



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Pacific Spirit Run raises funds to soften heavy tread of dementia** **What runs in the family inspires local footwear businesses to support Run**

**Vancouver, April 22, 2008** – Two competing Vancouver athletic footwear businesses have united in the battle against dementia.

The owners of athletic footwear outlets, Ladysport and Forerunners, have personally experienced the toll of dementia in their own families and, as a result, are sponsors of the BMO Pacific Spirit Run which takes place Saturday, May 10 at Pacific Spirit Park at UBC.

The Pacific Spirit Run's goal is to raise \$100,000 for dementia research and care initiatives. Dementia is a growing concern for our aging population. By 2031, more than three-quarters of a million Canadians will be diagnosed with the disease. It is not a normal part of aging. New and better treatment options are essential to improve the quality of life for those affected by this devastating and oftentimes hereditary disease.

Ladysport co-owner Phil Moore lost his father, Ted Moore, to dementia in 2002. Moore's paternal grandfather had also suffered from dementia in old age so Moore's father was aware of what was happening to him. Moore said his father initially disguised it well as dementia patients tend to do.

"My father was in his 80s and scared of Alzheimer's because of what his own father had gone through," said Moore. Moore's father's condition deteriorated after he broke his hip during a tennis game and had to have surgery. "He came out of hip surgery in worse condition than when he went in, which is apparently common. It sped the process up."

Moore's father, a former world traveler and manager of training for Shell Oil, had previously had a mind "like a steel trap" and loved family discussions and bridge. However, he soon could no longer participate in the activities he loved. Moore eventually had to place his father in an assisted care home in Toronto where he passed away.

"For my father, it was a mentally painful death. He could feel himself intellectually slipping away. It was like he was hidden behind a mask of confusion -- a mask that eventually left no image of the sharp, bright mind that we had all come to admire and enjoy," said Moore.

Forerunners owner Peter Butler has witnessed dementia in his 79-year-old mother, Joyce Butler, who has no memory at all and receives 24-hour care in her condominium in Calgary. She cannot distinguish between people, has lost the ability to perform basic human functions such as chewing food or using the bathroom. And her vocabulary has shrunk to a handful of words.

Despite her limited state, Butler's mother is taken out for daily outings by personal care workers and even exercises with the use of a walker. "Whenever you can stimulate body function, exercise is best," said Butler. "One just has to be careful not to overdo it as dementia patients become easily exhausted and sleep 15 hours a day as a result."

Butler, a former Olympian who holds the title for the second fastest marathon in Canadian history, is game to support the crusade for dementia research in whatever way possible. "It's essential to build public awareness of this truly major disease. Cancer and heart disease get lots of coverage. With an improved understanding of dementia, it will be possible to raise money to research better treatment regimes for dementia patients," said Butler.

Given the hereditary prominence of dementia in Moore's family, the vital and energetic 50-year-old is concerned about his own future, and hopes research gains made now will improve the outlook for his later years. "It's certainly something that I think about. Is there something I can do to avoid it? Am I not remembering that number or thing I'd planned to do because of it?" said Moore.

When Moore was approached by Butler to join the sponsorship effort for the Pacific Spirit Run, Moore didn't give it a second thought, especially given that dementia had also impacted one of his staff, Brenda Yamamoto, whose mother-in-law recently died after battling it.

"My dad is my inspiration for this effort. Peter and I have always had a good business relationship and when he approached Ladysport to join Forerunners as a sponsor, I thought it was a great opportunity to work together towards an important, mutual fundraising goal," said Moore.

The Pacific Spirit Run takes place Saturday, May 10, starting at 9 a.m. at the Triumpf Building, UBC, 4004 Wesbrook Mall. There is a 10 km timed route for runners, a 5 km route for runners/walkers and a 2.5 km paved route for families and those in wheelchairs. To register, visit [www.PacificSpiritRun.com](http://www.PacificSpiritRun.com) or pick up registration forms at Ladysport, Forerunners, Choices Markets and the Tapestry Foundation for Health Care office located at Mount Saint Joseph Hospital.

To make a donation for dementia research, visit [www.tapestryfoundation.ca](http://www.tapestryfoundation.ca).

The Tapestry Foundation for Health Care was established last spring as an umbrella fundraising organization to serve and support seven of eight Providence Health Care facilities including Mount Saint Joseph Hospital, Holy Family Hospital, St. Vincent's Hospital Langara, St. Vincent's Campus of Care, Brock Fahrni Pavilion, Marion Hospice and Youville Residence. The Foundation supports these sites by raising funds for medical equipment, programs, services and research in the field of elder care.

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**Contact:** Michele Penz,  
Calico Communications for Tapestry Foundation for Health Care  
Tel: 778.888.2249 Email: [calicocomm@telus.net](mailto:calicocomm@telus.net)