

Walk for Alzheimer's returns to Island Lake, raising close to \$30,000

By Sam Odrowski

Nearly \$30,000 has been raised for the Alzheimer Society of Dufferin County through its annual Walk for Alzheimer's event at Island Lake Conservation Area.

The walk took place on Saturday, May 27, with approximately 110 walkers, who were encouraged to take 10,690 steps for the 1,069 people living with dementia in Dufferin County.

"After a three-year hiatus of walking in person due to the pandemic, the walk was a tremendous success. Registrants were high and walker participants were excited and eagerly embracing the prospect of walking the trails to show their support to people living with dementia and their care partners," said Carmelina Cicuto, Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Society Dufferin County.

Donations are still coming in, but as of press time, the walk generated around \$28,000.

The money that's been raised helps the Alzheimer's Society to offer more caregiver support, enhance behavioural support visits, and reach more community members with dementia education.

Cicuto said the need for awareness and support for people with Alzheimer's and dementia is increasingly important. Studies show that the number of people living with the disease will rise rapidly over the next few years.

The Alzheimer Society of Canada's Landmark Study, launched last year, shows almost one million Canadians will have dementia by 2030. Another study by the Alzheimer Society of Canada projects 1.7 million Canadians will live with dementia by 2050.

With these numbers only rising, the need for support becomes increasingly important.

"Everyone will be touched by dementia, whether a relative, a friend, a member of your community or yourself. No one should have to face dementia alone. Our plan is to ensure that everyone living in Dufferin County has the support and resources to help them in their Dementia Journey. We will continue to support while expanding program access in the community," said Cicuto.

She told the Citizen that her organization is very thankful to IG Wealth Management as the Walk for Alzheimer's title sponsor and the many other sponsors and corporate donors who helped to make the event a success.

"We could not have achieved our objectives without our participants and donors and the community," said Cicuto. "Thank you for showing up for your community this [past] weekend - our annual #IGWalkforAlz had an incredible turnout. Because of you, people living with dementia and caregivers can access the support they need, close to home."