Laughter IS the best medicine!
And Other Inspiring Stories

MY STORY – Josephine McAdam
Beautiful Jewelry, Beautiful Home
Members Fund Research

Also in this issue:
- Celebrating Our Member Fundraisers
- Meet Your Member Fundraising Team
- Other ways to contribute
- ... and more!
Dear Myeloma Warriors,

Welcome to the IMF’s 2020 edition of Making Miracles. As I write this, many things are uncertain because of COVID-19. What does remain certain, though, is the incredible strength and resilience of our IMF community, which is profoundly reflected in our member fundraisers. For 13 years now, we’ve had the privilege of sharing the stories of your member fundraisers on the pages of this magazine, of being inspired by how you have taken challenges and turned them into successes.

We’re also inspired by the way so many of you have taken the things you already love to do and are now doing them on our behalf: Stand-up comedy, virtual gaming, jewelry-making, walking through nature, and delicious meals are all highlighted on the pages that follow, because they’ve all been turned into fundraisers in support of the IMF.

Here at the IMF, we’re also struck by the number of people in younger generations who are spearheading fundraisers for the myeloma community. In addition to honoring their loved ones and being part of a legacy, their events have shown us exciting new ways to create tremendous amounts of support and awareness.

When you partner with the IMF, we can help to create ideas for the future, doing things you love with those you love. Please reach out so we can all keep inspiring each other.

With warmest regards and deep appreciation,

Suzanne Battaglia
Senior Director, Member Events
800.452.CURE
sbattaglia@myeloma.org
Forrest Shaw, Andy Ostroff, and Francisco Ramos are all professional comedians whose friendship has grown through their common experience with myeloma – and their collective experience of creating comedy fundraisers on behalf of the IMF. We were honored to get them on the phone to provide us with insight and inspiration.

Making Miracles: The first question is about how it originally came to pass that we’re all talking today. What are your relationships to myeloma?

Forrest Shaw: My relationship to myeloma is through my mother having it for almost 15 years, so, of course, it also became a big part of my life. I didn’t know what it was when she was diagnosed. I was extremely close to my mom. I know that both Andy and Francisco were very close to their dads as well.

Andy Ostroff: Yes. And similar to Forrest, I had no idea what it was when my dad was diagnosed. It was a crash course. I was learning something about it every single day.

Francisco Ramos: For me, it was 10 years ago. My dad’s experience was brief, because the myeloma compounded other medical things. So I didn’t get a chance to learn as much at the time as Forrest and Andy. That’s one of the reasons why when I learned about their fundraisers, I knew I definitely wanted to get involved.

Forrest, you created your first comedy fundraiser in 2015. Tell us how that came to pass.

Forrest: Every year, when the IMF advertised the gala, my mom would show me the newsletter and say, “You should do this!” Then I would look at the line-up of comedians and see people like Ray Romano and Fred Willard, “It’s pretty big names Mom, I can’t just jump on this thing because you think I should, maybe I should get on Saturday Night Live while I’m at it?” Then I went with my mom to an IMF Patient & Family Seminar in Boca Raton, and I was really impressed with the whole organization. I happened to be doing shows that week in West Palm Beach and it occurred to me, I can do a comedy fundraiser myself. So I walked up to Suzanne Battaglia [the IMF’s Senior...
Eleven years ago now... I remember feeling so helpless when I found out about my mother’s myeloma diagnosis. I knew I would be there for support, but it’s hard not to feel like it’s never quite enough.

One thing that grabbed my attention is how much myeloma treatment was evolving, and that it would benefit from any help it could get. I wasn’t in a position where I could give a great amount personally, so I began to look at how I could utilize in my own career and circles to amplify the amount donated.

That’s where Twitch came in. Twitch is a live-streaming web platform where the subjects on screen generally have high interaction with the viewers – who can communicate via a chatroom at the same time! The activities vary from gaming, to illustration, to music, to just chatting, and so much more. I began streaming on Twitch five years ago, and my audience has grown over time. After participating in a few big Twitch-based charity drives for others, I saw what a great opportunity it was.

