

You Can H.E.L.P. Fund Spotlight – Ironman Fundraiser for Pancreatic Cancer Research

By John C. Werner

On November 23, 2009, I competed in the Tempe, Arizona Ironman triathlon in memory of my mother, who lost her battle with pancreatic cancer.

The event started at 7 AM, just as the sun was rising over the desert horizon. When the start cannon sounded, all participants were given 17 hours to navigate the Ironman course: a 2.4 mile swim, a 112 mile bike ride and a 26.2 mile marathon.

Throughout the event, I wore a purple Hirshberg Foundation wristband representing the fight against the disease and ongoing research efforts to find a cure. I can recall looking down at the wristband and gaining inspiration and strength, especially during the hours spent on the bike and throughout the marathon.

Through the generosity of family, friends and even strangers, I raised over \$3,000 for the Foundation.

I'm scheduled to participate in the 2010 Arizona Ironman event again in November, and plan to once again use it as a fundraiser event. I'll be wearing the purple wristband throughout my training and in the event, on behalf of those impacted by the disease, and as a reminder to remain strong and keep working towards the Finish Line...and a cure.

Event Spotlight – Hilary Price Morgan’s Wedding: In Memory of Rebecca Price

By Hilary Price Morgan

After many months of misdiagnosis, my mother, Rebecca Price, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in January of 2008. Her diagnosis came at a time when our family was looking forward to a couple of exciting changes. I was newly engaged and my brother and his wife were expecting their first child. Because aggressive treatment needed to start and my husband, who is in the military, was deploying in just a few weeks, it was not possible for us to have a traditional wedding that my mom would have liked for me to have. My mother lost her battle eleven weeks later. It was a harsh reality—my mom would not be at my wedding or at the birth of her first grandson.

After many conversations with the oncologist, it was alarming to hear that there were not many options for pancreatic cancer patients. It was during those conversations that I knew more medical advances were needed in order to give pancreatic cancer patients a chance to survive. Over the next few months, my fiancé and I began to plan our wedding. We knew that, in lieu of wedding favors, we wanted to donate to a foundation that supported pancreatic cancer research. After researching many organizations, we came across the Hirshberg Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research. I was encouraged by the Hirshberg Foundation, because their main focus is to raise funds to support pancreatic cancer research in hopes that there will one day be a cure. After sending in our contribution, we received purple organza satchels and cards explaining that a donation was

made in lieu of wedding favors and in memory of my mother.

After participating in the Hirshberg Foundation's Wedding and Celebrations Program, I began to receive updates on medical research that the Foundation was supporting and opportunities to participate in other events they sponsored. One of these emails contained information regarding the Hirshberg Training Team and their participation as an official charity at the Los Angeles Marathon. I immediately wanted to join the team. This was another opportunity for me to raise funds for pancreatic cancer research and bring awareness to such a devastating disease. I look forward to completing my first marathon in memory of my mother in March.

Though my mother was not able to attend my wedding in person or see me complete my first marathon, her spirit and love continues to be with me everyday. In honor of her courageous battle, I will continue to support the Hirshberg Foundation's efforts to raise awareness and money for pancreatic cancer research.

Event Spotlight – Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament

By Michael Meister

My father, Larry Meister, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in March of 2005 and passed away just three short months later. My father was a great man who stood out within the community and always found a way to be involved. I was raised with the notion that it is important to make a difference in the world no matter how big or small. It was with great joy that I could do

whatever I could to help spread awareness, raise money and fight pancreatic cancer.

In memory of my father, I began an online search for a Foundation that I could join in the fight with and help to support. I decided on the Hirshberg Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research for their cutting edge research being conducted at UCLA and around the US and because of their heartfelt commitment that money raised would go directly to finding a cure. On June 26, 2009 I held the First Annual Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament, benefiting the Hirshberg Foundation, in memory of my father Larry. This spectacular night was filled with Texas Hold'em Poker, food, a great raffle and terrific prize packages for the over 100 people who participated. The event raised over \$10,000 for the Foundation. It was such a successful night that we held our Second Annual Texas Hold'em event on March 12, 2010. We are also looking forward to coming up to LA for our fourth LA Cancer Challenge in October.

