

For Immediate Release

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A Positive Spin for ALS

Annual Bike Ride Raises Money for Patient Services and Research on Lou Gehrig's Disease

Wayland, MA, April 17, 2003 --- Do you like to ride a bike for fun or fitness? Want to use that pedal power to help save lives? Whether you are an avid athlete or bike just for fun, you can join hundreds of riders for a great cause in the Positive Spin for ALS™ on Sunday, May 18th.

The Positive Spin for ALS™ consists of four concurrent bike rides that start at the Longfellow Club on Route 20 in Wayland, MA. The routes are 10, 25, 50 and 100 miles in length, and each is named in honor of a local person or family stricken with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, (ALS), a progressively crippling and eventually fatal neuromuscular disease.

Money raised through the Positive Spin funds support services for more than 200 local patients and families living with ALS, and national research projects that will one day unlock the mystery of the disease, better known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

About the 4 Ride Routes

All rides begin at the Wayland Longfellow Club, located on Route 20 near the Wayland/Sudbury line.

Novices and families can ride the 10-mile loop along the back roads of Sudbury. Called George's Ride, in honor of the late George Soerheide of Ashland, the course meanders along scenic Water Row in Sudbury and through back roads and conservation lands. All riders must be at least 12 years of age to participate in this ride and riders under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult on the same route.

More experienced riders looking for a longer leisurely ride can participate in Pete's Ride, named for Pete Farricker, the late brother of Myke Farricker, co-owner of the Longfellow Clubs in Wayland and Natick. Pete's Ride is a 25-mile loop through the back roads of Wayland and Sudbury. All riders must be at least 12 years of age to participate in this ride and riders under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult on the same route.

For the touring enthusiast, The Positive Spin includes Ken's Ride, named for Ken Melanson, originally from Natick, MA, a graduate of Boston University, and later a Vice President in the Boston Company, now battling this fierce disease with his family from his home in Jupiter, Florida. Ken's Ride is a 50-mile ride that explores Hudson, Bolton, and Acton, and returns through historic Concord. This loop features rolling hills among breathtaking landscapes dotted with rustic farms and orchards. All riders must be at least 16 years old to ride this course.

Experts will appreciate the challenge of the century ride. Scott's Ride, named for Scott Carlson, a New Englander who, up to the late 1990's, competed in triathlons and competitive surfing tournaments around the world. Scott was diagnosed with ALS in 1999, and today is bound to a motorized wheelchair. This 100-mile loop, captained by triathlete and former teammate Ironwoman champion Karen Smyers, heads west to Princeton, MA, and includes the summit road at Mt. Wachusett, before winding back through Acton and Concord. This ride is not for the faint of heart. All riders must be at least 16 years old to ride this course.

All routes are well marked with event signage and the 25, 50 and 100 mile routes are patrolled by supply and gear (SAG) vehicles. Water stops and bathrooms will also be available on longer routes.

Registration

Riders can register online at www.positivespinforals.org, by phone at 781-326-8884, or by mail. Checks should be made out to Positive Spin for ALS, and mailed to Positive Spin for ALS, ALS Association of MA, 75 McNeil Way, Suite 201, Dedham, MA 02026.

The registration fee is the same for any length ride. Online registration at www.positivespinforals.org is \$50 for an individual, \$65 for a family before May 12. To account for administrative costs, snail mail registrations postmarked on or before May 12 are \$60 for an individual or \$85 for a family. Registrations postmarked after May 12, up to the day of the event are \$75 for an individual or \$95 for a family.

Last year's Positive Spin attracted 300 riders and raised more than \$121,000 for the ALS Association, MA Chapter. This year, the hope is to have an even larger event.

After the Ride

At the conclusion of the ride, participants are invited to enjoy a hearty lunch and music back at the Longfellow Club.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are needed for various tasks before, during, and after the ride. For more information on volunteer job listings, visit www.positivespinforals.org/Volunteer.html

Getting Ready for the Positive Spin

A Positive Spin Spinning class will be held on Saturday, April 26, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. at The

Longfellow Club, Route 20, Wayland, MA. Contact Teresa Newton-Moineau for more information at (508) 358-7355.

For riders who want to start road training for the ride, the Longfellow Club organizes Sunday morning rides, open to the public, leaving from and returning to the club. The rides range from 15-50 miles, depending on the route chosen by riders that day, and all levels of riders are welcome. For more information, contact Myke Farricker via email at myke@longfellowsportsclub.com.

About the Positive Spin for ALS™

The Positive Spin for ALS™ is an annual cycling event and fund raiser consisting of four concurrent bike rides designed for riders of any ability. The routes are 10, 25, 50 and 100-miles in length, and each is named in honor of a local person stricken with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, (ALS).

At advanced stages, care for an ALS patient can cost up to \$200,000 per year. Money raised through this event finances programs such as a durable equipment loan program and respite care, for 200 local patients and their families through the ALS Association, MA Chapter. The money also supports national research to find effective treatments and ultimately a cure for ALS. For more information about the ride, visit www.positivespinforals.org.

About The ALS Association, Massachusetts Chapter

The ALS Association is the only national not-for-profit health agency dedicated solely to the fight against amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS. The ALS Association covers all the bases - research, patient and community services, public education, and advocacy - in providing help and hope to those facing the disease. The mission of The ALS Association (ALSA) is to find a cure for and improve living with ALS. The MA Chapter of the organization currently serves over 200 ALS patients. For more information, please visit www.als-ma.org.

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