



See this little guy? Fill him up! Proceeds go to PTK's donation to the Relay for Life.

## Professors are students, too



Joni Tyler  
Staff Reporter

## Relay for Life PTK's goal to raise \$3,000

Wes Nolen  
Staff Reporter

A cure for cancer could be found with the help of Volunteer State Community College (VSCC).

Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) is participating in the Relay for Life's fight against cancer for the third time, according to PTK President Sharon Holland-Maleby.

Last year, PTK was recognized as one of the top two donating chapters in the nation.

Approximately \$5,000 was donated to cancer research by PTK, said PTK adviser Tim Amyx.

For this year's drive, PTK has set an on campus collection goal of \$3,000, and an overall goal of \$7,000.

"If every student gives fifty cents, we could get it," said Holland-Maleby.

In addition to the on campus collection, PTK will be hosting events such as, parent-child date night, a bachelor and bachelorette auction, an Armstrong Live Strong bracelet drive, and will be gathering celebrity memorabilia for an eBay auction.

PTK hopes to obtain the additional \$4,000 to donate to cancer research.

For parent-child date night, PTK is teaming up with the Association of Campus Events. Admission will be \$5 per family.

"It is going to be a great night of dinner and dancing for the whole family.

It will be a great way to raise money for a good cause, and have fun, because there are a lot of parents on this campus that do not get to spend a lot of time with their kids," said Holland-Maleby.

PTK member, Sam Green, said, VSCC's former president, Kenny Gregory, was a cancer survivor, and encouraged PTK's involvement in cancer research.

According to [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org), Relay for Life offers everyone in a community a chance to participate in the fight against cancer.

Teams of people camp out at a local high school, fairground or park and take turns walking or running around a track or path.

Each team is asked to have a representative on the track at all times during the event.

Relays are an overnight event, up to 24 hours in length.

PTK's team will be participating in the event at Hendersonville High School on May 13, said Holland-Maleby.

"There will be money-collection jars out all over the place. Just give. We're trying to fight cancer here. We have all been touched by it in some shape, form or fashion," said Holland-Maleby.

Blomgren also stated that playing the violin was not what she expected. She said she was "amazed by how very physical it is."

A tennis player in high school, Blomgren talked about how playing an instrument is "very much like being an athlete" because of the precision and coordination that is involved.

Blomgren said that since she started playing the violin she has more empathy for students in her classroom.

"It is very humbling to do something that I struggle with. I try to remember what that feels like in class," said Blomgren.

The challenges she enjoys as a student are not unlike the challenges that accompany teaching.

"There is always something new every semester, a new problem to solve," Blomgren said of why she enjoys teaching.

Before Blomgren chose a teaching career, she was an adjunct at Volunteer State while attending Vanderbilt University. She said she "really liked the classroom."

So when a full time position came open fourteen years ago, she took it.

Since then she has cultivated a twofold philosophy on why English and literature are important.

These classes can "help you move up in the world," Blomgren said, but even more importantly, they make it possible "for people to live a more aware, more engaged life."

Blomgren also teaches a leadership class with Julie Morgan. The class, Blomgren said, focuses on teaching students to "figure out what needs to be done and what it takes to achieve it."

She said that "leadership is not always about leading the charge" it is more often "about the details."

One detail that Blomgren is sure of is that she is having fun learning and playing the violin.

"It's fun, even when it's not fun," she said, "even when I'm frustrated and my fingers hurt, it's fun."

"The student becomes the teacher," is a phrase reminiscent of Confucius or a really bad 1970's Kung Fu movie, but for Nancy Blomgren, associate professor of English at Volunteer State, the teacher, has become the student.

Blomgren, who has been teaching English and literature full time at Volunteer State since 1991, enrolled in Music 160 in the fall 2004 and spring 2005 semester as a student.

The class, taught by Tiger Fitzhugh, is a performance class that consists of 5 students who play various string instruments.

Blomgren is taking the class again this semester to continue learning and performing the violin, an instrument she began playing only 2 years earlier. Blomgren admitted that before taking lessons for the violin she could not even read music.

"Because it's difficult. I wanted a hobby that could hold my interest longer," said Blomgren when asked why she chose the violin.

"Once you learn the basics of some hobbies," Blomgren said, "they tend to become boring. Plus there are any number of directions you can go with the violin," she added.

Right now, Blomgren is working through traditional and classical music.

"My skills limit what I can play, basically, right now, it's funeral music," she joked.

"I just shoot for being competent," says Blomgren when asked about her skills. But fellow student and cello player, Anne Osborn, disagrees.

"She's good; she is greatly above average for her skill level," Osborn said.

Blomgren does admit that playing in a group has helped her self confidence and her playing.

"I have a long way to go," she said, "but I feel like my skills have improved,"

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