

You Can H.E.L.P Fund Spotlight – Awesome Aud

By Ashley Kahrs

In October 2011, my mother, Audrey, was placed in the hospital for having a severe gallbladder attack. It was so infected the doctors made the decision to remove it. My mom had lost 15 pounds, was jaundiced and anemic and was getting worse every day. After spending over a month in the hospital post-surgery, her symptoms were finally getting better. My siblings and niece celebrated her birthday in the small hospital room. Finally she was well enough to have the all the pre-op tests and what they found was shocking.

Thanksgiving morning 2011 my phone woke me up a bit after 6:30 a.m. My father, Anthony, was calling me, “Hi sweetheart. I need to tell you something. Mom has cancer. It’s pancreatic...” My heart dropped and the world around me was gone. I couldn’t believe what I was hearing. I screamed and burst into tears. I hung up the phone and balled my eyes out in my husband Andrew’s arms before I told him the news. We got out of bed and threw on whatever clothes we could find. Driving to the hospital, which was 5 minutes away, was a blur of emotions.

When we walked into my mom’s room and she saw us we all started to cry. I crawled into my mom’s hospital bed and just hugged her. I couldn’t let her go. The room was filled with sadness and some other undeterminable emotion. I now know that the emotion was the will to fight, to survive and beat this horrible cancer. Shortly after my brother, Scott, sister-in-law, Kerstin, and niece Jeanina filled the room with love and support. As a family we discussed the next steps to take. Doctor after doctor came in to talk to us about what they recommended. Everyone agreed she

would need a surgery called "The Whipple," which would remove the cancer, part of her pancreas, and the surrounding lymph nodes.

Kerstin had just had a very dear friend go through this exact same type of cancer and recommended my mother be transferred to UCLA Medical Center where she could receive proper treatment. My mom was accepted into their pancreatic cancer program and would be under the experienced care of Dr. Timothy Donahue. As you could expect my mom and dad were so thankful. My mother now had a fighting chance. That night my brother picked up Thanksgiving dinner and as a family we celebrated what we were thankful for: finding the cancer, getting into UCLA and our family being such a strong support system for one another. During a time of tragic news here we sat laughing and smiling like it was just another day, just in a hospital setting.

In December 2011, my mother was transferred to UCLA where she would be treated with the highest care possible. In a few weeks' time, with her health improving, they would go ahead and remove the cancer tumor. Soon it was the big day, time to remove the cancer. The Whipple would take about 6 hours and was very high risk. Eight hours later Dr. Donahue came down stairs to find my family and let us know the news. The tumor was larger than they originally thought but they were able to remove the cancer. As of that moment mom had a great chance of surviving. Her life changed forever that day.

The past year my mother went through numerous rounds of chemo and radiation, suffered an umbilical hernia in two locations, has been on more medications that I can even remember. She has had test after test, CT scans, PET scans, weekly or daily doctor's visits and through it all has never given up. **I am pleased to say Audrey Ann Everts, wife, mother, friend is cancer free.** She fought a hard long battle, went through hell and back

a couple of times. My mom is my hero. I don't know many people who could survive what she has.

Brad Never Gives Up!

Since 2009 the Annual Dal Bon Memorial Golf Tournament has raised \$40,000 dollars for pancreatic cancer research and patient programs. The event is one of our highlights of the summer, bringing together the community in Grass Valley & Auburn, CA. The Dal Bon family's continued dedication to never give up inspires us all to continue the fight!

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!

Teri Never Gives Up!

Teri Fox became a member of the Hirshberg Foundation family in 2002. She has dedicated the past 17 years to fighting pancreatic

cancer and has generously given more than \$470,000 dollars to research personally and through the Paul A. Hughes Family Foundation grant. She continues to support the foundation in honor of her father and people everywhere whose lives have been affected by this disease. Teri's unwavering dedication, hope and generosity continues to inspire us. She has never given up!

You Can H.E.L.P. Fund Spotlight – In Memory of Pamela Martens Boughton

By Lisa Boughton

My mom was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in July of 2010. She had not been feeling well for a few weeks. Finally, my father noticed that she was jaundiced. He called his doctor, who then asked my mom a few questions. After that telephone conversation my dad rushed her to the ER, where we would get the diagnosis that changed our lives forever.

I had only known one other person who had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Quickly and painfully he also lost his battle with this horrible disease. I have to admit I never thought of or really heard about this disease before then. Little did I know it would creep into my life again, affecting me forever.

The irony in all of this is that my mother was a nurse. She spent ten years as an oncology nurse at the same hospital where her Whipple procedure was eventually performed. She survived the surgery, two weeks in the hospital, and one round of chemo. We

only got five months. The cancer spread to her liver. My mom, my hero, died on November 27, 2010 at just 64 years old.

Anyone who reads this knows how devastating this disease is. I watched her suffer, yet she never let on how much pain she was in. Was that because she was a nurse, had seen people die of cancer and knew what was coming? Did she want to spare us more grief and pain than we already had? Knowing her, the answer is “yes” to all of the above. I would ask her every day, “How are you feeling today mom?” She always replied “so-so”. I could tell she was putting on a brave face. She never complained; never let it get the best of her. She refused our help, whether it was bathing, getting up and down stairs, or urging her to take the pain meds she so desperately needed.

My friend Kelly found the Hirshberg Foundation online and directed me to the website. It has been a God send. In lieu of flowers, we directed that donations be sent to the Hirshberg Foundation and to date we have raised \$870.00. In doing so, it was my hope that more people would become aware of pancreatic cancer. I hope and pray that someone else can be spared the pain and devastation this disease inflicts on families and patients alike.

Martin Never Gives Up!

A dear friend of the Hirshberg Foundation family, Martin continues to volunteer at the LA Cancer Challenge every year; run in the LA Marathon and fundraise thousands of dollars on the Hirshberg Training Team; and as of 2017 we're thrilled to welcome him as a member of the staff. His enduring commitment to

fight for a cure in memory of Ron Hirshberg, and his determination to never give up continues to inspire others to get involved.