



Tiny boat carrying woman's ashes passes through Albany

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ALBANY – A tiny pine sailboat carrying the ashes of a young Michigan woman passed through the Capital Region on Tuesday as part of a 1,400-mile journey that has made headlines across the country, and will ultimately end up on the big screen.

Marie Kent died on September 27, 2013 of cardiac sarcoma, a rare cancer of the heart. Inspired by a favorite book, Kent wanted her ashes to travel by boat from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean: a journey that requires help from total strangers.

"I love the water, love sports, everything she stood for," said Donna Larkin, a power-boarder who helped guide the boat on the Hudson River from Waterford to Albany. "(If) everyone can help out along the way, well good for us for being there for her."

Larkin and several kayakers carried the boat – crafted by a blind carpenter, and painted by a Native American – into the Waterfront Bar and Grill. There, Larkin convinced an old friend, Claus Geiger, to continue the journey southward.

"We're going to take her down as far as we can," said Geiger, who was planning to transport the boat by car from Albany to Ravena with his friend, Ed Hines. "I think it's great that people are willing to take her down along the journey... and now I'm one of them."

A documentary film crew from Visionalist Entertainment Productions chronicled the last eight months of Kent's life, her death, and her continuing journey to the sea. It's expected to premiere at film festivals next year, executive producer Keith Famie said.

"The question was, 'How is a little sailboat going to make it all the way to the ocean? It's impossible,' Famie said. "It is impossible, but what's not impossible is how it touches people's lives and how people want to come out and help the boat."

When the boat finally reaches its destination somewhere off the coast of New Jersey, some of Kent's loved ones will fly in from Michigan. Kent's last wish was that her ashes be spilled into the Atlantic Ocean, so she can travel the world in death.

<http://wnyt.com/article/stories/S3511330.shtml>