



## Courage for a Cause

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Peggy Sherry has helped thousands of families affected by cancer through her Faces of Courage organization, and now the Buccaneers are helping Sherry build on her vision through a donation presented to her on Thursday at One Buccaneer Place



Peggy Sherry wanted to make a difference.

A Tampa resident and two-time breast cancer survivor, Sherry dreamed of providing life-enriching experiences for underserved children, women and families affected by cancer and blood disorders. So in 2004, she took a large sum of her inheritance and founded Faces of Courage, a nonprofit organization charged with carrying out her dream.

Six years later, Sherry's vision has become a reality for more than 3,000 families. On Thursday, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers did their part to help that number continue to grow.

Following the team's practice at One Buccaneer Place, the Faces of Courage Founder and CEO was presented a check for \$5,000 by cornerback **Ronde Barber** and linebacker **Adam Hayward** on behalf of the Buccaneers.

Barber, whose mother and grandmother are breast cancer survivors, and Hayward, who lost his mother to the same battle, are advocates for the fight against the deadly disease.

“Of the many important causes out there, this one is probably the most important to me,” said Barber. “My mom is a breast cancer survivor, so it’s nice to be involved. Obviously, I’m a big supporter and I appreciate everything that the Bucs do and the [National Football] League has done for it. It’s a horrible disease, but the fight is never over. The more that we can do, the better.”

As the first organization in the nation to tailor a women’s weekend camp for minority cancer survivors, Faces of Courage is considered a leader in minority outreach and education. While the enrollment for camp programs is currently more than 3,200 families, all programs are provided at no cost to the participants.

"When you go through treatment, it's very, very expensive," said Sherry. "We provide all our services at no cost, and it's through donations like this from the generous public and great foundations like the Buccaneers that we're able to do this."

While members naturally support one another, the organization primarily focuses on creating a fun, relaxed environment for women and children with cancer and other blood illnesses. Each camp and program aims to create an environment free of judgment for campers to take a break from the everyday stresses of overcoming their illnesses.

“There are lots of ways to battle it,” said Barber. “Their charge has been to beat it by distraction, and sometimes stepping away from the realities of life can be a good thing. We know that it’s ever-present and will always be there, but those moments away can be rewarding, and they’ve done a great job with that.”

Added Hayward: “It’s amazing that you have people out there dedicating their time, effort and money to helping others out. It’s well-needed; you need to get away from that kind of thing because the reality is you’re battling something and your family is going through something with you. To be able to take these families away from that and just have fun and be with their loved ones and just really experience life is beautiful to see.”

Since the passing of his mother, Hayward has become a proud supporter of the cause, joining the fight against breast cancer through numerous fundraisers and awareness campaigns. This past May, he served as the Honorary Chairman for the Susan G. Komen Pink Tie Gala in Tampa, and on October 3 he again lent his time and efforts, serving as the Honorary Chairman for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure in St. Petersburg.

Barber and Hayward are two of the many NFL players that have promoted breast cancer awareness by wearing pink athletic apparel throughout the month of October. The NFL’s “A Crucial Catch” campaign, promoted by the NFL’s national breast cancer partner, the American Cancer Society, works to encourage annual mammograms for women over 40. This key public health message has been complemented by increased media exposure, pink field stencils and stadium wall banners throughout the NFL.

“If we show that we care about things other than just us playing the game, it really shows the character of the NFL,” said Hayward. “It’s huge that you turn on the game and see two teams wearing pink. People are looking around wondering, ‘Why are they wearing pink?’, but because of the cause, it’s awesome to show that we care so much. There’s players out there that are going through the same things that other people are going through, and we’re out there showing that our hearts are out there too, to show that we are all the same.”

Throughout the month of October, the Buccaneers have made a concerted effort to build breast cancer awareness. Involving breast cancer survivors in pre-game introductions, honoring survivors as team captains for the coin toss and having Buccaneers players, coaches and cheerleaders wear pink uniform accents and apparel are just some of the many ways the team has helped spread awareness.

On Thursday, Sherry was grateful the Buccaneers decided to be involved in one more.

“It may not have affected your family, it may not have affected your neighbors or coworkers, but this is a real ugly, deadly disease, and there are people in the trenches fighting for it every day,” she said. “When they see the pink on the field and see a check being donated to someone who works with them in the trenches, it makes them feel like they’re not alone, and that’s amazing.”

To see how you can join the Buccaneers in the fight against breast cancer, visit [www.nfl.com/pink](http://www.nfl.com/pink).

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