



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

- What:** The 2nd Annual Walk to Defeat ALS™
- When:** Saturday, April 10, 2010; Registration @ 8:30 a.m.; Walk @ 10:00 a.m.
- Walk Length:** 2 miles
- Where:** Payne Park; Downtown Sarasota, Florida
- Why:** To raise funds and awareness of ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, to support patient care and comfort, as well as research.

Local Patients, Families, and Friends Take Steps to Cure Lou Gehrig's Disease and Provide Care for Suffering Patients in Our Community

Sarasota, FL – April 6, 2010 - On Saturday, April 10, 2010, hundreds will gather in Payne Park for The Walk to Defeat ALS™ to raise funds and awareness – for the deadly illness ALS. ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, progressively paralyzes its victims, attacking nerve cells and pathways in the brain or spinal cord. ALS has no known cause or cure, but the Sarasota and Manatee community is rallying together to change that for the more than 50 local individuals who are suffering with the disease. Currently more than 1,200 Floridians are afflicted with ALS.

The April 10th Walk to Defeat ALS will be the second in our area thanks to the leadership of Angela Massaro-Fain, President of Grapevine Communications Advertising Agency, who watched ALS aggressively attack her friend Ray Wolski, first diagnosed with this disease in May 2008. Ray passed away in January 2010, just 20 months after diagnosis.

“Since Ray's diagnosis, his wife Donna has been emotionally affected as well. I've been lucky to have good health and so I felt compelled to help. No one should go through this alone” stated Massaro-Fain. “Our community has to be aware of how devastating this disease is – and if we can assist that awareness through The Walk to Defeat ALS, then that's what we will do. Our daughter and our office team are participating again and we hope to make an impact,” Massaro-Fain added.

Local “Walk” teams from FCCI Insurance, Grapevine Communications Advertising Agency, Clear Channel Sarasota, Ed's Tavern, Hicks Oil, Bright House Networks, and Sarasota Hyatt will join with teams representing ALS patients and their families from across Sarasota and Manatee Counties with a goal to raise the public's awareness of Lou Gehrig's Disease and funds to provide patient care and to continue the search for a cure for this devastating and always fatal disease.

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COMMUNICATIONS

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(continued)

The Walk to Defeat ALS is The ALS Association's signature event in which all funds directly support cutting-edge research and patient care. Last year, "walks" raised over \$950,000 around the state of Florida and more than \$64,000 in Sarasota/Manatee alone. With a goal of raising \$1 million this year, every dollar counts, and those in the Sarasota community who support The ALS Association hope it's one of their dollars that will make the difference – one that could change the lives of thousands of patients, and maybe one day, save the lives of even more.

The Sarasota/Manatee Walk has a goal to raise \$75,000 and they are well on their way. Of that, .91¢ of each dollar raised will stay in the community to be used towards client services and research. Interested walkers should call 888-257-1717 or register online at www.ALSAFL.org; **click on Sarasota/Manatee location.**

The ALS Association Florida Chapter is dedicated to finding a cure for ALS while empowering the lives of those living with the disease through care, advocacy, research, education and support. For more information about the ALS Association Florida Chapter, log on to www.ALSAFL.org.

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