

# Community Gifts Help Save Cancer Patient's Life

by David Whaley

February 15 2023 1:54 PM



ALTON - Betty Davis drove 70 miles round trip, five days per week for five weeks, to receive radiation treatment. That's 25 times between her home in Greenfield, Ill., and Alton Memorial Hospital when gas averaged \$5 per gallon.

On top of the stress of a cancer diagnosis and the effects of radiation, Betty and her husband, Everett, needed help to pay for gas so she could continue to receive life-saving treatment.

“We live on a fixed income,” Betty said. “My husband was the first to find out about the Extra Mile program and then he told me about it.”

Because of gifts from the community to Alton Memorial Health Service Foundation’s Ribbon of Strength project, the couple did not have to choose between paying for essentials and battling cancer. The Foundation provided them with a gas card to continue to drive to treatment.

“There were times we didn’t know how we could pay for the gas to get back and forth,” Betty said. “The gas card came in handy and helped quite a bit.”

Everyone is invited to be lifesavers for future patients by donating to this year’s Ribbon of Strength campaign. Proceeds will be used to help patients experiencing financial hardships, as a result of their diagnosis or treatment, pay for the essentials – gas, car repairs, rent, mortgage, and utility bills – so they can focus on treatment, healing and recovery.

“Because I was able to continue my treatments, my cancer is gone and I am in recovery,” Betty said. “After receiving the gas card, it made me realize that people outside of my family really care. This made a huge difference.”

“Betty is just one of many patients who have benefited from the generosity of our community,” said Kristen Ryrie, manager of Foundation and Development for Alton Memorial Health Services Foundation. “With rising inflation and expenses, we want to be able to help even more patients so they don’t have to choose between treatment and their essentials.”

You can help by purchasing a ribbon on the [Foundation’s website](#) by March 9. Customize the ribbon with a message memorializing someone who lost his or her life to cancer, to send well wishes to someone battling the disease, or celebrate someone who won the fight. The ribbons will be laid end to end to form one giant ribbon. The Foundation invites the public to attend the unveiling at a reception from 4-6 p.m. Thursday, March 23, at Rolling Hills Golf Club in Godfrey.

“The reception is something we have been wanting to do for a while but couldn’t because of COVID-19 precautions,” Ryrie said. “We are excited to be able to show off this incredible display to our donors and to those honored with their messages. We encourage people to bring their cameras, take pictures and enjoy some refreshments.”