



BRETT'S RIDE

2009 Annual Newsletter

Thanks to you, 2008 was another record year for Brett's Ride. Even with the economic downturn we are all experiencing, Brett's Ride drew more riders and donated more money last year than ever before. Nearly 1400 riders signed up for the 2008 event, and a check for \$109,500 was presented to Wake Forest University Baptist Hospital in December for ongoing pediatric cancer research. The support from sponsors, volunteers, and participants has been incredible, and shows the tremendous commitment our community has to this cause.

Everyone on the Brett's Ride Committee and all of Brett's family and friends deeply appreciate the continued support. Tremendous advances have been made in pediatric cancer treatment over the years, and certainly your efforts are making a difference. Later in the newsletter you can read how your money is spent.

Still, pediatric cancer continues to be the number one cause of death by disease in children. Just this year we lost another beautiful and talented young lady from our area to this terrible disease, CJ Barnes. This year's event is dedicated to CJ and her family. You can read more about CJ inside this newsletter.

The Brett's Ride Committee is already busy planning the 2009 event, and it is their goal to continue to improve the event every year. Because of the growing number of riders participating in Brett's Ride each year, rider safety continues to be a major focus of the committee. Last year several changes were made to improve safety including implementing a controlled start, using experienced riders as "marshals" on the ten mile course, closing a lane to traffic on Old Lenoir Road, and increasing the number of support vehicles. There are more safety enhancements that will be implemented in 2009.

I hope you will continue to support this cause in any way you can. This battle is long and hard, but it can be won. As long as we continue to lose our children to pediatric cancer, Brett's Ride will continue to support this fight.

The 2009 Brett's Ride is scheduled for Sunday, October 4, 2009 at the Hickory Foundation YMCA. The 10, 30, and 65 mile rides will start at 9:00am and the YMCA track is open for the Tot Ride from 10:00am until noon.

For information on sponsoring Brett's Ride in 2009, contact Lew English, Sponsorship Chairman, at 828-320-7756 or you can reach us by mail at Brett's Ride, PO Box 5314, Hickory, NC 28603. For more information, visit us online at www.hickoryveloclub.com.

Brett's Ride Committee

All photos in this newsletter provided by Shane Greene Photography info@shanegreenephoto.com



Brett's Ride 2009 Dedication



The 2009 Brett's Ride is dedicated to the memory of Cassandra Jene "CJ" Barnes of Hickory. We lost CJ to the pediatric cancer Ewing's Sarcoma on Monday, January 19, 2009. She passed away at Brenner Children's Hospital in Winston-Salem.

CJ was a junior at Fred T. Foard High School. She was a beautiful and talented young lady who was active in the arts and drama department. She appeared in several plays and musicals at the Green Room Community Theatre. She was a member of Christ United Methodist Church and was active in the youth ministry.

Brett's Ride is committed to support the search for new treatments for pediatric cancer so that someday we will not have to suffer the loss of such wonderful, vibrant young people like CJ. We will remember her this year as we prepare for the 6th annual event. Please also remember her family in your prayers.

About Brett's Ride

Brett's Ride is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit foundation created in 2004. Brett's Ride's mission is to financially support research for pediatric cancer treatments and awareness by promoting a safe, challenging, fun, and well organized annual bicycle ride in Hickory.

All proceeds are donated to the Brenner Children's Hospital at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem.

There are no paid staff members for Brett's Ride. Over 80% of the sponsorships and donations go directly to pediatric cancer research with the balance used to offset some of the expenses of the ride.

If you have any questions about Brett's Ride you can contact us at PO Box 5314, Hickory, NC 28603. Or visit our website - http://www.hickoryveloclub.com/bretts_ride/index.html

Brett's Ride Officers for 2009:

Jim Powers – President and Ride Director, Lew English – Vice-President and Sponsorship Chairman

Mary Ann Gosnell – Secretary, Joan Gosnell – Treasurer



Notes From Brett's Ride

The 2008 event was dedicated to Jalen Gwaltney, a wonderful young man who lost his life to pediatric cancer last year.

Steven Dulin was awarded Brett's rider number, 1, at the 2008 Ride. Steven is a local young man who is a pediatric cancer survivor. He is a Hickory High graduate and currently attends UNC. Every year Brett's family awards the number Brett wore to someone participating in the event whom they want to honor.

