

# ← PARKER COUNTY → TODAY

OUR COUNTY'S MAGAZINE



Careity Foundation:  
Showdown with Cancer



## A Letter From The Editor

# Why Careity Foundation?

When I was working our mission statement of Parker County Today with the highly-visionary Drew Springer, we talked choosing a “charity of record,” for the magazine. We mapped out a criterion for choosing our charity.

1. Its focus would be helping individuals who truly need help. We weren’t interested in padding pockets

or making anyone famous.

2. Money stays local to help people in our area. If someone wants to ease the load of Sri Lankan dog-groomers, great. But, we wanted to help people we knew, people we see and deal with every day. We wanted to help folks in our neck of the woods. We definitely wanted to help people who read our magazine.

3. We wanted to support a charity that would not be, “top heavy,” one that would not use the funds we give them frivolously, on big salaries for people who spend most of their time eating lunch. We work hard for the money we make and we want to

see that the money we give is used wisely, carefully.

We chose Careity Foundation and we have never regretted our choice. Its founders Lyn Walsh and Beverly Branch truly care about the people they help. They are both worker bees. These ladies are saving lives in North Texas. We, at Parker County Today Magazine are proud of the fact that are blessed to have a small part in helping them to save so many lives in Parker, Hood, Tarrant, Johnson and Palo Pinto Counties.

Marsha Brown,  
Editor-in-Chief and Publisher,  
*Parker County Today Magazine*

# Careity Men’s Initiative

## Thinking Outside the BOXers Saving Lives ... One Man at a Time

Careity Men’s Initiative was started in 2015 to bring awareness to the cancer support services provided by Careity that are available to the men in our service area.

This committee is comprised of men from North Central Texas who have come together with the common goal of saving men’s lives through early cancer detection. Through our ongoing relationship with The Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders, we will be providing 6 early detection screenings for the men in our communities:

- Low Dose CT Lung Scan
- Oral Screening
- Skin Screening
- Colon Test Kits
- PSA blood work for Prostate
- Testicular screening

Careity Men will be spreading awareness of these services through their presence at sporting events, car shows, churches, service clubs, and anywhere that men congregate. If you are in need of medical assistance or would like more information about the Men’s Initiative, please call 817-994-0201.



Dr. Joel Kleven



# COWGIRL TOUGH — A SHOWDOWN WITH CANCER

BY MARSHA BROWN  
PHOTO BY MEGAN PARKS

## 2 Cancers and Two Friendships Make for A Winning Combination

Texas native and rodeo cowgirl Trina Hadley was a home-sick young mother living in Wyoming on a ranch that had been in her husband's family for generations when she met a teenaged cowgirl Stacy Marquiss. Their friendship has stood the test of time (it's spanned more than two decades), distance, and health issues.

Now, they're both living just outside of Weatherford and helping each other battle an ominous enemy — cancer. They're doing it with the help of two other best friends.

"Who'd of thought that two Wyoming girls would wind up here — both battling cancer?" Stacy said. "At the same time, with treatment from the same people?"

Trina added, "Well, I'm half only half-way Wyoming. I'm also half-Texas,"

Trina married a Wyoming native.

"My husband's family ranched between Moorcroft and Sundance, Wyoming. Stacy's family ranches between Gillette and Buffalo, Wyoming," Trina said. "The rodeo world brought us together. She used to babysit for me when she was in high school and we've been friends ever since."

Their friendship continued through long distances apart and life-changing events. Stacy moved to Ruidoso, New Mexico and Trina moved back to Texas.

"I went there for a summer," Stacy said. "I ended up staying for 10 years."

The world of American professional rodeo is a small, closely-knit community that reaches from coast-to-coast.

Trina returned with her family to Texas and Stacy moved to Parker County. She was just in time to help Trina face cancer.

"She was scooping me up," Trina said, "helping me with ovarian cancer and then guess what?"

"Then low and behold," Stacy said, "they found Lucifer in my chest." "Lucifer," is Stacy's name for Lymphoma.

One of the things Trina sees as Stacy's most endearing qualities is her tenacity. "I've always admired this child," Trina said, adding that it manifested itself when Stacy was a teenager in Wyoming. One of Trina's early memories of Stacy was when she was helping her sister, who was The National High School Rodeo Queen.

"With rodeo queens, there's always people in the background making sure that queen doesn't have any dirt on her and seeing that her hair and make-up is always perfect," Trina said. "Well, this one (Stacy) did that for

her sister. I always admired her grit and I was drawn to her from the time she was a kid."

"My sister and I were cut from a different cloth," Stacy said. "She was the queen and I roped."

Trina also roped but for a short time she competed in rodeo queen competitions.

