

**JONATHAN A. SCHNEIDER, D.O.**

1779 MARGARET'S WALK ROAD  
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APR 08 2010

Thursday, April 8, 2010

To my Friends at Hands On Jacksonville,

It is hard to believe that it has been nearly one year since you honored me with your Faith in Action award. So much has happened to me since that time and I thought I would be remiss to not only thank you again, but to share my story with you and to share with others how much it means to be a volunteer and to be blessed to do God's work through us in our community.

Last August I had a cyst removed from my back that was bothering me. Three weeks later I was called by my surgeon to be informed that there was a BB-sized malignant tumor that was found in the biopsy. Over 7 days I had an extensive work-up that showed a primary tumor in my left upper lung. Surgery was done last September to remove my entire left upper lobe of my lung and a very rare malignancy (unrelated to smoking... I had never smoked) was identified. Because of fatigue and other symptoms related to my cancer I had been unable to volunteer on the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile until last week when I decided to "normalize" my life and do what had provided so much meaning and purpose to my life.

So, I am writing to you so that perhaps you will share this with others. The following is from a recent devotional sent to me:

"It is easy to take credit for those instances when you feel you have done some good. You generously give away some money to a good cause, you graciously help someone who is sick, you volunteer some time for a charity and you receive plenty of affirmation for these actions. These actions are wonderful only if you realize who really deserves credit. You have money to give because you have been blessed, you have the ability to help because you have your health, and you have time to help because your life was taken down a different path. Humble are those who believe that while God could use sticks and stones to carry out His will, He mysteriously and patiently chooses to work through us.."

This devotional made me realize that we spend a short time on this side of eternity. It is not just a blessing, but an honor to serve Him through serving others. All of us are given the opportunity to share/ volunteer in some way. Sometimes, as in my case, we take for granted that with or without the accolades that serving others is a gift and when that opportunity is taken away, there is this strange and incredible

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void in our life. I would encourage others to take a deep inward look at what they are doing now and what they could do to volunteer! Life is too short to miss the wonderful opportunity to touch the lives of others to make life better for them and at the same time better our community. Please, don't look back upon your life and ask yourself, "I wish I had volunteered." "Retiring" to fulfill my mission as a volunteer here in Jacksonville has been more rewarding than any paycheck. To know as John Kennedy said, "Here on earth, God's work must surely be our own," and to be part of that also allows me to know that "Faith without good deeds is dead" (James 2: 17) will never be an issue for me or anyone else who is willing to go that extra mile for our brothers and sisters in need,

My final thoughts... anybody can volunteer in some way. Look at your lives and look at the lives of those who are less fortunate... You can make a difference! As the old Nike saying goes, "Just do it!"

With sincerest best wishes to this year's recipients and those in the years to come, please accept my thanks and my insight.

In Christ, our Lord,

Jon Schneider, D.O.

