

participants can register at the respective Gulf News offices between 9 am and 2 pm on working days only. The rates are Dh300 per adult and Dh175 per child.

by Emirates Flight Catering and Jebel Ali Hotel. The event is also supported by the UAE Motorplex, UAQ and Emirates Motor Sports Federation.

the light of day. He said the government must pay more attention to the population imbalance. Lieutenant General Shaikh Saif Bin Zayed Al

but they were not fully enforced." Abdul Rahim Abdul Latif Abdullah Al Shahin, a member from Ras Al Khaimah, said.

demographic issues and maintain synergy between the sustainable development and demographic policies.

unable to rent them out. They also pointed to the problem of repeated electrical power cuts in residential and commercial buildings.

Cycling to raise awareness about cancer

Englishman says it is his way of getting even with the disease and creating something positive from the situation

By NAHDA SULEIMAN
Staff Reporter

Dubai After Jon Wright twice survived testicular cancer, he and his brother Dom decided to cycle along the Tropic of Cancer to raise awareness about the disease.

Jon had a tumour removed in June 2007. However, 12 months later, the disease came back to haunt him.

After months of radiotherapy treatment, Jon started cycling to regain fitness.

"I started commuting to work, and then I began to imagine a huge challenge that could kickstart a huge awareness campaign.

"It's my way of getting even with cancer and creating something positive from the situation."

The first leg of the 17,700-kilometre journey across the Tropic of Cancer has been completed.

Jon, 27 and Dom, 32, started their journey at the Bank of England in London and cycled down through France, Italy, and Sicily before crossing to Tunisia.

By cycling an average of 104km a day, the siblings' aim is to complete the journey within nine months.

They are currently in the UAE and plan to follow the Tropic of Cancer eastwards across Asia, Mexico and Cuba.

The plan is to finish the challenge in Cuba by June 21, 2010 — the longest day of the year which according to Jon "signifies the long life that can be enjoyed after a diagnosis of cancer".

Using customised Panorama bicycles and a Ridgeback Voyager, the two have encountered several challenges along the way — from having to cope with torrential rains in Italy, visa issues

and language barriers.

"It's certainly not easy, it's a challenge, but at the end it's what drives us," Jon said.

"We do bicker sometimes, but that's what strengthens the bond," he added with a chuckle.

"The biggest boost we got was when we were in Egypt. There were these kids giving us high-fives as we cycled through. That is really uplifting especially during long days."

The boys' father, who is a doctor, and Jon's fiancée — both based in the UK — have given them their full support.

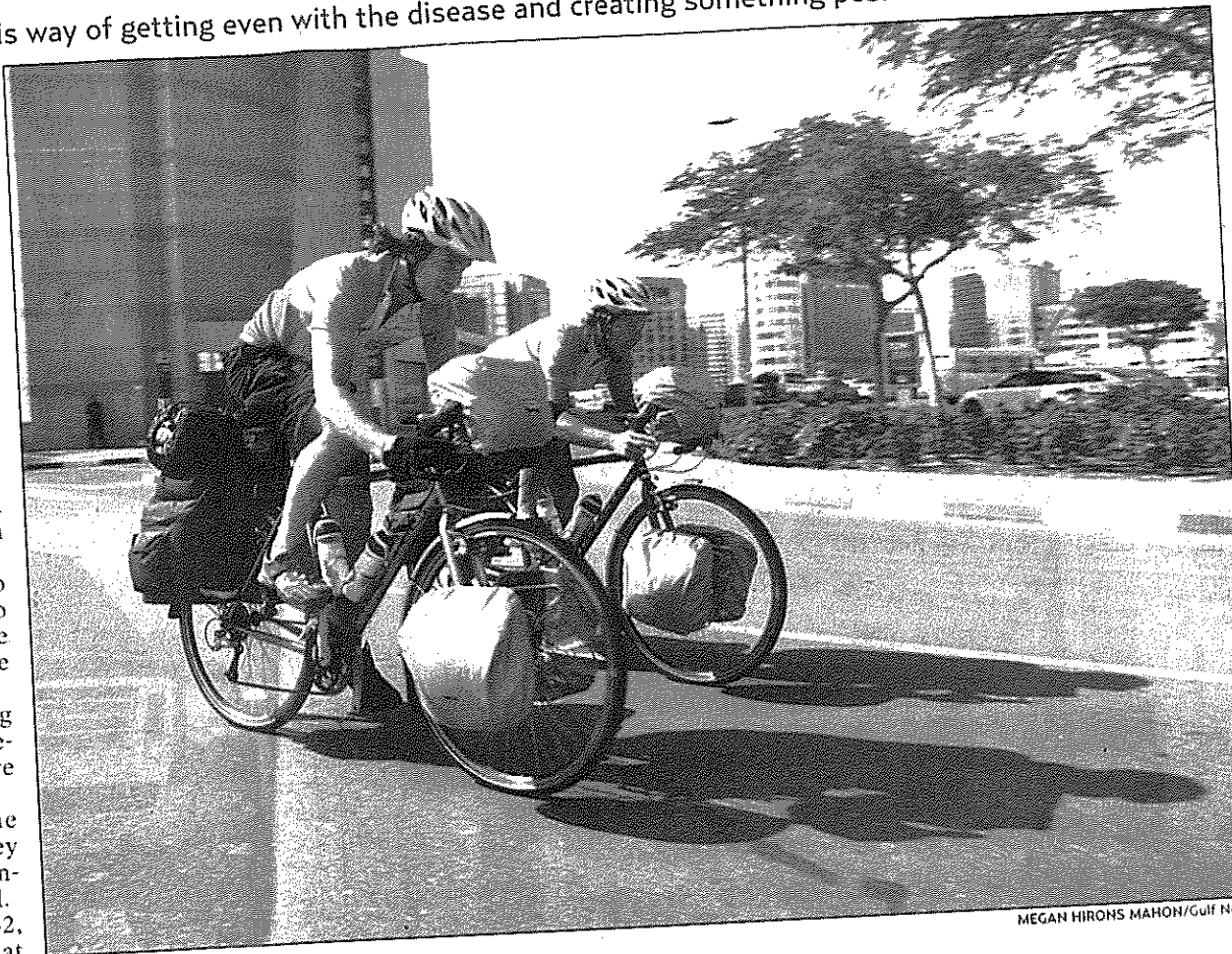
"I think what they are doing is fantastic. I was with

