

LIFETIMES

THE NEWSLETTER OF

The Minnie Pearl Cancer Foundation

Hope through Research, Support and Education

SUMMER/FALL
2007

Sewn in Love

YOUNG ADULT CANCER SURVIVOR RETREATS GET WRAPPED IN LOVE

It is startling to consider that approximately one of every three Americans will have some type of personal cancer experience in their lifetime, whether through a family member or their own.

A cancer diagnosis at any age is life altering, but especially so for young adults, who already find themselves in transformational times. 'Why me' questioning happens to all with cancer, but can be particularly plaguing to younger patients striving to establish careers and relationships. Also, coping with the fear of recurrence casts a shadow of limitation over what should be a time of boundless opportunity.

Recognizing the need for a support network of fellow survivors, The Foundation launched its annual Young Adult Cancer Survivor Retreats in 2005 to great acclaim. "All the retreats have been overwhelming successes for all involved, staff and participants

alike," said Susan Gregory, MSW, oncology social worker. "It is wonderful to continue this healing experience and offer these young adults a forum to connect with peers in similar circumstances."



Sandy Wilson

This year was no exception, seeing the addition of a second retreat focusing on young adult survivors between the ages of 30 and 40. The retreats, offered free of charge to survivors from any location and at any stage of survivorship, share a very special constant: the work of Sandy Wilson and her group Sewn-N-Love, who provide a handmade quilt to each guest.

Sandy's story mirrors that of many family members of cancer survivors, driven to become involved in the betterment of those who battle the disease. Chuck Wilson, Sandy's husband, was diagnosed with brain cancer in 2001, and she found great solace

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JOURNAL OF HOPE:

"What time is it?"

"Now."

Just over two months ago on Tuesday the 3rd of July 2007—ironic but fitting that this would occur on a Tuesday since Tuesdays were my chemo days—I found out what I already knew and what I had known for almost six years: that I was cured of cancer. And yet, two months later I am still thinking about hearing that phrase pass over a trained physician's lips. What is different about knowing something and hearing someone say that same something out loud? I will never know the answer to that question, but I know that the difference exists. The feeling is like that of being completely exposed, completely vulnerable, and totally empty as if the world had slowly come to a halt and everything stood still for a split second.

And then it was over.

And then I walked outside into the world of beauty that is my old Kentucky home and felt as though I was merely an extension of the earth, a fluid piece of matter that was floating effortlessly on the wind, swaying with the trees, absorbing the sunlight, flitting across the sky to take in the multitude of life that surrounded me and to realize that there is never 'nothing' going on. Surreal is the only adjective that can even come close to describing the feeling.

And, ironically again, as everyone else was experiencing the exuberant celebration of my being "cured," I felt a quiet sense of sorrow that I never could quite explain. It was simply there standing beside me like an old friend prolonging his imminent departure. He was not the only one prolonging for I was holding just as tightly as he. "What happens next? Where do I go from here? How does one end an era?"

My reticence came mainly from fears: a fear of the unknown, a fear of the question of "where will I go from here?", a fear of not knowing, a fear of being physically ready but emotionally unready and unwilling to be "cured," since being diagnosed—along with all the wonderful people who have played such a huge role in helping me through a difficult time—literally saved my life. Although the emotional and

physical have always been parallel, the physiological part of me has always been racing far ahead of the emotional trail leg. The fear was that the gap was too wide and


unbridgeable. If I am "cured," how can I justify still dealing with the effects of something that has found itself at such a definite end? Can one put a limit on working

through emotionally charged events? Is there a deadline? I had dreamt of this day ever since that day in early September 2001 when I was officially diagnosed with Stage 3 Hodgkin's Disease and found out that one of my lungs was 97% blocked and only by the grace of God and a good helping of motherly intuition was I prompted to see the doctor in the first place.

I had dreamt of this day and knew that it was going to come. I had every confidence in the world that I would pull through...but somehow it was as if I was working toward an unreachable goal, an elusive dream that flitted in and out of my consciousness never settling down long enough to actually feel "real."

The real is here and I am cured and, honestly, I feel as if I am starting from the beginning all over again. As frightening as starting over can be, it is also strangely liberating. We as cancer survivors can throw the cancer card; we have the privilege of knowing life in such an intimate way that most people cannot even imagine. We also have a responsibility to help our fellow adventurers along the way and turn the seemingly devastating diagnosis into liberated living.

