

ACS Newsletter

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Joel Spitzer: 28 Years of Service

On November 10th, Joel Spitzer, ACS volunteer and Stop Smoking Clinic Coordinator at Rush North Shore Medical Center spoke to 350 8th grade Wilmette Junior High School students about the dangers of smoking. If you were interviewing Joel on that day, he probably wouldn't be able to tell you the number of anti-smoking speeches he had made or the number of kids and adults that he has tried to reach with one simple message. "Don't start smoking and if you are....Stop!" Joel has been an ACS volunteer for 28 years, since he was 14 years old.

"It's more difficult to get teenagers to quit smoking. They haven't experienced the long term effects. When we see adults at the clinic, they're here because they have already experienced the problems of smoking," states Mr. Spitzer. The adults that Joel sees at the clinic realize they are addicted and they want to stop but they need help. "Teenagers don't realize they have a problem, they can still do what they've always done, their sports and running around."

"95% of kids will tell you that they won't be smoking in 5 years but they will be."



Joel Spitzer speaking at Wilmette Junior High School

We've only recently realized how the cigarette industry has been manipulating the ingredients in cigarettes, to make them more addictive. Since it's hard for kids to admit they have a problem they aren't motivated to stop. Joel has experimented with teenagers observing adult non-smoking clinics. He's hoping that they will understand that smoking is addicting; that it's not fun gasping for every breath. They hear stories first-hand from adults who want to quit but can't and may die of lung cancer if they don't. That is not the message that Joel was trying to get across to 350 Middle School students in Wilmette last year. He was trying to tell them not to start. Realizing that it's more difficult for teenagers to stop, Joel tries to get the message across loud and clear.

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Tour Update *Chair:* Alan Lev



Planning for the 1999 24th Annual Tour of the North Shore bike event is in

full swing. This year, it's scheduled for May 16th and the top prize for raising pledges will be a one year membership at Multiplex Health Club in Deerfield. Posters and event brochures are ready! If anyone could help the effort by putting up a poster where they work or in their community, please call Marcee at ACS.

William T. White Golf Outing

Chairperson: Bill White

On August 2nd, the American Cancer Society's annual golf outing will take place at Conway Farms Golf Club in Lake Forest. Conway Farms is one of the top courses in the Chicago area and the event is always a wonderful day of golf and dining for the most worthy of all causes - the American Cancer Society. Last year, 110 golfers played and raised almost \$60,000. If you are interested in playing or in serving on the committee, please call Marcee at ACS.

CI&R Update

Chairperson:

Leslie Reeder, D.D.S.

We've recently received our 10,000 printed pieces of the Cancer Information & Resources brochure. They look great and the committee is working hard to distribute them along the North Shore. If you would like to help with the process, contact Terra at ACS.

Spitzer Continued

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He brings a slide show and on a large screen flashes statistics. Statistics such as cigarette smoking causes more deaths every year than the combination of all of the deaths in WWI, WWII, The Korean and the Vietnam Wars combined.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, cigarettes kill 418,690 Americans every year, which is more than those killed by alcohol, car accidents, suicide, AIDS, and illegal drugs combined. Joel occasionally runs into apathy from parents. "At least my kids not doing drugs, he's only smoking" is a commonly heard phrase. After reading the above statistics, you know Joel's response would and should be, "but smoking is the deadliest."

At Mather High School, Joel, 14, may not have looked like the typical ACS volunteer. "It started as a school project...learning about the dangers of smoking." He wanted to lecture to different groups about smoking, at elementary and middle schools wherever he could get the message across. Joel teamed with the American Cancer Society who provided him with materials and helped to arrange appearances. It was also the beginning of a partnership with Don Zeigler. In 1971, Don worked for the ACS in Chicago and helped arrange Joel's anti-smoking programs in local schools. Today, this dynamic duo works together at the Good Health Program at Rush North Medical Center.

You may ask what would motivate a person for such a long time. Joel states it simply, "I always felt as if teaching about smoking was a calling. I had a knack for presenting this material to any age group at any educational level and I discovered that I could change people's behavior. I felt I was probably saving their lives.... that feeling has never changed."

Relay For Life Returns to Niles North in Skokie

Chairperson: Everett Lee

Relay For Life will return to Niles North on Friday, June 11 to Saturday, June 12th. The Relay Leadership Forum comprised of cancer survivors, business leaders, and health professionals have been meeting since September of last year. This year's goals are in terms of five. This is the fifth year for the North Shore Relay and the committee is planning on having 50 teams and raising \$50,000 in corporate sponsorship.

You can help by putting a team together to take part in Relay For Life. Relay is an overnight event where members of your team takes turns walking or strolling around a track. Join us for great food, live music, team prizes, and much more.

Your team can be pictured here:



Walkers for A Miracle: Largest fund-raising team in last year's relay!! (From left to right) Petra Macintosh, Lyn Gilbert, Ginny Elhe, Deb Barr, and Yolanda Martinez. Last year, Walkers raised over \$9,000. This year they have recruited two new teams!