



The Cancer Foundation
SERVING NORTHEAST GEORGIA

Newsletter: Summer 2023

Donor Spotlight: The McConnell Family



KELLI'S LIGHT & LEGACY



In late February, The Cancer Foundation received a call from Shelia McConnell. Although some time had passed since her eldest daughter, Kelli, lost her battle with cancer, Shelia, Kelli's father, Bob, and Kelli's two sisters, Natalie and Kenna, wanted to do something to celebrate Kelli's life and continue her legacy of helping others. "Kelli's heart was so big, even as a little girl, she would come home and go through her closet and bring kids who didn't have nice clothes some of her belongings." When she was diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer at 37, "her wish was to help others fighting cancer that may be struggling financially," Shelia shares.

In early March, TCF met with the McConnell family to learn more about Kelli and to discuss ideas her loved ones could use to celebrate Kelli. TCF quickly learned that Kelli was an amazing individual with a passion to heal. She was committed to others and loved fiercely. A ray of light to all, she led by example and even in her passing she never abandoned those in need. She always put others before herself. Her family continues her giving spirit with the same genuine concern and uncompromising commitment to improving the lives of others.

On May 6, 2023, the McConnell family celebrated their daughter/sister with their first annual Kelli's Light & Legacy celebration. They hosted friends and family at Terrapin Beer Company to celebrate her life, as well as her desire to help others who need the support that she was so fortunate to have while she was fighting her battle against breast cancer. Understanding that not everyone has the resources and support Kelli had along her journey, the McConnell family named The Cancer Foundation as beneficiary of the event. The event brought approximately 80 new donors to the Foundation Family and has raised over **\$20,000** to support The Cancer Foundation's Financial Assistance Program.



The mission of The Cancer Foundation is to help alleviate the financial burden of cancer for eligible patients. Serving 25 counties of northeast Georgia, TCF provides help in the form of financial assistance for housing, utilities, transportation and other critical needs during cancer treatment. Since 2009, we have provided over \$4 million in financial support to nearly 5,000 families across northeast Georgia! Our commitment to fiscal transparency earned Candid's Platinum Rating for 2022.



Scan to view our video & **LEARN MORE!**

THANK YOU TO IT'S THE JOURNEY, INC.

Despite there being numerous myths about breast cancer, it is the most common cancer for women in the United States with the exception of skin cancer. Currently, there are 3.8 million breast cancer survivors. For The Cancer Foundation, we serve more breast cancer patients through our Financial Assistance Program than any other type of cancer. **Last year, 17% of financial assistance awarded went to breast cancer patients.**

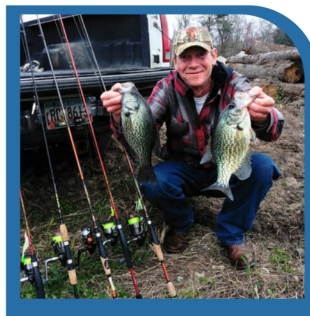
The Cancer Foundation and It's the Journey started a partnership to support breast cancer patients in our community in 2014. This partnership has grown and continues today. Most recently, **The Cancer Foundation received a grant of \$25,000** to support breast cancer patients. To date, It's the Journey has awarded The Cancer Foundation over \$209,000 making them the fourth largest grantor in The Cancer Foundation's 14-year history.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Families share their thanks and praise!

