**Listed within these pages are the Brave Recipients that have battled Cancer; some battles won, some lost. But we continue to fight against this deadly disease with hopes that one day there will be a cure.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1997 – Vivian Langley** | **2005 - Natalie Lozar** |
| **1998 - Mariann Blotsky** | **2009 - Wendy Penton** |
| **1999 - Judy Spainhour** | **2009 - Doreen Sears** |
| **2000 - Sarah Keller** | **2010 - Denise Cohen** |
| **2001 - Debbie Bailey** | **2010 - Christian Cox** |
| **2001 - Joan Junghans** | **2011 - Cathie Szemere** |
| **2001 - Sue Harris-Scoggins** | **2011 - Jan Whitaker** |
| **2001 - Sandy Till** | **2012 - Sharon Riggs** |
| **2002 - Dianna "Dee" O'Dell** | **2012 - Vivian Langley** |
| **2002 - LeGail Brown** | **2013 - Jean Hatcher** |
| **2003 - Anita Graydon** | **2014 – Susan Clark** |
| **2003 - Lisha Turley** | **2014 – Sherry Paysinger** |
| **2004 - Suzanne "Sukie" Sheppard** | **2015 – Vicki Gongwer** |
| **2004 - Susan Cureton** | **2015 - Lisa Hollans** |
| **2005 - Ellen Colley** | **2016 – P.W.** |
| **2006 - Cindi Turnbull Langley** | **2016 – Marcie Agerton** |
| **2006 - Jennifer Ballard** | **2017- Patti Roper** |
| **2007 - Michelle "Mitch" Guilbault** | **2018 – Charlotte Cates** |
| **2008 - Kathy Mitchell** | **2018 – Leslie Holley** |
| **2008 - Dawn Clark** | **2019 – Nancy Walsh** |
|  | **2019 – Larkin Stringer** |

**Vivian Langley**

**Feb. 27, 1956 - May 6th 2018**

After being told for two years, "it is nothing to be concerned about", Vivian was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer in December of 1990, at the age of 34. Following a mastectomy, six months of chemotherapy, six weeks of radiation and 4 years of Tamoxifen, it appeared she was cancer free. Unfortunately, in July of 1997, seven years after her original diagnosis, Vivian's breast cancer returned as a small tumor in her lower left lung. Surgery was performed and she started the necessary chemotherapy treatments that lead to a Stem Cell Replacement. On December 21, Vivian received the good news that her bone marrow was back up and running. As Vivian said at last year's Mahatma Shuffle, "It was the first time since July 1st that I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that I was going to live. As I did that day and every December 21 since then, I bought the best champagne I could afford, toasted my good fortune and said a prayer of thankfulness for the blessing of surviving."

In August 2004, Vivian wrote:

"It is hard to believe that eight tournaments have been played since we lost our dear friend Debbie Stokes. I remember my former Mahatma teammates calling from a gathering after Deb's funeral to say they were going to have a golf tournament in memory of her and then donate the proceeds to me. They said they were going to do whatever they could to help me pay for costs and to get through my treatments for recurrent breast cancer. I was humbled beyond belief that they would do something so thoughtful for me. Talk about great medicine- their love lifted me so high that day as I mourned the loss of such a good friend. Being so far away and unable to be there made it all the worse. Although I was fortunate enough to have good insurance, the out of pocket costs did grow to a sizable amount. It was indeed a relief to know that when the time came to pay off the bills, I had it covered. I have always said that I have the best friends in the world. I believe it now more than ever! There were also others that played in the rain during the first tourney that I did not know so to them I want to say, I think you are very special too! From the bottom of my heart, I want to say how much I appreciate you thinking of me in such an extraordinary way during a particularly difficult period of my life. I continue to be ever so grateful to be alive, to be healthy and able to share with you annually at the Mahatma Shuffle."

Although she was a University of Alabama grad, Vivian resided in Auburn and worked for Auburn University's Department of Liberal Arts until January 2018.

Sadly, on May 6th our ‘Dancing Queen’ and beautiful friend Vivian passed away. Her battle with cancer was long and hard fought but Vivian left us with many wonderful memories.

She will be missed as the heart and soul of Mahatma, but she left us inspired to LIVE LIKE VIV!

**Mariann Blotsky**

Mariann was diagnosed in February of 1995 with chronic Myelogenus Leukemia. On June 30, 1995 she received a bone marrow transplant. Her brother, Steven, was her bone marrow donor. Mariann was extremely lucky because only Steven and her sister could be tested. Mariann received her treatments at Shands hospital in Gainesville, Florida. She was in the hospital for 8 weeks; receiving one shot of total body radiation and subsequent chemotherapy. She remained in the Gainesville area for further treatments for another 8 weeks. While Mariann still continues to have some health problems she faces them with courage and the conviction to continue to fight this disease each and every day. Mariann continues to work and plays in the Mahatma tournament every year.

When asked, "What did being a recipient mean to her", she replied "I was in awe of how much these women cared about me and about my health. Half of those women I did not even know! Every year since, I am still in awe of their capacity to love and care for all the recipients. Their generosity is amazing and it still blows me away every year when we get together.

**Judy Spainhour**

****September 28th, 1944- July 22, 2002 ****

Judy was an integral part of the Mahatma Shuffle from its beginning in 1997. An avid golfer, Judy played in the tournament every year and was always one of the first to donate prizes or volunteer to help in any way she was needed. Judy was the recipient for the Mahatma Shuffle in 1999 when she was diagnosed with a recurrence of breast cancer. Judy bravely fought her cancer for over nine years until she passed away in July of 2002. Judy was a great friend and supporter of others who fought this same horrible disease.

Judy’s love of the game of golf and for all of her friends who continue to play in this tournament each year is a testament to what a wonderful friend and golf partner she truly was.

Judy was a devoted Aunt to her nieces and nephews and their children, and was a great friend who will truly be missed by everyone who knew her.

Judy lived her life the same way she played the game of golf - with integrity, humor and love!

**Sarah Keller**

In June of 2000, Sarah Keller was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Sarah was only 41 years old when her cancer was discovered. After a full hysterectomy, which included the removal of a tumor the size of a pineapple, it was believed all was well. However, in January of 2002, the cancer returned invading her bladder and surrounding area. Once again, surgery was performed and Sarah remains cancer free. Sarah has continued to have health problems and has recently gone on disability from her job at Emory University in Atlanta Georgia.

Sarah wrote on June 15, 2005:

I was the recipient in 2000, when the tournament was played in Tallahassee, FL. Today I am free of cancer and owe it all to God, my doctors, family, friends and the Mahatma Shuffle. I am very thankful for everything that the Mahatma Shuffle did for me. I may not see everyone but once a year, but they are a great bunch of women. I love them all.

I had tried out for the Mahatma team as a pitcher after high school. It was at that time I met these wonderful women. I was only 17 that year and due to a car accident that broke my leg, I was unable to actually play on the team. However, I will always have a special place in my heart for them. Frannie Cox was my softball coach in High School and she taught me well.

