



Howie Nestel is an American Cancer Society leadership volunteer and is the 2013 chair of the San Antonio Cattle Baron's Gala. He has volunteered with the American Cancer Society for over 10 years.

American Cancer Society Marks 100 Years San Antonio Residents Encouraged to Help Finish the Fight

The American Cancer Society turns 100 years old this month, and I am honored to hold a leadership role at a time when such progress has been forged against the disease.

A century ago, when our grandparents and great-grandparents were diagnosed with cancer, it was such a stigmatized death sentence that it was likely that they would not even be told why they were sick. Not much was known about cancer, and most people—even doctors—thought it was contagious. Many hospitals refused admission to those that had the disease. No one understood what cancer was or how to treat it.

In May of 1913, a group of physicians convened in New York City, determined to gather the facts and educate the public. This group, including a doctor who was fired for refusing to deny hospital admission to cancer patients, became the American Cancer Society.

Now, one hundred years later, cancer survivors are recognized as crowds cheer them on at American Cancer Society Relay For Life events held all around the nation and in San Antonio. Cancer survivors serve as models at our Ranch Chic Fashion show and then are recognized at our annual Cattle Baron's Gala through activities designed to honor them for their fight against the disease. We also remember those that lost their fight like my three-year-old cousin Kimberly who passed away of leukemia in 1977. Now most kids like Kimberly survive, and a history of cancer is no longer a stigma for them.

Although cancer is still feared, no longer is it a stigma. Volunteers like me along with researchers, fundraisers, educators, and medical professionals spend significant time and effort to finish the fight against the disease.

More than two out of three people survive cancer now when a hundred years ago almost no one did. Our goal is to change that statistic to three out of three. In 1945, the Society conducted a fundraising drive to



start its first research program. Now, on the eve of its 100th birthday, the American Cancer Society is the largest private funder of cancer research and has supported 46 Nobel Prize winners.

We've come a long way from virtually no survivors of cancer to the more than 13 million who are alive today because of advances in research and treatment and prevention. The motto for our 100th birthday is "silence won't finish the fight, action will." Celebrities like Josh Groban, Mary J. Blige, and Michael Douglas have been helping us get the word out. We've made progress but not enough. We want three out of three to survive—or better yet, to never be diagnosed with cancer.

So what can YOU do, the person sitting in the San Antonio area reading this message in your newspaper or on your computer screen or your smart phone? Well, you can help finish the fight. You can be a part of research history by donating your health information to the American Cancer Society Cancer Prevention Study-3. Your information will be kept strictly confidential and will help us determine links to cancer and how it can be prevented.

If you are age 30 to 65 and have never been diagnosed with cancer, you are eligible to participate. With three different enrollment dates and locations in San Antonio—one might work for you. Help us finish the fight against cancer and register for the study by going to cancerstudyTX.org or by calling 888-604-5888.