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Epilepsy Foundation of Broward puts first 'Footprints in the Sand'

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The Epilepsy Foundation of Florida Broward Chapter will host its inaugural "Footprints in the Sand" Walkathon on Sunday, May 4 from 8:30 a.m. to noon at Hollywood North Beach Park in Hollywood Beach. The walkathon will fund much needed services for people suffering from epilepsy. Walkers will enjoy breakfast, a walk on the beach, boardwalk picnic, music, a raffle, and awards. Bicycle helmets will be distributed while supplies last.

With 1.8 percent of Florida's population affected by epilepsy, the threat to daily living and the mystery of when and why their seizures occur can take its toll on a huge number of people in our state.

"The quality of life of those diagnosed with epilepsy is affected by their restricted independence, inability to drive, stigma, medication side effects, or depression. Making the correct diagnosis is essential," said Dr. Eduardo Locatelli, Foundation board member. "We are making huge strides in the treatment and diagnosis of those suffering from seizures. Continued support from the community will enable us to cure and offer hope to many more people."

Dr. Locatelli is the medical director of Florida Neuroscience Center and the new epilepsy monitoring unit at Holy Cross Hospital.

Genaro Pizza suffered from debilitating seizures for 55 years. He was fortunate to undergo brain surgery two years ago to be cured of his seizures and hasn't had one since. Pizza is a strong advocate for epilepsy awareness and has raised \$1,200 so far for the walkathon.

The Epilepsy Foundation of Florida exists to ensure that people with seizure disorders are able to fully participate as members of the community. The Foundation works with individuals and families to facilitate a variety of program services such as support groups, summer camp, medical services, and information and referral services.

Sponsors and supporters include Florida Neuroscience Center, State Representative Evan Jenne, Roasters and Toasters, Earthganics, Pepsi, Weston & Associates Inc., Chiquita Bananas, Cold Stone Creamery, and Commit to be Fit.

Registration is \$5 per individual and \$15 per team. For registration, pledge forms, or to sponsor, call 954-779-1509, e-mail mgomez@efof.org, or visit www.epilepsyfoundation.org.

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