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Section I


The American Cancer Society Relay For Life has always been about celebrating, remembering, and fighting back.

Through Relay For Life events, we help communities celebrate survivorship and the hope that one day cancer will be eliminated. We also help them to remember loved ones lost to the disease while finding comfort and healing. Both of these emotionally charged elements of Relay are visually symbolized through our Survivors Lap and the Luminaria Ceremony. Through Relay and these emotional experiences, we have built an army ready to fight back and take action against a disease that has already taken too much. Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. (CRFB) is the next step in the evolution of an event – a worldwide movement – that changes lives.

In 2008, thousands of events across the country did something that hasn’t been done in nearly 25 years of Relay history. These events added a new “take action” ceremony – the Fight Back Ceremony. By deepening the emotional experience participants have while at Relay, these events hope to use the Fight Back Ceremony to further mobilize their communities – engaging them in personal action to change behavior and ultimately save lives.

Communicating Our Message

Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. helps communities to communicate their Relay message in a way that allows those who have not been involved to see their place in the Relay movement. For those who are currently involved, they understand that Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. embodies the essence of what Relay means to them personally.

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. The strength of survivors inspires others to continue to fight.

Remember loved ones lost to the disease. At Relay, people who have walked alongside those battling cancer can grieve and find healing.

Fight Back. We Relay because we have been touched by cancer and desperately want to put an end to the disease. Make a commitment to save lives by taking up the fight.

Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE through Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back.

As we approach our 25th year of Relay, we can both reflect on and look forward to all the ways we can celebrate, remember, and fight back through Relay and because of Relay. Within this guidebook you will discover three individual community activities and one nationwide activity. Each of these activities will provide you and your community a creative and interactive way to celebrate 25 years of hope through Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back.
Section II

Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE
Section II – Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE

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Overview

What Is “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE”?

During May 2009, Relay For Life will reach the milestone of 25 years of community presence and action in the fight against cancer. Since 1985, Relay For Life has grown from one man – Dr. Gordy Klatt, who walked, jogged, and ran around a track for 24 hours raising money for his local American Cancer Society unit – to a movement to eliminate cancer that now takes place in 5,000 communities in the United States and in 19 other countries around the world. More than 3.5 million people participate in the life-changing event, which has raised a total of more than $3 billion to fund the American Cancer Society’s mission.

During 2009, the American Cancer Society will use “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” to explain how Relay is a worldwide movement to eliminate cancer, to reinforce Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back, and to show how the involvement of Relayers has helped the American Cancer Society make progress in research, education, advocacy, and patient services.
“Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” is the nationwide theme for Relay For Life’s 2008-09 season. We have developed special community activities around Relay’s 25th year to complement Relay events and their ceremonies nationwide.

Opening Ceremony – American Cancer Society’s Accomplishment Banners and Community Accomplishment Banner

A set of five American Cancer Society banners have been created in an effort to help educate the public on the progress the American Cancer Society has made in research, education, advocacy, and patient services over the past 25 years thanks to the valuable funds raised through Relay For Life. This set of banners will be provided free of charge to every Relay in the country. (Please speak with your Relay staff partner for more information.)

We have also created a community accomplishment banner available for ordering. (Speak with your Relay staff partner for information.) This template allows a community to customize banners with the local accomplishments of their Relay For Life and the programs and services offered by the American Cancer Society in their community.

All of these banners can be displayed at various American Cancer Society and Relay For Life functions, and they can also be carried by survivors in the opening Survivors Lap in recognition of the hope these accomplishments represent.

Luminaria Ceremony – Commemorative Stage Luminaria

A set of commemorative stage luminaria is being provided free of charge to every Relay event in the country. (Please check with your local staff partner for information.) The Luminaria Ceremony script included in this resource guidebook has been updated to utilize this new set.

Fight Back Ceremony – the 25th Hour

During the Fight Back Ceremony, Relay participants and guests are asked to make a “25th hour” in their day to fight back against cancer. As with the accomplishment banners and the stage luminaria, the refreshed Fight Back Ceremony script included in this resource guidebook has been updated with this 25th hour messaging.
Show Us Your HOPE Nationwide Activity
As Relay For Life celebrates 25 years, Relay communities across the country will have the opportunity to demonstrate what hope looks like to them by hosting special events around the “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” theme. The individual events may serve as promotional activities for Relay For Life and as local or regional media photo opportunities. American Cancer Society communications staff and volunteers will work together to tell the Relay For Life story to a broad audience by showing the strength and passion of Relayers in communities large and small.

The goal of “Show Us Your HOPE” events is to position Relay For Life as an international movement to end cancer. In order to reach that goal, “Show Us Your HOPE” events should be planned to attract media attention. Community activities should also be visual in nature, and whenever possible, images should be captured (still images and video) to share in online communities such as RelayForLife.org and SharingHope.tv.
Everyone who has helped Relay become a life-changing, worldwide movement has earned the privilege of celebrating its success, impact, and attributed accomplishments. Each of you also plays an important role in ensuring “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” and activities designed to highlight and celebrate Relay’s successes become a reality.

Event Chairperson:
As a leader within the community and your committee, your role with “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” is to:

- Understand and speak to the purpose and messaging of “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” and the “Show Us Your HOPE” nationwide activities.
- Understand and use “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” as a re-engagement opportunity for lapsed participants, volunteers, sponsors, etc.
- Understand available resources, where to locate them, and to which committee members they are applicable.
- Understand all Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. nationwide activities and how to infuse them into committee meetings, and work with appropriate subcommittee chairs on infusing them into event planning and team meetings.
- Understand the purpose and importance of the Fight Back Ceremony.
- Work with your staff partner and subcommittee chairs on a plan to best use each of the “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” activities at Relay and year-round.

Team Recruitment/Retention Chairperson:
As a leader on your committee, you are often the face of the American Cancer Society to your team captains, so your role with “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” is to:

- Understand and speak to the purpose and messaging of “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE.”
- Understand and use “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” as a team retention/engagement strategy for lapsed team captains and members.
- Understand each of the three Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. nationwide activities and how to infuse them into team captain meetings, kickoff events, newsletters, etc.
- Understand all Fight Back activities and work with the appropriate subcommittee chairs on infusing them into team captain meetings, kickoff events, and participant communications.
Roles and Responsibilities

Mission/Advocacy Chairperson:
The community accomplishment banners and the “25th Hour” campaign are two of the three Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. nationwide activities. As the mission/advocacy leader on your committee, your role with the planning and implementing of these two activities is very important. Your role with “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” is to:

- Understand and speak to the purpose and messaging of “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE.”
- Understand and use “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” as a re-engagement opportunity for lapsed participants, volunteers, and sponsors.
- Understand each of the three Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. nationwide activities and ways to fully utilize them during Relay and year-round, with a particular focus on the community accomplishment banners and the “25th Hour” campaign.
- Understand all Fight Back activities and work with appropriate subcommittee chairs on infusing them into team captain and committee meetings, kickoff events, participant communications, media events, etc.
- Understand the purpose and importance of the Fight Back Ceremony and the use of the Fight Back banner as a motivational tool and symbol of taking action.
- Be able to explain the “25th Hour” campaign.

Subcommittee Chairperson:
Everyone on the committee plays an important role in “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE.” As a subcommittee chairperson, your role is to:

- Understand the purpose and messaging of “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE.”
- Understand and use “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” as a re-engagement opportunity for lapsed participants, volunteers, and sponsors.
- Understand each of the three Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. nationwide activities and the appropriate involvement for your committee.
- Work with the event chair on what resources are relevant to your subcommittee work.
This document – volume two of the *Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. Resource Guidebook* – is dedicated to providing the information you need to successfully plan and implement the three Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. community activities. For additional information on Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. and refreshing your event’s activities and ceremonies, please see volume one of the *Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. Resource Guidebook* by visiting the Relay Library on RelayForLife.org. Additional copies of volume one are also available for order from the Nationwide Distribution Center (product code #7545.39).
Section III

Celebrate

Section III – Celebrate

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Celebrate
Relay is often defined as a celebration of life. While it can be a celebration characterized by fun and frivolity, Relay’s celebration can only truly be symbolized by the courage and spirit of the more than 500,000 cancer survivors who proudly walk the first lap at one of our nearly 5,000 community Relay For Life events.

Ensuring that these survivors, their caregivers, former caregivers, and all those who are witness to this momentous occasion experience healing and are emotionally charged to take action is important to the overall success of your event.

The information included here, and in volume one of the Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. Resource Guidebook available on RelayForLife.org, will help you and your committees plan emotionally charged ceremonies and activities for the day of your event, as well as activities all year long. Your efforts will inspire people to remember their reason to celebrate and to fight back for that very reason year-round.
Purpose
The opening ceremony will set the tone for the entire 24 hours of your Relay event. It provides an opportunity to bring everyone together during a high-energy ceremony to celebrate the lives of those who have battled cancer as well as those who have provided comfort and care. During the opening ceremony, we also inspire hope by sharing recent accomplishments and progress and by reminding everyone that while we are making progress, fighting cancer is a year-round priority.

The opening ceremony should include everyone attending the Relay, with particular focus on survivors, current caregivers, former caregivers, those touched by cancer, and those who want to make a difference.

At the end of the opening ceremony, we lead into the Survivors Lap, where everyone in attendance is encouraged to celebrate the strength and spirit of the survivors and where survivors have an opportunity to reflect and celebrate with their caregivers (if they are in attendance). To ensure everyone is included, specifically invite former caregivers – anyone who has ever cared for someone with cancer – to walk in your Caregivers Lap (whether as part of your Survivors Lap or at the conclusion of it) so that they may be recognized as well.

In 2009, we will be honoring the 25th year of Relay For Life by “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE.” We will have the unique opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of the American Cancer Society, understand the role Relay has played, and realize the incredible impact we have had on survivorship over the past 25 years. All this can be done quite simply through our community Celebrate activity and accomplishment banners. (See further information page 23.)

