



## Fact Sheet

**WHAT:** SOAR Feat 2012 is the name of a 3,000-mile cross-country “walk n roll” (walking and bicycling) to raise awareness and money to support the needs of vulnerable elderly and their caregivers.

**WHO:** Teri Swezey, a 57-year-old public health researcher from Carrboro, North Carolina, is making this 3,039-mile journey in honor of her late mother, Mary, who had late stage dementia and for whom she cared for during the last few years of her life.

**WHERE:** Swezey began her journey at Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina. She is traversing the following 12 states, taking a southern route across rural America: North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada and California.

**WHEN:** Swezey began her walk on April 1, 2012. Walking or riding up to 30 miles a day, she will conclude her walk in October 2012 in Cambria, California, which was her parents’ long-term adopted hometown.

**WHY:** Swezey has wanted to walk across America for the last 30 years. After her mother died, she thought this journey would be a great way to honor her, while simultaneously raising awareness and money for vulnerable seniors and their caregivers. Along the way, she is interviewing many caregivers, elderly, and service providers about the challenges they are facing in today’s tough financial times. Her mission is to reveal unrecognized needs in rural America by giving voice to those who feel isolated and unheard, and to promote avenues that meet those needs. She is also raising money for her nonprofit organization, Seniors Obtaining Assistance and Resources, Inc. (SOAR).

SOAR’s fundraising goal is to raise as much as possible from donations given from the heart. **Every penny counts!** Please give what you can to support the vulnerable elderly and their caregivers. Funds will be used to tell the unheard stories of caregivers and their loved ones in rural America and to cover some of the costs of the walk. SOAR’s ultimate goal is to provide much-needed assistance for prescription co-pays, low-income meal programs, and relief services for caregivers. These three areas of need came up in discussions with seniors, caregivers, and service providers while Swezey was caring for her mom. They have been reinforced in discussions with people during the SOAR Feat 2012 walk n roll.

**SPONSORS:** Swezey has already received support from numerous individuals and several organizations, including AARP North Carolina. AARP has a national campaign, “Decide.Create.Share.” that is aimed at increasing Baby Boomer women’s awareness about and planning for their own long-term care. Swezey’s walk is featured in an article on caregiving in the April 2012 issue of the *AARP Bulletin*:

<http://www.aarp.org/relationships/caregiving/info-04-2012/caregivers-take-care-of-yourself-first-nc.print.html>

Other sponsors include: Carrboro Family Vision Great Outdoor Provision Co. 1st Step Pro-Wellness, Fleet Feet Sports, D &H RV Center, Creative Wellness, Triangle Acupuncture Clinic, and Hampton Inns. Swezey is also seeking and picking up support and sponsors during her walk, as individuals and organizations learn about her mission.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:** Teri Swezey, 919.452.6811

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