

Alzheimer's Walk at Millennium Park raises over \$10,000



By Michael Riley

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The IG Wealth Management Bancroft Alzheimer's Walk happened on May 25 at Millennium Park. Walks also took place in Belleville, Quinte West, Prince Edward County and Tweed. All funds raised from the walk stay here in Bancroft to fund local Alzheimer's programs and services. According to Veronique Ladd, education and support coordinator with the Alzheimer's Society Hastings Prince Edward Bancroft office, the walk raised over \$10,000 in Bancroft and over \$55,000 in HPE, though final numbers are still being tabulated as donations are being accepted until June 30 at www.alzheimer.ca/hpe. Millennium Park was the place to be on May 25 for the IG Wealth Management Bancroft Alzheimer's Walk, which raised money toward programs and services for those with Alzheimer's, their families and caregivers and to fund research into finding a cure. Bancroft This Week did an article entitled "Bancroft Alzheimer's Walk coming May 25" in their May 17 issue. The walks occurring in Bancroft and the other locations raise crucial funding to help the Alzheimer's Society HPE to offer free programs and services to help people living with dementia and their caregivers in Hastings Prince Edward Counties and Brighton. Canadians suffering from dementia are increasing in numbers, and by 2050, more than 1.7 million people will be living with dementia in this country. As the number of people living with dementia increases, so too does the need for services. With less than 40 per cent of the Alzheimer's Society HPE budget from the Ministry of Health, they rely on the support of the community to continue providing their programs and services. Monica Sears, who is on maternity leave from the Alzheimer's Society HPE, was there with her mom Micheline, and said she felt that you couldn't have a conversation about seniors and aging without talking about Alzheimer's. "Unfortunately, they do kind of go hand in hand at times. I think every family is affected by it. And the statistics are massive, just how prevalent it is. I call it the snowflake disease, because it's so common but so unique to each individual. It affects them differently. It could be identical twins but the way they experience Alzheimer's is different. One doesn't equate with the others and you can't paint them with the same brush. It's definitely a passion so I think that's why we're all here," she says. On the day of the walk, Riverstone Retirement Residence provided refreshments, there were games and activities, and there was live music from Kirk Bates, accompanied by Dean Austin. Bates says he was approached by Monica Sears, who he assumes was referred to him by the organizers of the Relay for Life, which he's been part of as a performer and eventually the unofficial entertainment coordinator. "I'm always up for collaboration when it comes to community-based fundraisers. I'm also a local part-time working/for hire musician who plays regularly at local events and venues such as The Granite

and Bancroft Pub as well as venues further away in Barry's Bay, Brampton and Ridgetown. My primary career is a 35-year veteran of trucking. I have a few friends whom I perform with regularly as well, one of them being Dean Austin, the talented fellow who joined me for the Walk for Alzheimer's, he says. Ladd says that totals are still being calculated as donations continue to come in online, but Bancroft raised over \$10,000 and the Hastings Prince Edward totals are over \$55,000 at this time. And still counting as donations can be made for the Walk for Alzheimer's until June 30 at www.alzheimer.ca/hpe. We had participants who came to the event in person and others who walked off site in support of the Walk for Alzheimer's. Those who attended at Millennium Park enjoyed breakfast provided by Riverstone Retirement Home, walked the path around the park while enjoying live music. Fun was had by all and we look forward to hosting even more members of the community for next year's walk. We thank all our generous donors, volunteers and participants who came out to support this important cause! she says. Amelia Huffman, communications, grants and IT person with the Alzheimer's Society of Hastings Prince Edward, confirmed Ladd's information about the totals and counting for both Bancroft and Hastings Prince Edward, and that funds and donations are still being received. The only thing we wanted to add is that we sincerely thank Choices Thrift Store in Bancroft for their \$5,000 donation in support of the walk and their continued participation.