Ceremony Structure
The opening ceremony should take place on the main stage. Performers, the emcee(s), and speakers should be identified and prepared before the day of the event. You may also wish to incorporate co-chairs, a sponsor, and an individual who represents the Celebrate aspect of Relay For Life (such as a survivor). We recommend the opening ceremony be brief – 15 minutes (or 30 including the Survivors Lap) is ideal – and be held at the beginning of your event. The goal is to keep everyone’s attention, which can be difficult to do during a long ceremony presented in a large area with sound systems that may not be optimum. To keep the ceremony as short as possible, limit the number of speakers and activities on stage.
Opening Ceremony

Key Points to Convey During the Opening Ceremony

- Welcome and thank participants for coming and for supporting Relay For Life.
- Explain that Relay represents a community coming together for one reason: to fight cancer.
- Convey the cancer burden. When using the hand-held Celebrate. Remember, Fight Back. flags (7547.56), mention that the flags represent people who are facing cancer, including people in the local community. (You can use local diagnosis information here available through your staff partner or RelayForLife.org.)
- Ask and offer the answers to the questions “What can you do to help?” and “How can you fight back?,” and then ask people to stick around for the Fight Back Ceremony.
- Invite people to visit the community accomplishments banner/area to see how they are helping to save lives by being here today and supporting Relay and the American Cancer Society.
- Explain the logistics of the Survivors Lap and Caregivers Lap.
Opening Ceremony

Sample Script

American Cancer Society Relay For Life of [Hometown], USA

10 minutes prior to OPENING CEREMONY
State, national, and Relay flag-bearers; color guard; and high school marching band gather on either side of stage area. Emcee and event co-chairs are on stage, ready to go.

EMCEE:
Ladies and gentlemen, at this time we ask that all survivors gather under the balloon arch [or other starting location] in preparation for our opening ceremony. Participants, please fan out around the track/gather around the stage area. The opening ceremonies will begin in five minutes.

EMCEE:
Please welcome the [hometown] high school marching band and color guard as they present our national anthem.

EMCEE:
I’m happy to introduce your American Cancer Society Relay For Life of [hometown] co-chairs, [X] and [Y]

CO-CHAIR X:
Thank you. It’s so good to see everyone. Thank you for being here and a special thanks to the [hometown] high school marching band! Welcome to the 2009 American Cancer Society Relay For Life of [hometown]! This is an amazing gathering. Just look around you. Families, friends, coworkers, business and community leaders, children, grandparents, and neighbors are all here for the same reason: to put an end to cancer. The next 24 hours will take us together on life-affirming journey, symbolizing a day in the life of someone fighting cancer – a disease that never sleeps.

As we kick off this amazing celebration, I need to ask you a question. Can you give me a cheer if you know the name Gordy Klatt?

I see some of you really know your Relay history! That’s right ... this is a special year for the American Cancer Society. It was 25 years ago, in 1985, that one man – Dr. Gordy Klatt – laced up his shoes and took to a track in Tacoma, Washington, to make a statement about fighting cancer. Dr. Klatt ran and walked 83 miles in 24 hours and raised $27,000 for the American Cancer Society.
Opening Ceremony

CO-CHAIR Y:
[X] and I are so proud to be standing here this evening with all of you, as we follow in that one man's footsteps. Isn’t it amazing to think that we are part of an international movement to end this disease? And that it all started with just one volunteer?

We’re here in [hometown] tonight, doing what other Relayers do in 5,000 communities across America and in 19 other countries. By walking this track this weekend, you are joining forces with nearly four million people worldwide who want to save lives.

While each of us has a unique reason for being here, we all have something very much in common – we want to make a difference in the fight against cancer. We have gathered as a community, determined that those who are facing cancer will be supported, that those who have lost their battle will NOT be forgotten, and that, together, we will continue to fight back so that one day, no one in [hometown] will hear those dreadful words – “you have cancer.”

Please help me welcome one of our very own “Heroes of Hope,” cancer survivor [name]!

SURVIVOR: (introduces 25th hour initiative)
Eliminating cancer isn’t going to be easy – nothing worthwhile ever is. It will take power and courage and time and money and sacrifice – just like it does to survive cancer. But it is possible.

You’ve heard it. It’s been all over the news: Our American Cancer Society recently announced that for the [##] consecutive year, the number of deaths from cancer is declining. More people are surviving. I know. I am one of them.

I am a [X-year] [type] cancer survivor and I’m here to celebrate with my family, friends, and all of you. I’ll be fighting back right beside all of you, too, for the next 364 days, until we’re back together again for Relay For Life 2010!

What will we do to fight on the days that we’re not here at Relay For Life? I’d like to share an idea with you.

Do you ever get so busy and caught up in your daily life that you just wish you had extra time to do what you need to do or want to do?

I can tell you as a survivor, that the days you spend from diagnosis through treatment are long. What I wouldn’t have given for just one hour free from cancer. Just one hour that I didn’t have to be so strong and fight so hard. Just one hour to live a normal life.

Well, now that I’ve beaten this disease, I wish I had more time to make a difference. I want to do all I can to make sure my family, my friends, and all of you don’t have to suffer from cancer.

So what if I created that hour for myself? We schedule so many other things into our lives. Let’s schedule just one hour to do something that will fight cancer.
Can you do that? Can you find your own “25th hour”? See if you can find it once. If you can, see if you can add it next month and the next. Before you know it, we’ll be back here together next year, and think of what we will have accomplished. Stick around for our Fight Back Ceremony to make a pledge about what you’ll do with your extra hour.

And now, as a survivor, as a citizen of [hometown], and as a Relayer, I’d like to say a special thank you to all of the companies who have taken a leadership role in our Relay by becoming sponsors. In addition to putting teams together, they lend their financial support to help offset our expenses or donate much-needed goods and services. If you look around you at all the logos that grace your T-shirt and this venue, you can see that we are fortunate to have a number of caring companies in [hometown]. From our title sponsor, [XXXXXX], please welcome [XXXXXX]!

(Ask one major sponsor to represent all sponsors in making remarks from the stage. Remarks should be brief and include a thank you to any other key sponsors that need to be mentioned.)

SPONSOR:
Thank you [name of survivor who introduced sponsor]. We are so happy to be here once again this year, along with our fellow sponsors [XXXXXX]. Over the past [XXX] years, we’ve been a proud partner to the American Cancer Society as a title sponsor. We’re also proud to bring a team that gets bigger and better each year! Last year, we were given another opportunity to fight back by sponsoring this Relay For Life Fight Back banner (hold it up or point to it) that many of you signed. This banner is a symbol of the commitment each of you made last year and – I hope – will make again this year to pledge to fight back against cancer. As [insert survivor’s name here] asked, think about what we could do if we all created one more hour – that 25th hour – to fight back. I want to see your name and your commitment on this banner again this year. Together we are making a difference! Together, we will put an end to this disease!

CO-CHAIR X:
Yes, [name of sponsor], we will put an end to this disease. Every single person here is doing their part to make a difference. Since 1913, when the American Cancer Society was founded, people have been drawn together by a very simple but urgent need – to stop cancer from hurting or destroying our lives. It is working!

Yet the Relay movement is only as strong as each of the individual community events that make up the phenomenon we know as Relay For Life. We have an obligation to make our community event as successful as it can be. If every event makes the same commitment, we will end cancer even sooner. If there was ever a year for us to redouble our efforts, this would be the year.
Opening Ceremony

We’re making progress, but have more work to do. This year alone, more than [XXX] Americans will be diagnosed with cancer and [XXX] will die from the disease. Those are unacceptable numbers.

Even more unacceptable is the fact that this year, right here in [hometown], some of the people diagnosed will be our friends, neighbors, family members, and coworkers. [You can use local diagnosis rates/numbers here. Request this information from your staff partner or visit cancer.org.]

Do you see these flags? We display them here to represent people who are battling this disease. Each flag represents a real person; perhaps it’s you or someone you love. We are here to work toward the day when we don’t have to have these flags to remind us that those we love are fighting a disease that takes too much from us.

CO-CHAIR Y:

Whether you are a survivor, someone who is currently caring for someone battling cancer, or someone who provided care for a loved one who has passed away – whether you are a team captain or team member, a volunteer here to give a few hours of your time, or someone who has stopped by to see what Relay For Life is all about – all the people these flags represent need you.

This year, we honor Relay For Life’s 25th year by “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE.” What the American Cancer Society has accomplished over the last 25 years – thanks to the efforts of Relayers everywhere – is nothing short of remarkable. Consider this:

- We have contributed to a 14 percent decrease in the cancer death rate since the early 1990s. We answer nearly one million calls a year from people facing cancer to 1-800-ACS-2345, a phone line that’s available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- We successfully advocated for smoke-free laws that now cover 60 percent of Americans.
- We launched a clinical trials matching service at www.cancer.org that connects cancer patients with more than 64,000 different treatment options.

These major accomplishments – and others listed on the accomplishment banners proudly carried by our “Heroes of Hope” this year during our Survivors Lap – are proof that the contributions you have raised are being invested wisely by the American Cancer Society and are achieving valuable results.

All of these accomplishments have helped save lives. Since Relay started, the mortality rate has dropped 14 percent, and we now have 11 million cancer survivors in the United States. In continuing to help Relay For Life grow, and by raising additional funds for the American Cancer Society, we are the force that can continue to save lives – and we can help do that even faster.

Some of your fellow Relayers have gone above and beyond the call of duty to make this Relay a great experience. The people you see among you in the [X color] shirts are members of your community who worked on the Relay committee to make this year’s event happen. By all means, flag them down and say hello, tell them what we can do to make your experience better, and ask them about all the many opportunities available to you. At the very least, please thank them for their hard work. They have dedicated their time and effort to make sure this is 24 hours you’ll never forget.

