

KICKIN' CANCER



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WEARETHESOLUTION

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HELPTEAMBRENDA

SUPPORTING THOSE WHO HAVE FOUGHT, OR ARE FIGHTING,
THE GOOD FIGHT AGAINST CANCER.

EDUCATING PEOPLE ON HOW TO LIVE AN ANTI-CANCER
LIFESTYLE BY EATING REAL FOOD AND DOING SOME MOVEMENT.

DEREK GILBERT'S FOLLOW UP STORY "OUTLET TO CHANNEL ANGER"

BY DEREK GILBERT

My name is Derek Gilbert and I have been a volunteer firefighter since 2006. It had been a longtime dream of mine to be a paid firefighter and was privileged to serve as the volunteer coordinator and a responding firefighter for the Stayton Fire District for two years. As I got married and started my family that dream came to an end when they learned that I have fused vertebrae after breaking my back in college. What seemed at the time like a devastating blow turned out to be a tremendous blessing as it led to my now 9 year profession as a financial advisor with Doneth & Sturdivant Wealth Advisors in Salem while continuing my volunteer fire service with Marion County Fire District #1 where I am the Lieutenant at the Clearlake station. During my 14 years in the fire service one of the most meaningful components has been my participation in the Seattle Firefighter Stair climb. Over 2,000 firefighters, from around the world, come together to climb the 70 floors of the Columbia Center. They put on full fire suppression gear to raise money and awareness for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. I have participated now for 11 years and have finished in the top 35 for time 4 times and have raised nearly \$45,000 over those years.



What started as a physical challenge for me rapidly evolved when my father David was diagnosed with Stage 4 non-Hodgkins Lymphoma in 2012. From that point forward it became an extremely personal event to not only honor his successful fight against cancer, but to fight for family and friends who have been affected by cancer. After watching the pain and suffering my father went through as well as the emotional struggles our family faced I found the stair climb to be an amazing outlet to channel anger and frustration for his fight, and the struggles so many friends and family face dealing with this terrible disease. It also became an incredible way to offer support to those going through

cancer. I've been so proud to carry pictures of those fighting cancer on my helmet to encourage them through their darkest moments and honor those who lost their battle. While it can be a painful and mentally challenging event, it is extremely rewarding to watch my brother and sisters from around the world come together to rally around an organization and a cause that does so much good for those individuals and families affected by cancer!

(Editor's note: After meeting Derek, I made the decision to join him in 2020. When I heard there was a climb in Portland for Lung cancer and meeting Becky Olson, I made the decision to do this same climb for Becky. I "climbed the Bank4Becky")

RHONDA ALLEN'S STORY "I'M HAPPY TO BE HERE"

BY RHONDA ALLEN

I decided to have my first colonoscopy on my birthday April 14, 2015. I had been afraid to do it so I kept putting it off, but something was pushing me to do this. I had the test which was amazingly easy so I don't know why I didn't do it sooner. They found a 7cm tumor that they said had been there awhile. The previous 6 months I was sickly but no other symptoms. I had a colon resection 10 days later and then 6 months of Chemo. Chemo was hard and taxing. I had problems with my feet. The Chemo did more damage than the cancer. Since that time, I have learned so much about nutrition and how it affects the body. Perhaps if I had had a better diet, the cancer wouldn't have developed. In April I will be 5 years clear and although I have other health issues, I'm happy to be here. I have a Great Dane service dog who provides balance when I walk. He is so important to my life now. If you are a young person, research good nutrition and get help with it. If you do get cancer, research alternative cures. WeAreTheSolution shares so much knowledge, and will help or direct you in the right direction.



QUARTERLY THOUGHT "THE WHY THAT MAKES YOU CRY"

BY BRENDA FARRIS

At the young age of 48, I was shocked to be diagnosed with a very aggressive form of metastatic breast cancer. After my mastectomy, I learned that my cancer was not responsive to chemotherapy, so I was forced to take my health into my own hands, making enormous changes to every aspect in order to save my own life. Often in our presentations I have been brought to tears. This was not in the script it just happens. Very organic, completely spontaneous, heart-felt tears. This IS the 'Why that makes me cry'.

In order to save your life, you will have to make and maintain changes. You will have to dig deep and discover YOUR 'Why'. The

'Why' that makes you cry is what will sustain you when things get hard. And trust me, changing old habits is hard. Reading labels, buying different foods, learning what is toxic to your body, is HARD, it's a lot to change. It is easy to go back to your old ways, so if you don't know your 'Why', these life-saving changes may not stick. Take a moment to really ponder, dig deep and really think beyond 'today'. What do you want from this life? Why do you want to make healthier changes?

During this sudden moment of darkness, turmoil, and chaos, my 'Mess' became my 'Message' – became my 'Why that makes me cry'. Change is hard. I promise that as you step out of your comfort zone, face your fears and allow your pain to become your purpose, you will find the 'Why that makes you cry'.

