



# Relay For Life Luminaria Chair Guidebook

American Cancer Society  
Eastern Division



[RelayForLife.org](http://RelayForLife.org)



## AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY RELAY FOR LIFE

Celebrate.

Remember.

Fight Back.

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## AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY RELAY FOR LIFE

Celebrate.

Remember.

Fight Back.

## Welcome to the Relay For Life committee!

On behalf of the Eastern Division Relay For Life Business Unit, thank you for playing an integral role in the mission of the American Cancer Society. Together, we are **saving lives** and creating more birthdays by helping people stay well, helping people get well, by finding cures, and by fighting back.

Every role on the Relay For Life committee is an important one, and one person cannot do it alone. It takes about 12-16 people to create a good Relay; the more people on the committee the better the Relay! The most successful Relay For Life events in the country have committees with 20 members or more.

The Relay For Life committee is led by an Event Chair or Co-Chairs. The Chair or Co-Chairs act as project managers to ensure the rest of the committee are on track, have the resources they need to be successful, and that they are following up with assignments. Each sub-committee has a Chair and sub-committee members. The sub-committee Chair takes the lead by making plans, delegating responsibilities, and reporting both progress and obstacles to the full committee. The sub-committee members carry out the plans, accept assignments, and support the full committee.

There are some resources that you'll want to keep handy throughout your term (usually 2 seasons) on the Relay For Life committee:

- **This committee guidebook**
- **Relay Central** – <http://www.RelayForLife.org/NYNJ> - a website with Eastern Division-specific information and resources
- **RelayForLife.org** – <http://www.RelayForLife.org> - a national website with information, video training, resources, blogs, forums, and more
- **Regional Mini-Conference** – check with your staff partner about upcoming trainings in your area

By joining the Relay For Life committee, you are leading your community – or campus – in the fight against cancer. You are taking responsibility for one aspect of the Relay For Life...one piece of the puzzle...to help ensure its overall success. The funds raised at Relay For Life help support the mission of the American Cancer Society. On the next few pages, you'll read about the accomplishments that have been possible thanks to Relay For Life teams, participants, donors, and committee members – like you.

Again, we thank you and wish you success in your role on the Relay For Life committee!

*~ The Relay For Life Business Unit*

## Where Do the Dollars Go?

# Points of pride

Together we're **saving lives** and creating more birthdays by helping you stay well, helping you get well, by finding cures, and by fighting back.



*Stay well: We help you take steps to prevent cancer or detect at its earliest, most treatable stage.*

- The American Cancer Society's telephone counseling service, Quitline<sup>®</sup>, doubles a person's chances of quitting tobacco for good. Since 2000, we have helped 400,000 tobacco users by offering one-on-one support and customized quit tools
- We develop guidelines for nutrition and physical activity and cancer screenings so that you know how you can help prevent cancer, and what tests you need to find cancer early.
- We work with employers, health care systems, and communities throughout New York and New Jersey to create healthy environments that support healthy lifestyles.
- More than 800 companies nationwide are using Active For Life to make it easier for you to stay physically active and manage your weight. This year, we launched Choose to Change<sup>®</sup>, a counseling service for nutrition and weight management.
- We provide tips, tools, and online resources to help you set goals and stay motivated to eat healthy and maintain an active lifestyle. You can create a personalized health action plan to discuss with your doctor at [cancer.org](http://cancer.org).

*Get well: We're in your corner round the clock to guide you through a cancer experience.*

- Our phone lines are open every minute of every day and night for people needing answers. Every year, we provide information, help, and support to nearly one million people who call us at 1.800.227.2345.
- We're a trusted resource for more than 23 million visitors to [cancer.org](http://cancer.org) each year who access the latest updates and news on cancer and listings of local programs and services.
- Through our clinical trials matching service, we connect patients with more than 64,000 treatment options.
- We offer a wide array of support services through regional offices in New York and New Jersey, including compassionate, knowledgeable patient navigators who provide one-on-one guidance in hospitals and treatment centers.
- Local survivorship programs such as Look Good... Feel Better, Reach to Recovery, and Man to Man provide hope to those going through cancer treatment.
- Our three Hope Lodges in Manhattan, Buffalo, and Rochester served nearly 3,000 patients and provided 27,000 free nights of lodging last year. Our nationwide network of 28 Hope Lodges helps more than 30,000 patients annually—saving families tens of millions of dollars in lodging by providing a free place to stay while going through treatment far from home.

- We offer an online support community for cancer survivors and caregivers that has brought together more than 93,000 people since 2000.
- In 2009, we served nearly 41,000 patients in New York and New Jersey—more than ever before. We expanded our Eastern patient service center to better respond to needs.

*Find cures: We're getting results by funding research that helps us understand cancer's causes, determine how best to prevent it, and discover new cures.*

- We have contributed to a 14 percent decrease in the cancer death rate since the early 1990s. That means about 650,000 deaths were avoided and more birthdays were celebrated.
- We've had a hand in nearly every major cancer breakthrough of the past century, such as confirming the link between cigarette smoking and cancer, establishing the link between obesity and multiple cancers, developing drugs to treat leukemia and advanced breast cancer, and showing that mammography is the most effective way to detect breast cancer.
- We're the largest non-governmental funder of cancer research in the United States, having spent more than \$3.3 billion on cancer research since 1946. Last year, we funded 320 new research grants totaling \$145 million. Nationwide, nearly \$500 million in multi-year research grants are at work, and every discovery benefits our communities.
- We fund beginning researchers with cutting-edge ideas early in their careers—42 of whom have gone on to win the Nobel Prize, the highest accolade of scientific achievement.
- This year, we enrolled 500,000 participants in Cancer Prevention Study 3 at Relay For Life. The study is focused on how genetics, lifestyles, and environments affect cancer risk.
- American Cancer Society-funded researchers in prestigious institutions such as Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, University of Rochester, Columbia University, New York University, Princeton University, University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ, and Roswell Park Cancer Center are innovators—scientists at the beginning of their careers. ACS-funded researchers have discovered breast cancer genes, Herceptin, and Gleevec.
- Last year, American Cancer Society-funded researcher Dr. Yibin Kang at Princeton University discovered a gene responsible for breast cancer metastasis in up to 40 percent of cases. A treatment can now be developed to block this gene's activity.

*Fight back: We help pass laws that defeat cancer and rally communities to join the fight.*

- People who live in New York and New Jersey are protected by smoke free laws, thanks in part to the efforts of the Society and our nonpartisan advocacy affiliate, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN).
- New York and New Jersey have some of the lowest smoking rates and highest tobacco taxes, thanks to decades of work.
- We helped pass state laws ensuring that people have access to and coverage for lifesaving screenings and treatment.
- We have helped three million uninsured, underinsured, and low-income women get breast and cervical screening tests and follow-up treatment since 1991, and along with ACS CAN, we have successfully fought for legislation protecting this care.
- We are fighting for health care reform that focuses on prevention, ends the practice of denying coverage because of preexisting conditions, limits the cost burden on families, and ensures coverage for all Americans.
- We are working for state laws requiring chain restaurants to post calories for standard food items to give consumers information to make healthier choices.
- We fought to ensure that cancer patients in chronic pain have better access to prescriptions.

and relief.

- One in 100 Americans participates in one of the 5,000 American Cancer Society Relay For Life events across the globe, comprising the world's largest movement to end cancer.
- Making Strides Against Breast Cancer unites nearly 250,000 individuals—all who believe we can make breast cancer history—at 22 locations in New York and New Jersey

## Relay For Life Overview

### *What is Relay For Life?*

Relay For Life is the American Cancer Society's signature activity. It offers everyone in a community an opportunity to participate in the fight against cancer. Teams of people camp out at a local high school, park, or fairground and take turns walking or running around a track or path. Each team is asked to have a representative on the track at all times during the event. Relays are an overnight event, up to 24 hours in length.

Teams of people from all walks of life have fun while raising much-needed funds to fight cancer and raise awareness of cancer prevention and treatment. No matter who you are, there's a place for you at Relay. To participate, form a team, or dedicate a Luminaria at your local American Cancer Society Relay For Life, please call 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).

Relay For Life is a life-changing event that brings together more than 3.5 million people to:

- Celebrate the lives of those who have battled cancer. The strength of survivors inspires others to continue to fight.
- Remember loved ones lost to the disease. At Relay, people who have walked alongside people battling cancer can grieve and find healing.
- Fight Back. We Relay because we have been touched by cancer and desperately want to put an end to the disease.

### *Philosophy – Why We Relay*

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life represents the hope that those lost to cancer will never be forgotten, that those who face cancer will be supported, and that one day cancer will be eliminated.

### *Why Relay?*

One in three people will be diagnosed with cancer during their lifetime. The funds raised at Relay save lives by funding cutting-edge cancer research, early detection and prevention education, advocacy efforts, and life-affirming patient services. It is because of your involvement that we are able to save lives, help those battling cancer, and empower all to fight back against the disease.



