

# *Dragon Boat Charleston* **HOLIDAY FESTIVAL OF TREES** *Redefining Cancer Survivorship*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 1, 2022

Explore Charleston Hosts Festival of Trees to Benefit Dragon Boat Charleston

Charleston SC – Dragon Boat Charleston is collaborating with Explore Charleston to once again turn the Charleston Area Visitor and Reception Center into a winter wonderland this holiday season in support of cancer patients and survivors. The Visitor Center is adorned with themed Christmas trees adopted by area businesses and philanthropists and holiday fun for all.

The Third Annual Festival of Trees is now open to the public and runs through Jan. 4 and offers the public an opportunity to bid and vote on the trees in a silent-auction format in person or online. Bid online at <https://e.givesmart.com/events/u04/> or visit [DragonBoatCharleston.org/HFOT22](https://DragonBoatCharleston.org/HFOT22) for more information.

“We are thrilled with the Festival of Trees being held again at the beautiful Charleston Visitor Center this holiday season,” said Helen Hill, CEO of Explore Charleston. “Partnering with Dragon Boat Charleston to host this special event and support their philanthropic efforts is a great example of how our vision to create a center that engages both locals and visitors alike becomes a reality.”

Dragon Boat Charleston (DBC) promotes the physical and mental wellness of cancer survivors and their community of supporters. In keeping with the mission, DBC invited groups to sponsor the trees and decorate them in honor or in memory of someone who has battled cancer. Each tree is uniquely decorated with a theme depicting the person or group being honored.



[dragonboatcharleston.org/  
HFOT2022](https://dragonboatcharleston.org/HFOT2022)



Charleston Visitor Center  
375 Meeting St,  
Charleston, SC 29403

Hosted By  
*Explore Charleston*



# *Dragon Boat Charleston* **HOLIDAY FESTIVAL OF TREES** *Redefining Cancer Survivorship*

“We are so very grateful for the partnership with Explore Charleston to help add joy to the holiday season,” said Susan Collins, board chair of Dragon Boat Charleston. “The groups who are decorating trees are so creative and generous, and we cannot thank our sponsors enough for helping to make this happen.”

Every dollar raised helps DBC in outreach and support of cancer patients, survivors and community supporters

“DBC is a special and welcoming place where people can think more about life and less about their battle with cancer,” said Laura Francis, fundraising committee co-chair of Dragon Boat Charleston. “We are all inspired by the journeys of our survivors and seeing the stories of so many strong people come to life through each tree is very moving.”

New this year, DBC is hosting an invitation-only event kick off, Sparkles and Spirits, for sponsors and invited family members and guests of those being honored for their battle with cancer. In addition, each Sunday of the event, families and friends from select trees will be at the Visitor Center to view the tree and celebrate their loved one.

Local residents and visitors can tour the display and bid or vote on trees to show their support for the group, the honoree, or simply the unique and beautiful decorations. Bidding closes on Jan. 4. The trees will be packed up and delivered by January 7th. The winners will have a tree and ornaments packed up and ready to display for 2023.

The Charleston Visitor Center is located at 375 Meeting Street and is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.



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Dragon Boat Charleston is a Charleston-based nonprofit organization. Its mission is to promote the physical and mental wellness of cancer survivors and their community through dragon boating. Its vision is to redefine cancer survivorship. DBC has existed since 2003 and operates year-round for patients, survivors and community paddlers who support cancer survivors. Through various activities in and out of the boat, DBC successfully helps members stay healthier, more supported, and have better health outcomes.

As the region's destination marketing and management organization, Explore Charleston represents ten municipalities across three counties. It seeks to unify and lead the local travel industry in marketing the Charleston area, create overnight visitation, and support responsible development through travel and tourism strategies.

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# Dragon Boat Charleston HOLIDAY FESTIVAL OF TREES *Redefining Cancer Survivorship*

NOV. 23 RD - JAN. 4 TH



TREE AUCTION  
IN PERSON &  
ONLINE



## *Auction* FESTIVAL OF TREES

- 15 Trees
- 4 Wreaths
- Bid on your favorite.
- Fun for the whole family.



Come bid on your favorite tree at the Charleston Visitor Center. Each tree honors a loved one who's battled cancer. 100% of proceeds go to Dragon Boat Charleston. Winning bidders will receive their tree after the New Year.



