



A Note from a Friend

In 2008, my best friend, Connie Mack Boykin was diagnosed with stage 4 prostate cancer. We were both devastated to find out he was terminal. He had been my best friend since 1961. Since second grade, we had been in and out of trouble together; played many sports together; hunted, fished, and fought together. He even saved my life once when I fell in a lake duck hunting at 18 degrees and my muscles stopped working. Two years later I returned the favor when he fell in at 13 degrees and I had to carry him out of the woods over my shoulder. But there we were in 2008, and we both felt helpless.... His local oncologist told him that if he followed the treatment plan, he might live three years. He would begin with hormone treatments and when that stopped working, he would take chemo. When the chemo stopped working there would be nothing else they could do for him, and the cancer would take him.

He began searching for someone who could treat him beyond chemo. Everyone pointed him to Dr. Oliver Sartor at Tulane Cancer Center. We were all excited to learn that right here in our own back yard, we have the best in the nation, if not the world, at prostate cancer research and treating advanced prostate cancer.

Meanwhile, Connie Mack wanted to do something to help keep other men from having to fight the same battle he was fighting. So, we started a sporting clay shoot to raise money for prostate cancer research and awareness. We named it "The One Man Shoot" because we feel that one man or woman can make a difference. All of the funding raised goes to Tulane Cancer Center for prostate cancer research and awareness.

As the word spread that we were putting this inaugural fundraiser together, I was very moved by the people who started donating their time, money and passion to the cause. One of the ladies who showed up at an early meeting wore a red tee shirt that said, "Save the Males." That lovely lady was Janey Nasca. She joined our committee because her husband, Joel Nasca, also had prostate cancer.

Janey later introduced us to the "Blue Ribbon Soiree," where friends and family of Larry Ferachi and Joel Nasca were raising funds for the same exact cause. Believe it or not, it has been a great marriage between indoor glamour and outdoor gunpowder. Now, multiple members of each group help with both fundraisers. My wife Joleen and I are very blessed to be on both committees with such great people.

My buddy passed away in 2013. Thanks to the loving hand of God and the advanced treatment he received at Tulane from Oliver, he lived 2 years longer than anyone expected. I still catch myself wishing I could have saved his life one more time.... but I know God had a better plan.

At the first shoot, many of us struggled with the emotions of Connie Mack's disease. One of our mutual friends from high school asked me a very disturbing question. He said, "What kind of God would give something like this to such a good man as Connie Mack? Suddenly, it was as if God turned on the light so I could see clearly. I said, "A pretty smart God. How many people do you think are here today at the shoot?" He said, "5-600." I asked him, "How many people do you think would be here supporting the cause if God had given this disease to a jackass?"

It's obvious that Larry Ferachi and Joel Nasca were also extremely good men who were loved by many people. Since its beginning, the Blue Ribbon Soiree has raised over a million dollars. The One Man Shoot has raised about \$1.3 million. Together they have raised 2.3 million dollars for prostate cancer research and awareness and we are not done yet! Many other great people have brought wonderful groups and families to these functions to make a difference.

In addition to the fundraising, I can't tell you how many men have told us that they never checked their PSA until they went to the Blue Ribbon or to the Shoot. Some have discovered their PSA levels were high and thanks to that early detection have been successfully treated.

Every time I think about it, I am blown away by the generosity, love and compassion of our donors, volunteers, families and community. You have helped so many people we know... but way more that we will never know. You are making a difference.

I can't thank you enough for your continued generosity/support and for allowing my wife and I to be a small part of it all.



Randy Hays

Committee Member