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**LifePath**

options for independence

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# THE GOOD LIFE

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## Familiar Sights and Sounds of the Fall Season Fill the Air — Did Someone Say “Walkathon”?



John O'Farrell

*By John O'Farrell, Associate Director of Marketing and Development, LifePath*

As a kid I always marked the end of summer with going back to school and as an adult I have marked the end of summer by the increased traffic congestion that the new school year brings as parents drop off

their kids at school and bus drivers learn to navigate their new routes with numerous stops along the way.

My two kids are older now, but the new school year always reminds me of when I would look forward to picking up the kids at the end of their day and eagerly await hearing about what they did that day. What activities did they do, what new friends did they make, how was lunch today, etc.? Recently, I happened to be walking through LifePath's hallway as our Community Engagement Center was getting out. Just seeing the smiles on both caregivers' and their loved ones' faces as they talked about their day brought me such joy. Our Meals on Wheels drivers have similar experiences as they build positive rapport with those on their delivery routes. It is happy interactions such as these that demonstrate the power and the impact of our programs and what makes them so special. That's why it is so important to keep our programs going. To do this, we could really use your help.

Right around the corner, LifePath will be holding its annual Walkathon on Saturday, October

18, at the Franklin County Fairgrounds, starting at 10 a.m. Registration and check-in will start at 9:30 a.m. Enjoy all that the fall season has to offer and get your fill of the foliage, pumpkins, hot apple cider, and crisp fall air. Our yearly Walkathon is our major community fundraiser that helps to keep our programs moving forward, so that LifePath can continue to have a life-changing impact on those we serve each and every day.

Funds raised through this event will go to support the Meals on Wheels program, as well as other essential programs that LifePath provides. LifePath currently helps to support over 10,000 individuals on a yearly basis through the delivery of services encompassing a large variety of programs throughout Franklin County, the North Quabbin region, and parts of Berkshire, Hampshire, and Hampden Counties.

So you say you can't make it on that day! No problem! We have a solution for that too. NEW THIS YEAR we are encouraging people to hold their own Mini-Walkathons with family and friends right in their own neighborhoods. We recognize that people have busy schedules and we want to make it as easy as possible for everyone to participate in supporting our programs.

You pick the date, time, location, goal, etc. Have fun with it! Get creative! Maybe have a gathering with food afterwards. It's totally up to you. You can even use our pledge forms for your convenience, located on our website. We would love to see pictures of your event too, so we can share them on our website. If you are

interested, please visit our website at <https://lifepathma.org/events-workshops/walkathon/> and click on the “Doing My Own Walkathon” button to learn more.

Our Meals on Wheels program is the primary focal point of this fundraiser. As federal support for such programs seems to be decreasing drastically, your support is needed now more than ever to keep our programs going. The Meals on Wheels program plays a key role in not only making sure that people have a warm meal each day, it also provides a wonderful opportunity to do a welfare check and see how things are going. This positive exchange helps to build a caring and supportive relationship that people rely on and helps individuals to feel more confident and secure in their independence at home. So time to dust off your walking shoes and put your best foot forward in support of a great cause!

Below are a number of different ways that YOU can support LifePath through the Walkathon.

1) You can choose from a variety of different sponsorship opportunities. The brochure is available on our website at: <https://lifepathma.org/events-workshops/walkathon/>

2) You can create your own walking team and each team member can collect donations from those they know in support of LifePath. There's two ways to get started:

Option #1: Keep it simple and download a paper version of the donation form directly from our website at the link above. There you can print out a copy for yourself and share the form with those you know. Money raised can be turned in on the day of the event, if you are walking on Saturday, October 18.

Option #2: Create an online fundraising walking team. Using the link above, click on the “Create Fundraising Team Button.” Once you sign up and complete your setup, send an email to [jofarrell@lifepathma.org](mailto:jofarrell@lifepathma.org) to let us know that you signed up. We can then send

you your personalized fundraising page link that you can share with those you know. This way, people can make donations directly online using your link and their gifts will automatically be credited to your team's total.

3) NEW THIS YEAR! – Hold Your Own Mini-Walkathon with Friends, Family, and Neighbors. You pick the date, time, location and length, etc. Have fun with it! Get creative! Go ahead and use our pledge forms for your convenience. They can be downloaded from our website using the link above. We would love to see pictures of your event too, so we can share them on our website. Please take a moment to complete the special registration form and email it to [jofarrell@lifepathma.org](mailto:jofarrell@lifepathma.org) so we can add your event to the schedule.

4) If you or someone you know can't make it to the event, but would still like to support LifePath, please visit our website at <https://lifepathma.org/support-our-mission/> to make a secure, online donation; or if you prefer, you can simply mail in your donation to: LifePath, 101 Munson Street, Suite 201, Greenfield, MA 01301.

We look forward to your participation in our upcoming Walkathon fundraiser on Saturday, October 18, and appreciate your generous support of our efforts. Together, we can make great things happen, one step at a time. For questions about the Walkathon or your own Mini-Walkathon, please contact John O'Farrell by email at [jofarrell@lifepathma.org](mailto:jofarrell@lifepathma.org). Thank you for making our programs possible, in the communities we serve, through your generosity.

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