



# Relay for Life of Riverbend Coming Up June 8-9; Survivor Dinner is June 6

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*American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Riverbend Focuses on Birthdays and Saving Lives Faster*

*Celebrate, remember and fight back at Relay June 8-9*

Wood River, Ill. – For area residents battling cancer, “Happy Birthday” takes on a whole new meaning.

Local volunteers have devoted their time, talents and energy over the past several months to saving lives faster and creating a world with more birthdays in preparation for this year’s American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Riverbend, to be held at East Alton-Wood River High School. The event will begin at 6 p.m. on Friday, June 8, and last until the morning hours on Saturday, June 9.

Relay For Life is an overnight event that brings the community together in the fight against cancer to celebrate the lives of those who have cancer, remember those lost to the disease, and fight back against a disease that takes too much. Teams of local businesses, schools, churches, community groups and families raise funds - prior to and at the event – to support cancer research to help find cures and provide local programs aimed at helping people stay well, get well and fight back.

“Just like each birthday, I look forward to Relay every year,” said Laura Griffith, volunteer and publicity co-chair. “This family-friendly event is open to everyone.

Whether you take in the entertainment for a couple of hours or stay all night, we hope that you will make plans to come out for a bit and support Relay For Life of Riverbend and our efforts to eliminate this awful disease forever.”

Relay For Life of Riverbend starts with local cancer survivors uniting to walk the first lap of the event. They are then joined by family, friends and co-workers - the caregivers who helped them through their battle with cancer.

The Luminaria Ceremony will be held just after dark, to honor and remember loved ones. Honorees include survivors, caregivers and those who have lost their battle against the disease. Hundreds of luminaria will line the track and continue to burn throughout the night to remind participants of the incredible importance of their loved ones’ contributions. Dedicate a luminaria online at [www.relayforlife.org/riverbendil](http://www.relayforlife.org/riverbendil), or do so in person at the event.

There will also be entertainment, games and vendors on site throughout the night.

Cancer survivors, anyone who has ever been diagnosed with a form of cancer (no matter what kind), are also invited to a pre-event Survivor Dinner, to be held at 6 p.m. Wednesday, June 6 at the Rox-Arena, 2 Park Dr. in Roxana, Ill. All survivors are permitted to bring one caregiver or guest to the dinner. They will eat for free, as well as receive a free t-shirt. The doors will open at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 6 p.m. Pre-registration for the dinner is required. To RSVP, contact ACS partner Jacqueline Hoffman at (618) 288-2320 or Ellen Estes, survivor co-chair, at (618) 466-4253.

On average, 183 Illinoisans are diagnosed with cancer every day. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer-related death in Illinois, followed by colorectal cancer.

Relay For Life helps fund the American Cancer Society’s efforts to advance cancer prevention, treatment, patient services and cures. This includes the Society’s Patient Navigation Services program, designed to fill a critical void in health care and social services by acting as a full-service navigator to anyone touched by cancer. The services provided by the American Cancer Society include transportation assistance to treatments; discounted lodging at hotels for patients who need to travel to receive care; insurance coverage assistance; resource matching and referrals; and cosmetic help such as free wigs or headware for patients who have lost their hair due to chemotherapy. The ACS also offers cancer information and access to support groups via its call center, accessible anytime at 800-227-2345, or online at [www.IllinoisCancerHelp.org](http://www.IllinoisCancerHelp.org).

For more information on how to get involved in Relay For Life of Riverbend, contact the American Cancer Society at (618) 288-2320 or visit <http://www.relayforlife.org/riverbendil>.

### About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end suffering from cancer. As a global grassroots force with more than 100,000 volunteers in Illinois and millions elsewhere, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. As a result, more than 11 million people in America who have had cancer, and countless more who have avoided it, will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more or get help, call us any time at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.