CO-CHAIR X:
So what do you say we get this celebration started?! Let me quickly explain what’s about to happen. We’re going to honor our survivors here with us today by asking them to take the first lap, and we ask that everyone else fan out around the track to cheer them as they go. As they finish the first lap, we’ll ask anyone who is currently a caregiver or who has ever been a caregiver, to join the survivors for a second lap. Then, we’ll ask all our teams to walk a lap together before we settle in to our regular walking schedule and kick off our entertainment and activities.

CO-CHAIR Y:
So, without further ado, please join me in cheering on our “Heroes of Hope” – our cancer survivors – our reason to celebrate, as they walk the opening lap of our 2009 American Cancer Society Relay For Life of [hometown]!! You inspire us with your strength and courage, and we celebrate you!

[UPBEAT, ENERGETIC MUSIC PLAYS LOUDLY AS SURVIVORS DANCE AND CELEBRATE THEIR WAY AROUND THE TRACK.]

www.RelayForLife.org
Opening Ceremony

Friendly Reminders

- Start on time.
- Be brief (15-20 minutes) and energetic.
- Have an agenda and script.
- Have a good sound system so everyone can hear the opening ceremony.
- Time the script before the event day.
- Keep speakers – including sponsors and guests – to a minimum.
- Have seating available for those who have difficulty standing.
- Create an atmosphere of celebration with balloons, music, etc.
- Have a plan for inclement weather.
- Welcome and thank all attendees for coming and participating in Relay.
- Have sponsor logos on/around the stage.
- Invite the media.
- Wait to invite committee members on stage until closing ceremonies.

Music and Poetry Selections

Including appropriate music selections during your opening ceremony script is a good way to make an emotional impact on your participants. Examples of suggested music and poetry selections for use within your opening ceremony are available in the Relay Library on RelayForLife.org.
Community Celebrate Activity – Accomplishment Banners

Accomplishment Banners
Each Relay community from across the nation will receive a set of five accomplishment banners to use in communicating and promoting Relay’s 25th year and “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE.” Each banner will provide a brief, narrative description of the progress the American Cancer Society has made in the fight against cancer over the past 25 years and the important role Relay and its supporters have played.

Each banner measures 3 feet by 4 feet (3’x4’) with pole pockets on top and bottom, as well as grommets in all four corners. Messages on the five banners summarize accomplishments over the past 25 years in support of the American Cancer Society’s mission themes: research, education, advocacy, and patient service programs.

Each community also has the opportunity to add to their collection of five banners by ordering a customizable community accomplishment banner (or banners). These banners can help each community event begin to construct the history of their local Relay event. You can order customizable banners through your staff partner. Some events may choose to only add a sixth banner, while others may wish to assemble a more complete timeline of the history of their event by adding one for each year the event has been held in their community. These banners are an excellent way to document your Relay’s accomplishments as well as promote American Cancer Society programs and services available in your community.

Although they are designed to support communities in promoting Relay’s 25th year, the accomplishment banners will provide years of service in telling the American Cancer Society and Relay For Life story all year long.

Purpose
Relayers have always strived to communicate to others how we are making progress in the fight against cancer. The purpose of the accomplishment banners is to continue to provide proof of that progress. Our goal is that everyone who reads or encounters the banners feels their efforts throughout the past 25 years were worthwhile, that they scripted an important piece of the Relay story, and that they want to continue to help write the next chapter in our historic journey of hope.
Community Celebrate Activity – Accomplishment Banners

Opportunities for Use

If our goal for the accomplishment banners is to have all those who read or encounter them to feel great about their efforts and want to continue to do more, then providing as many opportunities for people to experience and appreciate the banners as possible is critical to our success.

Included here is a comprehensive list of opportunities where your community can display your set of accomplishment banners. Also included are a few specific how-to examples to help get your planning started.

- Your event
- Kickoff
- Bank Night
- Team captain meetings
- A Relay rally
- Committee meetings
- Open house events
- The wrap-up party
- A survivors reception
- A volunteer recognition dinner
- Traveling displays (at each teams’ place of business or at county libraries, for example)
- The local Cancer Resource Center
- Mini-Relays
- Team fundraisers
- The business locations of your corporate sponsors
- Lobby day
- A health fair
- Parades/community festivals
- A local Hope Lodge®
- Schools
- Vacant retail shops
- The library
- Your town hall
- Sports arenas
Community Celebrate Activity – Accomplishment Banners

Examples – Banner Display and Usage

Event Day
Your Relay event is where you draw the most traffic – it’s what you’ve been planning for all season long. There are a number of locations around and during your event where you could display your community accomplishment banners. Below are some ideas to help get you started.

Display Areas:
- Stage backdrop
- Mission/advocacy area
- Fight Back tent area
- Registration site
- Luminaria sales site
- Food area
- Site map/schedule of events posting area
- Special area for staging/display
- At campsites as a team motivational tool (for example, high-performing teams could stake them at their tent sites)
- Survivor/caregiver reception area
- At campsites as a roving team award (for example, to recognize teams with the most longevity)
- Fight Back Ceremony backdrop
- At a walkway/entryway with three on each side to form a path

Opening Ceremony – Survivors/Caregivers Lap
Included here is a great way to be interactive with your banners and engage your most important reason to celebrate – your survivors.

How to Utilize Banners:
1. Select two people (survivors/caregivers) per banner.
2. Have each group of two people carry one of the accomplishment banners and any customizable community accomplishment banners you have. (You’ll need a minimum of 10 people to carry the five accomplishment banners).
3. Ask each of the people to stand with the banners in chronological order.
4. Have these people spread out throughout the survivors/caregivers during your opening ceremony lap/Survivors Lap or have them spread across the width of the track halfway through your survivor/caregiver walkers and walk together around the track
5. Upon completing their lap, have them ceremonially carry the banners to a pre-assigned staging area.
Community Celebrate Activity – Accomplishment Banners

6. Stake or hang your banners in this special staging area, preferably where there is high traffic.
7. Keep the banners up for the duration of the event.
8. Consider assigning someone or asking several people to manage the area throughout your event. Be sure they are able to speak to the messages on the banners as well as answer questions people may have.

Other Possible Banner Carriers:
- Team captains/members of the most veteran teams
- Previous chairs
- Honorary chairs
- Community dignitaries
- Childhood/young cancer survivors
- Corporate sponsors
- Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts
- Survivors
- Caregivers

Mission Moments
The messages on the five banners summarize accomplishments from the past 25 years in support of the American Cancer Society’s work in research, education, advocacy, and patient service programs. Use this powerful information to provide “mission moments” or announcements intermittently throughout your event. Mission moment examples are available to you in the Relay Library on RelayForLife.org.

Pre-event Kickoff Events
Included here is an example of how your community could utilize your accomplishment banners through your event’s kickoff.

How to Utilize Banners:
1. Pre-start – Display them in a high-traffic area, such as a registration table, tent selection table, food area, or incentives display.
2. Opening Remarks/Ceremony – Have five people each carry one of the banners, and during the opening ceremony, have them talk about why their banner’s message is important to them. Then, have them place the banners in different locations around the room.
3. Survivor Remarks – Find a survivor to speak at your kickoff who can tie their story to one of the messages on the banners; have them stand near their banner when speaking.
Community Celebrate Activity – Accomplishment Banners

4. **Mission Moments** – Have your teams/attendees sit in different areas with a banner in each area. Throughout the kickoff, plan five short “mission moments” when someone in that section stands near one of the banners and reads one of the messages.

5. **Games/Entertainment** – During your kickoff, have some fun utilizing the banners in a game such as Relay Jeopardy, a scavenger hunt, or a trivia game in which the answer to the question can be found on one of the banners.

For the kickoff example above, you might consider the following roles and responsibilities:

- **Pre-kickoff Set-up** – Staff partner, chair, logistics chair
- **Opening Remarks/Ceremony** – Chair, co-chair, ceremonies chair
- **Survivor Remarks** – Survivorship chair
- **Mission Moments** – Mission chair
- **Games/Entertainment** – Activities/entertainment chair

**Team Fundraising Events**

Included here are ideas of how you could utilize your accomplishment banners to support your teams' fundraisers and, at the same time, help them brand their events as American Cancer Society activities, educate potential donors about the Society, and show where their contributions are going.

- Car wash
- Bake sales
- Garage sales
- Yard sales
- Lunches/dinners
- Places of business

The banners are weather resistant and, when hung or staked securely, can be a great display for most conditions and venues all year long. Included here are ideas of possible team fundraisers where your teams could display your accomplishment banners:
How to Utilize Banners

Look at the layout of your display area in advance, and make sure the banners can be hung or displayed securely and safely to protect the integrity of banners for future use. Keep in mind the banners are 3 feet by 4 feet (3’x4’); you will want to be sure you display them at eye level, making them easy and comfortable to read. Banners should also be hung as level as possible to create a pleasant display.

Banners could be:
- Held by team members
- Mounted on walls
- Mounted on rods suspended between stationary objects
- Hung on quilt-type display racks
- Hung at events such as car washes, where people might be waiting in line; at a seating area; or by a drive-through area
- Displayed at a fundraising dinner along the waiting line or used to create a corridor or traffic system to provide direction
- Used as a backdrop behind tables or a stage area
- Stationed/displayed around a yard sale or garage sale

Specific Roles and Responsibilities

Be sure you identify early on who on your committee is responsible for keeping and managing use of the accomplishment banners. This could be a great job for your Publicity chair.

Suggested Publicity Chair Roles and Responsibilities:
- Notify all committee and team captains whenever an event is taking place.
- Arrange media event opportunities at appropriate fundraisers.
- Keep the accomplishment banner:
  - Create a check-out journal to use: record who needs it, when, and where.
  - Write your event name and contact information on back of each banner.
  - Ensure the security and care of the banners for future use.
Celebrating Survivors and Caregivers

The American Cancer Society’s Definitions:

Survivor – A cancer survivor is anyone who defines himself or herself this way, from the time of diagnosis throughout the balance of his or her life.