Team Jordan is a cycling team that was put together in 2008 to honor Jordan Wilson, a young man from our area who has been treated for pediatric cancer. This team has already announced plans to participate in both Brett's Ride and 24 Hours of Booty. They are having their own team jerseys made to wear in the events. Team member Jim Mitchem bought a new bike and is handing his "old" bike off to Jordan's dad, Mike, to ride this year. This bike was previously handed off to Jim from Mark Hawkins, a Brett's Ride sponsor, with instructions to pass it down to a new rider when he got a new bike. This bike has been ridden in most of the events, and will cruise the course in 2009 with its 3rd different Brett's Ride participant. Be on the lookout for this "veteran" machine.



2008 saw the first inclusion of official "ride marshals" to patrol the 10-mile course to assist riders. Dan Dillion organized and led this effort and the marshals included Skip Pate, Rob Scott, Josh Spurlin, Chad Ritchie, Merle Bumgarner, Nicole Thomas, Angela Lambert, and Lanny Lambert. This was such a success that the ride marshal program will be expanded this year to include marshals on the longer routes.

In 2008, in addition to painting directional arrows on the road, we added "yard signs" with arrows at tricky intersections to help riders. In 2009 we plan to also add different color road paint for each different course to keep riders from turning onto the wrong loop.





March 2, 2009

Dear Brett's Ride Supporters,

I am writing to thank you for supporting the Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Section at Wake Forest University School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, North Carolina through Brett's Ride for Rhabdo, and to inform you of how the money is being spent. Once again you have exceeded our expectations, and words alone cannot adequately express how grateful we are. Make no mistake: the money raised by Brett's Ride for Rhabdo is helping to cure children with cancer.

In the current economy it seems that almost everyone is facing financial struggles and tough decisions. Charitable donations are dropping, but I want to reassure your sponsors and donors that the money from Brett's Ride will be well used. I can think of no better charity than Brett's Ride, which not only provides crucial funds for research, but is also invested in the lives of children. These children are not in some far off place, but right here in central and western North Carolina.

Our ultimate goal remains the same: to cure and ultimately prevent rhabdomyosarcoma and other childhood cancers. The cure for cancer will not arrive in a "breaking news" headline, but rather little by little, year by year, as discoveries are made and advances implemented. These happen through clinical and basic science research, and research takes money. The money raised by Brett's Ride for Rhabdo is inching us towards the goal of curing cancer. Not just rhabdomyosarcoma, but all cancer!

Below is a sample of what Brett's Ride for Rhabdo has allowed us to do in the past year (2008-9):

1. Open and maintain several clinical trials, including six sarcoma protocols run by the Children's Oncology Group (CureSearch.org):
 - a. Sarcoma biology and banking
 - b. Low risk rhabdomyosarcoma
 - c. Intermediate risk rhabdomyosarcoma
 - d. Recurrent rhabdomyosarcoma
 - e. Non-rhabdomyosarcoma soft tissue sarcomas
 - f. Osteosarcoma (bone cancer)
2. Open several other new clinical trials for children with cancer, including cutting edge treatment for children with relapsed leukemia, neuroblastoma, Wilms' tumor (kidney cancer), recurrent brain tumors, liver cancer, and a long-term survivorship protocol.
3. Continue a visiting professorship (Brett Gosnell Lectureship), an every-other-year Pediatric Grand Rounds given by a distinguished expert in pediatric sarcomas/cancer. The second Brett Gosnell lecture will be given on March 6, 2009 by Dr. Holcombe Grier of the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Children's Hospital in Boston. Dr. Grier will also attend a special Sarcoma Pediatric Tumor Board Conference on March 5, 2009.

More importantly, Brett's Ride for Rhabdo has raised the awareness of rhabdomyosarcoma and other childhood cancers. Our hope is that this awareness will inspire others to get involved, and to give of their time, money, and resources. Our dream is that the fund will grow to a point that an endowment could be established in Brett's memory, making his legacy in finding a cure permanent.

We are extremely grateful to you and your community for supporting our efforts to improve the lives of children and young adults with cancer. Please know that every dollar raised will go towards curing cancer and improving the quality of life of those with cancer.

I look forward to the 2009 ride, and hope we can grow our team from Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center. Look for us in our gold and black jerseys!

On Behalf of the Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Section,
With warm regards,

Tom

Thomas W. McLean, M.D.
Associate Professor of Pediatrics
Wake Forest University School of Medicine

Who Was Brett?

Brett Gosnell was born in Hickory, NC, on January 28, 1986, to Mary Ann and Mark Gosnell. He was the oldest of their three boys. His younger brothers are Scott and Matthew. He attended Hickory Public Schools, including Oakwood Elementary, Grandview Middle School, and Hickory High.

