




JENNIE EDMUNDSON
FOUNDATION



METHODIST
JENNIE EDMUNDSON
CANCER CENTER

Friday – Saturday
August 6-7, 2021



Jennie Edmundson Foundation

Spirit of Courage

A Benefit for the Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital
Cancer Center Charitable Patient Care Fund



Donna Elliff



Deb Potter



Jake Powers



Kevin Rutland

2021 Spirit of Courage Recipients

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Note: most photographs included in this program were taken before COVID-19 precautions were necessary.

Congratulations!



The physicians and staff of Methodist Radiation Oncology are honored to care for cancer survivors at three Methodist locations in Council Bluffs, Omaha and Fremont.

Congratulations to this year's honorees (from left):

Donna Elliff
Deb Potter
Jake Powers
Kevin Rutland



METHODIST



Spirit of Courage Past Recipients

We would like to recognize and thank our past recipients for their continued support and contributions.

2020

During the COVID-19 pandemic, new recipients were not selected. Instead, all past Spirit of Courage recipients were honored during the event.

2019

Deb Bladt
Dr. Darcey Butts
Bobbi Calderon
Bob Steele

2018

Erin Berkley
José Hernandez
Joan Minikus
Glen Mitchell

2017

Mark Engelke
John McCreedie
Mindy Miller
George Smith

2016

Teresa Benson
Karen Hansen
Jenyi Knudsen-Bergsten*
Amber Williams

2015

Rod Courtier
Richard Daberkow
Lucy Beall Graeme
Melanie Ryan

2014

Kara Dunphy
Dr. Lori Platt
Dolores Silkworth
Marilyn Weber*

2013

Marcia Antworth
Les Green
Randy Grudle
Laura Pattermann

2012

Marcia Keith
Julianne Morton
Julie Nickolisen
Caryl Martinez

2011

Gracie Hays
Edd Leach
Joel Peck*
Horst Rossbund

2010

Callie Earlywine
Karen Krause
John Scherle
Kathy Whitson*

2009

Cliff "Rink" Holly
Brady Jorgensen
Carol Reeder

2008

Pat Andersen
Rick Carlson
Ann Hartman
John Nelson

2007

John Allen
Emma Chance
Jan Lookabill
Tom Schmitt

2006

Gary Fiscus
Hazel Gammon*
Dr. John Okerbloom

2005

Shirley Hurd
Pat Penn
Janet Scherle
Dr. Mary Schermann

2004

Sue Johnson

2003

Verne Welch

*Denotes Lifetime Achievement Award recipient

Welcome Letter

Dear Friends,

Welcome back!

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced us into isolation in 2020, we responded with the first-ever virtual Spirit of Courage Gala. And through it all, you stayed with us. You realized just as we did that cancer doesn't stay quarantined, no matter what is happening in the world. And, knowing that cancer patients still need our help and encouragement, you remained supportive and generous.

We learned many things about ourselves in the past year. We are strong enough to overcome the most frightening of unforeseen challenges. We are united in our efforts to focus not only on our health, but that of our families, friends and neighbors. And, we can make it through darkness as long as we focus on the light.

Sounds a lot like our Spirit of Courage recipients, doesn't it?

Tonight we honor four courageous people:

Donna Elliff, Deb Potter, Jake Powers and Kevin Rutland. We also honor the dozens of physicians, surgeons, therapists, nurses, medical caregivers and support staff who make the Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital Cancer Program a place of healing and hope.

We need the expertise and high level of care the Cancer Center gives to southwest Iowa. And the patients they treat today and tomorrow need you. They need help to get through it all, physically, emotionally and often financially. They need the Jennie Edmundson Foundation and the Charitable Patient Care Fund.

The Foundation couldn't help so many people without so many people helping us. Tonight, we come together again to thank our sponsors for their continuing generosity. We thank the board of directors, committee chairs, celebrity guests and volunteers for contributing their time and talents.

Most of all, we thank you.

With gratitude,



Tara Slevin
Vice President and Chief Philanthropy Officer
Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital



Tara Slevin

WE LOVE AN AMAZING STORY

Thank you to this year's Spirit of Courage honorees
for sharing yours with us.

Donna Elliff
Deb Potter
Jake Powers
Kevin Rutland

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**The Wheels of Courage team
want to congratulate all of the past
Spirit of Courage recipients!**

Since 2015, Wheels of Courage events
have raised nearly \$120,000 to benefit
cancer patients at
Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital!

Wheels of Courage - Save the Date!
June 25, 2022 • Quaker Steak & Lube





2021 Summer Fundraising Events

Saturday, June 26

WHEELS OF COURAGE CAR SHOW

Standing Together in the Fight Against Cancer

Saturday, August 7

SHOTGUN SCRAMBLE CELEBRITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

Dodge Riverside Golf Club

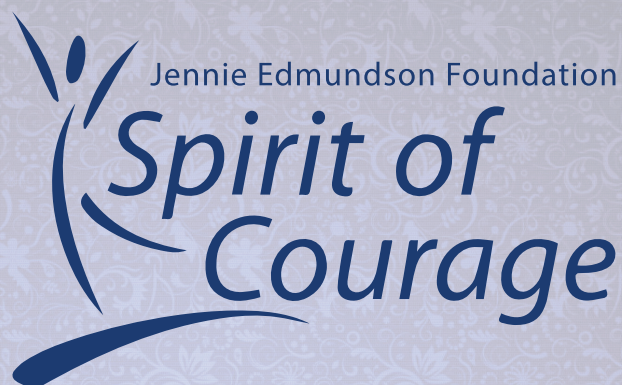
DINNER, AUCTION, ENTERTAINMENT & PRESENTATION

Spirit of Courage Recipient Awards to Donna Elliff, Deb Potter, Jake Powers and Kevin Rutland

May – September

WHEELS OF COURAGE team attends Thursday Night Car Shows

BRAD PERDUE RACE TEAM promotes awareness and the MJE Cancer Center on race tracks throughout the Midwest



A Constant in a World of Change

As we embark on our **19th annual Spirit of Courage**, the Jennie Edmundson Foundation Board of Directors would like to recognize each of our past recipients for their courage, inspiration and strength! We are honored to be a part of your journey, and blessed to work alongside you and your families in our fight against cancer.

