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Plainfield neighbors offer bargains to beat lung disease

Neighbors Brenda Lotz and Tricia Costello began bike riding to get healthy after Brenda's bout with thyroid cancer last year. When both had loved ones die from lung cancer, their riding took on new meaning and they signed up for the CowaLUNGa Bike Tour presented by Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago (RHAMC).

The three-day bike tour (with a one-day and a two-day option), held Saturday, August 2 – Monday, August 4, 2008, winds through Illinois into Wisconsin and covers 190 miles. All proceeds from CowaLUNGa benefit RHAMC's mission to promote healthy lungs and fight lung disease through research, advocacy, and education.

Lotz's friend Linda Vai was diagnosed with lung cancer which quickly spread, killing her in just four months. During one of her last visits with her friend, Lotz told her about participating in the CowaLUNGa Bike Tour.

"I told her, 'Every pedal is going to be for you,'" Lotz said.

After her father died from lung cancer last year, Costello searched for a way to help. An avid biker, Costello suggested participating in CowaLUNGa to fight the disease that stole their loved ones.

"I thought, 'I'm never going to give him another birthday present or Christmas gift. I can't do anything for him now but I can help the cause,'" Costello said.

Costello, Lotz and their families, friends and neighbors held a garage sale in their Plainfield neighborhood to raise funds for CowaLUNGa and RHAMC. They took any donations people were willing to give.

"With this economy, it's hard to tap into people's wallets, so we'll take their stuff," Costello said.

Though the sale was a fundraiser, the two aimed to keep prices low. They sold over 85% of what the donated items and raised over \$700.

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“We served two purposes – we sold things to raise money and people from the community got a good price,” Lotz said.

Individuals wishing to support Brenda Lotz, Tricia Costello and their team, The Slow Spokes can visit www.lungchicago.org, click the CowaLUNGa icon, then Search/Sponsor a Climber and type Slow Spokes.

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