

SYCAMORE TREE

Comments by Doris Bardon

There is a sycamore tree in my back yard whose large lush leaves and swaying branches fill my window. The window is in a small room at the back of my home where I spend a great deal of time creating with words.

The beauty of this tree is only surpassed by the beauty of the very special memory it evokes.

The tree started life about 25 years ago. It was just a little stick in a bundle of little sticks. Each stick was about the size of a pencil. The bundle was part of a fund raising project promoted by Burger King. The fundraiser was dedicated to a newly founded organization committed to stopping cancer in children.

My involvement was through Bonnie Freeman, a beautiful child of about 11 who was diagnosed with leukemia. This amazing child, undergoing endless medical attention, dedicated her mind, her body and her charm to promoting a project that would help other children by creating and funding a research project to prevent, control and cure children's cancer. Her mother, father and sister joined her in promoting her goals and dreams.

Bonnie did not survive, but the little stick of a sycamore tree planted 25 years ago, not only survived, but is now more than 8 stories tall and spreads its branches the width of my yard. Surely, nature is celebrating and honoring Bonnie.

Today, 25 years later, Bonnie's dream, implemented by the STOP! CHILDREN'S CANCER organization, has saved the lives of thousands of children and adults.

Bonnie is remembered and celebrated, not only for the funding that has enabled so many miracles, but by the thousands of men, women and children who have dedicated themselves to keeping the dream alive and growing.