Spirit of Courage – Feature



Diagnosing and treating a lung nodule

– Article by Nick Schinker

The year-old Incidental Lung Nodule Program underscores the continuing efforts of the Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital Cancer Center to diagnose and treat cancer at its earliest stages.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Cancer Center's accreditation by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer (ACS/COC). The center has been reaccredited every three years since.

Since opening its doors in 1994, the Cancer Center has been providing the highest quality treatments and therapies, delivered by certified and experienced medical experts utilizing state-of-the-art equipment. The Breast Health Center at Jennie Edmundson, which marked its 20th anniversary in 2020, is southwest Iowa's first comprehensive care facility of its kind and is accredited by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC).

The Incidental Lung Nodule Program, launched in 2020 as a joint effort of the Nebraska Methodist Hospital and the Estabrook Cancer Center along with Jennie Edmundson Hospital, is a one-stop approach to providing patients with a fast, convenient and comprehensive way to have their lung nodules diagnosed, monitored and treated.

Sumit Mukherjee, M.D., serves as the Medical Director of Critical Care and the Medical Director of the Thoracic Clinic at Jennie Edmundson. "Screening can have a huge impact on lung cancer, but we have faced limitations to finding it in its early stages," Dr. Mukherjee says.

"Typically, these nodules in the lung are found incidentally, for example, when someone comes to the Emergency Department with another issue such as a rib injury that requires a chest X-ray," he says. "Obviously, the priority is treating the injury. But we don't want to ignore that nodule. The Incidental Lung Nodule Program is a coordinated approach to utilize a software program to identify high-risk nodules and arrange follow-up examination and care."

With the program, a dedicated Nurse Navigator will review the data obtained from the patient's scan, utilize the software program to identify high risk nodules and check past scans, if available, to see if the nodule was present at that time and if there is any change. "All of this is being done to advance early detection of lung cancer and provide better care to the patient," Dr. Mukherjee says.

Since its inception in 2017, the Jennie Edmundson Thoracic Clinic has seen 1,073 follow-up patients and 498 new patients. Low-dose radiation CT (computerized tomography) scans were conducted 1,181 times, resulting in 136 new cancer diagnoses, says the Cancer Center's Director of Oncology Services, Michelle Kaufman, MS, R.T. (R,T).

The software program helps identify the clinical significance of the spots or nodules present on the CT scan, Dr. Mukherjee says. "It utilizes algorithms to compare several factors and help determine those patients we should contact and recommend a consultation," he says. "Similar programs around the U.S. consider this a life-saving measure."

Leading-edge programs, technologies and medical equipment help keep the Cancer Center and Breast Health Center at the forefront of treatments and preventative care.

Five years ago, the center added a new TrueBeam linear accelerator, an innovative system that offers radiation therapists the ability to deliver a more precise dose of radiation, targeting the cancer cells while preserving healthy tissue. The purchase of the accelerator, construction of a new vault to house it, as well as other improvements to the Cancer Center, were made possible by a \$5 million capital campaign conducted by the Jennie Edmundson Foundation.

"Our donors' generous support of the Cancer Center campaigns and the Charitable Patient Care Fund is making a difference in cancer patients' lives every day," says Tara Slevin, Vice President and Chief Philanthropy Officer, Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital. "Every donation, large and small, benefits the people of southwest Iowa."

The Cancer Center recently added a new diagnostic tool, Southwest Iowa's only digital positron emission tomography/computer tomography (PET/CT) system. Benefits to Jennie Edmundson patients and staff members include reducing scan times by half to less than 15 minutes, which improves patient comfort and allows more patients to have access to this advanced technology; increased sensitivity, allowing the scan to detect smaller lesions faster; and smaller injections of radioactive tracer, thus reducing radiation exposure.

Continued on next page.



“Giving our patients a better chance to live is why we are here.”

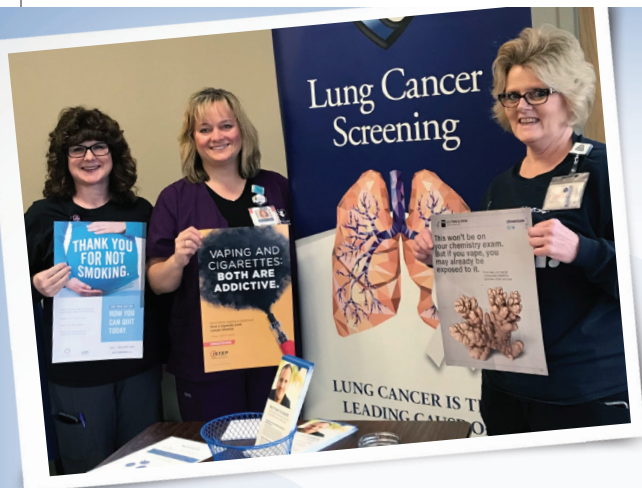
Dr. Sumit Mukherjee



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The Cancer Center also features:

- Medical Oncology/Chemotherapy, through a longstanding partnership with Heartland Oncology & Hematology;
- Radiation Oncology;
- Head and Neck Clinic;
- Colorectal Clinic;
- Interventional radiology;
- Full-service, on-site pathology;
- Cancer research and trial studies;
- Nutrition services; and
- Rehabilitation services

Dr. Mukherjee is the chairman of the Cancer Care Committee. "The 25th anniversary of the center's accreditation means so much to us as an institution, as well as the community we serve," he says. "Our presence here, highlighted by our continuing accreditation's validation of the outstanding level of care, is something we can all be very proud of."

