

As if I don't already have enough on my plate as a volunteer in our community, I was asked to join an American Cancer Society event called, RELAY FOR LIFE? I had never heard of such an event and it is going to be held in South Gate for the first time on AUG-15 & 16. Of course the word "cancer" caught my attention right away and then the words...CELEBRATE-REMEMBER-FIGHT BACK...we're so powerful! I immediately said yes, I would be a volunteer and later yes, I would be the chairman of the teams. Of course, not realizing what I had volunteered to do, it later became clear that the mission of Relay For Life was something I truly wanted to be a part of...at least once in my life.

I don't particularly want to bore you with a lot of written material in this e-mail to explain what is Relay For Life? Although, to read it gives you a real education about the American Cancer Society. So, what I've done is to give you a few highlights and some links to read for more information (videos too!). For me sometimes a picture tells it all and below I've shared some of those with you.

### WHAT IS RELAY FOR LIFE?

- A 24-hour team event to fight cancer. It raises awareness of cancer in the community and raises money to support the programs and services of the American Cancer Society.
- **Here's how it works:** A Team Captain gets together some of his/her closest friends, family and co-workers and forms a team. The team members go out and collect contributions prior to the event. Relay For Life is the "celebration party" at the end of the fundraising.
- **Come Relay Day:** Participants grab their tents and chairs and head to the Relay For Life. It's like a community camp-out. People pitch their tents on the field, and take turns walking around the track. One person is always on the track representing the team for the 24 hours.
- **Relay For Life is just not about honoring Survivors:** it's about empowering them to fight back against cancer. The first lap at the Relay is special...it's the Survivor's Lap. Cancer Survivors are invited to walk the first lap. It's very emotional and hopeful to see how many people DO survive cancer.
- **In the evening:** there is a Luminaria Ceremony. White bags with sand and a candle line the track. Each one is dedicated IN HONOR OF a cancer survivor, or in MEMORY OF those who have lost their battle. Luminarias encircle the track and light the way as Relay participants walk through the night.
- **It's special:** Relay For Life is the American Cancer Society's "signature" event. It allows us to honor cancer survivors, remember those we've lost, educate the community on early detection and prevention of cancer, and raise much needed funds for our community programs and services.
- **Why 24 hours?** We are asking you to give one day out of your life for those who may not have another. There are similarities between the Relay For Life and what a cancer patient goes through: It may get hot during the day and you may feel like quitting. But you keep walking. It may get windy and cold at night and it may rain. But you press on...knowing that the sun will come up and it will be a new day.
- **Why Relay?** One in three people will be diagnosed with cancer within their lifetime. The money raised at Relay saves lives by funding cutting-edge cancer research, early detection and prevention education, advocacy efforts, and life affirming patient services. Your involvement makes this all possible.



## CANCER FACTS:

- 1 of 2 men and 1 of 3 women will receive a cancer diagnosis in their lifetime.
- Based on the latest data, American Cancer Society epidemiologists predict that approx. 1.4 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer in 2007. Of those, 133,225 will occur in California.

## CELEBRATE.

Celebrate the lives of people who have battled cancer. The strength of survivors inspires others to continue their fight.

## REMEMBER.

Remember loved ones lost to the disease. At Relay, people who have walked alongside others 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.

## LINKS TO MORE INFORMATION ABOUT RELAY FOR LIFE...

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### RELAY FOR LIFE OF SOUTH GATE

[http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR?pg=entry&fr\\_id=18993](http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR?pg=entry&fr_id=18993)

### RELAY FOR LIFE ON U TUBE

<http://www.youtube.com/relayforlifedotorg>

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8P-MVMTsNuw&feature=channel\\_page](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8P-MVMTsNuw&feature=channel_page)

### WEB SITE VIDEO

<http://www.youtube.com/relayforlifedotorg>

## TO MY FAMILY...

A challenge to the VILLAPANIA family to come together as a Team and participate in this Relay For Life! We will celebrate our father as a cancer survivor and bring together the talents of our family as we unite in this worthy cause. For it may well be the research of the American Cancer Society which produced the medicine and/or the procedures to give our father the opportunity to survive this disease. And to our sister, Irene, whose own sister and friends are with us today because they had survived their battle with cancer. Each of us have been touched by those we know and love who have and/or are battling cancer...I would like us to come together as a family for this memorable event. I

know it's South Gate, but hey...I can guarantee this will be worth your while, worth the sacrifice, and besides, we all started here in South Gate...So...my only question is this...**WHOSE GOING TO BE THE TEAM CAPTAIN?** Let me know...

**WHAT IS A TEAM CAPTAIN?**

<http://www.relayforlife.org/relay/teamcaptains#wiatc>

**TO MY SGYFC and OCJAAF FAMILY...**

Every little donation helps. If you would like me to walk in the memory of a loved one lost to cancer, to celebrate the life of a Survivor, or to provide hope to a love one battling cancer...Donate to the American Cancer Society and/or purchase a Luminaria for our event...you can do this by visiting my Relay For Life Page:

[http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLFY09CA?px=9369889&pg=personal&fr\\_id=18993](http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLFY09CA?px=9369889&pg=personal&fr_id=18993)

**Thank you for your time and attention.**

I will Relay because of my father and for those who continue in their battle against this disease. I will Relay and dedicate all of my extra time, effort and energy to ensure we have a successful and memorable event in South Gate. I will Relay for you, for the 1 in 3 persons who will be diagnosed with cancer within their lifetime.

*Lora L. Gonzalez*