



Lisa J. Anderson
Cyclist, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

"Life changes fast. Life changes in the instant. You sit down to dinner and life as you know it ends." Joan Didion penned those words in her seminal work "The Year of Magical Thinking". Lisa Anderson knows all too well how true those words can be. Didion's words have stayed in Lisa's heart and mind these past five years as she has had to witness her husband, her law partner, and 2 close friends endure battles with cancer. Each diagnosis was, in Lisa's words, "out of the blue" and forever changed the lives of previously healthy, active adults and their families.

Lisa's family participated in the first Closer to Free ride three months after her husband David learned he had stage 4 lung cancer. "Six weeks after a 14 hour back surgery to remove the tumor," she remembers, "David started training for the ride and has been training ever since, riding up to 25 miles a day on the winding hilly roads of our hometown of Bethany." She feels that participating in the Closer to Free Ride is like a script ready made for her family. Her youngest son, at only 7, asked for a "good" mountain bike in lieu of watching TV for a year. That helped launch their family into years of bike riding and bike racing.

This year Lisa's law firm, *Bender, Anderson and Barba* has formed a Team "Bender's Brigade" to honor her law partner Ron Bender who died of brain cancer in August 2013. The team of riders and volunteers includes Ron's family and staff, many of whom have not been near a bike since childhood. "The Ride for me is about love and memory," she says. "We are joined by our love for Ron and our desire to lift up his life." The fundraising aspect of the Ride gives Lisa's friends, family, colleagues, and the wider community the opportunity to support Smilow, a place very close to her heart. "The Ride evokes the love and gratitude I feel for the dedicated health care providers, staff, patients and families I have met at Smilow," she says. "The Ride is for our beloved community."

Lisa knows that a life can change in an instant. So she and her entire team are riding and volunteering now so that not a moment goes to waste.

