



Jerry Janninck Rides In Memory Of His Friend

By Evelyn Beck

Jerry Janninck was the runner. His friend Scott Shuey was the bicyclist. Their passion for physical challenges bonded the two men when they met nine years ago. Jerry and his family had moved from Chicago to Anderson and joined the parish, and their daughters were classmates at St. Joseph School.

A criminal justice major at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, Ill., Jerry worked as a police officer for a few years before deciding on a career change. He and his wife, Adriana, and their daughters, Sarah and Julia, moved south for Jerry's job as sales manager at John Finger Mazda in Greenville. After the relocation, Jerry continued to indulge his passion for running, competing in several 5K races annually and a half-marathon in Folly Beach last year to benefit the Cancer Association of Anderson.

Scott, meanwhile, was training to ride his bike from Greenville, S.C., to Austin, Texas, as part of the "Challenge to Conquer Cancer," a relay ride organized by the Palmetto Peleton Project, which raises money to support cancer research and advocacy. But then Scott got sick with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, and he died on October 5, 2009. When the ride started a few weeks later, Scott's bike, a 16-pound carbon fiber racer, went, too, attached to the top of the service vehicle. Jerry, who had served as a pallbearer at Scott's funeral, watched the start of the ride, moved by the sight of his friend's riderless bike.

When Jerry, who had never ridden before, told Kim Shuey, Scott's widow, that he wanted to make the ride the following year in Scott's honor, she decided to give him Scott's



Jerry Janninck rode to Austin, Texas, on his late friend Scott Shuey's bike.

bike. "Scott didn't put a lot of value in things," said Kim. "But he had a gold crucifix I'd given him for our anniversary a couple of years ago, and his brother had given him a St. Peregrine medal (the patron saint of cancer), and he had a really nice watch he bought early in our marriage. The bike was his other treasured possession. The week before Scott died, he said to me one day, 'I've been thinking. I want Lauren [their older daughter] to have the crucifix, Catherine [their younger daughter] to have the medal, and Todd [Scott's brother] to have the watch. But I'm still not sure who I want to get my bike.' He never told me, and after he died, Catherine kept asking, 'What will you do with

Continued on next page



Cross-Country Bike Ride Was A Spiritual Experience

Daddy's bike?" She didn't want to give it away. But giving it to Jerry was great with her. The bike is where it needs to be. Scott wouldn't have been able to think of anyone better to make that ride for him."

Mary Alice Kelley, a fellow parishioner and friend to both Jerry and Kim, said, "When Kim gave him Scott's bike to ride, you can't put into words how that touched Jerry."

So Jerry began to train, riding four to six hours a day at least three days a week in Anderson and 30 miles on Tuesday nights in Greenville, and taking three overnight trips during the year to get used to riding in a group in the dark, with cyclists taking turns using their lights in order to conserve battery power.

On October 17 of this year, Kim, her daughters and many parishioners were among the group cheering Jerry at the start of the "Challenge to Conquer Cancer," which took five days. Four teams of six to eight riders rode for six hours at a time in a 24-hour rotation for the 1,700-mile trip, which included a large portion through the Natchez Trace. When Jerry arrived in Austin, he called Kim to tell her, "The bike's here. It made it."

In Austin, the Palmetto group joined over 5,000 bicyclists and runners from across the country who gathered with Lance Armstrong for the Team LiveStrong Challenge, a 5K run/walk and a choice of multi-distance bike rides ranging from 10 to 90 miles. Though he had just ridden his bike across the country, Jerry participated in both running and biking events in Austin. Individually, Jerry raised \$5,000 through his ride; the money went to the Greenville Hospital System Cancer Center Clinical Research Unit and the Anderson Cancer Association. "I had never taken on such an extreme kind of thing," said Jerry. "Getting the bike there was a major accomplishment. I rode in representation of Scott. His family knows that part of his dream has been successfully accomplished."

When he returned to Anderson, friends saw a change in Jerry. "For Jerry, the ride was a time of peacemaking, to experience what Scott would have experienced," said Mary Alice. "The team ride is very spiritual. It's also a one-on-one thing; there's a lot of time by yourself to think and pray. Jerry came back a different guy."

If you are interested in contributing to Jerry's fundraising efforts for his next ride, contact him at JerryJanninck@yahoo.com.

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