"My mother made me do that for a while," Trina laughed. "Let's just say that the girls loved me but the judges just thought I should stick to roping. That's why there is such a connection with us. Stacy has been a great source of support for me."

Stacy is now through with her treatment and Trina's is nearing its completion.

Both looked to Careity Foundation and The Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders for treatment and both are being aided by Careity Foundation.

"I believe I'm almost done," Trina said. "They're just making sure it doesn't rear its ugly head again."

Trina found Careity Foundation through another of her dear friends in the equine world— Shelly Mowery. Then Careity directed her to the Center of Cancer & Blood Disorders.

"I had just moved here and was pretty far along when they found it," Trina said. "I felt something in my abdomen and went to a P.A. in Lone Camp. I was working for a friend of mine there. She sent me to her gynecologist. I think it was the first she'd ever told anyone they had issues. It was pretty far along by the time I talked to Shelly. Things happen fast with me. I was pretty sick."

Trina was stunned when she was delivered the diagnosis. "I didn't know what to do. A friend said, 'Call Shelly.' I visited with Shelly and she got me with Lyn. I believe that it was a God thing. We can't leave God out of the mix."

When Trina mentions, "Lyn," she's referring to Lyn Walsh, CEO and co-founder of Careity Foundation. Along with her best friend, Beverly Branch, Walsh and Branch founded Careity 15 years ago, inspired after both their mothers battled cancer.

"We work with hospitals and physicians," Lyn said. "We strongly believe that the funds we raise should go to help patients."

The foundation helps people who are often not covered by insurance and health plans. The Careity Foundation has several clinical staff members that work at the Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders.

Walsh, Branch and Dr. Joel Kleven work with patients



Beverly Branch, Lyn Walsh, Trina Hadley, Stacy Marquiss

to coordinate services from diagnosis through surgery and treatment

"We're very involved with every patient's journey, every step of the way," Walsh said. "We are saving lives in Parker County. There are a lot of people out there who don't want to know if they have cancer because they can't afford to do anything about it."

Careity Foundation is based in Parker County, but also serves patients in Tarrant, Johnson, Hood and Palo Pinto Counties.

"Lyn got me with Dr. (Ray) Page and Dr. DeEtte Vasques," Trina said. "I've never been more blessed by all of these people. The whole thread of the rodeo world and how the family cares for each other, whether we're blood kin or not, is simply amazing. Those fingers reach way across the U.S."

Doctors discovered Stacy's malignancy when she went to the doctor because her neck had swollen.

"I wasn't having any symptoms," she said. "I was running four miles a day. I thought I'd lifted something too heavy and strained a muscle somehow. I noticed that my heart was beating fast. It took them a long time to figure it out. That was the worst part of the deal."

Stacy underwent two biopsies and both of them came back inconclusive.

"Then they went into my chest cavity and found Lymphoma," Stacy said.

Through Lyn Walsh Stacy found, Dr. Ray Page and The Center For Cancer & Blood Disorders. "Dr. Page was ordering my test way before I met him and when the last test came back he said, 'I've been watching you from the bench for six weeks.' The almost two months of not knowing was dreadful."

Trina and Stacy were communicating the entire time.

"When she (Trina) got diagnosed I was at the hospital with her," Stacy said. "Then I came with her to The Center of Cancer & Blood Disorders."

When Stacy became part of Trina's support system in her battle with cancer, she had no idea that the disease was lurking within her.

"That was in October (2015) and I went for my first CAT Scan in December (2015)," Stacy said. "I was diagnosed Jan. 4, 2016. It was a mass bigger than a grapefruit between my sternum and my heart. I was running 20 miles a week. I had no idea that my left lung had only 40 percent capacity. I had noticed that my heart was racing a lot faster at times."

The CAT Scan revealed that the tumor was pressing against one of her heart valves.

"She's tough," Trina said of Stacy.

Trina was having indications of trouble. "Mine incurred with some digestive issues," Trina said.

When Stacy brought Trina to her first Chemo treatment, she had no idea that she would be returning a few weeks later for her own treatment.

"Stacy didn't want to lose her beautiful curls," Trina said. "So when she started her chemo her sister told her about an article she had read about something called a Cold Cap." At the time she was willing to try almost anything. Trina was there with her each time, changing the caps every 15 minutes so as to maintain that optimal freezing temperature required in order for the cap to work its magic.

Lyn and Beverly also were at Stacy's first chemo treatment.

Hair loss is one of chemotherapy's most despised side effects, not because of vanity but because hair loss tends to fuel stigma, revealing to the world an illness that many would rather keep private.

Few patients who are battling cancer want to have people they hardly know stop them at the supermarket, a restaurant or the mall to talk about their battle with cancer.

Here's how it works — the patient straps on a cap so cold it numbs the scalp during chemo. While it's not widely used in the U.S., it works well enough to be used widely in Europe and Canada.

