

# 2006 RELAY FOR LIFE OF Salinas

June 23 and 24

## WHY I RELAY...

by Patricia A Mitchell

# In 2005, Relay For Life of Salinas raised over \$1.1 million...

...for the American Cancer Society in its mission to find a cure for cancer. There are over 4,500 Relay For Life events held in our nation and Salinas is ranked #4 due to its successful fundraising efforts. The success of Relay For Life of Salinas is directly attributed to the ongoing support of teams, business sponsors and local contributors, as well as the many volunteers who commit their time and energy to this event. This year Relay For Life of Salinas will celebrate its 9th year at Hartnell College. We all have been working together for years, contributing to the Relay For Life of Salinas as proud members of our community. With renewed energy and passion, each and every one of us tells the story of the American Cancer Society to the Salinas community.

We all participate for different reasons but we all share a common goal - that one day cancer will be eliminated! We cannot do it alone - but together, we can and will continue to make a difference in the lives of our community members as well as many others. Thank you, Salinas, for joining us in the fight.

**KATHY PIMENTEL and DEB AJESKA**  
Co-Chairs, Relay For Life of Salinas 2006

I Relay for my son Wylie, my sister Karen, my father Joe, our friend Rich- can you guess what they all have in common? They all battled cancer and lost within a very brief window of time. Each and every time I heard the diagnosis I thought, "ok, its not going to be easy but he/she will beat this thing", and in some sense they did, they did not allow it to change who they were.

I became involved with Relay the second year it came to Salinas, at that time I had no losses in my family and only wanted to help. By the time the next Relay came around we had lost my grandfather, then within minutes of the opening ceremony the next year, my son passed away, less than a year later my sister, father and Rich had also passed. The trauma of such great loss only seems to push me even harder, maybe this could be the year. Maybe the next dollar raised is the one that will find a cure. Maybe the next time I know someone with a cancer diagnosis they will be the one saved.

Fighting cancer is tough, not only for the person with the diagnosis, but their friends and family. I remember coming home at night and wanting to just collapse into my bed and hide. But I realized that the same thing would be waiting for me when I crawled out of my hiding place. So I chose not to hide, I chose to make a difference with my life, to make a difference with the lives and memories of my son, my sister, my father, my grandfather and Rich. I talk to anyone who will listen about cancer and how we need to find a cure. I talk about Relay and what a difference it makes in research. I listen to those who have their own story to tell, sometimes the nicest thing you can give someone is an ear.

It can be very stressful during Relay season. I hear people complain about not getting the prime spot for their tent, or maybe someone wasn't kind to them at Relay, or maybe they didn't get enough help from their team members. But really, is any of that even comparable to what a cancer patient goes through? No it is not. We should all keep close to our heart why we Relay, and remind ourselves of that reason when we start to get discouraged.

We should all celebrate with the many survivors who come out to Relay. Celebrate their day, because isn't that why we Relay, for the survivor?

I Relay for Wylie Howard Mitchell, Karen Curry-Scurrah, Howard Curry, Joe Mack and Rich Fumagalli. I Relay for the known and the unknown. I Relay because I know I can make a difference, can you?



## Celebrating 60 Years of Progress in Cancer Research

# Then and Now...

The American Cancer Society funds more cancer research than any not-for-profit, non-governmental organization in the US, nearly \$3 billion since 1946. With a significant role in nearly every major advance against cancer, the Society celebrates the 10 million cancer survivors alive today because of these breakthroughs and we look forward to a future of increased discovery.



Relay For Life Salinas celebrates its 9th year...wow! I have participated in Relay For Life for 7 years and it's never the 'same ole thing'! Each year I look forward to participating in this community event. I look forward to celebrating the survivorship of my husband and his father. I look forward to banding together with family, friends and community members in the fight against cancer. I look forward to a special night remembering my parents, relatives, baby godson and friends who have lost their battle to cancer. But most importantly, I look forward to the day when we find a cure for cancer!

Each year we ask for support for Relay For Life. Whether it's a monetary donation or volunteers working the event (a lot of times it's both!). The support that continues to pour from our community at this event is astounding! It is inspiring ... overwhelming ... incredulous! It is a reflection of our generosity and the generosity of its people.

