

The Mirror's **VALUABLE TIPS TO HELP YOU ACHIEVE A HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE** Guide To Good Health

Area Residents To Ride, Run And Rock In Support Of Lung Cancer Programs

BY NANCY GAGNET
MIRROR REPORTER

Riding, running, and rock and roll will be the focus of the Free to Breathe Rumble Run, a fund-raiser to benefit lung cancer research.

The event, which takes place Saturday, August 29 at Signature Harley-Davidson in Perrysburg, features a motorcycle ride, a 5K run/walk and a one-mile walk.

Lung cancer survivor Louann Cummings of Perrysburg is passionate about raising money for what she considers a disease shrouded in misconceptions.

"It is really easy to slip into thinking that a person smoked and they set themselves up for this, but the bottom line is that nobody deserves lung cancer," she said.

According to Cummings, approximately 50 percent of lung cancer cases are non-smokers or those who gave up smoking years ago.

Cummings, who runs marathons and has never smoked, feels fortunate to be alive and says it's a "miracle" that she is.

"It shouldn't have been caught," she said of the fluke circumstances that led to her diagnosis.

While training for a marathon in 2004, Cummings underwent a bone scan, which she thought would reveal a stress fracture



Lung cancer survivor Louann Cummings, an avid runner and a nonsmoker, is organizing a fund-raising event to benefit lung cancer research.

MIRROR PHOTO BY NANCY GAGNET

due to pain she was experiencing in her foot. Instead, doctors found a spot on her lung. Further tests revealed a malignant tumor that doctors deemed stage II-B.

"I was told it was small and contained," she said.

Surgeons removed one-third of her lung and she underwent several months of chemotherapy.

"This is completely

serendipitous, completely miraculous. If they had found it later, it truly would have manifested itself and it would have been stage IV and I wouldn't have been around much longer," Cummings said.

According to the National Lung Cancer Partnership, lung cancer kills approximately 160,000 people in the United States each year. Roughly 85 percent of people who are diagnosed with lung cancer die within five years of their initial diagnosis.

Since the late 1990s, Cummings, a 56-year-old professor of business at University of Findlay, has been running with a core group of friends several mornings each week. She currently runs an average of 30 miles every week.

She said her dedication for raising what she considers much-needed funds prompted her to organize the Free to Breathe Rumble Run event.

"There's hardly any research funding for lung cancer, and I hope the money raised will reveal more information about the disease, as well as ways to test for it and prevent it," she said.

February 2009 marked her five-year cancer-free milestone, a rare statistic for lung cancer patients. She credits her combined treatment of surgery and chemotherapy, as well as the fact that her cancer was found early.

"I want people to have hope. I tried not to look at statistics ever when I was in the midst of it. I want people

to look at a dismal statistic and change their ways and think about supporting lung cancer advocacy and funding," she said.

Cummings and her hus-

band of 35 years, Paul, have four children, Chris, Tim, Kate and Liz, and she is currently training for a marathon in Columbus in October.

Rumble Run Details

The Free to Breathe Rumble Run will take place Saturday, August 29 at Signature Harley-Davidson in Perrysburg.

Motorcycle ride registration opens at 8:30 a.m., and Toledo mayoral candidate Michael Bell will kick off the motorcycle ride at 10:00 a.m.

Registration for the 5K run/walk and one-mile walk begins at 9:30 a.m., and WTVG news anchor Lee Conklin will kick off the run and walk at 11:00 a.m.

At the conclusion of the ride and race, riders, runners and walkers will gather for a celebration at Signature Harley-Davidson, where classic rock band Suburban Legend will perform.

Event registration is \$25.00 in advance or \$30.00 on the day of the event and includes entertainment, food and a root beer float. The cost to attend the bash only is \$15.00.

Sponsored by the National Lung Cancer Partnership, the event will benefit the partnership's research, education and awareness programs.

For more information or to register online, visit www.freetobreathe.org.



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