



I am why you give.....You are why I am an Elk....

I am a mother, wife, daughter, sister, grandmother, and friend. I am a proud Elk, and...

I am a Cancer Survivor!

This is me at our Fall State Convention presenting this gentle giant, our State Co-Chairman for Cancer Research, Mr. Don Schoeff a check for our lodge Cancer Research Fundraiser. The joy, on his face and mine is why you give.

Three years ago, some friends of ours convinced us into joining a "lodge". Thinking to myself, we are too busy, have too much going on, and honestly...are we "at that age" to join some lodge? But we gave it a shot. We visited our local Greenfield Elks Lodge a couple times for dinner and a comedy show. Spoke with a few members, both young and old, and learned what the Elks organization was all about. We knew we had found a great place.

My husband joined first. I believed in keeping "tradition" and I was happy to support him as a wife of an Elk. I found a wonderful group of ladies who, like me, wanted to make a difference and "help revive" this lodge. Reforming our lodge Lady Elks, we had grand plans and started raising money to do some minor repairs around the lodge and support our community.

Still not truly "knowing" the members other than the few parties and dinners we had attended, the first big benefit we took part in was our 2017 Member Open House and Rock for Research Fundraiser. We were helping out as we could by both my husband and I playing Elroy, dancing by the roadside to get attention to bring people into the lodge, donating blood and preparing for the event that evening.

This became a wonderful distraction for me. I was going into this event with a secret. I had found a lump in my left breast and would be visiting the doctor on Monday. The fear and emotions I had going into the evening was almost more than I could bear. But that night, I saw this amazing group of people come together to raise money to help find a cure for what I feared we were about to live. I was proud to be a part of these amazing people. They are why I am an Elk...

Two days after the fundraiser, I was diagnosed with Stage 2 Breast Cancer, and so began our journey. With multiple doctor appointments and pre-op procedures, we soon became too busy

to be “active” members. My husband would attend meetings, as he was Chaplin for our lodge. He would fill them in on how everything was going, but we were far from “regulars” at the lodge at this point.

Nearly two months had passed, when I was lured to the lodge one evening. I had been preparing for surgery later that week and truly did not feel like making a visit. But I kindly agreed. What I walked into was something pretty crazy! A surprise Ta-Ta party. I mean who in their right mind does this?....Well, these crazy wonderful people do. The lodge was filled with many members, my friends and my family, all to surround me with love, prayers, and to brighten the fact that I was soon to be going through the most difficult year of my life. This group of people, most who were still strangers to me, showed so much love and support to someone they barely knew....They are why I am an Elk....

Three surgeries, twelve rounds of chemo, and in the middle of eleven months of maintenance therapy, the Greenfield Elks has been here and supporting me and my family. As soon as I was able, I knew I needed to be more than just the wife of an Elk, I needed to pay it forward. I needed to make a difference and I needed to be an Elk. I was so proposed as a member and followed my husband as Chaplin in the spring of 2018.

Feeling a little better, getting my strength back, and able to do more, my husband and I asked if we could take a major role in the fundraising efforts for the 2018 Rock for Research Event. With the guidance of Mike Jack, who has led many efforts in our fundraising events over the last years, we set out on our mission. We challenged our members to open their wallets with different fundraising events. We set up hosting a Sip n Dip for a Cure, a few 50/50 raffles, partnering with a local restaurant for a Cancer Charity dinner, and organizing an Indiana Elks Recipes for Research cookbook. We reached out to our community for donations, items for auction, new members and anything to help make our event successful.

I set a goal of \$10,000 and upon its announcement received a few snickers. We had raised a fantastic \$4000 the year prior which is pretty great for such a small lodge. But now I was asking these people to pull together and more than double that! Now it became a challenge! The more we worked, the more members got on board, the more members that got on board, the bigger our event became.

We ended up with more than 57 community sponsors and nearly 200 people in attendance for our 2018 Rock for Research Event. Not too shabby for our little lodge!

This past fall, we were able to present a check for \$10,100 toward our State Major Project, Cancer Research. YES, we hit our goal!

Just remember that I am why you give! I am here today, because you give! If this were just a few short years ago, and without the advancements in Cancer Research, my story could be a whole lot different and I may not be here today, asking you to give. But I am. I am a Cancer Survivor because you give to this amazing project! YOU are why I am here, and YOU are why I am an Elk.

Each and every one of us, working together, are making a difference. Please continue this fight to Find a Cure for Cancer! Support your local lodge and their efforts in raising money for Cancer Research and know: I am why you give and YOU are why I am an Elk!