## ***National Relay For Life Event Standards***

### **Overnight Event**

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life was originally created as a 24-hour event to represent the fact that cancer never sleeps. Someone who has cancer battles it 24 hours a day. Those Relays fewer than 24 hours in length (usually 12 to 18 hours) are still overnight. Overnight can be defined as sunset to sunrise.

### **Opening and Closing Ceremony**

Relays begin with an opening ceremony, which clearly emphasizes that Relay For Life is an American Cancer Society event. The opening ceremony includes an opening lap by cancer survivors that sets the tone for the entire event. The closing ceremony provides another opportunity for cancer survivors and their caregivers to walk the track and to celebrate their success.

### **Luminaria Ceremony**

Luminaria, paper sacks filled with sand to support a lighted candle, are a Relay For Life tradition. The Luminaria Ceremony is often referred to as the Ceremony of Hope. It is a time to remember people we have lost to cancer, to support people who currently have cancer, and to honor people who have fought cancer in the past. The power of this ceremony lies in providing an opportunity for people to work through grief and find hope.

### **Survivorship Activities**

Survivorship activities include hosting a reception, as well as giving a special recognition memento to survivors (a sash, pin, or special shirt). Additional survivorship activities are encouraged.

### **Mission Delivery**

Educational activities at Relay result in greater awareness of cancer prevention and early detection methods. Relay supporters have evolved into year-round collaborative partners who promote cancer awareness and programs before, during, and after Relay.

### **Team Registration/Commitment Fee**

Teams that pay a commitment fee are more likely to follow through on their participation and fundraising. If nothing else, the commitment fee covers the costs of printing the registration materials and other event overhead costs. There is no nationally recommended amount, although many Relays charge \$10 a person or \$150 a team.

### **Tobacco-Free Environment**

A tobacco-free environment does not mean banning smokers/chewers. Rather, we encourage their participation but prohibit their use of tobacco during the event.

### **No Alcohol Allowed**

Relay For Life is a family event and often held on school property; therefore, alcohol is always prohibited.

## **Follow National Text/Graphic Standards**

All national text/graphic standards for Relay must be adhered to. (The American Cancer Society Relay For Life Standards manual can be ordered by your staff partner from the shared services fulfillment center – product number 7542.24.)

## ***National Relay For Life Event Recommendations***

- Caregiver ceremony
- Sponsorships
- Team and individual incentives
- Expense ratio of 10 percent
- Communication/newsletters
- Team captain/leader meetings
- Bank nights

## **Always Focus on Teams**

Emphasis should be placed on encouraging businesses, service clubs, and school teams to bring their families to the event, thereby leading to greater retention of teams. Relay is a family-friendly event.

## **Mentor Teams Through Time**

Groom teams through time to raise more funds. These participants become the source of your new committee members and provide new doorways into the community. Involve teams in other American Cancer Society activities throughout the year.

## **Communicate, Communicate, Communicate**

Inform teams through emails and e-newsletters through Relay Online (Convio), as well as meetings. Educate people on the information, programs, and services that the Society provides.

## **Location, Location, Location**

Relays are typically held at school or community football fields, fairgrounds, or parks.

## **Length of Event**

It is at least 12 hours, always overnight, usually starting on Friday evening. The majority of the events last 18 to 24 hours. The longer the event, the greater the opportunity for mission delivery, advocacy, fundraising, relationship building, and the recruitment of volunteers.

## **Totality of the Event**

Participants describe Relay as a life-changing event, one that provides them an opportunity to heal and grow. Relay can be like a support group for cancer survivors, caregivers, and their family and friends.

## *Relay For Life Across the Country*

Since the American Cancer Society Relay For Life began, a single event has become an international movement to end cancer. Now the largest grassroots fundraising event in the world, Relay For Life is a success because of the impact of its volunteers around the globe. Here are a few key numbers that demonstrate the Power of Purple:

- Relay supporters raised approximately \$400 million in 2009
- More than 3.5 million Americans supported Relay in 2009
- Relay has raised more than \$3.5 billion to fight cancer since 1985
- In total, 5,100 communities hosted Relay For Life events in 2009
- Across the United States, 150 new communities joined the Relay For Life movement in 2009

There are 13 Divisions of the American Cancer Society in the United States:

- **California Division, Inc.** – California
- **Eastern Division, Inc.** – New York, New Jersey
- **Florida Division, Inc.** – Florida, Puerto Rico
- **Great Lakes Division, Inc.** – Michigan, Indiana
- **Great West Division, Inc.** – Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming
- **High Plains Division, Inc.** – Hawaii, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas
- **Illinois Division, Inc.** – Illinois
- **Mid-South Division, Inc.** – Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee
- **Midwest Division, Inc.** – Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, Wisconsin
- **New England Division, Inc.** – Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont
- **Ohio Division, Inc.** – Ohio
- **Pennsylvania Division, Inc.** – Pennsylvania
- **South Atlantic Division, Inc.** – Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Washington D.C., West Virginia

Within the **Eastern Division**, we have 21 Regions:

### Upstate New York:

1. **Capital New York** – Albany, Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schoharie, Schenectady, Warren, and Washington Counties
2. **Central New York** – Cayuga, Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, and St. Lawrence Counties
3. **Hudson Valley** – Dutchess, Putnam, Sullivan, Rockland, Orange, and Ulster Counties
4. **Lakes (New York)** – Allegany, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, and Yates Counties
5. **Southern New York** – Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Oswego, Schuyler, Tioga, Tompkins, and Otsego

6. **Western New York** – Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties

#### **Metro New York:**

7. **Bronx** – Kings County
8. **Brooklyn** – Bronx County
9. **Manhattan** – New York County
10. **Nassau** – Nassau County
11. **Queens** – Queens County
12. **Staten Island** – Richmond County
13. **Suffolk** – Suffolk County
14. **Westchester** – Westchester County
15. **Asian Initiatives** – Offices in Queens, NY and Cedar Knolls, NJ

#### **New Jersey:**

16. **Central New Jersey** – Mercer and Middlesex Counties
17. **Jersey Shore** – Monmouth and Ocean Counties
18. **Metro New Jersey** – Essex, Hudson, and Union Counties
19. **Northwest New Jersey** – Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset, Sussex, and Warren Counties
20. **Northern New Jersey** – Bergen and Passaic Counties
21. **South Jersey** – Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem

### ***International Relay For Life***

Planning an overseas holiday? Why not include visiting an International Relay in your vacation plans? In 1996, the United Kingdom became the first country to launch a Relay For Life outside the United States, marking the global debut of what has become the world's largest volunteer fundraising event. The growth of Relay around the globe is a powerful reminder that cancer affects everyone. Today, nearly 1,000 communities in 20 nations, outside the United States, proudly host Relay For Life events.

Australia	Honduras	New Zealand
Brazil	Ireland	Philippines
Canada	Jamaica	Portugal
Denmark	Japan	South Africa
France	Luxembourg	Taiwan
Germany	Malaysia	United Kingdom
Guatemala	Netherlands	United States

## Step 1 – Recognize Your Commitment

### *Job Description: Luminaria Chair*

The Luminaria Sub-Committee is responsible for all aspects of Luminaria sales, including tracking and collecting Luminaria names, planning and carrying out Luminaria placement and lighting, and management of the Luminaria Ceremony.

### Responsibilities

- Recruit subcommittee partner – Luminaria Sales, and Luminaria Logistics and Ceremony.
- Attend the Relay committee meetings and maintain communication with other event chairs.
- Work with sub-committee to ensure the promotion and sales of Luminaria before and during the event.
- Record and track number of Luminaria – pre-sales and onsite.
- Work with sub-committee to ensure the planning and implementation of Luminaria placement and lighting.
- Work to plan and secure all aspects of the Luminaria Ceremony (music, speakers, equipment, etc).
- Work with other Sub-Committees to ensure all aspects of Luminaria sales and Ceremony are covered (Entertainment & Activities, Publicity, Corporate Sponsorship, etc).
- Manage Luminaria sales, set-up, ceremony, and clean up at the Relay.
- Wrap Up Luminaria duties after the Relay, including sending Thank You notes for any donated items.
- Recruit teams among community contacts.
- Promote Relay as an event within the community.
- During the event, thank teams, sponsors, survivors, and other participants whenever possible.

### Qualifications

- Knowledge of and commitment to the American Cancer Society Mission.
- Knowledge of the community for recruitment of volunteers.
- Interest in leadership with the American Cancer Society.
- Sales experience desired.
- Good organizational skills.

