



Fire Fighter Cancer Awareness and Prevention



SURVIVOR STORY: CAROLYN PHIPPS

In Memory of: Jeff Phipps
Hanover, VA Local 4202 / Battalion Chief
Diagnosed with stage 4 colon cancer in 2021



My husband, Jeff Phipps, was a Battalion Chief with Hanover County Fire-EMS. Jeff was diagnosed with Stage 4 colon cancer during a routine colonoscopy on February 25, 2021. He was experiencing no symptoms at that time and almost five months later, in July of 2021, we lost our battle. I say “our battle” because the love and support we received was nothing short of a miracle in itself and all of our prayer warriors battled with us.

Our oldest son, Jeffrey, is also a fire fighter. He was told about the FCSN and immediately went to their website to see what they were about. He clicked on the “I need help” tab and gave them our contact information. Not knowing what to expect, we proceeded to try and figure out the many battles ahead.

Within days we received this box from FCSN. This box contained resources that helped us navigate all of the questions that we had. I referred to it as our lighthouse. We had no idea what we were doing or needed to be doing and the help in that box and through the network was a beacon of hope that lifted a huge weight from our shoulders.

Jeff was assigned a mentor who had beaten a similar type of cancer. He would call and Jeff’s whole demeanor would change. It gave him hope that here was this other person that really knew what he was feeling and he has been right where he is at. He seemed to know exactly when Jeff needed a call or text. When Jeff was put in the hospital near the end of our battle, his mentor did not hesitate to drive to our side to help support our family. We will always be grateful for the love and support shown to us by the FCSN and Hanover Fire-EMS.

While fighting, Jeff made it his mission to encourage others to get their colonoscopies and reinforced the importance of safety on the fire scene. He wanted to keep others from having to fight cancer. In honor of Jeff, that is what I am doing. I am becoming a mentor, volunteering at local FCSN events and am hoping to help educate fire fighters on how to protect themselves and their brothers and sisters in the fire service.