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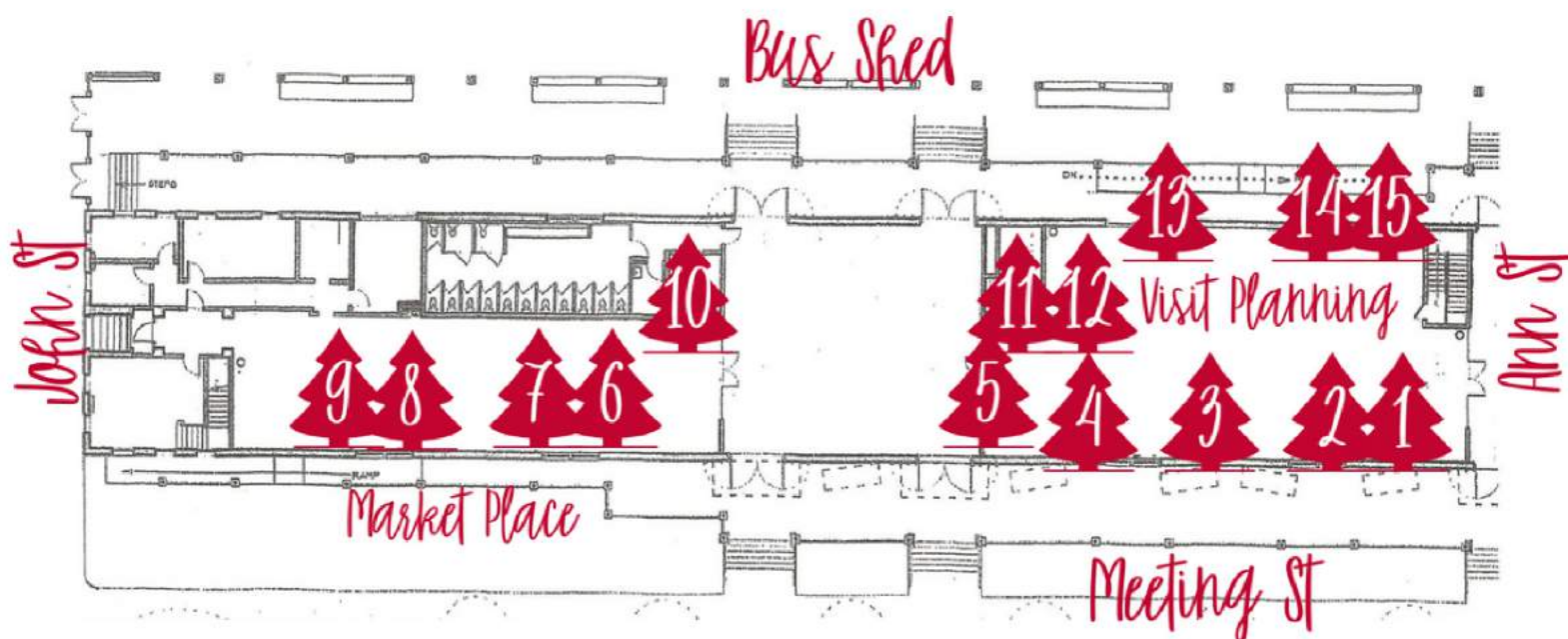




# Dragon Boat Charleston HOLIDAY FESTIVAL OF TREES Redefining Cancer Survivorship

NOV. 23 RD - JAN. 4 TH

## Tree Map



1 Bodega Bobby Dodd	5 Uptown Social Linda Dalton	9 Family & Friends Kathy Broughton	13 Boone Hall Sophia Hernandez
2 Chs Hts Vet Client Survivors	6 BoomTown Emily Bane	10 Explore Charleston Loved Ones	14 Pinnacle Financial Linda Gasper
3 Desiree & Lissette Shannon Thomas	7 Palmetto Flats Susan Durand	11 CRAN Chs Ring The Bell	15 Pinnacle Financial Brenna Ryan
4 Peninsula Dentistry Anita Coop	8 Share House Patrick Noonan	12 Lynn Lambert Mildred Howell	



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*Dragon Boat Charleston*  
**HOLIDAY FESTIVAL OF TREES**  
*Redefining Cancer Survivorship*

