

Vernonian training to compete in triathlons, has eyes on Ironman

What do you do when you see a man in skin tight clothing, who looks like something from the sports channel, running or biking around Vernonia? Wave to your neighbor, triathlete Christian Isakson.

Triathletes compete in triathlons, which include swimming, running and biking, combined into one race. Isakson is training now for an Ironman triathlon where he'll be swimming 2.4 miles, followed by a 112 mile bike race, finished off with a 26.2 mile run — all in one day. Sound like fun? If so, look forward to 20 to 30 hours of training per week for up to nine months before the race, plus eating, breathing, and sleeping training. Isakson says you'll also need a coach; he is

coached by Rod Ilg.

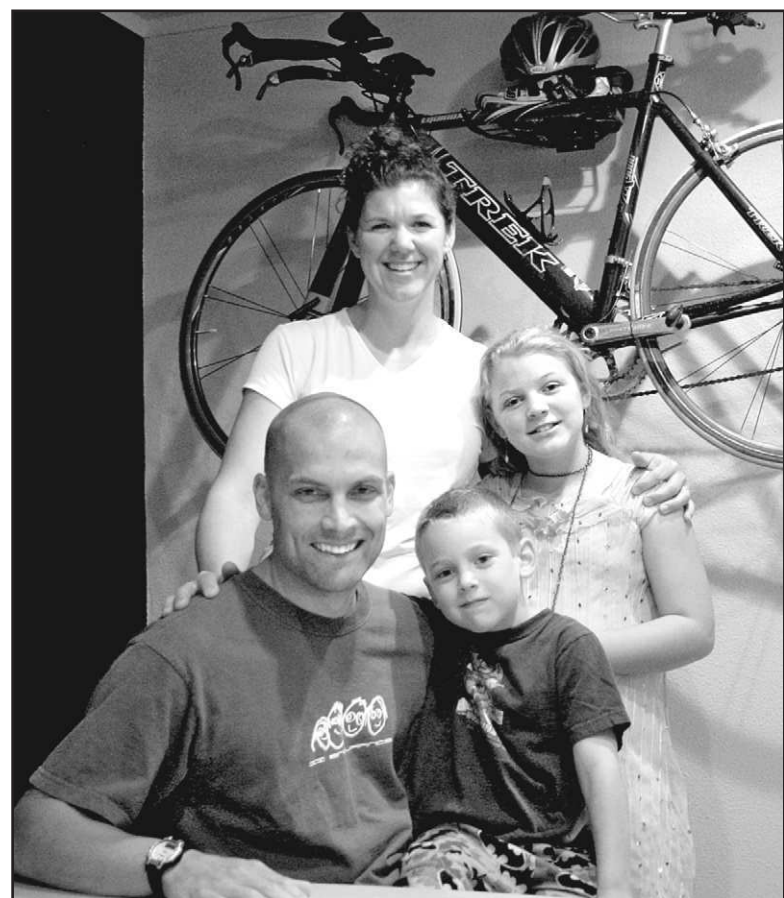
Isakson, 33, has wanted to be an Ironman since he saw one on television in 1982. He has been a distance runner, but got serious 4-5 years ago and ran his first marathon (26.2 miles) in 2004, in Las Vegas. He used the race to raise about \$4,000 for orphans in Romania, by getting pledges from people at his church, West Valley Community Church in Hillsboro. He has now competed in 10 triathlons (some are half distance or other distance races) and one marathon. He finished in the top three in a half Ironman at Coulee Dam, Washington, earlier this year. That qualified him to be on Team USA during the World competition in France next year. He's also

been invited to compete at the Escape from Alcatraz Triathlon in June 2007.

A U.S. Army medic for three years, Isakson has been a Hillsboro firefighter for the past four years. Isakson and his family moved to Vernonia from Aloha two years ago. His wife, Rhonda, is a Licensed Massage Therapist at Hawthorne Farms — having a masseuse in the family is very handy for all those sore muscles. Isakson, Rhonda and their two children, almost 12 year-old Evelyn and five year-old Ian, make up Isakson's team, Illl Endurance (four capital Is for the four Isaksons). The team motto is "Strip off every weight that slows us down," from the Book of Hebrews, in the Bible. Faith plays

a very important role in the fam-

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Triathlete Christian Isakson, seated with Ian and Rhonda Isakson and Evelyn standing in front of Christian's bicycle. Christian will be competing in a triathlon in Florida to try to qualify for the Ironman Triathlon in Hawaii.



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Good Night's Sleep is topic Oct. 28

Getting a Good Night's Sleep is the title of a free, no registration program to be presented Saturday, October 28,

from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

About 70 million Americans are not getting the sleep they need. And if you think that simply means a lot of tired, grumpy people, think again.

Long-term, untreated sleep disorders are a significant national health concern. They lead to fatigue-related accidents, diminished well-being, and reduced employee productivity. Plus, they contribute to cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, and other severe health problems.

The program will be held at Community Education, Tuality Health Education Center at 334 SE Eighth Ave., Hillsboro. For more information, call 503-681-1700 or go to www.tuality.org.



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