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18 FORE Life Banquet and Golf Tournament Celebrate 20 Years of Giving

JULY 07TH 2021 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Dexter, MO - "We are going to give out our 3 millionth dollar soon," stated Scott Kruse, Founder of 18 FORE Life.

How can such a small community raise that much money in a short 20 years? It takes many hands, lots of love for our friends and family, and the ability to come together whenever someone is fighting the big "C". Ben Kruse would be amazed how a small golf tournament turned into such a big part of our everyday lives.

Last year due to Covid-19 people couldn't come together in person, but that didn't stop the Kruse family. They went virtual!! There was an online auction and still many of the wonderful fundraisers were able to take place throughout the year. There's not a day that goes by that Scott and his family aren't doing something for someone with cancer. It amazes this reporter that so many people have cancer in our area and how much these LOVE Offerings help! It's truly an inspiration.

"This year we were able to send out over \$50,000 in love offerings," stated Kruse.

"Clearing the wait list and pushing within a few thousand of hitting \$3 million....which should be sent out before the end of this summer."

The Ben Kruse 18 FORE Life Banquet is held each year in June at the Dexter Elks Lodge. Kerri Kruse opened the event and welcomed everyone. Her husband, Scott, paid tribute to the late John Barge. Barge welcomed the 18 FORE Life Golf Tournament at

Hidden Trails Country Club during his time as the club pro. Kruse said that most club pros would not allow a one day tournament of nearly 90 teams on their course out of concern for the wear and tear. Barge loved having them there. He wasn't sure how that many teams would work, but he never let it stress him.

One of the funniest local love-offering recipients spoke about his ordeal and recovery from cancer. Darryl Orr and his wife Diana have both successfully battled cancer. He told his story of his cancer journey with a great amount of humor.

It all began with a trip to the emergency room in June of 2019 when Orr thought he was having a heart attack. "The good news was it was not a heart attack, but the bad news was I had a mass in my chest and the ER doctor suspected cancer."

After an appointment with Dr. Andrew Moore in Cape Girardeau, then came the roller coaster ride of tests and more tests. If you have ever had cancer or known anyone who has dealt with cancer it's one test after another and then repeat. "And the amount of blood they draw for tests, you would think they were vampires!" He stated his cancer treatments involved six week stays in the hospital and he finally completed his treatments in January of 2021. He lost his hair. He lost his voice and he lost about 30 pounds.

"The hair did grow back, but I can't seem to do a thing with it," joked Orr. "Unfortunately for me the 30 pounds also came back too. And unfortunately for you, my voice came back."

"The community has always given generously for this cause and I am appreciative for my wife, Diana, for you who donate and for the Kruse family who give and give and give! Thank you."

Once Orr concluded his speech, former St. Louis Rams Coach Dick Vermeil addressed the audience.

He spoke on his seven common sense principles of leadership.

Those principles are:

1. Make sure people know you care,
2. Be a good example,
3. Create an atmosphere in which people enjoy working,
4. Define, delegate then lead,

5. Bring energy to the workplace,
- 6 Build relationships as you implement your vision, values and process, and
7. Be sincere.

Vermeil spoke of each principle and how each one was applied to rebuilding the Rams into a Super Bowl winning football team.

At the conclusion of both speakers, a video was played along with music of previous banquets and golf tournaments and of course photos of Ben Kruse. It's always a touching tribute to those who have embraced this deadly disease and beat cancer and those who lost their lives. "We wait for a day when cancer is gone from this earth, but until that day comes, 18 FORE Life will be there for you and your family."

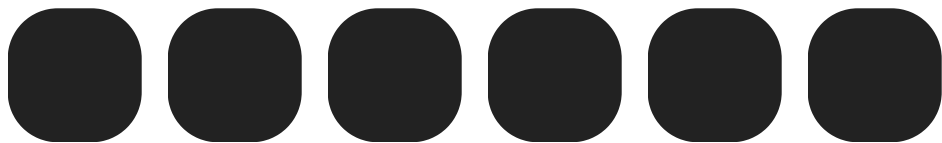
On Saturday, the morning after the banquet, a record 88 teams of 4 descended on the greens at Hidden Trails Country Club Golf Course to compete in the annual Ben Kruse 18 FORE Life Golf Tournament.

The team of Chad Wooldridge, Shawn Wooldridge, Chris Cohen and Cody McCain won the 2021 tournament.

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