He says personalized care "is something we take very seriously here at Jennie Edmundson. I treat my patients as if they were my family members. I want the very best care and outcomes for everyone."

Advances such as low-dose radiation CT scans, which limits the amount of radiation used to obtain detailed images, are another example of the Cancer Center's goal of ensuring patient safety, today and for the long term.

Together, these efforts are positively impacting the community's health, Dr. Mukherjee says. "One of my goals since I joined Jennie Edmundson in 2016 has been to create a 'stage shift' for lung cancer in our community," he says. "We were finding twice as many late stage cancers as early stage. Since opening the Thoracic Clinic and increasing our early screenings, the majority of lung cancers we have found are stage I and II.

"Giving our patients a better chance to live is why we are here."

You Make A Difference!

Every dollar you donate helps to provide programs, medical services and leading-edge equipment urgently needed to change and save lives.

Jennie Edmundson Foundation relies on supporters like you to deliver life-saving care for our communities most vulnerable.



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2019 RECIPIENT

Deb Bladt

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO HAVE
SUCH AN AMAZING PERSON
ON THE DOLL DISTRIBUTING TEAM!



Donna Elliff - Honoree



Donna Elliff

Special Thanks

First of all, I thank God for giving me the strength and determination to get through this journey.

I want to thank my amazing husband/warrior, family, friends and work family for their incredible support.

I want to thank Dr. Z, Tammy, Mindy, Dr. Parker, Kristin, Mary, Lyla, Amanda, Nikki, Anita, Dr. Nolan, Angie, Lorie and Barb for the amazing care and support.

I am also thankful for Spirit of Courage. It helped to relieve some of the financial pressure that comes with a cancer diagnosis.

I am so thankful and blessed.

So far, so good

- Article by Nick Schinker

There are two huge reasons Donna Elliff is here for tonight's gala fundraiser. She is a Spirit of Courage award recipient. And, she wants to say, "Thank you."

Elliff, 64, knows how important it is to raise money for the Jennie Edmundson Foundation and its Charitable Patient Care Fund, because she was a recipient of some of those funds when she battled breast cancer in late 2019 and 2020.

More important than the gas and food cards she received, she says, was the reassurance from the foundation that it would be there to help her family financially if she needed it. Concentrate on getting well, the foundation told her, not on the bills.

"I have very good insurance, but having cancer scared me," says Elliff, who for 18 years has worked

as a secretary at Lewis Central High School. "Having the foundation tell me that I had a safety net, that really helped."

In the years since the inception of the Spirit of Courage events, a total of \$2 million has been raised for the foundation's Charitable Patient Care Fund. The fund provides assistance to uninsured and underinsured cancer patients who need help paying for medications, treatments and deductibles as well as everyday living expenses such as groceries, rent and gas.

The foundation also benefits from events including the Wheels of Courage car shows, and the annual Pink Out events throughout southwest Iowa every October. In turn, cancer patients and their families benefit from the participants' generosity.

Elliff had no idea what lay ahead of her when she went to her doctor in August 2019. "I was always healthy," she recalls. "I had five years in a row of perfect attendance. I never went to the doctor. But when I turned 62, I figured at my age, I should get my yearly checks done."

One of those checks was a mammogram, which revealed a Stage I lump in one of her breasts.

"I have a first cousin who had breast cancer more than 25 years ago with the BRCA gene, so my mother had been tested for the BRCA gene, and I went through the testing after I was diagnosed," she says. "We were both negative."

The BRCA gene test is a blood test that analyzes DNA to identify harmful mutations in either one of the two breast cancer susceptibility genes: BRCA1 and BRCA2. People who inherit mutations in these genes have an increased risk of developing breast cancer.

"My last mammogram was four years earlier," Elliff says. "I had no symptoms before this mammogram, so finding out that I had cancer was a shock."

Elliff says she is fortunate her cancer was caught in an early stage. "They removed two lymph nodes to check to see if it had spread, and both were negative," she says.

She underwent a partial mastectomy, 20 radiation treatments and two blood transfusions at Jennie Edmundson, and 18 chemotherapy treatments at Heartland Oncology & Hematology, a longtime partner of the Methodist Jennie Edmundson Cancer Center. Her subsequent scans have been clear. "So far, so good," she says.

Tammy Johnson, certified nurse navigator at Jennie Edmundson's Breast Health Center, says Elliff's mammogram and quick results enabled the facility's cancer team to meet the disease head on. Both she and Elliff urge other women, especially those who put off routine testing during



the COVID-19 pandemic, to get back to scheduling tests including mammograms.

"Several women I know have told me they got their mammogram because of me," Elliff says. "If my story can be an inspiration to others, that is awesome. Breast cancer is not a death sentence any more. Even my hair is growing back. I tell people, I lost my curls, but I didn't lose my life."

Elliff and her husband, Danny, have three children – Angie Johnson, Courtney Harper and Brooke O'Reilly – along with four grandchildren. "And Rachel Zuehlke," Elliff says. "She is our oldest daughter's best friend, and we have long considered her a daughter. She lost her mother to breast cancer."

The girls all pitched in during the cancer fight by cooking, cleaning and acting as emotional support. Her husband, however, raised the bar.

"Danny," Elliff says. "I call him my warrior."

Together, the couple met the cancer diagnosis with resolve and determination. "I cried when I got the news," Elliff says. "And then I told Danny, 'That's it, no

Continued on next page.

“I had no symptoms before this mammogram, so finding out that I had cancer was a shock.”

