

Team Peek Never Gives Up!

Thanks to the generosity of the rancher community and Peek family, the Andy Peek Cattle Auction fundraiser has gifted over \$165,000 dollars to research. We have made amazing strides since we opened our doors but we need your help to end this battle!

Event Spotlight – Rummaging to Fight Pancreatic Cancer: Foster the CURE

By Monica Colella

Jim Foster, my dad, was the glue of our family.

When he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in September of 2011, it was devastating to all of our family, friends, and colleagues. He was a genuinely good person and his diagnosis raised the constant unanswered question of “why him?” Even as a well-educated woman, I didn’t know anything about pancreatic cancer and wondered, why is this disease one of the most fatal cancers and the least funded?

After his diagnosis and throughout treatment, Dad didn’t talk much. We all kept wondering what he was thinking about. He put up a good fight and when he was too weak we fought this disease together. When the oncologist and surgeon had done everything they could, my Dad smiled. He shook the surgeon’s hand and thanked him. I remember thinking how could he thank him? It

wasn't until he was gone that I then realized that during all those quiet times we had, he hadn't been angry. He'd made peace with it long before the rest of us had. He'd slowly taught my mom how to handle everyday tasks, from balancing the checkbook to grilling a hamburger. He even showed my brother how to cook the Thanksgiving turkey. Our fight was cut short after only four months. I think that he was able to thank the surgeon that day because he realized during those short four months that his work here was done. He was confident that he'd done his job as a husband, dad, friend, and colleague and he was proud of the results.

After our loss, our research on pancreatic cancer didn't stop. I found the Hirshberg Foundation's website and was excited to find something strictly for pancreatic cancer. My family and friends decided to hold a rummage sale and give 100% of the proceeds to the Hirshberg Foundation. It was well known that all the proceeds from our event would benefit pancreatic cancer research. We held a blind auction and received an abundance of donated gift cards and food from our community, friends, and family. We even had someone donate show rabbits that we were certain wouldn't sell, but to our surprise they were gone before we knew it!

"Rummaging for a Cure" started out as a simple rummage sale in our community in Sioux City, Iowa. We had a \$1,000 goal but when everything was said and done we'd raised thousands of dollars! With all the support, our fundraiser grew and grew and Foster the CURE grew with it! We had numerous people throughout the event tell us their stories about how pancreatic cancer had affected them. I was completely in awe of how supportive everyone was and our event raised a tremendous amount of awareness and funds.

I was happy to have my garage and house back after months of

rummage items taking over! I decided it would be months before discussing or planning another event, but it was about six hours before I was planning for next year! Foster the CURE will be doing an annual event each year. Hopefully something bigger and better, to raise money for pancreatic cancer research and we are looking forward to continuing a long lasting relationship with the Hirshberg Foundation.

5th Annual Brett Lawrence Memorial Golf Tournament

The foundation's Lisa Manheim talks about what we're doing to fight pancreatic cancer in a recent radio interview on KKLZ.



[Download MP3](#)

Doug C. Never Gives Up!

Since Doug's diagnosis he has been an avid supporter and participant in Hirshberg Foundation events and programs including the Annual symposium, the LA Cancer Challenge and hosting his Fishing for a Cure fundraising event. He continues to share his story with the community, advocating for patients and raising awareness. His passion for life and his determination to never give up continues to inspire us all!

You Can H.E.L.P Fund Spotlight – Koplow Fund

By Leslie Koplow

My Dad, Michael Koplow, was diagnosed in July 2010 with pancreatic cancer. They discovered that he had a large tumor in the head of the pancreas, which had not yet metastasized. In typical Dad fashion, he took a weekend to absorb and process the information on his own, before breaking the news to his wife and kids.

