

'Magic of Relay' to be celebrated Friday

Written by Chris Lee

With the Phillips County Relay For Life just around the corner, teams are busy tracking down those last couple of dollars to add to their team totals. Final plans are being carried out to make this year's annual Relay a memorable one.

Phillips County courthouse lawn in Holyoke will again serve as the location for the annual Relay Friday-Saturday, Aug. 24-25. The theme for this year's event is "The Magic of Relay."

Relay team members and cancer survivors will join together for hundreds of laps around the courthouse to remember the lives of those lost and celebrate those who have overcome their battle with cancer.

The evening will kick off with a meal by R&B Catering at 6 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend, and those who are not team members or cancer survivors are asked to give a freewill donation.

The opening ceremony will begin at 7 p.m. with a welcome from Phillips County Relay committee chairmen Sharon Greenman and Sherry Mari.

Following the opening ceremony, there will be a survivor "victory" lap where survivors and their caregivers will circle the courthouse while being recognized.

Emcees for this year's event are Marcia Dalton and Marcus Kammer.

The luminaria will be lit with the ceremony beginning at 9 p.m. with "In Memory of" and "In Honor of" readings followed by a silent memory lap.

Luminaria can be purchased prior to Relay by calling Chris Lee at 520-9650 or from 3-8 p.m. at the Courthouse on the Friday of Relay.

In addition to the socializing, numerous camp sites will have games and activities to keep people entertained throughout the evening. Seaboard Foods will have a 60-foot inflatable

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obstacle course at their site, Team Barn Burners a boxing ring, Team Major Rockstarz Minute to Win It games, Justice League superhero face painting and First Pioneer National Bank will be selling ducks for a chance to win prizes.

Relay activity coordinator Brittany Durbin has organized numerous activities for teams to participate in as well. Some of the games include Mr. Relay, Minute to Win It games, a frozen T-shirt contest and a Relay Idol contest.

For those interested in chili, a cook-off will be held at midnight for those wishing to participate. Organizers ask that chili be made ahead of time and placed in a crock pot. Money cups will be placed by each entry and the winner will be the one with the most money. The contest will be held from midnight-1 a.m.

Money can be raised up until the time the bank closes which is scheduled for 5 a.m.



Young survivor among those attending

Attending this year's Relay will be a young boy from Texas. Cooper Ballesterros is a 3-year-old survivor from Plain-view, Texas. The youngster was diagnosed with rhabdoid sarcoma June 5, 2011.

Ballesterros is the great-nephew of Sheila Robinson of Holyoke who invited the survivor and his family to the Phillips County Relay.

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Ballesterros is the son of Julie Ritter (Robinson's niece). His stepfather is Brett Ritter.

Robinson said the family was happy to be invited and is looking forward to the trip. She also said they plan to make a donation as they are more than happy to support the American Cancer Society.

Young Ballesterros is in remission and has had good labs during recent doctor appointments. He recently returned from a Make-A-Wish trip to Disney World.

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