Donna Elliff

more crying. It is what it is. We can't change it. We just have to deal with it one day at a time.' The power of prayer and a positive attitude means a lot."

Keeping in mind her perfect attendance record, a notable feat for anyone who works in the school system, Elliff continued to get to her job during treatments. "I went to work every day," she says, proudly. "I didn't make it all day a few days, but I showed up."

Her "work family" at Lewis Central also provided support, cooking meals and hosting a fundraiser, Elliff says.

She has nothing but praise for her surgeon, Michael Zlomke, M.D., the medical director of the Jennie Edmundson Breast Health Center; and the countless other caregivers who treated her and supported her.

"Everyone at Jennie was so positive," she says. "I'm a chatty Cathy and they found that out right away. You have to stay positive, and even though there were times I didn't, they were there to bring me right back up."

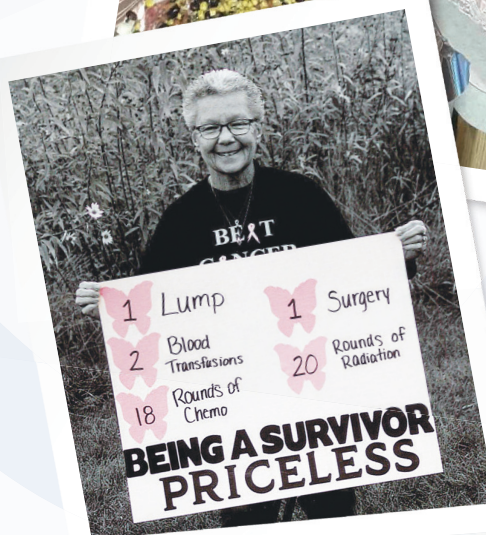
She says Jennie Edmundson Hospital and the Cancer Center are special places, and that the residents of southwest Iowa are fortunate they are nearby.

"Having them close to home was wonderful," she says. "We didn't have to drive far, and they really took the time to get to know me. They made me feel like I was their only patient."

For that, too, she says, "Thank you."

“They made me feel like I was their only patient.”

Donna Elliff





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Deb Potter - Honoree



Deb Potter

Special Thanks

My Cancer journey started with Jill Jensen, PA-C, who had the intuition to send me for my first X-ray, thank you. I would also like to thank Dr. Mukherjee and his staff at Methodist Physicians Clinic - their caring and understanding has been impeccable.

The girls I work with at the office treated my situation with dignity and picked up the slack when I wasn't around. For this, I cannot thank them enough.

I can't leave out the Respiratory Therapy Department staff who guided me through my recovery. Everyone at the Jennie Edmundson Hospital who helped on my Cancer journey needs a massive thanks. I couldn't have done it without you all.

I would not have gotten through these times without the help of my husband Jerry and my kiddo's Jodi, Teri & Eric, their spouses and all of my grandbabies. You're in my heart always. I have always said "I'm not lucky, I am blessed"

Drawing strength from compassion and expert care

- Article by Nick Schinker

Deb Potter refuses to let anything get her depressed. Not even cancer.

"I always try to keep positive," says Potter, 68. "It does you no good to feel bad."

Prior to her diagnosis, Potter was accustomed to coming down with a cold or cough during the winter months. That's all she thought it was when she saw her doctor in January 2018. "I had a persistent cough, just like I normally got every January or February," she recalls. "So she gave me some medicine."

This time, the medicine didn't last, and the cough returned in February.

"I went back to the doctor, Jill Jensen, PA-C, and she took an X-ray of my chest," she says. "That's when they found a spot in my lung, about the size of a pencil eraser."

Potter's physician referred her to Sumit Mukherjee, M.D., a critical care pulmonologist at Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital. For an accurate diagnosis, Dr. Mukherjee ordered a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan. It revealed adenocarcinoma in two places in the top lobe of Potter's right lung.

"I told Dr. Mukherjee that I wasn't going to start crying," she recalls. "All I said was, 'You tell me what we need to do next.'"

“[Dr. Mukherjee] is so awesome. If the world knew how good he is, he’d be so busy he’d never have a day off.”

Deb Potter

Potter says it is part of her personality to face adversity head on. “I’m a no nonsense person,” she says. “I never want to feel bad for myself.”

Her husband of 47 years, Jerry, describes her as strong willed. “She can be blunt,” he says. “She has a few filters, but not many.”

The former Food Service Director for the Pottawattamie County Sheriff’s Office, Potter is the Daily Operations Coordinator for Nutrition Services in the Council Bluffs Community School District. She administers the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant programs, as well as the 21st Century Community Learning Center after-school snack program, and the Kids & Company childcare snack program.

She continued to work for the school district throughout subsequent testing. She also is a Master Tax Advisor and Enrolled Agent, and works on taxes from January through April while taking tax classes during the summer months to maintain her status.

Deb and Jerry have three children, Jodi, Teri and Eric; and eight grandchildren who range in age from 25 years old to 18. After she shared the news of her cancer, she says she kept her trademark positive attitude especially in front of her family.

“The last thing I wanted to do was freak out my kids and grandkids,” she says. “Jerry and I and those grandkids are really close.”

She had a biopsy on Sept. 11, 2018, and lobectomy surgery was performed on Oct. 25 by John Batter, M.D., a cardiothoracic surgery, lung and thoracic oncology specialist at the Methodist Estabrook Cancer Center.

“He removed the top part of my right lung and that was it,” she says. “It was just gone. No chemotherapy. No radiation. Every day I think about how blessed I am.”

The couple say they are also blessed to have each other. While each of them has their own interests, most of all, they enjoy spending time together.

During the recent COVID-19 pandemic, Potter filled her free time sewing more than 2,000 masks.

