

Lyme Disease Association (LDA) Announces Lyme Walk/Ride on Sandy Hook

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Lyme & Other Tick-Borne Diseases Continue to Rise in NJ

Wall Township, May 12, 2008—The NJ-based national Lyme Disease Association (LDA) announces it is hosting a bike ride and a walk, **Spotlight on Lyme**, on May 18 in Monmouth County New Jersey. Participants have a choice of a 3 mile walk or 15 mile bike ride taking place on Sandy Hook to raise funds for the LDA for research to fight this debilitating disease and to raise awareness. New Jersey is third in the nation in CDC reported Lyme disease case numbers and Monmouth County ranks 2nd in case numbers in New Jersey.

Walk Chairman Kim Cronin, Little Silver, says: “We need much more awareness about Lyme disease all over New Jersey but particularly in the Jersey Shore area. Little is being done to prepare the public and our kids about how to prevent a tick bite, what to do when you are bitten, and what to do after you have Lyme disease. Little monies are being spent on Lyme education or research, so we need to focus on the disease and on raising funds to spotlight prevention and a cure. “

NJ has one of the highest incidences in the country for babesiosis, which is a malaria-like illness transmitted by the same deer tick that causes Lyme disease. Deer ticks are being joined by more aggressive Lone Star ticks which are spreading STARI, a Lyme-like illness with no viable test, and also other diseases. Additional

tick-borne diseases prevalent in the Northeast include anaplasmosis, ehrlichiosis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, tularemia, tick paralysis and tick-borne Bartonella.

Special attention needs to be paid to tick-borne diseases in children, since age groups 5-9 and 10-14 years are at highest risk of acquiring Lyme disease. Unfortunately, too many people are unaware that Lyme disease can interfere with the learning process—neurologic Lyme can even cause a drop in IQ for some students, which can usually be rectified with treatment. Since the disease is often misdiagnosed or has a delayed diagnosis, Lyme disease can attack every system in the body and produce cardiac, neurologic, musculo-skeletal, ophthalmologic, and psychiatric manifestations.

According to LDA President Pat Smith, “Chronic Lyme disease is often misdiagnosed as MS, ALS, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, lupus, Alzheimer’s and sometimes even autism. Patient organizations such as LDA are providing some of the only monies for research into chronic Lyme disease. Government has ignored the plight of these very sick patients, and more research needs to be done to answer the tough questions, such as why some people do not get totally better.” HR 741, the Lyme bill, which would provide needed federal research funds, is stuck in the US House of Representatives Energy & Commerce Health Subcommittee.

ABOUT THE WALK & RIDE: The event will be held on Sandy Hook Gateway National Park, New Jersey-Beach Area E Sunday, May 18, 2008, 9am check-in, Rain or Shine. Registration for adults is \$25 and for children 13 and under is \$15. Credit card registration can be done online through 6pm May 14 (www.LymeDiseaseAssociation.org) and registrations after that time will then be accepted the day of the event, by cash and check only. Games, DJ, face painting, prizes and food will be a part of the event festivities. Helmets are required and a waiver needs to be signed prior to participating in the event. Children 13 & under must be accompanied by an adult.

ABOUT THE LYME DISEASE ASSOCIATION (LDA): –The Lyme Disease Association (LDA) is a national volunteer nonprofit based in Monmouth & Ocean Counties that devotes ninety-eight percent of its funds to programs—funding research, education, prevention and patient support. LDA-has funded research projects coast to coast—some has been has been published in peer review including JAMA, Neurology, Infection, and the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science. Recognizing that the ability to find solutions involves a multi-disciplinary effort, the LDA has partnered with businesses, patient groups, celebrities, government, and the medical community to unlock the secrets of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases. LDA and Time for Lyme, its Connecticut affiliate, raised funds and

collaborated with Columbia University to open an endowed Lyme disease research center there in New York in 2007. LDA also has a fund for children with no insurance initiated by internationally acclaimed author Amy Tan. Go to www.LymeDiseaseAssociation.org.