Relay For Life® Participants around the World Honored with First Ever American Cancer Society Global 'Spirit of Relay' Awards

ATLANTA – August 13, 2013 –American Cancer Society volunteers in Australia, Canada and South Africa are the recipients of the Society's first-ever global 'Spirit of Relay' awards recognizing exemplary dedication to the Global Relay For Life movement, the Society's signature global fundraising event. The new Spirit of Relay Awards recognize and honor an outstanding Relay For Life event, staff, team and volunteer, who have each demonstrated outstanding commitment to cancer advocacy and finishing the fight against cancer in their communities and worldwide.

Relay For Life of Midwest, organized by Cancer Council Western Australia, is the recipient of the Spirit of Relay Event Award recognizing an event that goes above and beyond to engage volunteers, sponsors, staff, survivors and caregivers in celebrating hope through the Relay For Life program. Through radio interviews, newsletters, local business engagement and support, and fundraising events, the event successfully brought the Geraldton-Greenough community together to help finish the fight against cancer at their 2012 Relay event.

Anita Snyders of the Cancer Association of South Africa is the recipient of the Spirit of Relay Staff Award recognizing a staff partner who supports his/her event committee to reach new levels of success in fundraising, volunteer, survivor and caregiver recruitment; and community engagement. Snyders is described by her colleagues as a leader and "true ambassador for the Cancer Association of South Africa" with a purple office to match – purple is the signature color for Relay For Life.

Brooke's Donkeys, a Relay For Life of Prince Edward County team in Ontario Canada, will receive the Spirit of Relay Team Award recognizing a team that has fully engaged all of its team members through fundraising, survivor and caregiver engagement, and dedication to finishing the fight against cancer. Brooke's Donkeys honors Brooke Ramsay, who passed away from a rare form of cancer – a sarcoma in the brain – at the age of 23. After Ramsey was diagnosed with cancer in 2010, she formed a Relay For Life team with family and friends to raise money for cancer research. When she passed away, a year after diagnosis, she had raised over $36,000, and her team had raised a total of $80,000 for the Relay For Life of Prince Edward County event in 2011. Brooke's Donkeys derived their name from the first animal that Ramsey was able to recognize after her surgery to remove a large tumor in her brain.

Betty Damery, a cancer survivor and volunteer with the Canadian Cancer Society Relay For Life of Oromcto, will receive the Spirit of Relay Volunteer Award for her stewardship and dedication to the Relay For Life movement in her community of Oromcoto, home to Canadian Forces Base Gagetown – the second largest military base in Canada. Damery has been a volunteer since 2005, and is well known for her Relay commitment in her close-knit community. She is described by her community as a people person and a dedicated caregiver, and the success of the Relay For Life of Oromocto is credited to her hard work and leadership.

"The American Cancer Society is truly a global grassroots force with volunteers all over the world who dedicate their time and resources towards saving lives," said Iris Pendergast, Director, Global Relay For Life. "It is a privilege to honor our volunteer partners all over the world with the first global Spirit of Relay Award, letting them know that we immensely appreciate their help and support in fighting this disease in their respective countries."

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life program has been a global movement since the first Relay event outside of the US was held in United Kingdom in 1996. Global Relay For Life events are now held in more than 950 communities spanning 19 countries outside the United States. This unique activity, designed to celebrate survivorship and raise money for life-saving research and programs, unites and mobilizes community members committed to fighting back cancer. The Global Relay For Life program enables cancer organizations around the world to increase their visibility and generate cancer awareness, outreach, and income while building survivorship, volunteerism and advocacy efforts in their communities.

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society is a global grassroots force of more than three million volunteers saving lives and fighting for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. As the largest voluntary health organization, the Society's efforts have contributed to a 20 percent decline in cancer death rates in the U.S. since 1991, and a 50 percent drop in smoking rates. Thanks in part to our progress nearly 14 million Americans who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will celebrate more birthdays this year. As we mark our 100th birthday in 2013, we're determined to finish the fight against cancer. We're finding cures as the nation’s largest private, not-for-profit investor in cancer research, ensuring people facing cancer have the help they need and continuing the fight for access to quality health care, lifesaving screenings, clean air, and more. For more information, to get help, or to join the fight, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org. For more information on our global programs, visit global.cancer.org and follow @ACSGlobal on Twitter.

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