



By Carolyn Lee
The Imperial Republican

The “Moving Forward With Hope—ALL Cancer Walk,” sponsored by Chase County Community Hospital on Saturday, drew a crowd of people and touched on many emotions. It was a day of hope and remembrance for most of those involved.

The past three years the walk recognized breast cancer patients. This year, according to Chairman Francisca Morales, “We decided per input from community members to change it to all kinds of cancer.”

Morales said 90 people walked a 5K course around Imperial, or in the Chase County Schools gym, to raise over \$4,000 for cancer patients and their families in Chase County.

There were a number of speakers featured, including Stephanie Williams of Wauneta. She told those present that at age 27, she has already survived two bouts with brain cancer.

While living in Fort Collins, Colo., and 19 years of age, Williams began experiencing terrific headaches while pregnant. Her hand and right side of her face were numb.

A scan showed a malignant tumor in her left frontal lobe. She had a biopsy, a resection, and doctors told her they removed about 85 percent of the tumor.

Chemotherapy was the next step, at Children’s Hospital in Denver. She celebrated her son Coalten’s second birthday in the hospital. He is now nine.

The reaction to the chemotherapy “almost killed me,” she said, and it was discontinued in 2002. In 2004, Williams was pregnant again, this time with daughter Mellary, now almost five.

Her oncologist told her to have an abortion, as, “It will kill you to carry a baby.” With the help of an uncle, Williams decided to have the baby, who turned out to be a seven pound girl.

A divorce followed, and Williams moved to Wauneta in November, 2005, to be with her mother. To receive health insurance, Williams needed to be clear of cancer for five years. In a routine MRI for that insurance, Williams was told she had a reoccurrence of brain cancer the day before Thanksgiving, 2007.

The tumor was invading the left side of her brain and couldn’t be operated upon, she was told. She began radiation treatments in North Platte, seven weeks of 33 treatments that lasted 10 minutes at a time.

Williams was still working 25 hours a week to receive health insurance, and raising her two children.

Then she heard of a neurosurgeon in Omaha who could possibly help her. The surgeon was positive that she could remove the tumor surgically.

“She’s my angel,” Williams told the audience. It was almost a year to the day that the surgery was performed since the biopsy report. On Dec. 3, 2008 after a 10 and one-half hour surgery, Williams said, “So now, here I am. Thank you.”

Williams credits her church family at Lighthouse Fellowship with helping her the past several years. “God knew what I needed to get me through this. God’s given me peace,” she stated.

Also speaking during the ALL Cancer Walk program were Dr. Jonathan Richman, Randy Vlasin of the CCCH Foundation and Bruce Lantry, a leukemia survivor.



Therapeutic art class to be offered

Randy Vlasin of the Chase County Community Hospital Foundation told those present at the ALL Cancer Walk Saturday that a therapeutic art class for patients, survivors and caregivers of cancer patients will be offered soon if enough interest is shown.

Taught by Marcia Bauerle of Imperial, the class will use art materials provided by the Foundation, he said. Those interested in the class may contact him at the hospital at (308) 882-7111.