

By: Debby Brown Pictures provided by: Steve Gilbreath

Tough Enough To Wear... PINK

**Fundraiser for Breast Cancer Awareness
Held at The Madison County Equestrian Club
Anderson, Indiana
National Barrel Horse Assoc. & Girls Barrel
Racing Assoc. of Indiana Approved**



The weekend of July 4-5 2009 was an exceptionally wonderful weekend. The Madison County Equestrian Club partnered with Saint John's Cancer Center for the "Tough Enough to Wear Pink" campaign to raise awareness of breast cancer. The campaign was sponsored by Wrangler.

According to Kathy Zambos, who works for Saint John's and is a member of the MCEC the membership was fully supportive of the effort. Members thought it would be a great thing to do since almost everyone has their own story to tell of a loved one or close friend who has battled with breast cancer or lost someone to cancer.

Janell Burk also works for the cancer center as a "navigator" helping women with breast cancer through the sometimes labyrinthine health care system. She tells patients all the time, "The C word is not a D word." Burk also stated "It doesn't mean death all the time, the statistics show that the survival rates are much, much better now. Most cancers caught in the early stages have a much better quality and chance of extension of life."

Since the equestrian club event involved both women and men [who also, by the way, can contract breast cancer]. Burk also addressed the helplessness that can afflict men who have loved ones battling the disease. "Men tend to want to fix everything," she said. "If cancer was a nail and a hammer, men could cure cancer."

"Women just want to know that you're there for them. They want to know that you're going to love them, breast or no breast. And not every woman loses a breast. But she does not know that at the beginning."

Steve Rushton, who is vice-president of the MCEC, has a personal interest in the breast cancer awareness effort. Rushton stated: "It's not just breast cancer, it's that dreaded 'C' word. I lost my dad in February two years ago from lymphoma."

His father, Orville Rushton, was 71 when he died in 2007. After retiring as a farmer, the elder Rushton took a job at Hoosier Park, just to keep busy. After a lump was discovered in his lymph nodes, Rushton fought the disease for a year until it went into remission. Months later, it returned with, as his son says, "with a vengeance."

"If you've lost a family member [to cancer] you're never over it. You learn how to live with it."

So now Steve Rushton is in the midst of the battle, pink shirt and all. When asked did the choice of riding apparel give him second thoughts, he simply stated "Ahh, that's no big deal, I'd wear pink shorts and cowboy boots for the cause, if that's what they wanted me to do."

In addition to the July 4-5 event, MCEC also sold Tough Enough to Wear Pink merchandise which included: caps, shirts, t-shirts, sweat-shirts, hoodies, jewelry, bandanas, pins, stickers, water bottle, tote bags, etc. All proceeds from sales went to local awareness efforts.

A total of \$9400.00 was raised over the two day event and given to Saint John's Cancer Center to purchase blanket warmers for cancer patients to use when they come in for treatments. Money was also used to help with women who cannot afford mammograms or transportation to the hospital for treatments.

All in all the weekend was a success. Kathy Zambos stated, "There was such an over-whelming response, it was incredible."

Find out how to raise Funds for cancer awareness in your area through Wragler's Tough Enough To Wear Pink program....visit:

www.toughenoughtowearpink.com