



Twin joys in South Florida: motorcycling and giving sick children a reason to hope
The Ride for Kids® in support of the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation

Motorcycles seem to be everywhere in South Florida these days; as the northern states settle down for another long, cold, snowbound winter, residents and visitors here are welcoming the prime riding season. And for many of them, it's a time not only to enjoy the sport, but to lend a helping hand to a cause that touches so many of us. Year after year, the motorcycling community demonstrates civic leadership and compassion as it comes together for rides and events supporting organizations and institutions that come to the aid of children in need.

For those who want to make a difference, January 13, 2008, is the next date to remember: the 4th Annual Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation (PBTf) Ride for Kids® held in South Florida.

The national campaign of rides, begun by Mike and Dianne Traynor in 1984, raises both awareness and funds. The PBTf, incorporated as a foundation in 1991, is working tirelessly to find a cure for a terrible disease: childhood brain tumors. It's a shocking fact that every day in this country, nine children are diagnosed with various forms of brain tumors. Thanks to research and improved treatment options, the survival rate beyond five years after diagnosis is up to 60 percent. But there is still much more to be done for the 40 percent of children who will not survive.

But there is hope. Volunteers from South Florida have stepped forward, donating their time and energy to the PBTf to help organize the Ride for Kids® event and raise funds in this community. As presenting sponsor, the Honda Rider's Club of America (HRCA) joins the PBTf, these volunteers, and local businesses, led by Rita and Rick Case of Rick Case Honda Powerhouse, to support the South Florida Ride for Kids®.

The 2008 South Florida Ride for Kids® has the distinction of being the 350th event in Ride for Kids® history, but it's also an important milestone in this critical fight against a disease that still threatens too many children.

Thanks to the significant support of the HRCA, Honda dealers and other motorcycle industry companies, the Ride for Kids® program has raised more than \$37 million for pediatric brain tumor research. This support has helped make PBTf the largest nonprofit source of funding for pediatric brain tumor research outside of the U.S. government. In addition to research grants to medical laboratories, PBTf funds started the [Central Brain Tumor Registry of the U.S.](#), a national database of disease and patient information.

The 2008 South Florida Ride for Kids® begins at Quiet Waters Park (<http://www.broward.org/parks/qw.htm>), located in northern Broward County, on Sunday, Jan. 13, 2008. Upon arrival, riders are asked to sign an AMA (American Motorcyclist Association) waiver and directed to the registration tent, where donations



are collected. At the dealership registration and recognition tents, riders can sign up on behalf of their riders' club or favored dealership; the competition to show who can raise the most is exciting and intense, with the year's bragging rights at stake. Best of all, whatever the outcome, the kids win.

Over complimentary coffee and donuts, old acquaintances are rekindled and new friends are made. When the PBTF's National Ride Manager, Randy Shrimplin, arrives from the headquarters in Asheville, N.C., the crowd is all ears. Over the public address system, he welcomes the group and gives detailed safety instructions.

And it's all about the kids. The guests of honor are the children whose exceptional courage sets an example for all of us: the "stars" of the Ride for Kids®. Every year, local children who are affected with brain tumors join us, and on that day, we recognize them for the stars they truly are. They are our champions, and they give us the motivation to find a cure. To try to make the day special for them, we give them places of honor in the parade. It's truly thrilling to see these children and their families, often accompanied by VIP escorts with sidecars, at the head of the long column of bikes. .

After a safety briefing, a police escort leads the riders along a picturesque route through Broward County, looping back to beautiful Quiet Waters Park. There riders are greeted by cheering volunteers inviting them to a free picnic lunch and a seat in a big-top tent for the inspiring Ride for Kids® Celebration of Life program.

During the celebration, the stars are presented to the audience of riders, and are interviewed by Randy Shrimplin. The children's comments are sometimes unpredictable, and always deeply moving. Many times, a parent will also speak about how this disease has affected not only their special child, but the whole family. Many a rider will brush away a tear.

Contributing individuals, clubs, and dealerships are then recognized one by one for leading the way with their generous support, and all are invited for a group picture with the stars. Those who have raised the largest amounts collect premiums such as Ride for Kids® shirts, hats and jackets that will be treasured mementoes for years to come.

A drawing also adds a touch of excitement: American Honda Motor Company and the Honda Rider's Club of America donate a motorcycle, to be awarded to one lucky ticket holder. Fundraisers earn one chance for each \$300 raised. The enthusiasm is clearly infectious, and many of the riders inquire how they can become a volunteer for the next year. As volunteers assist with the cleanup and help direct traffic out of the park, the participants and the Foundation feel a special satisfaction. Talk of raising the bar for the next year is on everyone's lips.



For more information, please contact Doug Johnson at 954-423-2250 at my office or 954-275-8373 on my cell.. We invite you also to visit the Ride for Kids® on the web at www.rideforkids.org.

Key Facts about Pediatric Brain Tumors:

- Every day, nine more children are diagnosed with a brain tumor.
- Brain tumors are the leading cause of cancer death in children under 20, now surpassing acute lymphoblast leukemia. They are the deadliest type of childhood cancer.
- More than 21,000 American children are living with the diagnosis of a primary brain tumor.
- 76% of children diagnosed with a brain tumor are younger than 15.
- Four out of 10 children with a brain tumor will die of their disease within five years of diagnosis.
- The incidence of brain tumors is increasing, but the reasons for the increase are unknown.
- There are more than 120 different types of brain tumors, making effective treatment very complicated.
- Because brain tumors are located at the control center for thought, emotion and movement, their effect on a child's physical and cognitive abilities can be devastating.
- Pediatric brain tumors are different from those in adults and are often treated differently. Although as many as 60 percent of children will survive, they are often left with long-term side effects.
- Benign tumors may recur and may result in death.
- Brain tumors are usually treated by surgery, radiation therapy and chemotherapy, either individually or in combination.
- Some brain tumor survivors require physical, cognitive and rehabilitation services to allow them to return to tasks of everyday life.



- Enhancing the quality of life of children with brain tumors requires access to quality specialty care and ready availability of follow-up care and rehabilitative services.
- Improving the outlook for children with brain tumors requires research into the causes of the disease and better treatments for it.