



For Immediate Release

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For More Information, Contact:

Sondra Guffey 941-782-4320

MANATEE GLENS RAISES RECORD AMOUNT AT RUN/WALK FOR LIFE

(Bradenton, FL)... About 1,000 men, women, children and teens walked and ran in the annual Manatee Glens Run/Walk for Life on Saturday, September 28 in Sutton Park in Palmetto. The annual fundraiser also raises awareness about depression and suicide prevention. Manatee Glens, which is dedicated to providing the finest mental health and addictions care, serves one in 30 families in our community—many of whom face issues related to depression. The event opened with the National Anthem and spectacular dove release and closed with an emotional butterfly ceremony, which honored those lives lost to suicide.

“To date, we’ve raised almost \$60,000 and the contributions are still coming in,” stated Manatee Glens Chief Development Officer Janet Ginn, CFRE. “This is a record year for us and means we’ll be able to provide more services for children, teens and adults who are facing their darkest moments.”

This year the focus was on first responders and included participation from Cedar Hammock, North River and Bradenton Fire Districts. Manatee County Emergency Services Color Guard presented the colors. Mary Moonen, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, told how the suicide of her closest friend shaped her life; and she gave advice to teens about helping their friends who are depressed or threaten suicide.

“It was moving to see a group of firefighters walk in full gear for the length of the five kilometer route over the Green Bridge,” said Ginn. “These firefighters are truly dedicated to the cause and care so much about the people they serve.” In honor of firefighters and EMTs, a 1926 fire truck lead the first portion of the walk. There were other engines on site for people to get a closer look.

The Tampa Bay Lightning brought their Rolling Thunder Bus as well as the popular ThunderBug mascot. Not to be outdone, the Pittsburgh Pirates had a booth and brought the Bradenton Marauders’ always-friendly mascot, Marty.

This year, Manatee Glens also sponsored a video competition, “Why I 5k.” The winning videos were announced at the event. Nikki Pennington won in two categories, Best Overall and Most Inspirational. Braden River High School won Most Spirited. Bay News 9 judged the video completion.

Other winners:

Oneco Elementary—Elementary School with the most walkers

Nolan Middle School—Middle School with the most walkers

Southeast High School—High School with the most walkers (and winners of the coveted Champion Trophy)

East Side Super Striders—Team that raised the most money

Western Spirit—Team with the most registered walkers

Alexander Diaz & Ilene Toraz—Under 18 years old, highest fundraisers. Received iPad and new headphones

Ken Brown—adult who raised the most money. Received 2-night stay at Hilton Family Hotel, donated by S2 Timing, dance lessons and restaurant gift certificates.

Jay Johnson of the West Manatee Fire Department won the GRAND Prize, two jet Blue Airline Tickets!

Photo: Firefighters walked the 5k in full gear

Other photos available on request

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