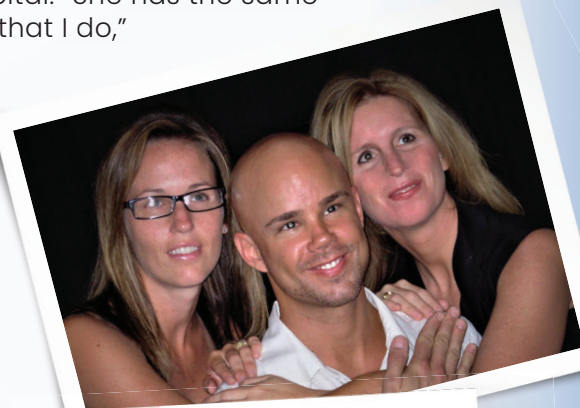
Jerry, a retired kitchen installer for an Omaha remodeling company, is an avid musician. “I’ve spent the past 53 years playing in 18 different bands,” he says. “My partner is a songwriter, so about half of our sets are original songs and the other half is covers of classic rock or country tunes.”

Both are grateful for the support their family, friends and Potter’s coworkers gave throughout their cancer journey. They say they are also grateful for the expert care available at Jennie Edmundson, where Potter continues to see Dr. Mukherjee for follow-up checks.

Fellow Spirit of Courage recipient Mindy Miller was Deb’s nurse during the biopsy at Jennie Edmundson Hospital. “She has the same positive attitude that I do,” Potter says.

She also praised Karla Owens at the Jennie Edmundson Cancer Center.

Continued on next page.





“I was treated so well, both medically and personally.”
Deb Potter

“She is the sweetest person,” Potter says. “You need anything, she’s right there for you.”

And, she says she drew strength from the compassion and expert care she received from Dr. Mukherjee. “He’s the man,” she says, smiling. “He is so awesome. If the world knew how good he is, he’d be so busy he’d never have a day off. I guess it’s just up to me to tell everyone.”

Dr. Mukherjee says Potter deserves to be credited for her – you guessed it – positive attitude.

“Deb is a great example of the qualities of so many of our patients,” he says. “Her spirit

is infectious. We thrive on the energy Deb and patients like her provide us.”

Potter says everyone she met at Jennie Edmundson took a personal interest in her care. “I know it sounds odd when you’re talking about having cancer, but every experience I had at Jennie was wonderful,” she says. “I was treated so well, both medically and personally.

“I can’t begin to tell you how blessed I am, and how blessed we all are to have Jennie Edmundson and all those kind and dedicated people right here in Council Bluffs.”

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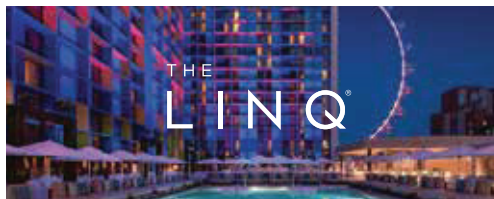
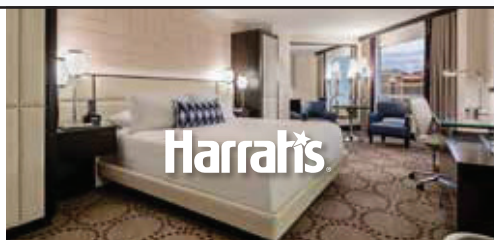
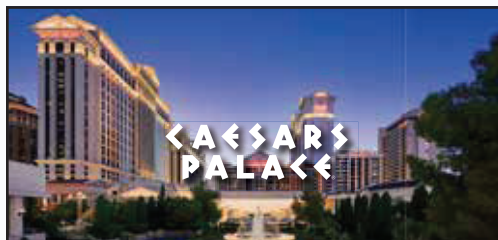
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Celebrity Autographs



Margaritas anyone? Always a fun stop during the tournament!



Past recipients Rod Courtier and John McCredie enjoy a fun evening catching up.



Brenden Stai and Larry Jacobson swapping football stories at the Kickoff event.



Mike and Amy McKay enjoy a night to relax and socialize after putting in long hours to create the four recipient videos.



Celebrity guests enjoying an evening with Scott and Susan Hartman, hosts of the 2019 Kickoff event.



Laughs all around as past recipient Amber and Alex Williams visit with Grace Bannon, Jeff Braine and Jen, Chris and Hanna Bober.



Hospitality Suite Sponsors, Brian and Teresa Wickersham, enjoying some laughs with friends before the gala.



Peter Onorati, Rad Daly and Richard Horvitz



2019 Spirit of Courage Recipient Bobbi Calderon with her team from Home Style Laundry bringing some fun to the Golf Tournament.



Past recipient, Brady Jorgensen, and Lance Zeno catch up on school, family and what he has been up to.

2019 Spirit of Courage Recipients:
Dr. Darcey Butts
Deb Blatt
Bobbi Calderon
and Bob Steele



MJE Behavioral Health team styling at the gala.



Wheels of Courage Sponsor, Chad Taylor, showing some love for the team.



Chad Taylor

Jake Powers - Honoree



Jake Powers

Special Thanks

To my amazing family and friends I appreciate all the love, your generosity, sacrifices and prayers on my behalf. All your efforts helped me keep going and kept me feeling positive.

Thank you to all the medical professionals at Jennie Edmundson and Heartland Oncology for the support and compassion you showed me during the very challenging, and uncertain even scary times of the pandemic. You are all outstanding and I could not begin to name all the doctors, nurses and staff members that touched my heart.

A very heartfelt thank you to my co-workers and administration at Methodist Physicians Clinic Risen Son, the Jennie hospital volunteers and the Jennie Edmundson Foundation, for the assistance through the Spirit of Courage fund and lessening my financial burden. Your amazing support and generosity was overwhelming and meant the world to me.

