# Join the American Cancer Society for the Great American Smokeout® on November 15 and Be a Quitter

## Tobacco Atlas estimates 1 billion people will die worldwide during 21st century if they don't quit smoking

ATLANTA – November 12, 2012 – As the official sponsor of birthdays, the American Cancer Society marks the 37th Great American Smokeout on November 15 by encouraging smokers to use the date to make a plan to quit, or to plan in advance and quit smoking that day. An estimated one billion people worldwide will die during the 21st century because of tobacco use, according to *The Tobacco Atlas,* published by the American Cancer Society and World Lung Foundation. The Society provides tips and tools on line to help smokers quit tobacco for good.

"Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the United States," said Thomas J. Glynn, Ph.D., director, cancer science and trends and director, international cancer control for the American Cancer Society. "Quitting smoking is the most important thing you can do for your health and the Great American Smokeout is a great way to start."

Tobacco use accounts for at least 30 percent of all cancer deaths and 80 percent of lung cancer deaths. In the U.S., tobacco use is responsible for nearly 1 in 5 deaths, or about 443,000 premature deaths each year. Smokers who quit, regardless of age, live longer than people who continue to smoke. In just 20 minutes after quitting smoking, heart rate and blood pressure drop, and in about 1 to 9 months after quitting, coughing and shortness of breath decrease.

The American Cancer Society created the trademarked concept for and held its first Great American Smokeout in 1976 as a way to inspire and encourage smokers to quit for a day. One million people quit smoking for a day at the 1976 event in California. The Great American Smokeout encourages smokers to commit to making a long-term plan to quit smoking for good. Find tips and tools online to help you quit smoking for good.

Important facts about tobacco use from *The Tobacco Atlas, Fourth Edition*, newly published by the American Cancer Society and World Lung Foundation:

- Cigarette smoking costs the United States more than $193 billion (i.e., $97 billion in lost productivity plus $96 billion in health care expenditures).

- In 2011, tobacco use killed almost 6 million people, with nearly 80 percent of these deaths occurring in low- and middle-income countries.

- An estimated 600,000 people die annually because of secondhand smoke.

**About the American Cancer Society**
The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end cancer for good. As a global grassroots force of three million volunteers, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. We save lives by helping you stay well by preventing cancer or detecting it early, helping you get well by being there for you during and after a diagnosis, by finding cures through groundbreaking discovery and fighting back through public policy. As the nation's largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, contributing more than $3.8 billion, we turn what we know about cancer into what we do. As a result, an estimated 13.7 million people in America who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more about us or to get help, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.