NOV. 23 RD - JAN. 4 TH

*Thank You*  
**TO OUR SPONSORS**

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Explore *Charleston*

**Platinum Sponsor**

**BOONE HALL**  
PLANTATION & GARDENS

**Gold Sponsor**



**Silver Bells Sponsors**



**Santa Helpers**



**BoomTown!**



**UPTOWN  
SOCIAL**



**PENINSULA  
COSMETIC & FAMILY  
DENTISTRY**



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IN MEMORY OF BOBBY DODD  
SPONSORED BY BODEGA

Hosted By  
Explore *Charleston*



*Honoree*  
**BOBBY DODD**



In late 2020, Bobby Dodd was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer. He approached his treatments with characteristic determination and unwavering optimism. When admitted to the hospital months later, he charmed the doctors, nurses, and staff with the same smile and mischievous twinkle in his eye that was his lifelong trademark. Bobby passed away on May 8, 2021. A loving husband, father, brother-in-law, uncle, and friend, he was a father figure to even more - known for his advice, humor, extensive vocabulary, and fierce support. An avid golfer, Bobby loved the competition and camaraderie. We miss him deeply, as does his labradoodle Willy.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #1



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IN HONOR OF CANCER SURVIVOR CLIENTS  
SPONSORED BY CHARLESTON HEIGHTS VETERINARY CLINIC

Hosted By  
*Explore Charleston*



## *Honoree* **Cancer Survivor Clients**

The Cancer Survivors we are honoring are clients of our Charleston Heights Veterinary Clinic.

We are blessed to have these awesome clients and are proud to honor them.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #2



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IN MEMORY OF SHANNON THOMAS  
DECORATED BY DESIREE & LISSETTE

Hosted By  
*Explore Charleston*



*Honoree*  
**SHANNON THOMAS**

Shannon Thomas, a devoted friend, mother and Dragon Boat teammate who was such a fighter, an inspiration and always positive about life, no matter what. She loved Ford Mustangs which shows her true spirit of believing in limitless possibilities no matter where her cancer took her. She loved being out in nature and had a thing for the color purple. Shannon, you will always be our "Benchie" and in our hearts. We love and miss you! Your DBC teammates.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #3



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IN MEMORY OF ANITA COOP  
SPONSORED BY PENINSULA DENTISTRY

Hosted By  
Explore *Charleston*



*Honoree*  
**ANITA COOP**

My Mother passed away of cancer in 2018. She was of German heritage and loved walks in the woods. This deer tree honors those walks she loved.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #4



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IN MEMORY OF LINDA DALTON  
SPONSORED BY UPTOWN SOCIAL

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*Honoree*  
**LINDA DALTON**



This tree honors Linda Dalton, mainly known as Momma Linda. She volunteered - working with kids and loving on them as her own. Linda also enjoyed the beach - long walks, playing with the grandchildren in the sand, sitting in a chair, or standing ankle deep watching us all play in the water. We always knew when we got out of the water she would be standing there with a towel and a hug. She was a strong woman and fought cancer for many years until God called upon her. She always taught everyone to love and if she could give everyone reading this one piece of advice, it would be to love one another. We love you Momma Linda.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #5



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IN MEMORY OF EMILY BANE  
SPONSORED BY BOOMTOWN

Hosted By  
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*Honoree*  
**EMILY BANE**



Emily Bane is a treasured wife, mother, daughter, sister and friend. A gorgeous soul, inside and out, Em's smile and laugh were infectious and she was at the top of any party invite list. Her joie de vivre was apparent in all that she did, and everything she did, she mastered. Emily was an incredible chef, her meals always paired with fabulous wine. A fearless force, when Em received her diagnosis, she began to wear a necklace with a spicy inscription of exactly what she thought about it. She loved cooking, wine, travel, gardening, laughing...but, most loved of all were her two beautiful girls and adoring husband. She lives on in them and the hearts of all who knew her.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #6



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IN MEMORY OF SUSAN DURAND  
SPONSORED BY PALMETTO FLATS

Hosted By  
Explore *Charleston*



*Honoree*  
**SUSAN DURAND**



Our friend Susan was a special lady! Beautiful inside and out! She passed away in January from cancer. She fought it for four years and never once complained! She was married to her childhood sweetheart, Ron, for almost 45 years, and has two beautiful children Ashley, and Eric. She loved to travel, read books, and host parties. She was a wonderful cook. Also, she enjoyed working in her yard, and definitely had a green thumb. We enjoyed her singing while she played the guitar with her husband Ron. Susan finished her degree in Art History while receiving cancer treatment. She was one heck of an amazing woman! We all feel truly blessed to have had her in our lives. We miss you, Susan!



