



# Arthritis Foundation Jingle Bell Run Raises More than \$35,000

December 7 2011 9:48 AM

*ALTON, IL* – The annual Arthritis Foundation Jingle Bell Run on Dec. 3 at Gordon Moore Park raised more than \$35,000 and attracted more than 550 participants. The \$35,000 total was as of bank day and the final total will likely be even more.

“It is heartwarming to see so many people come together and work so hard for such a great cause,” said Jody Basola, the Alton Jingle Bell Run 2011 committee chair.

“The event was a big success and teams are already plotting their fund-raising strategies for next year.”

There were 84 teams this year between Alton Memorial Hospital, Saint Anthony’s Health Center and the community. There were 183 runners and at least 250 walkers. The top male runner in the 5K run was Ben Gabel (18:46) and the top female runner was Rebecca Adney (20:37).

There was also a one-mile run, a one-mile walk and a Tot Trot, in which all participants under the age of 5 received a medal. Awards were given to the top three finishers in each age category, male and female. Complete race results are available at [www.fleetfeetstl.com](http://www.fleetfeetstl.com).

Awards were given as follows:

- Top School Team, East Elementary of Alton, \$573.73;
- Top Community Team, Tammy's Troopers, \$1,011.26;
- Top Community Individual Fundraiser, Emily Heitzig, \$511.26;
- Top Fundraising Hospital, Alton Memorial, \$16,836.55;

- Top Fundraising Team for the hospitals, AMH Traumatic Snowmen (ER/EMS), \$2,573.85.
- Top Hospital Individual, Valery Parker, AMH Traumatic Snowmen, \$1,189.57;
- Best Costume Award, Mr. and Mrs. Snowman (Jill Angel and April Brown from Alton Internal Medicine).

The 2011 Arthritis Foundation Honoree, Hannah Morgan, was present at the event and shared her story. She was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis at age 16 months.

Arthritis is a disease that affects 50 million Americans, including 300,000 children. It has become a major national health problem and the No. 1 disability in the United States, with 100 different forms of the disease. Arthritis costs the U.S. economy \$128 billion annually.

Many arthritis patients are on the same cell growth inhibitors as cancer patients and some undergo chemotherapy. Arthritis robs adults and children of their ability to perform the simplest tasks such as getting out of bed in the morning or playing catch with friends

Anyone can develop arthritis. Despite public perception that only older individuals get arthritis, the disease affects people in all age groups, including children. The condition takes an especially heavy toll among women, who make up two-thirds of all people with arthritis.

If you are interested in doing more to help the Arthritis Foundation, call 314-991-9333 for more information on volunteering.

**ALL PHOTOS BY PETE BASOLA**

**Hannah Morgan, this year's Arthritis Foundation Honoree, tells her story to Elaina Jackson of the Arthritis Foundation. Hannah was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis at the age of 16 months.**

**The starting line for the 2011 Arthritis Foundation Jingle Bell Run on Dec. 3 at Gordon Moore Park.**

**Lisa Pace, center, of Alton Memorial Hospital receives the Top Fundraising Hospital Award from Elaina Jackson, left, and Jody Basola of the Arthritis Foundation.**

**Emily Heitzig accepts the award for Top Community Team (Tammy's Troopers) and top Individual Fundraiser from Jackson and Basola.**

**Joann Curvey accepts the award for Top School Team, East Elementary of Alton.**

**Jill Angel and April Brown (Mr. and Mrs. Snowman) from Alton Internal Medicine won the Best Costume Award.**