

Riding toward a cure for cancer

A team of cyclists bike cross country to raise money for childhood cancer research.

By Charity Smalls
Staff Writer

DAYTON — Team Will, a group of cyclists biking cross country to raise money and awareness for childhood cancer research, recently stopped in Dayton.

Member Ken Kiefer said the team was formed three years ago and was named in honor of his son William, who died from childhood cancer.

Kiefer said Team Will began its trip on June 16 in San Francisco on the Golden Gate Bridge, and planned to end in Washington, D.C. on July 24.

Kiefer said Team Will would be meeting with CureSearch and other supporters of cancer research. The team also hoped to meet with members of Congress to promote the Caroline Pryce Walker Conquer Childhood Cancer Act of 2008, named in memory of congresswoman Deborah Pryce's daughter, who died in 1999 after battling cancer. She was 9 years old.

If the act is passed, \$30 million will be contributed to childhood cancer research over a five-year period.

Kiefer said his 14-member team raised \$60,000 last year and is hoping to exceed that amount this year.

Team Will, which includes six volunteer drivers, three ambassadors and a multimedia unit, receives funding from family, friends and other sponsors, Kiefer said.

The riders also carry a picture of a child who is battling cancer.

"Everybody has submitted themselves to a cause," he said. "We won't find a cure tomorrow. If it was easy as riding a bike to find a cure tomorrow, we would bike



Members of Team Will, a cycling group that is riding from California to Washington, D.C. to raise money and awareness for childhood cancer cures, visited Children's Medical Center Dayton on June 23. Staff photo by Ty Greenlees

around the world."

Stopping at the Children's Medical Center in Dayton, the team was greeted by the clinic staff, served breakfast and visited young cancer patients. Although Team Will is focusing on childhood cancer, Susan Dillhoff knows what it's like to face cancer as an adult.

Dillhoff, of Dayton, is a cancer survivor and has been in remission for 20 years. She was a 45-year-old mother of four when she was diagnosed with stage two cancer. "It was

a very upsetting time in our lives, but we managed to get through it," she said.

Dillhoff credited three things to her recovery — "fabulous doctors, a lot of prayers and me."

She said her family was a wonderful support to her as she endured rigorous chemotherapy treatment for a year. She said her husband sat down with the children and told them, "It's Mommy's turn; we're going to take care of her."

Over the years, she has helped support cancer research in different ways. Her son-in-law, John Depew, is a member of Team Will.

Dillhoff heartily supports the measures being taken to find a cure. "We've got to beat it; it's an ugly disease and can strike anybody anytime."

For more information concerning childhood cancer research, www.teamwill.org or www.curesearch.org.

Contact this reporter at (937) 225-0651.