



Many Charities Will Benefit From Dream Ride

By Rick Hiduk

Dream Ride Projects, an organization formed more than a decade ago by cyclist Mike Ridgeway to promote Lancaster County and its municipalities as bicycle-friendly communities while supporting local charities, will conduct the 14th annual Dream Ride on Saturday, July 25.

"Our plan when we first started was for it to be a community wide event to allow charities to participate by soliciting cyclists, but also for cyclists to designate a charity of their own and collect money for them," Ridgeway related.



United Disabilities Services (UDS) clients and cyclists (front, from left) Sandra Barker, Aubrie Barker, Jennifer Howell, Nancy Wagner, (back) Tim Barker, Bill Hager, Scott Wagner, Tom Barron, Sally Higgins and Steve Farrah look forward to the Saturday, July 25, Dream Ride in western Lancaster County. UDS will use its share of proceeds from the event to fund its Service Dog Program. Supporters can find more information at www.udservices.org.

The event was originally held in June to coincide with the anniversary of the founding of Lancaster County, and Ridgeway admits that shifting Dream Ride to July a few years ago resulted in a fluctuation of participating groups. Organizers also considered moving the event to a Sunday to avoid competition with so many other summer activities, but opted to stick with a Saturday date out of respect for the large number of faith-based organizations that had become involved.

At least 18 nonprofit organizations will take part in Dream Ride this year, soliciting donations and pledges that will directly influence the quality and quantity of services they can provide in the coming years. Since 1995, the fundraiser has pulled in more than \$1 million for Lancaster County-based charities.

Headquarters for Dream Ride on July 25 will be Riverview Elementary School, Route 441, Marietta, where riders will begin their journeys between 5 and 9 a.m. Cyclists may choose from one of six tours—ranging in length from 10 to 100 miles—of the western and northwestern parts of Lancaster County. Many regular participants challenge themselves to a longer ride each year, spurred both by their success during the previous year and by their abilities to generate more pledges.

The 10-mile ride zigzags on country roads between Marietta, Maytown, and Mount Joy. The 100-mile tour—also referred to as a century ride—will take cyclists northwest along the river on Route 441 before turning northeast to skirt the Dauphin and Lebanon County lines. After reaching West Cocalico Township, riders will traverse farm roads and covered bridges between Lititz and Manheim and eventually pass Salunga on the west as they return to Marietta. Detailed maps can be found online at www.dreamride-projects.org.

Participating organizations this year include; Adventures for the Cure, Arbor Place, Bridge of Hope, Compeer Lancaster, Cornerstone Community Ministries, Friendship Community, Mom's House, Millersville International House, Nazareth Project, New Hope Community Life Ministry, No Longer Alone Ministries, Philhaven Behavioral Services, Red Rose Autoimmune Hepatitis Liver Foundation, Tabor Community Services, The Red Thread, and United Disabilities Services.

Ridgeway suggests that readers click on the individual links of the charities on the Dream Rides webs site that they wish to support and donate directly to them if they don't know any of the riders.

Representatives of the participating organizations serve as volunteers at various comfort stations along each route, but even more volunteers are needed to ensure the success of the event. Interested readers should send an e-mal to mike@dreamrideprojects.org



No Longer Alone Ministries (NLAM) client Phil Longenecker and at last 19 additional NLAM clients and supporters are ready to roll on Saturday, July 25, when the annual Dream Ride kicks off to raise money for Lancaster County charities. Since 2000, NLAM has raised more than \$150,000 through the event, which helps the organization to provide supportive, caring services to individuals experiencing long-term mental illness and their families. For more information, readers may log on to www.nlam.org