



**For immediate release**

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## **North Carolina resident just north of Atlanta in her 3,000-mile walk across America**

***Cross-country journey aims to raise awareness  
and funds for seniors and their caregivers***

**(ATLANTA – May 14, 2012)** – North Carolina resident Teri Swezey is currently walking north of Atlanta through the state of Georgia in her 3,039-mile trek across the United States to raise awareness and funds for vulnerable seniors and the family and friends who care for them. She will arrive in Canton, Georgia, some 40 miles north of Atlanta, sometime today.

Swezey, who began her trip on April 1, 2012, in Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina, has so far walked more than 400 miles through three states. She is making this journey in honor of her late mother who had late stage dementia and for whom she cared during the last few years of her life.

Swezey, 57, is walking coast to coast, covering about 15 miles a day. She will conclude her expedition sometime in October or November 2012 at the Pacific Ocean in Cambria, California, which was her parents' long-term adopted hometown.

Swezey, who is available for interviews—by phone or in person while she's walking—will be traveling through or near the following towns: Corner, Colbert, Hull, Athens, Arcade, Jefferson, Pendergrass, Gainesville, Buffington, Canton, Sutallee, Kingston, Rome and Coosa. The counties she will walk through include Clarke County, Hall County, Forsyth County, Cherokee County, Bartow County and Floyd County.

Swezey's walk, entitled "SOAR Feat 2012," will traverse 12 states. She has been stopping along the way to engage and talk to seniors and their caregivers about their experiences with aging and caregiving. Swezey is also raising money for her nonprofit organization, Seniors Obtaining Assistance and Resources, Inc. (SOAR).

The inspiration for the SOAR name and logo, which can be seen on the SOAR Feat 2012 Web site, <http://walkusa4soar.org>, came from a picture of Swezey's late mother performing an awesome soaring swan dive.

“So many individuals are struggling with the same issues I faced while I was caring for my mother,” said Swezey. “I hope that by raising awareness of this issue I can help them find relief and support as they deal with issues of aging.”

SOAR’s mission is to help meet the needs of vulnerable elderly and their caregivers, focusing on three specific areas:

- 1) Relief services for caregivers of the elderly (known as respite).
- 2) Prescription co-pay assistance for seniors.
- 3) Low-income meal assistance for seniors.

“These are three common areas of need that I came across as I began to talk with others who have cared for seniors,” said Swezey, who by profession is a public health researcher.

AARP North Carolina is supporting Swezey on her walk and she will be spreading the word about AARP’s “Decide.Create.Share,” a national campaign 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>

Swezey also has support from other sponsors, including Carrboro Family Vision, Great Outdoor Provision Co., Fleet Feet Sports, D&H RV Center, Creative Wellness, GOAL ZERO, and Triangle Acupuncture Clinic. She is also picking up support and sponsors during her walk, as individuals and organization learn about her mission.

On her journey, Swezey will have a friend following a few miles behind her in a truck and trailer, which will be their home base. Swezey will also use a SPOT locator device to let interested followers track her progress along the SOAR Feat 2012 route.

For more information about Swezey’s endeavor and to follow her as she makes her journey, please visit the SOAR Feat 2012 Web site at <http://walkusa4soar.org>. The site includes her blog and a section where she will post photos and videos throughout the duration of her six- to seven-month journey.

Interested parties can also follow Swezey on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/#!/SOARFeat2012> or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/SOAR-Feat-2012/202807459751260>.

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