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Positive steps of support

About \$22,000 raised by Alzheimer's Memory Walk in Monroe

Brian Gray

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Times photo: Brian Gray

Tim Jones, Brodhead; Sarah Wong, 12, Monroe; and Vickie Jones, Brodhead, walk to raise money for Alzheimer's disease Saturday. About 140 walkers raised about \$22,000 to help provide support and services for people and caregivers who feel the impact of the disease.

"They might not remember us anymore, but we still remember them," she said.

Tim Jones said his wife's work helped him to get involved.

MONROE - They walk because someone in their family struggles with Alzheimer's.

They walk because someone they work with suffers from the disease that affects more than 5 million people but still has no cure.

They walk because they care.

About 140 people walked in the Memory Walk Saturday in Monroe. They raised about \$22,000 and the donations are still coming in, Kristin Larson, development associate of the South Central Wisconsin Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, said.

"Alzheimer's is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States," Larson said.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, Alzheimer's destroys brain cells which causes problems with memory, thinking and behavior severe enough to affect work, lifelong hobbies or social life. Eventually it gets worse and is fatal.

In the past, people tended to attribute the disease to just normal aging, Larson added.

"People are no longer embarrassed by it," Vickie Jones, Brodhead, said. "More people are willing to help, but there's still a need for more."

Jones and her husband, Tim, took part in the walk that began at the Behring Senior Center.

Like many walkers, from toddlers to senior citizens, they walked because Alzheimer's has touched their lives.

Vickie worked with a patient who had the disease. She saw first-hand what can happen to a person as Alzheimer's slowly robs them of their memories.

"You get attached to them (Alzheimer's patients)," he said.

Money raised helps support programs and services, Larson said. The money helps provide support for caregivers and people who have recently been diagnosed with the disease.

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