

Local organization holds second annual 5K race for area cancer patients

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ALTON – The Power of the Giraffe local non-profit is hosting their second annual scenic 5K race and one-mile fun walk along the Alton riverfront at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 23 to benefit area cancer patients.

The Power of the Giraffe was officially established in 2015 with the intention of creating “survival” gift baskets as well as financial support to deliver to cancer patients in the local area to help inspire them and let them know that they are not alone. The story began when Carol (Friedrich) Alcorn was first diagnosed with breast cancer in October of 2000. After surgery and chemotherapy she entered remission in the fall of

2001. Since 2009, cancer has returned multiple times in both Alcorn's bones and brain. Carol fought the disease for nearly seven years before passing away in November 2015. Her story continues to inspire family, friends, and multiple others throughout the area.

"Never give up. You have to keep going, just put one foot in front of the other," is what Carol used to say. "Each step may get harder, but don't stop."

Throughout this battle the story of the Giraffe began. Carol's favorite animal was always the giraffe. The family began to give her a stuffed giraffe after a test or treatment. What began as an attempt to cheer her up and make her smile after a procedure became an important ritual for the Alcorn family.

Out of this despair grew a dream to share the belief, hope and power of the Giraffe. Unfortunately with cancer often times comes isolation. While many people often say "if you need anything, let us know," it takes a special person to take initiative and to "stick their neck out." From this The Power of the Giraffe was formed to raise money to support patients and their families currently undergoing treatments. The organization has since delivered hundreds of baskets around the St. Louis Metro East, St. Louis and Columbia, Missouri areas.

"Our goal is not only to raise money," says Dale. "It is to inspire people to reach out and help. So when anyone sees a giraffe, they think of Carol and they think of the power. The power that even the smallest of items can carry."

The Power of the Giraffe 5K race will begin at the Alton Riverfront Park in downtown Alton on April 23 at 9 am with the one-mile fun walk beginning at 9:15 am.

Packet pickup will take place on Friday, April 22 at Shell Community Federal Credit Union (101 Wesley Drive, Wood River) from 3-6 pm or the morning of the race at the park.

Medals will be awarded the first place male and female as well as the top three male and female finishers in the following age groups: 0-18, 19-39, 40-59, 60+. The entry fee is \$30 and participants can register online.

Sponsors for this event include Phillips 66 Wood River Refinery, Federico Chrysler Dodge, Crown Vision, Alton Memorial, OSF St. Anthony Medical Center, Hawthorne Animal Hospital, GRP Mechanical Contractors, Midwest Members Credit Union (future name of Shell Community Credit Union), Elias Kallal and Schaaf Funeral Home, Pitchford Funeral Home and Panara Bread.

To find out more information about The Power of the Giraffe organization or to register for the race, please visit www.thepowerofthegiraffe.org or you can find us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/ThePowerOfTheGiraffe>.