

Registration is now open for 2025 Walk for Alzheimer's happening at Island Lake

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

Registration is open for this year's Walk for Alzheimer's fundraiser.

The annual event takes place at the Island Lake Conservation Area in May and is held by the Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County.

The five-kilometre walk is scheduled for Sunday, May 25, with in-person registration at 9 a.m. and the walk commencing at 10 a.m.

The Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County's fundraising goal is \$60,000 this year, and event organizers are encouraging residents to take part.

"I think more than anything, this is a walk, it's a fundraiser, but really we want to make this a celebration," said Lauren Culver, manager of fund development at the Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County. "We want to make this a bunch of people getting together, being able to celebrate their loved ones and celebrate each other, because it is such a hard job [providing care] for people."

Town Crier Andrew Welch will be at Island Lake to help kick off the walk and a light breakfast will be provided to attendees before they embark on the five-kilometre route.

Culver said the Alzheimer's Society will create a fun atmosphere after the walk is completed for people to enjoy.

"We're going to have a little bit more of a celebration at the end of the walk this year," she noted.

Following the walk there will be a food truck setup and the lemonade truck that was there last year is returning.

A live band will be playing for the entire day and after the walk, which will help strengthen the celebratory atmosphere when the walk concludes.

Children can enjoy face painting and activities when the walk is complete.

Funds generated from the Walk for Alzheimer's have a direct impact on local people with the illness and their caregivers.

Every \$200 raised by the Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County covers the cost of one behavioural support worker visit. A \$60 donation enables the not-for-profit organization to provide one customized Montessori kit to a person living with Alzheimer's or a dementia-related illness. A \$50 contribution can give access for one person to the caregiver support program.

"The money we raise is going to help us with our respite programs and being able to expand the portfolio of services that we have. [The Alzheimer's Society of] Dufferin County currently supports approximately 500 people/care partners. But we really want to be able to expand that to reach everybody who needs those services," said Culver.

"We have 1,500 plus people that we know of living with some form of dementia in Dufferin County, so there's definitely a greater need than what we have in a client base right now."

Culver added with increased awareness and funding, the Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County hopes to provide support and resources to everyone in the region who is impacted by the disease.

"We really want to blow out our respite program this year as well, called 'The Social' which is a place where people can bring

clients, and we can spend some time with them to allow their care partners to run an errand, get their hair cut or go out and do something. It gives them some time back to themselves while we work with the clients," Culver explained.

Anyone interested in registering a team or as an individual for this year's Walk for Alzheimer's can do so online at alzgiving.ca/dufferinwalk2025.

Organizers are anticipating the walk will have around 200 participants.

"Come out as an individual or do a corporate team, group of friends, family team — teams can be anything," Culver said.

"The biggest thing is — it's just bringing a bunch of like-minded people together to have a really good day together and celebrate the people in their lives."