

Center holds walk in honor of McCouch and cancer survivors

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By DAVID HARE

TOWAMENCIN — When Barbara Rice was diagnosed with breast cancer five years ago, one of the first places she went to for help was the The Wellness Community. There she met the woman who would see her through her recovery, Anne McCouch.

Saturday a Wellness Walk was held by the Community's Anne McCouch Center in honor of McCouch who in May died after a long illness.

"She helped me a lot," Rice said, after returning from her walk. "I remember that was a very rough year for me (2005). I lost my husband and I had been diagnosed. She got me through it. She helped a lot of people."

Eileen Joseph also reserved praise for her friend and colleague. "This year we're honoring Anne and all that she gave to build this center," Joseph said.

Kathy O'Mara, business manager at the center, said the walk acts as a fundraiser, but serves a higher purpose of bringing together cancer survivors. Some people carried pink plastic butterflies on their walk. O'Mara said the butterflies held the names of loved ones passed or those still fighting cancer. "It's a tribute to Anne, as well," O'Mara said. "She loved butterflies. After this we'll place them in her butterfly garden." She estimated about 60 people made the roughly 1.5 mile walk down Main Street from the center to Railroad Plaza.

Caroline Tepper was joined by her sister-in-law Sally Lombardo, both in support of Eileen Tepper, Caroline's mother. Ed Tepper said his wife fought hard against breast cancer. "They removed her lymph nodes," he said. "But she wasn't letting that SOB have it." Instead, Eileen was determined to finish her chemotherapy in time for the couple's cruise. They made it. So did she. "She's three years in remission now," he said.