Brett was diagnosed with rhabdomyosarcoma on April 8, 2003 after he noticed lumps on his side and foot. Rhabdo is a rare muscle cancer that primarily affects young people. Brett immediately began treatment at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center as several tumors were discovered in his chest, pancreas, spine, and foot. He told his parents and doctors that he wanted to live his life as normally as he could while going through treatment. He missed very little school during his treatments, which involved both chemotherapy and radiation. After chemo he was always determined to get out of the hospital and to get up and on his feet as quickly as he could.



Of all Brett's interests growing up, school and sports seemed to be the ones he was most passionate about. Excelling in school was always a high priority for Brett. He won the Top Scholar award at Grandview for finishing middle school with the highest cumulative grade-point average. He continued that success in high school, graduating as Valedictorian of Hickory High in 2004, even though he spent some of his junior and most of his senior year undergoing cancer treatment. Dissatisfied with his score on the math section of the SAT his junior year (740 out of a possible 800), he was determined to improve it. Against the advice of his parents, Brett took the SAT again a few days after a chemo treatment. This time he made a perfect score on the math portion, giving him a cumulative 1570 on the test overall. Brett even attended Governor's School West in the summer of 2003, arranging his chemo schedule to accommodate it. His fellow students at Hickory High voted Brett "Student of the Year" his senior year, and he was offered academic scholarships from Vanderbilt and the University of North Carolina.

Sports were always a high priority for Brett. As a child, he participated in most of the sports offered by the Hickory Recreation Department. Brett concentrated on physical fitness, and even at an early age he ran in many road races as a youngster. He won a silver medal at the NC State Games track and field championships in 1996. When he went to Grandview he played football, basketball, and baseball, but football became his favorite sport. He concentrated on football in high school, earning varsity letters both his sophomore and junior years. Brett could not play his senior year due to his cancer treatments, but he remained on the team and missed only one game. He missed the first game of the year because he had yet to talk his doctors into switching his chemo from Friday to Saturday. After he convinced them that he had to be at the games on Friday, his doctors arranged a special schedule so that he could get his chemo treatments on Saturday and still not miss school.

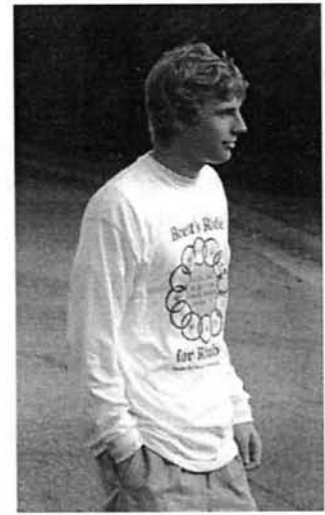
Some other achievements Brett was recognized for during his cancer treatment include the Presidential Award for Educational Excellence, a Charlotte Observer Top Scholar award, a WSOC-TV Honor Graduate Award, the DAR US History Silver Medal, the Hickory High Football Academic Award, the AP English Award, and the Corning AP Chemistry Award. Brett also served as President of the National Honor Society at Hickory High and was on the Hickory Youth Council.

Brett inspired many with his attitude and determination through his struggle with cancer. He attended the University of Virginia and maintained a 3.8 GPA even though he had to arrange afternoon classes in order to take chemo treatments in the mornings at UVa Medical Center.

Brett became too ill to attend classes and moved home to Hickory in March 2006. He lost his battle to cancer on August 17, 2006. He was at home with his family and special friend Stephanie Cothren when he died.

A Challenge for the Friends of Brett Baxley Gosnell

Dictated August 11, 2006



I am not here physically, but I am looking down from heaven on this assembled group. I challenge you to adopt a new goal, a new way of life for yourself. Put helping, caring about, and serving others at the center of all that you do – not just for today or tomorrow but for the remainder of your life.

I ask you to look for ways in which to make a difference in the lives of others, regardless of who they are or where you find them. They are God's children and they need us. We must turn away from thinking only of ourselves and remember that each one of us has a capacity for doing something. Discover what you can do – and do it. I ask you to do that.

But there is something else. In the act of helping others, think of this. It was my desire to make a difference, and I tried to do that in the opportunities that were given to me. There was so much more that I wanted to do, but I will keep my eye on you from heaven. Now you can pick up where I left off and serve so many others. Hear this plea and respond to it. This is your friend who asks you to accept this challenge. Do something meaningful with your life. After all, that is how you can most honor me and my life.

Brett

Our Volunteers Make Brett's Ride Special



THANK YOU SPONSORS!

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