Cancer Patient Care Client Testimonial
Jim Pollard – client's husband
March, 2009

Everyone remembers where they were and what they were doing when something traumatic happens. For me, I was at work and I pulled my truck over (Ironically at the building behind Cancer Patient Care) on January 15th 2008 at 1:37 in the afternoon when my cell phone rang. It was my wife. The words "It is cancer, Jim" will haunt me for the rest of my life. At that second, the lives of my wife, me and our 2 kids - 5 year old Amber and 7 year-old Zach, will never be the same. Cancer plays Russian Roulette with all of us. You hear the word cancer and you feel bad for that person. But when cancer's six-shooter fires its bullet into you, or someone you love, it is an indescribable feeling, a feeling only those that know... know.

There is no way one can put into words what it's like to have someone you love go through cancer. To try to answer unanswerable questions… "Am I going to see our kids grow up?" … "Why is this happing to me?" To witness right before your eyes that long, beautiful hair that used to hang down her back disappear…

My wife asked me during her bout with cancer why I never cried or showed any kind of emotion. I told her "Because I'm going to get my wife back." I never once at anytime thought that my wife was not going to get through this. Plus, I had to be strong and show confidence to help her with her healing. The frustrating part for me was the more support I gave her during her surgeries, chemotherapy, and radiation treatments the more I felt I wasn't even scratching the surface of support. I'm not sure why I felt that way. I just felt I could never give enough and Rhonda deserved so much more!

Cancer is the domino effect from hell. The rippling devastation of physical, emotional and financial repercussions is unbearable. Cancer also lets you know who your friends are, and which of your family members really know what the word "family" means. Financially, it was very difficult. My wife usually makes more money than I do. She has more titles at her accounting firm than will fit on a business card. However, while she was out of work, we somehow struggled enough to get by on truck drivers wages for 8 months.

Last August, The Spokane Indians had a Breast Cancer Awareness Night. I took it upon myself to help promote the event. I went out all over town distributing flyers for a Pitch For The Cure. I remembered a place on east Sprague Ave. with a sign on the side of the building that said Cancer Patient Care. I went in with some flyers thinking they would help me spread the word about the game. They noticed my shaved head and the pink ribbon tattooed on the back of my head. The conversation quickly went from baseball to telling them about my wife and her battle with breast cancer. The next thing I knew, I had two armfulls of wigs, hats, scarves and breast prostheses.

I couldn't wait to get home and give my wife all of these necessities that were given to me. When I got home she was lying on the couch. I then showed her all of the items for her. She said "HOW MUCH MONEY DID YOU SPEND?!" I told her I didn't spend a dime and there is this place called Cancer Patient Care in Spokane and they just gave me all this stuff….they gave it to YOU Rhonda!

About this time, our 5 year old Amber came in the room. She grabbed a box of breast prostheses and started to check it out. I said "No, no, no, Amber, those are Mamma's – okay?, They are very important; they aren't toys." She stormed off into the other room pouting and then started to cry. Her big brother Zach wanted to know why his little sister was crying. "What's wrong Amber?" he asked. So Amber says, "I WANNA PLAY WITH MOMMIES BOOBIES AND DADDY WON'T LET ME!"

That was the best moment we had shared in months because it was the first time my wife had laughed since her diagnosis. It was the priceless effect that Cancer Patient Care had on all of our family. We had hope again – my wife had hope and we knew we were not alone anymore! I wish we had discovered Cancer Patient Care months before. However, shortly there after we did receive a money voucher to buy groceries, money deducted for our utility bill and $100.00 gas card. This was a tremendous help, because this was when gas was 4 bucks a gallon. Living in Post Falls, we had to drive into Spokane every day for 6 weeks for radiation treatments. And this wasn't just a one time deal either. Every 3 months or so, Cancer patient Care would hook us up again and the help continued.

Cancer also has a way of bringing out certain things in people that normally wouldn't come out. If you were to ask me 14 months ago if I was going to get a tattoo anywhere on my body I would have said - not a chance. If you were to tell me that I was going to sing the National Anthem to thousands of people at a baseball game to honor my wife, I would have said you were crazy. If you were to tell me I would put a Tux on and give a fifteen minute speech in front of a few hundred people at the Spokane Cub?... No way! When something like cancer strikes someone you love, these things still don't come easy, but they do come naturally.

In February, 2009, Cancer Patient Care held their 14th Annual Mostly Merlot fund-raiser. Cliff Evans, Executive Director, asked my wife Rhonda to be the guest speaker at the event. She respectfully declined due to an unfortunate clarinet solo malfunction when she was in grade school. Along with cancer, this is another experience she will never forget! That's when I lost my mind and volunteered to speak on her behalf. That's an experience I will never forget either. I told her story and mine, and we were all in tears by the end of the story. The main point I wanted to get across during my speech is the same one I want to get across here with our story…

"CANCER PATIENT CARE IS A SLICE OF HEAVEN FOR THOSE THAT ARE GOING THROUGH HELL…"

Jim Pollard