



AT THE END of the second lap, Robbie Henningson, Tillie Shirley and Jeni and Nolan Henningson (above) slowed down to read the names on the luminaries. Alice is Nolan's great-grandmother. Kaine Fredrickson (below) released white doves out of the wicker basket.

# Cancer fighters walk to raise cash

Dressed in matching blue T-shirts, about 50 cancer survivors from this area took two turns around the high school track to kick off Oberlin's second annual Relay For Life.

The men and women carried purple balloons which they released into the blue sky after the first lap to honor those who had lost their lives to the disease.

On the second lap, friends, family and caregivers joined the survivors for a lap before the relay teams took over for the night.

The event, which raises money for the American Cancer Society, brought people from all over the county out to see the opening program and lighting of the 537 luminaries after dark.

Committee Member Sarah Fredrickson said so far, \$7,800 has been raised, although some of the money is still coming in. She said anyone who still wants to give can do so for another week by contacting a committee member.

New to the event this year were the "birds of hope," white doves given by Cloud Nine Lofts owner Tammy Touslee. The birds were

carried in a wicker basket to the field and released after the cancer survivors' names were read. The birds return to their home after being released.

Although the event was scheduled to last from 7 p.m. Friday to 7 a.m. Saturday, with members from each of the teams walking all night, rain shut things down at midnight.

The actual relay may only have taken five hours, but the planning started months ago. Committee members Dr. Gary, Sarah and Karli Fredrickson, Regina Stanley, Peg Smith, Sue Black, Patty Brown and Chris Dempewolf started work in January, said Mrs. Fredrickson. Everything had to be done in advance, from getting sponsors, to setting a date, to planning each detail.

This year, the group tried something new with the luminaries. First of all the names on the luminaries purchased early were printed by computer.

They collected clear plastic two-liter pop bottles, then cut off the bottoms to fill with sand and put inside the bags. The committee didn't have enough pop bottles and had to use some plastic bags, but because of the

wind on Friday, they found that the luminaries had to have sand in the bottom of the bags.

Mrs. Fredrickson said they had tried the bottles to make cleanup easier. When the bags got wet last year, it was hard to get them and all the sand off the track.

On Friday afternoon, committee members, with help of some local kids and four boys from Sappa Valley Youth Ranch, got everything set up.

Tents were erected, the luminaries with sand and candles were placed around the track and on the south bleachers, signs were put on the track and all details completed so when walkers showed up that night, everything was ready to go.

The third Relay for Life is already in the works for next year, Mrs. Fredrickson said. Anyone who wants to be on a committee or sign up a team can contact her.

Mrs. Fredrickson said everything went well this time. She said the committee appreciates all of the sponsors, because without them, the relay would not have been possible.

Anyone who wants a Relay for Life program may contact her.



ON THE SOUTH BLEACHERS, Serina Heikes (left) put candles in the luminaries during setup. Dr. Gary Fredrickson (far left) filled cups and bags with sand.



Story and photos by Kimberly Brandt