HELPTEAMBRENDA@GMAIL.COM • 4861 SKYLINE RD S #108 • SALEM, OR 97306

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LINCOLN'S STORY "MY INCREDIBLE BROTHER'S JOURNEY"

BY LAURA MCSWEENEY, President of the Board of Directors for the KickinCancer movement. This is the WHY THAT MAKES HER CRY

I am the oldest of six children who except for the youngest are only 12-13 months apart. I became "helper" at a very early age. I nurtured and "raised" my siblings so in reality I feel like I have been a mother my whole life. Let me set the stage by saying, my siblings feel very much like my children in my heart. Lincoln was the fourth child in my family line up. He could light up a room with his smile. He was always quiet and ALWAYS the first to hug you when you were sad or help you out when you needed



ANYTHING. He was fearless and competitive and always so proud of his accomplishments and bravely received his rewards which usually involved band aids or stitches. He suffered a skull fracture when he was nine years old which required, a metal plate replace the section of his damaged skull. A result of this injury caused him to have epileptic seizures. He lived in denial just wanting to be like the rest of his siblings and friends. He finally overcame this by accepting medication, adjusting his lifestyle by quitting bad habits like smoking, drinking and eating poorly and finding a strong relationship with the Lord.

He was successful at work and was loved by many. But his heart was searching for a partner to share life with. He found her when he started attending nursing school and their love would be the highlight of his life. They married in 2012, then in 2014 Lincoln was diagnosed with lung cancer. He had suffered a cold that caused him to lose his voice, but when the cold was gone his voice never returned. It turned out he had to have his left lung removed because it was so diseased it hadn't functioned for several years. This never impacted his ability to work or participate in fundraisers he and his wife did to support their church or mission trips to Guatemala. He had no idea his lung was not working. After the surgery to remove his lung he began chemotherapy to combat the cancer on his other lung. Unfortunately, the cancer spread to his brain and he received radiation to stop that cancer.

After 1 year of this he was told he was in remission. Lincoln had a road ahead to recovery but we were excited to be on this path! Then, during a check up they found it had returned to his other lung and spread to his liver.....it was unstoppable at this point. We rallied behind him throughout the remainder of his journey till he went home to heaven, where he no longer feels pain and can watch over us. He left behind a remarkable legacy of courage and bravery and most of all compassion for his loved ones. He went to sleep in the comfort of his home with his wife by his side July 18, 2015. He was only 50 years old. Just prior to his passing he was able to attend one of our longtime friend's, whom we called a brother, funerals in January 2014. He too died from lung cancer at the age of 51.

This is part of my reason "Enough is Enough!" My heart breaks to lose siblings, friends, family and coworkers to such an insidious disease. We must be vigilant to understand our bodies and fight for our health!

JAYME WESTERFELD'S STORY "SCARIEST DAY OF MY LIFE"

BY JAYME WESTERFELD

22 years ago, I was diagnosed with colon cancer. The cancer had spread outside of my colon and into the surrounding tissue. I remember when I woke up from the colonoscopy and saw the doctors face something was terribly wrong. I asked him if I had a tumor and he said yes! I asked him if it was cancer and he said yes! I asked him if I was going to die and he said I don't know? It was honestly the scariest day of my life. Feeling so helpless and so confused. I have no history of cancer in my family so it came as quite a shock. I was 40 years old and my kids were 6 and 10 at the time I was diagnosed. My fear was that I would not live to see my children grow up.

The doctors put me in for surgery immediately. They removed 12 inches of my colon and told me that because the cancer had spread to my surrounding tissue, I would have to have chemo every week for 6 months. I immediately started doing research to find ways I could possibly help strengthen my immune system as I was going thru treatment? I was very fortunate at the time to meet a wonderful doctor that had been doing his own research and had found overwhelming evidence that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables could help the body!

He said we need to eat more fruits and vegetables to help our immune system do its job. This made total sense! I had heard that all my life but quite honestly eating at least 13 raw fruits and vegetables was literally impossible. Of course, now the suggestion is at least 17. He said he was trying to get his patients to eat more but was having a huge issue with compliance. They just wouldn't do it. He was then introduced to Juice Plus which is 30 fruits, vegetables and berries. It was not an isolated vitamin; it was whole food. That alone wasn't enough for him to recommend it until he saw the published studies that had been done by several credible Universities and Research centers around the world. He felt now he had an answer for his patients. He heard about my cancer and told me about Juice Plus. He wanted my body to get nutritional support while I was fighting this disease and after looking at the science myself it did make sense. He also told me that Juice Plus wasn't a cure for disease, but having better nutrition would certainly be beneficial. It made sense because I knew I needed to add more whole foods to my diet and this was an easier way for me to do it.



The day I started chemotherapy the doctor did blood work and was very concerned because my hemoglobin was very low and he said that it would take a minimum of a year for it to come back into healthy numbers. I started taking JP and within 2 months my hemoglobin numbers were back into normal ranges. (Again, I'm in no way saying that taking Juice Plus did this but I feel for me it helped my body help itself) My doctor was thrilled and agreed that having a better diet can only help all of us.

Its been 22 years since that awful day and I feel fortunate that I have survived! I just want everyone to be as healthy as they can be and do everything in their power to help their bodies now and not wait until you are fighting for your life. We get one shot at this amazing life and what we do now can affect the life we have ahead.