The theory behind the Cold Cap is that near-freezing temperatures reduce blood flow in the scalp, making it harder for cancer-fighting drugs to reach and destroy hair follicles. But while several types of cold caps are sold around the world, scalp cooling during chemo is an idea that's been around for decades, but it never became popular in the U.S.

"It worked," Trina said. "It was 50 below."

It was uncomfortable, at times agonizing, but to Stacy it was worth the pain.

"It did, thank you, Jesus," Stacy said. "I had eight rounds of chemo and 25 rounds of radiation."

Every time Stacy went for chemo, two of her friends would go with her to help her manage her Cold Cap. Trina was always one of them.

"When I woke up from surgery and they told me it was cancer, the first thing I said was, 'I don't want to lose my hair,'" Stacy said. "My brother said, 'It will probably come back blonde and straight.'"

Is there an upside to being a cancer survivor?

"Yes. It's been the strength we found in going through this," Trina said.

Both are truly cowgirl tough. Both are still roping.

"I think it's our solace," Trina said.

Stacy has continued working full-time through it all, as a bartender at Fire Oak Grill.

"I couldn't have done this without my fire Oak Grill family," she said. "They've been wonderful."

Stacy is also a full-time college student who has kept up with her studies through the whole ordeal.

Her goal is becoming an algebra teacher.

What does it mean to have a close friend and confident at your side when you're fighting the most frightening battle of your life?

"It means everything," Trina said. "It's humbling to me to think that God had us in the palm of His hand the whole way. But, that's not to say that we ever coddled each other."

Call it courage or call it tenacity, but the girls call it something else.

"We are cowgirl tough," she said.

"We are cowgirls after all," Stacy said, "We believe that you have to get on with it. You either get on with living or get on with dying."

Both girls, health permitting, will be competing in the Careity Celebrity Cutting, on Friday, Dec. 2, 2016. 🍓

# Gina Wren —

## On the Battlefield With Powerful Allies?

BY MARSHA BROWN  
PHOTO BY TYLER MASK



Gina Wren

From the beginning, Lyn Walsh and Beverly Branch had a lot in common. Each had a heart of gold, they both loved to help others and — they had both lost their mothers to cancer in the same year.

Together, they resolved to help other cancer patients battle the disease.

But before they could help individuals fighting cancer like Gina Wren, they had to fund their mission.

They volunteered. They raised money and organized events that benefited various cancer charities. That was more than a quarter-of-a century ago.

“We started out volunteering and raising money for other charities,” Walsh said. “We helped other organizations for years, but there were services that we are passionate about providing that these other organizations either could not or would not focus on. Since we were

already raising the funds, we decided to establish an organization to provide these much-needed resources in our community. I guess you could say we wanted to take it a step further."

Careity is an organization that helps local patients in a different way, without all the red-tape and bureaucracy so often found in other charities.

A vision that developed into a reality in 2003 — Careity Foundation, an organization where the money raised goes directly toward helping patients and providing services for underserved people in this community.

Many people think that because of Obama Care or the Affordable Care Act, everyone has insurance and everything is fine. Unfortunately, that's not the way it is. Not everyone has health care and those that do, have a hard time getting the care they need as quickly as they need it.

A lot of the patients Careity helps are hard-working people who have not been able to afford adequate insurance or those who have insurance that simply won't cover the test or some of the procedures the patient needs.

Gina Wren was one of the former; a pretty, petite young woman with thick, long curly hair and a radiant smile. She was a hard-worker and a divorced mother of two. Her job was in the electronics department of the Weatherford Walmart, something she liked. But it worked both ways, her department manager and co-workers liked her as well. One of Wren's children is a special needs child Wren cares for with the help of her parents. Even with her parents' help, there never seemed to be an abundance of expendable income in her bank account.

If providing for her family wasn't enough, her health got in the way.

"I noticed a lump in my breast and it hurt," Wren said. "It was so bad that I couldn't lay on that side without pain."

So she went to her family doctor. "He told me I needed a mammogram. I said, 'I don't have the money for a mammogram.' My doctor said, 'Let me tell you about Careity.'

"I truly believe that it was God's will that I found Careity and The Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders. They took really good care of me.

When Wren's diagnosis came back, she had breast cancer, Stage #2. Not what anyone wants to hear but in this day and age your chances are good. Wren went on with her life that still focused mostly on work. Then, out of nowhere, she developed a limp.

"My boss walked by and said, 'What's with the limp?'" Wren said. "I had no idea. I thought maybe it was a touch of bursitis." She kept on going. Black Friday rolled around, Walmart's busiest day of the year.

"I went to pick something up and felt something like a tear in my back," Wren said. It was followed by excruciating pain that knocked her on the floor. "I couldn't get up. I just stayed there for a while."