### Support Provided

- Receives training from Event Chair or American Cancer Society staff partner
- Guidebook complete with expectations, instructions and resources
- Regional RFL Mini-Conference
- Samples and examples on The Link ([www.societylink.org](http://www.societylink.org))

- Additional resources, guidebooks, podcasts, blogs, forums, and e-Learning courses (video training) found on RelayForLife.org >> Committee Chair Toolkit
- All necessary print materials

## Staff & Volunteer Partnership

- Overall Event Chairperson
- American Cancer Society Relay Staff Partner
- Subcommittee members
- Volunteers

## Your Role on the Relay Planning Committee

Your Event Chair has asked you to fill this Committee position because you bring unique talents and skills to do this role well! As a Relay Planning Committee member, your role is to take care of all aspects of your focus area, Luminaria, to the best of your ability for the Relay For Life event. As a member of the Relay Planning Committee, you should:

- Attend all Relay Planning Committee meetings (or at least send one member of your Luminaria sub-committee if you are unable to attend a meeting). For summer Relay events, meetings are typically once a month during the fall/winter and more often as the Relay approaches.
- Work on your focus area outside of Relay Planning Committee meetings.
- Relay Planning Committee Meetings are not “group decision making time”. Your Event Chair and the committee trusts you to take care of your focus area without a lot of input from the whole committee during meetings.
- Relay Planning Committee meetings should be an opportunity to report back on progress your sub-committee has made in your focus area. **For example, for a June Relay, here are some things you might want to report on during different times of the year:**
  - In the fall, you should report on your plans for promoting Luminaria sales in the community and your plans for Luminaria logistical pieces (like lighting, weights, etc). You should also help the rest of the sub-committees with Team and Survivor Recruitment as much as possible.
  - In January, you should be ready to sell Luminaria at the Kickoff and at Team Captain meetings.
  - In the spring, you should be promoting Luminaria sales in the community by attending community events (like having a table at an Arts Picnic, etc.) and reporting on sales numbers. In addition, you should report on your plans for the Luminaria ceremony.
  - In early May, you should report on sales numbers and order supplies (bags, candles, glow sticks, etc.). You should also be recruiting day-of volunteers to help with Luminaria set up and clean up, and finalizing ceremony plans.
  - In June, you should make a final report of pre-Relay Luminaria sales, share final ceremony plans (including speakers, music, projecting names, etc.), and also share final plans for Luminaria set up and clean up.
- Communicate regularly with your Event Chair. You should touch base with your Event Chair regularly outside of Planning Committee meetings. Touching base with your Event Chair should include progress reports, questions, and any issues you

may be dealing with. Your Event Chair is there to help and support you.

- Be ready to discuss big pieces of the Relay that affect the whole committee at different times during the season
  - For instance, team recruitment and the Kickoff are big pieces at the beginning of the Relay season that the whole committee should be helping with.
- Make sure you are spreading the word about Relay to your friends, family and co-workers and passing warm leads for teams and sponsors on to those sub-committees.
- Take advantage of the opportunity to work together with other sub-committee Chairs in other focus areas on topics that overlap. We have provided a list of possible collaborations for you below, but this is not an all encompassing list. For instance:
  - Work with the Entertainment & Activities sub-committee to come up with ideas for Luminaria Ceremony that are unique from other ceremonies during the Relay.
  - Work with the Publicity sub-committee to publicize Luminaria sales, especially in the last month before Relay.
  - Work with the Logistics sub-committee to make sure you have space for selling and filling Luminaria at the Relay facility.
  - Work with the Team Development sub-committee to promote Luminaria sales to teams through Team Captain meetings.

## Your Role Leading the Luminaria Sub-Committee

As the Luminaria Chair, you have agreed to take care of the Luminaria needs of the Relay For Life event in your community. The great news is that you don't have to do it alone! Recruit a friend or two to help you as sub-committee partners and share the volunteer work together. Everything is more fun with a partner! As the Luminaria Sub-Committee Chair, you should:

- **Recruit partners to help.** You can read more about this in Step 2 in this guidebook. Also, suggested role delineations are included in the following pages. These roles are suggestions that help keep the workload manageable for each partner, but each Relay ultimately chooses how to distribute the work based on the skills, abilities, and time of the volunteers involved.
- **Delegate clearly.** Make sure that every partner on your Luminaria sub-committee knows exactly what they are being asked to accomplish and agrees to do it.
- **Communicate regularly.** Keep in regular contact with your partners to make sure they feel comfortable with their tasks and that things are moving forward. It may also be helpful to hold sub-committee meetings where all of your partners get a chance to meet one another, work together, and share ideas.
- **Complete Luminaria planning tasks.** Work on and complete the parts of Relay Luminaria that you have agreed to within your sub-committee. Suggested role delineations are provided in the following pages.
- **Ensure that someone from the Luminaria sub-committee attends the Relay Planning Committee meetings.** It is important that your sub-committee is represented at every meeting to report back on your progress, contribute to large Relay decisions and solutions, and work with other sub-committees as needed.

- **Follow up.** Make sure that all of the important aspects of Relay Luminaria outlined in this handbook are being covered and getting completed. Step in as needed to make sure they get done.
- **Recognize and appreciate the contributions of your partners.** Thank each of your sub-committee partners and make sure they know how much you appreciate their help and how they made a difference to the success of the Relay.

### **Suggested Role Delineation on the Luminaria Sub-Committee**

The “Ideal” Luminaria Sub-Committee would consist of two people, so that no one person feels over-whelmed by the job. These role delineations are suggestions, and you may need to modify them for the size of your event, the personalities, and the skills of you and your Luminaria Sub-Committee partner.

#### **Luminaria Sub-Committee Chair: Luminaria Sales**

This person is responsible for:

- Attending Relay Planning Committee meetings, reporting on Luminaria progress, and leading the Luminaria Sub-Committee.
- Setting overall Luminaria goals and direction, and helping sub-committee partners in their tasks as needed.
- Setting sales goals and determining your order collection and tracking system.
- Promoting Luminaria Sales to teams and to the community.
- Collecting and organizing Luminaria orders, including your tracking system and list.
- Helping to prepare Luminaria bags, including bag decoration and display order.
- Managing Luminaria sales at the Relay, and helping with preparation, set up and clean up.
- Wrapping Up, to make sure everything is finished and wrapped up properly.

#### **Luminaria Sub-Committee Partner: Luminaria Logistics and Ceremony**

- Helping to establish Luminaria Plan, including planning for name recognition, ceremony flow, and logistics.
- Determining Luminaria Logistics.
- Planning Luminaria Ceremony.
- Preparing Luminaria bags, including bag decoration and display order.
- Managing Luminaria at the Relay, including helping with Luminaria sales, and coordinating Luminaria preparation, set up and clean up.
- Wrapping Up, to make sure everything is finished and wrapped up properly.



## *Partnership Agreement*

### **Sample Relay For Life Committee Member/Event Chair Partnership Discussion**

Relay For Life Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Event Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Partner: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

In order for a volunteer partnership or staff/volunteer partnership to be successful, we must have a clear understanding of the purpose of each of the roles that the volunteer and staff members play within the American Cancer Society Relay For Life event.

One intention of this document is to gain a better understanding of what the volunteer is looking for in their experience to be sure that we are fulfilling those needs. Another intention is to understand the role that the staff partner plays in terms of coaching volunteers for all of their events.

#### **Committee Member**

*The reason that I am dedicated to the American Cancer Society mission is:*

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*My vision for the Relay For Life of \_\_\_\_\_ is:*

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*Our goal for the Relay For Life of \_\_\_\_\_ is to:*

*Be Engaged in the Recruiting Teams, Sponsors, Cancer Survivors and Caregivers and Meet the Event Fundraising Goal to Fund Vital Patient Services, Education, Advocacy Efforts and Research that supports my community members and those across the country.*

*I understand my role to be:*

---

---

*I understand the key responsibilities of my Committee position to include:*

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

*We have discussed the following:*

- Succession plan*
- Volunteer career path*
- Trainings that are available to me.*

*My qualities that I feel will best compliment this role include:*

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---

*I would like to receive further support and training in the following areas:*

---

---

*I like to be recognized the following ways:*

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*The reason that I am most excited about volunteering for Relay For Life is:*

---

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*The legacy that I would like to leave this Relay For Life event is:*

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*In order for our Relay For Life event to be successful, I understand the need for regular communication through in person meetings, phone calls, e-mail (if applicable).*

*The day & time of the week that works best to meet with my Event Chair is:*

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*The time of the day that is most convenient for me to discuss Relay updates & answer questions is:*

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*I prefer to be contacted at the following phone number:* \_\_\_\_\_

*I understand that the term for the Relay For Life Committee Member is 1 year with a possibility of a second term if mutually agreed upon by myself and the American Cancer Society.*

*I am committed to the fight against cancer and the mission of the American Cancer Society. I understand that our Relay For Life event represents our chance to raise awareness for our community while raising funds for the Society's lifesaving mission of eliminating cancer.*

*Committee Member Commitment:* \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

**Event Chair**

*The reason that I am dedicated to the American Cancer Society mission is:*

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My vision for the Relay For Life of \_\_\_\_\_ is:

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Our goal for the Relay For Life of \_\_\_\_\_ is to:

*Be Engaged in the Review of the Community Assessment and Goal Setting Process and Meet the Event Fundraising Goal to Fund Vital Patient Services, Education, Advocacy Efforts and Research that supports my community members and those across the country.*

I understand my role to be:

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I understand the key responsibilities of the Event Chair position to include:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

My qualities that I feel will best compliment this role include:

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The reason that I am most excited about chairing Relay For Life is:

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The legacy that I would like to leave this Relay For Life event is:

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*In order for our Relay For Life event to be successful, I understand the need for regular communication through in person meetings, phone calls, e-mail (if applicable).*

The day & time of the week that works best to meet with my committee member is:

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The time of the day that is most convenient for me to discuss Relay updates & answer questions is:

---

I prefer to be contacted at the following phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

My role is to work closely with our staff partner to provide coaching, support and resources to our Committee.

