

# OSF Saint Anthony's Health Center - Power of the Giraffe

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**Alton, Ill.** – On Monday, August 31, **The Power of the Giraffe Foundation**, founded by area residents **Dale and Carol Alcorn**, stopped by the **Cancer Center of Excellence at OSF Saint Clare's Hospital** to give cancer patients a gift basket to help them during their treatments.

The gift baskets are filled with lotions, lip balm, lemon drops, games, fuzzy socks, a stuffed giraffe and Carol Alcorn's story. Carol has been battling cancer since October of 2000.

"Carol is the inspiration behind this whole thing," said Dale Alcorn. "After going through this with her, I know that some weeks are just about making it through. And the baskets provide emotional support for those going through treatment.

"We started the Foundation with the goal of helping those who need help right now. A lot of great organizations raise money for research, and that is wonderful, but people living with cancer need help now."

The Foundation got its name from Carol's favorite animal. After every big test or treatment, her family would bring her a stuffed giraffe to cheer her up. Unfortunately, Carol has a lot of giraffes, but she bravely continues her fight.

"It became a ritual with our family. Whenever I would pick the kids up from school, they wanted to know what giraffe she had gotten," Dale said. "Our goal for everyone is like it is for Carol, to make them smile."

OSF Saint Anthony's Oncology Supervisor Jill Emmons said the Foundation fills a needed gap in the lives of those battling cancer.

"Cancer treatment wears you down emotionally, physically and financially. We are blessed to have people like Dale and Carol helping to support people in their fight against cancer," said Emmons. "Ultimately, we want to find a cure, but for now, there are people who need help. We have the technologies and medications to treat cancer, but the additional expenses from nutritional supplements, missed work and repeated trips add up.

"It's great to see the difference that the Power of the Giraffe Foundation, the OSF Saint Anthony's Foundation and the caring support of members of our community makes in the lives of our patients. We get to witness miracles everyday."

The long term goal of The Power of the Giraffe Foundation is to provide short-term financial assistance for those in need while in treatment.

"This is our first year of fundraising and we are in the final process of making the application. In a few months, we should be able to provide \$500 to \$1,000 grants to those that qualify," said Dale. "I feel like we are finally starting to gain some momentum."

Both The Power of the Giraffe Foundation and the OSF Saint Anthony's Foundation offer people in cancer treatment short-term financial support for items not covered by insurance. According to Dale, those are the kind of items that people forget about.

“We were pretty fortunate. We have good health insurance, and my job gives me the flexibility to be there for the treatments. Not all people have that kind of support,” Dale said. “And we are very close to having enough funds to start the support grants. So, stick your neck out and support area cancer patients.”

For more information or to donate to The Power of the Giraffe Foundation, visit [thepowerofthegiraffe.org](http://thepowerofthegiraffe.org). In addition, donations can be made at Shell Community Federal Credit Union.

For more information about OSF Saint Anthony's Cancer Center, call 618-463-5623.