



NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

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Danny Thompson Memorial Golf Tournament Raises \$270,000 for Cancer Research

Boise – A benefit golf tournament started more than 30 years ago to pay tribute to a former Minnesota Twins shortstop has helped thousands of Idahoans in their fights against cancer by helping fund critical cancer research.

The Danny Thompson Memorial Golf Tournament draws celebrities and dignitaries each year to the Sun Valley Resort and Elkhorn Golf Club to remember Thompson, who died of leukemia in 1976 at the age of 29.

This year's donation of \$270,000 marks a total of more than \$5 million donated to St. Luke's MSTI since the tournament's inception in 1977.

The tournament splits its proceeds each year between St. Luke's MSTI and the University of Minnesota Cancer Research Center in Minneapolis.

Funding from the tournament goes directly into cancer research efforts at St. Luke's.

"The support from the tournament offer patients from throughout our region the opportunity to participate in the trials that provide potentially life saving, cutting-edge, cancer treatments," said Dr. Thomas Beck, St. Luke's MSTI medical director.

St. Luke's MSTI enrolls twice as many patients in clinical trials that the national average. There are currently 180 clinical trials ongoing at St. Luke's. The majority of the trials – 33 percent – are for pediatric patients. An additional 25 percent of the trials are for leukemia lymphoma.

The most common cancer being treated at St. Luke's MSTI is breast cancer. More than 12 percent of the patients in clinical trials are breast cancer patients.

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St. Luke's MSTI is one of the largest community cancer centers in the Northwest seeing 3,000 new cancer patients every year and completing nearly 170,000 cancer procedures in 2009.

The results of cancer research have greatly improved survival rates for cancer at St. Luke's.

Today, 95 percent of patients survive breast cancer compared with 74 percent in 1983.

Prostate cancer survival rates are even more dramatic. In 1983, only 69 percent of the patients survived prostate cancer. Today, 100 percent of patients survive

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About Danny Thompson

Danny Thompson, an All-American baseball player with Oklahoma State, started his major league career with the Minnesota Twins in 1970. His love for baseball and desire to not give up kept him playing the game even after he was diagnosed with leukemia in 1974. During the 1975 season he led American League shortstops in batting average and played well enough that he had hopes of making the All-Star team. In 1976 he was traded to the Texas Rangers. He played his final game in October of that year and died 10 weeks later on Dec. 10.

About The Danny Thompson Memorial Golf Tournament

The inspiration for the golf tournament came from former teammate and Hall of Fame baseball player Harmon Killebrew, who retired from baseball in 1975 and former Idaho Congressman Ralph Harding. After retiring, Killebrew moved to Idaho and went into business with Harding. Killebrew wanted to do something to remember Thompson and Harding suggested a golf tournament. The first tournament was held in 1977 and attracted celebrities and dignitaries including former President Gerald Ford and baseball legend Mickey Mantle.

About St. Luke's Mountain States Tumor Institute

Founded in 1969, St. Luke's Mountain States Tumor Institute (MSTI) has treated nearly 60,000 patients and has become one of the Northwest's most respected cancer care centers providing the region's most advanced cancer care therapies with the added benefit of allowing most patients to remain close to home. To find out more about St. Luke's MSTI visit www.stlukesonline.org

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