Toledo Takes on ALS | Friday, July 31st, 2026

About Steve Welling

Welcome everyone to another year of Toledo Takes on ALS, which helps fund ALS TDI and their relentless research for a cure. What Tracy and John Schinharl have started, and with the amazing leadership from Lisa and Doug Downing, this event continues to be fun while raising money for an incurable disease. Incurable now, but ALS TDI is going to change that, thanks to your support! We are entering the 4th year of this amazing event, and I believe after this, we will have raised over $1 million at this event alone! We could not do this without all of your support!

Community support, friends, and family is what I have learned throughout this journey. With this disease, time is not exactly on our side. Alli, another huge voice and advocate for this event, lost her father to this disease in less than one year. When this event first started, I was able to walk from table to table. Now I am bound to a wheelchair and need assistance to be lifted up and not able to stand on my own. And I consider myself one of the lucky ones. This is a grueling, humbling, disheartening journey. But my main takeaway is all the love and support that has come out in abundance. We have made new friends since my diagnosis that are more than willing to help. We have old friends that have rekindled relationships and love spending time together. We have friends who have helped us in very difficult situations that we never would have imagined. I have friends and caretakers that help with everyday activities that I never thought I would need help with. And there are complete strangers that want to help and don't know how, but donating and going to this event is just one simple way to help someone in this position.

Lou Gehrig died from this disease on June 2, 1941. My official diagnosis was June 3, 2022. Yet some 80+ years later we still have no solution. ALS TDI is looking to change that. My wife and I were lucky enough to go tour their facility last year in Massachusetts.

They are working every day in their lab to try and find a solution. And I truly believe they will find it. It is events like this that help fund their pursuit in finding a solution and a cure.

In early 2021 I was experiencing some muscle spasms (fasciculations) in both my arms and legs. After countless doctor appointments, tests, EMG's, scans, it took over a year for the doctors to finally come to the conclusion that I have ALS. The one thing I didn't want. The one disease with an average lifespan of 2-5 years after diagnosis. The one thing that slowly attacks your neurons while your body falls apart. You are trapped in your own cell of a body while the walls slowly close in on you. You slowly lose muscles or functions without the ability to ever regain them back. It is a devastating disease that we must find a way to fight back.

I am a father of 3 girls and married to my beautiful wife, Leslie. I could not do this without her, she is my rock. My 3 daughters are all uniquely different, and I absolutely love that. Between dance competitions, soccer tournaments, basketball games, band concerts, family game nights, these are all things that I cherish a little more. Time is not on our side, so the time spent with these moments are so important. As a father who dreamed of walking his 3 girls down the aisle someday, had those dreams shattered in 2022 when I was diagnosed. But that doesn't stop our fight. This cure may not come in time for me, but if what we are doing is giving someone else a chance to walk their daughter down the aisle someday, then I am all for it! We are a strong supportive community trying to help others, and this event is a perfect example of how we do it.

ALS is a disease that affects everyone differently. Some lose strength and limb function. Some lose the ability to talk. For some it is slow progression. For others it is rapid. Everyone's journey is different, but we must enjoy everything while we can. Sure, there are some dark days and dark thoughts, and that is okay. But this thing will not win. Enjoy the small things in life. Have fun and laugh. Make the most of today because you don't know what you will lose tomorrow. Just be a good person and cherish the relationships you have made. This is not the end. ALS TDI will find a way! They are committed to it! Please come out and support this event, it could be life-changing. YOU have an opportunity to change a life, to save a life, and to save a family. Make the most of today.