



*Photos by Kim O'Neil  
Special thank you to  
Lone Pine Farms in Junction City*

# Debbie Wright

## How does she do it?

I was faced with the most challenging time of my life just five years ago, when my 13-year-old daughter, Staci, was diagnosed with cancer. I will never forget the day. It was a day that changed our lives forever. I received a call from my husband Rick. "Something's seriously wrong with Staci, you need to get home right away." That was at 11 a.m. Finally, at 5:30 p.m., they found a tumor in her brain. Staci was admitted to the hospital immediately and was scheduled for surgery. How could so much change in one day?

After the tumor was removed, we found out it was cancer. Ewings Sarcoma, bone cancer. It originated in her skull and was growing into her brain.

At one of our first meetings with her oncologist, we were informed about all the side effects of the chemotherapy. I cried inside, but stayed strong for Staci. Of all the side effects Staci was about to face, she was most concerned about losing her hair. "It's tough for people my age to lose their hair," said Staci. "They lose their self-esteem."

Staci's hair started to fall out after the second round of chemo. We went to wig shops and found that they just didn't work for Staci. Time was running out, Staci's hair was getting very thin now and she was starting to get depressed. A friend told me about a hair system and that was the best alternative to her own hair.

We found a cranial prosthesis hair system that looked so real, you would never know

it was not Staci's own hair. Staci wore her hair system all the time. She felt confident and best of all, nobody stared at her or treated her differently.

Staci's wish was to help other kids have the same benefits she had. So I decided to make her wish come true. I started Angel Hair Foundation.

Angel Hair Foundation provides hair systems to kids and teens up to age 19, who either live in the state of Oregon or are treated in an Oregon children's hospital. Our goal is to provide natural looking, quality hair-systems to children and teens who face hair loss.

Since then, my passion has been to help other kids feel a sense of normalcy while battling medical conditions such as cancer and alopecia. It is my pleasure to visit kids in the children's hospitals in Oregon and to be the "bright spot in the cancer battle," as one little girl put it.

### About Debbie

I have been blessed with three beautiful children; Zach, 21; Staci, 19; and Sydney, 10. "Mom"- what a beautiful title. It is such an honorary title that encompasses so much; compassion, security, friendship, and unconditional love.

Even though my two oldest kids have moved out of the house and are at college, I talk with them daily and see them weekly...usually during lunch (good timing Zach). I enjoy playing with my littlest one, she is not so little any more, but she will never outgrow that title. Her (our) favorite game is to jump on the trampoline with a water balloon. Needless to say, my kids keep me young.

While the kids are at school, I dive right into my work. I run Angel Hair Foundation from my home office. It is a bit challenging to stay focused, but the Angel Hair kids

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*Staci in the hospital with her sister Sydney.*



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keep me focused on what I have been called to do.

I love date night with my husband. I have always wanted to dance, so at my request, my husband Rick and I took ballroom dance lessons. I really look forward to our date “dance” night, and I think Rick does too. We have a lot of fun and laughs and a few disagreements. I think he is supposed to lead, but I have a hard time learning that part of dance.

Our dance lessons opened a whole new door for me. I enjoyed dancing so much that I decided to compete. I now dance International Latin which includes the cha cha, samba, rumba, paso doble, and jive. I absolutely love it. I love dancing on the ballroom dance floor and doing my hair

and make-up and putting on a sparkly dress, it’s just like playing dress-up.

I have a lot of energy and I enjoy being active. I currently teach an indoor cycle class. I started teaching group fitness when I graduated from college. I remember wearing leg warmers, leotards, and headband to class. We have come a long way in exercise apparel.

My all time favorite place on earth is sitting on our dock at Crescent Lake, early in the morning, and peacefully taking in God’s beauty. It’s breathtaking. Then later in the day, you can find me surfing behind our boat or riding an inner tube with my kids.

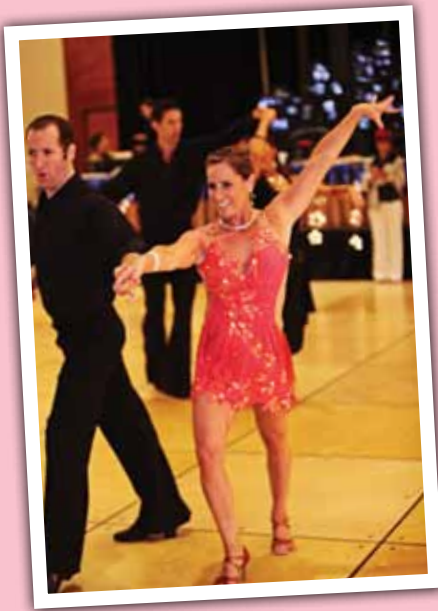
Mom is the title we get when we have children, but in the eyes of our children we are beautiful, heroic, and loving. I

***Debbie and Rick, with their kids Staci, 19; Sydney, 10; and Zach, 21.***

cannot express how important it is to not only love your children, but enjoy them as well. Remember, the journey is as thrilling as the destination.