Do to COVID much of my cancer journey I faced alone. Thank you to my husband's employer, General Service Bureau and his co-workers for allowing him the freedom to be there when I needed him and for supporting him emotionally and reassuring him throughout my treatments.

Cancer during a pandemic

- Article by Nick Schinker

Few people will say they enjoy public speaking, but tonight, Spirit of Courage recipient Jere Ann "Jake" Powers is grateful to be speaking at all.

In April 2020, just when the COVID-19 pandemic was capturing the minds and fears of most Americans, Powers felt a lump in her left breast. Powers, the former volunteer coordinator at Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital, was working as a receptionist at Risen Son Methodist Physicians Clinic in Council Bluffs.

"Everything was going crazy at work," she says. "Every day we were getting new procedures. I knew I needed to get in to see Jill (Jill Jensen, PA-C), but we were all so busy."

Named for her father's cousin, a woman named Jere Ann who went by the nickname Jake, Powers was aware that when she was young, her mother, Betty Gutheil, had undergone a mastectomy after being diagnosed with breast cancer.

Prodded by a coworker to make an appointment, a follow-up biopsy revealed April 8 that Powers had breast cancer. But there was more.

"The breast cancer had metastasized to the liver, which would require liver ablation prior to chemotherapy," she says. "And, they told me I had thyroid cancer."

After her doctors determined that the breast cancer was the priority, Powers began chemotherapy April 27 at Heartland Oncology &

“Tim had to drive me up,
drop me off and drive away.
It was tough.”

Jake Powers

Hematology, a longtime partner of the Methodist Jennie Edmundson Cancer Center, followed by surgery at Jennie Edmundson on Sept. 29. Michael Zlomke, M.D., the medical director of the Jennie Edmundson Breast Health Center, performed the mastectomy. Andrew Coughlin, M.D., a head and neck surgical oncologist at Methodist, performed the thyroid surgery.

“They told me afterward that the left side of the thyroid was more involved, and that the cancer had taken over a vocal nerve,” Powers says. “Dr. Coughlin said he repurposed another nerve and closed me up. He said they’d have to wait to see when they could operate again, and how the nerve would respond.”

Not only was the news not what she wanted to hear, she couldn’t get the physical and emotional support she needed from her husband, Tim, or her family. Because of COVID-19, she had to face being hospitalized alone, with no visitors allowed. Even before her surgery, when she underwent her chemotherapy treatments, she had to do it alone.

“Tim had to drive me up, drop me off and drive away,” she says. “It was tough.”

Having previously worked as the volunteer coordinator at the hospital did help, Powers says.

“I had my hysterectomy here years ago, but this time, I felt like I knew Jennie Edmundson like my second home,” she says. “Wherever I was, there was someone I knew by their first name. I really appreciated that, because there were so many patients there who really were all alone.”

She also found support in her nurse, Randy Burgan, “My Nurse Randy” as she called him. “I knew him personally, and he really cared,” Powers says. “He was truly invested in my health, and I think we put on our brave faces for each other.”

Powers was allowed to recover at home until a follow-up surgery on her thyroid the next month.



She began radiation therapy at Jennie Edmundson Nov. 9, completing a series of 33 treatments on Jan. 12, 2021.

Besides undergoing treatments and being hospitalized on her own, other things wore on Powers emotionally. On Nov. 15, her youngest brother, Tom, who had diabetes, was found deceased in his home. And, at the same time Powers was facing breast cancer, so was her step-sister, Renee Parrack.

“She was diagnosed three months after me, and she had her mastectomy the day before mine,” Powers says. “She went through so much with me. She shaved my hair, and I shaved hers. I really wanted to be brave for her because her treatments followed mine.”

Besides her husband, Powers also received support from her daughters, Beth and Julia. Beth, the eldest, announced that she would work from home and also home-school her two sons and Julia’s daughter so they could all be closer. “Julia kept friends and family informed,” Powers says. “Everyone sought out Julia for updates.”

And, Powers had her two Boxers, a brother and sister named Elmer and Fudd, who nestled at her side whenever she was home. Except for the four days she had to be quarantined at home due to a radioactive iodine pill she had to take for her thyroid.

Continued on next page.



“Being there during COVID, I could see how exhausting it was on the nurses. They weren’t just your nurse. They were all you had to hang onto.”

Jake Powers

Powers stayed on her job throughout her chemotherapy and most of her radiation treatments. Her co-workers were a source of support and inspiration. “They started a fundraiser designing, producing and selling personalized T-shirts,” she says. “They involved the volunteer department at Jennie, family and friends to make a successful fundraiser. I also received a big basket filled with comfort – books, ChapStick, a blanket, many gift certificates, lotions and slippers – everything I needed at my fingertips.”

She and her step-sister, Renee, continue to recover from their mastectomies. And, Dr. Coughlin examined the vocal cord in a follow up visit and discovered the repurposed nerve is moving the vocal cord on its own. “He said I should think of it as a nerve learning its new job,” Powers says.

That was music to her ears, especially since she enjoys singing, from karaoke to Melissa Etheridge, Jewel, Pink and Alanis Morissette, even the national anthem at events, “wherever someone wants to listen to me.”

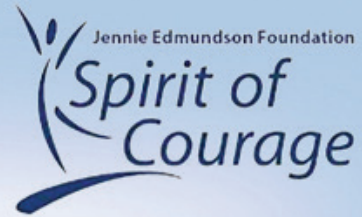
She recently began vocal therapy, adjusting her breathing to emanate more from her diaphragm – just as she does when she sings.

Now that her voice is returning, there is nothing Powers would rather do than sing the praises of the people at Jennie Edmundson who cared for her.

