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Jersey City Resident Raises Money for Sarcoma Research Raising Public Awareness of Sarcoma is Also a Primary Goal

March 18, 2003, Jersey City, NJ— Jersey City resident Elizabeth (Liddy) Shriver, who is battling Ewing's sarcoma/PNET (primitive neuroectodermal tumor), knows she will soon have difficulty breathing. But before this rare cancer progresses, she is determined to take several long bike rides as part of a campaign to raise public awareness of this disease. From April 10-13, Liddy, 36 will join friends and family members for their first Team Sarcoma bike tour. Then, in late June and early July, Team Sarcoma will undertake a bike tour in Denmark.

Liddy and her husband Tom Swartz moved to Jersey City in 1991. They became attached to the urban living and short commutes to Brooklyn, where Tom works, and NYU, where she attended graduate school. Since graduating in 1997, she has been a member of the technical staff of Bell Labs in Murray Hill, New Jersey.

Liddy's life was normal until nine years ago when she became aware of a burning pain in her foot. After years of nighttime nerve pain, a tumor was found behind her knee, which a biopsy showed to be Ewing's sarcoma/PNET. "I had chemotherapy, surgery which removed eight inches of my tibial nerve, radiation, and more chemotherapy," says Liddy, "but my cancer has spread to my lungs. So far, the nodules in my lungs haven't responded to treatment."

As the disease progresses, Liddy will have increased difficulty breathing, which will hinder her passion of cycling. Before this happens, she wants to take several long bike rides as part of a campaign to raise public awareness of sarcoma. "I want to raise funds for sarcoma research," she says, "and raise public awareness of the critical lack of young adult participation in clinical trials." Liddy thinks participating in and arranging bike tours to benefit sarcoma research is a good mechanism for achieving these objectives. Liddy and Tom train regularly at Liberty State Park..

Ewing's sarcoma is a rare type of cancer in adults (approximately 25 cases per year in the United States). It is more common as a cancer in children (approximately 250 cases per year in the United States). It is one of 50 or so sarcomas, tumors that arise in connective tissue such as fat, blood vessels, nerves and bones. About one percent of the new cancers diagnosed this year will be sarcomas. Since this cancer is rare, research in it is under funded. Most Ewing's sarcoma research has been done on children and the results do not always apply to adults. The lack of adult clinical trials has resulted in a higher fatality rate for adults with this disease. "I fall into the category of *young adults with cancer*," says Liddy, "which means there isn't much data available to help my oncologists know what treatments might work for me."

Some members of Team Sarcoma, who will ride in their first bike tour in April, are practicing daily to get in shape. Others are already experienced cyclists. They will take part in Cycle Zydeco, the second annual, four-day, 200-mile, southern Louisiana bike tour. While Cycle Zydeco is not a charity ride,

Team Sarcoma hopes to raise funds and public awareness for sarcoma research by getting private individuals, businesses and organizations to sponsor them. They will “piggyback” on the bike tour, which is a “Louisiana Cajun and Creole Food and Cycling Festival” that is featuring the cuisine and music that have made southern Louisiana famous. Team Sarcoma consists of eight people: Liddy, Tom (her husband), her parents (Bruce and Bev), her brother Mark and his son Daniel, and Liddy’s friends Rich Graves and John Griffin.

All funds raised by Team Sarcoma go directly to the Dr. Mary Louise Keohan Sarcoma Research Fund at Columbia University’s Health Sciences, which funds laboratory research and clinical trials at the Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Team Sarcoma is organizing a similar bike tour in Denmark in June and July 2003, called “The Shriver Family Bike Tour for Sarcoma Research.” All the funds raised in this bike tour will go directly to the Sarcoma Foundation of America.

Those who would like to participate as a rider on Team Sarcoma, or who wish to request a donation form, may contact Liddy at liddy@theshrivers.us.

Additional information is available at the following websites:

www.theshrivers.us/la_bike_tour.htm
www.theshrivers.us/danish_bike_tour.htm
www.cyclezydeco.com