**Debbie Bailey**

Debbie is 42 years old and is a Physical Education teacher

Opelika, AL. She is married and has two daughters. In April of 2001, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. After careful thought she decided to have a double mastectomy. Debbie believed, since she was the mother of two small children, that she should take all necessary steps to lower the possibility of more cancer in the future. Two days later she was given the gift of life when doctors told her that her lymph nodes were free of cancer. She however, did face six chemotherapy treatments. Throughout her illness, she continued to teach school every day and to be a terrific mom and wife. Debbie wants to give to others what she received from us and has offered to volunteer at all future Mahatma Shuffle golf tournaments.

9/20/2001 Debbie Bailey wrote: Sam, the girls and I can never thank you enough for your very generous gift. To our surprise, insurance has not covered everything and your gift will be most helpful. I would love to volunteer to help in any way when you host the tournament again. This is such a wonderful event and I would love to be able to help others that are fighting this terrible disease. Your kindness, caring and generosity have already touched many lives. I pray that the Mahatma Shuffle continues to grow and be successful. God Bless you all.

**Joan Junghans**

Joan was diagnosed with breast cancer in July of 2001 at the age of 43. She is married and has a 3 1/2 year old son. They live in Alabaster, AL where Joan works as a physical therapy assistant and enjoys swimming, attending sporting events and teaching pre-school Sunday school. Joan has undergone one surgery to remove a golf ball size mass from her breast and another surgery to remove her lymph nodes. She completed chemotherapy and radiation treatments. She is praying for a full recovery so she can continue doing what she loves most - spending time with her husband and her son.

**Sue Harris-Scoggins**

****October 10th, 1958- November 25, 2001 ****

Sue was born and raised in Montgomery, AL and graduated from Robert E Lee H.S. Sue married David in 2001, and with her 15 year old son and his three children, became a new family. Sue was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1997 and underwent chemotherapy and radiation. In 2001 she discovered a lump in her neck. It was determined that the cancer had returned and spread to her lymph nodes and brain. Sue was a Mahatma recipient in 2001, but was too ill to attend. She was touched to have been chosen as a recipient. Sue, an athlete all her life, was overwhelmed that other athletes who didn't know her would reach out to help. With that help, she and her new family were able to take one final family vacation to Disney World in October 2001.

**Sandy Till**

****May 4th, 1974- September 23, 2001 ****

Sandy was diagnosed with breast cancer in November of 2000. She was 26 years old. Many thought, even the Doctors, that she was too young to have this dreaded disease. She battled as hard as anyone but could not overcome what had stricken her way too early in life.

Sandy was honored to be a recipient of the 2001 Mahatma Shuffle. Sandy shared her story with the Mahatma participants that year and her smile, words and maturity beyond her years inspired us all! Sandy fought hard to be a survivor and was very encouraged by the camaraderie and enthusiasm at the Mahatma Shuffle. Sandy understood the power of the support in the Mahatma Shuffle and was proud to be a part of it.

Sadly this beautiful young woman lost her battle on September 23, 2001, only 3 weeks after she attended the Mahatma Shuffle.

**Dianna "Dee" O'Dell**

****March 17, 1966- April 15, 2003 ****

Dee attended the 2001 Mahatma Shuffle and had planned to be a participant in 2002. Dee however was diagnosed with an aggressive cancer, "Aden carcinoma," during the summer of 2002. It had attacked her vertebrae, right lung and right breast.

Dee battled many setbacks, but with unwavering determination and resolve, she attended the 2002 Mahatma Shuffle as an honored recipient. Dee lost her battle with cancer on April 15, 2003.

She had expressed to us how grateful she was for the Mahatma Shuffle experience. Her note stated:

"The memory of a good deed can never be taken from the heart of one who is grateful."

**LeGail Brown**

****November 29, 1965 - January 27, 2008****

At the time LeGail was selected as our recipient, she was 36 years old and was married with three daughters, ages 17, 16, and 10. She was a housewife and a student in Valley, Alabama. In August of 2000, she was diagnosed with colon cancer and had surgery and five months of chemotherapy. In March of 2002, the cancer returned and was found on her liver. One third of LeGail's liver was removed in April of 2002. Up until this past year, she had clear reports and had continued to feel blessed.

LeGail stated, "The last two years have been very hard and very scary, but I feel very lucky. The Lord has been good to us." She was very appreciative that a group of women, that she didn't know, would reach out to her and to her family in their time of need.

In September of 2002 LeGail wrote: The appreciation I feel can hardly be put into words. Thanks to all of you so very much!

On January 27th, 2008, LeGail lost her battle to cancer.

**Anita Graydon**

Anita is a 49 year old social worker who shares her contagious positive attitude and powerful faith with patients at several dialysis locations in Montgomery, AL. In June of 2003, she was diagnosed with breast cancer and had a mastectomy in July. After nine months of surgery, chemotherapy and radiation, in May of 2004 she was declared "cancer free."

Anita believes that her battle with cancer was a huge challenge and that with God's help and grace, she won. She is eternally grateful for the continued thoughts and prayers of the Mahatma Shuffle group. Anita looks forward to volunteering and being a part of future Mahatma Shuffle golf tournaments.

In October of 2003 Anita wrote: "I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the amazing and generous gift you all gave me. The check has given me extra peace of mind regarding my finances. The pillow is beautiful and inspiring. You are a wonderful group of women who are doing something very important."

**Lisha Turley**

Lisha is a 43 year old office manager from Atlanta and a former Mahatma Shuffle participant. She's an excellent Mom who loves spending time with her 22-month old daughter, Casey. She also enjoys participating in many outdoor activities. In November of 2002, Lisha was diagnosed with rectal colon cancer. She underwent colon surgery and endured six months of chemotherapy and radiation treatments. Lisha is now awaiting test results and hopes to soon be declared "cancer free." She, and her family, are truly grateful to the Mahatma family for their continued support.

Lisha wrote to us and said; I would like to thank you and the Mahatma Shuffle family for my gift. As I told you when I called, I am still overwhelmed by such a gift. I have been on disability and the timing was perfect to help pay for some of my bills. I can’t even begin to tell you how much it has meant to my family and me. Please pass this along and let them know how grateful I am. I hope to play next year and see everyone. I just had a checkup today and everything is looking good! I started back to work part-time and it has been nice. Here is a big hug to all!

**Suzanne "Sukie" Sheppard**

Many years ago, Sukie played softball against the original Mahatma Softball team. She was diagnosed with breast cancer in May of 2004 which required her to have a mastectomy and endure chemotherapy. She is a 46 year old occupational therapist and a mother of precious 5 year old daughter. Sukie has a strong faith and believes that it is in God’s plan for her to have this illness and to survive it. She’s prepared to be strong, courageous and fight this tough battle. According to her, she always knew that she had the best friends anyone could ask for, but didn’t realize how wonderful they were until her diagnosis. She was very appreciative of the help, love and support she received while being a part of this year’s Mahatma Shuffle and can’t wait to see everybody again next Labor Day.

