

# DOUG OAKLEY'S 4 CORNERS MOTORCYCLE RIDE TO BENEFIT COMPASSIONATE CARE ALS



Since I bought my first Harley Davidson 11 years ago, I have wanted to do the "4 Corners" ride on my motorcycle. This ride includes literally riding around the perimeter of the United States and stopping at each of the furthest corners of the country. Destinations are Key West Florida, San Luis Obispo California, Blaine Washington, and Machais Maine. The ride is a total of 8300 miles over a 17-20 day period, weather permitting. Over the years I have mapped it out and considered taking the time off to do the ride, but life kept getting in the way, so I would put it off until the next spring or fall.

Last fall, after noticing diminished use of my fine motor skills and muscle cramping in my left hand, I was diagnosed with a motor neuron disease. The preliminary diagnosis from my doctors is ALS. This diagnosis has shocked me into realizing that life will not wait until a more convenient time and I am finally going to do the "4 corners" in May of 2009 with my good friend Paul Zepf.



*Paul Zepf and me at Wild Harbor in North Falmouth, MA*

I am doing this ride not only to fulfill my dream but also to raise money and awareness for Compassionate Care ALS. Although, I have not known Ron Hoffman for a long time he has already made a difference in my life with his support during this diagnosis period. Please consider donating to this amazing organization that helps patients, caregivers, and loved ones across the country through their journeys with ALS. During the trip I will be sending reports and pictures back to show our progress. Please visit [www.ccals.org/4corners](http://www.ccals.org/4corners) for periodic updates.

Compassionate Care ALS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that offers individualized support to ALS patients, families, and caregivers. All contributions are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

PLEASE VISIT [WWW.CCALS.ORG/4CORNERS](http://WWW.CCALS.ORG/4CORNERS)

PAY IT FORWARD

P.O. BOX 1052 · WEST FALMOUTH, MA 02574 · (508) 563-3677 · [WWW.CCALS.ORG](http://WWW.CCALS.ORG) · [INFO@CCALS.ORG](mailto:INFO@CCALS.ORG)

SUPPORTING ALS FAMILIES SINCE 1998

# FACT SHEET

## What is ALS?

ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, stands for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. It is a neuromuscular disease that can attack any person regardless of race, gender, wealth, education, or geography. People with ALS progressively lose control of the voluntary muscles of their body. The cause of the disease is not understood. There are no effective treatments, and there is no known cure.

## Our History

Since 1998, the Gordon T. Heald ALS Fund and Compassionate Care ALS have helped guide more than 520 families impacted by ALS by assisting with:

- the purchase of high-cost items for daily living assistance
- connections to others impacted by ALS
- access to integrative therapies
- support for the quality of life for patients and their immediate circles of care.

## Why do ALS Families Need Support?

Research increasingly suggests that supporting caregivers and families helps reduce the distress and fear faced by the patient and improves his or her health and quality of life. Since ALS attacks without warning and often progresses rapidly, patients and their families are confronted with unanticipated challenges that can shift daily. In addition, the stress of managing this illness, in combination with the responsibility of earning an income, caring for a family, and addressing grief issues, takes a strenuous economic and emotional toll. Conventional medical support is grievously inadequate to address these needs.

## What does Compassionate Care ALS Offer?

Our range of services helps individuals to live as fully as possible within the parameters of the illness, and to gracefully experience the end of life with conscious choice and compassion. Our work is tailored to meet the individual needs of each patient and family. Types of assistance we offer include:

- Emotional Support – Our staff listens and suggests options. We visit families at home, facilitate gatherings for caregivers, offer counseling, match caregivers with caregivers & patients with patients to foster intimate dialogue at home or in other safe settings.
- Integrative Therapies – We subsidize massage, acupuncture, craniosacral therapy, self-inquiry, energy work, contemplative practice such as meditation, and we promote self-care for both patients and caregivers.
- Contemplative Practice – We work one on one with caregivers and families, teaching meditation and visualization techniques to help alleviate fear and anxiety and to promote well-being.
- Education – We lead workshops on “Cultivating Compassion” for health care professionals, caregivers, and the community about investigating conscious choice, living and dying with terminal illness, practicing self-care, and other topics related to ALS.
- Van Service – We loan a wheelchair-accessible van for everyday needs and special trips.
- Youth Program – Children of ALS patients are offered rites of passage programs and other supportive resources.
- Gordon T. Heald ALS Fund – We subsidize the purchase of home care equipment such as communications devices and wheelchair ramps, and assist with prescription costs and other living expenses as needed.
- Other assistance – We are responsive to a broad spectrum of special requests to ease the family burden of living with ALS.

## How Can I Help?

Send your tax-deductible donations to: Doug Oakley c/o Compassionate Care ALS, P.O. Box 1052, West Falmouth, MA, 02574 – please make checks out to “Compassionate Care ALS” – or contact Ron Hoffman at (508) 563-3677 or ron@ccals.org to inquire about donating goods, services, or volunteering your time.



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