



★ *Lynette Nielsen* ★
 Successful ... — CANCER —
SURVIVOR

Lynette Nielsen was born and raised in Roseburg, Oregon. After school she moved to Portland where she worked three jobs for 35 years. One of her jobs is a caregiver. Those skills brought her back to Roseburg about 13 years ago to attend to her Mother's needs. After her Mother's passing Lynette restarted her business in Roseburg working a three-job schedule. When we met with Lynette to hear her story it was immediately apparent she cares greatly about the well being of others. Perhaps her selflessness character and a little help from above provided her a second chance. Here is her story.

"In the late Spring of last year I was not feeling well. I was taking antibiotics but they weren't helping so I went to urgent care and was diagnosed with pneumonia. When viewing my chest X-ray Dr. Musgrave noticed a mass on my lung." Lynette explained. She then consulted her primary care physician, Dr. Bolduc, who referred her to a pulmonary specialist for a consultation and subsequent biopsy. It was the pulmonary specialist who informed Lynette the mass on her lung was stage 3-A non-small cell cancer. Surgery was not an option.

"My sister was with me at the appointment when I was diagnosed. We had talked earlier and decided that neither of us would be treated if we had cancer. But then, I was told I had about 16 months to live if I did nothing, I decided to go ahead with the treatment."

After consulting with Drs. Moore and Williams at the Community Cancer Center numerous tests were run and Lynette's treatment plan was formulated. Her situation required parallel radiation and chemotherapy treatments. "I started the first of 32 radiation treatments on 7/6/16 which were administered daily five

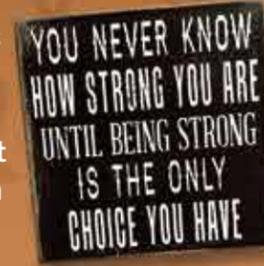
days a week and then about a week or so later the chemotherapy treatments began. The chemo treatments began on 7/11/16 and were three weeks apart, which was just enough time to start feeling better again before the next treatment." Lynette added with a chuckle.

Lynette told us her radiation treatments were great and she experienced only minor side effects such as sore throat. Chemotherapy was more taxing and left her nauseated, tired and a bit short with people, which she now regrets. "On the days of my chemo treatments I felt fine during the treatments. My Niece Molly would come with me. We always brought lunch and played games during the treatment and time just flew by. Many times the other patients would join our little parties." For Lynette, two to three days after the chemo treatment is when it became challenging. "I went through a period of time where I said, God, why did you allow this to happen. Now I look at it as a blessing. When asked to elaborate, Lynette said, "When you're faced with not knowing what beyond today is going to be you learn to appreciate the day you have and you try to make the best out of it. Do something good for somebody else and be grateful. Each day I try to be full of contentment and full of gratitude. Those are two things that if I can stay in that frame of mind my day goes well." She said.

While in treatment, and several weeks following, Lynette could not work. This created a financial hardship. "I'm so very grateful to my friends and fellowship at Westside Christian Church. They called, sent cards and also sent me checks. With their help I was able to manage things." She explained with sincere appreciation.

"During my chemo treatments I would tease Doctor Williams that my hair was not falling out. When we finished the treatments he told me I was among 1-2% of his patients who keep their hair. I felt pretty special but did not wish to question my chemo dosage" she said slyly.

"I learned I was cancer free on 10/19/16. I was surprised and just a thought a big WOW. I was doing everything wrong. I smoked for 48 years and did so through my cancer treatments." The second chance given to Lynette prompted her to give up cigarettes. She enrolled in the tobacco cessation course at the Community Cancer Center and had her last cigarette on 11/16/16. Lynette has been tobacco free for over 5 months and credits her



success to Angelia Freeman, CCC Outreach Coordinator, who supported her throughout the process. Lynette continues to attend the tobacco support group and wishes now to help others to quit smoking. "If there is something I can say or do for somebody else to make a difference, I'm going to be there." She stated emphatically.

What advice would you like to share with others who are being treated for cancer? "You are not alone. People who found out I had cancer sent cards, called me and helped me in many ways. I would also say don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't understand something. For me, I always had a list of questions for Dr. Williams and he always took the time to answer my questions." She offered.

Lynette prepared the following statement. "Cancer has been a blessing. My outlook and attitude on life has changed. I want to give back to others. I appreciate each small miracle in my life each day. I have had a spiritual change after my cancer diagnosis. As I celebrate life I have contentment and gratitude, each moment is precious. God placed angels, friends and family in the Community Cancer Center to love me and hold my hand each step of the way. I am blessed."

When asked about the care at the Community Cancer Center she said, "The care I received was wonderful. From the receptionist to techs, nurses and doctors every single person was great!"

Now cancer free and tobacco free Lynette is resuming her work of caring for others. Perhaps Lynette is a bit of an angel herself?

