

Becky's story: I once was told that I have a fire that burns inside of me that spreads like wildfire to others. That fire was to find a way to eradicate cancer and to bring hope to those that were fighting the disease. Not having any medical training, how could I best achieve this? Enter my daughter Alicia and her introduction of Grand Island's Relay for Life. Alicia, a neuroblastoma cancer survivor, threw herself into this organization and brought not only me but our entire family along for the ride and what a ride it has been. Thirteen years have passed since the ride has begun and during this time, the people I have met, the cancer warriors, the amazing caregivers, the people that stand side by side with me in this fight are the best of the best. None of us could do this alone. We stand together as a team where each of us are in on the decisions to make the event itself successful and to bring one day where having cancer is not the end but a start to a new beginning.

My war with cancer extends over multiple generations of my own family. Besides my daughter, my father, uncle, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, husband and several other family members have been told the words that no one ever wants to hear. It's so unfair what cancer survivors have to go through. When you watch one person go through treatments, surgery, chemo or radiation, it changes you. My calling is Relay. It's not about a pat on the back, not for even one of us. It's just about making it a day where it's okay. It's an amazing feeling.

Becky graduated from NCCC with a degree in Rehabilitation Services for the Developmentally Disabled and Applied Science. She has worked with numerous organizations including Jerry Lewis MDA Telethon, Camp Good Days and Special Times, Be the Match, Roswell Park Cancer Institute and The American Cancer Society. She has been married to her best friend Rich for 17 years and has three daughters, Alicia, Emily and Jenna and two step children, Richard and Kim. Becky says her family is the absolute loves of her life. "We stand together as one, always there for one another."



Lynn's Story: My Relay journey began in 2006 when I happened upon Relay at the Grand Island High School, not long before the start of the luminaria ceremony. When I walked the track in the dark with just those glowing luminaria and the sound of bagpipes, I was shocked seeing the names of people I know that I never knew were cancer survivors. I looked around at the people walking the track and was amazed at the out pouring of love and emotion. I knew right then I was going to be a part of Relay.

Cancer had touched my life before but long distance so meeting and talking to survivors and caregivers really opened my eyes. It didn't take long before I signed up a team and joined the planning committee taking my fiancé, John, and my kids, Nick and Jon, along for the ride.

When I first started with Relay, it was with the thought in mind that I never wanted my kids to hear the words "you have cancer." But after meeting so many amazing people and losing some of the close friends I made, my reason to Relay has grown. I will always do this for my kids with the hopes they never have to deal with cancer, but now I also Relay in memory of warriors that lost their fight and in honor of others that are fighting.

The money we raise funds research projects, and also provides services to help survivors and caregivers through their cancer journey. My team, the Mallwitz Cancer Crew, works hard to raise money and I love them for their

efforts. Over the years, Relay has become more than just fundraising to find a cure. It's about making a cancer survivor's journey just a bit easier. It's about putting a smile on a cancer survivor's face for even a short time. It's about giving survivors and caregivers HOPE that they'll beat cancer.

So, even though we are truly humbled and honored to be selected for this award, this is not about us. This journey is not our story. This story really belongs to Alicia, Rich, Faith, Walt, Lynn, Dan, Sheryl, Lisa, Mary, AnnMarie, Casey, Rita, Steve, Kevin, Caralyn, Ian, Billy, Mark, Matthew and the countless other faces that have been touched with the words, "You have Cancer." For the volunteers of Relay, we are just the bookmarks that bring the HOPE to the pages that are written.