

**NJCTS gives thanks for those who participated in the Mendham Walk:
Walkers, runners came out in droves, had a lot of fun**



It is only fitting that the second annual **New Jersey Walks For TS** event took place in the week leading up to Thanksgiving. While we still are accepting donations through Dec. 1 in hopes of reaching our fundraising goal of \$50,000, there are many individuals and families to thank right now for what was an extremely successful event to benefit the New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome (NJCTS)!

For starters, we would like to acknowledge our 10 fastest runners, all of whom came to the event in tip-top shape aiming to make a difference and advocate for TS awareness. They are:

- 1) Reid Smith -- 24 minutes, 46 seconds
- 2) Jake Kurtz-Freihilich -- 26:08
- 3) Mark Pakia -- 26:15
- 4) Jack Nonnenmaher -- 26:24
- 5) Megan Gillberg -- 28:34
- 6) Morgan Smith -- 28:36
- 7) "Daisy" the dog -- 28:36
- 8) Claire Colbertson -- 28:58
- 9) Mike Rieser -- 29:15
- 10) Sam Ortalini -- 29:59

Some of those names, as well as many others, were new to one of walk's organizers,

Rosemary Carrara.

"A ton of people came out and showed a lot of support. I saw a lot of new faces, as well as some people that are having their anniversary of finding out and being diagnosed," said Carrara, whose daughter, Emily, is the founder of the event. "I think it's great that they are automatically and very quickly showing support for NJCTS and what they are doing for families."

One of the newcomers to the event was Chris Sepe, who took part in Team TTT to support his goddaughter Tara, who has Tourette.

"We have all of her family here, and we came out to support her and the Tourette's group," Sepe said. "It was very well organized, and there were good spirits, lots of entertainment, and everybody was supporting each other. It was a great event."

Sepe and the rest of the crowd were entertained by performing acts such as Sparkee, the Somerset Patriots' official mascot; the Band of Jugglers; balloon artist Leigh McLachlan; Al Pal the Town Clown; DJ Ed Baumann; and teenager Danielle Piacentile, who sang the National Anthem.

Team TTT -- with its bright, colorful banner on display above -- was one of many groups in attendance. One of the larger ones, Team Flanagan, was on hand to support Quinn Flanagan. Park Ridge resident Mike Puzzo was part of Team Flanagan and thoroughly enjoyed the walk.

"It was a great event, and it's always great to raise awareness for Tourette Syndrome," Puzzo said.

Those sentiments were echoed by 12-year-old Basking Ridge resident Brett Hawn, who was very visible at the walk because of his tall red-and-black hat -- which took first place in the Best Hat competition.

"When I got to the finish line, I was pumped. I was happy to finish," said Hawn, who was on hand to support his stepbrother, Tommy Licato, who has TS and participated in the walk via wheelchair because of an ankle injury. "I think it's great that so many people care about it (TS)."

That's music to the ears of Rosemary Carrara, who is very thankful that last year's inaugural event was not the last.

"I think people are now fully aware that it (Tourette Syndrome) is not an isolated situation and that there are resources and people out there who care," she said. "I'm very proud of the teenagers who spearheaded it and really glad that it wasn't a one-shot deal. It needs to be an ongoing event."

If you wish to join Carrara, Sepe, Puzzo, Hawn, Licato and others in helping NJCTS reach its fundraising goal of \$50,000, please visit

www.active.com/donate/MendhamWalksForTS. For more information about the **New Jersey Walks For TS** event, please visit www.njcts.org.