Caregiver (both current and past) – A caregiver is a family member, friend, loved one, or other person who lends physical, emotional, or other support to someone throughout the cancer journey.

Survivors/Caregivers Reception

Providing a special gathering or receiving area for your survivors and their caregivers to register onsite at your event is important and will help your survivors and their caregivers feel welcome and included in the Relay experience. Providing food and beverages will only make the experience that much more enjoyable. You may want to consider utilizing your accomplishment banners as part of your special registration site or gathering area. For additional great ideas on how to plan for or refresh your survivor/caregiver reception, visit RelayForLife.org or refer to volume one of the Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. Guidebook (7545.39).
Closing Ceremony

Purpose
The closing ceremony will be an emotional close to the end of one Relay season and the beginning of a new one. Because it is often a time infused with exhaustion, it is particularly important to host an upbeat and inspiring closing ceremony to celebrate the success of the event; the hard work of your captains, participants, and committee; and the contributions of donors and sponsors, survivors, caregivers and former caregivers, and your community. It is a time to remember the lives of those lost and to celebrate that each of us has committed, through Relay, to fight back against this disease for the next 364 days.

Your closing ceremony should be filled with awards and recognition, including team and individual awards. Now is also a great time to really recognize your committee and team captains!

As with the opening ceremony, your closing ceremony should include everyone attending the Relay, with particular focus now on team captains, participants, survivors, and committee members.

The end of your closing ceremony should be punctuated by a ceremonial final lap – often led by your survivors and caregivers or by your team captains or committee members – where everyone in attendance is encouraged to celebrate their successes together. This would also be an appropriate time to celebrate 25 years of hope by parading once more with your accomplishment banners.

Ceremony Structure
The closing ceremony should take place on the main stage. Performers, the emcee(s), and speakers should be identified and prepared before going on stage. You may also wish to incorporate the members of your committee who worked closely with your teams on competitions, raising money, etc.

It is recommended that the closing ceremony be fairly brief; 20-30 minutes is ideal. The goal is to keep everyone’s attention, which can be difficult coming off of long hours of Relay activity. To keep the ceremony as upbeat and motivational as possible, be sure to keep your presenters moving quickly during awards presentations and use fun, upbeat music. (You can find suggested music selections on RelayForLife.org.)

Closing Ceremony

Key Points to Convey During the Closing Ceremony

- Start on time.
- Thank everyone for coming and supporting the American Cancer Society Relay For Life and for all their efforts.
- Use members of your planning committee for awards presentations.
- Keep the motivation level high by keeping the awards moving and playing upbeat music.
- Be sure to recognize the number of people making their Fight Back pledge and encourage everyone to find their “25th hour” in their personal fight against cancer.
Sample Script

CHAIR/CO-CHAIR:

Good [morning/afternoon] and welcome to the closing ceremony for the American Cancer Society Relay For Life of [insert Relay name].

When we started 24 hours ago, we said that we were here, together, to fight a disease that never sleeps.

How many of you got any sleep last night?! It’s been a Relay tradition for the past 25 years – from our first Relay event in Tacoma, Washington, to our nearly 5,000 events this year – to keep one person from each team on the track at all times. This track was pretty lively last night. I’d say we did it!

We’ve worked hard to get to this point. Not only have we stayed up all night on this one day, but we’ve worked all year long to make this event happen. We do it because we have all been touched by cancer.

On behalf of every Relayer in [hometown] I’d like to thank all the teams, sponsors, survivors, caregivers, and participants who came together to make this Relay such a success.

And special thanks go to the committee members, who have joined me here up on stage. It’s that time ... You’ve all asked your friends, family, and coworkers to contribute. You’ve held bake sales and car washes. You’ve raised money on the Web and been as creative as any group of people I’ve seen.

[If giving awards during closing ceremonies, insert awards scripting here.]

So how do you think we did??! You’re probably ready to hear just how much your efforts paid off and how much we raised for the American Cancer Society and the fight against cancer. But before we get to that part, I wanted to take a moment to reflect again on what brought us here this weekend.

Relay For Life gives us the opportunity to celebrate. We celebrate the cancer survivors in our lives and support them in their fight against this disease. We celebrate caregivers and thank them for everything they do. We celebrate all the accomplishments of the American Cancer Society over the past 25 years. And we celebrate being together at this great event called Relay For Life.
Closing Ceremony

Relay For Life also gives us time to remember those we have lost. They are never far from our hearts, and it’s at Relay that we can come together and remember their lives. We remember them with every step as we walk around the track and they motivate us to keep going. We gaze at their luminaria and remember the father, mother, sister, brother, son, daughter, husband, wife, or friend that person still is to us. Remembering them helps us remember what brings us here.

It is for all the people we’ve lost, all the people who continue to survive cancer, and all those who will still hear those dreaded words “you have cancer” that we pledge to fight back. Relay is how we choose to make a difference against this disease. I challenge each of you to take that one step further by committing to find your 25th hour – that one hour every month during which you do something to help protect your life, the life of someone you love, or the life of someone in your community from cancer. Through Relay and the 25th hour we have the tools we need to win the war.

Thank you for joining in this fight and for celebrating 25 years of hope. In the future, you will be able tell your kids and your grandkids that you played a critical role in the international movement that ended cancer.

We fought back harder than ever this weekend. How hard did we fight back?

This year, the Relay For Life of [insert name] collected [insert number of Fight Back pledges made] Fight Back pledges and raised an incredible [insert dollar amount]!

Thank you again for being a part of the American Cancer Society Relay For Life and fighting back against cancer. We hope to see you again next year!

Making Your Final Lap Memorable

Your closing ceremonies are just as important as your opening, Luminaria, and Fight Back ceremonies, so you will want to be sure your committee puts forth as much effort into making it as memorable as they did the others. Remember, just as the first 23 and a half hours will have left an impression (besides exhaustion!), so will the last half hour your teams spend at Relay! Check out RelayForLife.org for a suggested list of awards, music selections, and other ideas to help your committee in planning upbeat, memorable closing ceremonies.
Section IV
Remember
Section IV – Remember

Table of Contents

- Luminaria Ceremony
- Community Remember Activity – Commemorative Stage Luminaria
- Luminaria Lighting and Layout

Remember

For many, Relay is the one time during the year they can join together and find healing from their cancer experience. Whether it has been as a cancer patient, survivor, caregiver, friend, loved one, or concerned community member, the cancer journey takes an emotional and physical toll. Providing for a time of emotional healing is important.

Our opening ceremony provides for a time of celebration. It celebrates survivorship and the lives and memories of loved ones lost.

It is important to the overall success of your event to make sure every person who has been touched by cancer – and all those who are witness to this momentous occasion – experience healing and are emotionally charged to take action.

The information included here and on RelayForLife.org will help you and your committees plan for an emotionally charged Luminaria Ceremony, day-of activities, and activities all year long. Your efforts will inspire people to remember their reason to Relay and to fight back for that very reason year-round.
Luminaria Ceremony

Purpose
The Luminaria Ceremony provides participants with an opportunity to grieve, reflect on their own personal cancer experience, and to find hope.

Ceremony Structure
The ceremony is structured to take participants on an emotional journey similar to that of the cancer experience. This is the “remember” component of Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. It is essential that the ceremony is quiet and reverent, and that it gradually builds so it ends on a note of inspiration and hope. A good sound system is vital, and it is recommended that the committee perform a sound check prior to the beginning of the Relay. If the sound system does not allow participants to hear clearly across the entire track, we recommend using a secondary script provided on RelayForLife.org. You can find this script in the Relay Library within the Event Development folder under Luminaria Ceremony.

The ceremony begins with an introduction from the Luminaria chair to set the stage. The chair will share the meaning behind the luminaria, introduce any speakers/activity, and close with a moment of silence to allow participants a moment of quiet reflection. A speaker will follow the moment of silence by sharing his or her story about their cancer experience. It is recommended you ask someone who is a former caregiver who has lost someone to take part in your ceremony as a speaker.

Following the speaker or another appropriate activity, it is suggested all participants walk around the track in a silent lap. This part of the ceremony provides participants the opportunity to grieve. There should be no music or speakers during the first half of this lap. As walkers reach the halfway point, it is recommended that a poem is read or soft music played. Suggested poems and music selections are available on RelayForLife.org.

Following the first poem and song, the ceremony begins to shift to the reflection stage of the ceremony. Another poem could be read to begin shifting the mood to one that’s more hopeful and uplifting. A second song should follow the poem and be of a mood and tone that continues the feeling of hopefulness.

The ceremony closes with the main speaker returning to the stage and leaving participants feeling inspired and ready to continue fighting back against the disease. (A recommended reading included here is “The Darkened Room.”)
Preparation Participants for the Ceremony

8:45 p.m.
Begin lighting luminaria candles. Be careful not to light the candles too early; it will not have the same impact.

8:55 p.m.
Five minutes prior to the Luminaria Ceremony, the Luminaria chair (or Event chair) should make an announcement that the ceremony will begin shortly. All walking should be stopped, the track cleared, and generators stopped. The event should be as silent as possible. Volunteers are encouraged to use “Quiet” signs asking participants for silence as the ceremony begins.

Sample Script

Ceremony with Pre-lit Luminaria
(announcement) EMCEE:
The Luminaria Ceremony will begin in five minutes. Please begin to make your way to the stage [or designated area].
(Wait for people to begin gathering.)

Luminaria Chair (or designated speaker):
The Luminaria Ceremony is an opportunity for us to all come together and remember why we’re here at the American Cancer Society Relay For Life. I’d like to ask that you all please respect the meaning this ceremony carries by remaining silent.

