

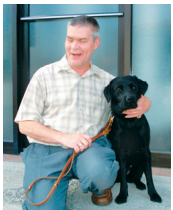
Ulm to lead first-ever Delphos 'Bark of Life'

Written by Nancy Spencer

Saturday, May 04, 2013 12:07 AM - Last Updated Saturday, May 04, 2013 12:20 AM

BY NANCY SPENCER

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DELPHOS — The Relay for Life of Delphos will mark its 11th year on June 21 and 22. However, this year will be a little different. Several hours after the closing ceremonies Saturday at the Community Track, dog-lovers will meet from 2-5 p.m. at Leisure Park in Delphos for the first-ever “Bark for Life.”

Delphos Animal Hospital is sponsoring the event with Dr. Bonnie Jones as chair.

“This is a great way for dogs and their owners to participate in the fight against cancer. We are seeking team captains as well as participants,” Dr. Jones said. “Dog-walkers need to pre-register at our office at 1825 E. Fifth St. and then start raising money for the cause. Perhaps they could take their furry friend with them. It’s hard to resist a cute dog.”

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She has recruited Bob Ulm and his guide dog, Pippa, as grand marshals.

"I think the event sounds like a lot of fun and will hopefully raise some funds, too. When Dr. Bonnie called to ask if I'd volunteer, I was happy to say yes," Ulm said.

Many members of Ulm's family have been touched by cancer.

"Like so many other people in this area, my family has been adversely affected by the ravages of cancer," Ulm said. "I lost my sight because of it at 11 months old. The same retina cancer resulted in the loss of vision in one eye for three of my five sisters and our daughter, Gina, during childhood. I lost my father, William Ulm, and a sister, Sue Hickey, to cancer.

"I think it's important to do all we can to fight this disease and this fundraiser sounds like a fun way to do so. Incorporating something as important as our pets in to the struggle sounds like a great idea and I hope we'll have a big turnout."

Ulm wants the focus to be on the event.

"My story is like dozens of others you can hear all too often in Delphos," he said. "I hope that some day people will talk about cancer in the same way we talk about polio but it's going to take a lot of research and a lot of money to make that happen."

While Ulm doesn't consider Pippa his caregiver, others may disagree.

"I had to remind Bob that cancer is the reason he has Pippa and she does take care of him on many levels," Dr. Jones said.

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The heart of the Bark For Life is the relationship between survivors and their canine companions. Every family, co-worker, friend or community member who has been close to a cancer experience and has a dog in their life, is invited to support the American Cancer Society by registering and fundraising through the Bark For Life.

Teams will consist of 10-14 members with the pre-registration fee being a minimum donation of \$10 per member. The goal is for each team member to raise at least \$100. Team captains will receive free T-shirts while the dogs will be awarded bandannas to wear during the walk.

"Delphos Creamery owner Dan Warnement is partnering with us to provide free ice cream treats to human participants and there will be free dog treats for the canines as well," Dr. Jones added.