

A LULU OF AN IDEA

Dogged determination



GREG DERR photos/The Patriot Ledger

Scott Leaver of Hingham and his dog, Lulu, are raising money for cancer research.

Hingham cancer survivor and his pup raise money for a cure

By KRISTEN WALSH

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HINGHAM
Cancer survivor Scott Leaver is helping to find a cure for the disease, one T-shirt at a time.

The 33-year-old Hingham man has created a company that sells products with images of his Swiss mountain dog, Lulu, on them and donates a portion of the proceeds to charitable foundations, most related to cancer research.

"You have millions of people who love their dogs, and millions of people who have been affected by cancer," said Leaver, who has raised nearly \$30,000 for cancer research so far by

selling lithograph prints, shirts, mugs and books through his company, Lulu Enterprises.

"I want to try and raise as much money for cancer research as possible, and someday people will see Lulu's picture and associate that with the idea of fighting cancer," Leaver said.



Scott Leaver's dog, Lulu, appears on T-shirts, mugs and other merchandise.

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Cancer survivor raising research funds

In late 2003, while on a business trip to Atlanta, Leaver went to the hospital when he felt faint and had been experiencing headaches for weeks. Doctors discovered a tumor the size of an apple on the right frontal lobe of his brain.

Surgery to remove the tumor went well, and Leaver was sent home to be treated at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston.

"All you can do is sleep when you're going through chemotherapy. But when I felt better between each round, I would go for a run or take Lulu for a walk," Leaver said.

His wife, Sharyn, bought him canvases and suggested he paint to keep busy. She asked him to create some art to decorate their new Hingham home.

His first inspiration was 4-year-old Lulu, his constant companion.

"She was always there, and pets love you unconditionally. All I could do while I was feeling so sick was hang out with my dog."

The painting, a mix of bright colors and a simple cartoon-like image of Lulu, was a hit among friends and family.

Soon people began asking Leaver to paint their pets and others wanted to own a piece of work with the Lulu image.

In addition to pictures of Lulu by herself, some pictures have the dog with things on her head, an idea that grew out of Leaver's desire to paint items that heal, things Lulu would "have on her mind."

Those items range from daisies, to headphones, coffee cups and martini glasses, and will soon feature an idea from a fifth-grade pupils at Wampatuck Elementary School in Scituate.

Students are offering ideas to Leaver, who will choose the best one. The student who has the winning idea will get to decide which charity will get the donation from sales of the new item.

"There's no real reason for the stuff on her head," Leaver said. "It's just stuff that makes you feel good, stuff that makes you smile."

Leaver said he tries to donate to foundations that use most of the money for research. "When I donate to these places, I can be sure that 98 cents on the dollar goes right into the lab for research, and it's really great validation for the project," her said.

The Web project is not Leaver's full-time job: he works full-time for a software company called Business Objects. The company is based in Paris, and Leaver works from his Hingham home.

Someday, he hopes to do art and raise money full time for research.

The chance of recurrence in the first five years with the type of brain tumor Leaver had is 75 percent.

But Leaver, who is nearing his second anniversary in remission, is heading into the holiday season with a bright outlook because his MRI this month showed good results.

"I've been so lucky, and I want to throw the karma back out there," he said.

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More info

Where you can find more Heal! Good Dog products and more information about Lulu Enterprises.

- Zuzu's Sisters boutique on South St. in Hingham Square
- Tails Doggie Boutique on Washington St. in Wellesley
- www.healgooddog.com