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Steve Stoler on the road

photo provided by Steve Stoler

## On Steve Stoler

By Cynthia Howe

**NEWS REPORTERS** don't necessarily report the news. They actually tell us the stories of life - they remind us that we are not alone. One of our local storytellers is Steve Stoler, reporter for WFAA, Channel 8 News. He has introduced us to a variety of people who share stories that are bewildering, horrifying, heart wrenching, inspiring and at times, intriguing.

So, what is the storyteller's story? As many other media personalities, Steve started out as a class clown. In high

school the Dean of Students told Steve he had a certain voice, and asked him to do the morning announcements. It was Steve's first introduction to delivering "the news." While attending Mercer University in Georgia he began working for a local news company. After graduation he went straight into the business, and never looked back.

Steve and his family live a short distance from where he works. His wife of over fifteen years, Susan, works for JC Penney, and their boys, Jordan and Jake, attend local schools. His love for his wife and children are reflected beyond the glass of the pictures that sit on his desk, telling the story of his family. On the weekends, he and the boys hang out. "We like to check out the DFW Airport observatory tower, eat out, catch a few professional games, or I watch them play soccer or baseball."

Steve's most personal story was his own battle with cancer. Today, he is a nine-year survivor, with the status: cured. But as seemingly impossible situations often reflect the character of an individual, this hardship revealed a man of faith and determination.

The story began to unfold as he felt a lump under his arm. He was young, about to celebrate his second child's birth, and he brushed concern aside. Thankfully, a few months later he went to the doctor for a sinus infection. He mentioned the lump

he'd found, and within days he received the news: Hodgkin's disease - lymphoma. His first thought was, "I'm going to die." They removed his lymph nodes, and he underwent chemotherapy and radiation. The doctors told him that he had an 85 percent chance for a full recovery. While Steve struggled through, he wanted to reach out to others who were suffering with cancer. He allowed his employer at the time, KDFW, Channel 4, to record his experience through a lengthy series entitled "The Cancer Chronicles."

"What are your choices? You fight with a good attitude, or you put up a white flag. Surrendering was not an option." He put on a positive attitude, shared his inspiring story with others, and then he went one step further.

He went from a "Sunday-around-the-block" rider, to riding in 100-mile marathons raising money for cancer research.

"The affirmation of a survivor is this: I can do one thing that I never did before my diagnosis." For Steve, it was riding his bike - in marathons! He went from a "Sunday-around-the-block" rider, to riding in 100-mile marathons raising money for cancer research.

Shortly after his recovery, he helped raise \$11,000 for The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society as he road with the "Team in Training" around Lake Tahoe, California in the 100-mile "America's Most Beautiful Bike Ride." This year, he is participating in the 150-mile ride for the MS Foundation, which will begin in Frisco and end in Ardmore, Oklahoma.

While Steve has shared the stories found throughout our city and neighborhoods, he has somehow become one of us, an acceptable addition to our living room. There is a gratitude we owe our storytellers, and Steve Stoler is one of them.

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*Cynthia Howe is a freelance writer living in Little Elm.*