*I am committed to the fight against cancer and the mission of the American Cancer Society. I understand that our Relay For Life event represents our chance to raise awareness for our community while raising funds for the Society's lifesaving mission of eliminating cancer.*

Event Chair Commitment: \_\_\_\_\_

(Signature)

## *Suggested Timeline*

This is a loose timeline to give you a feeling for what to expect throughout the Relay season.

### **11 to 12 months before event**

- Event chair(s) recruited and trained
- Secure facility for Relay and finalize the date, time, and location of event
- Plan for the event, including goals for number of teams, survivors, sponsors and plans for other areas of the Relay For Life
- Begin corporate sponsor recruitment and continue through Relay For Life

### **9 to 11 months before event**

- Event Chair(s) recruit committee members to fill Relay Planning Committee
- Conduct all Partnership Agreements so all Sub-Committee Chairs & Members understand their roles
- Sub-Committee Chairs recruit partners to help in their focus area
- Plan/schedule Relay Committee Retreat (training for committee members)
- Review data from last year as a full committee; include teams, sponsors, wrap-up notes, etc.
- Build a Team Development Plan including both Recruitment and Retention, and begin reaching out to invite past teams to come back; include a Team Blitz Week in the plan

### **6 to 9 months before event**

- Hold Relay Committee Retreat for your committee
- Committee meetings should focus on:
  - Committee and Sub-Committee recruitment and development
  - Sponsor recruitment updates
  - Designing a team development plan for the entire committee including both Recruitment and Retention (i.e., Team Blitz Week)
  - Kickoff planning and invitation list
- Begin planning a Kickoff as an entire planning committee led by the Team Development sub-committee; set date, time, and location
  - Each sub-committee should contribute in some way to the Kickoff:
    - Registration & Accounting will need to collect forms and money
    - Relay Online Chair should make sure there are computers available to register at the Kickoff
    - Entertainment & Activities should help create an exciting program
    - Food & Hospitality should secure food donations and make sure everyone feels welcome at the Kickoff
    - Et cetera

### **5 to 7 months before event**

- Committee meetings should focus on:
  - Team recruitment and retention progress (Team Blitz update) and updates from all sub-committees.
    - Have all past teams been contacted?
    - Have new potential teams been identified?
    - Have all returning and potential teams been invited to the Kickoff?
    - How is the entire committee participating in identifying potential teams and giving warm leads to the Team Development Sub-Committee?
  - Sponsor recruitment updates
  - Publicity progress focusing on team recruitment
- Hold your Relay Kickoff (ideally 5 months prior to your Relay)
  - Advertise local Team Captain University
  - At this point you should have 50% of your returning teams from last year registered
  - Be sure to follow up on the phone or through email with all attendees and those who could not attend the Kickoff

#### 4 months before event

- Committee meetings should focus on:
  - Team Recruitment & Retention progress as a committee – You should have 50% of your total team goal registered by this point. If not, brainstorm how to catch up with focused recruitment approaches from the whole committee.
  - Each Sub-Committee should report back on the plans and progress for their focus area
  - Survivor report on recruitment/retention progress
  - Publicity progress focusing on team recruitment and raising awareness of event in the community/ on the campus
- Host a Team Captain’s University (TCU) for all Team Captains, or publicize Regional TCU
- Hold first team captain meeting (ideally 3.5 months before Relay); focus on:
  - Phase 1: Team Building and Planning (review registration process, encourage team communication and goal setting, begin team fundraising event planning)
  - Review Team Fundraising ideas, including sales, dinners, tournaments, Mini Relays, etc.
  - Review Registration and t-shirt deadlines
  - Review incentive prize program, All Stars, and Team Fundraising Club
  - Review team mentor program – highlight great teams from last year offering to help new teams
  - American Cancer Society education/ mission moment
  - Team questions and answers

#### 3 months before event

- Committee meeting should focus on:
  - Team recruitment progress
  - Survivor recruitment progress
  - Publicity focusing on survivor recruitment and raising awareness of event in community
  - Logistical plans for the Relay (items needed as donations, layout plan, etc.)
  - Each Sub-Committee should report back on the plans and progress for their focus area
- Hold second team captain meeting ideally 2.5 months before Relay; focus on:
  - Review Phase 1: Team Building and Planning quickly (registration, goal setting, planning)
  - Focus on Phase 2: Fundraising (individual AND team, successful ideas, highlight successes)
    - Emphasize individual letter-writing/online fundraising & team fundraising activities
  - Mention Registration & t-shirt deadlines
  - American Cancer Society education/ mission moment
  - Questions & answers

#### 2 months before event

- Committee meeting should focus on:
  - Team recruitment progress. You should have 75% of your total team goal registered by this point. If not, brainstorm how to catch up with focused recruitment approaches from the whole committee
  - Survivor recruitment progress
  - Publicity focusing on survivor recruitment and raising awareness of event in community
  - Logistical plans for the Relay (items needed as donations, layout plan, etc.)
  - Entertainment & Activities plans and progress, especially for Ceremonies
  - Fundraising progress report by Registration & Accounting Sub –Committee
  - Each Sub –Committee should report back on the plans and progress for their focus area
- Hold third team captains meeting ideally 6 weeks before Relay; focus on:
  - Review Phase 1: Team Building and Planning quickly for any new teams (registration, goal setting, planning)
  - Review Phase 2: Fundraising (Fundraising - individual & team, successful ideas, etc.)
  - Focus on Phase 3: Preparing for Relay Fun! (team theme and decorations, on-site fundraising, walking schedule, what to bring, activity sign-ups, healthy competition between teams, etc.)
  - Last minute fundraising ideas, such as an Online 10-Day Blitz
  - Incentive Prize, All Stars, Team Fundraising Club, and Team Awards information to encourage friendly competition – highlight the current fundraising leaders
  - American Cancer Society education and advocacy update
  - Questions & answers

**1 month before event**

- Committee meeting should focus on:
  - Team recruitment progress. You should have 100% of your total team goal registered by this point. If not, brainstorm how to catch up with focused recruitment approaches from the whole committee.
  - Survivor recruitment progress. You should have about 75% of your survivor recruitment goal by this point. If not, brainstorm how to catch up with focused recruitment approaches.
  - Fundraising progress report by Registration & Accounting Sub-Committee
  - Bank Night planning and scheduling. All committee members should participate and help with Bank Night.
  - Logistical plans for the Relay, including items needed as donations, layout plan, set up and tear down plan, on-site emergency plan, on-site security plan, rain plan, on-site communication, etc.
  - Entertainment & Activities plans and progress, including Ceremony plans and Relay Program needs from the whole committee.
  - Food & Hospitality plans and progress, including food and decoration donations. Plans for greeters to welcome participants to Relay.
  - Each Sub-Committee should report back on the plans and progress for their focus area.

**2 weeks before event**

- Committee meetings should focus on:
  - Logistical plans and updates for the Relay, including items needed as donations, layout plan, set up and tear down plan, on-site emergency plan, rain plan, on-site communication among the committee, etc.
  - Bank Night Planning. Coordinating last-minute details and who will do what for Bank Night.
  - Fundraising progress report by Registration & Accounting Sub-Committee.
  - Relay Program information coordinated by Entertainment & Activities Sub-Committee.
  - Each Sub-Committee should report back on the plans and progress for their focus area

**1 to 2 weeks before event**

- Hold Bank Night(s)
  - All committee members should help set up, man a station, count money, and tear down
  - All Society accounting and cash handling procedures should be followed, including counting in a secure location
  - Report fundraising progress to all Relay participants through email communication

**Your Relay For Life!**

- Work the Track to begin team retention and committee recruitment for next year
- All Society accounting and cash-handling procedures should be followed, including counting in a secure location
- Each sub-committee should manage their on-site responsibilities and communicate with the Event Chair and the rest of the committee as needed
- Logistics Sub-Committee works with the staff partner and Event Chair to handle any emergencies

**3 to 4 weeks after event**

- Hold wrap-up meeting for leadership planning committee; focus on:
  - Celebrating success
  - Assessing the event and looking at positives as well as improvements for next year
  - Remember recognition and thank-you's
  - Committee positions and succession planning for next year
  - Discuss next year's event – date, time, location
- Hold wrap-up meeting for team captains; focus on:
  - Celebrating success
  - Assessing the event – what went well, what needs to improve in the future
  - Recognition and thank-you's
  - Discuss next year's event - date, time, location
  - Use Wrap Up Meeting as an opportunity for committee recruitment

## Step 2 – Recruit Your Partners

### *Find Help...Build Your Sub-Committee*

The Luminaria Sub-Committee covers an aspect of Relay that is very meaningful to participants and members of the community and is one of the most special parts of the Relay, so you will probably want to find a partner to help cover all the details. Ideally, the Luminaria Sub-Committee would consist of two people, one focusing on Luminaria Sales and the other focusing on Luminaria Logistics and Ceremony. A suggested role delineation is included in the preceding pages. The suggested roles work well and split the work in a way that makes sense and is manageable by each person, but ultimately, you can organize your Luminaria Sub-Committee however you decide based on the needs of your Relay, the skills and talents of you and your partner, and how many Luminaria you have had in the past and would like to have at your event this year.

