

Us TOO Florence My Prostate Cancer Journey — Epilogue



BY BOB HORNEY
AND DR. BRYAN MELHOFF

Tim Daugherty was diagnosed with cancer May 18, 2010 at age 52. He died Aug. 21, 2014, at age 56.

Tim and Debbie started sharing Tim's prostate cancer journey with our community in the Sept. 12, 2012, edition of the Siuslaw News, as well as in the three-ring binders throughout Florence, and on the www.ustoooflorence.org website.

Tim had been diagnosed with prostate cancer in May 2010 at the age of 52. Nine of 12 core biopsy samples were positive for the disease and his Gleason Score was an aggressive 8.

Tim's urologist, Dr. Bryan Mehlhaff, performed open surgery in June 2010 which revealed cancer already outside the prostate in a lymph node.

He was started on hormone therapy (Lupron) in October followed by external beam radiation (IGRT) in January and February 2011.

With Tim's PSA continuing to rise even while on Lupron and following surgery and radiation, he qualified for Provenge, a new FDA-approved immunotherapy.

This therapy involved three trips to Vancouver, Wash., for withdrawal of white blood cells (Leukapheresis), having them treated in Seal Beach, Calif., and then flown to Springfield to be reinfused into Tim.

Although dealing with snow, car problems and flooding, Tim (with Debbie's wonderful assistance and support) completed the therapy.

Tim's last update on his Journey was in the April 10, 2013 issue of Siuslaw News.

At that time he was enrolled in a clinical study, STRIVE, which was a phase-2 randomized, double blind study at Oregon Urology Institute.

The purpose of the study was to determine the safety and efficacy of Enzalutamide (Xtandi) versus Bicalutamide (Casodex) in asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic patients with prostate cancer whose disease had progressed despite being on androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) also called hormone therapy — like Lupron men-

tioned above.

Eventually, with some enlargement of an abdominal lymph node, another medication called Zytiga was added.

Through all of the above, Tim continued to teach his fifth-grade class at Siuslaw Elementary. He taught the entire 2013-2014 school year and even the 2014 summer school session and looked forward to being in the classroom again in September.

Following his completion of 2014 summer school, Tim was seen for his quarterly study visit with routine CT and bone scan. This showed significant spread of cancer to his liver that

was not seen just three months before. Biopsy proved this to be prostate cancer.

This was a surprising increase in his disease because at this point his PSA level was undetectable. Presumably this was because his prostate cancer had now become so genetically mutated that it no longer produced any PSA.

Tim was referred to a medical oncologist. He was well aware of the potential side effects of chemotherapy, declined to pursue it, and simply expressed a value for quality of life rather than quantity.

Dr. Mehlhaff encouraged him to possibly try this treat-

ment as some patients respond well and experience minimal side effects, but Tim was resolute. With his family and support of his church, he decided to enter hospice care.

This allowed him to choose the final path of his life with his family at his side.

In less than five years, Tim had gone from diagnosis of prostate cancer to death.

Screening for prostate cancer failed to catch his disease early enough to prevent its spread. If screening had been done earlier possibly his prostate cancer could have been cured, but this remains unknown without the earlier testing.

Throughout his disease, Tim continued to live a full and vibrant life with his family, and as a teacher.

For four full years, Tim and Debbie attended Us TOO Florence meetings, full of confidence and optimism about the future. Together, they touched many lives, but Tim's case and story particularly affected Dr. Mehlhaff, who learned much from Tim's spirit and gentle nature even with a particularly aggressive form of prostate cancer that progressed despite all efforts to stop it.

Chorus seeks interim director

The Community Chorus (CCFO) is seeking an interim director for the spring session while current director, Laura Merz, is on leave. The spring session will begin Jan. 26, with plans to present "Hooray for Hollywood" on May 3.

The interim director position begins Jan. 26, with the season ending on May 10,

2015. The chorus rehearses Monday evenings from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Cross Road Church, 10th and Maple streets. New members are welcomed. There is a registration fee of \$60 with financial aid available to interested persons meeting requirements.

For more information, call Laura Merz at 541-902-8567.



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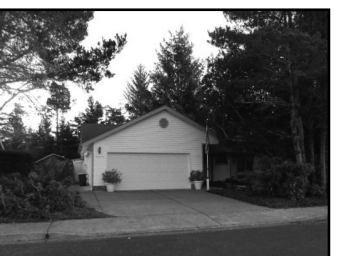
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