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CANCER SURVIVOR SAVES HUNDREDS OF LIVES; TO SPEAK AT VOICES FOR HOPE EVENT

Annual event, Thursday, May 5; New venue: Wyndridge Farm

There's a popular saying that, "Everything happens for a reason." The hard part is understanding why.

In the case of Retired California Highway Patrol (CHP) Sergeant Kevin Briggs, his purpose is glaringly clear to many. A cancer survivor, he has used his devastating diagnosis and successful outcome to help change the minds of many contemplating ending it all. Known as the Guardian of the Golden Gate Bridge, Briggs, 53, is credited with saving more than 200 lives from jumping off the iconic structure in San Francisco, most often because he simply chose to listen, engage and share from his own past hurts and adversities. Briggs is revered in the suicide prevention community and will be the featured keynote speaker at this year's Voices For Hope event sponsored by the local nonprofit, H.O.P.E. (Help for Oncology Problems and Emotional Support).

"Kevin gives hope to us all," says Barb Titanish, President and Co-Founder of H.O.P.E. "He embodies the spirit and will to weather the storms of life. A cancer diagnosis is one of the greatest storms an individual and their loved ones often encounter. Today, Kevin continues to inspire three decades later. We celebrate his bravery and his influence to so many more."

Briggs is a soft spoken, kind-hearted law enforcement officer who was diagnosed with cancer when he was just 20 years old and in the military. He successfully underwent treatment, became a CHP officer and retired after 23 years of service. While on patrol, Briggs encountered numerous individuals clinging to life by a thread – individuals who had lost hope and could see no way out - ready to jump off the bridge to what they assumed was a sudden death and an end to their pain, suffering and hopelessness. Briggs, by "listening to understand," brought solace and a change of heart to hundreds who chose either not to go over the bridge's rail or to come back to solid ground and start a new chapter in life.

Brigg's story and experiences – including his cancer experience and how it's touched other lives - have been featured at the 2014 TED Conference, as well as by *Ciudad de Las Ideas* (Mexico), *Yahoo News*, *The New Yorker Magazine*, *Men's Health Magazine*, *NPR's Bob Edwards Radio Show*, *People Magazine*, *USA Today*, as well as other magazines, newspapers, radio, and podcasts worldwide. His first book, *Guardian of the Golden Gate: Protecting the Line Between Hope and Despair*, was released in July 2015 to rave reviews.

"HOPE can come in many forms," says Briggs. "When I was going through cancer treatment, which included five chemotherapy drugs and multiple operations, HOPE came in the form of caring doctors, nurses, family and friends. Family and friends prayed for me daily and visited me often, raising my spirits. The belief by so many that I would survive helped me through some dark times. Believe me, hope was instrumental in my recovery. "

H.O.P.E.'s annual Voices For Hope event will be held Thursday, May 5 at Wyndridge Farm, 885 S. Pleasant Ave. in Dallastown. This special evening includes a dinner, silent auction, and presentation of H.O.P.E.'s 2016 Seeds of Hope Award to Stan and Nona Brown, owners of Brown's Orchards & Farm Market. Tickets will be available through April 16 at a cost of \$60. For more information, contact 717-993-3778 or email mcauliffeh@comcast.net.

H.O.P.E. was founded in 1994 to help support cancer patients and their families and runs almost entirely through volunteer efforts and community contributions. The local non-profit provides a food pantry, financial assistance, transportation to and from medical appointments, resource materials, wigs and hats, support groups and many other services, all free of charge. H.O.P.E. serves hundreds each year; most are families who have children to care for and bills to pay, but aren't able to make ends meet due to a cancer diagnosis within the family.

To learn more about H.O.P.E. visit www.hopeforcancerfamilies.org. For more information or to purchase tickets to the Voices for Hope event, contact 717-993-3778. To visit Brigg's website, [click here](#).