### *Where to Look for Help*

When looking for help, first brainstorm people you know who would be a good partner. Your sub-committee partner could be a friend, co-worker, neighbor, or family member...ask around to everyone you know because most people have a connection with cancer and would be happy to contribute their time to a worthy cause. This could be their outlet for that hidden event planning talent! Next, consider asking people who have jobs that compliment the skills of these roles that you may or may not know very well (possibly someone in a sales position to work on Luminaria sales, etc.). You might also ask around at a local university, community college, or high school for students interested in some practical event planning and community service experience for their resume. You may have several people tell you no, or they are too busy. That's ok...don't get discouraged. Keep asking and find the right people to help you have found a top-notch Luminaria Sub-Committee partner for your Relay event.

### *Defining Expectations with Your Sub-Committee Partners*

Once you have asked your partners for their help with Luminaria and they say yes, next you will want to clearly define their role and expectations. Every volunteer wants to feel needed and important to the overall success of the event, and they also want to have clear direction of how they play a part in that success. In the same way that you and your Event Chair should sit down and define roles and expectations to give you clear direction as the Luminaria Chair, be sure to sit down with your sub-committee partner and lay out their role and how they can do it well, and how you can work together to succeed.

Having this Partnership Agreement conversation at the beginning will set you up for success throughout the season. Your partner won't know what you need them to do unless you sit down and have a clear conversation establishing it so you can both move forward.

### *Lead Your Sub-Committee Well*

Now that you have recruited your sub-committee members, lead them well by communicating regularly, empowering them to do their jobs, helping to motivate them

to continue to do good work, getting them excited about the final Relay and appreciating all their hard work. Regular calls (once or twice per month) work well to keep your relationships strong and keep everyone in the loop.



## Step 3 – Establish a Plan

Remember: a goal is just a dream...with a deadline! Use the suggested timeline in Step 1, along with any feedback from last year’s Relay to develop an Action Plan with your Sub-Committee Members. Be sure to delegate responsibilities, provide due dates, and follow up before – as well as after – those due dates. Celebrate successes along the way as tasks are completed to keep your Sub-Committee Members motivated and feeling appreciated.

Be sure to include:

- Setting a goal for Luminaria sales
- Publicity of Luminaria sales
- Luminaria order collection process
- Process for lighting and weighing down Luminaria bags
- How Luminaria will be displayed at Relay For Life
- Planning the Luminaria Ceremony
- Work with Online Chair to get report of Luminaria
- Work with Event Chair and Activities & Entertainment Chair to plan Luminaria Ceremony
- Work with Team Development Chair to promote Luminaria sales

### *Your Action Plan*

ACTION	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DUE DATE	DATE COMPLETED

## Step 4 – Promote Luminaria Sales

Almost everyone has been touched by cancer, and can think of a friend or loved one who has faced cancer. It is usually pretty easy to get people to order Luminaria because it is a small donation and they are getting a special opportunity to honor or remember someone they know who has faced cancer.

Most people jump at the opportunity to purchase a Luminaria for the ceremony, even above and beyond a generous donation to a team. So, if you educate the community and the Relay participants about the opportunity, you will receive Luminaria orders with very little “selling” effort. Selling Luminaria is more about making people aware that they are available than about actually selling a product. So, here are some tips and things to keep in mind when increasing Luminaria awareness and “selling” Luminaria for your Relay.

### *Luminaria Pre-Sales through Teams*

While teams should not use Luminaria sales as a means to reach their fundraising goal, it is important to let them know that Luminaria are available. Many times the participants who attend the event feel very strongly about having a Luminaria around the track to honor or remember their Reason to Relay. They may also have friends, co-workers, or family who order Luminaria for special people, and often you will see participants taking pictures of specific bags to show donors who couldn't be there. Therefore, you will want to make Luminaria orders available to teams and clearly explain the order process and accounting process. Encourage your Team Captains to turn in Luminaria orders early so the bags can be prepared, or you may decide to give out bags so teams can decorate their own. Most of your Luminaria pre-orders will come through teams, because they almost all have someone special to honor or remember during the ceremony.

### *Luminaria Sales as Event Publicity*

In the six weeks before the Relay, you can use Luminaria Sales publicity pieces to promote your event in the community. Work with the Publicity Sub-Committee to come up with a strategy to include Luminaria to promote the Relay. This can include an ad in the local newspaper with information on how to order a Luminaria and an invitation to come see it at the event. Or you could write a letter to the editor inviting people to remember a loved one. Or the Luminaria publicity could include having Luminaria order forms at local businesses like banks, grocery stores, or doctor's offices. There are also Relay posters and flyers with Luminaria pictures that can be customized with your local information and posted in prominent places. Make sure that as you promote the Relay using Luminaria, you always invite people from the community to get involved on teams or come out and enjoy the Relay and see their Luminaria around the track.

### *Luminaria Sales in the Community*

You can also physically sell Luminaria out in the community. A booth at a local festival or event can be great places to sell Luminaria for the Relay, and invite people to get involved. Luminaria can also sell well in church environments, like in the back area after a

service is complete. You might also let local funeral homes know that Luminaria are available for a way to physically remember someone who has passed away from cancer recently. There are many ways to get the word out into the community about Luminaria, but always be sure to invite people to get involved on teams or come to the event to see their Luminaria in action.

### ***Mailing to Past Participants***

Try sending a nice letter and order form to the people who ordered Luminaria last year...they may wish to purchase one again. This requires that accurate records and good data be kept year to year, so even if you don't have a good list from last year, be sure you keep one for next year. And, be sure to check with your staff partner to pull a fresh list" with suppressions from our staff database (Siebel). If any individual has requested not to receive communications from the American Cancer Society, we want to honor that request by pulling a fresh list from the database.

### ***Online Luminaria Sales***

Your event also has the ability to accept Luminaria orders online. Work with your Online Chair to figure out the details of setting up this part of the site and getting a report of the online orders transferred to you so each order turns into an actual Luminaria around the track.

## Step 5 – Luminaria Logistics

### *Secure Luminaria Supplies*

There are many logistical decisions to be made about how your Luminaria will look, be lit, and be weighed down. Secure local donations or work with your staff partner to order supplies to make sure each of these logistical needs are met:

- **Luminaria bags** — Work with your staff partner to order white bags for your Luminaria. There are nice white bags with a small Relay For Life logo in the corner available that work great to line the track with bags.
- **Methods for lighting the bags** — There are several options available for lighting Luminaria:
  - **Votive Candles** — these are inexpensive and have that “authentic” feeling, but may not be allowed at some facilities. They are also susceptible to rain and windy conditions and can be dangerous if kicked over. They also often burn out before the night is over, and can create a lot of wax mess and trash to throw away at the end of the Relay. Sand is necessary with candles both to weigh down the bags and to provide a small safety buffer with the small candles burning in the bags.
  - **Glow sticks** — these are expensive and often have an eerie glow, but until recently were the only alternative to actual candles. They do not require any other special supplies. They often glow for 4-6 hours, depending on the brand and size of the glow sticks. Glow sticks give some flexibility with the bag weights, as items other than sand can be used. But, they can also be tricky to balance in the bags, so they can give off unbalanced light. They also have to be thrown away at the end of the Relay.
  - **Battery Operated Tea Lights** — these are little tea lights that look like candles and even flicker like they have a real flame. They are more expensive than candles up front, but the batteries last around 30 hours so they can be used for several Relays, and the batteries are not very expensive to replace. They are wind-proof and rainproof, and make no mess. They do sometimes break apart and need to be replaced, especially if they are used and transported multiple times. They do take some effort to collect all of the lights at the end of the Relay event to reuse for another Relay.
- **Methods for weighing down the bags** — There are several options available for weighing down Luminaria bags:
  - **Sand** — this is the traditional method, but some facilities may not allow it to be brought in. It is a safety feature and must be used for lit candles. Sand is heavy and can be challenging to bring in to the Relay in bags, but the biggest challenge with sand is disposing of it after the Relay. If your facility has a sand pit, or allows you to dump it in the grass, it works great.
    - **TIP:** 100 lb. Bag of Sand = 200 Luminaria (approximately one 8 oz. cup per Luminaria)...OR...½ Yard of Sand = approximately 2,500 Luminaria
  - **Rocks or Bricks** — with glow sticks or battery operated votive candles, these work very well, and can even be borrowed instead of purchased. Bricks with holes can also help balance glow sticks in the bag to give even light. The

- challenge with these is transporting them to and from the event because of the weight and collecting them at the end of the Relay.
- **Other creative means** — There are other ways to weigh down your Luminaria bags, like using wood blocks or metal weights. Feel free to get creative if you are willing to figure out the details and can get things donated from someone in your community. You just need to figure out where to get enough of them, how to transport them, and how to collect them after the Relay. Otherwise, your imagination is the limit!
    - **TIP:** One Relay asked team members to bring canned goods to Relay; these were used to weigh down the Luminaria and then the cans were donated to a local food shelter after the Relay.
  - **Other supplies** — Depending on the lighting style you choose, there are a lot of other supplies to consider as well:
    - **Lighters** — if you use candles, you will need enough lighters to get them all lit quickly. Make sure they all have enough lighter fluid as well if they have been borrowed from another event.
    - **Plastic cups** — if you use candles, you might consider placing them in little plastic cups. This significantly reduced the wax mess and makes cleanup easier without hiding the candlelight.
    - **Fire extinguishers** — if you use candles, you should have several fire extinguishers around the track just in case a Luminaria is kicked over...the bags burn very quickly and small fires could easily start.
    - **Extra batteries** — if you use the battery operated votive candles, be sure to have extra batteries on hand just in case some of them wear out during the night.

