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WEARETHESOLUTION

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(WATSUP!)

# KICKING-CANCER CHRONICLE

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**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.

## “SO FAR EVERYTHING IS LOOKING GOOD”

SARAH BENNETT (MINNESOTA)



October 26, 2022 I first started getting sick. It started with the worst vomiting and diarrhea experience I ever had. This went on for about 12 days. Within those 12 days I had gone to the ER 3 times Urgent Care once and they had exhausted every test they could. It was finally on my last ER visit that they decided to do a CT scan. Come to find out that they thought was a birth defect of my pancreas, so they ended up doing an MRI. After the MRI results came back there was a tumor that was attached to the back of the pancreas. They scheduled an endoscopy with a biopsy.

They discharged me to go home November 8 2022, then the day after I was discharged, about 2:45 PM, I got a call from the doctor who did my endoscopy and biopsy to say he had the results back. It was a neuroendocrine cancerous tumor. I just fell silent at that point. I heard the word cancer and what do you do. He gave me the phone for an oncology department here in Minnesota. My next thought was to call my husband and ask him when he was going to be home. He asked what was going on. I told him what the doctor had told me as I'm crying my eyes out over the phone. He said, "I will be home in about an hour." After I got my daughter I we came home to find my husband. He just pulls me into a hug and I start crying.

I had my first oncology appointment on the November 14, 2022. The oncologist explained a lot of things, but says due to the type of cancer and where it's located I need to find a specialist who would be able to help operate on me and remove it. At that time I had no Minnesota health insurance. I still have Oregon health insurance, since I used to live in Keizer OR, so every visit I had would be out of pocket. So I tell the oncologist I'm going to go back to Oregon, because I still have insurance there and I have family out there that can help me. She went ahead and took care of finding someone for me through OHSU. The nurses at OHSU reached out to me. We took care of scheduling my appointments. I talked to my folks, who got me a plane ticket. I had another PET scan with contrast dye on the December 8, before flying to Oregon on December 11 to talk with the on surgical oncologist at OHSU. I flew out on December 25, 2022 to spend Christmas with my family in Oregon. My mother-in-law came out on January 2, 2023 to pick my daughter up and take her back to Minnesota. On January 9 I had my oncologist appointment to talk about doing chemo to get the tumor to shrink, because it really was not in a good place for operating on at the time. We talked about the two different types of chemo pills that I was going to be taking.

My surgical oncologist went into depth about the biology of neuroendocrine cancer; where it begins, how the neuroendocrine system is everywhere. We talked about the option of surgery, but wanting to try the chemo first just to see if we would be able to get it to shrink down. I did 2 weeks taking the chemo medication. I starting one and then starting the second pill on the second week. Then it was 2 weeks off of taking any of the medication that way I could give the medication I had taken a chance to work. In February 2023 I took the train back to Minnesota to I visit with my family. My last trip out to Oregon was May 4, 2023 because I had done a final CT scan and the tumor had shrunk but not enough to make me happy. Part of my insurance was my mom's and I turned 26 in May. The insurance came to an end when I turned 26, so I really needed to get the surgery scheduled. I went back to Oregon, saying goodbye to my daughter, my husband, and my mother-in-law. My surgery was on May 19, 2023. I

ended up missing out on spending my birthday with my daughter and my husband. They removed the tumor successfully. My husband was able to fly out to Oregon to support me during my surgery. I had all my follow-up appointments, then was cleared to go back home on June 26, 2023. I went back home to Minnesota and I have been there since. I was able to be back in time for my daughter's 5th birthday at the end of June. In September I had my first scan since surgery and everything looks clear. At this point I'm waiting for February for my next scan, but so far everything is looking good.

## “SHE IS OUT!”

BETH BRUBAKER (KENTUCKY)

"It did come back malignant." Time stopped with those words. Life changed. 1 in 8 women are diagnosed with Breast Cancer. Then four days later, I became 1 in 3000. THE 1 in 3000 of women diagnosed with breast cancer while pregnant. This was after my husband and I suffered a miscarriage five months earlier.

In a matter of months, as I lost parts of my body that made my womanhood, my belly grew. Fear grew also. What if my daughter does not survive this? What if I do not see my daughter go to Kindergarten? Minutes after I received the phone call that the results of my lumpectomy indicated the need for more surgeries and now chemotherapy while carrying my daughter, I made a promise to God. If my unborn daughter and I survived this, I would share my miracle for the rest of my life.

Nine months, two surgeries, and six round of chemotherapy later, I heard the words: "She is out!" Time stopped again. Harper Jaye Brubaker survived. I was survived. God was completing our miracle. However, no one prepared me for the aftermath of postpartum and restarting chemotherapy with a newborn. Ten rounds of Taxol with a newborn.

Sitting in that infusion chair, I cried week after week. I was bald, sick, and miserable. Fortunately, I had two of my biggest supporters - my nurse navigator and lifeline at the breast center, Patty, and best friend from high school Maria, who saw me absolutely falling apart. During one of my infusions, I received an email in which I could not have anticipated the impact. It read: "Spa Day - Karen Wellington Foundation." Inside of the email was an invitation to a full spa day with a friend of my choosing. For 10 months, I had not thought of anything else except cancer and being a mom. Now, I had something else to look forward to. Something FUN. Now, 23 days after completing chemotherapy, I sat in a different chair, a pedicure chair. Instead of tears, I shared laughs with my best friend, who had been there for me through it all and knew that I needed this. I was still bald, still sick, but I did not feel miserable. I felt beautiful. I felt truly beautiful for the first time in 11 months. Even with no hair, no eyebrows, and no eyelashes.

