

PRESSRELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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LaPorte County Relay For Life Receives Great Lakes Division's "Heart of Relay" Award

Michigan City, IN (November 30, 2004) - The LaPorte County Relay For Life received the Great Lakes Division of the American Cancer Society's prestigious "Heart of Relay 2004" award for volunteerism.

Laura New, chair of the LaPorte County Relay For Life committee, said, "The Heart of Relay award identifies and recognizes those Relay events across the nation which have developed innovative and creative practices supporting both the mission of the American Cancer Society and meeting their 2015 goals. These "Best Practices" are offered as templates for use by Relay For Life teams all over the country. The LaPorte County Relay For Life topped the other eight counties in our division."

Heart of Relay is based on the concepts of activities occurring before, during and after the Relay, how the project supported community needs, increasing the presence of the American Cancer Society and Relay in the community, goals of the activity and how well the activity did in achieving those goals, the number of people reached, and obstacles which had to be overcome.

The 2004 LaPorte County Relay For Life was the 9th year of the county's participation in this national event and the first year that the Relay joined the Mayor's Campaign Against Cancer. Mayor Chuck Oberlie's program for promoting cancer awareness in Michigan City is part of the U.S. Conference of Mayors' efforts to bring information to community residents.

Working with the City of Michigan City, the Relay For Life committee was able to provide information about early detection, treatment options, programs that provide low-cost or free screening tests and other vital information through the city's website, www.emichigancity.com. People were directed to the site through public service announcements, press releases and televised discussion groups.

The Relay For Life committee succeeded in signing up hundreds of volunteers to provide 18 hours of fun and excitement, information and memories to more than 2000 people at the 2004 event held at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds.

Two-hundred survivors participated in and were honored at the Relay For Life event. Over 2252 luminarias, honoring survivors and remembering those who had lost their battle with cancer, were lit on the track.

Through the increase in number of teams and team members and an increase in publicity opportunities, the 2004 LaPorte County Relay For Life raised an unprecedented \$169,454.40, nearly \$1.52 per capita for the county.

The American Cancer Society represents the interests of cancer patients, their families and the general public in the development of local, state and national health care policies. One of the American Cancer Society's most successful projects, designed to raise awareness of cancer-related health concerns and to raise funds that will be used for educational outreach programs, is the Relay For Life. The Relay is a unique, empowering and fun way to make a difference in the fight against cancer.

"Volunteers donate thousands of hours of their time and expertise to Relay every year," New said. "They give of themselves for the reward of watching survivors and people currently in chemotherapy walk the track during Relay. They come back year after year, giving up so many hours of their free time, because they or someone they love has experienced the devastation of cancer. They never quit - because cancer never does. Their efforts contribute so much towards the battle against cancer."

"I want to thank the thousands of team members who worked so hard to raise money and to bring to life the theme of '50's and 60's at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds," New continued. "A special thanks goes to the survivors who brought their message of hope to the Relay. And I want to thank the committee members who worked so hard to make the 2004 LaPorte County Relay For Life so successful. The committee is comprised of Evelyn Bechinski, Mat Blair, Carol Corbett, Karen & Dennis Durnell, Brenda Ebach, Karen Emerich, Billie Callas, Jan Kostielney, Mark & Tracy Harrison, Shellee Marter, Christy Michaels, Kim Petrick, Beverly Russell, June Lenig, Jeff Moyer, Cathy Dye, Nancy Kubath, and Rebecca Shrode. The success of the Relay - and the achievement of the Heart of Relay award - would not have been possible without the efforts of every person involved with Relay."

Everyone is welcome to learn about and become a part of Relay For Life. Come to the team captains' meetings which start January 11, 2005 at 6:30 p.m. at the Coolspring Volunteer Fire Department. The 2005 Relay For Life is scheduled on June 17th and 18th at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds.

Upcoming events for the LaPorte County Relay For Life include: Spaghetti Supper 2/19/05 from 4:00 - 6:30 at Countryside Church; Bowling For Hope April 23 at Thunderbird Lanes; and Cruisin For a Cure and Sock Hop Dance 5/22/05. Contact Laura New at 219/873-1506 or

219/874-3640 for more information or go to the city website, www.emichigancity.com, and click on “Mayor’s Campaign Against Cancer.”

*I see Cancer... it starts with one Cell.
I see Cancer...it starts with one Community.
Cancer Happens. Happen Back.
Partner with the American Cancer Society Relay For Life.*

Contact Laura New at 219/873-1506 or 219/874-3640 for more information

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