

## **Relay For Life returning to Cozad**

Written by Gothenburg Times  
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### **Planning starts this month.**

The 17th annual American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Dawson County returns to Cozad next summer and planning will start this month.

This celebration of life brings together Dawson County residents and businesses in an effort to fight back against cancer by raising money for American Cancer Society programs and raising awareness about the American Cancer Society's mission, according to April Headley, 2011 event chairperson, of Gothenburg.

The Relay For Life will be Friday, July 29, starting at 7 p.m. with the survivors lap at Cozad High School track.

"Mark your calendars now and plan to be part of this inspirational and fun filled night," Headley said. "Relay For Life empowers all of us, young and old, survivors and caregivers, business owners and corporate sponsors. Everyone involved with Relay For Life knows the fight back power we have!"

The first organizational meeting is planned for Tuesday, Dec. 14, at 6:30 p.m. at the Cozad Public Library, 901 Meridian Ave. Anyone interested in learning more about the American Cancer Society, the Relay For Life event, or wanting to be more involved with the 2011 planning committee is invited to attend.

"We are looking for fresh ideas and enthusiasm to partner with our solid base of experience and commitment," Headley said. "The possibilities are endless when it comes to helping plan and facilitate a successful Relay event. We can find a job for everyone willing to give the time and effort."

The 2011 Relay For Life of Dawson County web page is up and running with four returning teams already signed up. Last year, all Relay team captains registered their teams and team

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members on-line. It was great to see all of our teams listed there, Headley said. "Every time I had a chance, I went to the website to check the on-line total. Donations really piled in the closer we got to Relay, but teams don't have to wait this year. We can start now."

Go to the [DC Relay For Life](#) website and follow the easy directions to register a team for the 2011 event.

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life is a life-changing event that brings together more than 3.5 million people every year to celebrate the lives of those who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost, and empower individuals and communities to fight back against a disease that takes so much.

Relay For Life opens as cancer survivors (anyone who has ever been diagnosed with cancer) and caregivers complete the first lap. This is an emotional time that sets the stage of the importance of each participant's contribution. A festive atmosphere develops around the track. As walkers make new friends and spend time with old ones, the Relay heats up and the camp-out begins. An atmosphere of camaraderie is created with team members entertaining each other: eating, playing games and, of course, walking for a great cause.

Highlighting the evening is the luminaria ceremony that takes place after dark to honor cancer survivors and to remember those lost. Luminaria line the track and are left burning throughout the night to remind participants of the importance of their efforts.

"Relay For Life is as much an awareness raiser about the progress against cancer as it is a fundraiser," said Headley. "Many of the participants will be people who have dealt with cancer themselves. Their involvement is proof of the progress that has been made in improving cancer survival rates and the quality of life following cancer treatment."

Information about how to form a team or become involved in the American Cancer Society Relay For Life is available at [here](#) or by calling Headley at 308-529-3659.