



## Tee Up for Life Colorado Springs History

*Mr. Brad Mears, founder of this organization, was 6 years old when he first lost a family member to cancer. Since then he saw his mother, mother-in-law, aunts, uncles and friends fall to this same disease. In August 2005, at age 44, he became a cancer patient himself. If it hadn't been for the great strides made in cancer research over the years, his own story might have ended quite differently from that of his family members. Shortly after undergoing surgery and chemotherapy, Brad decided he wanted to give something back to the organization that funds the vital research programs necessary to combat this disease.*

*He was having lunch with a couple of good friends after an afternoon of golf when he proposed the idea of setting up a charity golf tournament to benefit the American Cancer Society. Before you could slice off into the rough, Brad, David Barnett, Todd Endres and Brad's wife Teri were forming Tee Up for Life Colorado Springs. As the board formed, Brad contacted the local office of the American Cancer Society and enlisted the help of Nikole Mazich who quickly became the Board's ACS representative and an invaluable inspiration to the team as well as new friend. Brad also met a new golf buddy at his day job. Paul Plemel, an avid golfer and one-time golf pro, joined the team shortly after it was formed. His willingness to help a co-worker and new friend in this challenging endeavor were greatly appreciated. The Board was formed: Brad Mears, Director; Teri Mears, Business Manager; David Barnett, Sponsor Coordinator; Todd Endres, Sponsor Coordinator; Paul Plemel, Golf Coordinator; and Nikole Mazich, ACS Representative.*

*The first year in business for Tee Up for Life was a busy one. Forming a charitable organization with a plan to have its first major event in only 3 short months was a challenge but one the board members were determined at which to succeed. Teri began researching and filing the necessary paperwork to become a tax exempt Non-profit organization while the rest of the team set about the business of contacting a golf course for the first annual tournament and determining how to advertise it to the public. Given the short time frame, finding sponsorships for the event proved challenging but the team pressed on undaunted even without local corporate help. On August 8, 2009 a team of 35 golfers met on the course at Springs Ranch Golf Club for a beautiful day of golf and friendship. The stories of the golfers varied but it was telling to hear that in one way or another, each one's life had been touched by cancer in some way. Some had stories of friends to share, some of family members, some a personal story of themselves. But the day was about celebrating and raising funds for the needed research to continue to conquer this disease. By day's end, Tee Up for Life Colorado Springs had raised over \$1700 for the American Cancer Society through the combined efforts of the board, Colorado Springs golfers and their family members.*



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*The 2010 tournament planning began the moment the 2009 tournament ended. Teri finalized the federal tax exempt paperwork and Tee Up for Life became a legal 501(c)3 Non-Profit organization. The board began working on plans to solicit corporate sponsorships and early in 2010 obtained an event sponsor, Braxton Technologies. Mr. Maury Keller, CFO of Braxton, joined the board as the event sponsor representative. The Board has affiliated itself with the American Cancer Society's local Relay for Life board and plans to become an integral part of that event in Colorado Springs.*

*Tee Up for Life Colorado Springs was off and running again and will continue to become, as its goal states, the premier charity golf tournament in the Pikes Peak region.*

*On August 24, 2010, Director Brad Mears will be cancer free for 5 years and he and his family and friends will celebrate that week. But the real celebration will occur annually at the Tee Up for Life tournament as they share their lives with others in a day of golf and friendship.*



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*The Board of Tee Up for Life at the 2009 tournament*



*The 2009 winning team with Director Brad Mears*



*2009 Group Picture*