

Fighting back one step at a time

Written by Deb Egenberger

Thursday, 29 July 2010 11:58 - Last Updated Thursday, 29 July 2010 12:00



Step by step, bag after bag the lump in my throat grew heavier.

I did not recognize all of the names on the luminaria lining the track at the Lincoln County Relay for Life last weekend. It didn't matter. I knew full well what each of those bags symbolized.

Cancer.

There were photos of children, young adults, grandmas and grandpas.

There were notes to sisters and husbands and dear, dear friends.

Some luminaria contained messages of victory and triumph for those honored. Others bore words of sadness and longing for those remembered.

In the daylight, the luminarias were simply a bunch of white paper sacks decorated with crayons and markers.

When the full moon rose and the stars came out, those sacks were magically transformed into glowing symbols of hope.

The flickering candlelight inside each paper monument spoke to me as if the spirits of those honored were whispering in my ear.

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“Keep fighting for a cure.”

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“Keep fighting ...”

I don't think there's a single person who walks this earth who has not been affected by cancer in some way. If it's not a personal battle waged against this dreadful disease it's a crusade for a loved one.

We all see it. We all hate it.

I did not keep track of the laps I walked over that 12-hour period. I didn't need to know. It wasn't about me.

Instead, I walked for the 1,500 people who die in the United States every day because of cancer and the 3,400 who will get that diagnosis today.

This weekend offers another opportunity to support those brave souls who have faced cancer's demons.

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Dawson County kicks off at 6 p.m. Friday, July 30, at Kirkpatrick Memorial Park in Lexington.

The spirits will speak again. I hope you can make it.