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Cape Cod resident logs miles, and dollars, to keep up the fight against cancer

The Prouty cancer fundraiser to hold Boston kickoff April 2

After his wife, Peg, died in in 2011, Orleans resident Paul Goodhue set out to make something good of the loss. Having watched Peg put up a two-year fight with cancer, he decided to start his own fight—to raise money to support cancer research and care by riding his bicycle.

So far, Paul has pedaled his way to a total of nearly \$40,000 for charities combating cancer and Multiple Sclerosis, another disease Peg battled. Most of the thousands of miles rides each year are close to home—whether he’s training on the Cape’s bike trails or completing the two Massachusetts charity rides on his annual schedule. But in recent years Paul has added one out-of-state event to his list: The Prouty in Hanover, NH, which raises funds to support Dartmouth-Hitchcock Norris Cotton Cancer Center. This year, Paul will join more than 5,000 other participants for the Prouty July 10-11.

“When I’m riding on the Cape in my Prouty jersey, I get lots of questions about it,” Paul says. “I tell people it’s a great event that’s really well supported by amazing volunteers and that gives people lots of ways to raise money for cancer.”

While most Prouty participants choose one-day rides of 20 to 100 miles, Paul opts for the two-day Prouty Ultimate, which features back-to-back 100 mile rides through the New Hampshire countryside. Non-cyclists also fundraise and participate by walking, running, rowing, or golfing on Prouty weekend—or by designing “Virtual Prouty” challenges. Boston-area residents can talk with Paul and learn about participating in any of the Prouty’s events at a kick-off event at 6:00-7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 2 at the Palm Restaurant, 1 International Place, Boston. Learn more about the event at The Prouty website (www.theprouty.org) or by calling Christine Pariseau-Telge at 603-703-6955.

“As our events have grown over the past 33 years, we have been grateful to see more and more people coming up from the Boston area to enjoy New Hampshire and Vermont while raising money for cancer research and care,” said Jean Brown, Prouty Event Director. “I can’t say that everyone is as dedicated as Paul Goodhue, but I can say that they all seem to value their Prouty time.”

Paul wasn’t always such a cycling fanatic. When he first pulled his bicycle out of the garage to begin training in 2011, its odometer had logged only 440 miles in the dozen years since Peg had given it to him as a Christmas present. Since then, he has ridden between 3,000 and 5,000 miles each year.

Peg died in March, 2011. This after two years of treatment that twice had them thinking she was in the clear—and after living for 15 years with Multiple Sclerosis. Driving home from the hospital the day Peg died, Paul prayed that he would find a way to make something good out of the terrible loss. By year’s end, he had committed himself to riding his bike in Peg’s memory.

“The rides are incredibly rewarding, if for no other reason than to see the people along the road saying thank you,” Paul says. “I’ll never forget the woman holding a sign saying, ‘My daughter is 13 today because of you.’”

But it’s not just about the rides for Paul: Off the bike, he organizes yard sales and bake sales, talks with his church congregation, and writes letters to supporters telling describing the hope and the research advances that result from their generosity. He also promotes his fundraising on his Facebook page and on a personal fundraising page for the Prouty.

“It’s my way of doing something, of fighting back,” Paul says. “Emotionally, you just have to do something—and after Peg died I needed something to keep me in the fight.”

After hearing about the Prouty from another cyclist he met at a charity ride, Paul was drawn to the event because it offered him the challenge of some hills—which he doesn’t get on the Cape—and because of its relatively low fundraising minimums: \$150 for the one-day rides and \$2500 for the Ultimate.

Named for cancer patient Audrey Prouty, the Prouty was founded in 1982 by four nurses who pedaled their way across the White Mountains of New Hampshire to raise money and awareness for cancer research at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Norris Cotton Cancer Center. The Prouty has raised nearly \$25 million since its founding in 1982.

Encouraged to get into charity rides by Peg’s brother, Paul has now inspired his son to begin riding as well. And he has gained another new riding partner: He is dating a woman he met when he stopped to help her with a flat tire on the bike path.

It’s all just about staying in the fight for a guy who sometimes refers to himself as “Headwind” because, whichever way he turns, his rides always seem to be right into the notorious Cape winds.

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Founded as a cycling event, the Prouty has grown into a weekend of athletic events—walking, rowing, golfing and cycling—with the common purpose of supporting Dartmouth-Hitchcock Norris Cotton Cancer Center. Organized by the Friends of Dartmouth-Hitchcock Norris Cotton Cancer Center, The Prouty has raised nearly \$25 million since its founding in 1982, when four nurses rode their bikes 100 miles to honor an inspiring cancer patient, Audrey Prouty. The Prouty weekend now draws more than 5,000 participants and 1,300 volunteers each year, with additional participants climbing mountains or creating their own “Virtual Prouty” on a bike, on a tennis court, or in an arm chair. Organized by the Friends of Norris Cotton, the events contribute nearly 87 cents of every dollar raised to support research or patient support services at the Cancer Center. Learn more about The Prouty at www.theprouty.org



**Paul Goodhue of Orleans, MA, participating in The Prouty.
(High-res image available on request)**