So I decided to plan my own 12-hour live-stream marathon to benefit the IMF! On May 6, 2017 I hosted guests and we played games throughout the day. When we hit certain donation levels, the incentive was we’d start dancing, or speaking in accents, or whatever silliness we could come up with. Certain giving amounts meant viewers could give us gaming handicaps, or unlock giveaways – which were generously donated along with so many people’s time. It was like an epic virtual party met a telethon with gaming thrown in.

That 2017 fundraiser raised more money than I would have ever imagined. So I decided to do it again on September 7, 2019! For this one, my dad did a wonderful whisky tasting. My mum joined in for Mario Kart shenanigans. I was honored to raise even more funds, and I also realized what worldwide awareness opportunities Twitch provides. The Sweden-based company Paradox, who I’m honored to work with as an actor, decided to launch their own charity stream for the IMF. It was helmed by Outstar, a terrific artist based in Poland. Through their generosity, our cause has been further amplified around the globe.

As the creative ways I can fundraise continue to change, it is also incredible to see how far we have come in myeloma treatment. It is truly the biggest gift to think that I am able to have some small part in advancing this research, and hope to keep doing so in the future to help my own mum, as well as all others affected in the world, as we get ever closer to finding a cure!!

by Josephine McAdam


Twitch Becomes a Family Affair

When his daughter, Josephine, became active on Twitch in 2015, Gary McAdam only knew “it was something to do with online gaming.” By this past May, he was live-streaming with her.

Gary joined in for a segment featuring his own long-standing Grand Tour of Scotland. Usually these whisky tastings are done in places like people’s living rooms, but for Josephine’s fundraiser, “it involved cameras, plus microphones, so lots of technical set-up,” Gary shares. “Then the guest whisky tasters were streaming from another room!”

Gary is in awe of his daughter. “Josephine was not only on camera, she was producing, directing, and had gathered together a whole group of great technical folks. I’m proud that we raised a strong, confident young woman with a giving heart who could pull this all off!”

Twitch’s Global Fundraising Reach

In September 2019, Laureline Petit, Lead Community Developer for Paradox Interactive, a Sweden-based company, wanted to support a nonprofit that aligned with their new game, Bloodlines 2. “I was looking for an organization with an international presence, because our players come from all over the world,” Laureline recalls. Something blood-related was also a focus. “We tell vampire stories,” she explains.

“I found a tweet from Josephine McAdam,” Laureline continues. “That’s how I discovered the IMF!”

Outstar, a Poland-based gaming influencer, hosted Paradox’s five-hour Twitch livestream on December 14, 2019. It brought in thousands of viewers – and donors – from around the globe. “I didn’t know about myeloma beforehand,” Laureline shares. “It made me realize how important it is to raise awareness.”

If you’re active on Twitch and would like to host a fundraiser, we can help you too! Please reach out to SBattaglia@myeloma.org or 1-800-452-CURE.

What is Twitch?

If you’ve only heard “Twitch” mentioned in passing – or haven’t heard of it at all – here’s a little primer:

Twitch is a live-streaming website that started in 2011 for gamers. Amazon purchased it in 2014, and it has expanded to include music, talk shows, sports, and a lot more. There are now approximately two million broadcasters on the site, with 150 million unique viewers each month. The average viewer spends almost 100 minutes on Twitch each day.

Most Twitch content is interactive, so viewers can both comment and impact what they’re seeing in real time. This makes it a huge opportunity for fundraising. From 2012–2017 alone, people raised a collective $75 million by hosting fundraising events via Twitch livestreams.

You can explore more at twitch.tv.
When is pizza much more than just pizza? When ordering one means supporting the IMF. Marco Cerbone and his family empowered their restaurant patrons to do just that when they hosted a fundraiser at their restaurant, Corato Pizza II, to celebrate their restaurant’s 60th Anniversary.

Supporting the IMF was important to their family because their uncle and brother-in-law, Cristofaro DeMarinis, who was co-owner of the restaurant, had myeloma. “We wanted to celebrate our 60th Anniversary in a way that was more than just hosting a party,” Marco explains.

