

Spirit Connection

February 2009

TIME TO SIGN UP

They say Spring is just around the corner and with temps in the 40s. Remember to reserve some time in your summer for a great get away by signing up for one of the MS150 rides. Plan to "get off that couch" and ride off that winter excess.

Some encouragement;

- The West Michigan ride leaves both days from Holland, which worked out so well last year. You don't have to move your gear, deal with traffic near Grand Rapids, and riders found it more relaxing. The Saturday morning cruise through Douglas and Sagatuck is also beautiful with views of the lakes.
- There are numerous distance options: 30, 75, 100mile and 1 or 2 day options. In addition to road rides, there's even a dedicated mountain bike ride in September.
- You don't have to be an experienced rider to participate. Last year, 35% of the team were first-time riders. This is an excellent ride if you're new to cycling as it's very

well supported with the DowTCC team and Tri-City Cyclists helping with training. You'll have a lot of fun as you cruise through some beautiful Michigan farm country.

- The DowTCC team is an open, community based team that welcomes all riders.



HOW TO SIGNUP

1. Go to the Michigan Chapter's website (use attached link or www.bikems.org and navigate to the ride in Michigan you want). Click on MS150.
2. Signup for the DowTCC team (E. Rightor, team captain). There are 17 signed up already.
3. Register with the early season discount for \$50.
4. Setup a personal webpage using the helps and suggestions.
5. Send emails and letters to friends using the tips and start fundraising today!

OTHER MS OPPORTUNITIES

- **Walk, April 25, Midland.**



Helen Myers the enthusiastic Dow Team captain invites you to join this open group for the MS Walk. You can signup on the MS website under

Dow Team.

- **Volunteer.** We need volunteer to help staff aid stations. If you'd like to help out send Doug Todd dk todd@dow.com or Jarrett Russell jwrussell@dow.com an email.

TRAINING

Temperatures are getting into the 40's which means some dedicated folks are already riding outside (brrrr some say). The best way to be aware of impromptu rides is join the Tri-City Cyclists and signup for the impromptu alerts.

www.tricitycyclists.org

Otherwise, sign up for a spin class, get in some late season cross country skiing, put in some basement miles (on a trainer), and otherwise be active!

CHECK OUT THE 2009 JERSEY

The Steering Team considered several cool designs from the SVSU students in Tom Canale's Graphics Design class. Here's the winner, so be sure to signup today to reserve this new design for your cycling wardrobe.



TOP REASONS TO RIDE

There are many reasons why folks ride, including these top reasons from the post-ride survey last year:

- Know someone with MS.... 33%
- Personal challenge 24%
- Fitness opportunity..... 14%
- Wanting to raise awareness and \$\$ for MS 10%

The ride is also a great reunion opportunity and a way to spend time with friends while doing something active. It is also an excellent way to explore a different part of Michigan. Of course, while we're out there having fun, we're also playing a key role in supporting those with multiple sclerosis. Wow! That's doing several great things at once.

FUNDRAISING

We've had cycling friends wary of joining the ride in the past due to "fundraising phobia". Surprisingly, when they decided to take the plunge and register, they found that the fundraising tips, use of on-line fundraising via the Society's website, and other help made this mountain into a mole hill. Once they started, they found that fundraising, even in challenging times, wasn't as big of an issue as they thought and were able to raise far more than the fundraising minimum.

So if you're on the fence, don't let this hurdle keep you from joining as you'll find it's not a problem if you really follow the tips.

1. **Set a Goal.** It provides motivation and drive and your sponsors see you putting in effort for those with MS. Last yr the team fundraising average was \$730 and 28 riders raised over \$1000 including several first-time riders

2. **Setup a personal web page.** The Society page really makes fundraising a lot easier on-line and you can post training updates with a blog
3. **Send emails** to friends, relatives, coworkers in your immediate group (suggest avoiding sending to entire company)
4. **Start early.** The early you signup and get going on this the better. Yes, the economy will provide some challenges this year, but we've found in the past folks are still very willing to give when they see you putting in the sweat equity.
5. **Actively Use Fundraising Tips.** We have a collection on the team site www.tricityms150 and there are more on the MS Society pages.

