

Kelly Girl

Auction to benefit UK instructor battling cancer

By Allison Elliott

University of Kentucky faculty, staff and graduate students are coming together to help one of their own as she enters her second bout with cancer. Writing instructor Kelly Feinberg, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in February 2009 and with metastasized cancer in her liver in September, will be the beneficiary of a silent auction to be held from 6 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 3, in the UK Student Center Small Ballroom.

The Feinberg Fund Silent Auction, hosted by the UK College of Arts and Sciences and Hispanic Studies, along with the Graduate Student Congress, will feature an array of interesting items on the auction block. Gift baskets, services from local businesses and UK Athletics items will be on the block, along with rare items such as an 1806 edition of the complete works of Samuel Johnson (donated from the personal collection of English department faculty member Richard Smith). Autographed books from authors as diverse as Nick Cave, Hulk Hogan Robert Joran, Paul Auster and Thomas Friedman will be available — as well as a sculpture commissioned for the event, artwork by UK faculty and students and items from local artisans.



Kelly, husband Matt, and their son Ari at natural Bridge

plans for civil disobedience. Kelly found a perfect example of how something as personal as food played an integral part in broader civic and social issues. And she was chomping at the bit to share this with her stu-

dents, keeping her chin up for herself, her son, her husband and her friends. For all of these reasons, it's important for us to support Kelly in any way we can as she works through this difficult time in her life."

"Kelly's creative approach to teaching, good sense of humor, and true caring for her students humanized UK's huge campus for me. Fairly often I would run into her at Target or Good Foods Coop. She was always so proud of Ari, her little boy, and took time to stop and talk about 'mom' stuff with me."

—Debi MacQuown, English instructor at UK

English department doctoral candidate and teaching assistant Leah Bayens says of Feinberg, "Kelly and I worked on a curriculum development committee together a few semesters back, and her genuine enthusiasm for community engagement impressed me. We were fleshing out food-themed course plans, and one day, Kelly came to our meeting so excited to tell us about a discovery she'd made. She'd been listening to NPR and heard a segment called Hidden Kitchens. The segment detailed how a woman in Montgomery, Alabama operated a restaurant out of her home that helped fuel the civil rights movement. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other members of the SCLC would gather at Georgia Gilmore's home, eat, and make

dents. She was excited, we were excited, and I knew her students would be, too. This, to me, is the essence of how Kelly ticks on a professional and personal level."

"She's the colleague who brings enthusiasm and fresh ideas to any project, from classroom innovations to conference presentations," adds Bayens, who is co-organizing the Feinberg Fund Silent Auction with fellow English graduate student Rebecca Beach. "It's always a pleasure to work with such a bright yet unpretentious person, a person who has convictions about fostering healthy communities and who builds those ethics into her life at every level. Perhaps most humbling, though, is the positive spirit Kelly has maintained throughout her physical tri-

Debi MacQuown, English instructor at UK, says "When I first moved into the desk next to Kelly's in POT 1306, she made me feel very welcomed. Her creative approach to teaching, good sense of humor, and true caring for her students humanized UK's huge campus for me. Fairly often I would run into her at Target or Good Foods Coop. She was always so proud of Ari, her little boy, and took time to stop and talk about 'mom' stuff with me."

Following Feinberg's initial diagnosis of breast cancer, she underwent a double mastectomy. Initially believing her cancer to be gone, doctors discovered malignant tumors in Feinberg's liver this fall. She is cur-

rently undergoing chemotherapy at UK Chandler Hospital. All proceeds from the silent auction — as well as a benefit concert to be scheduled in the future — will assist Feinberg and her family with the enormous medical and living expenses they face.

Feinberg and her husband Matt, a graduate student in the UK Department of Hispanic Studies, are the parents of a 16-month-old son, Ari. Feinberg is also known among her colleagues as an avid gardener, crafter, and compassionate co-worker.

"From the first time I met Kelly at our Writing Program new instructor orientation, I admired her. She had so many good ideas for teaching, and I could tell that she is the type of teacher who draws students into the challenge and fun of writing," said Beth Connors-Manke, an English doctoral candidate and teaching assistant. "As a colleague of hers for several years now, I also know that she is the type of person to which many people are drawn because of her kindness and authenticity. We all need her to get better."

Another former UK English instructor and friend of Feinberg's says, "Kelly and I entered Writing Program 'boot camp' at the same time, and I immediately was drawn to her. She was so genuine and funny, so open, and so passionate about teaching. (She would laugh at me if she heard me say that — because she is good-naturedly modest — but she gives so much to her students that it's impossible not to label that as passion.) I then shared an office with Kelly for five semesters, and I was continually impressed by her warmth and dedication to her students. It's

no surprise that she was named 'Outstanding Writing Program Instructor' in 2008; she knows how to relate to her students in a way that not only engages and entertains, but also inspires and challenges. A good teacher is one who loves their subject matter and who can spread that love. Kelly is surely a powerful advocate for literacy, critical thinking, social responsibility, and sustainability, and she spreads that passion to her students. Kelly has taught over 400 students at UK, and those students carry her lessons of humor, grace, and community responsibility with them throughout their interactions with family, friends, and classmates. As those lessons have been well-taught, they will be well-utilized, and well-spread.

Auction Items Include

- Two (2) UK basketball tickets for the Drexel game, December 21 @ 7pm. Seats are section 13, row E, seats 3 & 4 (12 rows from the floor, 1 section from center court!) (\$200 min. bid)
- Crayon art by Brian Connors-Manke (\$100 minimum)
- Oil painting by Carol Nesbitt
- Photography by Joshua Howard
- Watercolor by William McKim
- Artwork by UK students
- Signed copy of Silas House's *Eli the Good*
- Signed copy of Erik Reece's *Lost*



Carol Nesbitt's oil painting



Joshua Howard's "Ancient Monolith"

Mountain

- Signed copy of Kim Edwards' *The Memory Keeper's Daughter*
- Vintage *Life* magazines from 1965
- Unique Books gift certificate
- Woodland Computers services gift certificate
- Sunrise Bakery gift certificates
- Mellow Mushroom gift certificate
- Special Media gift certificate
- Good Foods Co-Op gift certificate



course of the last year. I am every day inspired that I might face my own challenges with the same poise, perspective, humor, and faith." ■



The Feinberg Fund Silent Auction will be open to the general public, and will be 6pm to 9pm, Thursday, Dec. 3, in the UK Student Center Small Ballroom. If you want to contribute but can't attend, contact Rebecca Beach Rebecca.Beach@uky.edu, 931.624.5939 or Leah Bayens Leah.Bayens@uky.edu, 859.583.7796.

Friday, December 4 is a Benefit show at Al's Bar. \$5. All proceeds go to Kelly Feinberg and family. The Rainjunkies, Freak the Mighty, and Tiny Fights will play.

"But those remarks all pertain to Kelly as my colleague. As my friend, Kelly makes me laugh. She amazes me with her creativity and her dedication to smart, fun, progressive parenting. She adores her son, and her husband, and their family is a model of cooperation and love. She gardens and cooks, crafts and reads and writes. (I know that she has written a piece about her breast cancer struggles that will be published soon.) She is a tremendous support when friends need her most, and she knows how to lighten every burden with laughter. She does not take herself too seriously; she is genuine and open with everyone she meets. When she tells stories around the dinner table, we laugh until tears come to our eyes. It is no accident that Kelly has built a tremendous network of friends."

She adds, "I am continually struck by Kelly's strength and positivity, especially in the face of her health struggles over the



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