

December 3, 2008

Dear Miles for Myeloma Friends,

What a transformation our movement has been! Miles for Myeloma is now four years old – and one million dollars richer! At the outset of this journey, the expectations were not great; no one gave us a chance to build a million dollar event. This is an amazing destiny that in my wildest dreams I would not have imagined to reach. **I thank you for your contributions that made it possible for us to reach this goal together.**

How did we get here? Well, one step at a time and one mile at a time. We have reached this goal one donation at a time from people like you who know that for a goal this great, it takes a family and it takes a village. Oh, how much people can make a difference one mile at a time and one dollar at a time! After more than 400 miles of running and cycling, we have raised more than one million dollars for myeloma research.

How did this become a real and strong movement in such a short period of time? The formula is simple: we have one goal and one team. **The goal is to eradicate myeloma and the team is the family and friends of those suffering from the disease.** Since my first mile on this journey, my family has grown many folds. The journey has been hard, but this family has made it feel easy.

This year, once again we started running in the middle of the night. We departed on Halloween from the IU Simon Cancer Center in downtown Indianapolis. Eight runners – including one patient – started the run through a tunnel of luminaries that honored the memory of those who have lost their fight against myeloma. Cheers, tears, hugs and high-fives got the group moving toward Bloomington. You read it right – we had a myeloma patient run nine miles with us! *If this is not a transformation, I do not what a transformation is.* Ten years ago, it would be unheard of for a myeloma patient to be allowed to run. Now, through the power of research, this is possible.

Our night of running was long, and it got colder by the hour. The highlight of the night was the sight of our Miles for Myeloma RV waiting for us every three miles or so. Brownies, peanut butter sandwiches, oranges and more were laid out before us every time we stopped. This was not an ultra run – it was an all-you-can-eat buffet at a fresh market!



MILES FOR MYELOMA
Supporting Myeloma Research at the Indiana University Simon Cancer Center
2008

Before noon Saturday, we entered IU's Memorial Stadium through an energized human tunnel of nearly 500 patients, families and friends. The excitement of this crowd was like a performance-enhancing drug. After more than 50 miles of running, the crowd gave us the force to sprint through that tunnel. It was just a miracle to feel this burst of energy! From this tunnel, we felt love, confidence and the resolve to achieve the goal. That carried us to the 50-yard line where the new IU basketball coach Tom Crean greeted us. He was kind and was impressed by our effort. I welcomed him to Indiana University and told him to tell his players that if they do not play well this year, they will have to run 50 miles with us next year! *Go Hoosiers!*

On Sunday, we gathered at the stadium in Bloomington and to my surprise nearly 50 cyclists showed up! Several patients rode alongside their family and friends. It was amazingly nice weather for early November. The sun was out and quickly we warmed up and went up some really hard hills. I have to admit I did not make it all the way up one of these hills. Oh well! I blame this on the run the day before and my age!

One of the cyclists came to me during the ride and thanked me. I asked why. He told me that this summer, he started training for this ride and dropped his cholesterol in half. Take that, Lipitor – who needs drugs when you have Miles for Myeloma? This man's mother passed away from myeloma several years ago, and he has never given up on the mission.

When we arrived in Indianapolis, we had time to spare, so I asked the cyclists if they'd like to take a spin around the Monument Circle downtown. You should have seen the peloton on the circle! People were taking pictures and waving and cheering. It felt like a victory lap! Finally, we arrived back at the Cancer Center to a huge and warm reception.

Well, the journey was hard, and we had some fun moments along the way. But there is no real victory lap yet. Once again this year, several of my beloved patients lost their fight to this ugly disease. Beautiful people, young and old, who made life more meaningful to us and had so much more to give to their loved ones, were taken away from us prematurely. Their journey was much harder than ours, but they never lost conviction. Their memories warmed the night for us, and their love was shining the way. We will never forget them, and they will be in our hearts forever. Their strength will ease the sadness and loneliness we experience by their loss.

We are happy to have the funds that have been generated to date to help pave the way to more research, and **we will not rest until there is a cure**. That is my promise, that is the goal and that is why we will continue to run and cycle these long miles.

Your love and support have eased the pain of this journey. **Thank you. Together, we shall find a cure.**

Peace to all,



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