In October of 2004, Sukie wrote: How do I begin to thank you for your generosity and kindness? I feel honored to be a recipient and very blessed to be your friend. It was nice to see all of my friends that I haven’t seen in years. I can’t wait until next Labor Day to see everyone again and be part of such a great cause. Thanks again and God bless you all!

**Susan Cureton**

****July 19, 1957 - July 25, 2007 ****

Susan Cureton was 47 years old and was widowed when her husband died after a six-year illness. Six months after her husband’s death, Susan was diagnosed with an extremely rare malignant cancerous osteosarcoma tumor inside her heart. She had to have open heart surgery and six rounds of chemotherapy in extremely high doses. Susan and her husband had been married 27 years and have two grown children. Her 26 year old son is mentally handicapped and lived at home with her. When her husband became ill she went back to school to become a medical decoder. She was too ill to participate in the Mahatma Shuffle but was overwhelmed by the act of kindness that a group of strangers offered her family.

Susan wrote us saying, "I appreciate all of the prayers that are being prayed on my behalf you just don't know how much. I really hope that I am able to attend the Mahatma shuffle this year and be able to express in person how much it all has meant to me. I don't know if Beth or Luanne told you, but right after I sent in my application to the tournament, I was let go from my job. It amazes me how God takes care of us. The money that I received was truly a God send and came right when I could use it most. "

On July 25th, 2007, Susan passed away after her formidable bout against cancer.

**Natalie Lozar**

Natalie Lozar, from Pontiac, Michigan is a single mother of 2 children, Trisha (19) and Joey (13). Natalie was originally diagnosed with lung cancer in December of 2004 and was told she had 3 weeks to live. Natalie endured chemo and radiation therapy and appeared to have had her cancer retreat into remission. In June of 2005, tests proved that her cancer had returned so she started a new, more intense regimen of chemotherapy. The chemo proved to be more taxing than the previous drugs, causing her to be extremely ill after every treatment and rotting her teeth. Her mouth is in constant pain and is in need of oral surgery. Although Natalies prognosis has not been good, she continues to keep a positive outlook as she scrimps to take care of her children. Because she cannot work, her only source of assistance is Social Security. Natalies mother and sisters do their best to help support her but under the circumstances it is not enough to make up for the loss of her full time job as a house keeper. Her hope is to get well, get back to work and provide a more stable environment for her children, especially Joey who worries on a daily basis that his mother is not going to make it. Natalie was unable to attend this year’s event but her sister Deb, spoke and thanked everyone one for their kindness and generosity towards her sister.

Sadly Natalie lost her courageous battle in 2009.

**Ellen Colley**

Ellen Colley, who lives in Pensacola, Florida, is a 44 year old elementary school teacher. She was diagnosed with stage II breast cancer on September 4th, 2004. After the initial surgery to remove her tumor, a mastectomy was performed because clear margins could not be attained. After 8 rounds of chemotherapy, she completed treatments with 6 weeks of radiation. Currently Ellen is doing extremely well and continues to be able to attend and participate in the Mahatma Shuffle. Ellen also contributes to the Mahatma Shuffle each year and is an inspiration to all of us who have known her for so long.

On November 1, 2005, Ellen wrote, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your gift. I am overwhelmed by your generosity. Words cannot express how grateful I am to have been chosen a recipient this year. The dedication to your friends (family) is truly commendable. I look forward to being a part of and supporting the Mahatma Shuffle for many years to come.

**Cindi Turnbull Langley**

Cindi Turnbull Langley is the sister in law of 1997 recipient Vivian Langley. Cindi is married to Max and they have a 12 year old son Rankin. Cindi is 49 years old and lives in Granville, OH, a small community 40 miles east of Columbus. She teaches in the Theatre Dept. at Dennison University and serves as Costumer Designer for all departmental productions. Cindi was first diagnosed 5 years ago with a very early stage breast cancer. At that time, she had a lumpectomy and was advised against further treatments. Last February, she found a lump in her right breast near the original site. In March, she had further surgery to remove the new lump but unfortunately 2 new cancerous tumors were discovered in her other breast. Tests also revealed that 2 of her lymph nodes were positive. Cindi finished her 8th round of chemotherapy on September 1st and will undergo her final surgery in October. She will then begin 7 weeks of radiation. Although she has a full time job, she is the sole source of income for the family as Max is a stay at home Dad. One of her biggest challenges financially has been traveling over 100 miles round trip to doctor appointments and treatments 5 days a week.

Cindi could not make the trip to Mahatma this year, but asked that we extend to you her sincere thanks for helping her. She told us that asking for help is a difficult thing for her to do but she is extremely grateful for this assistance during such an arduous and trying time. Cindi is most honored to be a part of the Mahatma family.

Cindi said, I am honored, proud and so very grateful for your generosity towards someone you have never met.

**Jennifer Ballard**

****July 19, 1972 - November 5, 2007****

Jennifer Ballard was a 34 year old single mother and sole supporter of an 11 year old daughter named Claire. Jennifer was originally diagnosed with breast cancer in July 2004. At that time a double mastectomy was performed and followed up with 4 months of chemotherapy and then 7 weeks of radiation therapy. In May of 2006, it was discovered that her cancer had returned. Not only was the new tumor 5 cm in size, but because of the close proximity to the heart it was inoperable. She underwent chemotherapy every Friday and continued this protocol for almost a year. Jennifer was the office manager for Bailey-Harris Construction Company and worked fulltime for as long as she could manage. However, with her cancer returning, she was forced to drop to part time to deal with her treatment regime. Due to her out of pocket costs: high deductibles, numerous ongoing prescriptions and co-pays, she was steadily falling behind. Half of her income went to cover her cancer related expenses. Jennifer’s family was already stretching financially because her elderly grandfather had been ill and resources have been used to take care of his needs. Jennifer was a courageous fighter and was whole-heartedly determined to beat her cancer. She was most appreciative of being given such an opportunity to catch up financially and had planned to volunteer for next year’s event.

On November 5th, 2007, Jennifer passed away after a gallant fight against her cancer.

**Michelle "Mitch" Guilbault**

****January 7, 1960 - February 14, 2011 ****

Michele Simone Guilbault, 51, passed away Monday, Feb. 14, 2011, at her home surrounded by many friends and her Florida family after an extended, courageous and determined battle with breast cancer.

Michele was born Jan. 7, 1960, in Montreal, Canada, and was a proud French Canadian who grew up speaking French as her primary language. She came to live in Tallahassee, Fla., in 1979 as the recipient of a full golf scholarship at Florida State University. Michele, a Canadian citizen, had been a U.S. resident since 1985, living in Tallahassee, Fla., and moving to Panama City Beach, Fla., in 2000. Before coming to school at FSU, Michele attended St. Thomas High School, graduated from Polyvalente Pierrefond, and attended CEGEP: St. Laurent in Canada. She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Physical Education and was on the Dean's list at FSU in 1982. Subsequently, she furthered her interests and education with studies at Tallahassee Community College and Gulf Coast Community College attaining an Associate's degree in Business Administration. Michele worked as a dental assistant, veterinary technician and practice manager, chiropractic assistant and as a Professional Golfer and teacher. Growing up and throughout her life, Michele's first love was golf.

