Hundreds take Heart Walk

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BUTLER TWP — Many people participating in the 2012 Butler Heart Walk on Saturday were personally touched by heart disease.

Butler County Community College President Nick Neupauer, heart walk chairman, said his father and grandparents died of heart disease, making awareness important to him.

“(It) is a cause that is near and dear to my heart,” Neupauer said.

Four hundred participants in the annual event held at BC3 donated money and walked around the campus three times, a total of three miles. Proceeds benefit the American Heart Association.

In September, more than 600 people participated in the Cranberry Heart Walk. Both events raised a total of $168,000.

Barbara Roth, division director of the heart association, said this morning the final tally should be closer to the goal of raising $195,000 for both events.

“There's still money coming in,” Roth said.

George Lubiw of West View, Allegheny County, the event speaker, told the story of his survival during the kickoff.

In 2011, he was at the reception after his daughter's wedding when he had a heart attack.

“My heart quit beating,” Lubiw said.

A guest did CPR on Lubiw until the police arrived with an AED device, which brought him back to life. He was taken to Butler Memorial Hospital, where his heart stopped again.
After working with doctors, he had a pacemaker and defibrillator implanted.

“And I'm lucky to be here today,” Lubiw said.

Kelly Jordan of Penn Township and Ann McCandless of Renfrew have participated in the heart walk for four years. Their father, Earl Calderwood Sr., died of complications from heart surgery.

“I think it's a great event. We always look forward to a beautiful fall day,” Jordan said.

McCandless brought her 5-month-old son, Conner.

“This is his first walk. He's all bundled up,” McCandless said.

Joyce Basham of Grove City regularly is involved with these types of fundraisers. They are important to her because of her diabetes.

“Diabetes affects the heart, the liver, the kidneys, everything,” Basham said.

About 15 years ago, she was involved in a serious car accident that was caused due to symptoms of diabetes. She was laid up for six months.

“They said I wouldn't walk again,” Basham said.

However, she is walking again, and she enjoys walking for exercise.

Gene Bradshaw of Cranberry Township said that he likes events such as these because they combine exercise with giving back to the community.

“It's a great way to stay in shape … and work towards a great cause,” Bradshaw said.

His mother had quadruple bypass surgery 25 years ago. She is still alive today.

Shirley Joseph of Pittsburgh said that the cause is important to her because heart disease runs heavily in her family.

“Everyone of our parents has passed away from heart attacks,” Joseph said.

Bev Martin of Hilliards said she likes the work that the heart association does raising money and working with children in schools.

“I know the value of the American Heart Association,” Martin said.

Her husband, Roy Martin, said that he also was there to help get back in the exercise habit.

Jeannie Gilkey of Butler did not have any experience with heart disease in her family, but she understands the importance of the walk.
“It's definitely something really important to raise awareness for,” Gilkey said. “The heart affects so much of what you can do.”