### *Secure Day-Of Volunteers*

Consider how many Luminaria you are planning on, and think about how many people you will need to fill, place, and light all of those bags. Different Relays come up with many different plans for filling, placing, and lighting their Luminaria. Some small Relays have each team responsible for filling and placing their own Luminaria. Others have a very specific system for filling them and an order for placing the bags around the track. Some Relays use team members or young people to light the bags. Others have committee members or designated volunteers light the bags. Decide how yours will work and how many extra volunteers you will need to accomplish your plan. Then work with the Volunteer Recruitment Sub-committee to help recruit volunteers to help on the night of Relay.

### *Determine On-Site Needs*

Think about what kind of logistical needs you will have to sell, keep track of, fill, place, and clean up your Luminaria. Work to borrow each item or get them donated from local businesses. Here are some supplies you may need:

- **Luminaria Sales Station** – tent, tables, chairs, bags, markers, power, light, etc. Work with the Logistics Sub-Committee to secure all event logistical pieces, like tents, tables, chairs, power, light, etc.
- **Tracking Luminaria Names** – You may choose to use a paper list or use a laptop and printer. Just be sure you plan ahead to make sure you have the right files on the

laptop, the printed is connected correctly, there is enough power, etc.

- **Luminaria Filling and Placing Supplies** – supplies for bag weights (scoops and buckets for sand, etc), wagons/golf carts/other vehicle for transporting the bags around the track,
- **Luminaria Clean Up** – collection bags or boxes for weights and battery operated votive candles, if you are using them. Consider keeping some of the well-decorated Luminaria for examples and decorations at next year’s Kickoff and Team Captain Meetings.

## Step 6 – Luminaria Ceremony

### *The Luminaria Ceremony*

Also often called the Ceremony of Hope, the Luminaria Ceremony is one of the most moving moments of the Relay For Life event. The idea is to have lit white bags line the walking track, each bag with the name of a person who has faced cancer. Donors can purchase a Luminaria in memory of someone lost to cancer, or in honor of someone who is a cancer survivor. This powerful ceremony is a special opportunity for people to remember those lost to cancer and work through grief to arrive at hope. The Luminaria Ceremony is a part of the Relay that all the participants remember afterwards. It gives each participant the opportunity to remember the reason they Relay and connect with the mission of the American Cancer Society. Therefore it is very important that the ceremony is interesting, meaningful, well planned, and fresh each year.

### *Keeping Ceremonies Fresh*

The Luminaria Ceremony is an emotional and inspirational part of Relay, and it is a great place to integrate Relay traditions. Many Relays have some aspects of their Luminaria ceremony that participants can look forward to each year, like a Luminaria video with names and pictures or a special song. But sometimes keeping too many traditions year after year carries the danger of making the ceremonies lose their inspirational value – becoming stale and predictable for the participants. To combat this challenge, be intentional about choosing which traditions to keep each year and which aspects will be fresh, exciting, and newly inspirational for your Relay participants. Challenge yourself to create a new ceremony each year, rather than using last year’s agenda. Ask around and find out what kinds of things inspire Relay participants, and incorporate those ideas into your ceremony. Keep your teams and participants coming back year after year by giving them a fresh, moving, and inspirational Luminaria Ceremony that allows them to truly honor and remember those touched by cancer and connect to the Society’s mission of fighting cancer.

### *Planning Your Luminaria Ceremony*

You have a lot of freedom to be creative with the Luminaria Ceremony...you can include whatever you want to make it inspirational and filled with hope. Every Relay does something different for their Luminaria Ceremony, from lighting the bags in a certain order, spelling HOPE in the bleachers and changing it to CURE (refer to Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back. Resource Guidebook for more information; guidebook found on RelayForLife.org), playing special music from a CD, having live performers, reading special poems, recognizing the names on the bags through videos or PowerPoint presentations, having special laps in silence, and more. Really, the only limit on the Luminaria Ceremony is your imagination. Make it a time filled with hope that we will find a cure for cancer through special moments. Also be sure to work together with the Entertainment and Activities Sub-Committee, because they may have input or want to help plan the details of this ceremony. Every Relay committee distributes the work a little differently, so decide

who is responsible for planning all of the details of this ceremony and make it great.

### ***Transitions and Timing***

The Luminaria Ceremony typically takes place at or around sunset and should last about a half hour. If the ceremony is too long, participants (especially children) struggle to maintain the reverence of the ceremony and can distract from the point of the ceremony. Also be sure to plan logical transitions in and out of the Luminaria Ceremony and back into the fun activities of Relay, (including turning lights on/off, announcing the start of the ceremony and any requirements for silence, starting with slower music or a cancer related activity directly after the ceremony, etc).

### ***Reading or Projecting Names***

**For a small Relay**, reading the names from the Luminaria list can be a neat way to honor all of the people and engage the teams and participants in the ceremony. There is something powerful about hearing all of those names, and especially hearing the name of the person you purchased a Luminaria for. However, be cautious of the hurt feelings that may result from mispronouncing a name, or from leaving a name off the list. If you choose to read names, take every precaution possible and be meticulous about including all names. Also, your committee will need to decide whether repeat-names should be read each time. For example, there may be 20 Luminaria for the same person – do you read his/her name 20 times?

**As your Relay grows, you may want to explore other ways to recognize the names from the Luminaria.** With large numbers of Luminaria, reading the names can take a long time and can lose the powerful effect as participants (especially children) lose interest. Remember that the point of the Luminaria Ceremony is to give participants a chance to honor and remember the people in their lives who have been touched by cancer. If they become disinterested and stop listening because the list of names is too long, then the Ceremony is no longer fulfilling its purpose of helping them honor and remember loved ones. **There is no requirement that you read the Luminaria names** – some events project them on a screen instead (see the next paragraph for a tool to do this easily), and other events don't draw attention to the specific names at all, focusing instead on meaningful parts of the ceremony for all survivors and for all those lost to cancer. As the Luminaria Sub-Committee, you get to make the ultimate decision on how to help your teams and participants honor and remember their loved ones, whether that includes reading the names, projecting them on a screen, or some other creative method.

### ***Samples and Examples***

If you need inspiration, there are many sample and examples in the back section of this guidebook, including ideas for music and readings. Also, if you want to project your Luminaria names from a PowerPoint presentation, there is an Excel document available on The Link that will create a PowerPoint presentation from your list of Luminaria names (*see details in the Tools, Samples & Examples section of this guidebook*). Each slide displays three names with a Relay themed background, and the program automatically organizes your names alphabetically for the presentation. It is a very neat program that



makes projecting your names very easy, so you should check it out!

## Step 7 – Collect & Organize Luminaria Orders

### *Determine Your System*

Decide how you are going to collect and organize the Luminaria orders that come in. It is very important to be very detailed with Luminaria, and not miss any or spell names incorrectly because they mean so much to the people who purchase them. Some Relays give teams a lot of responsibility for their own Luminaria by handing out bags and letting teams bring them back decorated or even set them around the track themselves. This gets a little tricky to make sure that every bag around the track is paid for, but because Luminaria are more about giving people an opportunity to honor their loved ones than about being a fundraiser, this is a viable option.

Other Relays only accept order forms with money and they make every Luminaria look alike with special calligraphy. Be sure to consider Luminaria orders that come from Team Captains and from the general public. Decide how you want your collection system to work and communicate that to the Relay Committee, to the Team Captains, and to the public.

### *Collect Orders*

Here are the places and ways that you will collect Luminaria orders:

- **At Team Captain Meetings** — be sure to attend Team Captain meetings to communicate about Luminaria to Team Captains and to collect orders and payments.
- **At other community functions** — consider selling Luminaria and collecting order at booths at community events like fairs, festivals, sporting events, etc.
- **Through the mail and phone** — place your contact information on public Luminaria publicity pieces, and receive orders from the general public through mail, fax, phone, etc.
- **Online** — run reports of any Luminaria purchased through the online tool.
- **At Bank Night** — set up a Luminaria station at Bank Night to collect final orders from teams. You will receive many Luminaria orders at this time.
- **At the Relay** — collect on-site Luminaria orders at the Relay. You will also receive a large number of Luminaria orders on-site as people see the Luminaria around the track and decide they want to purchase one.

