



Carrie and the Pink Bicycle

The live auction was just about to end, but there was one special item left to auction. The eyes of every woman in the room lit up as the bright pink beach cruiser bicycle was wheeled out. It was clear this was something special, and the woman taking home this bike was going to be the envy of everyone in the room! What few people in the room knew was the story behind the precious bike.

According to her fiancé, Carrie was the picture of health. She had finished a 5K just days before her annual well woman exam, and was surprised when the nurse practitioner's mood changed suddenly during her breast exam.

Carrie's breast cancer diagnosis drew in her family as an immediate support system. Her sister was a copious note taker during the initial visits with oncologists. Her father, a retired physician, was there to help ask the right questions and give a thorough family history. Her fiancé Bruce, after his initial feeling of being blindsided, became actively involved in her treatment process.

Carrie was able to schedule her first series of chemotherapy treatments around her days off, and was back to work each week at Brighton Gardens where she serves as a Community Relations Director. When she began having noticeable changes in her hair, Carrie decided it was time to let the Brighton residents know that she was facing breast cancer. Many of the residents shared their own stories of being breast cancer survivors. "I work in a house full of grandparents," she said. "It was a great support."

Carrie had purchased a wig as she began chemotherapy, but realized she had no scarves. She came to Cancer Action and not only found the scarves she needed, but also selected a wig that she could use as a back up. She received several



Back on her bike, Carrie and Bruce will be riding in the Sunflowers to Roses Bike Tour on August 14. They are encouraging other cyclists to participate with them in support of Cancer Action.

comfort items including a hand-made afghan and pressure point pillows to use in areas tender from treatment and surgery. At work she learned that the wife of a coworker was also facing a cancer diagnosis, and that Cancer Action was helping her with nutritional supplements to help keep up her strength and energy.

Bruce went with Carrie to her chemotherapy appointments and helped ask questions. He said that going through treatment was a humbling process. While Carrie was one of the youngest people in the treatment room, they found that going through treatment put everyone on the same playing field.

During her treatment, Carrie was encouraged to help with an event being held at Brighton Gardens. A group of community women was planning the Annual High Tea for Breast Cancer, and Cancer Action was the beneficiary. Bruce had a special surprise planned for the event. On staff at Family Bicycles in Waldo, Bruce had previously given Carrie a bike to get her interested in cycling. When she began cycling longer distances, Bruce helped her upgrade to a bike better designed for distance. Bruce decided to reclaim his first gift – the beach cruiser – and had it repainted pink in honor of Carrie's battle with breast cancer. He kept the bike at the shop, hiding it each time Carrie came in.

On the day of the high tea, the white rimmed tires gracefully rolled across the carpet, and Carrie saw her bike in all its pink glory. As the bidding went higher and higher, this gift from Bruce was becoming a gift again, this time supporting other breast cancer survivors through the programs and services at Cancer Action.

A NOTE FROM KARLA

By Karla Nichols, Executive Director

Ordinary day... extraordinary work. That describes a typical day at Cancer Action. I was keenly reminded of this fact while I was filling in at one of our offices last week. In just two hours, I experienced how vital our services and support are to those facing the challenge of a cancer diagnosis.

I gave some medical supplies, including a bedside commode, to a family who is caring for their loved one at home. Conserving his strength and energy is crucial at this time. Two people came in for nutritional supplement, each with specific nutritional needs. For one client, his only source of nutrition is the tube-feeding supplement he receives from Cancer Action. This service is truly life-saving for him. The other case of nutritional supplement was provided to a person undergoing a very rigorous treatment to fight his disease. With his decreased appetite, some days this is the only thing he is able to eat.

All of these patients and families stayed and talked with me about the challenges they were having along this difficult journey. It reminded me how important having a caring place of support can be when dealing with such a life-impacting disease.

I ended my day with a woman and her sister who came through our doors for the very first time. She came hoping to find a wig. We visited for a while then tried on several wigs until she found one she that was comfortable and she felt good wearing. Finding a wig is incredibly important to a woman going through treatment. It really prepares her to face her world with confidence and lifts her spirits. She gave me a hug as she left and thanked me for our help.