On August 30, 2019, all patrons who came to eat at Corato Pizza II were supporting the cause, with a portion of the sales for that entire day donated to the IMF. People were encouraged to directly donate to the IMF as well. The restaurant marketed the event through social media and encouraged their family and friends to further spread the word. Leading up to the event, they also created a special promotional banner that they hung outside of the restaurant in Ridgewood, New York.

The restaurant was full all day. “Through this event, we learned that friends and family are always around to support us, and we were able to include our entire Ridgewood Community in this special occasion,” Marco says. “It was truly an honor and a blessing to be able to share in this day with everyone!”

“Not a day goes by that we don’t miss Chris,” Marco adds. “We have had his photo hanging on our wall since the day he passed, and on August 30th we added a new one to keep his memory alive. We know this all meant as much to him as it does to us.”

Joy Mays and her family held their First Annual Schleicher’s Hikers 5K on October 12, 2019. “From the very beginning we were calling it our ‘first annual’ because our family and friends are committed to helping the IMF raise funds,” Joy says.

That commitment started with Jim Schleicher, Joy’s brother, who was diagnosed with myeloma in 2012. It was Jim’s idea to create this fundraiser for the IMF. He decided on a 5K for this active group of family and friends, and chose the Ma & Pa Heritage Trail in Bel Air, Maryland as the site. “He often rode his bike on the trail and was a supporter of the programs there,” Joy shares. When Jim’s health declined, Joy and a group of family and friends took over the planning. “We made it happen in record time with no experience,” Joy says.
In addition to the 5K, the event included a post-party celebration. “We are a very social group,” Joy explains. The owner of Main Street Tower restaurant offered lunch and drink specials, and then also donated a portion of his proceeds back. A good friend who plays guitar volunteered his musical services. The fundraising team also put together auction baskets donated with items for food, fun nights out, self-pampering, the beach, and much more.

While it was a successful day, it was also a difficult one. After his battle with myeloma, Jim passed away six days before the event. All of his friends and family knew that they would go on with the fundraiser that Jim had originally started. “When we first planned for it, the post-party was meant to celebrate completing the 5K,” Joy says. “But turned into a wonderful celebration of my brother’s life.”

Amy Klitsner had been donating to the IMF ever since her mother was diagnosed with myeloma in 1998. As time went on, she sought out opportunities to connect her giving with her life in other ways as well.

Amy is a professional jewelry maker, with a focus on hand-made glass and opal items. Her Etsy store, which she opened in 2014, was becoming more and more successful. She decided to reach out to Suzanne Battaglia [the IMF’s Senior Director, Member Events] for advice on how to donate a portion of her business’ proceeds to the cause. “Suzanne had the idea of linking my Etsy website to the IMF’s website, which was a great idea,” Amy says. “I can reach so many IMF people that way!”

While she was brainstorming with the IMF about fundraising through her jewelry, Amy also mentioned that she and her husband had just purchased a villa home on the Big Island of Hawaii, which they currently use for vacations. She wondered if she could donate its use for an opportunity drawing with proceeds going to the IMF?

The answer was a resounding yes from both the IMF and from IMF supporters happy to use the chance of a Hawaii vacation as an “excuse” to also support the myeloma community. “We are beyond ecstatic at how popular the drawing was,” Amy says. “In my wildest dreams I didn’t know how valuable donating our villa could be. We are so thrilled that our home can be used to raise money towards research or any way the IMF needs to use it.”

Amy is also moved by what she describes as “the generosity and warmth of the IMF patrons” who purchase jewelry through her Etsy website. “I get little notes from the buyers with their thanks for my support of the IMF,” Amy shares. “That always makes my day.”

To join this year’s opportunity drawing for Amy’s wonderful Hawaiian home, please see page 13 of this magazine.
To purchase Amy’s jewelry, please visit give.myeloma.org/amykjewels19.

Fundraising Legacy – continued from previous page

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1. Bonnie Schleicher, Jim Schleicher, Jr., Ashley Manger
2. Chloe Cincotta, Caroline Marsh, Joy Schleicher Mays
4. Dave Reed, Bonnie Schleicher, Jim Schleicher, Jr.
While exciting fundraisers are already underway in 2020, the IMF also wants to take the time to share our gratitude for the wonderful array of events that took place in 2019—and the incredible people who made them happen. These member fundraisers provide special support to patients, families, and research. They also create important awareness for our entire myeloma community.

