



Former NFL player and current Zeeland East High School varsity football coach Jay Riemersma and his daughter, Sophie, lead a brigade of New Groningen Elementary students on a wellness walk in search of the "golden shoe" during kick-off festivities on April 20 in downtown Zeeland.

## Students Kick Off Wellness Walk

More than 150 boisterous elementary students kicked off the Ottawa County Wellness Coalition's (OCWC) Golden Shoe campaign in downtown Zeeland on Friday morning, April 20.

OCWC launched its campaign last week as part of a six-month walking initiative that will continue through Oct. 19.

First- and second-grade students from New Groningen Elementary School led the charge as walkers searched for the "golden shoe" hidden along a 1.3-mile route that promotes local neighborhoods, parks, history, churches, shops and restaurants.

"This is an exciting day and the start of several months of walking," Zeeland Chamber of Commerce President Ann Query told students gathered for the ribbon-cutting ceremony at Heritage Square, located at the corner of Main Avenue and Elm Street.

Query, along with Zeeland Mayor Les Hoogland and former NFL player and Zeeland East High School varsity football coach Jay Riemersma, donned their own "golden shoes" and led the children along the route, searching for the prize.

"Every couple of weeks a 'golden shoe' will be hidden along each route. Individuals finding these 'golden shoes' will win a free pair of walking shoes. In addition every time you walk the route, you can enter to win a gift basket," Query explained.

The youngsters began their procession by going east on Main to Church Street. At

Church they turned south toward Central Avenue, traveling past Vande Luyster Square. Their trek continued west along Central past Third Christian Reformed Church to Pine Street. At Pine they turned right and walked to Main before jogging over to Colonial – their treasure hunt still unsuccessful. The road ended at Washington and the group saw the Colonial Clock Building before heading east on the homeward stretch. They walked south on State for a block before turning east on Main. The students and their entourage made it back to their starting point at Heritage Square, a little less full of energy and still searching for the elusive golden shoe.

The prize was discovered later in the day by Genevieve Warner, who claimed Zeeland's first pair of walking shoes.

Similar kick-off programs were held on Friday in Grand Haven and Holland, which also have walking routes. Entry forms for wellness baskets and route maps are available at the Howard Miller Library in Zeeland, Herrick District Library in Holland and Loutit Library in Grand Haven. Forms are also available online at [www.gethealthyottawa.org](http://www.gethealthyottawa.org).

Every time an individual completes a walking route, they can complete an entry form and return it to the entry box at the local library for a chance to win a wellness basket. Baskets will be filled with prizes and gift certificates donated by local businesses.