

I'm sharing this a day early, and asking for a favor.

Tomorrow, I will again, be reminded of the unfair nature of cancer, as my "John Wayne" has another biopsy for his cancer.

Please keep our family in your thoughts as we decide our next steps in this journey. - jen

Happy (almost) Friday Friends!

"He didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it." ~Clarence Budington Kelland

This Father's Day, I want to take time to honor those who truly understand the responsibility of teaching the next generation.

Training them to value accountability.

Instructing them on integrity and respect.

Teaching them to recognize that the best inheritance is the lessons and gifts you share with the next generation.

It took me several years to fully understand the gift I had in my dad.

He has worked incredibly hard, and accomplished more than I could ever imagine. He is truly a self-made man who has continued to honor his family, while teaching us, by example. (Anyone who is involved with the Electric Cooperatives will know his efforts.) Within one organization, he established a magazine and a credit union and set the business standards for state programs across the country. He's been a mentor to so many.

He accomplished all of this with humility and unwanted praise. He just wanted to serve others.

The earthly reward for his efforts were the loss of his wife, at 43, after a 2 year battle with breast cancer.

The near loss of his second wife due to a car wreck, and leading our family as her world, and ours, changed completely.

Soon after a well-earned retirement, he was diagnosed with an aggressive cancer.

Life isn't easy. Period.

But through it all, he continues to lead by example.

A Father's Devotion

"I believe that what we become depends on what our fathers teach us at odd moments, when they aren't trying to teach us.

We are formed by little scraps of wisdom." – Umberto Eco



*"Courage is being scared to death,
but saddling up anyway."*

~John Wayne

Father's Day is a time for dads to remember the important role they play in influencing the choices their kids make. Unfortunately, across the US [tobacco use remains a serious problem among men](#).

- More than one in five men currently smoke
- More than 278,000 men die every year from smoking
- 216,000 kids have already lost their dad to smoking

In [Oklahoma](#), the outlook is much the same.

- 344,000 men currently smoke (24.4%)
- 3,700 men die annually
- 3,200 kids have already lost their dads to smoking
- Oklahoma spends \$979.1 million every year in health costs to treat male tobacco users.

*I remember Daddy's hands, folded silently in prayer
And reaching out to hold me, when I had a nightmare
You could read quite a story, in the callouses and lines
Years of work and worry had left their mark behind.*

As a parent, you are one of the most important people in a child's life.

- Children from families who smoke are *twice as likely to become smokers* themselves.
- Parents who try to quit and talk to their kids about how addictive smoking is, why they want to quit and how important it is to never start *can beat those odds*.
- An estimated 88 million nonsmoking Americans, including 54% of children age 3-11 years, are exposed to secondhand smoke.
- 5.6 million children alive today will ultimately *die early from smoking*. That is 1 child out of every 13 alive in the US today.

*I remember Daddy's hands, how they held my Mama tight
And patted my back, for something done right.
There are things that I've forgotten, that I love about the man,
But I'll always remember the love in Daddy's hands.*

When it comes to [cancer](#), tobacco too often plays a leading role.

- Lung cancer is the most preventable form of cancer death in the world, and is the leading cause of cancer death in the US for both men and women.
- The risk of lung cancer for male smokers is 25 times the risk of men who never smoked.
- Tobacco use accounts for at least 30% of ALL cancer deaths, and causes 87% of lung cancer deaths in men.
- Cigars contain many of the same carcinogens found in cigarettes, and causes cancer of the lung, mouth, throat, larynx, esophagus and pancreas.
- Men with prostate cancer, who smoke, may be more likely to die from the disease than nonsmokers.
- Tobacco causes many other types of cancer, including cancers of the throat, mouth, nasal cavity, esophagus, stomach, pancreas, kidney, bladder, and acute myeloid leukemia.

*Daddy's hands were soft and kind when I was cryin'
Daddy's hands were hard as steel when I'd done wrong.
Daddy's hands weren't always gentle but I've come to understand
There was always love in Daddy's hands*

Tobacco use is a major contributing factor to 4 of the 5 leading causes of death among men.

- Heart disease (24.6%)
- Cancer (24.1%)

- Chronic lower respiratory diseases (5.4%)
- Stroke (4.2%)

Tobacco use has a major impact on quality of health as well.

- Smoking can harm all parts of the digestive system, contributing to heartburn, peptic ulcers and gallstones. It also damages the liver.
- Smoking produces insulin resistance and chronic inflammation, which can accelerate macrovascular and microvascular complications, including nephropathy.
- 18 million males over age 20 suffer from erectile dysfunction (ED). Smoking is a cause of ED, as cigarette smoke alters the necessary blood flow.

*I remember Daddy's hands, working 'til they bled
 He sacrificed unselfishly, just to keep us all fed.
 If I could do things over, I'd live my life again,
 And never take for granted, the love in Daddy's hands.
 ~Daddy's Hands, Holly Dunn*

You can make a big difference in the choices your kids make, *especially when it comes to tobacco.*

Remember...

The cessation and education efforts that we put into our patients, co-workers, communities and families will impact them and future generations.

To all the Fathers out there, whether by birth or choice, and to all those who care about them: *Remember, your influence, your motivation and your inherent value to your family. You are laying the foundation for the next generation.*

Educate children about the dangers of smoking and tobacco use at an early age.

*"This is the price you pay for having a great father.
 You get the wonder, the joy, the tender moments –
 and you get the tears at the end, too."
 – Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

So here we are this Father's Day, once again, facing another aggressive round of cancer.

Despite the concern I feel for him and his immediate future, I know this will also be an opportunity to learn and grow.

I know he will display strength and courage.

His granddaughters will provide the hope and the motivation.



I will do all I can to give him the gift of love and encouragement.

Happy Father's Day!

Until next week,

Oklahoma Strategic Tribal Alliance for Health (OSTAH)

Margie Burkhart

Cherokee Nation Healthy Nation



Oklahoma Hospital Association (OHA)

Jennifer W. Roysdon

Hospitals Helping Patients Quit



"There is no clinical treatment available today that can reduce illness, prevent death, and increase quality of life more than effective tobacco treatment interventions."

-Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence, US Public Health Service, US Dept. of Health and Human Services