

## Lora Robinson's Story

---

“I was definitely scared. Just hearing you have cancer is scary – then you have to start dealing with it.” That was Lora Robinson’s initial reaction when she found out that she had cancer in 1998. Lora was the mother of four young children ranging in age from 12 to 2 years old when she was diagnosed with Liposarcoma, a tumor of the soft tissue that was found just below her armpit. Typically this type of tumor is benign, but on rare occasions such as Lora’s, it is malignant. Lora underwent surgery to remove the tumor and later had a second surgery to remove two of the muscles with which the tumor had intertwined. The second surgery affected the use of Lora’s left arm. She had to endure many rounds of physical therapy and pain management visits for injections because the remaining muscles in her left side and left shoulder were overcompensating for the missing muscles. “I still have issues with muscle spasms and left side pain,” Lora says. In addition to the left-sided pain, Lora has also developed trouble with her right arm. “I have used my right arm to overcompensate, creating tennis elbow and carpal tunnel in my right arm. Therefore, I feel I am still learning to deal with some of the issues associated with it all,” she notes. Lora found strength to keep fighting in her husband, Joe, and their four children, Mindy, Katie, Meri Jo and Kristina. Her mother and other family members and friends were also great sources of support. “My surgeon and doctors were always there to help and support me as well. Most importantly, my faith in God and the power of his love got me through it. I prayed a lot, everyday. I went to a healing mass for strength. I am here today, so I am a blessed person. My cancer was handled with surgery only – again I was blessed.” Lora first became involved in Relay in 2000 as a survivor. In 2001, she joined the committee for the Overland Park/Leawood Relay. “I went to approximately 20 different relays in Kansas and Missouri in 2001 mainly to get ideas for the committee I had joined.” This was also the year that Kidz Corner was launched. Kidz Corner consists of games and crafts for children attending the Relay. “We make necklaces, have tattoos, candy walks, limbo, beanbag toss, prize wheel, plunko and new games added every year.” As the children play the games, they earn Kidz Corner dollars which they can turn in for prizes or deposit as chances for the raffle baskets. The best part about Kidz Corner is that there is no cost to play the games or make the crafts. “We wanted to give the kids attending Relay a fun time. We know that families going through cancer often battle money issues due to the costs of treatment, etc., so we wanted it to be free for the family. In some way, cancer has touched their lives and has caused them sadness, so it is our way to see them smile and find good things are out there, too, that are associated with cancer.” Lora’s Camp Fire club has been sponsoring Kidz Corner since its

## **Lora Robinson's Story**

---

inception in 2001. The club members seek donations through companies. Redemption Plus and Wal-Mart are contributing members this year. "We also rely on individuals or other companies to assist us. We watch clearance aisles at the stores, too." Lora estimates that each member contributes 25-30 hours of volunteer time each year for Relay. Camp Fire USA's motto is "Give Service". The club members enjoy the challenge each year and feel great accomplishment when it is over. "They take a lot of pride in what they try to accomplish each year. They love to see the kids smile. Hopefully, it strengthens them as our future leaders in taking on such a project later in their lives." Lora chose the Kaw Valley Relay for the home of Kidz Corner because she grew up in Bonner and graduated from Bonner Springs High School. "We love coming here and the kids seem to enjoy us. It makes me feel good to give back to the community that gave to me as I grew up." "One of the neatest moments at the Kaw Valley Relay for me is the Survivor Lap when my family, along with my Camp Fire family, cheer me on and then walk one lap with me. I could not do all this without the support of my family outside of our Camp Fire involvement." Look for Lora and her Camp Fire club at the Kaw Valley Relay this year. Kidz Corner will be open from 6 PM to 9 PM on Relay night.