This is a time for us to grieve for those we’ve lost. It’s a time for us to reflect on how the disease has touched each of us personally. And it’s a time for us to look inside ourselves with quiet reflection and to find hope. No matter what our experience with cancer has been, we all share the hope that we will one day live in a world where our children, and their children, will never have to hear the words “you have cancer.”

Our track is illuminated by luminaria. Each one represents a treasured relationship. They represent people, each with a name and a story to tell. They are our mothers, our fathers, our sisters, our brothers, our sons, our daughters, our friends, and our loved ones. We love these people, we remember them, we celebrate them, and we fight back against this disease for them. As these luminaria glow through the night, they represent our shared vision for a cancer-free future.
(Have all four large luminaria on stage in this order: Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. HOPE. In each bag, the battery-powered camping lanterns should be turned to the off position.)

Twenty-five years ago a man had a vision. His vision was not unlike the one many of you have tonight. His vision was of a world free from the pain and suffering of cancer – a world where no one would again hear the words "you have cancer." And as this man circled the track in darkness, a flicker of light appeared in the distance. The light was from a field of brilliant luminaria, each one representing a name, a face, a smile, and a treasured memory. Each flickering light beckoned the man and his journey to go on and his vision – our vision – to become a reality.

Tonight, we will hear from [insert name] and [his or her] experience with cancer.

Survivor Speaker:
My name is [xxxx] and I’m a [xx]-year cancer survivor.

Why do we Relay? We Relay for the hope that we will come together as a community every year to celebrate the lives of all those who have faced cancer, from the newly diagnosed to those reaching the five-year mark to those who are long-term survivors. We also Relay to celebrate caregivers – all those who have cared for loved ones or friends battling cancer. A caregiver’s impact is immeasurable.

(Light the “Celebrate” bag.)

FORMER CAREGIVER SPEAKER (caregiver who has lost a loved one):
My name is [xxxx] and I was a loving caregiver to my [xxx] before [he/she] passed away [xx years/months] ago.

Why do we Relay? We Relay for the hope that we remember all those gone too soon. In a world that is moving so fast, with life more complicated today than ever before; in a world that finds little use for ceremony; in a world that rarely pauses to reflect; here at Relay, our community gathers to remember. We will never, ever forget those we have lost.

(Light the “Remember” bag.)

FIGHT BACK SPEAKER (someone who made the pledge last year and kept it, a researcher, physician, your Fight Back Ceremony speaker, etc.):
My name is [xxxx] and I made the pledge to fight back for me, for you, and for my entire community.

Why do we Relay? We Relay for the hope that our community will continue to muster the strength and determination to fight back against cancer. We Relay for the hope that we will fight back in some way every day and that we will make a 25th hour in our day to take action.
Luminaria Ceremony

It may be by exercising, eating better, asking a loved one to get a test like a mammogram, or by joining the American Cancer Society’s Cancer Action Network to ensure the right cancer legislation is passed. But together we will make a pledge to fight back.

(Light the “Fight Back” bag.)

LUMINARIA CHAIR (or other designated speaker):

Why do we Relay? We Relay because by celebrating, remembering, and fighting back together, we find hope. Our “HOPE” is displayed in all capital letters for good reason. Our hope is not just for us here tonight, it is for everyone across the planet. We hope for a cancer-free world. We may not know how long this will take, but we see the advances the American Cancer Society helps bring in drugs and treatment protocols every year. We see the lives that are being saved. And we join together in saying that there is no finish line until a cure is found for all.

(Light the “HOPE” bag.)

As we begin our Luminaria Ceremony, I’d like for us to all join together in a moment of silence to remember why we Relay.

(During the presentation of the commemorative bags, volunteers should begin lighting the outline of the “O” or the star or Relay logo, which becomes the “O” in HOPE with luminaria in the stands or bleachers. See the instructions starting on page 46.)

At this time, I invite everyone to join together in walking a quiet lap in honor of or in memory of someone close to you who has fought cancer. Let each step be in remembrance of our experiences and those special people we’ve shared them with, a celebration of today and of those with us on the track and in our hearts, and a step forward in our fight back toward a brighter tomorrow.

(Read a poem or play remembrance music here.)

Setting the Tone:

- Find suggested poems with a solemn tone or a tone of remembrance to read as walkers reach the halfway point of the silent lap. You can find examples on RelayForLife.org in the Relay Library and also in volume one of the Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. Resource Guidebook.

- After the poem, play a song of reflection, such as “I Will Remember You” by Sarah McLachlan. Other suggested song selections can be found on RelayForLife.org in the Relay Library and in volume one of the Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. Resource Guidebook.
Luminaria Ceremony

- After the song, allow a few moments of silence and then read the next poem. As the poem is read, begin lighting the “H,” “O,” “P,” and “E” to spell out “hope” in the stands. Additional poem selections are available on RelayForLife.org. Choosing a poem with a more hopeful tone would be appropriate at this juncture.
- After the poem, play live or recorded inspirational music.
- As Relayers walk the track, and while the event is still relatively quiet, end the ceremony with words from a guest speaker or offer a reading such as “The Darkened Room.” It is important to begin to bring the tone of your Luminaria Ceremony back up to a more hopeful one as you approach its ending.

“The Darkened Room”

In a darkened room (PAUSE)  
With drapes drawn (PAUSE)  
Door shut (PAUSE)  
And lights off (PAUSE)  
Head in hands. (PAUSE)  
How did this happen to me? (PAUSE)  
How could I have gotten this disease? (PAUSE)  
Can I be strong enough to survive? (PAUSE)  
Who will take care of my family? (PAUSE)  
Where is the light out of this darkened room? (PAUSE)  
The question most frequently asked of American Cancer Society volunteers, of Relayers, is “why do you do this event year after year?” And you look at the person and you realize that they don’t “get it” and you wonder is there any way to explain how Relay changes people’s lives. (PAUSE)  
How do you explain the story of the newly diagnosed cancer patient who attends a Relay and meets another cancer survivor who has had the same exact disease and is still alive? (PAUSE)  
How do you explain the story of a caregiver who has traveled down a path of compassion, love, joy, sorrow, guilt, loss, and depression? Explain how at Relay a caregiver can talk to the only other person who could possibly understand this difficult journey – another caregiver? (PAUSE)
Luminaria Ceremony

How do you explain the story of a friend or coworker who has seen someone they know battle this deadly disease and could do so very little to help? Yes, they could take the person to treatments, or mow their yard, or bring them dinner, but it isn’t enough. Yet at Relay you can form a team, raise money, educate people on cancer, and fight back against a disease that takes too much. (PAUSE)

All these people have found at Relay what you have found – hope. You can feel it in the air at 3:00 a.m. when you walk into a Relay. Wandering across a damp football field, mist in the air, you can almost touch the energy in the air. That energy is hope, the combined power of hundreds of thousands of people coming together in a common cause to eradicate a disease. (PAUSE)

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life is held to remember those we have lost to cancer, to support all those who are battling the disease, and to work towards the day that know one has to hear the words “you have cancer.” (PAUSE)

And when the final book is written on how cancer was eliminated, the American Cancer Society Relay For Life will have the last chapter. It will explain that a grassroots event and millions of people in thousands of communities in the United States and in countries such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, Singapore, Jamaica, Honduras, and Guatemala came together, united in common cause to eradicate a disease, to form the largest not-for-profit fundraising event in the world – the largest in humankind’s history. (PAUSE) On behalf of millions of Relayers everywhere – thank you (neighborhood / town / city / county) for providing the gift of Relay.

Thank you for providing the gift of hope to so many people. Thank you for providing the light out of “The Darkened Room.” This closes our Luminaria Ceremony.

(After five minutes, bring the lights back on around the track. Many people will still be in a reflective mood, so select music that isn’t too loud or inappropriate.)
Luminaria Ceremony

Key Points to Convey During Your Luminaria Ceremony:

- Quiet your site by shutting down generators, loud speakers, and activities around the track and on the infield.
- Make announcements asking participants to gather near the stage or area where the Luminaria Ceremony will begin.
- Welcome participants and let them know you will be taking them through a journey of quiet reflection that will gradually build to one of hope and inspiration.
- Ask a speaker to share his or her story of remembrance. Choose a caregiver who has lost a loved one to cancer.
- Remember Relay’s philosophy: We are here so that those who face cancer will be supported, that those who have lost their battle will not be forgotten, and that one day, cancer will be eliminated.
- Reiterate the importance of quietness during the ceremony by utilizing “Quiet” signs.
- Consider utilizing different lighting selections each year. (Suggestions are available in the Relay Library on RelayForLife.org.)

Music and Poetry Selections

Including appropriate music selections, readings, and poems throughout your Luminaria Ceremony script is a good way to make an emotional impact on your participants while also making the transition from a solemn mood to a more inspirational, hopeful mood. There are many examples of music and poetry selections for use within your Luminaria Ceremony available on RelayForLife.org in the Relay Library and in volume one of the Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. Resource Guidebook (7545.39).
Community Remember Activity – Commemorative Stage Luminaria

Commemorative Stage Luminaria

Since Relay’s earliest days, luminaria have encircled gravelled tracks, concrete sidewalks, and rain-dampened, grassy fields. One luminaria may celebrate the life of someone courageous and triumphant, another may remember a special loved one no longer by our side. Each one lights the path in our journey of hope.

Each Relay community across the nation will receive a set of four commemorative stage luminaria bags for display in communicating and promoting Relay’s 25th year and “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE.” There is one bag for each of the following: Celebrate, Remember, Fight Back, and HOPE.

Each large commemorative luminaria bag is 20” wide by 10” deep by 28” high and is constructed of sturdy, white cardboard with die-cut stars allowing for illumination from an internal lighting source (not included). A suggested lighting source would be a battery-powered camping lantern.

