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The Wellness Community Announces June Star Caregiver of the Month

Caregiver featured in new caregiver book out this month

Washington, DC - The Wellness Community (TWC) announced today that, Dottie Leven is June's *Star* of the Month. Dottie joins nearly 300 family members, friends, medical professionals, counselors and others who have been honored through The *Star Campaign*, a web-based effort, www.starcampaign.org, which enables people with cancer to honor and reflect on the caregivers who support them. The campaign is made possible by a charitable donation from GlaxoSmithKline Oncology.

Dottie is being honored by her husband, Andy Leven, a prostate cancer survivor. As Andy's primary family caregiver, Dottie was there to drive him to doctor appointments, prepare healthy meals, run errands and "keep the household running in tip-top shape," as Andy recalls.

Being an informed caregiver and patient was important to Dottie and Andy, respectively. Soon after Andy's diagnosis Dottie began attending caregiver support groups at The Wellness Community- San Francisco/East Bay in Walnut Creek, CA. Initially, she attended this weekly professionally-led support group out of solidarity for Andy, who attended a group for patients across the hall at the same time each week. It didn't take long for Dottie to realize the value in talking to other caregivers who shared similar experiences. She says, "the single greatest thing I took away from the support group was peace of mind."

Andy loved to see how these weekly support groups rejuvenated Dottie. "We were in this journey together and it was comforting to see that she was getting the support she needed. Our relationship grew stronger as a result of my cancer diagnosis because I was reminded every day how much my wife cared for me in new and inspiring ways," he says.

In addition to being June's *Star* of the Month, Dottie and Andy Leven are featured in The Wellness Community's first exclusively caregiver-focused book, *The Balancing Act: Tips for the Cancer Caregiver*, featuring personal stories of caregivers across the country and tools for individuals just beginning their journey as cancer caregivers. The book is part of the growing movement to empower cancer caregivers in their journey to be more effective, reduce their own distress and find hope.

To order your free copy of *The Balancing Act: Tips for the Cancer Caregiver* online beginning June 24, 2008 or to learn more about the *Star Campaign*, visit www.starcampaign.org.

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About The Wellness Community®

Founded in 1982, The Wellness Community is an international non-profit organization dedicated to providing free support, education and hope to people with cancer and their loved ones. Through participation in professionally-led support groups, educational workshops, nutrition and exercise programs, and stress-reduction classes, people affected by cancer learn vital skills that enable them to regain control, reduce isolation and restore hope regardless of the stage of their disease. The Wellness Community provides support, education and hope for people affected by cancer at over 100 locations worldwide including 24 U.S. based and 2 international centers with 73 satellite and off-site programs and online at www.thewellnesscommunity.org.

