



THE
DRAGONFLY
DIGEST

ISSUE 1 - JULY 2016

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

THE TAYLOR HEATHERLY STORY

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JULY 2016

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LETTER FROM THE
founders

Greetings!

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the first issue of the Dragonfly Digest. We are very excited about our new newsletter, and hope you find it of great interest.

The Dragonfly Digest will be delivered quarterly to you via email. It will include stories about our Dragonflies, donors, volunteers, staff and programs. Additionally, the Digest will include ways to help and get involved with our organization.

The purpose of the Dragonfly Digest is to inform you about Dragonfly, and to educate you on the impact you make by supporting us. Our intent is to keep the Digest upbeat, and enjoyable. The stories we share will illustrate the courage and perseverance shown by our patients and their families, and describe the many ways our organization works to heal hearts and spirits.

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Enjoy!

CHRISTINE & RIA
CO-FOUNDERS

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Photo courtesy of Photography by Bill Box, LLC

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

THE TAYLOR HEATHERLY STORY

"It's been 550 days since diagnosis."

Those words carry as much pain as they do optimism. For Taylor Heatherly, a junior at Little Miami High School in Ohio, they mean only one more year until the end of her treatment. Only one more year of daily chemo, twice-daily injections, monthly intravenous (IV) treatments, monthly spinal taps, and the stigma that goes with cancer.

At the age of 14, Taylor was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's T-Cell Lymphoblastic Lymphoma, which in layman's terms is when white blood cells, called lymphocytes, become abnormal and grow in an uncontrolled way. People usually present with painless swelling in the neck, armpit, or groin. This is caused by enlarged lymph nodes. When Taylor woke up one morning with a painless lump in her neck she didn't think much of it.

Little did she know how much her world was about to change.

When asked about the first week after her diagnosis Taylor described it as "Very busy – meeting new doctors, residents, and fellows was confusing." Between meeting new medical staff, wrapping her head around the idea that she had cancer, and all of the other emo-

tions that arise during the initial diagnosis and treatment, Taylor barely had time to think. Her fight was just beginning.

Over the last 550 days Taylor has endured things that will have long-term effects on her body including a brain bleed and blood clot in the brain in August of 2015, a kidney stone in January this year and hip surgery in February. Her mother, Marianne, said "though she is currently cancer free; the life that will exist for her after having cancer will never be normal. So, we take things day by day and we will take the next 365 days no different."

Amazingly, Taylor hasn't let cancer stop her from pursuing her dreams or from doing the things she loves to do. At the top of that list? Dancing.

Continued on next page...

"...the life that will exist for her after having cancer will never be normal."

Today, Taylor dances at Star Performance Centre in Liberty Township, and is a varsity cheerleader at her high school. While she may be limited in what she is allowed to do, her effort and determination have never wavered. "Even with being so active in dance and all the special skills that come with being a dancer and cheerleader, I am not allowed to do flips or jumps anymore due to a brain bleed and blood clots cause from chemo." As mom put it "She is strong, she is stubborn, she is Taylor! Our girl will do whatever she can to do what she loves and more importantly, be as normal as a newly 16 year old can."

You learn a lot about yourself and others when you battle a life threatening illness. "I've learned I am stronger than I thought I was, and to never give up. Now in daily life when I hear others say they're having a bad day I think to myself 'you don't know what a bad day is.'"

For the Heatherlys, bad days were common, but no matter how bad it got, they were always able to lean on their Dragonfly Family. "Dragonfly has been a great 'virtual home' for us. Knowing that there is a page to go to that shows others going through the same things as us is more helpful than people realize." Marianne, referring to the private Dragonfly patient page on Facebook where families go to share their frustrations, get advice and



Photo courtesy of Griffin Hart Davis, LLC

support each other. "It is helpful to have people who know how it feels to be inpatient for days or weeks at a time without any control to make your child better."