"What time is it?"

"Now." 

John Pyron
7 September 07



John Pyron has been a participant at our Young Adult Cancer Survivor Retreat each year since its inception.

"NO ONE IS STANDING
IN YOUR WAY ANYMORE;
IT IS TIME TO MOVE FORWARD."

—CHINESE FORTUNE COOKIE

*hope through research,
support & education*

HOPE

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YOUNG ADULT CANCER SURVIVOR RETREATS GET WRAPPED IN LOVE

in working on quilt pieces during time in waiting and treatment rooms. Patients and families began to approach Sandy and ask if they could sit and watch while she worked.

In 2004, Sandy and her best friend of more than 25 years, Joan Fuller, founded Sewn-N-Love to minister to cancer survivors. This nonprofit organization consists solely of volunteers, from quilt shop groups to high school students.

"I remember being so cold in those rooms, just wanting to bundle up," said Sandy. "Quilting is my passion, and I realized what a great gift a handmade quilt would make to cancer patients."

Through its gifts, Sewn-N-Love demonstrates to cancer patients and their families that they are not alone in the struggle. "The quilts are tangible reminders that others are praying for them and fight similar battles, and they also symbolically represent the warmth of God's love," said Sandy. "We also hope to pass on our love of quilting while promoting fellowship within the quilting community."

Sewn-N-Love is very active in the cancer community beyond their commitment to The Foundation and its retreats. They have provided quilts to numerous groups, including over 40 American Cancer Society-sponsored camps and The Sarah Cannon Cancer Center as well as the National Children's Cancer Society.

Fran Sargent, owner of Sewn-N-Love's home shop, Quilter's Attic in Goodlettsville, Tenn., sums up the work of this benevolent group well: "Quilts represent an investment of time and love. The gift of giving a part of yourself to someone hurting and in need of a special touch is accomplished through our gifts of quilts. There is nothing like the warmth of a quilt and giving this gift is a wonderful feeling."

Sewn-N-Love is a 501(c)3 public charity and all contributions are deductible for income tax purposes. For more information or if you are interested in joining this compassionate effort, please visit www.sewn-n-love.org.



*Young Adult Cancer Survivor
Retreat Memories*




*A Minnie
Moment*

FUSION '07

For the third consecutive year, Fusion, a Nashville-based music and arts fundraiser hosted by The Foundation's Young Professionals Committee, was a great success. Held on July 14 at City Hall and Project A Gallery in The Gulch, Nashville's downtown nightlife hotspot, the event featured a silent auction and over 80 visual and musical artists, from fashion designers, photographers and filmmakers to painters, sculptors and singer-songwriters.

In addition to the musical performances, dozens of visual artists displayed their work, three fashion shows were held, and eight original short films were screened. Proceeds benefited The Foundation's Young Adult Cancer Survivor Retreats. Fusion raised over \$17,000 to help make the retreats available at no cost to survivors.

"We have so much artistic talent in Nashville—not just musicians, but painters, photographers, filmmakers and designers as well," said Heather Karls, a graphic designer and founder of Fusion in 2005. "I wanted to not only give these artists a place to showcase their talents, but an opportunity to use their talents to benefit a great Nashville charity." 

A Note from the Board

Dear Friends,

In my ten years with The Minnie Pearl Cancer Foundation, we have never been more active or reached out to so many patients and doctors in the fight against cancer. It has been tremendously rewarding to roll up my sleeves and work together with such a committed group of staff and volunteers.

Thanks to you and your involvement, we are making a substantial difference. We are funding research and drug trials with our world-class network of doctors. We provide hope and support to cancer patients and their families in the most challenging and uncertain of times. Among our new initiatives, we're also reaching out to the business community to educate employers and coworkers about cancer in the workplace.

Do you know someone who could benefit from counseling about the realities of cancer and how it affects families? Would you like advice on diet and cooking for someone undergoing treatment for cancer? Are you looking for a good source of reliable information about cancer recovery and survival—including books, articles, and Internet sites? The Minnie Pearl Cancer Foundation can provide all of these things and more.

In the coming year, we plan to reach out even further, to help more people, and to make an even bigger difference. If you or someone you know has cancer, we encourage you to give us a call to find out how we can help. Or, if you'd like to volunteer, don't hesitate to pick up the phone. The Foundation is full of wonderful people who would love to hear from you.