Bid &/or vote on this item: #7



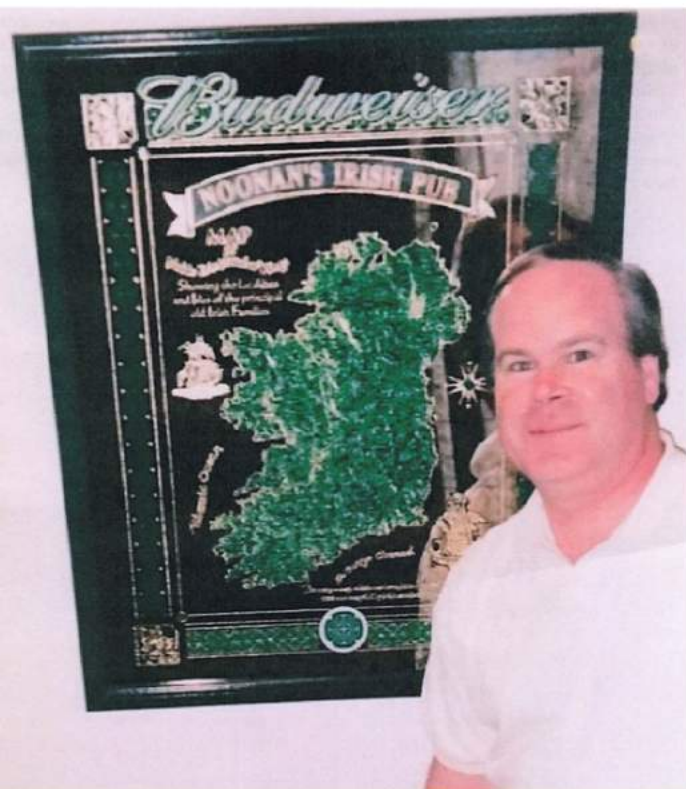
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IN MEMORY OF PATRICK JOSEPH NOONAN  
SPONSORED BY SHARE HOUSE

Hosted By  
*Explore Charleston*



*Honoree*  
**PATRICK JOSEPH NOONAN**



Patrick Joseph Noonan was diagnosed with Lung cancer in October. Could you sum up the spirit of Christmas in a person? The Noonan family can. Our father, Pat, enjoyed everything from the decorations, to the gift of giving, and most importantly establishing family traditions. He rented a limousine to look at Christmas lights with his wife and children, pulled off the ultimate Christmas surprise of gifting us our family dog, and found great joy in spreading holiday cheer to anyone he met. Often described as a real life Clark Griswold, no tree went unlit and the most important item on his to-do list was spending quality time with his family. Pat passed away on June 1st, 2009. He is deeply missed by all.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #8



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IN MEMORY OF KATHY BROUGHTON  
SPONSORED BY FAMILY & FRIENDS

Hosted By  
*Explore Charleston*



*Honoree*  
**KATHY BROUGHTON**



Kathy learned from her mother how to nurture, support, and love her family and friends. She shared her love with her devoted husband Lary. Her students were her children. As a Whitesville Wise Owl, and then a Howe Hall AIMS Chameleon, Kathy used fun reading assignments and dramatic "read alouds" to share her love of books. Every Easter, Kathy's room was filled with cotton ball bunnies filled with goodies soon to be delivered to patients in the VA hospital. Her friends and family remember her nights singing on the Spirit of Charleston, her dramatic presence, and love of all things luxurious. Her true legacy is her students who continue to love reading and caring for others.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #9



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IN MEMORY OF LOVED ONES  
DECORATED BY EXPLORE CHARLESTON

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*Honoree*  
**EXPLORE CHARLESTON LOVED ONES**

The Cancer Survivors we are honoring are loved ones of the Explore Charleston Staff that lost their battle with cancer. Our team is proud to host the Holiday Festival of Trees and support Dragon Boat Charleston.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #10



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RING THE BELL  
SPONSORED BY CRAN CHARLESTON

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*Honoree*  
**Cancer Survivors**



If you are a cancer survivor you might have rung the bell to let everyone know you beat this disease. This tree celebrates all those survivors. Feel free to add a bell ornament to represent your achievement!

**If you are a cancer survivor, please ring the bell and sign your name in the registry.**



Bid &/or vote on this item: #11



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IN MEMORY OF MILDRED MOSER HOWELL  
SPONSORED BY LYNN LAMBERT

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*Honoree*  
**MILDRED MOSER HOWELL**



Mildred Amelia Moser Howell was a fantastically loving mother, grandmother and great grandmother. She lost her mother and her youngest daughter to leukemia within 6 months of each other, but stoically carried on. She spent the bulk of her career as a rural mail carrier in northern Kentucky. GiGi loved to travel, to collect antiques, and to spend her weekends at her camp overlooking the Ohio River in Rabbit Hash (yup, the one with a dog for mayor)! Shortly after retiring she was diagnosed with breast cancer. During treatment, she was further diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, to which she succumbed. The pink on this tree is for all her girls, the natural items represent her country upbringing and weekends at camp.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #12



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*Honoree*  
**HERNANDEZ FAMILY**



For over 30 years, the Hernandez family has been helping to take care of Boone Hall on every level. Without question, they are the backbone of Boone Hall. All of them were close to and loved Boone Hall owner Willie McRae, who passed away in 2020 after a long battle with cancer.

