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Cancer fund-raiser rolling across U.S.

By: JENIFER GEE

Determined not to be helpless, a Maryland man will bike across the country to raise money on behalf of a Millersville family hard-hit by cancer.

Today marks the first day of Steven Sroka's 80-plus day, 4,000-mile bike ride which starts at the Naval Academy in Annapolis and ends in Astoria, Ore.

Mr. Sroka hopes to raise \$100,000 for the Ulman Cancer Fund for Young Adults, which provides free support programs, education and resources to young adults affected by cancer.

Mr. Sroka's trek was inspired by the Majoros family and their battle with cancer.

His close friend, Matthew Majoros, 20, was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease about a year ago. He recovered a few months later, only to be diagnosed with testicular cancer.

He is in remission but his older brother was not as lucky. John Majoros died at 22 of testicular cancer in February 2002.

After witnessing the family's struggle, Mr. Sroka approached the Catonsville Sunshine Rotary Club and asked for members' support for his ride.

The club was eager to help and provided Mr. Sroka with a fund-raising team. Within three months, Mr. Sroka had multiple sponsors and was ready to start his lengthy journey.

A competitive cyclist, Mr. Sroka said he's happy but a little nervous to begin.

"I have a lot of mixed feelings but I'm totally ready to get on the bike," the 21-year-old Catonsville resident said. "I'm just antsy."

Mr. Sroka's route will avoid major cities where there is heavy traffic and his daily mileage will depend on the terrain and weather.

Members of the Majoros family said they're honored by Mr. Sroka's tremendous effort.

"I hope this makes him feel good," Matthew said. "We're all proud of him for doing it."

Mr. Sroka will document his trip with pictures and journal entries which he will download onto his Web site.

WQSR radio station, 102.7, will broadcast live, weekly phone interviews with Mr. Sroka during the morning show.

As he leaves the Naval Academy and heads to his first stop at Catonsville Community College, Mr. Sroka is looking forward to the rest of his trip.

"It's a learning experience for me and it's not just the ride," Mr. Sroka said.

To contact Mr. Sroka or learn more about his bike ride, visit www.bikecoasttocoastforcancer.com.