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Elaine & Edward Stepanek Legacy Society

Members of the Elaine and Edward Stepanek Legacy Society are donors who support the Cancer Foundation of Santa Barbara's long-term success through a planned gift. After you've taken care of those close to you, we invite you to consider ensuring quality cancer care on the central coast through a gift in your estate. While cash contributions are always appreciated, there are other creative and flexible giving options such as real estate, stocks or marketable securities.

Whether it is naming the Cancer Foundation as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or other liquid or non-liquid assets, we encourage you to consult with your financial advisor to discuss the options. By considering the "Four P's", people, property, plans and planners, you can ensure a lasting legacy.

Please let us know if you've already included us in your estate, intend to, or would like to discuss the many options available which provide income or tax savings. Please contact Lori Willis at (805) 898-2187 or lwillis@cfsb.org.



CFSB NEWS

Celebrating 75 YEARS

In September of 1949, the Memorial Cancer Foundation opened its doors in Santa Barbara, establishing a local center for patients to receive pioneering cancer care in their own community and removing the need to travel. Nearly 75 years later, the Cancer Foundation of Santa Barbara, as we are known today, remains committed to ensuring integrative and comprehensive programs and services and state-of-the-art technology are available at Ridley-Tree Cancer Center for all cancer patients in Santa Barbara county.

From the acquisition and installation of the first of its kind digital PET/CT machine and new SPECT/CT equipment, to funding clinical and supportive care programs such as genetic counseling, patient navigation and the resource library, for three quarters of a century your generosity has allowed the Cancer Foundation to ensure comprehensive care close to home.

Thank you!



Lori Willis
Executive Director



**RANCHEROS RAISED
MORE THAN
\$1.5M
OVER THE PAST
12 YEARS**

Rancheros Visitadores Ride in 2024 to Support Local Cancer Care

For more than a decade, the Rancheros Visitadores, based in the Santa Ynez Valley, have supported local cancer care through their annual ride. This year, as they once again partner with Wrangler, the Rancheros have already contributed \$100,000 towards their goal of \$150,000. Funds are directed to support programs at Ridley-Tree Cancer Center including: clinical research, wellness classes and programs, hereditary cancer risk counseling, oncology nutrition, social work and nurse navigation. These services are available to all cancer patients who reside in Santa Barbara County.

2024 will mark the 94th ride for the Rancheros Visitadores, which is often celebrated with a parade through the streets of Solvang to Mission Santa Ines for a blessing of the riders.

"We know that cancer has touched the lives of most of our membership and we believe in the work of the Cancer Foundation. As our members return to this community from near and far, we understand the importance of supporting this worthwhile cause."

-Ranchero Peter Oppenheimer



“I’m sure there are people who think they don’t need a dietician but it should almost be enforced — it was that huge for me.”

—Kyle Vercelli

NUTRITION

\$390,286

ANTICIPATED
2024 AWARD

KYLE VERCELLI

Oncology Nutrition Program

When Kyle Vercelli was first diagnosed with stage 3 colorectal cancer, he switched to a high fiber diet, as fiber-rich foods are often recommended by various public health media outlets for helping to reduce the risk of certain cancers.

Yet, despite eating seeds, nuts, beans, and berries, Kyle remained in unbearable pain. Every day was a battle to pass food, given the large size and location of his tumor, and he often spent hours in the bath to alleviate his discomfort.

Then, Pamela Wells, an oncology dietitian at Ridley-Tree Cancer Center reached out and completely changed Kyle’s diet, which dramatically relieved his pain. The oncology

dietitians are funded by the Cancer Foundation of Santa Barbara, the nonprofit backbone of Ridley-Tree which ensures that all patients, regardless of means or where they receive treatment, have access to critical support services during their treatment.

“Honestly, the shift in diet alone reduced my pain by a crazy amount. Pam knew exactly what to do.”

In fact, Kyle likely avoided surgery to remove the very serious bowel obstruction thanks to Pam’s expertise, which placed him on low fiber meals and a stool softener.

Kyle’s treatment required 28 rounds of radiation, Xeloda, and chemotherapy, and each of these remedies came with a host of challenging side effects. Thankfully, Pam’s knowledge proved critical once again in helping Kyle tolerate the treatments.

“Kyle struggled with significant nausea, taste alterations, and food aversions during chemo, which made it a challenge to eat and stay hydrated,” explained Pam. “He lost about 30-40 pounds over the course of five months.”

Pam met with Kyle regularly to provide support and tips on managing side effects, while trying various strategies to help him optimize his nutritional intake as much as possible in the midst of these confounding side-effects. They discussed everything from how to optimize calories in small portions and which foods to try when everything tastes or smells bad, to how to stay hydrated when you can only tolerate warm fluids and where to eat in his house to minimize nausea (for a while, Kyle was eating in the garage to avoid all food smells).

“Pam was like a great food coach — she knew all of the symptoms I would face in advance and had ideas, tricks, and knowledge on how to overcome obstacles,” he said. “There was no way that I would ever miss a meeting with Pam!”

While Kyle admitted that he’d never skip an appointment with Pam, those meetings might not have been possible without the generous support of the Cancer Foundation.

With mounting medical bills, Kyle said that he probably would not have engaged with a dietitian if he had to pay for the services himself.

“It would have felt like another thing to schedule, keep track of, and pay for,” he said.

The Cancer Foundation recognizes the critical role of oncology nutritionists in helping patients manage challenging side effects and maintain the highest level of well-being possible during and after cancer treatment, which is why the organization has remained steadfast in supporting local patients throughout their recovery for 75 years.

Pam met with Kyle every three weeks, after each chemo infusion, to help him stay on track. Post-treatment, Kyle has opted for a “watch and wait” approach, and Pam helped him transition to long-term healthy eating habits, which include the reincorporation of fiber-rich foods.

“Pam had every trick in the book and I followed all of them,” said Kyle. “I’m sure there are people who think they don’t need a dietitian but it should almost be enforced — it was that huge for me.”

