

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Husband And Wife Reveal Cancer Story; Call For Help

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Ernice Gilbert **August 10, 2015**



ST. CROIX -- The wedding took place 5 years ago this month. That of Rogier Fahie and Petra Jones, who'd known each other for years and decided to wed after having determined that it was time to make their commitment official.

Their lives have been the Caribbean story ever since. Rogier, 40, a multifaceted individual, worked at the HOVENSA refinery for roughly two years after it shuttered in 2012 because of his exceptional skill set. His wife, 44, a cook at the Youth Rehabilitation Center here, helped her husband carry the financial weight. They were on an upward trajectory, gradually making gains that so many strive to attain.

But in October of 2014, Mrs. Fahie, who was featured in an article on *The Consortium* [where she was placed in a room at the Juan F. Luis hospital with no air-conditioning](#), began feeling pain in her body while attempting to walk. She said the discomfort would be felt in various areas, but she chose not to make mention of it and continued working. Eventually, however, the pain became unbearable and plans were made for a physical examination.

Mrs. Fahie was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, or diffuse large B cell lymphoma disease — a cancer of the lymphatic system, which is part of the immune system. Lymphatic system grow abnormally and may



Mrs. Petra Fahie undergoing treatment at San

Pablo Hospital in PR.

The Consortium was invited to the Fahies' residence for an interview, where what was suspected to be the routine would later be confirmed by Mr. Fahie as the norm. As his wife's primary caregiver, Mr. Fahie has become a makeshift doctor; giving her medication, injections, picking up prescriptions from pharmacies and making sure that Mrs. Fahie does what is necessary to keep healthy. All this while Mr. Fahie document every moment of his and his wife's journey.

Mrs. Fahie's eyebrows are all but gone; she has lost all the hair on her body; and her head is almost completely bald. Yet, she is not downtrodden. *The Consortium* was greeted by Mrs. Fahie with a broad smile, laughing and looking for every opportunity to do so.

"I'm already healed but I'm just going through the process," Mrs. Fahie, a Christian, who, along with her husband attends Miracle Revival Deliverance Tabernacle (MRDT). "Jesus Christ, through his death over 2,000 years ago, paid it all and I tell people I'm just going through the process."

The family of 5, including two children and Mrs. Fahie's mother, a widow, said faith in God is what keeps them going.

"My faith has played the biggest role. I think I've called on God more than I've ever called on God in my life," Mr. Fahie admitted. "When I feel the pressure coming on I can only say, 'Lord, I need strength now. I can only asked him for more. The Bible says [God] will not give us more than we can bare. Thing is, nobody knows how much they can really bare but God. So the mere fact that we are going through means that we're actually stronger than we think we are, and that gives me strength," Mr. Fahie said passionately.

At one point, *The Consortium* was shown a process through which chemotherapy is administered to Mrs. Fahie, the initial process of which includes piercing a hole in the area near her upper right breast to make way for what is called a mediport. The procedure is painful, and while viewing the video, memories came flooding back to Mrs. Fahie. Tears followed.

The couple said they have a support system that keeps them strong. From family t regularly, to close friends who offer support in has also supported the family throughout the



Mrs. Fahie with mediport attached where various

medicines can be administered, including the chemotherapy process.

Since the couple stopped working, they have expended all funds in their coffers, and unemployment payments have already depleted. Fahie says they've had to secure accounts with minimal amounts of money just to keep them open. They've also enrolled in the SNAP program and other government assistance offerings, but it's not enough. The travel back-and-forth, although Mrs. Fahie is enrolled with Medicaid, is costly. The struggling couple has one daughter attending college in Puerto Rico, who's studying nursing, and a son about to attend high school here. They also have a myriad of bills aside from medical, to pay.

The Fahies created a GoFundMe page where funds can be donated. See it [here](#). They are asking for \$5,000, however there is no limit to the amount that can be given. The couple said they wanted to be considerate in light of the economic hardship the territory's currently facing, but would welcome the extra donations.

And their love for each other is stronger than it's ever been.

"My love for me wife keeps me going," Fahie said. "It's hard to see her going through the things that she does, and it's hard to see her like this." Fahie's word to caregivers is to never cry in front of the patient, "because emotionally, the treatments, all the medication and everything that they go through is grueling. You must be like a rock," he said.

Mrs. Fahie, who resides at the Puerto Rico Hope Lodge when in PR, has been to the ER 8 times: 7 times at the Juan F. Luis Hospital and once at the San Pablo Hospital while in Puerto Rico. She has also been admitted 4 times to JFL and 3 times in Puerto Rico.

"There are times where I've had to call my mother-in-law or Latrice (the couple's daughter attending college in Puerto Rico) while she's there to go inside and deal with her mother for a little bit, so that I could excuse myself and cry just a little bit, and then come back inside, straighten myself up and then relieve them once again."

As for Mrs. Fahie, she encouraged those going through the struggle of cancer to keep their hopes up and trust in God.

"I would say call on God to give you strength," she said. "I am sure God will send somebody to help and encourage them to go through."

She continued: "It is not an easy task, I can tell you, but it's because of the grace of God that I am here today and I am making it. It's all God. That's why I give God all the honor and glory. I thank him that I am privileged to have my husband, whom I love so much, my mother and my son.

"I am grateful that I have people who keep me going. The more people you have around the better it is for you. Yes, you have God, but you need that physical presence.

"And I'm asking God to give me the strength to go through this," she went on. "And I will survive; I will beat lymphoma in Jesus' name."

For those wishing to donate through Paypal, the Fahies have created an account to facilitate those gifts, as well: petrajonesfahie@gmail.com. If you'd rather mail your financial assistance, make checks payable to: Petra Jones-Fahie P.O. Box 6985 Christiansted USVI 00823.