

Greater Sudbury's Access AIDS is joining organizations from 3,000 cities around the world to participate in the 2006 International AIDS Candlelight Memorial.

The event will be held Sunday, May 28 at the Grace Hartman Amphitheatre in Bell Park, beginning at 8 pm.

The candlelight memorial will be held in 85 countries around the world, making it the largest grassroots AIDS event ever held.

Citizens across Greater Sudbury are invited to join guest speakers, local people living with HIV/AIDS, friends, family members, poets and musicians to pay tribute to those who have died of AIDS and those living with the illness.

The evening also serves as a way of helping overcome the stigma associated to the disease, while raising awareness about HIV/AIDS and the services offered by the Access AIDS network.

More than 100 citizens in Greater Sudbury have died of AIDS and it's important to realize education and prevention initiatives are as crucial as taking care of those already infected, said Richard Rainville, executive director of Access AIDS, in a news release.

The annual event is co-ordinated by the Global Health Council and commemorates all lives lost to the disease, demonstrates support for people living with HIV/AIDS and mobilizes community support.

This year's theme is Lighting the Path to a Brighter Future. Observances will include lighting of candles and oil lamps in more than 200 rural villages in southeast India, candlelit processions in Latin America, and inter-faith services in towns all across the United States.

For more information about the candlelight memorial, contact Sylvie Daviau at Access AIDS at 688-0500, ext. 26.