



Saint Viator Students Rally for Relay for Life

June 24, 2011



Saint Viator Dean of Students Deborah Scerbicke (left) and math teacher Rev. Arnie Perham, C.S.V. (center) led students in a lap at the Relay for Life event.

Saint Viator students cheered as their Dean of Students, Deborah Scerbicke, marched in the opening Survivor's Lap of the Arlington Heights Relay for Life.

Scerbicke battled breast cancer earlier this spring forcing her to take a leave of absence from school. But she made a vow to Saint Viator seniors that she would return in time to lead them into graduation ceremonies, and she did.

One month later, Scerbicke led students into a ceremony again: the all-night Relay for Life fundraiser held on the track at Christian Academy in Arlington Heights.

In all, nearly 300 participants and 22 teams supported the event, which has grown to be the largest fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. Saint Viator's team was one of the largest, taking over the entire north end zone with

87 students, as well as adult volunteers.

They came from all areas of the school to participate, from Students Making Smart Choices (a division of SADD), to student council, LINK Crew and campus ministry, as well as newspaper, yearbook, modern language clubs and Orchesis.

Student athletes represented the football, wrestling, lacrosse, soccer, baseball, basketball, softball, track, water polo, cheerleading and poms teams, just to name a few.

They came from all across the Northwest suburbs, including: Arlington Heights, Barrington, Deer Park, Des Plaines, Elk Grove Village, Hoffman Estates, Inverness, Itasca, Long Grove, Mt. Prospect, Palatine, Prospect Heights, Rolling Meadows, Roselle, Schaumburg, Streamwood, Wheeling and Wood Dale.

Several students had parents that had been diagnosed with cancer and many had grandparents or other extended family members affected by the disease.

"My mother was just diagnosed with thyroid cancer," said junior Emma Liedlich of Barrington. "I had signed up for this before she was diagnosed, but now it's personal."

Likewise, junior Haley Gainer of Deer Park said her grandparents had battled cancer, and finally she had found a way to help.

"This makes you feel like you're doing something," Gainer said. "It's more than donating money; you feel like you're learning more about the disease and are able to make a difference."

Cathy Abrahamian, the Saint Viator staff member who has organized the team over the last several years, says that students have made a difference. Though pledges continue to come in, she expects Saint Viator's team to contribute more than \$11,000 to the cause of researching and finding a cure for cancer.