The Heatherlys have been able to benefit from the many ways Dragonfly provides comfort and joy to patients and families. "The donations made, have helped my child cope or even be distracted from

what she is dealing with no matter the amount whether it be a small gift card or tickets to a reds game when she was able to go."

No doubt Taylor has overcome her obstacles and continues to do so everyday. Look for her on the sidelines this fall cheering on the Little Miami football team.

End.

SMILE
DRAGONFLY.ORG





Photos courtesy of Hartong Digital Media, LLC



**We are thrilled to announce that the
Dragonfly Gala raised more than**

\$120,000

Stay tuned for a big announcement regarding
our **February 11, 2017** Dragonfly Gala!



Golfers, sponsors, and supporters
raised more than

\$55,000

at the 6th Annual Dragonfly Golf Classic:
Presented by The Elam Family



Thank You Sponsors

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We Had...

MORE THAN
10,000

WATER BALLONS!

Face painters
Bouncy house
Inflatable obstacle course
Laser Tag
Train rides
Touch a fire truck
Arts & crafts
Life sized connect four
Snow cones
Drinks & snacks
Prizes & give aways



Photos courtesy of Hartong Digital Media, LLC

UPCOMING EVENTS

Hoxworth Bleed For A Cause

Bleed for a Cause is a competition among 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofits in good standing to recruit blood donors for Hoxworth Blood Center. The top three organizations who score the most points will win money: \$2,500, \$5,000, or \$10,000. There are Weekly Heats and inclusion in the Premier Donor Club in which groups can earn more. Bleed for a Cause is generously sponsored by Montgomery Inn and Toyota.

Bleed for a Cause runs from July 18th to August 13th
You can help us by visiting any neighborhood Hoxworth Center
To make an appointment call: 513-451-0910
Write "TDF" at the top of your donor form upon check in



Kings Island Kicks Cancer

Help provide care, raise awareness and cure cancer by purchasing a soccer ball to kick into the fountain on International Street. You may also win a brand new Kings Honda!

AUGUST 1st-21st

Tons of volunteers needed!

Sign up at Dragonfly.org/Events/Kings-Island-Kicks-Cancer

Dragonfly Dash

If you can walk, crawl, roll, dance or skip 500 feet, our Dragonfly Dash course at Liberty Centre is for you! On October 8th, kids, adults, seniors, and costumed teams are invited to participate in the slowest race on record. There's also a roof-top after party that will include entertainment, music, snacks/drinks, and an auction/raffle.

For more information, visit Dragonfly.org/Dash



volunteer SPOTLIGHT



ANNSCHMIDT
OAKLEY NEIGHBORHOOD

What made you start volunteering at Dragonfly?

Over the last two years I have lost two people I care about to cancer and so in order to continue to honor them I do my best to work hard for The Dragonfly Foundation. I will never be able to cure Cancer, but I can certainly help an organization that brings comfort and joy to those battling cancer.

Favorite moment of volunteering so far?

One of the Dragonfly girls told me that her new friend was having a tough week, but making a new friend really cheered her up. It is moments like those that make me want to keep volunteering and donating

Any advice for people thinking about volunteering?

It is a blessing to be a part of The Dragonfly Foundation. There are many ways to use your talents to help the organization whether it is donating, committee work, or helping at events.

COLLEENBERLINGER

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS

When did you start working for Dragonfly

I started volunteering for The Dragonfly Foundation in the summer of 2013, but was officially hired in April of 2014.

Why do you enjoy working for Dragonfly?

I love being a part of an organization that's dedicated to making the lives of others a little bit brighter and The Dragonfly Foundation does that on a daily basis. The patients and families we serve are going through situations that no one can fathom, and are so grateful for what they are able to experience here, from new friendships, to small gifts delivered to their hospital room, to our larger events!

employee SPOTLIGHT



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A BIG THANK YOU

...to our amazing donors, supporters, and advocates for continuing to advance our mission.



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For More Information Or To Donate Please Visit Dragonfly.org Or Text TDF To 91999