As a man of science, and a mechanical engineer by trade, Dad attacked his disease with his full arsenal of tools – his ability to tackle complex projects, his research skills, his scientific knowledge, his patience, his fortitude and stoicism, his charm, and his ability to just “get things done.” He knew from the beginning that the statistics were not in his favor, but he was determined to get the best treatment he could and extend his life as long as possible while maintaining the quality of life he required. Years of hockey, tennis and basketball and his wife’s excellent cooking had him in good shape for the battle. For 20 months, he was able to stave off most of the disease’s effects, undergoing a Whipple operation attempt, 17 rounds of Gemcitabine (chemotherapy) and 2 rounds of Cyberknife (radiation). During that time, he was able to accomplish many of his end-of-life goals with help from dear friends and family, by preparing he and his wife’s house for sale, buying and refinishing a new condominium apartment, visiting with all his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren near and far, and managing his treatment with the

help of his medical team.

Dad was treated at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital in Boston. He kept meticulous notes of his symptoms and treatments, and charted his CA-19 levels against the tumor's size. He never showed any self-pity; his biggest worry was how his death would affect his family. It was only in the last two months, when his digestion became severely compromised by the tumor's growth that he experienced pain and real debilitation.

Once his options had run out for treatment, he quickly decided that he had no interest in lingering in an incapacitated state, and chose to withhold all measures that might extend his life. This is so in keeping with the man he was! He talked of his worry of "disrupting his children's lives for too long" as we and his grandchildren all gathered in Boston to help in any way we could and be with him during this incredibly difficult time. He died a mere eight days later, very peacefully at home, surrounded by his children, Paul, Leslie, Hilarie, and Jeff, his dear wife Dottie, and his daughter-in-law Kathy.

He had an excellent relationship with his oncologist, Dr. Andrea Bullock, and her colleague, Dr. Jamie Potossek of Beth Israel Deaconess, and fully comprehended the challenges of pancreatic cancer. Unlike many other cancers for which treatments have been developed, pancreatic cancer remains inevitably fatal and difficult to treat effectively. We decided to create a You Can Help Fund Page in memory of dad because Dr. Bullock's pancreatic cancer research was supported by the Hirshberg Foundation Seed Grant Program and thus Dad hoped that friends and family would contribute to this Fund in his memory and to help future patients diagnosed with this terrible disease.

Event Spotlight – Dance for a Cure

By Abigail Houston, Colleen Perks, & Melinda Kolesar

Every year at the West Branch Area Senior High School in Morrisdale, PA, students are asked to design, plan, and implement a Senior Project. When it was our turn to propose a project, we knew that we wanted to do something to make a difference in the field of cancer, specifically because we all have been personally touched by cancer. After our initial meeting, it was clear to all three of us what type of cancer we wanted to focus on.

In the summer of 2010, Abigail's Uncle William "Wilbur" O'Neill was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Abigail was there while he struggled and valiantly tried to fight this horrible disease. At only 54 years old, Uncle Wilbur, a sweet, caring, loving man, always full of life, lost his battle with cancer six weeks after his diagnosis. He fought until the very end. The twinkle in those Irish eyes will never be forgotten.

After going through such a devastating experience, all three of us, Colleen, Melinda and Abigail, made the decision to dedicate our senior project to raising money to help fight pancreatic cancer. We started our planning at the beginning of our senior year. We decided to put on a dance as a way of raising money for our project. The name we chose was "Dance For A Cure". We scheduled the dance for Saturday, November 18th, 2011 in the high school gym. We secured a DJ, booked our security, and started making posters.

We pre-sold tickets for the dance and, when selling the tickets, we also had bracelets for sale. We also mailed out letters to individuals and businesses. If a business or individual donated \$25 or more, their name would be written on our t-shirts which were to students, parents, teachers, and community members. The actual night of the dance, we sold drinks, pizza, baked goods, and snacks. Businesses and individuals also donated items to be chanced off the night of the event.

We decorated our high school gym with purple and white balloons. Most of the students who were present purchased a t-shirt and wore it in honor of all pancreatic cancer patients. The night was a huge success. Everyone that attended showed so much support and danced the night away for our amazing cause. We could certainly feel that Uncle Wilbur was there looking down on us, smiling upon us with those dimples. We felt blessed that we were able to raise \$2,485.65 for the Hirshberg Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research.