

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## **Relay For Life is a year long project**

Relay For Life is on the minds of many as fundraising efforts start to mount; but for a few dedicated volunteers and staff, it is almost the end of a year long project.

Lou Mason is part of the organising committee for the Launceston Relay For Life. They started preparing for March's event almost as soon as it ended last year.

"You have a break of a month or two, but it's always ticking over in the back of your mind," she said.

They will start preparations for 2010 by April or May.

Ms Mason was introduced to Relay For Life three years ago through the Tamar Sunrise Rotary Club, where she is a member. But she has since maintained her interest in the event personally.

"When I became aware of the benefits the fundraising has for Tasmanian families with cancer, it just seemed like a really practical way to help," she said.

Tamar Sunrise Rotary runs the information booths and cleans the toilets - Ms Mason is no exception.

"I get my gloves on," she said.

But she also has taken on other, some more pleasant, roles, such as finding a masseuse for the event.

Ms Mason said she suffered from a little bit of sleep deprivation and hard work over the weekend, but it was easy to recover and well worth it.

"We've got a pretty zany crew of people. We certainly fit in a few laughs and still get the hard work done," she said.

Ms Mason said volunteering was a fun and rewarding experience.

"I'd recommend it to anyone interested in being involved in a community event, which has a massive effect across the state," she said.

Last year the Launceston event raised more than \$400,000 to support Cancer Council Tasmania's support and information services.

In 2009 47 teams have registered so far and are already putting thousands of dollars in the kitty.

The event is on March 14 and 15 at the St Leonards Athletics Centre.

**For further information contact Cancer Council Coordinator of Regional Services North Jennifer Lyall on 6336 2566 or 0408 512 042.**

**ENDS**

## **Relay For Life:**

- Relay For Life is an outdoor, overnight event where teams of 10 to 15 people take turns to walk or run around a track for 24 hours
- It is Cancer Council Tasmania's premier fundraising event
- It supports 80 per cent of the organisations support and information services
- In 2008 Tasmanians raised \$1.2 million through the event, which equates to \$2 per head of population, most mainland states struggle to reach \$1 per head
- Relay has been running in Tasmania since 2001
- This year four events will be held across the state:
  - Hobart – February 28 and March 1
  - Eastern Region (St Helens) – February 28 and March 1
  - Launceston – March 14 and 15
  - Penguin – March 21 and 22

## **Tasmanian cancer stats & facts**

- One in two Tasmanian men and one in three women will receive a cancer diagnosis by age 85 years
- Each day seven Tasmanians are diagnosed with cancer; that's more than 2700 a year and that figure will increase with our ageing population
- Each day close to three Tasmanians will die of cancer; that's more than 1000 people a year
- We have the second highest cancer rate in Australia
- For every Tasmanian diagnosed with cancer there are friends, family and colleagues affected
- At any one time, there are about 7000 Tasmanians living with cancer