

Contra Costa SUN

Orinda family runs to honor mother

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By Meera Pal
STAFF WRITER

This weekend, when Katie Davis arrives at the third annual Race Against Pulmonary Hypertension at Stanford University, she will be there in her mother's memory.

Orinda resident Patti Ewing, for whom the race was founded in 2001, passed away this May from PH.

Three years ago, at the encouragement of life-long friend, Paige Dunn, Davis and her husband, Eddie, joined ranks with Dunn to establish the annual 5K run/walk.

"My goal was to not only create an event that would raise money for a cure and awareness for the disease, but more importantly, I wanted to create an annual event that the Ewings could participate in year after year that would honor Patti when she was gone," wrote Dunn in a recent e-mail from Los Angeles.

This year's race will be even more poignant for friends and family of Ewing, who remember her as a friend, mentor, wife and mother.



Katie Davis prepares for Sunday's race

Since the race was founded three years ago, it has raised \$80,000 in funds, which have been donated to the Ewing Fund for Research at Stanford University, as well as the Pulmonary Hypertension Association.

After the first year, when the race was held at Lake Merced in San Francisco, Davis and Dunn were approached by the Vera Moulton Wall Center for Vascular Disease at Stanford, asking if the Center could sponsor and organize the race at Stanford next year and years to come. The three were thrilled that the Center, which seeks to enhance the lives of patients with PH through the highest level of clinical care, advanced training opportunities for physicians, and clinical and science research, wanted to take over the race.

The first year had been a lot of work, even with the professional race organizing company they hired to take care of the logistics and organizing. Davis had used her parents' Christmas list to send out letters, asking friends and family to take part in the race. That first year, Davis says she knew about 90 percent of the participants.

"It was incredible to see all that support from family and friends," said Davis.



Patti Ewing

Ewing, who was unable to attend the first year due to the PH, had been presented a guest book full of signatures from race participants. Davis remembers how overwhelmed her mother had been at the number of people who had come out to run, walk or donate to the cause.

With the race, the Davises and Dunn hope to bring awareness about PH, a rare and often misdiagnosed blood vessel disorder of the lungs in which the pressure in the pulmonary artery (the blood vessel that leads from the heart to the lungs) rises above normal levels and may become life-threatening. Symptoms include shortness of breath, fatigue, chest pain, dizzy spells and fainting. Davis hopes

one day they can "I have truly been touched by the amount of love and support we have received in the last few years. My mom's family, her friends, and her doctors stood by her every step of the way and are responsible for making this race such a success," said Davis. "Although she will not be with us on race day she will be with us in spirit. And she will be smiling down upon those who love her most."

Reach Meera Pal at 925-284-4728, or by e-mail at mpal2@cctimes.com