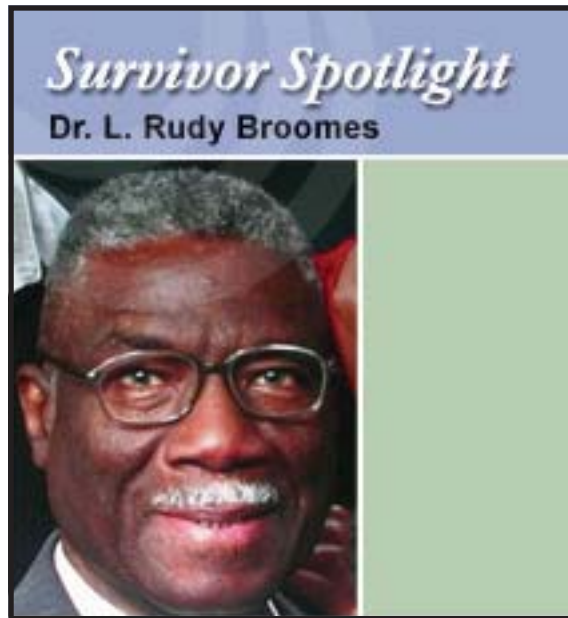


Alabama Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalition (ACCCC)

# Survivor Spotlight



*Dr. Broomes was diagnosed with prostate cancer in August 2000 at age 64.*

## ***Dr. Broomes in his own words...***

"I had been treated with medication for five years for Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia. During this time one biopsy specimen showed "atypical cells."

My average PSA was 2-4. I was experiencing no new symptoms when I changed jobs. It was time for my annual physical examination at the time of a change of job. My PSA was noted to be 8.0, and I reluctantly went for an investigation of the change. On this occasion the prostate cancer, Gleason 5 was diagnosed."

"The moment I learned of my diagnosis over the phone I shrank into silence....I was shocked. I was at work and for a few moments I could not function. Fortunately, I had no patients in my office at the time. However, I collected my thoughts sufficiently to finish the morning schedule. My wife and I were expecting to hear from the doctor's office. But when I showed up at home at noon with my attaché case, untouched lunch bag, flushed face, dazed eyes, and tightly blanched lips, my body language said it all. We hugged at the door! Time stood still! Finally I said, "I have cancer." When I revived, I looked beyond myself. I looked to God for direction. "Be still and know that I am God. (Psalm 46:10)." L. Rudy Broomes, *Sufficient Grace: Surviving Prostate Cancer* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Rudlaur Publishers, 2002, p.1)."

"I decided to have a radical prostatectomy. Radiation was not necessary. At that time it was usual to be relieved of urinary incontinence after 6 months to a year or so. My worst moment came when this treatment complication persisted for almost five years. When I asked my urologist to intervene, I insisted on a conservative remedy rather than a surgical procedure. Within three months my medication was changed and my symptoms stopped with professional Kegel muscle training."

"Having lived with a cancer diagnosis has taught me to pay more attention to changes in my body, to listen to my wife (whose promptings about work stress and follow-up examinations I had been previously ignoring), to live more healthily, and to acknowledge that my Christian commitment does not confer automatic immunity from illness."

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## *Dr. Broomes in his own words...*

"The experience has changed my life in several ways. For the past seven years I have been a more vocal community advocate for prostate cancer education and support. Specifically, for the past year, I have been an Alabama Pilot Site Coordinator for UsTOO International Education and Support, Inc. In addition to the book referenced above, my wife and I co-authored Let's Make Lemonade, a self-help work book which instructs how to learn valuable lessons from life's difficult challenges."

"My sources of strength include God, for the wake-up call; my wife, for showing me, how to survive (she has survived Lupus for over 32 years); my relatives and my church family for continued support."

"I suggest that anyone going through what I went through should learn as much as possible about prostate cancer, accept support from its various sources, adopt a plant-based diet, and pay attention to lifestyle stresses."

"Support and encouragement can come from unexpected resources. A devout female church member, upon hearing about my diagnosis, gave me a list of passages of Scripture. She encouraged me to claim the promises and to make them a part of my life. Ibid. p. 63."

"When I think about cancer, I reflect on the ordeal as well as how I was able to overcome the complications. I am happy for a second chance at life."