As a young amateur, Michele's golf accomplishments included Montreal District Champ (1975), Quebec Amateur Junior Champ (1976-77-78), Quebec Amateur Champ (1976-77-78) and runner-up Amateur Champ in 1979. She also was Quebec Mixed Champ (1977), Canadian Junior Champ (1978), and Canadian Team Winner in the Commonwealth Championship, Perth, Australia (1979). She was named Athlete of the Year in Quebec in 1981. Her amateur Golf Coach was Gordon McGinnis. An all-round excellent athlete growing up, Michele took time out from golf to win several gold medal awards for downhill skiing in Quebec competitions, played ice hockey with a passion and played too many other sports to mention. By her 41st birthday, Michele churned up the waters off Panama City Beach wakeboarding, wake skating and wake surfing. In quiet times she could be found wherever there was water fishing and enjoying the salt life.

Michele won five individual collegiate golf tournament victories as a student athlete at Florida State University from 1979 to 1980. She was the Team Captain for all three years she played intercollegiate golf. Michele led the FSU golf team to the 1981 AIAW National Championship and received the All-America Award in 1981. For her outstanding collegiate career at FSU, Michele was inducted into the Florida State University Athletic Hall of Fame in 1998 and became a Lifetime FSU Varsity Club member. In recognition of her athletic career and accomplishments friends, fans and teammates established the Michele Guilbault Endowed Scholarship in Golf at Florida State University in 2009. Michele described the establishment of this scholarship in her name for the education of future Lady Seminole golfers as the greatest honor of her life.

After her stellar collegiate career, golf was not over for "Mitch." Even though suffering a severe back injury in her senior year in college, Michele turned Professional in 1988 playing on the Florida Central Tour, the Futures Golf Tour and the L.P.G.A. Tour for five years. Due to her chronic back injury, "Mitch" retired from the tour and in 2003 retained her amateur status in golf. In the last weeks of her life she continued to play golf, even for nine holes, and continued to soundly beat all her friends.

In addition to working, golfing, wakeboarding and volunteering time assisting with the caretaking of animals at Zooworld in Panama City, Michele loved to watch puppies do what they do and spend time with her cherished friends. She took precious time and energy in the last weeks of her life to personally thank all those friends who have been there for her throughout her illness and with whom she shared great happiness.

Preceding Michele in death were her grandparents, Charles and Mildred Guilbault and Alphonse and Simone Dionne, Aunt Monique Tocci and Uncle Albert Guilbault.

Mitch is survived by her parents, Paul and Denise Guilbault of Montreal, Canada; her sister, Lynn (Roger); brothers, Charles and Pierre (Marlene); nieces and nephews Vanessa, Antoine and Emily, Sarah and Simon; and many aunts, uncles, cousins and her stepson, Thomas G. Fowler. Her heart and soul rests with her life partner, Margaret P. Fowler, D.V.M., and she leaves precious little pet "ZZ" to continue to do what puppies do.

**Kathy Mitchell**

Kathy Mitchell is from Opelika, Alabama and is a special education aide at Opelika Middle School. She is 42 years old and has been married to her husband John for 18 years. They have three beautiful daughters Maria (14), Elise (12) and Julia (9).

On January 8, 2008, Kathy was diagnosed with infiltrating, ductal carcinoma and focal ductal carcinoma of the right breast. After a bi-lateral mastectomy, she began eight rounds of chemotherapy which were completed in June.

Then, in another strange twist of fate, her husband was diagnosed with what was thought to be advanced metastatic cancer to five organs. A young doctor noted test results that were not classic to cancer and discovered that John had a fungus, not cancer. After two weeks of high dose and very expensive antibiotics he was on the road to recovery. Kathy’s insurance covered a large portion of her costs but Johns medical costs were not. Kathy writes, "Thank you for allowing me to submit my name, application and situation. Unfortunately, breast cancer is becoming more and more prevalent. It is quite an honor to be a part of such a wonderful cause for those battling breast cancers. Each of you are a blessing."

The good news is that Kathy is back working full time again and both she and John have made full recoveries.

**Dawn Clark**

****October 5, 1961 - December 29, 2008****

Dawn Clark, 46 and her husband Alan, are the parents of three sons; Jake, Joey and Justin. In February of 2008, Dawn was diagnosed with fast spreading Stage IV metastatic breast cancer to her liver, back bone and lymph nodes under both arms. She started treatments in March to reduce the 30 spots found on her liver. Initially she responded well and she was very grateful the spots were fading. The lack of affordable insurance was the family’s biggest challenge, although Dawn had worked full time for the past eight years. After applying for Medicaid, Dawn was forced to give up her job and not work for five months to be eligible for Disability. The hope was that additional money would be available to assist the family since Alan had been disabled for some time and had also been turned down for disability. Gratefully, Alan’s parents were able to help them make ends meet and it was only a small fixed income from Medicaid that kept them going through her treatments.

Dawn wrote to us, "Sometimes I have good days & sometimes bad days. Why me I wonder? I cry, I pray I hope, I wonder how long I have to live. My life has been turned upside down. But I do know the good Lord has a plan for me and a much better one than I thought I did. I pray that a cure is on the way, but until that day I live every day to its fullest."

Sadly on December 29, 2008 Dawn lost her battle with cancer, but she never lost her spirit.

**Wendy Penton**

Wendy Penton is originally from Wetumpka, Alabama. She is 49 years old and her best friend is Anita Graydon, our 2003 recipient. As Wendy wrote, I never thought I would have cancer. Even after seeing Anita go through treatments, I didn’t think of me because the odds were against it happening. I was thin, didn’t smoke or drink, no family history!

On April 1st, 2009, yes on April fool’s Day, Wendy was diagnosed with breast cancer. After having a port installed for treatments, she began 16 weeks of chemotherapy. She is currently trying to finish all her rounds so that she can then proceed with surgery and finish with radiation therapy. It will be at a minimum, a 6-month process.

Wendy is 12-year full-time employee with the State of Alabama Division of Purchasing as a buyer. After her 2nd treatment she could no longer work and was forced to use the Family Medical Leave Act. Her leave time will run out in September and at that point will have no means of support until she is able to hopefully return to work beginning the 1st of the year.

Wendy has been an attendee and a supporter of the Mahatma Shuffle for many years and has always had a wonderful time. The thing Wendy is praying for the most is to be celebrating her 50th birthday at a party and not at the doctor’s office like this year.

**Doreen Sears**

Doreen Sears was 42 years old when diagnosed and as was her older sister, they both were battling breast cancer. As a way of supporting each other they tried to schedule their chemotherapy on the same day.

She was diagnosed on what people call the luckiest day of the century, 7/7/07 with a rare and extremely aggressive form of breast cancer called Triple Negative. It was named this because the cancer is not hormone receptive. She had a mastectomy with reconstruction in August of 07 and began chemo in October. By January however, a new tumor had begun growing in the reconstructed breast. This is rare occurring in only 4% of patients. Again, a mastectomy was performed.

