

Las Sendas Up Close

Bringing neighbors closer to their community

September 2011

Love and Fate Launch Poppy Pocket Business

By AnnElise Makin

Sometimes, one wishes progress wouldn't be so painful. Las Sendas resident Julie Hyzdu has made a lot of progress, recently patenting her invention and launching it for mass production.

Julie's eyes well up every time she tells the story of the Poppy Pocket. *Poppy* is what her children used to call their grandfather. And the *pocket* is a holder for medical infusion pumps, as they are used in chemotherapy.

The invention is owed to Bob Berling, Julie's dad. He lost his battle with colorectal cancer last fall October. Still crushed by this tragedy, Julie and her business partner Sandy Smith moved forward with the Poppy Pocket. Both women want this medical accessory to improve the lives of other cancer patients as soon as possible.

"Doctors are maxed out by monitoring their patients' high-tech treatment requirements," Julie observed. "So, they might forget what it is like for patients to go home and live with the illness." Her dad experienced numerous practical complications.

"My dad was sent home with a fanny pack holding this ambulatory infusion pump," Julie recalled. "He had to keep it on at all times, but it was a cumbersome inconvenience. The tubes got entangled, caught on cabinetry, sheets, car doors, chairs, and even the sink." Sometimes, they got pulled from the port.

One day, Bob got so frustrated he ordered himself a gun holster from the Internet to control the jumble of tubes. But that carrier didn't fit the pump. So, he bandaged it to his skin. This was less than comfortable.

Julie could not see her father struggle any longer. She ordered a swatch of medical elastic, and sewed a pouch for him. Bob liked to wear this adjustable carrier discretely tucked away under his arm, as if the infusion pump were his secret weapon.

At the next appointment, the doctor asked, "Bob, where is your pump?" He could not see that his patient was wearing

it. The doctor was amazed, and asked if Julie could make more pockets for his other patients. All of them were thrilled about the comfort.

"I could not afford to keep making the pockets for the doctor," Julie recalled. She had been homeschooling her children and had little time. Although Julie wasn't looking for a business, it spontaneously found her.



Julie, not having a business background, involved her friend, Sandy, an experienced sales and marketing professional, bringing her on board as a partner. Soon, Julie would obtain a patent and design a logo, as she diligently studied every entrepreneurial book she could find in the library.

Just this past May, Poppy Pocket partnered with Infusystem, the leading supplier of infusion services to oncologists. Every patient receiving treatment through Infusystem also will be provided with a Poppy Pocket.

Industrial manufacturing has started at Spectrum Products USA, located in Phoenix. Sandy is expecting to turn out 100,000 pieces a year. The Poppy Pocket is suitable for many pain management devices, heart monitors, insulin pumps and other modalities.

Although the daily reminiscence is still so painful for Julie, she feels compelled to carry on Bob's legacy. "We have made

100 Poppy Pockets so far and received all positive feedback," she said. "Every meeting I attend is because of Dad."

"My father was all about helping other people," Julie concluded. "If only he could see how many people he is helping right now." ■



CHOOSE TO LIVE FREELY
Poppy Pockets Improve Quality of Life

The Poppy Pocket is an infusion pump holder for various medical treatments. It has a soft, twin, polyester pouch attached to an adjustable chest band made from latex-free medical elastic. The pocket can be worn in front, on the side, or on back in multiple positions, for example, underarm or under chest. Variable lengths can be established through Velcro closures, which are recessed from the margins to protect the skin.

Poppy Pockets have now become available in 1,300 oncology practices to 30,000 patients in the United States served by Infusystem. They allow patients to engage freely in everyday activities, hands and worry free.

If you would like to find out more about Poppy Pockets, or are interested in purchasing one for a friend or yourself, go to the Web site at www.poppypocket.net.

YOUNG PARTICIPANTS ENJOY SUNSHINE AND SUNFLOWER CUP GOLF TOURNAMENT

By Ben Weir

Lead Instructor, Las Sendas Golf Academy

On July 29, the fourth annual Sunshine Cup (boys) and Sunflower Cup (girls) Golf Tournament teed it up from 9 to 11:30 a.m. with overwhelming success.

There were 27 contestants, nine instructors, and 12 volunteers, not to mention the food and beverage staff, who displayed an incredible food buffet in Bogey's Steak and Seafood. We created scoreboards to give the children the feeling they were touring pros.

From the golf club owners, each child received a complimentary Las Sendas goodie bag. Each bag included a divot tool, ball marker and tees. Also in the bag was a gift card, which allows participants to access a free 45-minute practice session indoors at either PGA Superstore in Chandler or Scottsdale.

For added adventure and flavor, five goodie bags had a mystery prize, which was a \$20 cash gift card to the PGA Superstore, compliments of Ben Weir. There were four age divisions for boys and three divisions for girls,

who received trophies for first and second place finishes respectfully. The oldest age divisions for boys, due to an increased number of players, had first through third place awards. For those participants who did not win a trophy, ribbons were awarded.



"Ben and his staff did an outstanding job at mixing fun, tournament seriousness and camaraderie with all the children," said Ray Woodhouse, parent and resident of Las Sendas. "We are very excited to return in November, for the after school camps on Friday."

This eight-week program proved to be another feather in the caps of the incredible staff, the volunteers at Las Sendas Golf Club and myself.

A special thanks to all the members and residents who were understanding and present to view our successful program in June and July.

Even though we just finished with an exciting summer of fun, all of us are gearing up for the after school fall/winter junior camps. If you know of anyone who is interested in taking part in these wonderful opportunities, we would be happy to send all the information. ■

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