

Local Man & Foundation
Help People with Cerebral Palsy

PEDALING TO FREEDOM



Dan Stroble

Kent resident Peter Zeidner has cerebral palsy, but don't expect that to stop him from helping millions of people affected by the disorder. As the founder of Pedal-with-Pete Foundation, he has led the cause to raise more than \$880,000 for research grants.

"I'm very excited that I've raised so much money and am getting so close to my goal of 1 million dollars," he says.

Founded in 1993, the foundation's primary fundraisers are yearly bike and hike events in Kent, Ohio, Columbus, Ohio, and Emmetsburg, Iowa. Pedal-with-Pete is all volunteer-based, so more than 85% of the money donated has gone directly to fund cerebral palsy research. Cerebral palsy is caused by abnormalities in parts of the brain that control muscle movements, therefore the research can lead to life-improving treatments. Because Pedal-with-Pete is a 501(c)3 organization, all donations are fully tax-deductible.

Pete says he started Pedal-with-Pete because there was not much research on cerebral palsy. Last year, the funding for cerebral palsy research received by the National Institutes of Health added up to less than one-quarter of a percent of the total amount across all health categories. Dr. Leland Albright, a neurosurgeon, has received numerous research grants from Pedal-with-Pete. His studies have revealed that the medication baclofen is much more effective when inserted into the spinal fluid inside the brain. According to Albright, this was a "night and day difference" from other methods.

In addition to providing funds for research grants, Pedal-with-Pete has started a separate fund for giving away adaptable bikes for children with cerebral palsy.

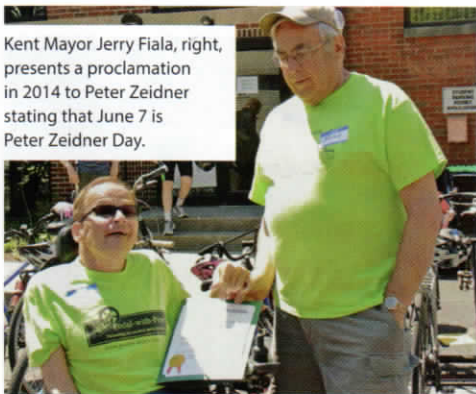
Albright commends Pete for his "extraordinary qualities" and his constant willingness to help others, despite his own challenges.

Pete has been a fighter since day one. He was born to German immigrant parents in Hinckley, Ohio on September 8, 1958. Because he was



Kent Lions Club volunteers from the 2014 ride include, from left, Tracy McNeil, Jane Gwinn, Steve Hardesty, Peter Zeidner, John Ferlito, Madelyne Williams, John McNeil, Jerry Fiala, Fran Hardesty and Lela Irving.

Kent Mayor Jerry Fiala, right, presents a proclamation in 2014 to Peter Zeidner stating that June 7 is Peter Zeidner Day.



born with cerebral palsy and the doctors did not expect him to live, he was baptized that same day. Pete's father and the family au pair, Haide (pronounced like "Heidi"), raised him for most of his child life because his mother was tragically killed in a car accident when he was four years old.

Pete recalls when he would grow frustrated during his challenging childhood. When this happened, he would ride his tricycle and "everything would become all right."

For Pete's first years of school, he attended The Society for Crippled Children in Lakewood. While in his "special needs" classroom, he was forced to use buses, bathrooms, and a lunchroom separate from the non-disabled. He learned to type on a typewriter using a pencil eraser and practiced typing during the summer months.

In seventh grade, Pete was "mainstreamed" into a regular classroom at St. Mark Lutheran School in Cleveland, where he was the only disabled person in a school of 150 students. He felt like an "ordinary Joe" and made numerous good friends. He attended a parochial high school. He was not granted any scholastic exceptions and was required to maintain "acceptable grades." His sheer determination and sense of humor aided him in graduating from the parochial school. Upon graduation, the entire student body gifted a class ring to him.

A resident of The Tree City since 1980, Pete earned his bachelor's degree in marketing from Kent State University. He made many friends as a former member of the business fraternity Delta Sigma Pi, who purchased his first recumbent bike.

Another person close to Pete is Christine Hudecek, who has been Pete's companion and aide for 15 years. "Pete has been a real inspiration to me with his positive attitude and has taught me how to get through the difficult times in my life," she says. "He has a wonderful sense of humor and is fun to be around. He is the kindest, most giving person I know."

Pete is a longtime member of the Kent Lions Club and volunteers his time to selling carnations and pancake breakfast tickets. The Lions Club volunteers at the Pedal-with-Pete bike and hike event.

In 1991, to jumpstart interest in his foundation and with help from the Ohio Elks Association, Pete rode his recumbent bike 1,000 miles throughout the state. The excursion lasted 23 days and raised \$10,000. This achievement garnered him the Elk of the Year Award from the Ohio Elks Association.

Pete has been a member of Faith Lutheran Church in Kent since 1981. The church's former pastor, the Rev. George Gaiser, is one of Pete's closest friends and a former president of the Pedal-with-Pete board. Gaiser describes Pete

Kent Bike & Hike Event to Benefit Cerebral Palsy Research

Seeking riders, volunteers, and door prize donations

What: Choose a bike ride (10, 25, 50, or 100-kilometer) or family-friendly hike (2 or 5-kilometer) at your own pace. Rides and hikes are fully supported with directions and roving support volunteers. Light refreshments and water will be available at rest stops along the bike routes. Enjoy complimentary lunch, music, massages, and door prizes at the completion of your journey. A bike tune-up station and raffle to win a 2015 Raleigh Detour 4.5 bicycle, both sponsored by Portage Cyclery in Ravenna, will be located at the start/finish.

When: Saturday, June 6, 2015. Register from 7 — 9:30 a.m. the day of the event. Plan to finish ride or hike by 1 p.m.

Where: The start/finish is at Theodore Roosevelt High School, 1400 N. Mantua St. (State Route 43), in Kent. The routes will travel through Kent and neighboring communities.

More Information: Save by pre-registering at www.pedal-with-pete.org or by mail at P.O. Box 274, Kent, Ohio 44240. Visit website or contact ride co-chair Jim Stroble at strobes@neo.rr.com for more information.

as "caring," adding "he has worked incredibly to make the best of his limitations."

Pete enjoys sharing his powerful story with the world, so he is finishing an autobiography. He and the foundation are working to start additional events around the country. They are seeking riders, volunteers, and door prize donations for their bike and hike events. Kent's

ride is on June 6. If you want to help Pete reach his goal of \$1 million, mail your donation to P.O. Box 274, Kent, Ohio 44240. To register for the Kent ride or walk, visit www.pedal-with-pete.org. Contact ride co-chair Jim Stroble at strobes@neo.rr.com to volunteer or donate door prizes. Pedal-with-Pete thanks you! ■

Pedal-with-Pete founder Peter Zeidner begins a ride on his tandem bike with his brother, Chris, around the neighboring streets at the 2014 Kent ride.