Radiation followed and after 30 treatments her cancer returned to her skin in the form of a rash. Doreen was then referred to a specialist at Duke where she began an experimental treatment combining chemo & heat. Unfortunately the cancer continued to spread and an alternative chemo program was started at a local cancer center. She returned to Durham every 12 weeks for tests.

Doreen was hopeful that she would be selected to participate in a new PARP inhibitor trial, as this might have been her best hope for a cure. If chosen, she would have to travel to Bethesda, MD or Stanford, CA. As before, she would have to bear the brunt of all costs associated with her travel. Her biggest fear was that she would not be able to afford the expense of participating in the trial if selected especially knowing this may be the treatment that could have put her in remission.

Doreen had a wonderful circle of friends that supported and comforted her and feels very fortunate to have had them in her life. Doreen put together a team for this tournament & played as well as she could considering the effect the chemo & radiation have had on her body.

Doreen was an Instructional Specialist for Reading Literacy, K-12 grades in Columbus, GA. She was a 3rd grade teacher before taking this position. Doreen was able to work most days although the further her disease progressed, the harder it was for her to do so.

Doreen did learn that she was to be accepted into the experimental program but unfortunately the news came too late. Doreen lost her battle to breast cancer soon after receiving the Mahatma money which would have supported her travel to treatments.

**Denise Cohen**

Denise Cohen is 49 years old and lives in Manitou Springs, CO. She currently runs her own property management company.

Denise was diagnosed with breast cancer on June 16th. Not only was her tumor extremely large but her cancer was HERS2 positive which made it very aggressive. Initially she was advised in Colorado Springs to do chemotherapy first to shrink the tumor and then have a lumpectomy. However, a second opinion, at the Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, in New York City, recommended that she have a modified radical mastectomy stating her tumor was too large and aggressive to just do chemo first.

After her surgery, Denise developed a large hematoma in her chest and had to be rushed back in to surgery for a second time in 2 days. When the final pathology report was given, she was Stage 2 with 1 node positive. Her oncologist gave her the choice to 1) not do chemo, 2) do a standard protocol of chemotherapy or 3) participate in a Phase 2 trial with Taxol & Herceptin. Denise made the decision to participate in the trial. This requires her to stay in NY for most of the next year. Her chemotherapy regimen involved 12 weeks of Taxol & the Herceptin. She will finished her reconstruction after the initial rounds of chemotherapy and will complete the clinical trial after receiving an additional 40 weeks of Herceptin. By participating in the trial, a financial hardship was created from having to rent an apartment in NYC. Her absence will also be a drain on her small company from her not being there to run it. This additional responsibility will fall on her partner, Liz, who will stay in Colorado Springs most of the time to keep the company up and running. Additional staff will most likely have to be hired in her absence. When I asked Denise why she chose to do the trial, as they can be very risky, she said, "I am willing to make these sacrifices because I can hopefully help women in the future. I am young, healthy and the doctor believes I am an ideal candidate to participate. Hopefully, this is the right treatment for me and once done, I will be done with cancer forever."

Denise continues her treatments every three weeks in NYC and has already made plans to participate in the 15th Anniversary Tournament, Labor Day Weekend 2011. She is so grateful to the Mahatma Shuffle for its generosity and support enabling her to help other women in the future.

**Christian "Chris" Cox**

****September 14, 1952 - September 19, 2010 ****

Chris Cox lived her life with empathy and imagination and that is how she fought her battle with cancer as well. Chris lived in Tallahassee most of her life, graduating Magna Cum Laude from Florida State University with a BA in English. Chris loved words and books and used those skills as Editor of Law books for the Florida Bar. Chris natural instincts as a true humanist also helped in her mitigation work on capital punishment and death row cases.

Chris commitment to a clean and sober lifestyle deeply reflected her strength of character and commitment to aiding those in need.

Chris would tell you that her greatest accomplishments in life were her children, Elizabeth and Ross, to whom she passed her passion of the search for truth and compassion.

**Cathie Szemere**

****February 12, 1952 - April 6, 2013****

Cathie Szemere is a 59-year-old mother of twins, Michaela and Shannon, and devoted wife of 20 years to her husband, Barry. She has been a physical therapist for over 30 years and currently resides in Parkland, Florida. Her daughter Shannon has been attending the Mahatma Shuffle for the last eight years.

Cathie was diagnosed with colon cancer in June 2010. She underwent surgery to remove a 12 inch section of her colon and completed 10 chemotherapy treatments over the next six months. Scans from January 2011 showed no signs of cancer. However, while preparing for a hernia repair surgery five months later, they found a mass in her abdomen. Following an additional scan it was determined her colon cancer had returned and had metastasized in her liver and lungs. Cathie decided at that time to again undergo chemo treatments.

Shannon, Cathie's daughter, wrote, "All my life my mother has been the one to take care of people. She has made a career out of it, as a physical therapist. She raised my sister and I as a single parent and has made sure we had the tools to be successful in life, even if this meant she did without. I would like nothing more than to continue to give back to her".

In June 2012, we received an update that Cathie completed her last chemo treatment for that round just before Christmas and was able to take a two month break. The good news is during this time she was able to visit with family and a childhood friend she had not seen in years. On February 12th, Cathie turned 60!! Shannon and Michaela surprised their mom with a visit and presented her with a very special gift - a book of memories and birthday wishes from 60 of her childhood, college and work friends, as well as family members. The book was filled with pictures and funny stories which they ALL enjoyed!

Unfortunately, Cathie has had to undergo more treatments and surgeries, but her latest scans were clear and the doctor is very pleased with the results of her latest surgery.

Cathie continues to appreciate all the prayers and positive thoughts sent her way and looks forward to being at the 2012 Mahatma Shuffle with her husband and two daughters. Cathie was able to attend the 2012 tournament, spend time with her daughters and with her newly adopted Mahatma family. Unfortunately in April of 2013, Cathie's body gave out, but her fighting spirit never did!

**Janice Whitaker**

Janice Whitaker currently lives in Gadsden, AL. She is 53 years old and the mother of Whitleigh, a high school senior. Jan was diagnosed in August of 2011 with ovarian cancer. “I have a long road of recovery ahead, but with the love of family and friends, I will survive this disease. Although I have insurance, I am just beginning to see how out-of-pocket expenses can and will certainly take a toll on me. Ironically, this is the most difficult time for me financially, as well."

With the economic down-turn, Jan was forced to start a commercial cleaning business to supplement her income. She had been servicing the majority of the accounts personally when she was diagnosed. Once chemotherapy started, that income source was no longer available as she could not work. While keeping personal expenses to a minimum, she has been relying on the generosity of family and friends to get to her treatments and assist in any way possible. "Although this is very difficult for me, I realize how blessed I am to have their financial and emotional support. I have always found a way to take care of myself and others to whom I am responsible. But the world has changed drastically for me in the last month, and pride has been replaced with gratitude. I am thankful for every day and even more thankful for my friends and generous people like you, who have compassion for those in need.”

