



ACS Relay for Life of Riverbend Gears Up for Event June 25-26

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(*Wood River, IL*) – The American Cancer Society Relay for Life of Riverbend will join with other communities across the state and nation to “Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back” this June 25-26.

The annual overnight event, from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. the following day, will celebrate the lives of those who have cancer, remember those who have been lost, and fight back against a disease that takes too much.

Relay for Life is a family-focused event that brings the community together in the fight against cancer. Teams of local businesses, schools, churches, community groups and families raise funds - prior to and at the event - to help support services for patients and their families in the Riverbend area, cancer research, community educational programs and advocacy initiatives.

“When we support Relay for Life we support the American Cancer Society’s mission to save lives by helping people stay well, by helping people get well, by finding cures and by fighting back,” said Tracy Driver, Relay for Life of Riverbend chair. “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.”

Relay for Life starts with local cancer survivors uniting to walk the first lap of the event, then being joined by family, friends and co-workers who have helped them through their battles with cancer. The Luminaria Ceremony is held after dark to honor cancer survivors and those who have lost their battles against cancer. The Luminaria, decorated paper bags filled with sand and lit candles, each bear the name of an honoree and burn throughout the night to remind event participants of the incredible importance of their

contributions. The Fight Back Ceremony, held later in the evening, inspires and motivates participants to take action to fight cancer year-round.

According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, more than 62,400 Illinois residents will be diagnosed with cancer this year and more than 25,600 will die from the disease.

“In these difficult economic times, cancer patients and their families need the support and services of the American Cancer Society more than ever,” Driver said. “Through your participation in Relay for Life, you’ll join the American Cancer Society as we fight for every birthday threatened by cancer in our community.”

The goal of this year’s Relay for Life of Riverbend is to raise more than \$110,000. In addition to cancer research, Relay helps fund support services for area patients and their families such as Road to Recovery, a program that provides cancer patients with transportation to and from treatments; Look Good...Feel Better, which focuses on the inner and outer beauty of women going through chemotherapy and radiation treatments, and Support for Recovery, which matches newly diagnosed patients with cancer survivors to help them cope with their diagnosis, treatment and recovery.

Teams are still being formed and Luminaria to honor loved ones are available for a donation. For more information on how to become involved in Relay for Life of Riverbend, please call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345, or e-mail Event /ACS staff partner Mandie Sidener at mandie.sidener@cancer.org. Visit www.relayforliferiverbend.com.

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