



Golden Shoes step into action

Saturday, April 28, 2007

By NOW staff

The Ottawa County Wellness Coalition kicked off the Golden Shoe Campaign April 21 by hosting three simultaneous events in Grand Haven, Holland and Zeeland.

About 100 people participated in the inaugural walks and others stopped by on their lunch break to get information to participate in the future.

The effort by local health officials to get people walking is a six-month project, which runs through October.

The Golden Shoe Campaign is a project of the Ottawa County Wellness Coalition, a collaboration of community partners working to improve the health of Ottawa County residents by encouraging healthy, sustainable lifestyles.

In Grand Haven, Mayor Roger Bergman and Spring Lake Village Manager Ryan Cotton took part in opening ceremonies at Central Park on Washington Avenue.

At the Holland event, six-year-old Landon Roberts of Holland was the lucky winner of the first golden shoe that was hidden along the 1.3-mile route. The prize gets him a new pair of athletic shoes.

When asked if he was happy about finding the gold-painted shoe, Landon replied, "I know it's going to be a good night. And I'm glad I'm gonna get a new pair of shoes!"

Mayor Al McGeehan helped celebrate the start of the campaign, inviting everyone to participate. "Whether you're a walker, a strider or a toddler, let's go for a walk!" after cutting the ceremonial shoestring.

Ottawa residents are encouraged to participate in the six-month campaign for a chance to win one of 40 pairs of shoes plus many wellness baskets donated by local businesses. Maps and complete program details are available at the Loutit District Library in Grand Haven, Herrick District Library (River Location), and Howard Miller Library or can be downloaded at www.getthehealthyottawa.org. All the routes are wheelchair and stroller friendly, and also provide opportunities to learn the history of many Ottawa County landmarks.

Gold sponsors for the event include the Ottawa County Health Department, Holland Hospital, Zeeland Community Hospital and North Ottawa Community Health System.