My wife and I have felt a warm connection to the Hirshberg Foundation. We ask that everyone please consider making a donation to the Foundation in memory of your loved one this year!

**You Can H.E.L.P. Fund
Spotlight – Kim Pietro's**

Ironman Fund: In Honor of John Van Decker

By Kim Pietro

When my father John was diagnosed with Stage III pancreatic cancer in August 2008, his world did not stop. He continues to rise to the top of his class with a will to live for his family, for the Jets, the Yankees, his home and for his work as a mason contractor. Two years since symptoms were evident, this is a man who provides and relies on love to carry him through the best and worst of times.

Right now, pancreatic cancer is essentially an unsolvable problem. If staying power is any sign of victory, we are very blessed to have it. We realize not every person can be healed, but we believe that any disease can be cured. We live by high expectations of ourselves, our friends and family, of our society and now of the Hirshberg Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research.

I became personally involved with the Hirshberg Foundation when I was looking to utilize my 2009 Lake Placid Ironman triathlon as a platform to raise awareness and money for pancreatic cancer research. The Ironman is the ultimate one day endurance event that is propelled by the human body and driven by the mind. 2009 was a victory- John is still with us and I finished the Ironman in a very respectable fashion. We share the same goal in 2010: to each get stronger and tougher mentally, physically and spiritually.

Under the great guidance of my parents, I feel a responsibility to be part of something much bigger than myself. To promote a more just society, to serve others and to stand up for things

that I believe in. Together, we are committed to helping the Hirshberg Foundation find a cure.

Event Spotlight – The Wedding of Lindsey Wilder & John McRobbie

By Lindsey Wilder

Since I was a little girl, my mother, Elizabeth Wilder, and I had shared dreams of my wedding day. From the invitations and flower arrangements, to the wedding dress and cake, she and I had preplanned all of the wedding details. By the time I got engaged at the age of 25, my mother had already been battling pancreatic cancer for over a year. I was faced with the devastating reality that my mother would not live to see me get married. Sadly, my mother lost her battle with pancreatic cancer on February 15, 2008, and like everyone else who had known and loved her, I was heart-broken.

Over the next nine months, my fiancé and I considered various options that would allow us to incorporate my mom's spirit into our wedding. After reading about a few organizations, we stumbled upon the Hirshberg Foundation's website and learned that their main focus is on raising funds for laboratory research in hopes of developing a cure for the cancer. Shortly after sending our contribution, we received purple ribbons for our wedding guests, as well as place cards explaining the purpose of our donation.

On the evening of November 8, 2008, I walked happily down the aisle with a bit of lace from my mother's wedding dress sewn into mine, and one of her brooches pinned to my bouquet. With the color purple (also my mom's favorite color) integrated into our clothing, flowers, and decorations, we each proudly donned our purple ribbons throughout the night in honor and loving remembrance of her life.

This past February 15th, on the one year anniversary of her passing, my whole family got together again to commemorate my mother's life. People brought flowers and memories to share, and still others made additional donations to the Hirshberg Foundation to try and help fight this horrific disease. Though my mother was not able to attend my wedding in person, her spirit and her love was all around us that night.

Event Spotlight – Robert J. Paroli Memorial Tennis Tournament

Bar Mitzvah Project in memory of Ethan's grandfather, Robert

"My grandfather was a larger than life figure in his community in the Bay Area. He was constantly involved with charitable organizations and fundraising missions, often setting up golf tournaments to raise money for different causes. It would be a true meaningful mitzvah for me to raise money and awareness for a terribly underfunded disease that at this time does not offer the same hope of survival as other cancers." – Ethan Blank