



Rebecca Run for SMA

News Release

For immediate release

THE QUEST FOR A CURE CONTINUES!

The Organizers of the Esso Rebecca Run for SMA are targeting over \$1 Million!

Holland Landing (Ontario), May 2008 -- Organizers of the Esso Rebecca Run for SMA have confirmed that the 7th annual event will be held on Saturday, July 5, 2008 at Fairy Lake, Newmarket, Ontario. The event continues in the quest for awareness and cure/treatment research dollars for Spinal Muscular Atrophy.

In 6 short years the charity events inspired by Rebecca Grace VanFraassen, including the Rebecca Run for SMA, have raised over \$1 million dollars for cure and treatment research for Spinal Muscular Atrophy. The Rebecca Run itself has created a moment in time that is especially for the children and families living with SMA. Funds raised at the Esso Rebecca Run for SMA are allocated by Families of Spinal Muscular Atrophy Canada (FSMAC) toward various Canadian researchers.

"The money raised will go towards research being carried out in Canada. This is a very exciting time for us in terms of progress with SMA research, and we have great hope for the children affected by SMA," stated Darren Bray, President, FSMAC. "Today, numerous researchers in Canada and around the world are focussed on different aspects of the disease, with a view to finding a treatment or cure."

The 2008 event is dedicated to the memory of a beautiful SMA Angel in heaven, Max Yorke Vallender. Simply click this link to be inspired and humbled by the amazing spirit of our SMA angel.
<http://www.rebeccarun.com/honourees.html>.

As in previous years, the day's activities will include the awesome MC, Chris Giles who keeps the energy pumping, a post-race barbecue for all participants and volunteers, kid's face painting and draw prizes. The massive silent auction, which features over 150 items valued from \$5 to \$1,000 is a major attraction for those looking for a good \$deal\$.

"It is the commitment from Esso, Running Room, and countless other sponsors and volunteers that has allowed the Rebecca Run to become such a successful event. Esso in particular has come on strong with something called the Esso Community Program that encourages local, independently owned Dealerships to promote and assist with local community events. We have many Dealers from across the GTA, that are dedicating time and money to help in raising funds for the Rebecca Run. The Imperial Oil Corporation is so impressed with their Dealer's commitment that they are matching the funds raised by their Independent Dealers. Now THAT'S community involvement at its best." said Ms. Smith. "The Rebecca Run has become synonymous with combining fun with fundraising."

About the Esso Rebecca Run for SMA

Rebecca van Fraassen, the niece of Race Director Louise Smith, inspired the Esso Rebecca Run for SMA. This devastating neuromuscular disease affects Rebecca. This annual event raises funds for research through Families of SMA Canada. July 5th, 2008 will be the 7th annual event. More information is available at www.rebeccarun.com



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About Spinal Muscular Atrophy

Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) is the number one genetic killer of children under the age of two. It is a group of inherited diseases that destroy the nerves that control voluntary movement, which affect crawling, walking, head and neck control, swallowing and breathing. One in 40 people carry the SMA gene; one in 6,000 babies from around the world is born with SMA and some 15,000 children die from the disease each year. 50% of the children diagnosed before their second birthday will die before they turn two. Because SMA is autosomal recessive, a child must inherit the defective gene from both parents and then has a one in four chance of being affected by the disease.

About Families of SMA Canada

Families of Spinal Muscular Atrophy Canada (FSMAC) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to eradicating SMA by promoting and supporting the best possible Canadian research for a treatment or cure. FSMAC's goal for 2004 was to raise \$400,000 for research in Canada through fundraising events like the Esso Rebecca Run for SMA. FSMAC dedicates more than 95% of its income directly to funding research.

In addition to its fundraising activities, FSMAC helps families and individuals who are affected by SMA through national and international programs and support. It currently represents affected and interested families and individuals from Canadian provinces. FSMAC also works to educate the public and professional communities about SMA.

FSMAC was founded 2000 and achieved charitable status the same year. Its head office is located in Brandon, Manitoba. FSMAC is one of 20 international chapters affiliated with Families of Spinal Muscular Atrophy (FSMA) in the United States, which itself has raised more than US\$10 million dollars since its inception in 1984 to aid research around the world. FSMA also sponsors the annual International Spinal Muscular Atrophy Research Group Meeting, where scientists, researchers and clinicians gather to exchange research findings and ideas.

www.CureSMA.ca
www.rebeccarun.com

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