



A Prideful Day

By JACK MacKENZIE, CGCS
North Oaks Golf Club
Editor

On Monday, following the Wee One Golf Tournament while consuming delectable post play goodies, I sat next to one every lucky gentleman. Having purchased several lengths of coupons to be utilized as chances for the many raffle items, he was fortunate enough to win two big prizes...the lucky dog!

Esophageal cancer is cancer that occurs in the esophagus - a long hollow tube that runs from your throat to your stomach. Your esophagus carries food you swallow to your stomach to be digested.

Esophageal cancer usually begins in the cells that line the inside of the esophagus. Esophageal cancer can occur anywhere along the esophagus, but in people in the United States, it occurs most often in the lower portion of the esophagus.

To be able to host the event was a treat. The weather perfect, the sponsor list long and the quality of golf equally awesome, but the best for me was the fraternal bond that emanated throughout the ballroom following the round. It was mutually understood that the competition was neither about a trophy nor pro shop prizes. We were not there for braggers rights or proxies. And although the food was terrific, the culinary display was a mere distraction.

The day was important for one reason alone, we were celebrating

the opportunity to help one of our professional peers, an individual who had suffered a stroke of bad luck and for whom we could rally and lend our support not only monetarily but more importantly through our compassionate presence. In this world of me, me, me this unselfish gesture is rare and very heart warming.

Those in attendance were not brave in their consideration, for that tribute went to the honored guest Tom Fuller and his family. In a very humble presentation Tom reflected upon his deteriorating lung condition and current status giving insight into a life jarring situation none in the room could fathom, well, maybe one. Tom was very appreciative for the contributions but in private he told me the greatest gift was the emotional support from his colleagues that he and his family have felt during his ordeal. "Nobody in the support group activities I attend has received such an outpouring of support from their industry peers. What you guys and the Wee One Foundation have done is unheard of. Thank you, thank you."

It's not clear what causes esophageal cancer. Esophageal cancer occurs when cells in your esophagus develop errors (mutations) in their DNA. The errors make cells grow and divide out of control. The accumulating abnormal cells form a tumor in the esophagus that can grow to invade nearby structures and spread to other parts of the body. Early esophageal cancer typically causes no signs or symptoms.

It was a prideful day. I struggle to imagine any other vocational group that "gets it" when it comes to life difficulties. Is it because the product we produce is a living dynamic, ever changing with the whims of Mother Nature? Is it because we can comprehend the challenges beyond our control and appreciate that some problems we can deal with alone and others require a request for help? Is it because we understand the frailty of life? Is it because we were born with a 'compassion chip', an inherent quality required to be a good multi-tasking manager? How about all of the above?

My heart crept to my throat several times the afternoon of the Wee One event. During Tom's soft spoken presentation, while one after another the cash winners contributed their substantial winnings to the cause and finally following the party when my table neighbor, Kerry Anderson, the lucky dog, leaned over and said, "I am here today to support this amazing event because three years ago the Wee One Foundation was there for me when I needed it most. You see, I am a cancer survivor; one of the baddies, esophageal cancer."

Ensuing conversations with Kerry gave me more insight to the amazing benefits of the Wee One Foundation. The financial brace was welcome as it helped to relieve the stress of making payments during the six months he was absent from the work force. However it was the emotional foundation created by the compassion from his professional peers that built Kerry's moral during the rigorous eradication procedures and ensuing recovery.

In his words:

"It is truly breathtaking what was given to me through my many friends and peers. When you are going through this horrible moment in your life, your family and friends mean more than you will ever know. After the meeting I went up to Tom, a new friend in my life, and wanted to offer words of encouragement. All I wanted to say was, when you are in the presence of such giving people for your benefit, it can truly be humbling. Thank you can't ever express enough, what our friends can do for us. All we can do is emerge out of this moment, keep positive, and know we will be better. Then, it's our chance to really thank everyone by giving back in whatever way we choose to this wonderful group.

The Wee One Foundation was started because of a Fraternity of friends that knew Wayne Otto, and wanted to honor him in some way. But, what I don't think they realize is how important their actions have become. It is amazing what they have created for the benefit of others, not just financially but emotionally. I will never be able to say thank you enough for their efforts. I can only have the opportunity to give back. Please consider supporting the Wee One Foundation in any way you can."

Wow, aren't we all a pack of lucky dogs to have such a fraternal safety net in place.



Vendor DIRECTORY

Connect with Vendors Face-to-Face and All Year Round!

Turf, fertilizer, plants and much more... easy to find at the Northern Green Expo Vendor Directory.

Access this new year-round service at MTGF.org, MNLA.biz and NorthernGreenExpo.org!