How do I do it all...I don’t. I just enjoy what I can do and not worry about the rest.

My favorite bible verse is Philippians 4:6-7 “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”



## Shall We Dance

A Dancing with the Star's show benefiting Angel Hair Foundation

**January 27, 2012**

Mark your calendars for Angel Hair Foundation's third annual Shall We Dance. The main event is a Dancing with the Stars style dance competition, with a full cast of local celebrities and dance instructors. Last year's fundraising event, Shall We Dance, was an overwhelming success and allowed Angel Hair Foundation to help even more kids fight the cancer battle.

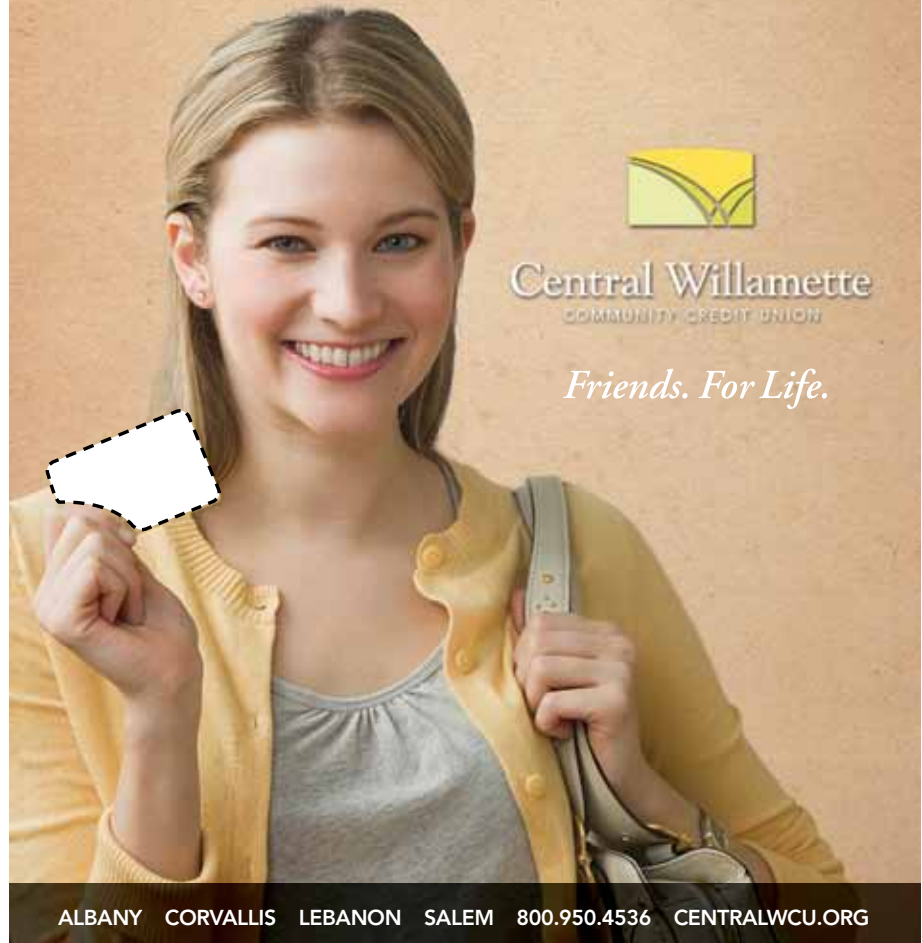
Shall We Dance is scheduled for Friday, January 27, 2012. Please contact Angel Hair Foundation if you would like to volunteer, sponsor, or attend the event at [angelhairfoundation@yahoo.com](mailto:angelhairfoundation@yahoo.com). You can see the highlights from last year's event on our website [angelhairfoundation.org](http://angelhairfoundation.org).



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## Debbie's Favorites

**Hobbies:** I really enjoy being active and involved in sports. I enjoy working out, dancing, playing tennis, and my latest passion is International Latin Ballroom Dancing.

**Books:** I am currently reading *Sarah's Key*, but I also enjoy lighter books like *The Undomestic Goddess*.

**TV Shows/Movies:** When I go to the movies, it's usually girl's night out. I love a good "chick flick" with my friends.

**Vacations:** YES!! I love to spend time with my family on vacation. I prefer to go someplace warm and on a beach like Roatan, Hawaii, or Bermuda. My husband and I just celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary in Ibiza, Spain. That was one of my all-time favorite vacations.