“Being there during COVID, I could see how exhausting it was on the nurses,” she says. “They weren’t just your nurse. They were all you had to hang onto.”



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Special Thanks

Being alive is something we tend to take for granted. God gave us this time and I'm truly thankful for my wonderful life so far. I have been blessed with great parents, family, children, grandchildren, friends and the opportunity to live, love and enjoy work and play for many years.

I may have many or few miles left to travel on these interconnecting pathways through life, and I'm going to continue to Get Up, Get Out and Get Active, overcoming the challenges and enjoying every moment that God gives me.

Cancer is just one of the possible cracks in our roads that we have to step over to continue moving forward. I'm deeply thankful to Dr. Bolte, Dr. Arther, Dr. Duckert and especially to Angie and Loree, Paul and all the other awesome people who have helped me on my road to recovery. They are the very Special People who deserve all of the honors.

I have been especially blessed to have Anne as my willing partner, and the love of my life, on this journey. We walk hand in hand. I can't ask for anything more!

A marvelous life

– Article by Nick Schinker

Kevin Rutland knew something was wrong.

Several years ago, after experiencing a urinary tract infection (UTI), he had a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test. Used to check the amount of PSA, a protein produced by both cancerous and noncancerous tissue in the prostate, the test is a screen for prostate cancer. "They told me at the time if the PSA level was above 10, it was quite high and should be discussed with a doctor right away," Rutland recalls.

Near the end of 2019, Rutland experienced another UTI, again followed by a PSA test. This time, the level was 38.

He wasted no time making an appointment with his urologist, Stefanie Bolte, M.D., in Council Bluffs. Dr. Bolte immediately scheduled a series of scans and a prostate biopsy. On Jan. 6, 2020, the results confirmed prostate cancer.

Prostate cancer is measured on the Gleason Score, a system named for the pathologist who developed it in the 1960s. The score ranges from 2 to 10, with 10 being the most aggressive form of prostate cancer. "Mine was nine," Rutland recalls.

He began a course of hormone treatments to slow the cancer. His prostate was removed in a robotic-assisted surgery performed Feb. 13 by urology specialist Andrew R. Arther, M.D., at Methodist Hospital in Omaha. The next morning,

Rutland and his wife, Anne, celebrated his successful surgery – and Valentine's Day – with a hospital breakfast.

His first PSA test after the operation showed a level of 0.01, but subsequent tests over the next nine months showed gradual increases, from 0.1 to 0.4, then 1.38. "It became obvious some cancer cells had evaded the removal operation," Rutland says.

He was sent to see Randall T. Duckert, M.D., a radiation oncologist at Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital. "Dr. Duckert turned out to be another great and encouraging doctor," Rutland says.

Rutland underwent a seven-week course of 35 radiation treatments, ending on St. Patrick's Day 2021. His most recent PSA test, in June this year, was less than 0.01.

From initial diagnosis to his final radiation treatment, Rutland stayed positive. "I am not a worrier at all," he says. "I will analyze a situation, but I don't dwell on it. Worry stresses you, and I'd rather stay cheerful and proactive."

He and Anne met 23 years ago, just after he purchased his first Internet capable computer. He was living in England, and she lived in Council Bluffs. She had a keen interest in England, and since chat rooms had not yet been created, she went online to find out more about Great Britain.

"It was 8 a.m. in Council Bluffs and 2 a.m. in England (a six hour time difference due to the distance), and I was the only person online who matched Anne's search criteria," Rutland recalls. "My user name showed where I was, and she asked a question about England. We started to type back and forth, and really talked about everything. We fell in love more or less straight away."

As their romance grew, so did the desire to lessen the distance between them. Rutland moved from England to Council Bluffs in 1997, and brought with him a most charming English accent, his positive attitude and a light-hearted sense of humor.



"I came over in April, moved here in May and we were married in July," he says. "I am nine months older than Anne, and I like to say that God made her for me."

They have traveled to England several times, including for Rutland's daughters' weddings, and visited his "mum" after she and his sister moved to Ireland.

"I'm 69 now, and I am still having a marvelous life," Rutland says.

A Craft Design & Technology teacher in England for 24 years, Rutland worked in facilities management at a call center in Omaha until he retired at 62.

His many interests include both small scale and full-size aircraft. He built and flew Microlight airplanes. He has flown a single-seat Microlight

Continued on next page.

“These people showed me compassion beyond any scale you want to use. They were cheerful, caring and friendly. They are a great team.”

Kevin Rutland

Flexwing Airplane in UK national competitions, and was a member of the British Microlight team.

He began building and operating hovercraft as an after-school activity with students in the BP Challenge to Youth competitions in England. After moving to Council Bluffs, he built several full-size hovercraft that he and Anne would use to cruise the Platte River. Several years ago, he used one of his hovercraft to assist in a deer rescue at Zorinsky Lake in Omaha.

Today, he also enjoys remote control (RC) airplane and drone flying. He is secretary of the Cobra RC Club in C.B., and he designs and 3D prints components for his airplanes and small-scale hovercraft.

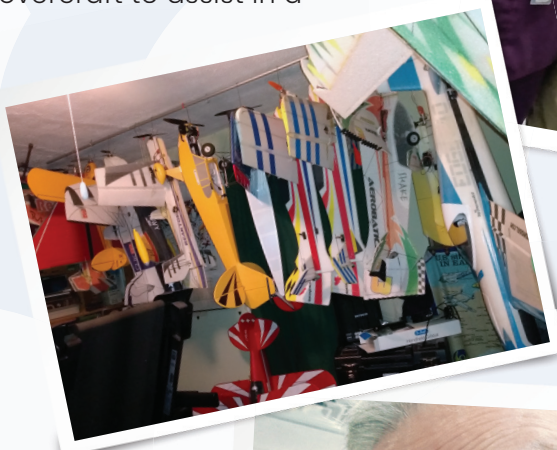
"This is currently a major hobby of mine," he says. "I build, fly, crash and repair the various electrically powered airplanes and drones, and fly them as often as possible, weather permitting."