them during the planning of the routes and I feel like a very proud father," Dr Wright said.

Jon's fiancée, Hally Rose, who was by his side throughout his battle with cancer, says not seeing him for months has been difficult. However, she makes it a point that they chat on Skype often.

Asked if she has a message to send out to cancer patients and their families, she says: "Remaining positive and being surrounded by family and friends is very important. If you are surrounded by positive people and believe in yourself, then it will all work out."

"A big part of Jon's recov-



MEGAN HIRONS MAHON/Gulf News

On a roll

Jon (foreground) and Dom on their bikes in Deira. The brothers plan to follow the Tropic of Cancer eastwards across Asia, Mexico and Cuba.

ONLINE WEBSITE SET UP

A website has been set up in honour of this challenge. People can drop in messages of support on www.tccchallenge.co.uk. Added to this, the website has links to Twitter and Facebook, for people to keep in touch.

Similarly, to support the TCC Challenge, donations can be sent to www.justgiving.com/tccchallenge

The proceeds from the donations will go to four cancer charities in the UK: Macmillan Cancer Support, Orchid, Willow and Starlight.

— N.S.

ery was the book *The Secret*. He read it throughout his illness and now encourages me to read it too."

The brothers have a little more than Dh600,000 to hit — they have raised 10

per cent and still have 90 per cent to go.

Once the challenge is finished, Jon plans to have a fairytale wedding, having asked his fiancée to marry him in the Caribbean.

BRIEFS

HEALTH CARE

PIONEERS TO BE HONOURED AT ANNUAL AWARDS

Dubai UAE and Saudi health care pioneers will be honoured at the annual Arab Health Achievement and Innovation Awards for their contribution towards regional growth and development. The winners will be announced during a gala dinner on January 26. Some of the short-listed organisations in the UAE include Shaikh Khalifa Medical City, Mafraq Hospital, Tawam Hospital and Rashid Hospital Trauma Centre. The awards will be given during the Arab Health Exhibition and Congress.

SUPPORT

Free medical camp for workers

Dubai The Indian Ladies Association Dubai, the Indian Consulate and the Getwell Clinic, Bur Dubai, will hold a Medical Camp at the Indian Consulate Auditorium. The camp will be held on Friday from 8am to noon. The camp focuses on workers and other needy people in the community who don't have medical insurance and whose income is Dh2,000 or below. It is organised every three months so that there is continuity of medical services and medicines to those who need them. A panel of 18 medics, including general physicians, dermatologists, ophthalmologist, orthopedic surgeon and dentists will be there to offer their services for free. Free medicines and follow-ups will also be provided to the needy.

— Compiled from staff reports