

Relay throws birthday bash; raises \$39,000

Written by Darci Tomky



□□ Charlene Kropp and Marjorie Colglazier greet one another with smiles as they finish the survivor lap at Relay For Life. The two joined a number of cancer survivors who were honored at the event. □□—Enterprise photo

□ The goal is to celebrate more birthdays, and Phillips County communities recently joined forces to raise money for the American Cancer Society and cancer research, giving survivors hope and a reason to celebrate each birthday. Twenty-four teams gathered for the “12 Hour Birthday Bash” at the ninth annual Relay For Life Friday-Saturday, June 4-5.

□ Phillips County Courthouse Square was alive with balloons, games, party hats and, of course, birthday cake. In the months leading up to Relay, team members committed themselves to raising money and walking at the 12-hour event. By the end of Relay, Phillips County teams had raised \$39,090.76 for the American Cancer Society.

□ Emcees Joe Hall and Marcia Dalton welcomed survivors, teams, volunteers and guests to this year’s Relay, thanking everyone for their involvement in the county event and their dedication to finding a way to beat cancer.

□ Kicking off the night’s events, cancer survivors made their way around the track in a “Victory Lap.” Friends and Relay participants lined the walkway, cheering on the survivors. Caregivers and family walked alongside them, showing their encouragement in the fight against cancer, and survivors released purple balloons.

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□ Sporting costumes and Relay gear, team members circled the track next in the team parade. Winner of the best parade entry was Grainland Co-op.

□ Other team awards went to Phillips County for the best campsite; Flower Garden, most team spirit; and Melissa Memorial Hospital Wild Things, best team baton.

□ New to this year was a cake decorating contest following the Birthday Bash theme. First place was won by the Toy Story team.

□ Speaking of cakes, one lucky community member got a cake in the face Friday night. For Grainland's "Caked" event, jars around town collected money for Relay, and the second place winner Harlan Stern had the fun opportunity to cake the first place winner Rick Unrein.

□ A variety of other team activities and entertainment kept walkers awake and excited throughout the 12-hour walk. Fund raisers included everything from lip sync karaoke, hair cuts, tasty treats and piñatas while musicians and special guests took the stage for entertainment.

□ Teams competed in the musical chairs scavenger hunt, M&M relay, sack lunch relay, egg toss, not-so-newlywed game and reverse wheelchair race.

□ Every year, team activities take a break for the Relay For Life Luminaria Ceremony. The track was lit up with candles to remember those affected by cancer, and their names were read as participants recognized why they were there—for hope, to celebrate, to remember and to fight back. Dozens of luminaria were dedicated in memory of those lost to cancer and in honor of those still fighting the disease.

□ Phillips County can take pride in their efforts to raise money for cancer research. This year's top fund raising team was Hofmeister Insurance/Haxtun Fleming Herald with \$4,188. Top individual was Nora Hofmeister with \$500.

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□ Most money raised per capita went to Toy Story with \$216.47 for each member and \$1,515.30 total. Points West Community Bank missed it by just 77¢ with \$215.70 each and \$2,157 total.

□ Other preliminary team totals include A Family Affair \$1,215, Bank of Colorado \$2,076.20, Cheering for a Cure \$1,284.72, First Pioneer National Bank \$1,046, Flamin' Stylist \$1,090, Flower Garden \$2,567.25, Grainland \$1,680.10, Ham Family \$1,000, Happily Ever After \$729.53, Haxtun Lions Club \$1,645, Haxtun National Junior Honor Society \$1,421.27, Haxtun UMYF \$1,114, Haxtun United Methodist Church \$1,867, Melissa Memorial Hospital Wild Things \$2,118.56, PC Telcom/Radio Shack \$1,160 and Phillips County \$1,816.40.