In 2019, our member fundraisers hit the ground running...as well as walking and hiking. Guy Hays supported the IMF by Hiking the Appalachian Trail for a Cause. The Philadelphia Multiple Myeloma Networking Group organized their 11th Annual Miles for Myeloma 5K Run/Walk (funding two Brian D. Novis Research Grants, see page 10). Pam Polia-koff spearheaded the 1st Annual Walk for Myeloma Miracles. Chris Meier ran his 8th Annual Cincinnati Flying Pig Half Marathon (funding a Brian D. Novis Research Grant, see page 10). Joy Mays helped organize Schleicher's Hikers (see pg. 6). The 7th Annual Miracles for Myeloma 5K was overseen by Ron & Sheree Pask and Gina Klemm (funding a Brian D. Novis Research Grant, see page 10). Theresa Tucker and Sheila Burton held their 5th Annual A Walk in the Park.

Our folks also like to hit the links. Darla Kubik and Dwight Royall organized the 2019 Kubik Memorial Golf Tournament, the 4th Annual Support Sheldon Golf Tournament was overseen by Maurice Pierre, the Czerkies Family honored us with their 12th Annual Carolyn Czerkies Memorial Golf Outing. Todd Birmingham helped bring us the 14th Annual Coach Rob's Golf Tournament, and Bob Zins and a loyal, dedicated team organized the 20th Annual J.C. Golf Tournament.

Our member fundraisers don't neglect other sporting activities either. Steven Saunders rode his bike Coast 2 Coast for Myeloma, and Andy Sninsky continued his Bicycle Mojave and Beyond. Doug Farrell organized the 6th Captain Turner's Ocean Swim and Ed Curtis spearheaded the 3rd Annual Masters Tennis for Myeloma.

The IMF also has reason to celebrate the parties that were thrown on our behalf. Debbie Beatty gave us the 4th Annual Mission for Matt. Sylvia Hairston created the 2nd Annual Seeds of Hope Luncheon and Debbie Morelli and the Central NJ Multiple Myeloma Support Group hosted the 4th Annual Celebration of Life. Lloyd Watts.
organized his 2nd Annual Casino Night. Josephine McAdam led us in a different type of gaming with her live-streamed Josephine’s Mad Char(itea) Party (see pg. 4) – which inspired Paradox, a game development company, to do the same with Outstar’s Fundraiser (see pg. 5).

Food and drink also flowed via Kiara Marisco’s Dine for a Cure and the Rhode Island Multiple Myeloma Support Group’s Dine and Donate for a Cause. Lisa Sanzo helped oversee Corato Pizza II’s 60th Anniversary Honoring Cristofaro DeMarinis (see pg. 6). To satisfy our sweet tooth, we had Jameca Barrett’s 3rd Annual Scrumptious Holiday Cookie Fundraiser.

Caroline Berger, Ella Berger, Madeline Berger, Fiona Duncheskie, and Stephen Duncheskie gave us a Lemonade Stand in honor of their grandmother, Doris. Other member fundraisers focused on the harder stuff. Austin Fust oversaw Brewing for a Cure for Myeloma, which was sponsored by WestFax Brewing Company and Joyride Brewing Company. Gary McAdam supported us with his ongoing Grand Tour of Scotland (see pg. 5). The 7th Annual A Visit to Virginia’s Wine Country was organized by the Greater Richmond Multiple Myeloma Support Group, and Steve Weinstein continued his Corks For The Cure.

We also raise a glass to our community members who organize virtual campaigns. Brenda Riggs brought us her 2nd Annual Ten to Win the Fight and Mark BagYo Ho spearheaded an Awareness Campaign. Nancy Bruno organized Nancy’s Passion for Patients, Bayla Cohen and Sarah Livstone gave us Hope for a Cure, and Janet Kerrigan’s Birthday brought supporters to our cause. Jack Aiello provided us with continued support through Jack’s Education Grant. Faith Jackson and her colleagues came together for the Oliveri Architects Fundraiser.

