



MEDIA CONTACTS

Kaylie Moore

Journalist

724-317-6924, kmoore@fayettecountypa.info

Kristi Rooker Kassimer

Public Relations, Digital Media Specialist

412-691-0262, kkassimer@fayettecountypa.info

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FAYETTE TO CELEBRATE 24TH ANNUAL RELAY FOR LIFE

Uniontown, PA – Fayette County residents are encouraged to lace up their walking shoes as Relay For Life returns Saturday to Penn State Fayette: The Eberly Campus.

Hosted annually by The American Cancer Society, Relay For Life represents the hope that those lost to cancer will never be forgotten, that those who face cancer will be supported and that one day cancer will be eliminated.

A nationwide, community-based, voluntary health organization, The American Cancer Society is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives and diminishing suffering through research, education, advocacy and service.

As the society's signature activity, Relay For Life offers everyone in the community an opportunity to participate in the fight against cancer.

Dillon Spencer, community development manager for Fayette and Greene counties, said 26 registered teams have been fundraising all year, but the free event is open to everyone.

From 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., participants will enjoy games, a vendor show, car show, raffles, food and many other activities. This year's theme is games, with participating teams selecting board or video game decorations for their campsites.

"We try to make the event something that will appeal to everyone," Spencer said.

The highlight of the event is the Survivor and Caregiver Celebration, which honors cancer survivors with a special lap, gifts and dinner, beginning at 5 p.m. The day will end with a luminaria ceremony.

Fayette County Commissioner Vince Vicites said he was honored to be invited to be part of the Survivor and Caregiver Celebration ceremony, because the cause is very close to his heart.

"My mother died of cancer and I want to do all that I can for the American Cancer Society and Relay For Life," Vicites said. "It's a very important cause to support in Fayette County."



“Cancer is one of the leading causes of death in this country and in Fayette, so the more support financially we can give to this cause, the more the American Cancer Society can provide funds for cancer research and cures.”

All event proceeds will benefit the American Cancer Society and its local partners, including the free wig salon at Laurel Business Institute in Uniontown and Road to Recovery of Fayette County, which matches cancer patients with drivers who can take them to their treatments.

“A lot of our drivers are cancer survivors themselves, so they’ve been in the patient’s shoes before,” Spencer said. “Of course, one of the main things our donations go toward is research.”

Spencer said the Fayette County relay committee has set a fundraising goal of \$100,000 for this year’s festivities, but the day is really about spending time together and sharing stories.

“I always say that Relay For Life is hard to explain. It’s just something you have to go and experience for yourself,” Spencer said. “I didn’t have a background knowing anyone with cancer; I just went once and fell in love with it.”

Spencer said the event is special because there’s “no divide” among participants.

“It doesn’t matter who you are, what your background is or where you come from,” he said. “Everyone is there because they want to beat cancer.

“It’s fun for all ages, especially in Fayette County, because we’re really pushing to make it great for everyone. These volunteers have blown us away all year in Fayette.”

Fayette County Commissioner Angela Zimmerlink said supporting Relay For Life is important for many reasons other than simply “being human nature.”

“It is the kindness and caring of people helping and supporting one another in these times and we all should do our part, in whatever way we can, to support one another,” Zimmerlink said.

The relay will move to the indoor campus community center in the event of inclement weather.

Cancer survivors can register for the 5 p.m. ceremony until the day of the event. Sponsors, volunteers and teams are still welcome. Contact Spencer at 724-824-5116 or dillon.spencer@cancer.org to join the fight against cancer.

For more information, visit www.facebook.com/relayforlifeoffayettecountypa or www.relayforlife.org/fayettecountypa.

For American Cancer Society assistance, call the national hotline at 1-800-227-2345.



To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.fayettecountypa.info.

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