

Bolton teen ready to take part in Enbridge Ride to Conquer Cancer

By Bill Rea

Events in life that are the hardest to deal with can sometimes end up with positive results.

That's what Bolton resident Alexandra McKibbon is working on as she prepares to take part in the Enbridge Ride to Conquer Cancer June 7 and 8.

Her ride will be starting at Ontario Place with a 100-kilometre trip to Hamilton, followed by another 100-kilometre trek to Niagara Falls.

"This journey may be hard, but it doesn't compare to what cancer patients or survivors have been through and dealt with," she stated in a piece she wrote for the ride's website (www.conquercancer.ca)

McKibbon's motivation started with her 16th birthday in December 2011, when it was discovered that her grandmother Geraldine Moore had a brain tumour. She died the following July at Headwaters Health Care Centre in Orangeville.

"The battle wasn't easy," she wrote. "We must find a cure!"

McKibbon's motivation has taken her to more than just this cycling event. She said she took part in the CIBC Run for the Cure, as well as the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon.

After losing her grandmother, McKibbon, now 18, said she wanted to take part in as many activities as possible, calling it a method of coping with her loss.

"I always wanted to do something," she said. "It somehow motivated me to get out there and help with the cause."

McKibbon will be among thousands taking part in the event, and in addition to training, she has been raising funds needed to take part. She was supposed to raise \$2,500, and with the deadline approaching, she said she was at about \$2,350.

"I'll have it by then, no problem," she said.

Although that one deadline has passed, it's still possible to contribute to McKibbon's effort through the website.

With the many events such as these taking place to raise money to fight cancer, McKibbon said she believes progress is being made.

"I think we are moving forward," she said. "I think it's getting a lot better."

"It's a process," she added. "I don't think it's going to happen overnight."

As the date of the ride approaches, McKibbon said she's getting "really excited."

"It is a little terrifying that I will be doing it all by myself," she admitted. "It will be something to look back on."

There have already been benefits from taking part in these events. She said she's met a lot of people and helped raise money, so she believes she has already had an impact.

"Just the journey itself's been a great journey," she remarked.

There has also been a lot of training to get ready for this long bike ride. McKibbon said she's been working out in a gym, and riding as many kilometres as possible.

"I am in good shape," she observed. "I'm not really worried about the physical aspects of it."