Over the years, your gift has made a difference in the lives of thousands of patients and their families. Thanks to your donations these families received the help they need with transportation to treatment, housing and utilities while in treatment, and other financial burdens such as medication costs, durable medical equipment, and insurance premiums or co-payments. **TCF expects to serve patient number 5,000 later this summer thanks to the generosity of our donors.**



💡💡 *It was an absolute lifesaver to be able to stay in a motel half the distance of my home even though it's an hour drive from the motel it's 2 hours from my home and I've got to cross the mountain. So very grateful for the tender loving kindness of everyone that's been involved. I thank you for your mercy on me. I don't know how to put into words what it means to me even though I don't see any of your faces I want you to know that I pray for you and I pray that the Lord blesses you 100 fold for everything that you all have done for me. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.*💡💡

-William
Esophageal/Throat Cancer Patient
Towns County Resident
referred by Northeast Georgia
Medical Center

*Stay
tuned*

for William's entire message

William's message will be published in it's entirety later this summer

Cheers!
January thru March 2023

Our *Cheers!* program celebrates individuals in a meaningful way. Whether a survivor tribute gift, anniversary gift, birthday or thank you gift, the honoree receives a customized notecard from The Cancer Foundation with your special message.

Alison McCullick Camilla Bracewell Cathi Wilson

Dale Duncan (Duncan & Co.)

Dr. Gustavo Westin Dr. James Splichal Dr. Ronald Terry

Emmie Fowler Kim Hardwick McCall Grosso

Dr. Glen & Marlo Wiggans

Ruth Campbell Connie Fleming Tom Scott

NURSE NAVIGATOR



What are They? How Can They Help?

Receiving a cancer diagnosis is one of, if not the, most terrifying things a person will ever experience.

Once the initial shock fades and a patient begins to absorb the information they received, they begin to feel the gravity of the diagnosis and the complexity of what lies ahead. It becomes overwhelming. This is where a Nurse Navigator can be helpful. Most Nurse Navigators work in cardiology, oncology, and other critical care sectors.

A Nurse Navigator can be described as a **specialty trained personal advocate** for those diagnosed with cancer. They take on the role of the **primary point of contact** for the patient and work with a multidisciplinary team to provide comprehensive service to their patients.

Many Nurse Navigators:

- Educate their patients about their conditions, treatments, side effects, and prescriptions
- Provide healthcare resources, such as consultations, testing, or treatment options
- Provide answers to questions and liaise with physicians
- Ensure accessibility to all healthcare documents and information
- Secure, assess and coordinate quality care services throughout their facility
- Support effective appointment scheduling, treatment procedures, and diagnostic testing
- Address administrative healthcare needs for patients, such as housing, childcare, transportation, prescription costs, and finances
- Provide referrals to appropriate contacts, such as social workers

In all, Nurse Navigator Programs are designed to increase better health outcomes for patients, especially cancer patients.

If you or someone you know has unanswered questions on this cancer journey or you believe you could benefit from working with a Nurse Navigator check with your healthcare provider for more information on their Nurse Navigator program.

The History of the Nurse Navigator



In 1971, President Richard Nixon declared a "war on cancer" and signed the National Cancer Act.

Over the next several decades significant gains were made in the fight against cancer. We began to see improved cancer prevention, early screenings, and more effective and targeted treatments.

However, not all patients shared the success. What we also discovered during this time that there is a disconnect between what we know and what we do. In 1990, Dr. Harold Freeman, oncologist at Harlem Hospital Center in New York, was the first to envision and initiate the **Nurse Navigator Program**. Based on this model the Patient Navigator and Chronic Disease Prevention Act was signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2005.

The original program focused on eliminating barriers to timely care such as:

- **financial barriers**
- **communication and information barriers**
- **medical system barriers**
- **fear, distrust and emotional barriers**

Overtime, the program has expanded to include:

- **prevention**
- **detection**
- **diagnosis**
- **treatment**
- **survivorship**
- **end of life support/survivorship**

Thank You to Our 2023 Sponsors



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DID YOU KNOW?



Most cancers are sporadic, meaning the changes in the DNA that led to a cancer developing were picked up during life. For example, UV radiation from the sun or tanning beds increases the risk for melanoma and other skin cancers because it breaks the strands of DNA in our skin cells. However, about 10-13% of cancers are from a DNA error that the person was born with. These errors can make a person more likely to develop certain kinds of cancers than their peers; man with a BRCA2 mutation may have a 7% or greater chance of developing a breast cancer than other men, whose risks are only about 0.1%.

