

For Immediate Release
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9th Annual Dipsea Hike/Run Lite on Saturday, September 17th, 2011
Sponsored by **Zero Breast Cancer**
10-year old Reilly Johnson, the youngest person ever to win the Dipsea Trail Race, to support Dipsea Hike/Run Lite as honored lead runner

(San Rafael, Calif.) – Zero Breast Cancer, a San Rafael-based nonprofit organization focused on research, prevention and education has announced that Mill Valley student Reilly Johnson – who at 8 years old was the youngest person to ever win the grueling Dipsea Trail Race last year, will be the honored lead runner for the 9th annual Dipsea Hike/Run Lite on the Dipsea Trail, Mt. Tamalpais, Mill Valley, California on Saturday, September 17, 2011.

Johnson's participation is intended to highlight the importance of physical activity for young girls and women in improving their health throughout their lives, including reducing their later risk of developing breast cancer.

About Reilly Johnson

Reilly was born on July 7, 2001, and lives in Tamalpais Valley. She will be attending Mill Valley Middle School this fall. Reilly first ran the Dipsea in 2008 at age 6 in the open Runner section. Her father, Hal, forfeited his Invitational status that year to run with her and shepherd her through the shortcuts. Her first year, Reilly managed to qualify for the Invitational section. The following year, reinstated as an Invitational runner, Hal informed Reilly that she was going to be on her own. Learning the trail and all the shortcuts so that she could demonstrate to her father on a practice run that she could run the whole thing on her own was the extent of her training. She managed to take 10 minutes off of her time from the year before, finishing 199th overall and preserving her Invitational status in 2009. Beyond hiking and running the course a couple of times with her parents, up to this point Reilly had never formally trained for the Dipsea. In early January 2010, Reilly informed her parents that she actually wanted to train for the Dipsea this time. Having done a report on the Dipsea in third grade, she knew that this would be the last year that she would have a 25 minute head start. Her parents thought she might improve her time by another 10 minutes just by virtue of being a year older. Reilly did not want to take any chances. More importantly, she *really* wanted to see if she could beat her dad and – maybe, just maybe – secure a Black Shirt. With the support of her parents, starting in mid-January, Reilly started running weekly. She gradually ramped up the intensity and duration of her informal training.

It paid off. She won, narrowly edging out Dipsea legend Melody-Ann Schulz, and thus became the youngest runner ever to win the Dipsea, on the 100th running of the race no less. In addition to hiking and trail running on and around Mt Tam with her parents, Reilly plays competitive soccer, enjoys skiing and hiking in the mountains of Colorado, where her family spends winter and summer breaks, is an avid reader, and relishes just being a kid and playing with friends.

What is the Dipsea Hike/Run Lite?

The Dipsea Hike/Run Lite is a community event that raises funds to benefit Zero Breast Cancer – while also raising awareness about the benefits of physical activity in reducing the risk of breast cancer. It is a noncompetitive, all-ages event that takes place on a 6-mile course, including the famous Dipsea steps. Check-in is at 8:00 AM, with a 9:00 AM start. There will be 2 aid stations along the way staffed by trained first responders; members of the Tamalpa Running Club will be the trail monitors. After completing the course, Hike/Run participants will enjoy a free lunch, mini-massages and jazz at Old Mill Park. Prizes will be awarded recognizing first runners & hikers in, top fundraisers and other categories.

Trail Details:

Hikers and runners begin at Old Mill Park in Mill Valley, climb the Dipsea steps up to the celebrated views of Mount Tamalpais, cross the Panoramic Highway and follow the Sun Trail to the Tourist Club (aid station #1). Then they take the Redwood Trail to the Panoramic Trail, where it meets with Alice Eastwood. There is a small set of steps at Alice Eastwood that takes hikers and runners up to Panoramic Highway and the

Mountain Home Inn (aid station #2). From there, participants take Edgewood to the Tenderfoot Trail, to the Cypress Trail and return to the Dipsea steps, where the loop ends at Old Mill Park. With State parks on the chopping block, this event is a wonderful opportunity to appreciate this outstanding natural resource.

Registration – Individuals and teams:

Individual and group participants can register online at www.zerobreastcancer.org or by calling 415-507-1949. For individuals, registration is \$35. Student registration is \$20. Children 10 and under are free. Team fundraising goals are based on the number of people participating; there is no fee for team members if the group meets their goal.

Why we do this event:

ZBC's version of the Dipsea Hike/Run was established in 2002 by Annie Fox, a former ZBC Board member, Marin County employee, avid trail runner and breast cancer awareness advocate who died of breast cancer at the age of 35. In her last days, she focused her energy on bringing the first Dipsea Hike/Run Lite to fruition. Zero Breast Cancer's Dipsea Hike/Run Lite continues to be held annually in her honor. Fox believed - and extensive research has demonstrated - that physical activity is one of the most important ways we can reduce breast cancer risk.

This year ZBC will also honor Jerry Leith, who died recently of cancer. After Annie's death, Jerry Leith, also an avid runner, carried on her inspiration and assumed a leadership role in coordinating the Dipsea Hike/Run Lite for the past eight years. The event has raised over \$200,000 in support of ZBC's research and educational programs focused on breast cancer prevention.

Proceeds from the 9th annual Dipsea Hike/Run Lite benefit the research, education and community outreach programs of Zero Breast Cancer. The Dipsea Hike/Run Lite gives folks an opportunity to raise funds to help Zero Breast Cancer's work to eliminate breast cancer while doing something tangible and effective to reduce their personal (or their loved ones') risk at the same time.

Zero Breast Cancer is a Marin County nonprofit organization dedicated to finding the causes of breast cancer through community participation in the research process. It focuses on identifying environmental factors and the role they play in the development of breast cancer at all stages of life and across generations. Zero Breast Cancer is the only community-based organization dedicated to finding out why women in Marin and the Bay Area are at higher risk for breast cancer. In partnership with academic and research institutions ZBC has brought several million in research dollars to fund Bay Area breast cancer researchers. Zero Breast Cancer is also the only community-based organization with a main focus on prevention of Breast Cancer through research and education. Their goal is the elimination of the disease. Visit www.zerobreastcancer.org.

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