Finally, she ended up in an urgent care facility. The doctor there told her she had strained a muscle and sent her home with a prescription.

Not until a couple of weeks later, when she was on

the operating table to get a port put in so they could start treating her breast cancer, did anyone realize there was something very wrong with the energetic young woman with the radiant smile.

At The Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders, doctors discovered what it was.

"They found that I had bone cancer," Wren said. "So now I had bone cancer and breast cancer. I'd been working at Walmart with a broken back."

Besides Careity's mammogram program, the foundation provides navigators to help patients undergoing chemotherapy or radiation.

Wren was in a body cast from Dec. 14, 2014, until March 15, 2015. "After the cast came off, I went to a walker," Wren said. "I had to learn to walk all over again."

Chemotherapy continued until mid-June of this year.

By the third week of chemo, she was losing her hair. "By the third week, if you needed to find me all you would have to do was follow the trail of black curls. The lady at the Careity office at the cancer center picked out a wig for me." That's another one of the services that Careity provides.

Careity provides mammogram vouchers, diagnostic procedures, surgical consults, biopsies, surgeries and more.

Careity's supportive clinical services are at the Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders; they include nutritional counseling and supplements, oncology massage, acupuncture and a variety of pain management support, psychotherapy, cancer navigation and a social worker.

Wren's hair is now growing back, and she's walking just fine. She is participating in a clinical trial.

"The last thing [they] told me about the bone cancer was, 'We can't cure it but we can manage it.' But you know, I truly believe that we will get rid of it. I honestly believe that cancer is not what will kill me. I'll probably die of something really stupid. But it won't be bone cancer." 🍓

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Careity Foundation has raised the bar among nonprofit organizations in helping with both care management and financial aid.

Careity staff works very hard every day with both the patients and clinicians to make sure that nobody falls through the cracks.

Gina Wren is one of those.

"I'm so grateful to Careity for all they did for me," Wren said. "I'm going to the chamber Luncheon because I want to thank everyone I can find who supports Careity Foundation and tell them how much I appreciate what they've done for me." And that she did in an eloquent style. Up front and center stage her testimony was wonderful. A video of Amanda Stevens and Gina Wren can be found on Careity's website at [www.Careity.org](http://www.Careity.org) Click on *In the News*.

**Over 7250 Services provided in North Central Texas!!**  
Clinical locations in Tarrant, Parker, Johnson, Hood, and Palo Pinto Counties.  
in The Center For Cancer and Blood Disorders



Amanda and children

**850+ Patients!**

### Cancer Navigation

A cancer patient navigator is an oncology nurse who is trained to help identify and resolve real

and perceived barriers to care, enabling patients to adhere to care recommendations and thus improve their cancer outcomes. They help patients by meeting with them and their families, calling them and going to doctors visits with them when needed. Personal guidance is provided to patients as they move through their cancer journey. Patients who have nurse navigators are more involved in their care, more informed as to how their cancer affects their life, and are usually better prepared to deal with their cancer.

### Dietician Services, Nutritional Supplements,

Nutrition plays an important role in cancer treatment and recovery. Registered and licensed dietitians help patients in their fight with cancer. A good nutrition plan helps keep the body stronger. Nutritional supplements are also provided to economically challenged patients.



**1500+ Services & supplements!**

### Patient Gas Cards

**800+ Gas cards!**



Cancer patients quite often exhaust their finances due to loss of employment, loss of insurance or lack of both. Many patients in our community have very long distances to travel for treatment and doctor visits. Radiology patients face a situation of having to commute to treatment on a daily basis for a long period of time. Many are in forced into a position to choose between food and fuel. Our team of social workers, determine the needs economically challenged patients within our community.

### Mammograms, Diagnostics, Biopsies and Surgeries

Careity offers free early detection and a critical comprehensive in-depth program for patients who are diagnosed. Access to our team of physicians for consults and surgery is rapid. A timely communication of treatment plans is vitally important. Within 48 hours of diagnosis, patients are contacted by a Patient Coordinator, through our team at The Center For Cancer and Blood Disorders. Careity patients are also eligible for clinical trials.



**900+ Medical procedures!**

### Psychotherapy, Social Worker and Chaplain Services

Psychotherapy counseling sessions are offered to cancer patients, and their families as they are dealing with various emotional issues stemming from their cancer diagnosis. Depression, anxiety, grief, anger, fear, stress, insomnia and feeling overwhelmed are typically addressed.



**2500+ Patient services!**

### Medical Massage Therapy, Reflexology, Accupuncture

These medical therapies are provided to patients to help them manage and better tolerate pain and nausea. It gives them a better opportunity to consider the positive aspects of the drugs in spite of some of the negative impact on the body.



**700+ Patient treatments!**