

Grace in the Face of Adversity



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✖ **Landscaper Rob Estes' generous spirit provides hope for others.**

One recent evening my wife, Vicky, and I finished watching [Ken Burns' cancer documentary "The Emperor Of All Maladies."](#) The [PBS program](#) appeared in three parts over consecutive evenings. In all, Burns shared six hours of compelling information about cancer.

"The Emperor Of All Maladies," based on [Siddhartha Mukherjee's remarkable book](#) of the same name, provided a clear-eyed view of cancer from ancient times to today—what people thought about it, how they attempted to treat it and, most importantly, where we are in terms of understanding cancer.

To that point, dedicated researchers are making major breakthroughs in both cancer prevention and cancer treatment thanks to the generosity of donors who fund the work. The documentary and [Mukherjee's book](#), which I read this past fall, reassure me that our children and our grandchildren will view a diagnosis of cancer with much less horror than we now do. The book and the documentary it inspired, in the end, paint a picture of realistic hope in managing the disease.

At this point you are probably wondering what the topic of cancer has to do with the professional landscape/lawn service trade? Obviously, nothing relating to making more sales, providing more services, doing more production, etc.

Cancer's awful toll

The fact is that, as it now stands, one in every three people will contract a cancer; one out of four people will die of cancer. In other words, if it hasn't already ravaged someone close to you, it almost certainly will. A parent? A spouse? A son or daughter? A sibling? A dear friend? An acquaintance?

I was again reminded of this April 2 (And yes, I need reminding. And yes, I am old enough to have lost both beloved family members and life-long friends to cancer.) on receiving an e-newsletter from Tidwell Nurseries in Greenville, Georgia. The newsletter informed me of a foundation started by Rob Estes, owner of Atlanta-area [Estes Landscape](#). His foundation—[Can't Never Could](#)—is “dedicated to helping individuals and groups who are facing adversity and personal battles.”

Adversity and personal battles?

For Rob Estes that adversity and personal battle is glioblastoma, an aggressive brain tumor, the newsletter informed me.

Rob Estes? The name sounded familiar. I turned it over in my mind several times before I Googled his company.

A great day remembered

Yes, of course, I know Rob Estes, although it has been maybe 13 or 14 years ago since we spent a day together at his business just south of Atlanta. It was a beautiful mid-summer day, pleasantly cool for north Georgia that time of year, as I recall. Rob proudly showed me around his landscape company property, a prime location on a busy county road. I was impressed. His property was also populated with allied companies, a lawn care company, a stone company and, I believe, a plant nursery.

Rob later invited me to lunch with him and some his staff where he spoke glowingly of the [University of Georgia](#), his alma mater. Then we drove into nearby Peachtree City where he pointed out some of the great work that his team was doing there.

I've been told that the measure of a person's worth is reflected by the quality of the people they attract to themselves or their causes. By that measure (and other enviable measures) Rob Estes stands out. At a March dinner fundraiser for his nonprofit foundation, legendary University of Georgia football coach [Vince Dooley and his wife, Barbara](#), attended and offered their support. Could there have been a nicer gesture from one Bulldog to another?

Does Rob remember me? I don't know, and that's not important. What's important is that I remember him and count myself fortunate to have made the acquaintance of such a kind, generous person.

Please check out [Can't Never Could Foundation](#), a selfless gift to advance the fight against cancer from a landscape business owner with a truly remarkable vision of a well-lived life.