Jan was eligible for, and participated in, a clinical trial study through Duke University her first round of treatments. In a June 2012 update, Jan’s sister Joyce shared the following information…

Jan is presently in the final 2 weeks of this chemotherapy cycle. She had emergency surgery recently to remove a dangerously infected bottom port, but she is almost completely healed. A CAT scan will be performed three weeks from now, to see how effective the treatment has been. The good news is her numbers have steadily gone down, and this treatment (Carboplatin, Gemzar & Taxol) has not been as brutal to her system as the first round. She definitely feels better and has had an appetite. During Jan’s treatments, we met a patient that has been on this same protocol for 6 years. She goes into remission for months and then has to resume treatments when her numbers creep up. I asked Jan if this became a chronic condition for her, could she accept and deal with intermittent treatments. She said she could, especially since the treatment has not been as bad this time.

We look forward to seeing all of you again during the Mahatma weekend. I give thanks for you guys in every prayer about Jan's journey. We are continually thankful to be blessed by your generosity and your friendship.

**Sharon Riggs**

****March 26, 1961 – March 23, 2017****

“One never expects to wake up one day and suddenly have cancer.”

In June 2012, Sharon, 51 years old, noticed a lump in her breast and decided to get her first mammogram. The results showed three masses that were of concern, and on July 3rd she underwent a surgical biopsy where two masses were removed and determined malignant. On July 13th a unilateral mastectomy of her left breast was performed and she is currently going through follow-up chemotherapy treatment.

Sharon is self-employed and while her business has allowed her to meet all needs and expenses, she has not been able to afford health insurance for herself. Since her diagnosis she has been unable to work and the subsequent procedures have depleted her savings. “I am especially concerned that I will not be able to get back to work anytime soon. I’ve never been unable to provide for myself, and am completely overwhelmed at the prospect of having no financial stability or income.”

Knowing the circumstances of her long-time friend, Kelly Holland, a supporter of the Mahatma Shuffle, submitted Sharon’s name for recipient consideration. And, everyone who is part of the Mahatma Shuffle feels honored to be able to offer financial assistance to Sharon in her time of need. We wish her strength for her journey and hope for a full recovery.

Sharon is a resident of Hartselle, Alabama, and feels very fortunate to have her twin sister living right around the corner and many family members in close proximity. “Their emotional support is such a blessing and will be very important for me in the days to come.”

Sharon wishes to express her sincere thanks to the Mahatma Shuffle and looks forward to participating next year.

Sadly on March 23rd, 2017, Shay lost her long courageous battle with cancer.

**Vivian Langley**

**Feb. 27, 1956 - May 6th 2018**



Fourteen years ago Vivian was the initial Mahatma Shuffle recipient. It has been fourteen cancer free years since the successful surgery that removed recurrent breast cancer from her lung and uterus, and the sub subsequent stem cell replacement procedure that gave her immune system new life and Vivian a new lease on life.

So, it was stunning news when in September, 2011, tumors were detected in the hilum area of her lungs. Vivian recalled, “I just kept thinking how this could happen after fourteen years and why?” After a thoracotomy removed two of the tumors, leaving two that were inoperable, the biopsy confirmed the recurrence of breast cancer. “In that moment there was a huge sense of sadness, and then my heart said, ‘Ok Langley, three is the charm. It’s time to get back in the ring and fight’.”

Following a thorough consultation with her Oncologist concerning options for treatment, Viv began chemotherapy in October at East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika, Alabama. Every three weeks she was infused with the drug Abraxain; and other than the one and a half to two days in which she rested and recovered after treatment, her determination to live everyday “business as usual” was remarkable, her courage and “can do” spirit an inspiration.

Vivian had her first scan in December, ten weeks after beginning treatment, and results indicated that the cancer was stable. That being a good sign, it was decided to stay with the same course of therapy.

In the spring of 2012, although subsequent scans showed the cancer remained stable, the chemotherapy was beginning to take its toll. The quality of her functional daily life was suffering due to neuropathy and fatigue. In May, 2012, two days before she was to receive her next round of chemo, Viv made a decision.

“My doctor had always said I needed to tell her when it was time to take a break. The Saturday morning before treatment 13 on Monday, I woke up at 4:42 a.m. hearing a very clear, NO MORE CHEMO. I tell everyone it was my angels letting me know it was time to take that break.”

In July, two months after ceasing therapy, another scan was performed and showed, to everyone’s amazement that the tumors had shrunk. And as of this Mahatma Shuffle weekend her hair is growing back, neuropathy is improving, and the light of her beautiful spirit is shining bright.

Although she was a University of Alabama grad, Vivian resided in Auburn and worked for Auburn University's Department of Liberal Arts until January 2018.

Sadly, on May 6th our ‘Dancing Queen’ and beautiful friend Vivian passed away. Her battle with cancer was long and hard fought but Vivian left us with many wonderful memories.

She will be missed as the heart and soul of Mahatma, but she left us inspired to LIVE LIKE VIV!

**Jean Hatcher**

 **June 16th, 1964- February 26th, 2020**

“I was invited to play in the Mahatma Shuffle in 2001 and from that point on I was hooked. I love the Shuffle and all that it stands for and I try to play every year! I never thought I would find myself in these circumstances and filling out this application”

The application Jean Hatcher mentions is the 2013 Mahatma Shuffle Recipient application. In January 2013, Jean was diagnosed with a malignant inoperable brain tumor. It is located in the area of her brain that controls speech and memory. If she elected surgery, she risked losing her speech and memory along with the possibility of acquiring right side paralysis. And, unfortunately, chemotherapy was said to be ineffective for this type tumor and the location. In early 2013, she underwent numerous radiation treatments to stop the progress of the tumor. Today, she has a hard time finding the words she wants to say, has occasional falls and has problems with her short term memory.

Jean was able to join us at this year’s Mahatma Festivities all decked out in her beloved Georgia Bulldog’s red and black!!!!! She was very thankful for the thoughts and prayers, grateful for the outpouring of love and blessed to be surrounded by such a supportive group of friends. She pledged to not only attend the 2014 Mahatma Shuffle, but to be able to swing a golf club next time.

Jean passed away on Wednesday, February 26, 2020 from Cardiac Arrest. At her request she was cremated and requested no formal service.

**Susan Clark**

Susan Clark, an original member of the Mahatma Softball team, knew something was wrong when her faithful companion, Winston, a beautiful black cocker spaniel jumped on her abdomen and it hurt! Susan went to her doctor and was diagnosed with stage 1 ovarian cancer in March 2014. Susan underwent chemo-therapy treatments from April through August and her cancer is now in remission. Susan continues to be tested every 3 months and her numbers remain great!

Just after Susan was finished with her cancer treatments, it was discovered that Winston had cancer as well. Winston has completed his chemo treatments and is now healthy and still jumping on Susan.

Susan is a life-long Auburn fan and is also responsible for our tournament being called the Mahatma ‘Shuffle’. In the early planning stages, several of the original Mahatma softball team got together to try to put together a ‘small’ golf tournament to honor Debbie Stokes and help out our friend Vivian. In trying to determine the best format, Susan said “are we going to play that shuffle thing” meaning a scramble format… and that is how the Mahatma ‘Shuffle’ got its name!

