American Cancer Society Announces Relay For Life

Tuscaloosa, Alabama – April, 29 2011 – Tuscaloosa County walkers go around the clock in the battle against cancer during the American Cancer Society Relay For Life. This celebration of life brings together numerous groups and individuals concerned about cancer in a unified effort to fight back.

Teams of enthusiastic citizens will gather at Shelton State Community College for an overnight relay from 6:00pm on Friday, April 29, 2011 until 6:00am on Saturday, April 30, 2011, that celebrates anyone who has battled cancer, remembers loved ones lost and empowers all to fight back against the disease.

Relay For Life is a unique fundraising event that allows participants from all walks of life — including patients, medical support staff, corporations, civic organizations, faith-based groups and community volunteers — to join together to fight cancer. Relay For Life reminds us that progress has been made in the fight against cancer and that everyone who participates is making a difference.

Relay For Life opens as cancer survivors (anyone who has ever been diagnosed with cancer) take the first lap. This emotional time sets the stage for the importance of each participant's contribution. A festive atmosphere always develops around the track area at Relay For Life events. As participants make new friends and spend time with old ones, the Relay celebration and camp-out begins. Team members come together to celebrate, barbeque, play games and walk the track for a great cause.

Relay For Life will also hold a “Fight Back” Ceremony, in which a community leader inspires Relay participants with his/her own commitment to tangibly battle cancer, and he/she challenges them to make a personal pledge to take action (e.g., stop smoking, eat more healthily, exercise regularly, etc.)

Highlighting the evening is the Luminaria Ceremony, held after dark to honor cancer survivors and to remember those who have lost the battle against cancer.
Hundreds [thousands] of luminaria (bags filled with sand and a lit candle) line the track and are left burning throughout the night to remind participants of the incredible importance of their contributions.

“Relay For Life is as much an awareness raiser about the progress against cancer as it is a fund raiser,” said Laura Lee, event chair. “Many of the participants will be people who have been dealt with cancer themselves. Their involvement is proof of the progress that has been made in reducing cancer death rates and in the quality of life following cancer treatment.

“The funds raised will enable us to continue our investment in the fight against cancer through educational programs, research and services to patients,” said Melissa Hobbs. Information about how to form a team or become involved in Relay For Life is available from the American Cancer Society at 205-342-2009 or 1-800-ACS-2345, or visit www.RelayForLife.org/tuscaloosa.

The American Cancer Society is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by saving lives, diminishing suffering and preventing cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. Founded in 1913 and with national headquarters in Atlanta, the Society has 13 regional Divisions and local offices in 3,400 communities, involving millions of volunteers across the United States. For more information, call 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit www.cancer.org.

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