This was a turning point for me. I still had radiation and immunotherapy to go - all during my daughter's first year of life. That day gave me strength to go forward.

From there I completed 30 rounds of radiation and a year's worth of targeted treatments (Herceptin and Perjeta). My last treatment fell on my daughter's first birthday. She just turned 5 on May 21, 2024, and I am now four years out of treatment as well. We are both healthy and happy.



## “OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE BACK”

CINDE DOLPHIN (CALIFORNIA)



I had a fun and exciting career in the adult beverage industry for almost 25 years. As a Marketing Manager for Coors, I traveled all the time, went to splashy events and met sports and musical celebrities. Over the years, it started to feel shallow and it certainly wasn't going to make the world a better place. Then in 2013, I experienced my ninth surgery as a result of a cancer diagnosis. As in the previous surgeries, it was critical to wear post-op wound care drains for three weeks during recovery. The protocol for hospitals is to supply a

safety pin or clothesline clip to attach drains to a patient's hospital gown. Instead of using the pins, I elected to bring a canvas apron – similar to the ones used at Home Depot – to manage drains. The result was very positive, with the attending medical team requesting something be developed that could be used in a clinical environment. At the beginning of 2014, a prototype using mesh material was developed and tested with patients at UC Davis Medical Center. A commercial version was manufactured, and we began marketing the KILI Medical Drain Carrier.

Our first adopter was the post anesthesia care unit at UC Davis Medical Center. Subsequently we contacted and networked with Nurse Navigators in the Sacramento region. The product is now distributed to patients with drains at University of Chicago Medical Center, Sutter Health Hospitals, Dignity Health Hospitals and several independent hospitals in the area. I'm so fortunate to survive cancer. Now I have the opportunity to give back to individuals having to face a similar trauma of a cancer diagnosis.

## “TAKING THIS SERIOUSLY”

ROBERT ROMERO (VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON)

Around the beginning of May 2022 I went in for an examination with my regular Doctor. My blood work PSA came back at a 12 I was shocked. We waited a month. Then my PSA was a 14. At this point I was scheduled for a biopsy of my prostate. When the results came back I was told I had stage 5 prostate cancer. This scared me. I was referred to an oncologist here in Vancouver, WA to do more evasive test. I went through 5 weeks of radiation. By May 2024 my PSA was at a 0.



After a colonoscopy in early 2023 I was told now I'm in the beginning stages of colon rectal cancer. April 2023 I had another colonoscopy and the oncologist told me I'm still in the beginning stages of colon rectal cancer. My oncologist says I didn't hear this from him, but did say he has never seen someone go from a PSA of 14 to a 0 and stay. Plus to have the colon rectal cancer stay the same and not get any worse. This is why he advised for me to be more aggressive with what I'm doing. I am juicing and sticking with my Kangen water routine. As of today I have lost 3 family members to cancer. I do not want to be the next so I'm taking this seriously and healing myself. Positive energy helps as well.

## “WOULD NOT TRADE ANYTHING”

ROB MALLICOAT (YAKIMA, WASHINGTON)

I was born November 16th, 1964, in St. Helens Oregon. We lived in Salem in my early years. We ended up moving to Hermiston Oregon around 1977-78. Hermiston brought baseball; Little League, Babe Ruth and finally High School. We won Little League championships, then High School State Playoff where we played the West Linn, OR High School for the chance to play for the state title. We lost 2-1 to the eventual state champions.

The summer of my junior year the parents had a new business idea and we headed to Hillsboro Oregon for their new ideas and my senior year at a new high school. A few games into my senior year at Hillsboro HS I pitched against one of our rivals, Beaverton. They had a highly scouted catcher with a dozen scouts watching him and I ended up striking him out 2 times. This ended up helping my visibility with professional baseball and college. This put me on the radar with scouts and colleges. I started getting offer letters and phone calls but once I was drafted in the 8th round by the Detroit Tigers out of high school. My dream was starting to happen.

I was glad I had a few smart guys in my immediate family; my father and my uncle Jerry. Dad was more the practical type of guy who shared experiences and stories that helped him teach or at a minimum, give you some perspective. Jerry had played college baseball at Oregon State University and played a summer of professional baseball in the Pacific Northwest. He even spent some time playing with Kurt Russell during his minor league time before he played in Portland with his father's team, the Portland Mavericks.



Once I signed, I spent every waking moment focused on baseball and trying to move up through the system. I spent the fall after the minor league season ended in Phoenix in the Astros Instructional League for 6 weeks, then drove down to Houston working with other players on the MLB team and it helped me tremendously. Basically baseball had become my life. I ended up playing for 11 years and spend nearly 3 years in the MLB, but my shoulder gave out and required 3 surgeries to repair and this took time away from me. I would not trade anything for the experience playing baseball professionally. Many get the chance, but only a few make it to the MLB. After turning 55 I went in for routine colonoscopy only to find out that I am dealing with Stage 4 Colon, Liver and Lung Cancer. This is JUST a new chapter in my life.

## “FROM THE EFFORTS OF A FEW”

In the summer of 2018 a few people gathered at Bush Pasture Park in Salem, OR with an idea. After Baron Robison supported his sister Brenda Farris in a Warrior Dash with 42 friends they thought MAYBE they could help one more. That one more lead to one more, then one more. Now over six years later Kickin' Cancer has gone from GoTeamBrenda to GoTeamRachele, which is the 27th GoTeam... It has HONORED countless individuals by telling



their cancer story, and now added a radio show that goes to podcast and YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/@KickinCancer>. The growth of movements is when individuals want to be part of something bigger than themselves. Kickin' Cancer encourages each of you to 'Join the Movement'