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Naples Health

EXTRAORDINARY CARE FOR LIFE

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NCH

The Power of

Healing

How the Garden of Hope and
Courage lives up to its name

CONQUERING BREAST CANCER: The stories of four survivors



A Promise Delivered

The touching story of how the Garden of Hope & Courage became an inspirational force.

Jan Emfield loved her garden. It was a place where she found beauty, peace and renewal. So it seemed natural, after she was diagnosed with breast cancer, to suggest her support group holds its meetings in her backyard haven.

“The place was more uplifting and not as gloomy as a meeting room,” recalls long-time friend Richard D’Amico, “and so Jan came up with the idea of creating a garden at a hospital. We put a board together and started meeting. On the night of our first board meeting, Jan had just come from the doctor, who had told her her cancer was back.”

“She’d been in remission for about three years,” adds her husband, Bob Emfield. “But the cancer had metastasized to the bone. It came back with a vengeance. Before she died [in 1994], one of the things she asked of Richard and me was to take the garden idea to heart and accomplish it.”

Fulfilling that request wasn’t an easy task. For several years, D’Amico and Emfield tried to engage the interest of a hospital in their hometown of Minneapolis without success. Finally, they decided to bring the idea to Naples, their second home.

“In 1999, I was going to Wynn’s [Market], and I went a street further,” D’Amico reports. “I drove by a little pond at NCH and thought, ‘Oh my God! That’s a perfect place.’ I called Ed Morton [then-CEO of NCH]. He loved the idea and said, ‘Let’s do it.’”

Emfield, a co-founder of Tommy Bahama, and D’Amico, owner of Campiello and Café Lurcat, quietly raised funds for the garden over the years. With NCH’s commitment to house the garden, they broadened their efforts, eventually raising nearly \$3 million. “The people in Naples were so generous,” D’Amico says. “We were absolutely thrilled.”

The Garden of Hope & Courage opened a year ago on two and a half acres at the corner of Eighth Street and Second Avenue, adjacent to NCH Downtown Naples Hospital. The end result far exceeds the original vision. “Initially, we had been looking for half an acre in Minnesota,” Emfield says. “Now we have nearly three acres in Florida. It’s bigger, grander and prettier than I could have hoped for.”

Best of all, the garden is serving exactly the purpose Jan Emfield had envisioned—providing a beautiful place of respite and calm for NCH patients, caregivers and staff. Frank Bernardi, who suffers from Parkinson’s, had a lengthy stay at the hospital last summer after he broke his leg. “My wife took me down to the garden, and I thought, ‘Wow!’ The view, the trees—it’s just magnificent,” he says. “I went down there whenever she had the time to take me. I would just sit there and enjoy the scenery.”

Pat Jaworoski, a staffing specialist at NCH, takes her breaks in the garden every day. “It’s such a peaceful place,” she says. “It rejuvenates my spirit and gets me through the day.” **NH**