### *Keep a List*

Be sure to keep an accurate list of all Luminaria names and the people who purchased them. The list of Luminaria names will be useful if you are planning to read or project the names, and the list of people who ordered Luminaria will be useful for promoting sales next year (where you can send an order form and letter to everyone who purchased a Luminaria from the year before – but be sure to have a fresh list pulled from the ACS Staff database to make sure the information is still correct).

Keeping a list can be done by hand, but most people use a computer spreadsheet program like Excel. If you are using a computer to keep your list, be sure to plan the logistics for having power for your computer at the Relay. You may also want to have a printer or other computer accessories available for your on-site Relay sales, so plan all the details to make your on-site list management work.

## Step 8 – Prepare the Luminaria Bags

### *Options for Labeling Luminaria Bags*

Different Relays label their Luminaria bags in different ways. Some have every bag decorated by the individual who purchased it with markers, photos, paint, stickers, and other crafty techniques. Other Relays want all of the bags to have a consistent look, so they are all just white bags with simple printed labels or written calligraphy around the track. Others have a mixture of both, with some decorated bags, and some bags simply labeled by the committee. Decide how you want your Relay Luminaria to work, and communicate that to your Relay participants.

### *Labeling Undecorated Luminaria*

If you choose to allow bag decorations, you will have some beautiful bags turned in, but you will still have a large number of orders that come in without decorated bags (like order forms that come in through the mail). The Luminaria Sub-Committee is responsible for labeling all of the bags that are not decorated by the donor. Here are some options for labeling them:

- **Handwriting** (one or several people write the names in basic “nice” handwriting – could be a committee party or volunteer group).
- **Calligraphy** (one person writes all bags with a nice marker and beautiful script)
- **Printed labels** (ACS has sticker labels available that can be run through a laser printer and affixed to Luminaria bags, if your Relay has available money in your budget. Your staff partner can order them through the ACS Shared Services Center Catalog on Ariba, numbers 7522.63, 7522.62, 7522.83)
- **Others decorate the bags** (consider gathering a group of children, a cancer support group, or maybe a retirement home to decorate the bags that don’t come in decorated. You will also need a plan for decorating extra bags on-site at the Relay).

### *Be Meticulous*

Make sure that there is a Luminaria bag around the track for every form turned in, and make sure that each bag that you prepare looks nice. Do not lose any Luminaria bags or order forms. People are very emotionally invested when they purchase Luminaria in honor or in memory of their loved ones, and nothing is worse than having someone walk around the whole track looking for the Luminaria they ordered and have it not be there. This is especially true when names are read or projected. You have people’s emotions in your hands as you handle Luminaria bags and orders, so treat them with the utmost respect and pay attention to every detail.

## Step 9 – On-site Management

### *On-Site Luminaria Sales*

You will want to have an area near registration to sell Luminaria on site at the Relay, and you will manage this area during the Relay. You will sell quite a few Luminaria that night as people see the Luminaria and decide they want one, and you want to have enough help to make it run smoothly. Here are some things to prepare and have at your On-Site Luminaria Sales station:

- **Clear signage** so that people know exactly where to purchase Luminaria and when on-site ordering ends
- Tables, chairs, computer, printer, power, and any other **logistical needs**
- **Day-Of volunteers** to sell the Luminaria, maintain the money box, update the list, and keep the newly decorated bags organized so they can be filled and placed around the track
- **Work with the Registration & Accounting Sub-Committee** to batch and process the cash and checks from Luminaria sales on-site
- **Decoration table and art supplies** for people to decorate their newly purchased Luminaria (if you allow individually decorated bags)

### *Luminaria Set Up*

You will also be managing the process of Luminaria set up and placement at the Relay. This includes:

- Making sure all Luminaria supplies arrive at the Relay (bags, candles, glow sticks, sand, lighters, bricks, etc)
- Day-Of volunteers to fill the bags to weigh them down and place the candle or glowstick in them, and volunteers to place the filled bags around the track. You might also have a station where teams fill and place their own bags.
- A way to transport filled bags around the track to be placed, like a wagon or golf cart.
- Make sure that the bags are distributed evenly around the track, so there are bags all the way around, even if there is blank space between them.

#### **TIPS** For Alphabetizing Luminaria:

- If your Relay alphabetizes Luminaria, consider grouping all A's together, all B's together, etc. – rather than alphabetizing every single name.
- Consider alphabetizing (or grouping) all pre-sale Luminaria and then designating one area for Luminaria sold on the day of the event (NOT alphabetized) so that people will know generally where to find their Luminaria around the track.

## *Lighting the Luminaria*

In addition, the Luminaria Sub-Committee will manage the lighting process for the Luminaria. This includes:

- Day-Of volunteers to light the Luminaria (either light candles with lighters, or switch on battery-operated tea lights, or crack glow sticks). If you use glow sticks or battery-operated tea lights, children are often willing workers who don't mind bending over hundreds of times and can accomplish the task very quickly. Simply make an announcement that all the kids who want to help should meet at a certain area for instructions.
- Any necessary preparation before they are lit, including calmer music, lights turned off, live music acts or readings begin, etc.
- Fire safety – if you are using real candles, make sure there are plenty of fire extinguishers placed around the track. Luminaria bags can light on fire quickly if a candle tips over, and need to be put out right away.

## *Manage the Luminaria Ceremony*

The Luminaria Sub-Committee should work with the Entertainment & Activities Sub-Committee to make sure the Luminaria Ceremony runs smoothly, including:

- Making sure all speakers or performers arrive ahead of time and are prepared
- Making sure all ceremony equipment is ready (stage, microphones, ceremony lighting, music CDs, etc)
- Making sure any special plans are ready (leaders for a silent lap, handheld candles or glow sticks are distributed, changing the bags from HOPE to CURE, etc)
- If you are planning to place plain Luminaria bags to spell HOPE in the stands or other visible place and change them to CURE, refer to the diagram in the Celebrate Remember Fight Back Resource Guidebook (available on RelayForLife.org)
- Making sure participants (especially kids) know that the Luminaria Ceremony is a special time to be quiet and respectful (give announcement at the beginning, have committee members "running interference" for anyone who gets noisy or distracting during the ceremony, etc)
- Making sure the ceremony runs as planned
- Making sure the transition back into the fun, party atmosphere of Relay happens smoothly (turn on lights, start with nice slow DJ music for a couple songs, maybe transition into a cancer education activity, etc)

## *Clean Up the Luminaria*

The Luminaria Sub-Committee is also responsible for making sure all of the Luminaria and Luminaria supplies are cleaned up and packed up after the Relay event including making sure that:

- All Luminaria bags are emptied of their weights (sand, bricks, rocks, etc)
- All weights are taken care of (sand disposed of appropriately, bricks/rocks

returned, etc).

- Disposing of sand can be tricky. Some venues do not allow you to dump it on the grass or throw it in a dumpster. If there is a long jump pit at your school track, consider getting permission to dump your sand in the pit. If not, find another way to collect and dispose of the sand, or consider using a different material to weigh down the bags.
- Bricks and rocks are heavy, so have a plan for transporting them back to the original owner.
- All candles and glow sticks are thrown away, or all battery-operated tea-lights are collected, packed and returned to the Society.
- All Luminaria bags are disposed of – although you may consider keeping some of the best bags as decorations and examples for your Kickoff or community sales next year.
- Consider using Relay participants to help clean up Luminaria with a themed Luminaria Pick Up lap at a specific time (like 6 a.m., after sunrise).
- Announce to participants that any Luminaria they wish to keep should be picked up prior to the Luminaria Pick Up Lap.
  - Then when the Luminaria Pick Up Lap begins, place trash cans and collection buckets/bins/boxes on the track for walkers to pick up Luminaria, dump the sand/rocks in buckets on the track, trash the candles, and place the bags in collection boxes.
  - It's a "win-win" situation: Participants do all the hard work of collecting all the individual Luminaria and all you have to do is manage the collection containers afterwards. They enjoy helping while they are walking too.
- All other Luminaria supplies (lighters, markers, computer, printer, wagons, etc) are collected, packed, and returned to their owners.
- Any other Luminaria messes are cleaned up (ie. candle wax on track, etc).

## Step 10 – Wrap Up

### *Finish Strong*

Most of your work is complete once the Relay is over, but there are a few things to finish up before you are completely done. Be sure to complete all of the following items to leave the Relay in great shape for next year!

### *The Importance of Thank You Notes*

Thank every person/company who helped you with your Luminaria sales or ceremony, including guest speakers, entertainers who donated their time, companies or organizations who allowed you to place order forms in their place of business, media or newsletters if they donated ads or helped promote Luminaria sales, etc. Also thank your invaluable sub-committee partner for all their help throughout the Relay season.

### *Attend the Committee Wrap-Up Meeting*

Attend the Committee Wrap-Up Meeting to discuss with the entire Relay committee: (a) which parts of Relay went well, and (b) which parts could be improved. Also discuss Relay impressions with your Sub-Committee Members, and take notes on what could be improved for next year.

