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Donoho bicycles through Liberal Monday with his dog, Diva, as he goes about fundraising for the American Cancer Society. He has ridden more than 26,000 miles and raised more than \$1,000 in his efforts the last four years. L&T photos/Elly Grimm

By ELLY GRIMM

• Leader & Times

Cancer affects millions of people every year and fundraising efforts to combat it are frequent across the country.

Perhaps the most unique fundraising method has been taken over by Flynn Donoho, who has been bicycling across the U.S. for the last four years with his dog, Diva, raising funds. He has ridden more than 26,000 miles and covered 48 of the 50 states.

Donoho was inspired to start riding to raise funds for the American Cancer Society because of the many friends and family he has seen cancer affect.

Donoho, who is an ex-drug addict, said that he first started riding after he found God and bicycled from California to Charlotte, N.C. to see Billy Graham's library. After visiting the famed pastor's library, he continued to the East Coast and then the Gulf Coast and then back to California – a feat of 6,000 miles. Donoho says that was the unofficial start of his fundraising mission.



“I thought, ‘I’ll just go to the east coast, it’s right there’ so I rode to the East Coast and then I rode down the Gulf Coast and back to the West Coast and so I thought to myself, ‘if I can ride that many miles, I can ride a lot more,’ he said. “and then I thought I’d ride for a fundraiser for some cause and since so many people were passing away from cancer, and there were so many people involved and affected by cancer, that was my choice.”

He then went to the American Cancer Society in Santa Anna, Calif., where he started his own part on the website called Cycling for Cancer.

While many have hailed his bicycling mission as a great deed, he said he has had his share of people who doubted the legitimacy of his mission. One particular memory that strikes him is a time he asked to camp out on a golf course.

“It was pouring rain, I was at a golf course, and I was trying to get out of the rain, and I asked him ‘is there anywhere a guy could sleep overnight and get out of this rain?’ and it rained all night,” he remembered. “He said ‘how do I know you’re legit?’ so I pulled my support card out and said ‘call this 800 number on the bottom,’ so he goes away and comes back and....his attitude changed and took a U-turn and he realized that I was legit and that I really was raising money for cancer, and he gave me free drinks, free dinner and he said ‘I’ll show you where you can sleep tonight.’”

While Donoho’s bicycling mission has gone smoothly for the most part, his personal life has experienced some ups and downs. He is currently homeless and he hasn’t seen his children for eight years since his wife left him for another man and took them.

That is all about to change however – he is currently bicycling to Carey, Ohio, where he has a job with a landscaping company waiting along with a place to stay. Donoho said he was tired of being homeless in California and said accepting the job was a no-brainer.

“They called me up and asked me if I know how to do landscaping because his brother works for the company,” he said. “And I said ‘yeah I can landscape’ and he asked ‘you know how to drive a lawnmower or push mower?’ and I said ‘of course I do, yeah’ and he said ‘you’ve got a job waiting for you, too when you get here.’”

Donoho said that his original goal when he started was \$1,000, which he says he has raised and then some. However, he admitted it wasn’t easy and that it’s taken almost the entire last four years for him to raise the money. He said that he will continue to find ways to raise money while in Ohio

“It wasn’t easy when you have no sponsors, no chase vehicles, nothing like that,” he said. “I’m doing it all on my own with just God as my supporter.”

EDITOR's NOTE: Interested people can donate through the web site: teamACS.ACSevents.org.

- Click on donate and type Flynn Donoho in participant's name.
- Click donate again and give needed information.
- Donors can use credit cards for \$10 and more.

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