So what are things we can do to lower the risk of cancers? There are many things that keep our DNA happy. Good nutrition (eat your fruits and veggies!), hydration with water, avoiding tobacco, limiting alcohol, restful sleep, exercise, stress reduction, and limiting sun exposure are just a few things available to make the most of our health!

With the generosity of our donors and the hard work of our team, on June 5, 2023 The Cancer Foundation served our

**5,000TH
PATIENT**





In Loving Memory of.....

Remember With Love



Russell Alan Coite

January through March 2023



Carmen Hall



Tillman Randall Whitehead



J.O. "Buster" Gregory, Jr.



Brenda Doster



Ralph Huff



Michael Odell Cleghorne

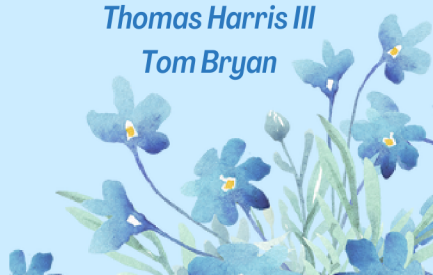


Jewell White

"When someone you love becomes a memory, a memory becomes a treasure."

Our *Remember With Love* program pays tribute to those who have lost their battle with this devastating disease. If you would like to learn more about honoring your loved one through our *Remember With Love* program or hosting a legacy celebration in memory of your loved one please contact Tina Laseter, Director of Community Engagement at 706-353-4354 ext. 3 or tlaseter@cfnega.org.

- Althea V. Fleming
- Annette Herndon
- Brenda Colley
- Bob Sires
- Charlene McCullick
- Coach Steve Webber
- David Bohanan
- David Gastley
- Dennis Carpenter
- Dr. J. Michael West
- Ellen Terrell
- George Dougherty
- Glenn Clapp
- Gordon Dickerson
- Jan Rubadou
- Jim and Helen Everett
- Jim Wallace
- John A. Bleyle
- Joyce McElhannon
- Joyce Sellers
- Karen Sailors Bramblett
- Kelli McConnell
- Linda Elias
- Melvina Henderson
- Michel O. Goggin
- Reba Hutchins Aaron
- Richard E. "Dick" Hodgetts
- Richard H. and Kathryn "Betty" Garrett
- Ruth Eleanor Asaud
- Stephanie Gamble
- Susan Moss O'Donnell
- Thomas Harris III
- Tom Bryan





Sip & Shuck Fall Fundraiser
Thursday, September 14, 2023
6 pm to 9 pm

Visit cfnega.org/events for sponsor and reservation information.



The Cancer Foundation
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A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greetings from The Cancer Foundation!

I am honored and excited to introduce myself as the new Executive Director of this amazing organization. I have been working in the nonprofit sector for over 15 years, and I have a passion for helping people who are facing the challenges of cancer; largely because I have been there myself. At the age of 10, I was diagnosed with stage four osteosarcoma, or bone cancer.

I joined The Cancer Foundation in April 2023, after serving as the Director of Development at another Georgia-based nonprofit. I have a background in fundraising, marketing, strategic planning and program management. I am also a cancer survivor myself, so I understand the physical, emotional and financial impact of cancer. I am committed to leading The Cancer Foundation with compassion, integrity and excellence.

As the new Executive Director, I am working with our dedicated staff, board, volunteers, partners and supporters to continue and expand our impact in the community. I invite you to join us in our efforts to make a difference in the lives of cancer patients and their families. You can learn more about our programs and services, make a donation, follow us on social media, or sign up for our e-newsletter on our website. Also, you can contact me at jtripp@cfnega.org or call (706) 353-4354 ext. 4.

Thank you for your support and interest in the Cancer Foundation. Together, we can help more people fight cancer with hope and dignity.



Joey, age 11, at Egleston Children's Hospital

Joey Tripp

Joey Tripp
 Executive Director