

Walk For Alzheimer's returning to Island Lake May 28

By **Sam Odrowski**

The Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County is bringing back an in-person event for their 2022 IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer at Island Lake Conversation Area on May 28.

Registration opens at 8 a.m., with a fee of \$25 that includes a free Walk For Alzheimer's t-shirt, and opening ceremonies start at 9 a.m. The walk is estimated to wrap up around 9:20 a.m.

Online registration for the in-person walk is now closed, so those who want to participate will have to show up to Island Lake before 9 a.m. on the day of the event.

To date, \$7,869 has been raised out of the \$60,000 goal that Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County (ASDC) has set for the walk this year.

The last two years the event has been held in a virtual format due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so people are excited to gather again as a community, said Carmelina Cicuto, executive director of ASDC.

"I think people are itching to get out," she said. "I understand in the past, the weather has been fantastic on walk day. So overall, I think people are excited to just get back out."

Social distancing and safety of walkers will be the focus, Cicuto noted, but she said there's definitely an excitement in the air to get back to a community walk at Island Lake.

"Ideally, our goal was to have at least 100 plus people there. We're kind of almost halfway there," said Cicuto, who added that they're anticipating a bit smaller of a group for their first year back in-person.

Dementia affects the lives of roughly 21,000 people in Dufferin County, according to ASDC.

Fundraisers such as the Walk for Alzheimer's helps ASDC raise money for vital programs and services that support local families who face the disease, while helping them live life to the fullest.

"By supporting the [Alzheimer's] Society, your supporting individuals and families that live in Dufferin County, that are affected by Alzheimer's and Dementia," Cicuto noted. "We provide a lot of resources and education to caregivers, and one-on-one behavioral support for clients as well."

One example of how the fundraiser helps ASDC support the community is by providing a behavioural support worker to clients' homes, which gives relief to their primary caregiver.

Cicuto spoke to a couple other examples of programs the fundraiser supports.

"It could be something as simple as offering a music program or we have what we call Montessori kits, where staff grab a specific box or make a specific Montessori kit for a client they deal with. It's based on what their likes are and their needs in terms of the development ? the progression of the disease," said Cicuto.

"The money goes to restocking those kits and making sure there's different resources and tools that the staff can use when visiting."

Cicuto said she'd encourage everyone to come out to Island Lake on the morning of May 28 and participate in the walk.

?It's going to be a fun day,? she said. ?What's better on a Saturday morning to come out for a walk, hopefully on a beautiful day, and just meet the team and support what we do.?

To learn more about the event or donate, visit: tinyurl.com/2p84je3r

?If someone can't make the walk and still wants to make a donation, no amount of money is small. It will go towards good things for people living with Alzheimer's in Dufferin County,? Cicuto noted.