The family also dealt with battling cancer with one of their own. Sophia Hernandez contracted a form of bone cancer in her leg when she was five years old. Sophia underwent treatment that ended in her being cancer free. She is now 12 years old. Boone Hall dedicates this tree in gratitude for Sophia being a cancer survivor and to the entire Hernandez family.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #13



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IN MEMORY OF LINDA GASPAR SECOR  
SPONSORED BY PINNACLE FINANCIAL PARTNERS

Hosted By  
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*Honoree*  
**LINDA GASPAR SECOR**



Linda Gaspar Secor passed away on October 26, 2022 after a six-year battle with lung cancer. She was a devoted wife of 40 years, loving mother to 3 sons, and beloved grandmother to 2 grandchildren. Linda was all about family, Christmas was her absolute favorite time of year. Linda owned and operated several iterations of candy, ice cream, and gift stores to extend her great love of the holiday season and giving throughout the entire year. During her illness, whenever we saw a cardinal in her bird feeder, she said it was a visit from a departed loved one. She knew this would be a symbol for her soon. Her love, devotion, guidance, quick wit, and overall kind heart will be greatly missed by all she knew.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #14



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IN HONOR OF BRENNA RYAN  
SPONSORED BY PINNACLE FINANCIAL PARTNERS

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*Honoree*  
**BRENNA RYAN**



Brenna Ryan was born in New Jersey, but moved to sunny Myrtle Beach, SC 18 years ago and has never looked back! She and her husband have been together for 23 years and will be celebrating their 16th wedding anniversary. They also have a son, Patrick, and 2 fur kids, Murphy and Louie.

"At the end of the day, I know that cancer will only be a chapter in my life, not my whole story. I trust the next chapter because I know He is the author. With the incredible support of family, friends, my Pinnacle fam, and the medical teams at Roper St. Francis, I can say with confidence that I will get to live a long and healthy life living on the Brightside!"



Bid &/or vote on this item: #15



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IN MEMORY OF KEITH EDWARD DIDYOUNG  
DECORATED BY FAITHFUL MARKETING & EVENTS

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*Honoree*  
**KEITH EDWARD DIDYOUNG**



Keith was a loving father of three and a devoted husband to his wife Ellen. He passed away 9 and a half years ago. He was a Physician Assistant who poured love and kindness into his patients. He was the most generous man who would give the shirt off his back to a stranger that needed it. But his biggest heart was for his kids, Mark, Chris, and Erin. He did everything he could to make them happy and raise them right. He loved his family more than anything. He felt so blessed by all his loved ones. His wife Ellen and daughter Erin decided to decorate this wreath with shells and the Morris Island light house because that was his favorite place. He is still greatly missed by all the lives he touched.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #16



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IN HONOR OF CANCER WARRIORS  
DECORATED BY CARLA WALTERS

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## *Honoree* **CANCER WARRIORS**

The wreath represents the recuperative effect of time spent in nature which can bring peace while one is undergoing treatments that fight the cancer.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #17



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IN HONOR OF ALL CANCER SURVIVORS  
SPONSORED BY CHARLES RIVER

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*Honoree*  
**CANCER SURVIVORS**

The colors of the ornaments on the wreath represent all types of cancer. Dragon Boat Charleston was the first all cancer Dragon Boat organization in South Carolina.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #18



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# IN MEMORY OF MARIE LOUISE RONFORD DECORATED BY DRAGON BOAT CHARLESTON

Hosted By  
*Explore Charleston*



## *Honoree* **Marie Louise Ronfort**



Marie Louise Ronfort lived her whole life in France and passed away just before this year's Holiday Festival of Trees. She was a strong willed woman, who stood her ground to become a nurse. She loved spending time in her garden where she planted irises, her favorite, and loved all animals and birds, European blue titmouses being her favorite. At the age of 18, her daughter took care of her when she went through double mastectomy surgery and complications from breast cancer.

Marie Louise is the reason her daughter became the independent, take charge person she is today. From her, Her daughter learned how to take care of herself and her family, even in the most difficult times.



Bid &/or vote on this item: #19



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