

goodwill



The eighth annual DFW Brain Tumor walk will take place on Nov. 14 this year in Trinity Park in Fort Worth. This year's goal is \$185,000.

Beating Cancer

National Brain Tumor Society wants faster research and higher survival rates.

by Scott Nishimura |

THE NATIONAL BRAIN TUMOR SOCIETY wants to help speed research and dramatically boost survivability of brain cancers.

"We don't really know what's going to cause a brain tumor. There's no early detection. There's no prevention," David Arons, the society's interim chief executive, says. "We really haven't made much progress against brain tumors - ever."

The society, which raises money and sends those dollars out in grants to researchers, is holding its eighth annual DFW Brain Tumor Walk, Nov. 14, at Trinity Park in Fort Worth. The 5K is one of 18 races, walks and rides the society holds annually across the United States.

The 2014 DFW event raised \$147,500, with 2,481 participants, the society said. This year's goal is \$185,000 and about 2,500 participants. For information or to join the walk, contact Tasha DeKock, associate director of development, Southwest, at tdecock@braintumor.org. For more information, visit BrainTumorWalk.org/DFW.

Last year the 18 events raised a total \$6.1 million. The society, based in Newton, Mass., reports that 83 cents of every donated dollar goes out to research and the organization's advocacy programs.

In Texas, the Brain Tumor Society supports Defeat GBM, a collaboration launched in 2013 and led by the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research in San Diego, and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York.

The initiative's five-year goal is to double the five-year survivability of one of the deadliest brain cancers by focusing drug development, indicators that show whether drugs are working and clinical trials.

GBM, or glioblastoma multiforme, has "less than a 5 percent, five-year survival rate," Arons said. Doubling it "would be truly historic."

In Texas, the Brain Tumor Society also supports pediatric research led by physicians at Baylor College of Medicine. Brain tumors are a leading cause of death in children.

"Some of these kids only have nine to 12 months to live" from diagnosis, Arons said.

Brain cancers are complex and drug-resistant, frustrating researchers for years.

"We have to do a lot better," he said. "Even if that means failure" in the search for therapies, "we have to fail faster so we can learn from it."

Some new approaches, such as in immunotherapy, have offered encouragement.

Researchers at Duke University are using a re-engineered polio virus in human trials with encouraging results highlighted in a recent 60 Minutes report. "This is exciting stuff," Arons said.

Research into the interruption of blood supplies to brain tumors is also encouraging, Arons said. ☺