

HELP TESS BEAT CANCER



With a heavy heart but steadfast hope, we reach out to you today to share the courageous journey of our dear friend, Tess Erickson. She is currently and fighting her way through the darkness of cancer, and she needs our collective strength now more than ever. Our small community has a huge heart, and we know that every little bit of support helps.

Tess hails from the Mankato, MN area. She and her wife Cassie have been living in Alma the last few years. She is a local artist and has spent most of her adult life singing in bands and DJing across the Midwest. If you know her, you know she's the life of the party....always there with the perfect song to get you dancing. If you have had the opportunity to hear her sing, you know she has an amazing voice and loves to share her talent. In the last few years Tess has been working at Bill's Talk of the Town in Alma, bringing lots of fun and joy to all. She runs their weekly trivia and karaoke nights, and even planned Alma's first annual street dance in 2023.

On the cusp of starting her own wedding and event planning business, she woke up one morning with some pain. After further investigation, Tess received the devastating diagnosis that she has HER2 positive, estrogen positive, and progesterone negative breast cancer. Unfortunately, this cancer is very fast growing. From the time she was diagnosed in January 2024 to starting treatment in March, her tumor had grown 7 cm and had spread with further tumors throughout. Tess, at the age of 33, is now battling stage 3 breast cancer.

Due to a compromised immune system, Tess is unable to work. She will need 20 weeks of chemotherapy. If everything goes well, she will then need a double mastectomy followed by more chemotherapy and finally radiation. The doctors are currently advising her that she has minimally one full year of treatment ahead.

With her naturally positive attitude, Tess has refused to let this defeat her. Anyone who knows Tess will know that this is out of her comfort zone. Fiercely independent, and usually the one giving, she finds herself on the other side needing our support.

While Tess focuses on her health, Cassie continues to work to provide for their family. Of course, Cassie is also needing to miss work to support Tess, take her to appointments and handle the administration that goes with a cancer diagnosis.....insurance, doctors, co-pays and paperwork.

There is not one of us that has not had cancer touch our lives in some fashion. Not only does cancer kill the body, it reaps havoc on the family's finances. The treatments are incredibly expensive, plus the additional costs of transportation, temporary accommodations during extended treatment sessions, etc. Tess and Cassie will fund what they can as a family, but obviously any 'fighting fund' you can give would be very much appreciated, as would any wishes of love and support.

Thanks for reading, please feel free to share Tess' story far and wide.