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## Alzheimer's Run and Walk to be Held in LaSalle and Peru

by Alzheimer's Association Volunteer Leslie Seiler

Joanne M. Milby is passionate about many things in her life. She is blessed with children and grandchildren, and has a rewarding career as the comptroller for the city of LaSalle.

When her husband, Welby "Boo" Milby died in April 2007 from Alzheimer's disease, however, she lost not only her best friend, but the man she had created a life with the last 25 years.

It was after Joanne participated in that year's Alzheimer's Association Annual Memory Walk that she discovered a new passion. With urging from her granddaughter, she created the **Boo Milby 5k Memory Run** as a way to keep her husband's memory alive.

"I would love to see — everybody's dream — a world without Alzheimer's," said Joanne, who also is a Walk Committee member.

Alzheimer's is a type of dementia that causes problems with memory, thinking and behavior. Symptoms usually develop slowly and get worse over time, becoming severe enough to interfere with daily tasks. Today, there are 5.4 million Americans living with Alzheimer's disease, and unless something is done, as many as 16 million American's will have Alzheimer's in 2050.

Now in its fourth year, the Boo Milby Memory Run, held at Northwest School in LaSalle, has swelled in popularity. It's grown from 100 participants in the first year to 165 members in 2010. Money raised from last year's race totaled about \$3,000, all of which was donated to the Alzheimer's Association. But that amount is not enough for Joanne, who has a lofty goal to donate \$10,000.

"That's why we're hoping it will get bigger every year," she said. "It would be fantastic. That would be a lot of people if it could build up to that much."

This year's **Boo Milby Memory Run is scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 13**. As race director, Joanne said the event would not have grown into the largest team fund raiser benefitting the Illinois Valley Walk to End Alzheimer's without the help from the Starved Rock Runners Club.

“A lot of people who knew my husband know it’s a passion for me and that is what attracts people in this area to participate,” she said. Joanne’s involvement with the Alzheimer’s Association will be constant. It’s her way of saying thank you to the organization that supported her in a time of need.

“I just want to give back what was given to me,” she said. “The Association reaches out in so many ways. You feel like you’re alone, but going to a support group meeting you can sit there and vent and you see that you’re not alone. There’s a bond in these meetings.”

This year’s **Illinois Valley Walk to End Alzheimer’s (formerly called Memory Walk) is at 1 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 21, at Baker Lake in Peru.** The 3-mile walk will educate participants about the disease, advocacy opportunities, clinical trial enrollment, and support programs and services of the Alzheimer’s Association. Each walker will also join in a meaningful tribute ceremony to honor those affected by Alzheimer’s disease.

To start or join a team or register as an individual walker please call the Central Illinois Office at 309-681-1100 or 800-272-3900. Participants can also register on-line at the agency website: [alz.org/illinoiscentral](http://alz.org/illinoiscentral). For more information, contact the Central Illinois Chapter, Peoria, 309.681.1100 or 800.272.3900.

*The Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's is the nation's largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support and research. The Association's mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.*

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