

BRIDGES



Building bridges to support the future of Montgomery County

Summer 2018

Honoring and Remembering Cole Petty

The sum of a life is never as simple and fixed as $2 + 2 = 4$. There are too many variables, too many factors to consider that are all part of the whole. To describe anyone's life in a few words and phrases, can never truly reflect the priceless worth and significance of that life. However, we would like to attempt to give you a glimpse into the treasured life of Cole Petty, a young man who was loved by many.

Cole possessed a passion for the outdoors and loved hunting and fishing. He was fearless around anything that slithered or walked on four legs, holding a deep affection for all wildlife and soaking up everything that nature offered. Cole was one of those rare individuals who knew how to enjoy the moment, never appearing to be in a hurry to get to the next one. His sense of humor was contagious, eliciting smiles and laughter from those in his presence. Cole had a tender, sensitive soul and cared deeply for his loved ones and friends.

Dedication and commitment would also be descriptive of Cole. Upon graduation from Southmont High School, Cole went on to study at the Purdue University School of Agriculture, where he was on track to receive his degree in Animal Science. In addition to those studies, he graduated from the United States Marine Corp Officer Candidate School in 2017, an arduous, grueling program. Many never finish this program, but Cole did, and his completion was a huge accomplishment. Cole was set to commission as an officer in the Marines after his college graduation.

What comes next might not seem to "fit" the person described above. You might think that someone like Cole would not take his own life – but he did, and his suicide is also part of the whole. His parents, Bret and Lisa Petty, have courageously chosen to be open about the manner of Cole's death, hoping it will lead to conversations about awareness and prevention where possible. They never had the slightest suspicion that Cole would have even considered, let alone attempted, suicide. Learning more than they ever wanted to know, Bret and Lisa now desire to effect change on the stigma associated with suicide.

Cole fought the dragon of depression, which has been likened to a cyclical prison cell. It has many causes, but regardless of the cause, depression always centers on death and pain. Insecurities and feelings of inadequacy swell along with

depression, while hope and confidence evaporate. Cole hid his depression from his loved ones because he didn't want them to worry. Depression clouded his vision, throwing a murky shadow over the value of his life and preventing him from understanding just how much he was loved. Cole lost his battle with depression on February 23, 2018 at the age of 22.

But Cole's loved ones would want you to remember all the parts that made up his life, rather than focus on his death. So in memory of their beloved son, Bret and Lisa recently established the **Cole Petty Scholarship Fund** at the MCCF. This fund is for graduates of Southmont High School – a place where Cole blossomed and found his niche. He once said of Southmont, "I now go to the best school on earth" and his parents felt this is something that would truly honor him. It is forever a reminder and reflection of Cole's willingness to help others.



There is one more addition to this story. Bret and Lisa recently learned something that brought comfort to their aching hearts. Cole was in good standing at Purdue and only weeks away from graduation, so his professors nominated him to receive his BS degree in Animal Science,

Posthumous. This degree is of tremendous worth to Cole's family as it validates all his hard work and accomplishments. This August, Cole's older brother, Graham, also a Purdue graduate, will proudly walk the stage for Cole and accept his diploma. There will be tears, but there will also be joy. Cole would relish the moment.

More about this topic on the following page

Sobering Statistics

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently released sobering statistics, stating that the suicide rate in the U.S. rose by nearly 30 percent from 1999 to 2016. It is a sharp increase, now claiming twice as many lives as homicides. In 2016, suicide became the second leading cause of death among those aged 10-34. If any other disease had such a spike in numbers, it might be considered an epidemic. Speaker, author and theologian, Ron Rolheiser, stated that "suicide is a disease and the most misunderstood of all sicknesses. It takes a person out of life against his or her will, the emotional equivalent of cancer, a stroke, or a heart attack. Suicide is an illness and, as with any sickness, we can love someone and still not be able to save that person from death."

One of the hard things Bret and Lisa have painfully learned is that most people contemplating suicide don't reach out for help. Most won't call a hot line, and most will avoid talking to anyone who might talk them out of it. At that point, the person is in pain so deep that they cannot see any other way out, except through suicide. This is why Bret and Lisa believe so strongly in starting the discussion and having those hard conversations, whether at home, school, church, or wherever it needs to happen.



