

in(t)-spe-'rā-shen *n* 1. a divine or supernatural influence 2. to be an animating, enlivening, or exalting influence on another; to spur one to act 3. to draw forth or bring out

RIGHT ANGLES

Straight Lines & T

by Brent Evans



Lance Armstrong and Mike Sherwin at the 2004 Ride for the Roses.

With a background in mechanical engineering merged into a career in investment banking, Mike Sherwin employs a perspective unlike most in business. "I see things in straight lines and right angles," says Mike, a self-proclaimed "Deal Maker" with a knack for getting the right people together to get the job done.

OA sat down with Mike to discuss his passion and involvement in the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF). Easily recognized as the world's leading Cancer Survivorship Organization, LAF is spearheaded by its namesake Lance Armstrong, cancer survivor and the only 6-time winner (and in a row) of the Tour de France bicycle race. The signature yellow LiveSTRONG bands are a phenomenon that can be seen everywhere and have created a great opportunity for the foundation.

Inspiration: Mike Sherwin

OA: What is your current position within LAF?

MS: (laughter) That's a long answer. I am Head of National Development for the Board of Directors, Chairman of the Endowment Committee and sit on the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, as well as the Strategic Planning Committee and the Nominating Committee.

OA: Whew! Tell us how you first came to be involved with LAF.

MS: Actually, it had nothing to do with riding a bike (Mike is a former hockey player turned road cyclist due to two total knee replacements). I was asked in 1997 to join the foundation as a private board member by good friend Jeff Garvey. Eventually, I met Lance Armstrong and found that what I respect most about Lance is his unwavering commitment to survivorship. Survivorship is defined legally and medically as the moment you are diagnosed with cancer until death.

OA: Who has inspired you? Why do you wear a LiveStrong band?

MS: Two people have inspired me in two totally different ways.

First, Stephanie Robins, the daughter-in-law of a business partner Charlie Robins, was diagnosed three and a half months after her wedding day. Steph battled kidney cancer for

three and a half years. I gave her the book *Its Not About the Bike* (Lance Armstrong's first book) and it resonated with her. Many things improved the quality of Steph's life beyond actual treatment. With Steph's battle against cancer, it gave me the frightening sense of unfairness in life.

Second, was my dear friend Fred "Foxy" Gaertner. Diagnosed with abdominal cancer in the fall one year, Foxy passed away the following spring. Foxy never pursued anything to treat his cancer. This had a significant effect on me.

I wear the band because LiveSTRONG has more to do with lifestyle than people think. It reminds you and encourages others to LiveSTRONG daily.

OA: Give us some insight into LAF as an organization

MS: LAF is based in Austin, Texas and employs 55 staff members. The staff believes in busting their tails day in and day out and they know that Lance believes in them. It is a great organization made up of people like Doug Ullman, LAF's survivorship director, who is a soccer player and three-time cancer survivor himself.

LAF is committed to disseminating the kinds of information that cancer survivors need and should be available to them. Your Physician members can direct patients to use

the www.LAF.org website as a portal to massive amounts of information. These tools then allow survivors to make choices based on information and facts.

The Peloton Project is LAF's major grassroots fundraising and outreach initiative that brings together a diverse group of volunteers dedicated to helping people living with cancer live strong. In 2004, 7,200 Peloton Project members collected more than \$5.6 million in donations. The annual Ride for the Roses, a 100-mile bike ride draws 6,500 people who have raised money to participate.

OA: How did the LiveSTRONG bands begin?

MS: A guy at NIKE convinced CEO Phil Knight to honor Lance's run at a six consecutive Tour de France win with the bands. One million were a gift to get things rolling. Five million were made and sold at \$1.00 a piece. They really did not take off until the Tour de France; in fact less than five million were sold until the race commentators started talking about a rival of Lance, Ivan Basso and his mother's fight against cancer. Lance and Ivan talked about how LAF could help her. People then began to get a sense of what it was all about.

Continued on Page 30