While designed to support communities in promoting Relay’s 25th year, the commemorative luminaria bags can provide years of service in complementing your community’s Luminaria Ceremony.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the commemorative stage luminaria bags is to support your community’s efforts of promoting Relay’s 25th year and the enormous role our Luminaria Ceremonies have played in providing people with an opportunity to grieve, reflect on their own personal cancer experience, and find hope.
Community Remember Activity –
Commemorative Stage Luminaria

Commemorative Luminaria – Use

Scripting
On page 38 of this guidebook, you will find a refreshed Luminaria Ceremony script. It contains messaging to support the staging and lighting of these special commemorative luminaria bags. The scripting allows for and encourages the inclusion of a survivor speaker as well as a caregiver who has lost a loved one to cancer, someone who has made and successfully achieved their Fight Back pledge, and a Society representative or volunteer.

Staging
Listed here are suggested locations where you can display or place your set of commemorative luminaria bags at your event site. However, only you and your committee will truly know the best location to place these very special representatives of remembrance and hope.

- Start/finish line
- Survivors reception
- Main stage
- Middle of the field
- Pulled on small wagons around the track
- Placed high up on risers
- Primary focal point for your Luminaria Ceremony
Luminaria Lighting and Layout

Luminaria Lighting Selections
Every event has its own way of making the luminaria special and meaningful for the community. With the 25th year and "Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE," the actual lighting of these commemorative stage luminaria is one way in which you may make your ceremony unique.

Many Relay events across the nation traditionally spell the word HOPE in the stands, on their field, or somewhere in and around their event site as part of their Luminaria Ceremony. If your event does not currently have this tradition, we encourage you to join our other events in making it your tradition.

Included here are examples of different ways your event could consider incorporating the lighting of your luminaria as a part of your Luminaria Ceremony. You will want to adjust your script to reflect the lighting selection you have chosen. We’ve included scripts to support these special lighting instructions on RelayForLife.org in the Relay Library.

Luminaria Layout and Instructions

HOPE Star

70 Luminaria Bag Pattern on Seven Bleacher Steps
Luminaria Lighting and Layout

HOPE” to “CURE”

59 Luminaria Bag Pattern on Five Bleacher Steps

When changing “HOPE” to “CURE,” have three people work to move the bags as follows:

- Person 1 moves bags A, B, and C, holding two bags in one hand and one in the other.
- Person 2 moves bags D, E, and F, holding two bags in one hand and one in the other.
- Person 3 moves bags G, H, and I, holding two bags in one hand and one in the other.
Luminaria Ceremony

“HOPE” to “CURE”

164 Luminaria Bag Pattern on Eight Bleacher Steps

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<th>Bag Pattern</th>
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When changing “HOPE” to “CURE,” have six people work to move the bags as follows:

- Person 1 moves bags A, B, C, and D, holding two bags per hand.
- Person 2 moves bags E, F, G, and H, holding two bags per hand.
- Person 3 moves bags I, J, K, and L, holding two bags per hand.
- Person 4 moves bags M, N, O, and P, holding two bags per hand.
- Person 5 moves bags Q, R, S, and T, holding two bags per hand.
- Person 6 moves bags U, V, W, and X, holding two bags per hand.
Luminaria Ceremony

Friendly Reminders

- Start on time.
- Stop all activities during the Luminaria Ceremony.
- Have an agenda and script.
- Have a good sound system.
- Invite a guest speaker, preferably someone who has lost a loved one to cancer.
- Begin with a moment of silence and quiet reflection.
- Be sure to bring the mood of your ceremony back up about halfway through.
- Have a luminaria to honor each survivor.
- Use “Quiet” signs.
- Set the tone by turning cell phones and generators off.
- Have extra lighters.
- Make sure the wicks of the candles are upright when placed in the bags for quick lighting.
- Have a rain plan.
- Fold the top of the bags down to prevent fires.
- Have a plan for flame-ups.
- Use adults to read names instead of having children do it.
- Ensure that all luminaria bags are treated with respect.
- Give people an opportunity to pick up their luminaria bag before discarding them.
- Make changes to complement your ceremony each year.
- Invite the media.
Section V

Fight Back
Section V – Fight Back

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Fight Back

Fight Back is the next step in the evolution of an event that changes lives.

What we know about people drawn to Relay is that they want to fight back. They want to do more to challenge the progression of a disease that has touched their lives. Our role as volunteer and staff leaders at Relay is to provide an emotional experience like no other, so participants and visitors are inspired to take action that could potentially save their life, the life of a loved one, or the life of someone in their community. That is the power of Fight Back. That is the power of Relay!

Fight Back is symbolized by a Fight Back Ceremony and is supported year-round by mission and advocacy Fight Back activities designed for use by you and your committee members, as well as teams and individuals. The desired result of participation in these activities is:
- Increased awareness and changes in behaviors leading to cancer
- A rise in the number of volunteers who are expanding their volunteer relationship with the American Cancer Society and its sister organization, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action NetworkSM (ACS CAN).
Fight Back Ceremony

Purpose
Not unlike the Survivors Lap and Luminaria Ceremony, the Fight Back Ceremony is an emotionally powerful time that serves to inspire Relay participants to take action. The Fight Back Ceremony symbolizes the emotional commitment we each make to the fight against cancer. The action we take represents what we are willing to do for ourselves, for our loved ones, and for our community to fight cancer year-round and to commit to saving lives.

Ceremony Structure
The Fight Back Ceremony should take place on the main stage or in an area where your event has high traffic or a high concentration of people. The emcee(s) and speakers should be identified and well-prepared ahead of time. You will also want to incorporate a speaker who represents the Fight Back aspect of Relay For Life. It is recommended that the Fight Back Ceremony be brief – 15-20 minutes is ideal. The goal is to keep everyone’s attention, which can be difficult to do during a long ceremony presented in a large area with sound systems that may not be optimal. To keep the ceremony as short as possible, limit the number of speakers and activities on stage.

Here are the basic components of the Fight Back Ceremony:
- Ceremony – Inspires people to take action
- Taking a Flag – Represents the commitment to save a life
- Signing the Banner and Pledge card – Symbolizes the action that each person will take to save a life
**Fight Back Ceremony**

**Sample Script**

**EMCEE:**
Please gather around the stage as we begin the American Cancer Society Relay For Life Fight Back Ceremony.

**EMCEE:**
Cancer does funny things with time, doesn’t it?
When you have cancer, you’re stuck in a kind of time trap. You are caught between time moving too slowly – giving you too much time to think – and time moving too quickly to live your life the way you want to.
It seems so unfair that we fight cancer with every breath or watch our loved ones suffer and feel so powerless.
What if we could add just one extra hour to our day that could free us from the pain cancer causes? What if we could make a 25th hour during which we didn’t have to think about, much less endure, this disease? What we wouldn’t give to turn it all off, walk away, and just be OK for one single hour.
Finding that hour is up to us. We must create it for ourselves, wrap ourselves up in it, and move forward. A 25th hour doesn’t eliminate the fact that cancer is a part of our life, but it takes away cancer’s power to define our day.
Whether you are battling cancer yourself, walking alongside a loved one fighting the disease, or you just want to ease the pain that cancer causes for someone else, a 25th hour is within reach.
No, you won’t find someone asking you to meet for lunch at “25 o’clock,” but you can make it a priority to find an hour in your day that you might use for routine things, and instead make a choice to use that hour differently. You can use it to fight back against cancer. You can use that hour to save someone’s life.
We are all here for basically the same reasons. In celebrating the lives of those we love or remembering those we’ve lost, we are motivated to do something – anything – to make sure no one else we care about has to face this disease.
We are here, together, to fight back.
Look at these flags on this field. Every single flag represents a person who will battle cancer here in our community this year.
It makes me mad to see how many flags are here. It makes me angry to know that one more person will have to fight this horrible disease.

I’ve witnessed too much pain. You’ve seen too much suffering. We’ve all lost too many people we love. We must fight back. We must fight back to honor the memories of all the people cancer has taken away from us. We must fight back to protect our children, brothers, sisters, parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and friends from this disease.

Your participation in Relay For Life means you are a vital part of the American Cancer Society’s efforts to eliminate cancer. Together, we are taking this day and this night to make a statement about our commitment to creating a cancer-free world.

Many of you work 365 days a year to improve the lives of those battling this disease. You drive patients to treatment; you serve as Celebration on the Hill™ Ambassadors; you provide one-on-one support to newly diagnosed breast cancer patients; or you encourage others to get screened for cancer.

In short, you embody all that the American Cancer Society is. You save lives, you help those battling cancer, and you empower others to fight back with you.

So I ask this of all of you – make a 25th hour in the day. Do it at least once a month, on the 25th day of the month, perhaps. During that hour, make good on your pledge. Take an action to help save a life. You could:

- Get a screening exam you’ve been putting off or encourage someone in your life to get checked for cancer.
- Let your legislators know that cancer must be a priority.
- Reach out to someone you know who is battling cancer and help connect them to American Cancer Society resources.
- Get active, eat right, or even quit smoking.

The impact of all of us taking these actions, of Relayers across the globe fighting back, will save thousands of lives. Acting together, we can find that 25th hour to help end cancer once and for all.

We’d like to introduce you to a volunteer who gives of [himself/herself] every day to ensure that the memory of [his/her] [mother/son/wife/etc.] is honored, and that no one else [he/she] knows suffers from the same disease.
Fight Back Ceremony

**Fight Back Speaker:**
(Insert speaker story here. The speaker should be someone who’s already involved as a Society volunteer outside of Relay, but, if possible, it should be someone who came to the organization through Relay. This is a good opportunity for Celebration on the Hill Ambassadors. The speaker should emphasize how his or her actions saved a life. Sample personal Fight Back stories are available on RelayForLife.org in the Relay Library.)

