

# SAYING HELLO TO TOMORROW

## (Relay for Life)

*By Dr. John VanValkenburg*

One attempts to show gratitude for progress  
made in Cancer research each year.  
Local communities do their best to give  
support that is deeply sincere.

There are garage sales, car washes, and dinners,  
friendship and fundship need no phrases.  
Some are major community events that need  
no speeches, just justified and lavish praises.

Not only do these events and occurrences  
build support represented for a great cause.  
But survivors gather encouraging each other  
acknowledging once again a Birthday pause

Cancer history goes back with traces,  
among fossiled archaeological finds.  
Among the stones and old bones of ancients,  
yes, you bet, cancer of many kinds.

The Egyptians wrote manuscripts describing a  
common disease as early as 1500 B.C.  
They blamed the illness on the wrath of Gods,  
usually fatal for all to see .

It was a Greek physician, Hippocrates, who gave  
cancer an identity and name.  
It was called Carcinosis, a Greek word for crab,  
a name describing its tentacled spreading chain.

It was thought in early theory to be somehow,  
spread by body fluids and glands .  
The overall problem with Cancer is  
it does not always follow a predictable plan.

It was a Roman physician, Celsus that renamed Carcinosis  
to cancer as a new medical term simplified.  
It made the identity almost too general,  
as many survivors will testify.

In 1985 Dr. Gordy Klatt, a Tacoma surgeon,  
saw cancer research needing adequate support.  
He was a jogger and an organizer and created a walk/run  
it created a special event built upon his sport.

Friends and family paid \$25.00 to walk  
30 minutes with Dr. Klatt to give aid.  
\$27,000 was raised for research,  
and the seeds of "Relay for Life" were laid.

They found it was more than funds,  
there were people to know and engage.  
Survivors, family and friends, coming together  
encouraging and hoping to set a new stage.

Mrs. Pat Flynn of Destiny, Washington became known  
as the "Mother of Relay."  
In 1986 she followed Dr. Klatt's example and  
raised \$33,000 in the same ideal way.

The event "Relay for Life" was now born,  
with fund raising in which spinoff derives.  
There emerged a fellowship and support groups,  
illuminated bags with candles memorialize lives.

"Relay for Life" has gone global  
with 21 countries and 300 Relays to lead.  
It's a World wide trying to find support and  
"Relay for Life" does fill that need.

Many volunteers, institutions and corporations  
find ways in which to share.  
The needed funds and people developing whole  
communities who care.

We are not talking about token giving  
the events raised real goals.  
Some teams have raised exceptional amounts, as  
corporations and businesses played a central role.

So "Relay for Life" is important for each  
community to lift its hand  
And I dedicate this poem to all the volunteers  
who enjoy participating throughout the land.

All the words can not say enough because  
the challenges and opportunities come from within  
Those in "Relay for Life" are blessed and are committed  
to battle this disease until some day we win.