



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Jill Hill will cycle across southern Ontario in support of Bereaved Families of Ontario. She's pictured here with Fitness Technique owner Keith MacKay, who is donating some equipment for her journey.

Working through the grief to create something positive

By **KAREN SMITH**

The Champion

A Halton organization that helps families deal with the death of loved ones will benefit from a woman's personal mission.

In memory of her daughter Megan, Jill Hill will cycle across southern Ontario from the Quebec border to Windsor, marking the 10th anniversary of Bereaved Families of Ontario (BFO) — Halton/Peel.

"I feel a real desire to do something to mark the 10th anniversary of Bereaved Families of Ontario — Halton/Peel and more importantly to mark the 10th anniversary of Meggie's death," said the 43-year-old Waterdown mother of two.

"BFO was there when I needed help and I want to help make sure that it will be there for others in the future."

One-year-old Megan died peacefully at home in the arms of her parents in February, 1988. She had been diagnosed with Krabbe's disease, a genetic disorder for which there's no treatment.

"Although her death was an anticipated one, we were still shocked when it finally happened," Ms Hill said.

"I remember thinking that I could actually feel my heart breaking and I cried what must have amounted to a river of tears. My arms felt so empty that they

physically ached."

Depending on weather conditions, Ms Hill expects the August 1 solo ride will take 13 to 16 days at a rate of cycling five to six hours a day. She will be accompanied by a van driven by her husband Ken and a cousin.

"I believe strongly in personal challenges and in the power of one person to make a difference in the world in which we live," she said.

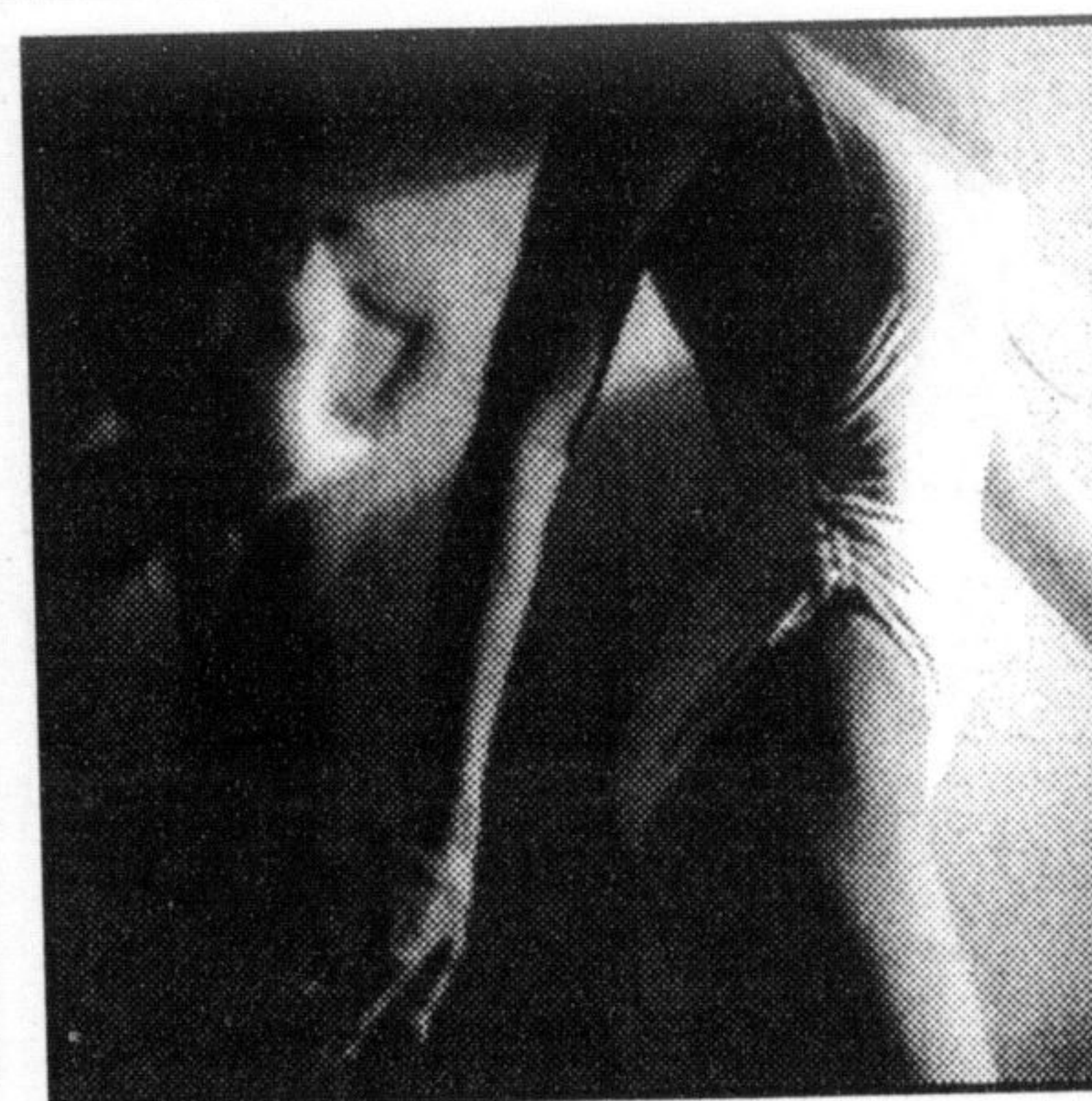
"I also believe in the concept of legacy. Your child who has died can leave you with a legacy of grief and sadness or the legacy of trying to make some good come out of the tragedy that you have endured and turning your grief into something positive."

BFO, which gives support to parents who have lost a child to death and to young adults who have lost a parent or sibling, provides a unique service in Ontario, said executive director Doris Burns.

"The programs are free of charge to those who need us," she said. "They receive no government funding to support our programs. Donations come from local businesses, service clubs and private contributions."

Corporations are invited to support Ms Hill's 'Miles of Memories' ride by providing sponsorship ranging from \$50 to \$1,000. The public is also welcome to make a donation. Proceeds will help fund BFO's programs. For more information, call (905) 507-2200.

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