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Trick or treat in the heat

By Chris Ford Frontiersman.com 17 hrs ago



SETTLERS BAY — The neighborhood around Settlers Bay Golf Course in Wasilla will see Halloween arrive a little earlier than the normal Oct. 31 as the 11th annual Ian Robbins Memorial Trick or Treat in Heat is set for Sunday.

Erin Marchwick, one of the event organizers said this marks the second time volunteers have arranged to hold the memorial Trick or Treat in the Mat-Su Valley. The event has its origins dating back to 2005 when five-year old Ian Robbins of Anchorage had a special request. The boy had been diagnosed with terminal cancer and wanted to go trick-or-treating but wasn't expected

to survive until Halloween. Ian's father Sean came up with the idea of holding the event in his neighborhood a little earlier than normal so that his son could wear his costume and, like most youngsters his age, imbibe in sugary treats.

Since that first Trick or Treat, the idea has spread to eight regional locations spanning a distance from Valdez to the Valley. Marchwick said the event also ties in with the fact that September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. The late afternoon, early evening event will kick off at Settlers Bay at 4:45 p.m. led by Grand Marshal Meghan Thompson. Thompson, a 16-year old Wasilla girl, is a cancer survivor after she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer at the age of six, Marchwick explained.

Actual trick-or-treating will take place 5 to 7 p.m. in the neighborhood around the golf course. Marchwick said neighbors on about a half-dozen streets were approached about participating by handing treats out to the little ghosts and goblins.

"All of the (participating) houses are aware of what's going on," Marchwick said. "They've all been very supportive. Last year, we were running out of candy."

This year, Marchwick said local businesses and civic organizations are help to make sure that doesn't happen for round two of the event.

"The Wasilla Rotary Club did a candy drive. Lowe's made a donation and did a candy drive. We've invited local businesses to come out and make donations," Marchwick said.

The event also includes a post trick-or-treat party. Marchwick explained there will be plenty of activities for young and old alike. Included in the mix are a children's bounce house donated by Bouncing Bears, three-balloon twisters from Wasilla's Twisted Balloons, face-painting and crazy hair compliments of Fred Meyer, free popcorn and cotton candy.

Marchwick said Alaska State Troopers (AST) have agreed to send several troops to meet and address both the youth and their parents. AST's Safety Bear is also scheduled to make an appearance. Marchwick said the Central Mat-Su Fire Department might send out an engine and several firefighters. Live DJ music is also on the evening list of events.

The event is intended to not only provide parents and their youngsters a chance to enjoy Halloween in more favorable weather conditions than the traditional Oct. 31 timeline, the event is also a fundraiser for local non-profit groups. Marchwick explained participant parents

purchase bands for \$10 that allows them and their kids to join in the fun.

Revenues from the purchase go to support four area non-profits groups — the Ronald McDonald House, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Hospice of Anchorage and the local branch of the American Cancer Society (ACS). Settlers Bay is making the ACS donation.

“Last year we sold 480 bands for the kids. This year, we will have around 600,” Marchwick said, adding there is room for up to 800 children to join in the activities.

Bands can be purchased at seven area locations including Settlers Bay Golf Course, Just Imagine Toys in the Carr shopping center, Special Events on parks highway, Just Add Paint across from the Wasilla Post Office, Bouncing Bears on East Bogard Road, Infusion Boutique near Fred Meyers in Wasilla and Wasilla McDonalds. Bands can also be purchased the day of the event at the golf course.

For additional information, contact Marchwick at 907-414-1675, email settlersbay@totith.org, or the organization’s Facebook page Settlers Bay Totith.