

Julia Trangeled's 2007 Weekend to End Breast Cancer - Jul 27-29 (5.6 million Canadian dollars raised - 2,036 walkers - 60 kms)

This two-day walk took place on the hottest weekend, with temperatures reaching 32c and even more on the hot concrete sidewalks.

Round-Up Centre, Stampede Park.

Fri. Jul 27 (Day Zero) Everyone had to report for registration, tent assignments, watch a safety video, etc. I met up with Audrey, Jaclyn and Jana, from the Medicine Centre pharmacy in Market Mall, who had invited me to join them on the walk (team name Treasure Chests).

Sat. Jul 28 (Day One). We arrived at 6.15am, had breakfast and were ready to go. However, due to the fact that the port-a-potties had not been delivered to the first pit stop, we were held up and did not start off until 8.00am, after some stretching and motivational speeches. The temperature was perfect at this time of day, but it soon became very hot. At the first pit stop, there was only one port-a-potty, so the community centre opened up their few washrooms to the walkers, but it was slow going. We had to make sure that we drank plenty of water and sports drinks throughout the day.

The hundreds of crew members were everywhere, encouraging us, some driving in the wildly decorated "sweeper" vans and at the pit stops where we could get water/sports drinks, snacks and use the many port-a-potties. The many "bikers" were designated to help us at the crossroads and they were amazing. There were nowhere near as many people outside their houses as in 2005, but those that did come out, went all out to



The "bikers" dressed in pink with their decorated motorbikes



Yes, even the dogs got in on the act

playing the bagpipes which was inspiring. The heat was unbearable and towards the end of the afternoon we had to walk up a very long hill in the blistering heat, with no shade at all. That was for me the worst moment of the walk and I think many people gave up or got help at this point.

cheer us on. Countless people had garden sprays going or had mister bottles to help keep us cool. Some offered us cold lemonade or ice pops. Even the Policemen who were posted at the some of the crossings joined in the fun.

At lunchtime, when we entered the playground, the Police Piped Band greeted us by



Finally, we arrived to a sea of blue tents at Currie Barracks, where everyone immediately changed into sandals. There were hot showers, massage therapists and chiropractors, as well as the medical tent which was doing a roaring trade all evening and the following morning. We had a good hot meal, and watched a bra competition, followed by a live band and dancing in the main tent. We were all exhausted and as none of us were staying the night, we eventually left to go to our respective homes for a soak in the tub and a comfy bed.

Sun. Jul 29 (Day Two). Back by 6.50pm, a quick hot breakfast of waffles, sausage and eggs, and we set off 7.15am. We all felt refreshed, but regrettably one of the team could not make it as her blisters were so bad. We saw many people with knee braces or were hobbling along on blistered feet. I was definitely not as fast and my feet started to ache a little quite quickly, but otherwise I felt good and the heat did not get to me like it did on the previous day. Of course it did help that the crew were giving out plastic bags of ice at the pit stops and I put one on my neck. The day went very quickly as it had done in 2005 and we ducked out of the walk in the afternoon for 45 minutes to go to Starbucks for an iced coffee and wait for the other member of the team who we had called to meet us,



A photo op walking past the reservoir



Jana, Jaclyn and Audrey at the last pit stop 3.8km before the end.

so we could finish the walk together. When we arrived at The Corral at Stampede Park, my husband Jesper and my friend Marilyn were waiting to greet us, so I spent a few minutes with them before going through the victory walk. We arrived officially at 2.51pm, got our shirts and joined the greeting line which got longer and longer. By 3.30pm everyone had arrived.



Eventually, we assembled for the closing ceremony at 4pm inside The Corral. The crew went in first, followed by all the walkers wearing blue shirts, and then finally those of us in the pink shirts (survivors) entered in twos and split apart, forming two long lines. It was just a mass of clapping and cheering for each of the groups. Then through the centre space slowly walked the unbroken ring of survivors holding hands that proceeded up onto the stage. It was all very emotional and everyone felt special. There were some very motivating speeches before the end.



Celebrating with a bottle of champagne at home after the event.

OBSERVATIONS:

- ◇ *The biggest difference this year was the number of men walking. There were couples, husbands, sons and several all-men teams - this shows how the attitude has changed since the first event in 2005 when there were so few men walking and they were never mentioned in the video or speeches.*
- ◇ *The crowd support was definitely not as big as the first year, which I believe is inevitable given that this is a yearly event and there are now so many more other charity events.*
- ◇ *The audience at the Corral is bigger now that people see what an important moment this is for the walkers and their families/friends.*
- ◇ *Memorable moment: When a car stopped to let us pass and the occupant, a soldier, actually saluted us - it was so touching.*
- ◇ *I raised a total of \$4,421.80 from 58 incredible people!*

*Prior to the Weekend to End Breast Cancer, the Alberta Cancer Foundation was awarding approximately \$300,000 annually to breast cancer researchers in Alberta. Ten grants have already been approved for funding in 2007, bringing the number of research grants to more than 30, and the total invested in breast cancer research, screening and patient programs to more than \$12 million. **WE MADE THAT DIFFERENCE.***