Rutland even made small remote-controlled hovercraft for the radiation technicians at Jennie Edmundson and for Dr. Duckert. "I used the mechanisms and controller from small drones, and designed and 3D printed the bodies," he says. "Two of the motors face downward and two backward. They actually go quite fast."

The hovercraft gifts are a very cool way of saying thank you. "These people showed me compassion beyond any scale you want to use," Rutland says. "They were cheerful, caring and friendly. They are a great team."

Despite having prostate cancer, Rutland says he considers himself a lucky man.

"I have had the finest doctors, scan and oncology technicians, the nurses, as well as all the people who work so hard to support the various departments where I was treated," he says. "My thanks and praise go out to you all!"



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Spirit of Courage – Sponsor Feature



Support matters

– Article by Nick Schinker

Laura and TJ Pattermann take the good work of the Jennie Edmundson Foundation and the Spirit of Courage weekend events very personally.

Not only are the Council Bluffs attorneys sponsors and generous supporters of the annual Spirit of Courage Gala fundraiser, Laura Pattermann is a Spirit of Courage recipient from 2013.

During the summer of 2011, Pattermann noticed a lump the size of a pencil eraser in her upper thigh. Though a family friend who was a doctor repeatedly suggested she immediately have it removed, she went on with her busy personal and professional life assuming it would go away. The lump, however, continued to grow.

Several months after first noticing the lump, she met with surgeon Gregory Eakins, M.D., at Methodist Hospital. She underwent surgery, and Dr. Eakins removed a tumor that was Non-Hodgkin's Follicular

Lymphoma, a relatively slow-growing but incurable cancer.

Cancer is a diagnosis shared by more than just the patient. It also affects family and friends. For Laura, her diagnosis meant it was time to start fighting so she could still be there for TJ, and their daughters, Morgan and Lauren, who at the time were 13 and 8.

"Being able to be strong and face this fight together as a family was important to us and our girls," Laura says. "Looking back, I believe it shaped who they are as people today."

Chemotherapy, with the serious side effect of losing her immune system, left Laura quarantined. As a result of treatment she endured both double pneumonia and histoplasmosis. Radiation therapy followed and brought its own side effects. Still, she kept fighting.

Since the initial diagnosis in 2011, Laura's cancer has been a part of her and her family's lives. "I know my cancer isn't curable" she says, "but I'm not going to stop fighting or live in fear. Every time it returns, I will do battle. Now, through the foundation, I have a cheering squad. The fantastic thing is they are there for anyone who is being treated for cancer at Jennie and needs support."

She and TJ are strong supporters of the work of the Jennie Edmundson Foundation, often serving as sponsors for foundation events. Laura's father, Bob Laubenthal, has volunteered on the foundation's board of directors.

Laura and TJ say they appreciate the foundation's hands-on approach to helping cancer patients. In the 18 years since the inception of the Spirit of Courage events, almost \$2 million has been raised for the Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital Cancer Center Charitable Patient Care Fund. The fund provides assistance to cancer patients who need help paying for medications, treatments and deductibles, as well as everyday living expenses such as groceries, rent and gas.

"The foundation is extremely beneficial to the community," Laura says. "These people work on the front lines to provide assistance directly to the people who need it most."

Continued on next page.



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congratulate all of the past Spirit of
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She says the 2021 Spirit of Courage weekend is especially important to the foundation. "With the COVID-19 pandemic and the cancellation of so many in-person events, the past year has been very difficult on many charities," Laura says. "At the same time, many of us have been facing cancer during this

time, which makes the work of the foundation more important than ever."

The foundation benefits the community by offering financial support to fill the gaps for patients who do not have insurance, or have insurance that is not adequate to cover their care, she says.

"People can be terrified when they find out they have cancer," she says. "That fear is compounded when they must also worry about paying for food for their families or transportation to and from treatments.

"People do better when they can focus all of their efforts on healing," she says. "For them, the foundation provides the support they need and is often the answer to a prayer."

For information about sponsoring, volunteering or making a donation to the Spirit of Courage Charitable Patient Care fund, please contact the Foundation at 712-396-6040 or jefoundation@nmhs.org.

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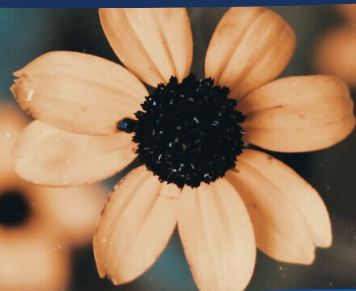
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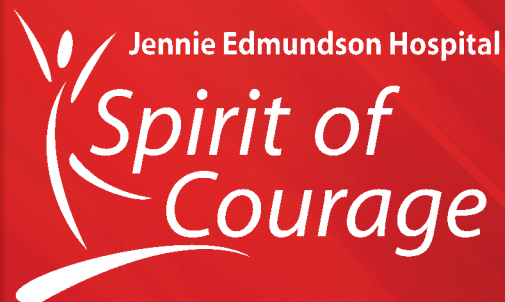


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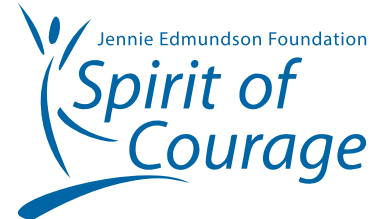
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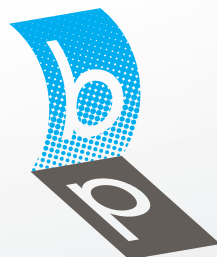
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