

Ex-Ossining resident pedals for a cure

by Adam Stone

Shortly after getting off a train that will take her from Aarhus, Denmark to Odense yesterday (Tuesday), Elizabeth "Liddy" Shriver and 23 other cyclists that form "Team Sarcoma" will don their biking clothes, mount their bikes, and begin the Shriver Family Bike Tour for Sarcoma research.

Liddy, a former Ossining resident, was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma in April of last year.

Her father, Bruce, calls his 36-year-old daughter a "fighter," and said people have rallied around Liddy and the family to support the tour.

The four-day cycling event is designed to raise public awareness and funds to research the deadly disease.

Liddy is excited to get on her bike and pedal for a cure.

"It will give me an opportunity to spend time with family and friends, doing something that I (and many of them) really enjoy," the Jersey City resident wrote in an e-mail. "Hopefully, each of us will make special memories of the many experiences that we will share together."

Bruce Shriver was a bit frustrated because he realized not everyone who wanted to travel out of the country would be able to make it.

"Then I woke up at 3 a.m. and thought of this idea," he said.

The idea is the Virtual Bike Tour. These cyclists commit to bike on the very same days Team Sarcoma bikes in Denmark and report to the Team Sarcoma Web site to show how far and where they biked.

Dr. Mark Thornton, president of the Sarcoma Foundation of America, said the event the family has put together is serving an invaluable purpose.

"The Shriver Family Bike Tour will raise much-needed funds to perform research to find new and better therapies against sarcoma," Thornton said. "Right now, one in two people diagnosed with sarcoma will die of this disease. Because it is so rare, very few cancer researchers focus on it. So the mission of the Sarcoma Foundation of America, where the proceeds of the Shriver event are going, is to fill the gap that exists and provide research money for this forgotten cancer."

Liddy's cancer has metastasized to her lungs, and over the months the tumors continued to grow in number and size.

Tadao Ichikawa, a good friend of Bruce Shriver, said, "Statistical data presented by Bruce for promotion of Sarcoma Research as well as the Liddy's own experiences appearing in her home page "My Current Health" has made me seriously concerned with sarcoma and I'm now confident that any trial for raising social awareness regarding sarcoma is important."

The Shriver's found data on Ewing's sarcoma that states, "the five-year survival rate is five percent or patients who develop metastases while on treatment for Ewing's sarcoma."

"I'm going through this experience the only way I know how," Liddy wrote. "I view having cancer and going thru treatment as just another 'problem' where the solution/path is obtained after gathering and analyzing data."