

True Gentle'men

TRIO OF MEN BIKING TO D.C.
TO RAISE FUNDS, AWARENESS
FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTER

»»18A



BAND OF BROTHERS

VIETNAM WAR INFANTRY VETERANS
MEET IN NAPLES
TO REMEMBER, RECONNECT

»»16A



FUN SPORT, FUNNIER NAME

PICKLEBALL ENTHUSIASTS
LOOKING FORWARD TO INAUGURAL
CHAMPIONSHIP COMING TO NAPLES

»»14B



LIFE IS HEALD

SNOW WHITE'S APPLE
WAS JUST
THE PROTOTYPE

»»8A

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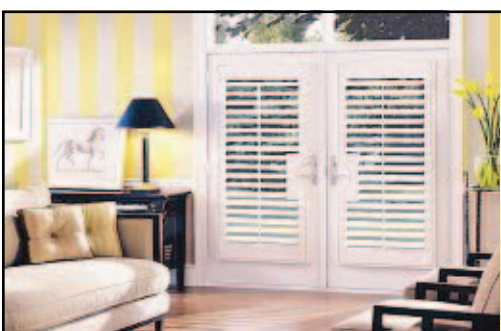
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DARREN MILES/SPECIAL TO THE CITIZEN

Colin Estrem, Gordon Kellam and Glen Schwesinger plan to pedal 1,156 miles over 10 days, starting April 16, as the latest fundraiser for the Shelter for Abused Women and Children in Naples. Their challenge will be biking from Naples to Washington, D.C.

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By John Osborne
Citizen Correspondent

Two of the three have already scaled one of the world's tallest mountains. Now, a third ambitious Southwest Florida resident will join the others to form a trio that will bicycle from Naples to Washington, D.C. in support of The Shelter for Abused Women & Children.

As part of their roles in the shelter's 10-year-old "Gentle'men Against Domestic Violence" (GADV) initiative, Colin Estrem, Gordon Kellam and Glen Schwesinger plan to pedal 1,156 miles over 10 days, starting April 16.

Statistics show domestic violence accounts for around 40 percent of all violent crime committed in Collier County. So, in an effort to shine a spotlight on the problem, the three friends will meet with celebrities and politicians along the way, with a goal of raising \$100,000 for the shelter and its various programs, including the "Raising Gentle'men" program.

That particular program targets young men and boys in Collier County public schools with a succinct message: violence does not equal strength and true "gentle'men" exhibit respect, loyalty, honest and accountability toward women.

Estrem, owner of Avenue Wine Café and 7th Avenue Social in Naples, said the program is an important part of the shelter's overall mission.

"The shelter is great because of all the work it does, but the 'Gentle'men' side is amazing, too, because it addresses the cause, not just the horrifying effects, of domestic violence," said the Minnesota native and father of two daughters. "It's all about educating young men to not fall into the continuing the pattern of domestic violence."

Lest anyone perceive the program as gender-biased, Estrem and his fellow "gentle'men" acknowledge that the problem of domestic violence isn't a one-way street. In 2000, a National Violence Against Women Survey conducted by the National Institute of Justice found that around 40 percent of those reporting serious partner violence were men. A 2013 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey published by the Centers for Disease Control reported similar numbers.

"The image people often have is of men as the perpetrators, but it's important for all people to receive the message that hitting is not OK, regardless," Estrem said, then explained how he became involved in the GADV initiative.

"I've been watching Glen and Gordon for a couple years now and getting more involved in supporting charities, specifically the shelter, and I've admired what they've done," he said. "Over time, I learned how effective their efforts have been, and now that I've got the time I wanted to help out."

With a 2013 summit of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania to support the shelter already under their belts, Kellam and Schwesinger said the long-distance bicycle ride would seek celebrity and political endorsements in a campaign to create a national GADV day.

"We have a list of recognizable names and faces we'll meet with but we can't reveal any of them yet," said Kellam, managing director and financial advisor for BB&T Scott & Stringfellow and complex director for the west coast of Florida. "There are 15 to 20 figures

we'll meet with and have them sign a proclamation of support for the initiative, including movie stars, TV stars, musicians, politicians and sports figures."

A father of two sons with his wife, Barbie, Kellam said the trio would likely meet with other high-profile figures, as well.

"There will be a broad range of recognition on the local level, as well, since we'll meet with well-known chefs at some of the more prominent restaurants and mayors and other local politicians," he said. "We're still hammering out all the logistics. This is something that was born organically, and it has really shaped up into something exciting."

Schwesinger, vice president of investments with UBS Financial Services and a longtime member of the shelter's GADV Committee, said the bike ride would accomplish two main goals.

"We want to raise money, of course, but for me it's more about raising awareness," he said. "Research has found that it's very important to shut down domestic violence at its root, and the root comes from young men witnessing violence, then later in life doing what they know. Boys from families that have experienced violence tend to have more violence in life later on, so the main goal is to educate boys and young men to not repeat what they witnessed."

Like Estrem, Schwesinger said both men and women could benefit from hearing that message.

"I don't condone violence in general because I don't see any place for it in society," he said, then added that GADV would welcome with open arms any assistance from both genders.

"If anybody is interested in donating or learning more about GADV, they can email me at glen.schwesinger@ubs.com and I'd be happy to provide them with all the details I can," he said.

Linda Oberhaus, executive director of The Shelter for Abused Women & Children, said the importance of the trio's efforts couldn't be underscored enough.

"We are very excited and grateful for the courage and enthusiasm of our three 'spokes' men," she said. "Every mile on this remarkable journey will raise awareness and exposure for the Gentle'men Against Domestic Violence initiative. We call on men from throughout the community and beyond to stand with women as equal partners as we work to end domestic violence."

For more information on The Shelter for Abused Women & Children, call 239-775-3862 or see naplesshelter.org.



In this file photo, Gordon Kellam and Glen Schwesinger are seen prior to their climb up Kilimanjaro.



Before taking on their latest challenge, Glen Schwesinger, left, and Gordon Kellam climbed and reached the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro, as another fundraiser for the Shelter for Abused Women and Children.



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