

Roberson to Make Ataxia Ride This Month

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Erik Wander/KMXT

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Kodiak man will take part in the third annual Ride Ataxia (Uh-TAX-ee-uh) bike ride, in which he will ride a specially designed bicycle from Portland, Oregon, to Seattle to help raise funds for research on a rare disease. The 200-mile ride will terminate in Seattle, where participants will attend the National Ataxia Foundation meeting.

KMXT's Erik Wander has more.

Sean Roberson of Kodiak was diagnosed with Friedreich's Ataxia, a disease that causes progressive damage to the parts of the nervous system that control balance and coordination, in 2005. He plans to take part in the third annual event to raise funds for research on the disease. The ride will cover the approximately 200 miles from Portland to Seattle in four days. Roberson said he's looking forward to participating for the first time.

-- (Roberson 1 20 sec. "We're just doing a fundraising ... into Friedreich's Ataxia.")

Roberson said generous members of the Kodiak community have donated to his research fund. He also said the Elks and Lions Clubs of Kodiak donated money to enable him to purchase an expensive, specially designed bike, for which he is grateful.

-- (Roberson 2 35 sec. "The bike that I have ... over in England.")

Roberson had special advice for those afflicted with Friedreich's Ataxia, which can leave victims confined to a wheelchair within 15 to 20 years after the appearance of the first symptoms and completely incapacitated in the later stages of the disease.

-- (Roberson 3 10 sec. "Just don't take the simple ... about the disease.")

According to the

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, there is currently no effective cure or treatment for genetic disorder, which affects about one in 50-thousand Americans. The Ride Ataxia team has travelled over 3,100-miles over the past two years, attracting between 21 and 50 cyclists, and raised nearly 350-thousand-dollars. The fundraising goal for Ride Ataxia III is 100-thousand-dollars. The ride begins in Portland on March 16th.

I'm Erik Wander

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