



Wayne Allen ■ Daily Times

Rosie Williams, president of Genesis Oxygen and Home Medical Equipment and vice president of Interim HealthCare, has been selected as the 2010 Relay For Life chairperson.

Rosie Williams selected to lead efforts of 2010 Relay For Life



Daily Times ■ file photo

Participants release balloons during last year's Relay For Life.

By DEBORAH DANIELS
PDT Staff Writer

Rosie Williams, president of Genesis Oxygen and Home Medical Equipment, and vice president of Interim HealthCare, both located in New Boston, has been chosen to head up this year's Scioto County Relay For Life.

As the new chairperson, Williams will be working with committee chairs and promoting the fundraising and the actual Relay event that takes place June 25-26, 2010.

"I look forward to having another great year raising funds for this very worthwhile event," she said. "It gives a lot back to our community and helps the Cancer Center continue to provide for those in our community that end up with cancer."

Williams first began taking part in Relay For Life in Jackson, where Genesis has one of its nine locations.

"Originally, my involvement with Relay started after the passing of my mom in 1993," she said. "We had a team in Jackson, which started prior to Scioto County. We had a team there for several years, then, when they introduced it into Scioto County, we started a Relay team here and we've been doing it for several years now."

"My mother passed away at age 43. She was diagnosed at 34 with breast cancer, so she struggled about 10 years and it finally spread to the point that she wasn't going to get any better," Williams said.

She was 25 years old at the time. "Me being the oldest of four sib-



lings — and the youngest was 10 — it made all four of us take part in the activity at the Relay," she said.

Then, last year, everything was brought home again, when an employee of Genesis, who had struggled for three years with cancer, passed away.

"Anyone you strike up a conversation with has someone they are associated with — whether it is family, friends, co-workers or acquaintances — that have been affected by cancer. Even though science has made great strides in the treatments of cancer, it is a long way from being conquered," she said.

Genesis and Interim together have raised many thousands of dollars over the years by selling candy bars, conducting parking lot sales, auto auctions, split the pots, luncheons, basket sales, daffodils and luminaries, to name a few.

"That's why we decided a few years ago — because we had always done a lot of community things — we decided to pick one and put forth everything that we have in the way of fundraising. It's worked well for us and it affects a lot of people," Williams said.

"Last year, we raised \$66,000,

"The candlelight ceremony is one of the most touching things I've ever been in, especially when your luminary is there with your person that you're remembering or honoring — that really touches your heart."

Rosie Williams, 2010 Relay For Life chairperson

so of course we want to exceed that goal this year," she said. "But with this economy, I don't know. It takes a lot of work on the team level to raise the funds and then the actual event takes a lot of us working together to pull off the all-night event."

Williams said the Relay won't be quite the same for her this year. "It will be a little different this year by being chair. My responsibilities will be a bit broader," she said. "In order for the event to be truly successful, it has to have community support. By that, I mean we need people to be willing to come forward with teams that are anxious to raise funds for such a worthy cause."

Jane Gee, last year's chairperson, will remain active and will help teams with their fundraising ideas, Williams said.

"I've recruited a lot of people, but we're always looking for more teams. We're looking for anyone who wants to give back; anyone who wants to get involved," she said.

Williams said the Relay For Life team meets once a month at the SOMC Cancer Center on Kinney's Lane.

"If you don't want to be on a team, you can be on a committee," she said. "Our first official kickoff for 2010 is from 6 to 8 p.m. Jan. 7 and it's at the Cancer Center. That will be a time that they can get

team information."

Williams said she is hoping for an outpouring of individuals in the community that will want to join the Relay For Life teams this year to help wipe out cancer. Anyone that might be interested is welcome to call her at (740) 456-6962.

Williams has been with Genesis for 22 years.

"My background is finance, so I started on the financial side of the company," she said.

Through the years, Williams said she has grown in different positions with Genesis and Interim — they became sister companies in 1999.

Williams said the American Cancer Society theme is "Sponsoring Birthdays," so the local Relay is also adopting that theme.

"Relay is a fun, exciting time with entertainment, lots of activities and food for sale," she said. "It's a time that you can bring your family out and get involved. The candlelight ceremony is one of the most touching things I've ever been in especially when your luminary is there with your person that you're remembering or honoring — that really touches your heart."

DEBORAH DANIELS can be reached at (740) 353-3101, ext. 234 or e-mail pdfeatures@portsmouth-dailytimes.com