Someone who has helped get that discussion going is Kevin Hines, a young man who jumped from the Golden Gate Bridge to take his own life, but survived. He produced a movie project, *Suicide, The Ripple Effect*, and it was released on the day Bret and Lisa lost Cole. Kevin's story and his message is compelling and one of hope. In it, Kevin states that for every one death by suicide, there are at least 150 people who are affected, hence the ripple effect. His goal is to raise awareness in order to increase understanding about this difficult topic. Kevin is so thankful to be alive today, and his life's mission is to tell his story in an attempt to reverse hopelessness in suicidal people so that they will instead choose to live.

To watch a five-minute trailer about Kevin's movie, please use this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LytKNC405oI>.

To help make a local impact, the Montgomery County Youth Service Bureau is sponsoring a Suicide Prevention Walk on Saturday, August 18th at Milligan Park. For more information and to register, please visit mcysb.org.



The MCCF Love Where You Live campaign has officially hit the halfway mark! In January, this project began as a way to celebrate the things that make Montgomery County a great place to live. Since then we have featured close to 30 different organizations, events, and people.

The main goal of our LWYL campaign is to share the positive things happening in our community with those who might not normally see them. To do this, we have been busy promoting the videos on our social media pages and website. You can help too by sharing with your friends online! All of the videos are available on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

We are always taking suggestions for video features. If there is something that you would like to see spotlighted in an upcoming video, please feel free to stop by the MCCF office, email LoveWhereYouLive@mccf-in.org, or give us a call at 362-1267.



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Megan Wilson was the winner of our Facebook contest, in which she shared one of our Love Where You Live videos.

She received our Love Where You Live t-shirt.

Thanks for sharing, Megan!

Your gifts make a difference and giving can still benefit you!

While tax laws have changed, there are still many ways you can make a gift to support our cause and make a difference.

Even with the changes, **making a gift to us can still provide benefits to you.**

Contact us to learn more about ways you can support our work and benefit this year.

This information is not intended as tax, legal or financial advice. Gift results may vary. Consult your personal financial advisor for information specific to your situation.



Fund owners Nancy and Richard Inskeep

1.

IRA Rollover Gift

If you are 70 ½ or older you can avoid extra income this year by making a gift to us from your IRA

2.

Gift of Securities

Give us your old stock (with a low basis) that has appreciated in the rising market and avoid capital gains tax

3.

Life Insurance Gift

Eliminate an old or unneeded life insurance policy by making a gift of the cash balance to support our work

4.

Charitable Bequest

Make a gift to support our work that costs you nothing today. Provide for your loved ones first and then our cause with a bequest made in your will or trust

Executive Director
Kelly S. Taylor

This time of year is one of my favorite times of the year at work, and it's not because it is summer or that school is out. It's because this is the time we set aside to meet with our fund owners to discuss the funds they've established with the MCCF. Our goal is to have a personal meeting with our local fund owners every other year. Fund owners who live further away receive their fund owner statements in the mail and we're always available for any questions.

At these meetings, we are able to discuss the investment performance of the fund, review the MCCF investment objectives and share granting information. I truly enjoy this time to meet face to face with our donors and learn more about their charitable goals. I like to remind donors that charitable giving is the "one stop shop" with MCCF. Since we manage over 200 funds that benefit a number of nonprofits and charitable causes in our community, anyone can accomplish just about any type of charitable giving through the MCCF.

Another benefit to meeting personally with our donors is that it provides another opportunity to express our appreciation. While we acknowledge every gift with a letter and/or personal note, I enjoy the opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude for their support. Our donors are truly the reason we are able to continue the work we do in our community. And we are grateful.

If you're interested in giving to the MCCF or setting up a fund, please give us call. We'd love to talk to you and help you realize your charitable goals.



(l-r) Jennifer Stanfield and Dick Walker, representing Camp Rotary, meet with MCCF Executive Director, Kelly Taylor to review the Camp Rotary Fund

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