IMFers also like to be stylish for us. Jameca Barrett organized a Belk Charity Sale. We were also honored with the support of Amy Klitsner’s Jewelry With A Cause (see pg. 7), Donna Swartz’s Pearls with a Purpose, and the Bead Society of the Palm Beaches’ fundraiser In Honor of Laurie Gregory Bye. A different sort of flash came our way through Silver Giveaways, a coin auction spearheaded by David Lee Slate. Charlie Eddins’ 5th Annual Heritage Singers brought music into our lives.

And of course, laughter can be wonderful medicine, so we are grateful that comedy came our way through Kent Oliver’s 4th Annual Laugh 4 Life (funding a Brian D. Novis Research Grant, see pg. 10), as well as Andy Ostroff’s 2nd Annual Anti-Cancer Comedy FUndraiser and Forrest Shaw’s third A Night of Comedy at The Improv (see pg. 3).

From belly laughs to bottles of wine, from collectibles to cookies, from anything you love to anything you want to try for the first time – there’s a way to do it as an IMF Fundraiser! Whatever your point of inspiration, we’ll help you make it happen. Please contact Suzanne Battaglia at 800-452-CURE or SBattaglia@myeloma.org to get started!
IMF MEMBER FUNDRAISERS

Support Cutting-edge Research

IMF member fundraisers provide essential support for all of our programs, including the IMF’s Brian D. Novis Research Grants. These grants provide important funding to myeloma researchers around the world who are leading the way in innovative work for our community. Four remarkable IMF member fundraisers made these grants possible this year:

7th Annual Miracles for Myeloma 5K
Sylvie Hermouet, MD, PhD
CRCINA Inserm U1232 – Centre de Recherche en Cancérologie et Immunologie Nantes-Angers
Nantes, France
“Functional Characterization of Monoclonal Immunoglobulins from Antigen-Driven MGUS and Myeloma”

Laughs 4 Life
Mikhail Nikiforov, PhD
Wake Forest University Health Sciences – Cancer Biology
Winston-Salem, NC, USA
“Leveraging polyamine dependency for treatment of drug-resistant multiple myelomas”

Flying Pig Marathon Run By Dr. Christopher Meier
Alexandre Detappe, PhD
Centre Paul Strauss/Universite de Strasbourg – Medical Oncology
Strasbourg, France
“A ‘click-ready’ Cereblon E3 ligase modulation drug library for fast in vivo evaluation in Multiple Myeloma mouse models”

11th Annual Miles for Myeloma 5K
Francesco Maura, MD
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center – Medicine
New York, NY, USA
“Deciphering the Impact of Melphalan on Secondary Malignancy in Multiple Myeloma”

and

Kim De Veirman, PhD
Vrije Universiteit Brussel – Hematology and Immunology,
Myeloma Center Brussels
Brussels, Belgium
“Targeting AXL, a putative dormancy regulator in multiple myeloma”
Before there was even a glimmer of charitable peer-to-peer fundraising, Suzanne Battaglia had an important realization. While talking with patients and their families, she became aware of a general “theme” of the conversations – a pervading feeling of hopelessness, as if there was nothing they could do to feel proactive, and that with their diagnosis, they had lost control. In chatting about this with founding Board Member, Don Springer, a patient himself, he mentioned that he hosted annual golf tournaments. Suzanne asked Don if it would be OK if she helped put a fundraising element to them. Then, Dr. Robert A. Kyle called Suzanne to ask her to chat with his patient’s wife, who was not able to harness her grief over losing her husband. Suzanne called her, and at the end of the conversation, this grieving widow decided she would gather all of her and her husband’s friends and families, and have his favorite kind of activity – a Bull Roast – as a fundraiser. The rest, as they say, is history. The IMF’s Member Fundraising program took off like a bullet, to the point where it was necessary to bring on an associate, Ilana Kenville, and recently, an assistant, Karla Lemus. Together, this team supports around 40 member-organized events each year. Some events require very little direction, like celebrating a birthday with a party and adding a raffle; some require ongoing guidance. We offer our organizers more of a relaxed environment in which to participate, as opposed to the more structured commitments of an organized 5K or golf tournament. We encourage everyone to choose something they already do or want to do, and together we go to work making it as easy and stress-free as possible. As you can see from these pages, the sky’s the limit and your imagination is welcomed.

