in the last two months, I've met dozens of great people – many near my own neighborhood – and I've gotten much more confident and am having SO much fun, it's difficult to remember what I was so afraid of! My biggest problem these days is choosing which rides I want to do each weekend. I've met a lot of other women who ride (even a couple here at my new job!), some great guys, and am affiliated with a couple of different clubs now too. I'm finally feeling like a real biker chick and I think I'll be ready for this event come October.

It's hard to believe how much of the summer is over already, and I am much farther behind on my fundraising than I hoped to be at this point. To date I've raised a little over \$1000 of my \$5000 goal. I was hoping to hold a fundraising party with the help of a friend, but that didn't work out, so I'm back to beating the bushes to flush out friends and family to contribute! Every dollar helps, and I would also really appreciate your forwarding my request to anyone you think might be interested. The funds this year support Amazon Heart – the organization that makes these fantastic events possible. They are also working with the Young Survival Coalition to help young survivors like myself connect with others who share our unique needs.

This has been my third year doing a breast cancer fundraising event, and I can't tell you how much I appreciate how so many of you have supported my efforts and this important cause (but this will be it for a while - I promise!)

As a reminder, as I did last year, I am collecting names of women to ride in honor or memory of, so please let me know if there is someone that I can add to that list. Last year I rode in honor of 30 survivors, and in memory of 16 brave women who ultimately lost their battles with breast cancer. Please let me know if there is anyone I can add to that list for you.

Warmest regards,

Karen

"It's not the destination, it's the journey"

"Four wheels move the body, two wheels move the soul"

[Click here to find out about my Changing Gears adventure!](#)

