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Baptist youth choir tuning up to aid pancreatic cancer research

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By **SANDRA E. CONSTANTINE**

sconstantine@repub.com

SOUTH HADLEY - The Christ's Young Ambassadors youth choir of the Second Baptist Church has set itself the goal of raising \$10,000 for the Lustgarten Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research and has planned a series of fund-raising events.

Among the events are a walkathon and concerts.

"The kids really are excited about doing this," choir director Clifton C. Winspeare said during a recent interview at his home.

Winspeare, who suffers from colon cancer, said he got the idea of having his choir adopt fighting pancreatic cancer after seeing an infomercial on television about the Lustgarten Foundation. He said he did not want to raise money to fight colon cancer because he suffers from it, as well as the fact that he would not want to have to hear about it all the time.

Winspeare said he was cancer-free for three months, but the disease has returned and he must go back to chemotherapy. He said he has a life expectancy of one to four and a half years.

Although the choir has raised money for causes in the past, Winspeare said \$10,000 is the largest sum of money it has tried to generate.

"It's a good opportunity to help those who need help. ... It (cancer) affects pretty much everyone," said Danielle T. Reid, a 17-year-old junior leader of the choir.

Danielle's paternal grandmother died of cancer.

"I'm enthusiastic because this (pancreatic cancer) is one of the most deadly cancers," said Ashley M. Glidden, a 16-year junior leader of the choir.

The first fund-raising event will be a walkathon on May 5 at BATTERY Brook Park. People interested in taking part should contact Winspeare, who lives at 20 Taylor St. The group will hold a tag sale at Winspeare's house on May 11 and 12.

The choir will perform and accept donations at Joy and Gladness, a Pentecostal church in Dorchester, on June 24.

It will sponsor a performance by Dan Kane of the Dan Kane Singers and some of his youth choir at 7 p.m. on Sept. 8 at Second Baptist Church. Tickets are \$10 each.

The choir will perform a concert and accept donations at 7 p.m. on Dec. 1 at Second Baptist Church.

The group has also placed canisters for donations at the Egg and I Restaurant and Tower Theatres.

Checks for donations should be made out to the Second Baptist Church Children's Choir Cancer Fund and mailed to Winspeare's home.

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