

For OrrViews issue FEB 15

Submitted by the Growing Healthy Habits Coalition and Team Pretty-in-Pink

Grab your walking boots and your woolen cap! It's time to end that hibernation mode by stepping out into the wonderful world of winter. Not only that, but while you are improving your mood and your health, you can help beat breast cancer.

On Saturday, February 23 from 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm, the 2nd Annual Midwinter Health Walk, hosted by the Growing Healthy Habits Coalition (GHHC), will be held at Johnson Woods on Fox Lake Road, just north of Orrville.

Last year's event drew nearly 50 people, who enjoyed a perfectly beautiful snowy day while stepping their way down the 1.5 mile boardwalk trail that weaves its way through the woods. Participants may choose either the short or long route. Some may even venture a short distance, then choose to reverse the same route and return back to the start point.

The GHHC developed the walk in 2007 to send the message that outdoor exercise opportunities can be enjoyed during any season. With proper attire and pace, a walking experience in winter can help you burn calories very effectively. Dress in layers, and be sure to have your head, hands, neck and feet well protected.

The first event included a focus on the National Heart Association. This year a connection has been made with a local contingent of women who are raising money to send a team of walkers to the Breast Cancer 3 Day Walk in Washington, DC in October. Members of Team Pretty-in-Pink will be present to answer your questions about the "Susan G. Komen for the Cure" project.

"We were pleased to have the opportunity to co-host the event with this enthusiastic group of women," said Mary Lynne Zahler, Wellness Manager at Dunlap Community Hospital. "Our focus on health and fitness aligns itself with their concerted efforts to bring attention to the fight against breast cancer." Zahler serves as Chair of the GHHC.

Committee member Marilyn Mahoney, Office Manager for Dunlap Family Physicians, agreed. "This partnership gave us a shot in the arm. Team Pretty-in-Pink has taken on the organization of this event and is bringing us some wonderful new ideas for making it even more fun."

The team, which includes 15 members from Orrville, Wooster, Akron and Columbus, as well as Virginia and California, range in age from 25 – 62. Not all of the team members will be present at the walk, but those who are there will not only cheer you on your way, but will also have some refreshments to offer.

"They are providing hot coffee and cranberry tea," said Zahler. Also available at the start point before or after the walk will be packaged servings of trail mix. "They really stayed with the healthy habits focus and are having a good time helping us deliver our message as well as their own." The snack and beverages will be available to walkers for a donation.

A few of the team members will also be selling beautiful handwoven scarves in a variety of colors. All proceeds will go toward the \$2,200 per walker that the team has to raise to qualify for the October event.

"This is also a chance for us to remind ourselves that we can begin training now. We don't have to wait for spring," said team member Rita McAllister. "Each one of us will walk 20 miles a day for 3 days, so it's certainly not too early to begin preparing."

For more information on the walk, contact Beth Reusser at 330-682-3121 or visit www.the3day.org. To learn more about the fascinating story of Johnson Woods, which is located about 2.5 miles north of Orrville on SR 57, then one mile east on Fox Lake Road, visit the Ohio Department of Natural Resources website at <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us>.

No pets are permitted at the site.

In the case of questionable weather conditions, call the Orrville Area Chamber of Commerce at 330-682-8881 for a message regarding cancellation.