Introducing new team member, Karla Lemus

Karla joined the IMF in 2019 to assist the Senior Director of Member Events, Suzanne Battaglia, with the many projects and events supported by the IMF. Karla earned a degree in Communications from California State University, Northridge. She previously worked in the non-profit sector in the Los Angeles area, specializing in afterschool programs. Karla enjoys playing sports, music, and spending time with her family.
Director, Member Events] and started that conversation. It was a great success, with the IMF’s help. When I did a second one, Andy saw me promoting it and reached out to me.

“You can do any idea for charity.” — Andy Ostroff

Andy: And it turned out we both had parents with myeloma and I thought, “Well let’s do something on both coasts.”

Francisco: Then I saw Andy was doing the New York fundraiser and found out that his dad had myeloma too. And Andy told me about the L.A. one Forrest was also doing. I knew Andy and Forrest already, but I didn’t know we had that connection.

Andy: It’s not something you talk about.

Francisco: I wanted to talk about it. I wanted to have that way of sharing the story.

For all three of you, it’s about honoring your parents.

Forrest: At first, I literally did it because I knew it was going to make my mom happy.

Andy: In my regular stand up, I have some stories with my dad, but I don’t get into his myeloma. When I do the fundraiser, I talk about it. It’s nice to get to share it.

Francisco: In Latin culture, you have these things you don’t talk about. I want to do the opposite, because that will help more people get educated.

Andy: We’re also aiming towards funding a Novis Research Grant, which we’ll present in honor of our parents. I’m so excited for that. It’s a more permanent thing of record.

“It’s about whatever you can do to create community” — Forrest Shaw

Forrest: It’s about whatever you can do to create community. It seemed like a small world when I started planning that first show. But what’s been the most surprising thing is, the more you do it, the more you realize how many people have been impacted by myeloma.

Editor’s Note: The next A Night of Comedy at The Improv (Los Angeles) and Anti-Cancer Comedy FUNdraiser (New York City) are both in the planning stages. In the meantime, you can follow all three comedians on social media:

Forrest Shaw – Twitter + Instagram: @forrestshaw. Facebook: @forrestshawcomedian.

Andy Ostroff – Twitter, Instagram, Facebook: @hisnameisandy.

Francisco Ramos – Twitter: @franciscoaramos. Instagram: @framsocomedy. You can also find him on Netflix’s new original series, GenteFied.
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Winner need not be present. All arrangements will be made through the IMF office at the time of the drawing. Winner will be drawn on November 9, 2020 and will be notified immediately. All activities are valid during the mutually agreed upon time-frame.

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Attention: Karla Lemos
12650 Riverside Drive, Suite 206
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Members who give $20 or more per month receive two complementary registrations to a Patient & Family Seminar per year. In addition, new members can select a limited edition Hope Society gift as a thank you for joining!

**Ready to join?** Contact Jonathan Weitz at 800.452.2873 Ext. 254 or jweitz@myeloma.org

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**Supporting Myeloma Research Toward a Cure**

The IMF is improving the outcomes of myeloma patients, and moving toward a cure. With clinicians and researchers from top institutions around the world working together, the IMF is taking the first steps to identifying curative treatments in subsets of patients. With philanthropic support, you can help the IMF change the trajectory of myeloma. If you would like to learn how to partner with us, please contact:

Lynn K. Green, Ed.D.
Senior Vice President, Philanthropy
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At no added cost to you, Amazon will donate to the IMF a percentage of your purchases. When you access your Amazon account through the IMF’s portal, you give to the IMF each time you shop. It’s that simple!
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smile.amazon.com

Calendar of Events
In this space we typically include the IMF’s upcoming calendar of member fundraisers and other IMF community events. However, given the uncertainty right now, please refer to our dedicated member fundraiser webpage for the latest information on how we are adjusting our event programming.
myeloma.org/take-action/fundraise
Your contribution for these items will help us provide critical education, research and support, raise awareness and show support for myeloma patients worldwide, and help us in our mission to improve the quality of life of myeloma patients while working toward prevention and a cure.