



25th Anniversary of the Thad and Alice Eure Walk for Hope

INTERVIEW BY CRASH GREGG | ARTICLE WRITTEN BY LINDSAY K. SAUNDERS

Most of our readers in the Triangle have heard of the Angus Barn as well as 42nd Street Oyster Bar. They are both incredibly unique fine-dining restaurants located in Raleigh. What many probably are not familiar with is the special connection the two restaurants hold to The Foundation of Hope for Research and Treatment of Mental Illness. Recently, the daughters of the late Thad and Alice Eure met with our publisher Crash Gregg at The Pavilion at The Angus Barn to talk about the legacy began by their parents, how it's grown and thrived, and the remarkable 25th anniversary of the Annual Walk for Hope as it approaches on Sunday, October 13.

Because their beloved son Thad Eure, III endured numerous struggles with mental health issues, Thad and Alice Eure established The Foundation of Hope in 1984 with a commitment to funding mental illness research. "It doesn't just happen to one person in a

family; it happens to everyone. Our parents, after experiencing this and seeing what little research and funding was out there, decided they wanted to do something to help," shares Shelley Eure Belk,



Executive Director of The Foundation of Hope. "They realized they might not be able to do much for their son during their lifetime, but they knew, 'We've got to do something to make a difference.'"

Four years after the Foundation began, Thad Eure Jr. passed away in 1988. His dedicated employees of the Angus Barn, Fat Daddy's Restaurant and 42nd Street Oyster Bar decided to honor his memory by raising money for the Foundation of Hope. They called their fundraising event the Thad Eure, Jr. Walk for Hope. The participants walked 12 miles from The Angus Barn to 42nd Street Oyster Bar. Van Eure, Walk for Hope Chair and owner of The Angus Barn explained, "The theory was that they were going to walk from Dad's first restaurant to his last restaurant."

They kept the same walk again the following year before realizing that it might be easier to begin and end at the same location, the Angus Barn. Thus the



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Van Eure and sister Shelley Eure Belk

current format for the Walk for Hope was born. There are people who are devoted to the event and come back year after year to be a part of it. The Foundation doesn't even have to reach out to them. "They know this is the season for the Walk and they're ready," explains Shelley.

"Some people have a more personal reason for participating because they have suffered through mental illness or have a family member who has

been affected," says Van. "Some don't really know the reason for the Walk because in spite of how tragic and sad the cause is, we really do make it a fun day."

Last year was their biggest year with over 3,500 walkers and more than \$600,000 raised. In addition to the Walk, there are also 5K and 10K Run for Hope events that take runners from The Angus Barn through a loop at William B. Umstead State Park nearby and back to The Angus Bar. Both runs are certified so interested runners can get credit towards their national ranking. Participants are required to raise a minimum of \$60 to register, with a \$30 minimum for students and kids five and under participate for free. Prizes are awarded to the largest fundraisers and there's something for everyone at the event, including a breakfast before the event and a post-Walk celebration with kids' activities, food, live music, and more.

One hundred percent of the money raised on Walk Day goes to fund research locally at UNC-Chapel Hill. The Foundation of Hope has a medical advisory team to assist with the many grant requests they receive every year.

"We feel really good that all the Walk Day money raised stays right here in North Carolina," says Shelley. Van finishes her thought by adding, "And the research that's done can benefit the world."

The mission of The Foundation of Hope is to promote scientific research aimed at discovering the causes and potential cures for mental illness in order to develop more effective means of treatment. With that mission in mind, Shelly is proud to tell us, "To date, we've funded \$3.7 million in research from our local community. We're so thankful to everyone who joins in to help and we look forward to this event every year."

For the first time ever, the man who inspired the Hope Foundation, Thad Eure, III spoke out in a personal written letter on their site. You can read his story online: <http://bitly.com/thadeure>.

Consider joining Shelley and Van and the thousands of others in the Walk for Hope this year. Visit their website to sign up or for more information, www.walkforhope.com. We hope to see you at the Walk!

Lindsay can be reached for comment at Lindsay@welovedowntown.com.



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