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“Out of tragedy, a community helps bring relief to grieving families”

Ellen Lindeman's Story

A family vacation to Italy in August, 2003 was the trip of a lifetime for Ellen Lindeman, her husband, Ted, and their two children, Taylor and Luke, ages 5 and 3. Little did they know that it would be their last family vacation. Two short months later, on October 17, 2003, Ted Lindeman was diagnosed with esophageal cancer. Ted's doctors were hopeful that Ted could beat the cancer. However, on January 6, 2004, Ted's doctors discovered that the cancer had spread through his entire body, and he died three days later at the age of 33.

In June 2004, parents of Taylor's classmates at Warwick Elementary School, in Jamison, PA, organized a benefit dinner to raise money to help Ellen and her children through the horrific ordeal that they faced. This group of parents and the surrounding community rallied around Ellen and her children in their darkest days.

Ellen was overwhelmed with the kindness and support of the Warwick community, and all of the others who reached out to support her family. She will tell you that the one good thing that came out of Ted's death was seeing how good, generous, and caring people can be. Ellen and her children feel incredibly fortunate to be a part of such a loving and caring community.

At the time of Ted's death, Ellen worked part-time, but had taken time off from her job to care for Ted throughout his illness. After Ted's death, Ellen needed to find full time work to support herself and her children, but while doing so, never forgot about the support and kindness that she had received as a grieving widow and mother.

The following year, Ellen, with the assistance of members of the Warwick community, decided to make it her mission to reach out to other young widows, widowers, and their children, and help them in the same way that others had helped her. Ellen formed the Ted Lindeman Outreach Foundation, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization which was officially established in 2006. The mission of the Ted Lindeman Outreach Foundation is to provide emotional and financial assistance to families in Bucks and Montgomery Counties that have tragically lost a parent and are raising young children. Ellen knows firsthand that for a least the first year after this kind of loss, it is impossible for a family to absorb the enormity of the loss. In addition to grief, they may have emotional and financial difficulties that they do not know how the deal with.

Ellen would give anything to have Ted back for just one more day, but his death has changed her, she says, in some ways for the better. It has shown her what is important in life. Families come to her in their grief, and she connects with them from a place of true understanding.

Each year, through an annual gala and silent auction at a local country club, and several other fund-raising events, Ellen and her team strive to raise funds so that the families that reach out to her can focus on more important issues during the initial phase of their grief.

The Ted Lindeman Outreach Foundation is a major driving force in Ellen's life. It helps to bring

meaning out of her grief. In order for the Foundation to grow and be able to help more families, Ellen needs to spend as much time as she can connecting with families, raising funds, and finding ways to publicize the Foundations' efforts. Her worst fear has always been that the demand for assistance would be greater than the Foundation's resources could support. That is the challenge that Ellen faces today. There is nothing more difficult for Ellen than to turn away a family in need because the Foundation does not have enough money to help.

Ellen is fortunate and grateful that people in the community are always offering to help her with the Foundation's efforts, but Ellen emphasizes that the greatest challenge she currently faces is raising money to help the families that contact her. The Ted Lindeman Outreach Foundation is now reaching out beyond the scope of the local community to raise awareness about the Foundation's mission, and to raise funds to assist the growing number of families that contact Ellen every day.

Please help Ellen and her team help others in need in the community by sponsoring the foundation or sending a tax deductible donation to: Ted Lindeman Outreach Foundation, P.O. Box 352, Jamison, PA 18929. For more information, please visit the Foundation at www.tedlindemanoutreachfoundation.com, or you may contact Ellen Lindeman by e-mail at Ellen@TedLindemanOutreach.com, or by phone at 215-918-2796.

Ellen is truly an inspiration to all who know her, and to those families who have been touched by her kindness and generosity. With “Strength, Empowerment, and Support”, the Ted Lindeman Outreach Foundation helps families heal.

The **Ted Lindeman Outreach Foundation** has been featured in area newspapers, including the Intelligencer, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Bulletin, the Bucks County Herald, and others. **Ellen's story is also featured in the November 2008 issue of Family Circle magazine.**

Last summer, Ellen Lindeman was honored by State Farm Insurance Company as a recipient of their ***Embrace Life Award*** – a State Farm program which honors those who have renewed their lives and inspired others through their perseverance following the loss of a spouse or parent. Ellen was 1 of 13 people chosen out of over 290 nominees to receive the award. The award ceremony was held in Chicago, IL at the end of August. For more information about the Embrace Life Program, visit the link at: <http://www.sfembracelifeawards.com/>.