**EMCEE:**
We need all of you to commit to saving one life this year. It may be your own; the life of a family member, friend, or co-worker; or the life of someone you don’t even know yet. If we all make a pledge to save just one life, then each of these flags can be removed from this field. There are posters, signs, and banners placed around this event that all explain how you can take action to save a life. Perhaps it is as simple as making a commitment to get a mammogram, recommending your neighbor or father get a colonoscopy, sending an email to your legislator to support legislation impacting cancer, or telling your neighbor to call 1-800-ACS-2345 to get more information on his or her cancer diagnosis. Such simple steps can – and do – save lives.

We must save more lives and we must do so faster. To not take action, to not fight back year-round, is to let cancer win. That is simply not acceptable.

In honor, in memory, and in support of all those who have faced this disease, we will fight back. Please sign the Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. banner with your pledge to save a life while you are at Relay this weekend.

But now, let’s focus on why you are here. Look within yourself to your own story – your own reason for being here and for fighting back.

If you are ready to make a commitment to save just one life, please come forward and remove a flag. Carry it with you as you continue to walk, and think about the impact you can have if you not only keep walking, but leave this field inspired to fight back and save another person in your community from facing cancer.

(Committee members and pre-arranged individuals from the crowd should come forward, take a flag, and make a one sentence statement about their commitment. Example: “My name is Sue, and I am ready to fight back.” “My name is Bob, and I pledge to save the life of my brother this year.” “My name is Shirley, and I am going to get screened for colon cancer this year.”)

(After the flow of people to the microphone has slowed, the emcee should come back to the mic.)
Fight Back Ceremony

EMCEE:
Thank you all for being here, for being a part of the American Cancer Society, and for helping us to fight back. We will defeat this disease!

(End the ceremony with upbeat song to get people out on the track with their flags in hand.)

Key Points to Convey During the Fight Back Ceremony

- Welcome and thank participants for coming and for supporting Relay For Life.
- Remind them that the fight against cancer goes on 365 days a year.
- Convey the cancer burden.
- Mention that the flags represent people who are facing cancer, including those in the local community. (You can use local diagnosis information here.)
- Remind people that it is our opportunity and our responsibility to fight back and ensure we reduce the number of our own family members and neighbors who face cancer.
- Explain the logistics of the Fight Back Ceremony.

Logistics of the Fight Back Ceremony

Staging
Each event should set up the Fight Back Ceremony to meet the needs of the event. You want to create a buzz and some anticipation around your new ceremony, but you do not want to create so much additional work for your committee that this ceremony becomes a burden.

Here are a few suggestions for staging your Fight Back Ceremony:
- Use your main stage or a high-traffic area. It is already a nice focal point.
- Use the existing sound system.
- Create a buzz by decorating your staging area using Fight Back materials available through the National Distribution Center (for example, the RFL CRFB Pennant String [7548.82] or the RFL CRFB 2.75’ x 8’ Stage Banner Set [7548.84])
- Use white Fight Back flags (7547.56) to symbolize future cancer diagnosis in your community, state, or Division. Place them in an area around your stage or in a grassy area to create a visual impact. Numbers for cancer diagnosis can be located in the annual Cancer Facts & Figures booklet, on RelayForLife.org, or by working through your staff partner.
- Set up an area to display the Fight Back banner, pledge cards, and stickers for people to sign and make pledges.
Fight Back Ceremony

- Use the "I Can Fight Back" banner to help people choose their Fight Back action.
- Provide an "I made the pledge to fight back!" sticker to anyone signing the banner and making their pledge.
- Use Relay and mission signs around the track to give people ideas for making their Fight Back pledge when the time comes.

Speakers

The script allows for two speakers, although it can be altered to include more. The important thing to remember with your Fight Back Ceremony speakers is that they must be motivational and inspirational in their delivery. Their role is to deliver a message that inspires people to commit to saving a life by taking a white flag and to making a pledge to fight back by signing the banner and pledge card. You might use someone such as a survivor, caregiver, researcher, or past chairperson as your motivational speaker.

Sample real-life Fight Back speaker scripts are available for review on RelayForLife.org in the Relay Library.

Suggested Supplies

All suggested supplies are available to preview on RelayForLife.org or to order through the Shared Services Fulfillment Center.

a. Fight Back Ceremony Script ................................................................. included here
b. Fight Back Banners ................................................................. 7547.20
c. I Can Fight Back! Banners ................................................................. 7548.45
d. Fight Back Flags ................................................................. 7547.56
e. Pledge Cards ................................................................. 7548.73
f. Fight Back Stickers ................................................................. 7747.58
g. Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. Stage Banner Set 2.75’ x 8’ .............. 7548.84
h. Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. Pennant String ................................ 7548.82

www.RelayForLife.org
Music

Including upbeat music selections as part of your Fight Back Ceremony can be a powerful way to motivate people to take action. Examples of suggested motivational music are included here, and additional selections can be found on RelayForLife.org in the Relay Library.

Music Suggestions for the Fight Back Ceremony

- “Reach” – Gloria Estefan
- “Don’t Stop” – Fleetwood Mac
- “Better Days” – Goo Goo Dolls
- “I Know I Am Not Alone” – Michael Franti and Spearhead
- “Proud” – Heather Small
- “Streetcorner Symphony” – Rob Thomas
- “These Are Days” – 10,000 Maniacs
- “Right Now” – Van Halen
- “Change the World” – Eric Clapton
- “When You See a Chance” – Steve Winwood
- “The Revolution Starts Now” – Steve Earle
- “Yes We Can Can” – The Pointer Sisters
- “Eye of the Tiger” – Survivor
Making the Pledge

Following what is sure to be an emotionally powerful Fight Back Ceremony in which participants have been inspired to take action and commit to saving a life by taking a white flag, encourage them to come to the stage or to a roving microphone and share their pledge to Fight Back with everyone. This will add a powerful element to your ceremony. Encourage those who are too shy to join you on stage or who are unsure of what their pledge may be to visit the Fight Back tent area. Invite those individuals back up on stage throughout the evening/afternoon to read their pledge. This is a great way to keep the Fight Back momentum going.

Whether before, during, or after your Fight Back Ceremony, be certain to encourage everyone to sign the Fight Back banner and their pledge card.

They may already know what their pledge will be. For example – “I pledge to encourage my dad to get his colonoscopy – Mary Smith,” or “I pledge to work on the Smoke-free Smithville campaign – Jim Murray.” Others may choose to just sign their name, not knowing yet what their pledge may be. Either way, signing the banner and their pledge card, just like taking a flag, are symbolic of committing to take action to fight back and save a life.

During the American Cancer Society Relay For Life’s 25th year, we will be asking people to join us in creating a 25th hour in their day so that, together, we can fight back against cancer. By signing their pledge card and the Fight Back banner, participants will be making the commitment to find just one hour each month to take action against cancer.

There are three important components to the pledge card:

- Pledge Tally Card – This is a tally card your event retains to keep track of the number of Fight Back pledges that have been made so you can announce them during closing ceremonies, wrap-up meetings, kickoffs for the next season, media stories, etc.
- Wallet Card – This is the card the person making the pledge keeps to remind them of their pledge.
- Information Card – This is the card the person making the pledge keeps that provides all of the information they need to go to RelayForLife.org to take action.

They can take action by choosing one of many monthly “I can” actions they feel will make the difference in their life, the life of a loved one, or the life of someone in their community.
Making the Pledge

Friendly Reminders

- Start on time.
- Be brief (15-20 minutes).
- Have an agenda and script.
- Have at least two speakers, including one who tells a personal Fight Back story.
- Have a good sound system so everyone can hear the ceremony.
- Time the script before event day.
- Have seating available for those who have difficulty standing.
- Be energetic.
- Create an atmosphere with a sense of urgency and anticipation.
- Use the Fight Back banners, pledge cards, white flags, and stickers.
- Invite the media.
- Don’t forget your supplies.
- Use your emcee or someone with a roving microphone to gather people from activities or their tent sites to join in the Fight Back Ceremony.
Fight Back Activities

While the Fight Back Ceremony is symbolic of the commitment each person makes to fight cancer, the actions we commit to are just as important. This is why the Fight Back Ceremony is supported by easy-to-use, nicely packaged mission and advocacy Fight Back activities for you, your committee, your teams, and your community. Some are for the day of your event. The rest are for the other 364 days of the year. All are featured within the Mission and Advocacy chair guidebooks or on RelayForLife.org. All support the "25th Hour" initiative.

Mission – Day-of Activities
Included here is a list of ideas your Mission chair should be encouraged to include as part of the Relay event day activities. For additional information on these activities and more, refer to the Mission chair guidebook, or visit RelayForLife.org.

- Use Relay track signs and mission track signs around your event site.
- Provide Society messaging during the scheduled events, including stage announcements, survivor/caregiver receptions, and the opening, closing, and Fight Back ceremonies.
- Incorporate fun, mission-related activities and competitions into your Relay.
- Use the event to recruit patient program volunteers.

Advocacy – Day-of Activities
The advocacy focus for many events will be Picture A Cure®, either in the electronic or the paper formats. Advocacy or Event chairs can work with their grassroots staff to order their Picture A Cure kits. More information on Picture A Cure and other advocacy-related activities can be found in the Advocacy chair guidebook or by visiting RelayForLife.org.

Fight Back Activities – 365 Days a Year
As Relayers, we often use the phrase “cancer never sleeps,” especially as we refer to the courage of cancer patients and survivors. It’s true that cancer never sleeps, and in 2009, an estimated (ask your staff partner or visit cancer.org for cancer statistics) people are expected to be diagnosed with the disease. Cancer never sleeps, and neither can we. We must fight cancer 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. By accepting the challenge to find the 25th hour in your life, you will learn more about how you and your loved ones can take steps to potentially save your own lives or the lives of others.