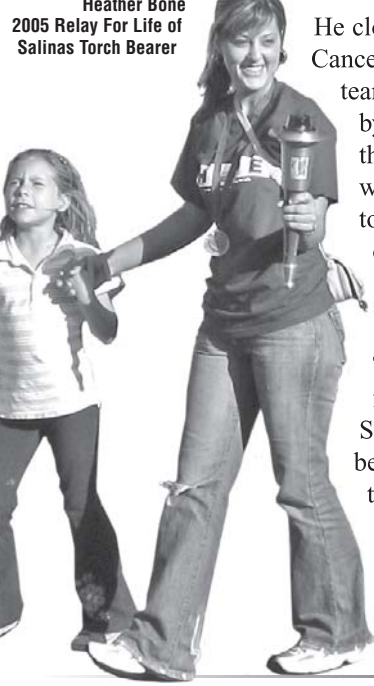
We give up one night of sleep to participate in Relay For Life... because cancer never sleeps. We give money so that strides in research can continue to be made. We give our time and energy because we know it's the right thing to do. We are empowered in the fight against cancer and Relay For Life provides that empowerment. Don't wait for cancer to touch your life. Take a stand now!

Please join our community as we celebrate our cancer survivors, honor our caretakers and remember the memories of our loved ones. It's an experience like no other and one that you won't ever forget!



## How did Relay For Life get on track to become one of the most popular and successful fundraisers to fight cancer?

The roots of Relay begin in May 1985 when Dr. Gordy Klatt, a colorectal surgeon and avid runner, took the first step of his 24-hour walk/run around a track in Tacoma, Washington to show his dedication to finding a cure for cancer.



Heather Bone  
2005 Relay For Life of Salinas Torch Bearer

He clocked 83 miles, raising \$27,000 to support the American Cancer Society. The very next year, 220 people formed 19 teams and showed their support for Dr. Klatt and his cause by joining him on the track in this overnight event. And that is how the American Cancer Society Relay For Life was born. Over the last 18 years, Relay For Life has spread to 3,800 communities in the United States and eight foreign countries. What began as one man's statement in the fight against cancer has led to the development of a worldwide event to help eradicate cancer.

Today, Relays are the single largest fundraising activity for the ACS and currently they account for 26% of the Society's total income. Here in Salinas, our Relay event began 8 years ago with just 30 teams. But with each year that has passed we have grown and grown and we only see more growth in our future.

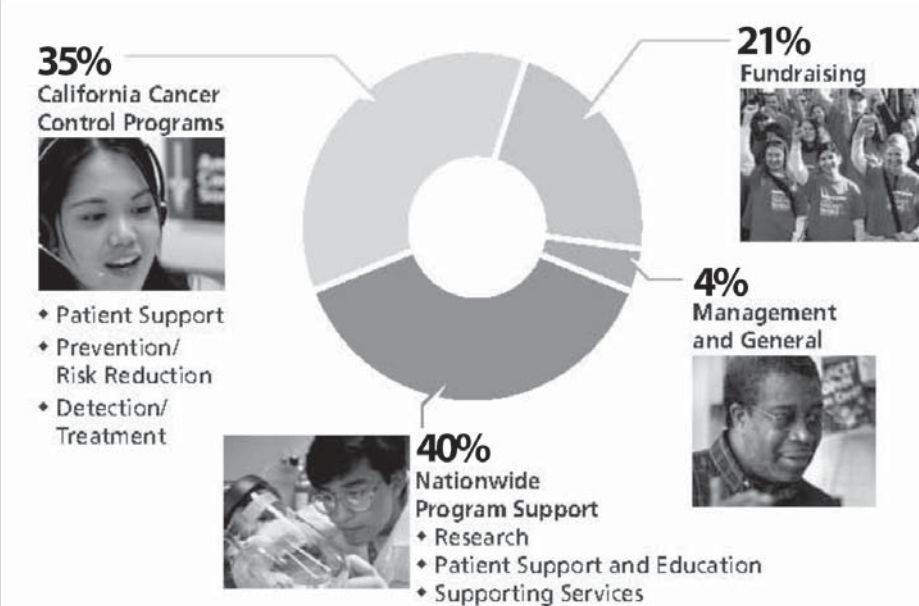
So make plans to come out and join us as we help light the way to a cancer free future!

In 2004, Relay For Life across the country raised \$303 million for the fight against cancer. The funds you help to raise through Relay For Life of Salinas directly change the lives of people in our community who are affected by cancer through various programs, research and education. The funds raised by the American Cancer Society are used in many ways, as is shown in this graph.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you are a student in need of community service hours or someone who wants to volunteer for Relay For Life of Salinas, please contact Cathy Joest at (831)484-9302 or email at [ibekoo@aol.com](mailto:ibekoo@aol.com).

### Using Donated Money Wisely



- More than \$10 million was awarded to California research institutions.
- Nationwide the American Cancer Society funds about \$100 million annually.
- Regardless of where cancer research happens, the breakthroughs benefit us all.

Source: American Cancer Society California Division, Inc. audited financial figures, 2002-03

## the committee

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