Susan has been helped through her journey with faith, family and friends and of course her buddy, Winston!

**Sherry Paysinger**

Sherry Paysinger is a 62 year old mother, grandmother and high school teacher who was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in the spring of 2014. After her diagnosis Sherry had a complete hysterectomy at the University of Alabama, Birmingham in May of 2014. After surgery Sherry underwent chemo-therapy from mid-June until the end of September and is now Cancer Free!

Sherry acknowledged that our financial gift definitely helped defray the cost of mounting medical and travel expenses and that the expressions of love we shared will continue to touch her heart for a lifetime.

Congratulations Sherry!!!!!

**Vicki Gongwer**

****September 5, 1959 – May 29th 2017****

Vicki Gongwer is an Indiana native that lived in Birmingham from 1988 to November 2010.  While living in Birmingham, Vicki played in the Mahatma Shuffle several years and has always been supportive of the event.  She currently resides in the Villages, FL and has supported other breast cancer tournaments in Florida.  Vicki feels that she has been blessed to have made many wonderful friends at the Villages that have supported her since being diagnosed. Vicki was diagnosed with breast cancer in April 2015 and had a bi-lateral mastectomy. It was discovered that she had both invasive and non-invasive carcinoma in both breasts. After three surgeries to get clear margins, it was also determined that she was triple negative. Although she has had struggles with surgery wounds healing and her treatments, Vicki continues to be upbeat as she continues her battle.

Vicki is very supportive and thankful to the Mahatma Shuffle for the support received.  She is hopeful that she will be able to attend this year's 20th Anniversary Mahatma Golf tournament as she was not able to travel to last year's gathering.  After the event, Vicki wrote to thank us and say that it was a privilege to be considered, but, such a blessing to actually be a recipient.  It was something that she had never imagined possible. She also emphasized that God continues to guide and bless her each and every day.

In May, Vicki left this earth knowing she had fought a courageous battle! She will be missed every day.

**Lisa Hollans**

Lisa Hollans is a strong, independent mother of four. Friends feel the success of her children is a direct reflection on the wonderful mother she is to them.  Lisa loves life, all people, her family and her friends.  She is a resident of Notasulga, AL and was first diagnosed in 2008 with ductal carcinoma. It was also found that she was triple negative.  In 2015, during a routine medical check, it was determined a double mastectomy would be necessary and any further treatments would need to be determined. All subsequent procedures, including follow up surgery last fall, went well and Lisa is now considered in remission. She is an employee of Auburn University and works for Student Services in the School of Forestry and Wild Life Services.

Lisa and her family plan to attend this year's Mahatma Shuffle as volunteers and participants. She has said she is so grateful to have been a 2015 recipient at a time when she needed support and feels it is now her turn to give back to other women in need and battling cancer.

**P. W.**

P was diagnosed in March with metastatic breast cancer to her bones after mammograms twice missed her tumors. She opted for a complete mastectomy and began 10 radiation treatments to eliminate the cancer in her upper femur and pelvic area. Subsequent scans also discovered a large mass in her uterus which when removed was found to be thankfully benign.

Fortunately she will not need chemotherapy at this time but her current follow up care involves taking an expensive daily hormone inhibitor as well as a costly bone strengthening drug monthly at the Cancer Center.

Working for the state means she does have insurance but due to 2 surgeries she has exhausted all of her leave time. Having to take off time for continued testing and follow up care has created a hardship since it is now leave without pay. Although her partner helps with the needs of the family, this medical situation has created the stress of money being tight to make ends meet.

In talking with P., she is very grateful for Mahatma’s help never dreaming she would ever be the one in need of assistance.

**Marcie Agerton**

Marcie Agerton from Pensacola having relocated from Nashville. She is 47 years old, married to Angie Jones and is the proud mother of 2 “four legged” babies - Bella and Percy.

Marcie was employed by Lowe’s for 22 years as a regional human resource director in Nashville, a position that put her in charge of 7 states.

On April 1, 2011, she heard the words “you have cancer”. On May 5, she had a radical mastectomy with lymph nodes removed. After a whirlwind of test and surgeries, her oncologist broke the news that it was breast cancer and it had metathesized to the bones. Her oncologist shared that she will need treatments for the rest of her life.

Marcie continued to work but in spite of every treatment, the cancer continued to progress.  In the fall of 2012, she had to make the difficult decision to medically retire. She describes this decision as more difficult than hearing the words, you have cancer.

Marcie was on a clinical trial for 3 years but was discontinued in December 20. is taking Ibrance a new drug on the market. With this drug came a huge monthly copay but with help she is now eligible for a discount.

Despite chronic bone pain and days when she is immobile, Marcie embraces life. She makes herself get up every day whether she feels like it or not and goes out to enjoy life as best she can.  Only a handful of people have seen the other side to her.

When she is able, she works to support the American Cancer Society by helping her team fundraise for the Pensacola Making Strides against Breast Cancer Run. They have been one of the top teams.

Marcie’s true support system includes Angie and a small handful of friends which has expanded since Mahatma last summer to take time off from work, without pay, to accompany her to appointments. She wrote, “it is difficult that only a few understand that do we need help and know what these trips to doctor’s appointments in Nashville are like and the toll that they take on both of us.”

**Patti Roper**

Patti Roper is 54 years old and has played in the Mahatma Shuffle golf tournament for the past 5 years. Patti is married to Anne and they have been together 22 years.

On November 26, 2016 Patti received a mammogram that showed a dark image. Since she had a similar situation 10 years earlier, that turned out to be benign, her doctor decided to wait 3 months and see if there were any changes. Another mammogram and ultrasound in April 2017 showed that the image was even more defined and had grown. After an MRI and a needle biopsy, Patti was diagnosed with DCIS (Ductal Carcinoma in Situ)**.** Patti’s doctor said catching this type of cancer so early was life saving for her. The location of the cancer is in an area where she would have never felt a lump until it was too late. The only way to find this cancer was from a routine mammogram. Patti had a lumpectomy on August 4, 2017 at St. Francis Hospital.

Patti has also been dealing with shingles in the cornea of her eyes for the last 20 years and mustbe monitored closely so she does not completely lose the vision in both eyes. Due to the shingles she now has to wear glasses and hearing aids.

Patti and Anne have been dreaming of a new house for years and in November of 2016, the same month of her initial mammogram, they found a subdivision that both agreed upon and placed a contract on their dream home! Truly a blessing in a dark time.

Patti said “we have always had so much respect for the compassion and generosity you have given to the recipients. We are touched every year by the stories of the recipients and feel blessed to be able to support this wonderful cause. We give every year because we know cancer is an awful disease that affects so many families every year. Both of our families have been touched by this disease in the past but we never imagined that it would affect either one of us. We never thought we would be in the same position as the recipients that we hear stories about every year.”

