

# Steps to bring suicide prevention into the light

## Out of the Darkness Walk gathers community members, raises support and funds

**Story by Rachel Streich, Chief Copy Editor**

More than 300 people decided to go for a walk on a sunny Saturday morning in Carson Park. The crowd of adults, children and dogs gathered at the Pine Pavilion, and as they left their starting spot they let go of a few balloons and took a stroll in the park for a purpose.

The fourth annual Eau Claire Out of the Darkness Walk honored the memories of friends and family members lost to suicide, celebrated survivors of suicide or depression and raised funds for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

The short walk around the park at 10 a.m. helped bring awareness to suicide and its prevalence. According to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, there were 734 deaths reported to be caused by suicide in Wisconsin in 2012.

On a national level, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates each day 108 Americans take their own life.

Karlene Phillips, one of the organizers of the event, said the walk was successful and it gathered an outstanding amount of support for suicide prevention in the community.