For more ideas on how to personally fight back 365 days a year or how to promote Fight Back activities through team captain and committee meetings, kickoff and open house events, newsletters, and event communications, plan to visit the Fight Back page and the Relay Library at RelayForLife.org.
Community Fight Back Activity –
The 25th Hour Initiative

The 25th Hour Initiative
During the American Cancer Society Relay For Life’s 25th year, we will be asking people to join us in creating a 25th hour in their day so we can fight back against cancer. We know that if each of us makes the commitment to find just one hour to take action against cancer, our combined efforts will save lives.

Together We Will Make a Difference
Nearly four million people across the world participate in Relay. If each person made a commitment to find an extra hour in his or her life each month to do something that could potentially save lives, the impact could be enormous. Each of us plays an important role in communicating the “25th Hour” message.

Included within this guidebook is a refreshed Fight Back Ceremony script that contains messaging for the “25th Hour” initiative. There are also additional ideas on how to infuse the “25th Hour” year-round into your event’s planning.

Beginning in September 2008, RelayForLife.org will officially launch its “25th Hour” initiative, and online visitors will be informed about and encouraged to join in this effort. RelayForLife.org will continue to provide visitors to the site with a multitude of Fight Back opportunities to choose from each month to help them fulfill their “25th Hour” pledge.

People who organize local events are encouraged to continue to use team captain meetings, committee meetings, kickoff and open house events, and event newsletters as a way to inform people about and engage captains and team participants in the “25th Hour” initiative. You can:

• Visit RelayForLife.org and the Fight Back page for ideas on ways individuals can fight back, and publicize them in your event newsletter.
• Make sure the RelayForLife.org/Fight Back Web address is on all your event communications.
• Visit RelayForLife.org and the Relay Library for ideas on “mission moments” for your team and committee meetings, and encourage people to make the 25th Hour pledge.
• Highlight the 25th of every month leading up to your event as a way to draw attention to the “25th Hour” initiative.
Community Fight Back Activity – The 25th Hour Initiative

25th Hour Messaging

What if we could add just one extra hour to our day that would free us from the pain cancer causes? What if we could make a 25th hour during which we didn’t have to think about, much less endure, this disease?

Finding that hour is up to us. We must create it for ourselves. A 25th hour won’t eliminate the fact that cancer is a part of our life, but it will take away cancer’s power to define our day.

Whether you are battling cancer yourself, walking alongside a loved one fighting the disease, or just want to ease the pain that cancer causes for someone else, a 25th hour is within reach.

You can make it a priority to find an hour in your day that might have easily been spent on routine activities, and instead make a choice to use that hour differently. You can use it to fight back against cancer. You can use that hour to save someone’s life.

Your participation in Relay For Life means you are a vital part of the American Cancer Society’s efforts to eliminate cancer. Together, we celebrate survivors and caregivers, remember loved ones lost, and fight back together for a cancer-free world.

Many Relay For Life volunteers work 365 days a year to improve the lives of those battling cancer. Whether it’s driving someone to treatment, serving as a Celebration on the Hill™ Ambassador, providing one-on-one support to newly diagnosed cancer patients, or encouraging others to get screened for cancer, volunteers embody all that the American Cancer Society is. And, by taking part in Relay, you, too, help save lives, help those battling cancer, and help empower others to fight back with you.

So make a 25th hour in the day. Strive to make that hour at least once a month. During that hour, make good on your pledge. Take an action to help save a life:

* Get a screening exam you’ve been putting off or encourage someone in your life to get checked for cancer.
* Let your legislators know that cancer must be a priority.
* Reach out to someone you know who is battling cancer and help connect them to American Cancer Society resources.
* Get active, eat right, or even quit smoking.

The impact of all Relayers across the globe fighting back could save thousands of lives. Together, we can find that 25th hour – and help bring and end to this disease.
Section VI

“Show Us Your HOPE” – Nationwide Activity
Section VI – “Show Us Your HOPE” – Nationwide Activity

Table of Contents:
- Overview
- Purpose
- Planning and Implementing
- Promotional Activities
As part of the American Cancer Society Relay For Life “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” initiative, Relay communities nationwide are encouraged to host special “Show Us Your HOPE” activities that visually depict the passion Relayers have for the fight against cancer. Ideally, the activities should be separate from Relay For Life events themselves and should demonstrate how the American Cancer Society helps people in communities celebrate survivors, remember loved ones lost, and fight back against cancer through Relay For Life. “Show Us Your HOPE” events will take place nationwide between September 1, 2008, and August 31, 2009.
The goal of “Show Us Your HOPE” activities is to position the American Cancer Society Relay For Life as an international movement to eliminate cancer, convey that to a broad audience, and explain how Relay For Life brings hope to cancer survivors and caregivers worldwide. Individual communities, large and small, play a key role in reaching a mass market by hosting events that capture local, regional, national, and international media attention.
Planning and Implementing

“Show Us Your HOPE” Activities

“Show Us Your HOPE” is a volunteer-driven project, and activities should be led by a Relay committee public relations/marketing/communications chair or another designated committee member. Each committee should work together to create an activity that demonstrates, represents, and shows what “HOPE” means to their particular community.

Examples

Included here are several examples of what community “Show Us Your HOPE” activities may include:

- Lighting a community monument or landmark in purple lights
- Lining a major road with luminaria
- Hosting a stand-alone luminaria event to honor all cancer survivors in a community
- Gathering as many survivors as possible in a community and forming the word “HOPE” or the Relay For Life logo in a park or other clearing
- Asking local businesses to decorate store fronts in purple for a particular week of the year
- Building large-scale luminaria in a central location
- Planting purple plants in a city center or a tree in honor of or in memory of someone in the community
- Asking students to dress in all purple for a day
- Using the lights of a large building to spell “HOPE” at night
- Designating a town as “Hope, USA” on a particular day

“Show Us Your HOPE” activities need not be large-scale, but they should promote Relay For Life in the community and convey the message that the host community celebrates progress in the fight against cancer and the role of Relay volunteers in that progress.

The committee planning each community event will receive a comprehensive communications guide outlining everything they need to know, including:

- How to ensure plans are made to capture photos and video of the activity and that images and video are posted to RelayForLife.org, SharingHope.tv, and other social networking sites
- How participants can post blog entries about their community’s activity on RelayForLife.org as well as on their own personal blogs, if appropriate (and how to encourage them to do so)

Sharing the stories of how various communities define hope helps to convey the strength of the larger Relay For Life movement to the media and potential Relay supporters.
Promotional Activities

“Show Us Your HOPE”

“Show Us Your HOPE” activities provide the American Cancer Society a great opportunity to showcase the hope that Relay has inspired for cancer survivors and caregivers for 25 years. Creating a local, national, and international buzz around “Show Us Your HOPE” will take a united and coordinated effort by many volunteers and staff members from all areas of the organization.

Community

The role you play as a community leader in creatively planning for, visually capturing, and promoting local activities is essential. It is important that you and your staff partner communicate information about local activities, and that the information is as detailed and accurate as possible.

Staff members from your Division Relay For Life Business Unit and Marketing and Communications department will work together with the American Cancer Society’s National Home Office to identify and pitch stories to national and international media. Many of these stories will be identified from local community activities.

Nationally and Internationally

Staff members from your nationwide Relay For Life Business Unit and Corporate Communications departments are working behind the scenes to support your community efforts by identifying and pitching stories to both national and international media. They have also partnered with an outside media agency to identify national reporters interested in “Show Us Your HOPE” stories – your stories – for various media outlets.

In addition to pitching stories to national media, Society communications staff will work with your Division and the International Relay For Life program to coordinate international events and large-market events in the United States on several dates (possibly the 25th day of multiple months) in order to garner media attention.

The ongoing promotion of “Celebrating 25 Years of HOPE” and “Show Us Your HOPE” will be regularly detailed on RelayForLife.org and will include contests and interactive activities to help build and expand the online Relay For Life community.

A comprehensive communications guide that includes sample press releases and information for volunteers on how to work with Society communications staff members and local media is available.
Activity Script

Included here is a sample activity script for you to use during your “Show Us Your HOPE” event.

In May of 2009, the American Cancer Society Relay For Life will reach (reached) a milestone: 25 years of community presence and action in the fight against cancer. Since 1985, Relay For Life has grown from the efforts of one man – Dr. Gordy Klatt, who walked, jogged, and ran around a track for 24 hours raising money for his local American Cancer Society unit – into the world’s largest movement to eliminate cancer. Our local event is one of many that take place in 5,000 communities in the United States and in 19 other countries around the world. More than 3.5 million people participate in this life-changing event, which raised more than $450 million this past year to fund the American Cancer Society’s mission.

Today we would like to welcome you to our “Show Us Your HOPE” event, our community’s way of joining with thousands of other events across the world to demonstrate what hope means to our community. We are here to:

- Celebrate cancer survivors and their supporters.
- Remember loved ones lost to cancer.
- Fight back against this disease that takes too much.

(Activity takes place.)

Thanks so very much for attending our community’s “Show Us Your HOPE” event. We would like to invite all of you to join us with your teams at this year’s American Cancer Society Relay For Life, to be held on [date] at [location]. Please contact [name and phone] for more information.

After Completing Your “Show Us Your HOPE” Activity

After you complete your “Show Us Your HOPE” activity, go to the “Training Room” on RelayForLife.org for instructions on how to:

1. Post your best photographs of your activity along with a caption.
2. Post video on SharingHope.tv.
3. Post blog entries about your community’s activity on RelayForLife.org and on your own blog.
4. Make sure to submit your photographs, videotape, or story to local media if they didn’t cover the event itself.
The American Cancer Society is the nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives, and diminishing suffering from cancer, through research, education, advocacy, and service.

No matter who you are, we can help. Contact us anytime, day or night, for information and support.