

WOMEN'S GOLF ASSOCIATIONS TEE UP FOR A GREAT CAUSE

Living in a golf community has its perks, not the least of which is having access to a collegial community of passionate golfers. The Pinewild Women's Golf Association (PWGA) and the Pinewild Azalea League (PAL) offer weekly opportunities for women to play in a fun and sociable setting.

These golf associations not only foster a love for the game of golf and lifelong friendships, they also engage in meaningful philanthropy. For years now, both PWGA and PAL have sponsored tournaments and other fundraisers to support The Foundation of FirstHealth's Cancer CARE Fund. As of 2018, proceeds from the PWGA's annual Think Pink tournament and PAL's Tickle Me Pink events have raised more than \$50,000 for the Cancer CARE Fund. This year, PAL raised a record of \$13,000 through its efforts.

To recognize Pinewild's outstanding commitment to a worthy cause, The Foundation of FirstHealth held an appreciation reception on October 17, 2018, for PAL and PWGA members at the Clara McLean House. At the event, Laura Kuzma, Cancer CARE Fund Coordinator, shared the history of the Cancer CARE Fund. The fund was started in 2000 by supporters who wanted to keep the money raised for cancer patients within the community, rather than sending it to national organizations. The fund provides direct financial assistance to cancer patients receiving treatment at FirstHealth, and who need help with the added burden of paying for transportation to treatments, medications, wigs and prostheses.

Laura read several grateful patient letters, that have been collected over the years and tell the story of how the Cancer CARE Fund has nurtured so many lives in our community. Nearly all of us have been touched in some way by this disease. Thank you again, Pinewild ladies, for making a difference in the lives others.



Members of the Pinewild Azalea League take a break from the Tickle Me Pink golf tournament to enjoy pink lemonade.

Mary Alyce, a 2018 Cancer CARE Fund recipient, wrote this beautiful letter about what the gift meant to her. She expressed it better than anyone...

"I am a stay-at-home mom and military wife with stage 3C breast cancer. I was diagnosed a year ago, just a couple months after I turned 30. I will never forget that day.

My husband was deployed at the time, so I brought my kids – who were then 6, 4 and 1 – with me to the doctor's office. It was then that I found out that I had cancer. So what did we do? We went to buy groceries and pick up the dog from the groomer, because that's just what had to be done. Our world was turned upside down that day and continued to shift even more in the weeks to follow...all while trying to help each other stay sane and keep life as normal as possible for our children.

As a young mom with a husband and small children, finding out I had cancer was beyond scary. I was not only fighting for my life, I was fighting to stay a part of theirs.



Fighting cancer requires a ton of work – doctors' appointments, babysitters, time off work for my husband, coordinating insurance and referrals, and so much more.

Aside from my faith, knowing that we have people to lean on and support us in such chaotic and scary times is one of the biggest comforts we can have. The Cancer CARE Fund provides that support and has helped relieve some of the cost of gas and travel which means so much to a one- income military family with three children.

Before I was diagnosed with cancer I knew it was an awful disease, but had no idea of the ferocity in which it invades every aspect of your life. I read that along with all the bad, cancer brings a sort of magic that has proven true for us. When your world is turned upside-down, people – sometimes even strangers – step up and hold you up until you can stand again.

The gifts to support the Cancer CARE Fund make it possible to provide people like our family with a little magic in a time where everything is filled with worry, fear and uncertainty. It makes a difference and does not go unnoticed. I am so grateful for the support we were given. It allowed our family to breathe that much easier."