### *Leaving a Legacy for Future Years*

Committee members typically serve in one position for two years, and then move to another position on the committee or to another volunteer opportunity in the Region or in the Division. Ideally, this helps keep the Relay fresh and exciting with a mixture of new and veteran volunteers on the planning committee each year, and also keeps volunteers from being burned out in a specific area.

Take the following steps to set up for future success:

- Decide now whether you are planning to return in your position next year, or whether there may be another position on the committee you would like to try.
- In addition, after serving as Event Chair there are additional volunteer leadership opportunities within the American Cancer Society available on:
  - Regional Relay Task Force
  - Division Project Teams – such as the Heroes of Hope Workgroup, RFL Leadership Conference Planning Committee, etc.
  - Division RFL Advisory Team
  - Division RFL Training Team
  - National RFL committees
  - International RFL training teams

- Have a conversation with your Event Chair and staff partner to discuss your plans, any committee openings for next year's Relay, and your future goals as an American Cancer Society volunteer.
- If you decide to step down from the committee or move to another position, think about who you know that might be a good fit to take your place. Consider asking them if they would be interested in taking your place for the next Relay, or at least give their name and number to your Event Chair to contact them regarding filling the position. The goal is to have the whole committee lined up within the first two-three months following the Relay, so they can have the entire season to plan and not be rushed at the end.
- If you are leaving your position, leave a legacy of your hard work by giving all of your detailed notes, lists, and files to your staff partner to pass on to the next chair.



## Tools, Samples & Examples

If you do not already have access to The Link (the American Cancer Society's intranet), please ask your staff partner to request this for you. There are many invaluable resources available with just a click of a button!

Log on to The Link at <http://www.societylink.org>

Once you are on the Relay For Life Eastern home page, click on the **RFL 5Ds** link, located on the left in the green "Inside This Community" menu

Click on the **Event Development** folder

Select the **Luminaria** sub-folder to find:

- Luminaria Form – sample Luminaria Form
- Luminaria Powerpoint Creator – use this spreadsheet to easily create a scrolling Luminaria PowerPoint featuring the names and In Honor Of/ In Memory Of for each name
- Mini Luminaria Ceremony Script – sample mini-Luminaria Ceremony to use at Kick Off, Team Captain Meetings, etc.
- Ultimate Luminaria Guide – tips, tricks, samples and ideas for all aspects of Luminaria

Be sure to visit [RelayForLife.org](http://RelayForLife.org) as well for forums, resources, and more ideas about Luminaria.

## Tips & Ideas

### *Formula for Sand*

100 lb. Bag of Sand = 200 Luminaria (approximately one 8 oz. cup per Luminaria)

OR

½ Yard of Sand = approximately 2,500 Luminaria

### *Don't Forget to Run Online Luminaria Reports!*

Keep in mind that people may be “purchasing” Luminaria through Relay Online. Therefore it is critical that the Luminaria Sub-Committee work with the Relay Online Chair to obtain an online Luminaria report. This report may be run throughout the season, so that the Luminaria Sub-Committee may prepare the Luminaria bags ahead of time. However, a last-minute report should be run right before Relay in order to ensure that every Luminaria “purchased” prior to Relay is placed on the track at the Relay.

### *DGI for Rainy Relays*

This trick worked wonders at our rainy Relay For Life of Bay Ridge (Brooklyn, NY), which traditionally has enough Luminaria to line the track 2 or 3 times....

Because they have so many Luminaria, the committee made the decision that they had to start lining the track – despite dark and cloudy skies – in order to be able to put them all out for the ceremony at 9 p.m. As suspected, the rains came, and it looked like they would have soggy Luminaria bags...when in a moment of genius, the chair and I noticed an entire tent's worth of rectangular plastic tablecloths left over from the Survivor Luncheon...perfect!!! The Luminaria committee immediately “borrowed” the tablecloths, and in no time, the Luminaria were all perfectly covered in purple plastic. They were the exact size needed to cover the bags, and were really lightweight, so the Luminaria could stay upright.

And in true Relay fashion, by 8:30 p.m., the rain ended and tons of volunteers helped put the rest of the bags on the track. The tablecloths came off, the candles were lit, and Luminaria was saved!

The lesson of this story is: add plastic tablecloths to your Luminaria packing list if your event forecast calls for rain. Be careful if the track is on a hill – the rain may sneak under the tablecloths and affect the Luminaria bags. However, on an official track, it's a level surface, so the Luminaria are well protected.



## Recognizing Top Community Relay Events and Individuals



### *Nationwide Awards and Recognition*

## Be An Award-Winning Relay!

Since Relay For Life's inception in 1985, countless individuals, teams, and communities have worked together to celebrate cancer survivors and remember loved ones we've lost while raising much-needed funds and awareness for the fight against cancer.

Relay volunteers are recognized in communities nationwide for their dedication to the mission of the American Cancer Society. While no award can adequately recognize all that Relay volunteers achieve in their efforts to eliminate cancer, the Society offers the Relay For Life Nationwide Awards and Recognition Program as a tribute to some of the nation's most outstanding participants. The awards highlight the success of individuals, teams, and events that define the hallmarks of Relay For Life, and serve to inspire others across the nation. Those recognized as nationwide Relay For Life award winners represent the very essence of what it means to be a Relay For Life volunteer.

Winners in each category are announced and presented to the winners at the Division Relay For Life Leadership Conference in the fall.

# American Cancer Society Relay For Life Nationwide Awards and Recognition Program

## **All American Relay Award** *(application required)*

Awarded to communities that show growth, retention, Relay branding, diversity, and leadership in incorporating the 5Ds within the Relay event and throughout the year

## **Gordy Klatt Number One Net Income Award**

Awarded to the number one nationwide fundraising community and youth fundraising event in the country based on net income from Lawson

## **Gordy Klatt Number One Per Capita Award**

Awarded to the number one per capita county in the country based on net income from Lawson and county population\* and awarded to the number one per capita youth event in the country based on net income from Lawson and enrollment population

## **Heart of Relay Award** *(application required)*

Awarded to community, collegiate, and youth events that demonstrate successful practices and innovations in supporting the Society's mission and 2015 goals in the areas of fighting back, advocacy, survivor/caregiver engagement, and youth involvement

## **International Heart of Relay Award : One World – One Hope** *(application required)*

Awarded to international communities that demonstrate successful practices that support and impact the global fight against cancer in the areas of mission, survivorship, youth engagement, and advocacy.

## **Nationwide Data Club Award**

Awarded to the top three Divisions that excel in data capture as determined by the National Relay For Life Business Unit Data Management and Analysis Team

## **Nationwide Division Per Capita Award**

Awarded to the top three Divisions with the highest per capita based on net income from Lawson and total county population in the Division

## **Nationwide Number One Power of Hope Award**

Awarded to the top counties in each population bucket with the highest per capita number of total registered survivors participating in all events in the county based on county population and survivors in Siebel

## **Nationwide Number One Rookie Event Award**

Awarded to the first year community event with the top net income in Lawson and to the first year youth event with the top net income in Lawson

## **Nationwide Number One Survivor Engagement Award**

Awarded to the community event & the youth event with the highest number of registered survivors entered in Siebel

## **Nationwide Online Communications Award** *(application required)*

Awarded to the top three events and the top three teams recognized by the nationwide Relay For Life Marketing and Communications Leadership Committee as demonstrating the best use of the e-revenue/communication tool and/or [www.RelayForLife.org](http://www.RelayForLife.org) for online communications

## **Nationwide Per Capita Award**

Awarded to the top 10 per capita counties in each population bucket based on the net income from Lawson and county population from all the Relays in each county and to the top five per capita youth events in each population bucket based on net income from Lawson and enrollment population

## **Nationwide Team of Excellence Award**

Awarded to all teams that raise \$50,000 and above (with an average of \$3,333 per team member) and to all youth teams that raise \$15,000 and above (with an average of \$1,000 per team member) based on estimated revenue and number of team members in Siebel

## **Nationwide Top Net Income Events**

Awarded to the top 10 nationwide fundraising events and to the top five nationwide fundraising youth events in the country based on net income from Lawson

## **Nationwide Top Online Fundraising Award**

Awarded to the top individual and top event with the most online dollars raised (both community and youth) based on credit card donations

## **Nationwide Top Individual Fundraising Award**

Awarded to the top 10 individuals who raise the most funds nationwide and to the top five youth based on estimated revenue in Siebel

## **Nationwide Top Team Fundraising Award**

Awarded to the top 10 community fundraising teams and to the top five youth fundraising teams in the country based on estimated revenue in Siebel including both online and offline income

## **Terry Zahn Award** *(application required)*

Awarded to the top three events and top three teams demonstrating excellence in a Relay event or team publicity

\* County populations are provided by Claritas to the American Cancer Society based upon US Census figures adjusted annually. Enrollment populations are from Market Data Retrieval (MDR) (a D&B Company) and are updated every other year. Financial figures are derived from Lawson. All other award information is based on Siebel, unless otherwise noted.



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