

# ?Debbie?s Fairway to Heaven? golf tournament raising money for oncology clinic

By **ZACHARY ROMAN**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A memorial golf tournament for a beloved wife, mother and friend has raised over \$5,000 for the oncology clinic at Brampton Civic Hospital ? and it hasn't even happened yet.

Debbie Tarasco was the wife of Tony Tarasco, and together they had four children: Ashley, Ben, Dion, and Courtney.

Debbie was diagnosed with Double Hit Lymphoma in September 2021 and received treatment and care for the disease in the William Osler Oncology Clinic at Brampton Civic Hospital for over a year before she died in December 2022.

Tony and Ashley explained that the oncology team at Brampton Civic went above and beyond in their care for Debbie, so they wanted to do something in Debbie's memory to fundraise for the clinic.

Tony said the oncology team at Brampton Civic is full of dedicated people with big hearts.

Thus, the ?Debbie's Fairway to Heaven? memorial golf tournament was born. It's being held for the first time on September 10 at Banty's Roost Golf Club in Caledon, and tickets for it have sold out.

?It's a way to give back, while also getting our friends and family together in her honour,? said Ashley.

Tony said his wife was well-loved by her family, friends and coworkers. He said Debbie had a beautiful laugh.

?If we ever had to find her, it was her laugh we could use to locate her,? said Tony. ?She had so many friends. She was the go-to person if anyone ever needed someone to talk to.?

This is clearly reflected in the number of people coming to the tournament: there are 141 golfers participating and 80 more people coming for the post-tournament dinner. There's even a waitlist of people ready to take one of the spots if someone can't make it. Ashley and Tony said at Debbie's funeral, between 300 and 400 people came, enough to overflow the funeral home.

Tony said Banty's Roost has been great to work with and noted it was the course that would allow his family to raise the most money for charity after costs. Based on ticket sales, the nearly \$5,000 in donations received already, and raffles planned on tournament day, Tony and Ashley estimate they will raise \$10,000 to \$15,000 in total.

Ashley said support has been overwhelming, as they originally anticipated 120 golfers and a fundraising total of \$2,500 to \$5,000. The family is now planning to make the tournament an annual event, as they said it is a great way to combine fundraising and getting people together.

A group of Debbie's friends from Malton, and Ashley, Ben, Courtney and Dion's spouses (Paul, Maggie, Pino, and Jessica), are helping to run the tournament too.

Those interested in supporting the Tarasco family's fundraising efforts can visit [tinyurl.com/fairwaytoheaven](https://tinyurl.com/fairwaytoheaven).

?We're extremely grateful and overwhelmed by the generosity we have seen from people,? said Ashley.