Patti continues, saying “I am so blessed to have a wonderful support system that includes my wife, mother, aunt and uncle, my in-laws and the best church family anyone could ask for. My wife has taken me to every doctor’s appointment and has been my rock through this terrifying ordeal.”

Patti’s name was submitted by her dear friend, Lorrie Watt, and they now play in the Mahatma Shuffle together.

**Charlotte Cates**

Charlotte Cates is from Auburn, Georgia, and was nominated by her friend (and longtime friend of the Mahatma Shuffle), Angie Jones. On April 4, 2018, Charlotte said she was hit with severe pain in her back, so she went to Urgent Care, and they sent her straight to the hospital. Five hours later, what she thought was perhaps appendicitis, turned into a recommendation to see an oncologist. Three days later, she saw the oncologist who discovered a large mass on her right ovary. The doctor told her it would be a small surgery (about 1 hour) to remove the mass, and for her to plan on a 4 day recovery. When surgery was performed two weeks later, it took 3 hours – the doctor removed her fallopian tubes, both ovaries, uterus, appendix, lymph nodes, and scraped her colon. It turns out that she had stage 3 uterine cancer and stage 1 colon cancer at the same time. She was prescribed a treatment regimen of 9 rounds of chemo, 6 rounds of radiation, followed by another 9 rounds of chemo.

Charlotte is 58 years old and a self-employed farmer. Since beginning her treatment, she’s only been able to work part-time because of the physical demands of her work. She has no insurance and her savings have been depleted paying for the surgery. She has received some financial support from a Go Fund Me account that friends set up for her, and a cancer center has helped pay for a month’s electric bill, gas and food, and she was so grateful for that support. “But,” she says, “the bills keep piling up and the stress of that can kill a person.” Charlotte says she is incredibly blessed with wonderful family support – since her surgery, she has had at least one of her Moms with her at all times. She calls them her “Wardens.” She says, “They both know that before all this happened, I was a workaholic, so they’re here to keep me in check and to be with me during chemo and radiation treatments.” She also has other family and friends nearby who help her out. Charlotte says it is such a blessing to be a Mahatma Shuffle recipient and wants everyone to know that so far, everything looks good with her treatments, and she’s feeling great.

And just a little side note – Charlotte was quite the softball player in her youth. First, playing with the Tifton Tomboys and then playing for Joanne Graf at FSU. She says another incredible blessing that’s happened because of the Mahatma Shuffle is that through this network she has reconnected with so many people she knew and loved from the old softball days – she says this is “priceless emotional support.”

**Leslie Holley**

Leslie Holley lives in Auburn, Alabama. She is a 46-year-old single mom, raising two sons – 18-year-old Sawyer and 15-year-old Max. Leslie was nominated by her cousin, Rhea Ingram. Rhea and her partner, Sandy Atkins are longtime friends and supporters of the Mahatma Shuffle.

In March of 2018, Leslie had a mammogram that indicated some inconsistencies – she then had a second mammogram that showed a 2 cm mass. After the biopsy, she had a lumpectomy and 10 lymph nodes removed. This was unsuccessful as the doctors were unable to obtain clear margins, nor properly diagnose the cancer. She decided to get a 2nd opinion, which led her to the Cancer Treatment Centers of America in Newnan, Georgia. Leslie’s “Dream Team,” as she refers to her doctors there, quickly diagnosed the cancer is invasive lobular carcinoma and prepared her for what was to come: a bilateral mastectomy and 35 radiation treatments – one a day for 5 weeks beginning in august. Leslie had the mastectomy on June 26, and her doctor found a second tumor in the same breast that was 4 times larger than the original mass detected by the mammogram. Her doctor said he had treated over 200,000 women with breast cancer and this was a first for him. He did not have an explanation for how a tumor that size would not show up during testing – an extremely unusual case. The discovery of the second tumor took the cancer status from stage 2 to stage 3, but her oncologist told her that this type of cancer is curable, and she was very encouraged by that.

Leslie said, “The way I see it, is that you go through the storm to get to the beautiful weather, and I can see that horizon. The storms are just serving to make me stronger and better.”

Leslie is store manager for DSW at East Chase in Montgomery, but has been unable to work since May 3, and is currently on disability. She does have insurance but has already exceeded both in-network and out-of-network deductibles. With out of pocket expenses mounting as her treatments continue. And, she will be on a hormone blocking drug for the next 10-15 years. She says, “This diagnosis has been life-changing and challenging on many levels. But, I have an amazing family – just take Rhea and Sandy as my examples – while difficult for them as well, they make it easier for me. It is an honor to be selected as a Mahatma Shuffle recipient. It means so much to me and for my family.”

**Nancy Walsh**

Nancy Walsh is 53 years old and from New Orleans, LA. Nancy was nominated by her friend and long-time friend of Mahatma Shuffle, Vicki Carson.

In August 2018 Nancy was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer. She had surgery to remove her right breast gland and 5 lymph nodes. Her treatment required 6 rounds of chemotherapy and 28 days of radiation. She now receives maintenance chemotherapy every 3 weeks. Nancy says she’s been very blessed to have her sister taking care of her. “My sister has been the best coach I could have because she’s pushed me in ways I needed to be pushed.”

Nancy teaches at Cabrini High School in New Orleans, and is the coach of the JV and varsity basketball teams. Due to the intensity of the treatments, her doctors didn’t want her to teach or coach this year – she told them that would not be an option. The administration at Cabrini stood behind her, providing substitute teachers after each chemotherapy treatment and her assistant coaches carried on with the basketball teams.

Nancy says, “I’m so grateful for my colleagues at Cabrini High School, the New Orleans basketball community, ex-players and friends from all over the world who have prayed for me during these challenging times. And, I’m extremely fortunate to have my faith, family and doctors to help me conquer cancer.”

**Larkin Stringer**

Larkin Stringer is 34 years old and from Cumming, GA. Larkin was nominated by her good friends and longtime Mahatma Shuffle supporters Emily Chambers and Maria Hurtado.

In December 2018, Larkin suffered a stroke and was hospitalized and treated for what doctors thought was a blood clot infection. She was released from the hospital after 12 days, but soon returned with severe blood clots. During her 42 day hospitalization she suffered 3 more strokes and doctors began searching for the cause of her illness. A PET scan revealed cancer in 6 lymph nodes and diagnosed as stage 4 Adenocarcinoma. Larkin received 8 rounds of chemotherapy, after which scans showed no signs of active cancer and is receiving immunotherapy to help keep the cancer at bay.

Larkin has not worked since suffering the strokes, and hearing and nerve damage from the chemotherapy have left her unable to drive. Since her treatments, her parents have provided the extensive care she needs, along with help from some close friends and extended family.

Larkin says, “I’ve always been an adventurer who loves to explore and enjoy hiking and kayaking. Through this experience I’ve grown so much more appreciative of all the things I used to be able to accomplish physically – not just the big adventures, but even the smallest of things like driving a car. My new found passion is to help the people I’ve met and those I’ve yet to meet who are going through their own cancer journeys – to lend an open ear and open heart and support them with hope and compassion. I would love to go back to school and become a nurse.”