

Missy Newell Run Planned For Saturday

(KNZA)--A tradition of 13 years, memorializing a local woman while benefiting scholarships and assisting those who struggle with cancer, will happen this weekend in Hiawatha.

Missy Newell, who died in October 2001, battled breast cancer for five years, but left behind a rich legacy carried on by family and friends, including the annual memorial Fun Run named in her honor.

It will again be held in conjunction with Hiawatha's Maple Leaf Festival on Saturday, starting that morning at 8:00 at the Courthouse Square.

Newell's longtime friend Courtney Riley says, despite so many years passing since Newell's death, her legacy remains strong to this day. "This is where Missy wanted her memorial money to go. She set up the fund and the scholarship before she died."

Riley, who remembers her cherished friend well, says the monies generated through the event are exactly how Newell wanted them used, with no red tape or long application processes necessary to access the money. "It doesn't have to be just breast cancer, either. It's for people affected by all types of cancer."

Michelle Witham, Missy's sister, says, "When we hear people are suffering from cancer, we get money to them, no questions asked. There are so many expenses that go with fighting cancer. There are no stipulations on the money. My sister wanted it that way."

Nearly \$10,000 was raised from last year's memorial walk/run, with an additional \$1,500 in memorials that were donated to the fund. All of the money is used to help local cancer fighters and fund a \$500 scholarship for a Hiawatha High School graduate. During the past year, the fund has helped more than thirty individuals by alleviating costs associated with fighting all types of cancer.

Riley and Witham both say money from the fund has been used for gas, wigs, groceries, rent, medicines, phone bills, co-pays, and hotels, depending on what the needs of the person are.

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