Best Regards,

Key

Key Holleman, Chair
Board of Directors



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Life Blooms

2008 CALENDAR

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFITING THE MINNIE PEARL CANCER FOUNDATION

In commemoration of the 20th anniversary of The Foundation's work, we are proud to present *Life Blooms*, a calendar honoring the cultivation of hope in the lives of cancer patients, their families and loved ones who are constant inspiration to our mission. Representing the culmination of months of planning and preparation, this is no ordinary calendar; all profits will contribute toward efforts to eradicate all forms of cancer.

Another special aspect is the invaluable support of the participants who graciously donated their time to make this project happen. These prominent women featured throughout *Life Blooms* embody Nashville's distinct community pride and the compassionate spirit of Minnie Pearl, as well as the strength of The Foundation's purpose.

Moll Anderson, *Interior Designer/Lifestyle Expert*
 Marsha Blackburn, *U.S. Representative*
 Miranda Cohen, *Entertainment Reporter for Fox*
 Amy Grant, *Singer/Songwriter*
 Tracee (Jones) Wells, *Head Women's Basketball Coach at Tennessee State University*
 Martina McBride, *Country Music Artist*

LeAnn Rimes, *Country Music Artist*
 SHeDAISY, *Country Music Artist*
 Rachel Smith, *Miss USA® 2007*
 Stacie Standifer, *Publisher of Nashville Lifestyles Magazine*
 Pam Tillis, *Country Music Artist*
 Kimberly Williams-Paisley, *Writer, Director, Actress, Wife & Mother*

As you turn the pages of *Life Blooms*, please know that each day The Foundation strives to bring about an end to cancer, a disease that will affect over 1.4 million new patients, their families and friends in 2008. It is The Foundation's hope that this inspirational calendar will help brighten your days throughout the year, serving as a reminder to take time to be thankful for the blooms in your life and those you love.

May the strength and character of *Life Blooms'* models and its messages of encouragement help you realize the potential for growth in every day and season. 🌸



Special Thanks

Life Blooms represents the culmination of the efforts of numerous individuals and organizations over many months.

Betsey Johnson at the Mall of Green Hills
 Carte Blanche Specialty Invitations & Gifts

Billie Causieestko
 Ginny Chambers
 Davis-Kidd Booksellers
 DeLong Photography—Mark & Melissa DeLong
 Elliston Place Soda Shop
 Fabu
 Joel Green

Angela Cay Hall
 Rebecca's Fine Furniture & Design—Rebecca Poole & Mark Johnson
 Jennifer Kemp
 Jeremy & Kathy Mitchell
 The Trading Company
 Deborah Wingo

To purchase the calendar for \$20 visit www.minniepearl.org or call

EVENTS

mark your calendars

4TH ANNUAL "BOYS IN DRESSES"

SONGWRITERS NIGHT

Monday, October 29, Dan McGuiness Irish Pub
Benefiting breast cancer programs for The Foundation.

BRIGHTON COLLECTIBLES SALE

Through October 31, The Mall at Green Hills
A portion of the proceeds from the special breast cancer awareness bracelet, necklace and earrings will be donated to The Foundation.

MUSIC...FOR A CURE

Monday, November 15, 7:30 p.m., Third & Lindsley
A \$10 donation at the door will benefit The Foundation.
Come out for a full night of writers and performers including Shauna Bolton, Adam Shoenfeld, Jerrod Niemann, Melody Guy, Bruce Wallace, Terri Jo Box, and many others.

LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER

Free cosmetologist session for women cancer patients
Monday, December 10, 2:00-4:00 p.m.
Seating is limited. Call (615) 467-1936 for reservations.

QUIT 4 LIFE

Free smoking cessation support group
Meets every Tuesday at The Foundation's
Patient Resource Center, 6:00-7:00 p.m.

For more information or to purchase tickets to these events, call (615) 467-1936.

The Minnie Pearl Cancer Foundation is a nonprofit public charity committed to funding programs that provide the greatest benefit to cancer patients and their families. By supporting new programs in cancer research, education, and patient and family services, we honor the memory of Sarah Cannon, a cancer patient herself, who created the beloved character "Minnie Pearl."



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A 501(C)(3) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

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