

My husband joined the team and a few other friends and thus began The Grateful Tread. Over the years that our team has been around other friends and family joined the ride for a cure as well as my daughters and then their friends. Some riding with us many years and others just a few times. It was a bit of a rough start for me though. I had several relapses with the full array of symptoms to go with and had tried and failed with several treatments and medications. But I was determined to be in charge of how I lived my life so I too joined the team in 2009. Never being into riding before, I got myself a bike and started to train. Soon after I noticed on Facebook a woman I had gone to high school 15 years prior was also riding trails not far from me. We hadn't known each other well back then but found so much in common now. We loved being outside, watching the seasons change across the countryside and dodging chipmunks on the trail. Being a part of this bike ride has given me such a great way of connecting with new and old friends as well as so many amazing memories. So many crazy weather stories, biking in the early morning mist with horses running next to me. Children cheering next to sprinklers set up for us to ride through on a hot day. Riders collecting money for a fellow rider in need. Singing sweet Caroline in our tents as it began to rain. A massage in Lanesboro after those killer hills. Of course the last couple of years have looked different. Virtual rides or "riding with your bubble" and finding new ways to raise donations. Last year with my quarantine time I sewed a quilt and held an online raffle. This year I partnered with my yoga studio and organized an outdoor yoga class for donations. I'm grateful friends, family and so many people who've touched my life. I am grateful for MS (eek! Can I say that out loud?!), but it's part of what's made me who I am and I like me.

Best poem from 2011 Ride Across Minnesota

You Know My Love Not Fade Away

She's on the couch again

I'll cook tonight

She's going to bed early again

Somethings not right

Her hands feel funny

I'm sure it's nothing

She went to the doctor

Is it something

She has MS

No, we have MS

So, suppose we try Rebif

Copaxone, Avonex what's the dif

Greg and friends ride the TRAM

What the hey is the TRAM

We're on to the next drug cuz Rebif ain't it

Copaxone may work but it hurts like shit

Tim and Greg and friends ride the TRAM

Ah, so that's the TRAM

She's going blind in one eye

This is getting scary

With her now riding we become the Grateful Tread

Of pirates we are wary!

Let's try Avonex it might do the trick,

Should this have been our first pick?

The kids do the TRAM which is nice

Just for Paige the rest stops pack extra ice

Switching doctors. Last shop is Tysabri

We all ride the TRAM to be

Someday

MS Free

-Tim Risdal