

Relay for Life event steps off this Friday

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Rain or shine, the American Cancer Relay for Life event brings out scores of participants who walk to raise money for cancer research that may one day lead to a cure for the disease.

Organizers of the Wagoner County Relay for Life are hoping to raise \$105,000 this year.

The event is a program through the American Cancer Society. It is a time to honor those who have survived, and remember those who have died from the disease, as well as to raise awareness of it.

The theme this year is "1985" celebrating 25 years of Relay. Jackie Murray, co-chair of this year's Relay, said participants are encouraged to dress up in mid-80's attire if they desire.

This year, Relay will start at 6 p.m. on Friday, May 29 with the Survivor Lap, and end at 6 a.m. on Saturday, May 30 at Maple Park in Wagoner. Chris Mann will deejay the music

for those attending. There are several kids activities, with members of the Wagoner Family Services Council and the Porter SWAT team helping.

Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) is a program in which students encourage their peers not to take up smoking or using tobacco products.

Murray said at press time, there are 31 teams signed up for the event. She said more teams are encouraged to sign up, and all cancer survivors and their caregivers are encouraged to attend.

"This is the reason we do this," Murray said.

Many businesses, individuals and organizations participate in the event. One of the biggest events is the "Queen of Relay" in which men dress up in drag, and collect money from those attending.

"The Queen of Relay is always a big hit," Murray commented.

There will also be other on-site fundraising activities including a silent auction.

In 2008, a total of \$95,668 was raised by the teams and other donations, which was short of the goal of \$100,000.

For additional information, people can contact Murray at 485-9612 or co-chair Donna Ramsey at 760-8250.



Cancer survivors carry their banner proudly on the first lap of the Wagoner County Relay for Life event in 2008. This year's American Cancer Society fundraiser begins this Friday, May 29 at 6 p.m.