



Local runner gearing up for Alzheimer fundraiser 65 km fundraising run to occur this September

By Ron Giofu
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AMHERSTBURG - Chris Uszynski is gearing up for another big run but this one is not just about athletic performance. Uszynski will be marking World Alzheimer's Awareness Day September 21 by running from Amherstburg to Lakeshore, a 65-kilometre cross county trek. The local marathon runner has a personal reason for doing what he is doing.

"My father has been suffering with Alzheimer's for over 15 years. I am running this not just for him but to honour my mother, she is the primary caregiver and an incredible person just like all spouses and caregivers that selflessly give their all for ailing loved ones. She is the hero behind this disease," said

Uszynski. Uszynski has brothers in Belle River and has often thought the route between his hometown and his brother's would be a great one to run. He thought it would be a great idea to tie Alzheimer's awareness into it as well. He also plans on accepting donations that would go towards research as well as programs offered by the Alzheimer's Society.

"I have two of the most incredible parents in the world. My dad was taken out of his home at the age of 15 and sent to a Siberian concentration camp to die, when the Soviets invaded Poland. He was then freed and fought under the Allied freed Polish Army and fought at Monte Casino and throughout the Middle East and Africa. My mother was the little girl riding the trams in the Warsaw Polish Ghetto. Her family saved three Jewish Families and on the fourth family they were caught by the Nazi's," he said. "Only my grandmother and mother survived. Everyone else was exterminated. My parents are survivors. They have seen the horrors and beauty of man. Never have they let their sons forget it and to make sure that we always help where we can. It is this beauty, love and commitment that I celebrate with this run."

It is a seven-hour run with frequent stops. Uszynski said anyone wishing to join him and his fellow runners can do so. The route is tentatively scheduled to begin at General Amherst High School and wind its way past several Essex County High Schools including St. Thomas of Villanova, Western Secondary, Essex District High School, St. Michael's and Belle River District High School. He hopes to have the students out that day and involve their cross country teams. They are seeking someone with an RV to help out so they can have a portable washroom for the run.

"I am running my first Ultra Marathon (50 miler) in September called Dances with Dirt in Hell, Michigan," he added. "Between that and the Detroit Marathon I thought that I would raise awareness, hopefully some money and get people involved. I had asked only a couple of local athletes who are very accomplished runners and triathletes and the response has been overwhelming. I will be looking for anyone who want to join me on my run, even to run small portions of it to show their support and gratitude. One of our goals in raising awareness is that we will be running by at least eight primary and secondary schools. We want to get these kids out, running with us for a couple of kilometres and hopefully raising awareness and funds for the Alzheimer's Society and its incredible local services."

There will be a link from the Alzheimer Society of Windsor & Essex County www.wincom.net/alzwind
Their number is 519-974-2220

Sponsors and Runners who are interested can call him at 519-736-4999 and they can discuss the route and their participation further.