


# Survival and Hope *Life After Cancer*



 **ANTHONY LOGGINS, 57**  
**DIAGNOSIS: PANCREATIC CANCER, STAGE 3**

## The Basics:

- **RESIDENCE:** Hesperia.
- **OCCUPATION:** On disability because of heart attack, two months after they got married.
- **Family:** Ronal Loggins, 50, wife; Mary Rose Gardner, mother.
- **Hobbies:** Fishing.
- **Philosophy:** I have to stay positive.

By Alberta Hale Crigler

In 2013, Anthony Loggins had been getting sick a lot. "I had a bout of pancreatitis, which was the fourth time," he said.

"One Sunday morning it was a bad day. I was throwing up all day and I went to ER in the afternoon. The doctor said it was something I ate. They pumped my stomach, and I was going to go home with anti-nausea medication.

"I said something is wrong and it has been going on for a long time, and you are a quack.

"The next day we called my doctor in Hesperia and told him what was going on. He said come down here and we will make an appointment for an ultrasound".

The doctor called Loggins with results two days later. They had found a mass on the

head of his pancreas. He was referred to the cancer center at St. Agnes Medical Center in Fresno.

Loggins had a biopsy and a CT scan. "They said it was an inoperable tumor, and that it was stage 3," he said.

"When I got diagnosed, the doctor said, 'we are going to put you on chemo until...'

"My wife said 'until what?' Essentially until I died.

I don't accept it. That has been my philosophy. You have to fight and you have to stay positive. If you look at the negative, it brings everything down. It just has to be that way.

"My wife and I went to the car and we held each other's hands and we said we are not going to accept it. We cried. We actually said, 'God, you kept me alive through the heart attack, why now?'

"On the next appointment, we were told it was a neuroendocrine tumor and we were going to be transferred to the cancer center at Stanford University.

"My oncologist was doing a clinical trial and she wanted to put me on it."

But, Loggins said he did not qualify for the trial; however,



"we still did the same (oral) drug."

"I did two weeks of really terrible pills that made me sicker than a dog – two weeks on, two weeks off," he said.

Then, Loggins developed an abscess and infection on his back that disrupted his chemo.

"All of this was going on right around October and November in 2013," he said. I was on an infusion pump for antibiotics for eight weeks, 24 hours per day."

Finally, Loggins's surgeon told him "enough is enough, we are going to schedule surgery and we are going to take this thing out."

"On Jan. 21, 2014, we went in and we had the surgery," Loggins said.

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*They said it was an inoperable tumor, and that it was stage 3.*

"It was supposed to be six to seven hours. Ten hours later, my surgeon came in and said, 'we think we got it all.'

"I have a chevron scar from one side of my body to the other side.

"I thank God every day. I hit the floor, I look up, and I am so happy that I am still here.

Still, Loggins said he thinks about a recurrence "all the time. Especially with pancreatic cancer, I pray that it doesn't happen because so many people pass away with pancreatic cancer.

"I am actually coming up on five years of being cancer free. Every year we get a CT scan, and so far, every year we are still cancer free.

"My tumor was so rare, my oncologist said we won't talk about being cured until after 10 years."

"(But) every time I feel a twinge in my stomach or I don't feel right, I am 'Oh my gosh, it feels like it felt before.'"

Loggins said the small, northern town he and Ronal lived did not have a Relay for Life event. "This is the first year we did it. Every chance we get to do something, we try.

"We did the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (pancan.org) PurpleStride (Walk to End Pancreatic Cancer). We have done that every year except for last year.

## Caregiver Perspective



When Ronal Loggins heard her husband's cancer diagnosis, "I cried and was devastated," she said.

"This is the man that I loved. My world revolved around him. I am thankful every day when we wake up that he is a survivor and still going strong. We are still very much in love.

Ronal said during Anthony's surgery, "prayers were coming from Alaska, Canada, (her native) South Africa, and America."

Ronal said she was still working when Anthony had his treatment and surgery. She credits their church members, a supportive boss and family with helping see them through his treatment and recovery.

"We got married on Aug. 20, 2009. Oh, what he's put me through and I still love him! He is stuck with me until death do we part."



The American Cancer Society provides a 24 hour service to answer questions about diagnosis, insurance, local support and resources

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