I was also reminded about the importance of our volunteers that day. One of our faithful office volunteers



was helping me during those two hours. She was compassionate and encouraging to those who came in our door. When I showed a new client the afghan and neck pillow, I saw how much it meant to her to know that she was not in this journey alone.

Two hours on an ordinary day. I am continually reminded that we could not do this extraordinary work without the support of our donors. During this difficult economic time, we are truly grateful for those who support us financially. We need your help more than ever as we continue to see increasing need for those we serve. Cancer Action is the heart of cancer support in Kansas City. Together we make an extraordinary, life-saving difference for those with cancer in our community.

Volunteer Awards Reception 2011



Phyllis Bagley received the 2011 Maxine Bowers Legacy of Service Award.



The Silent Service Award was presented to Pat and Ernie Trammell. Presenting the award were Gary Lezak, Karla Nichols and Brian Levinson, board president.



Dee Koeppen, 2011 Volunteer of the Year, receives her award from Gary Lezak, chief meteorologist NBC Action News, Karla Nichols, executive director, and Leslie Berning, volunteer coordinator.

Cancer Action Named LIVESTRONG® Community Impact Project Award Recipient

Organization will receive \$4,000 to help people affected by cancer

On June 7th Cancer Action received the news that they were selected as an award recipient for a LIVESTRONG® Community Impact Project grant. The project, created by LIVESTRONG, the organization founded by cancer survivor and champion cyclist Lance Armstrong to serve people affected by cancer and empower them to take action, will bring proven cancer support programs to more than 90 communities across the United States.

“This award will directly impact our ability to support those in our community who are affected by cancer,” said Karla Nichols, executive director for Cancer Action. “We want to offer our appreciation to those who voted in support of our grant. Together, we’re making a difference in the lives of cancer survivors and their families in our community.”

LIVESTRONG President and CEO Doug Ulman said, “By investing in these bold and innovative cancer support programs, LIVESTRONG is providing inspiration and empowerment to area residents so they can band together as a community to face cancer head-on.”

The grant will enable Cancer Action to bring the Cancer Transitions program to cancer survivors in Kansas City. Cancer Transitions™: Moving Beyond Treatment is designed to support, educate and empower people with cancer in the transitional period after treatment is over. Partnering with LIVESTRONG to provide Cancer Transitions will allow Cancer Action to reach even more cancer survivors in the Kansas City community with resources to improve their quality of life.

We are grateful for the support to Cancer Action and those we serve through grants received during the year. Cancer Action would like to thank the following foundations and organizations for their support:

- HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION OF GREATER KANSAS CITY
- KANSAS HEALTH FOUNDATION
- SUSAN G. KOMEN FOR THE CURE GREATER KANSAS CITY
- CENTERPOINT AUXILIARY
- INDEPENDENCE YOUNG MATRONS
- WOMEN WITH ONE VOICE

Volunteer Awards Reception 2011



The 2011 Leadership Circle Award was presented to 21 volunteers who have shown dedication and leadership to Cancer Action's service units.



The heart of cancer support in Kansas City

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For more information, contact
Cindy at 913-642-8885.



Join the 2011 Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure event on Sunday, August 14, 2011 and support breast cancer survivors. For more information go to www.komenkansascity.org.

9th ANNUAL sunflowers to roses BIKE TOUR

UPDATE - S2R has moved to Sunday, August 14, 2011. This is a change from the date published in our spring newsletter. Come out for a 15, 34, 62 or 72 mile ride or join the four-mile family ride through southern Johnson County. If you would like to volunteer at the event, contact us at 913-642-8885. For more information about the ride or to register to ride, visit www.sunflowerstoroses.org.

THANK YOU to those who have already supported Cancer Action through a vehicle donation! You can donate your car, truck, boat or RV to Cancer Action and help support our work with cancer patients in the Kansas City area. The vehicle can be in running condition or not, as long as you have the title and there are no liens against the vehicle. For more information, contact Cindy at (913) 642-8885 or visit www.canceractionkc.org



Cancer Action Locations:

Eastern Jackson County
4010 S. Lynn Court
Independence, MO 64055
816-350-8881

Johnson County
10520 Barkley, Suite 100
Overland Park, KS 66212
913-642-8885

Wyandotte County
1600 Washington Blvd.
Kansas City, KS 66102
913-321-8880

www.canceractionkc.org

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