



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Our Mission: Gunnison Tough is dedicated to providing comprehensive cancer programs to keep our community strong.

Our Vision: Gunnison Tough keeps all the money raised in our valley to support our community in their needs to stay healthy and strong in the face of cancer. Equipped with a powerful historical foundation, Gunnison Tough continues to identify and serve our community's growing needs through partnerships and collaboration to provide our valley with the best rural cancer care in the country.

Who We Serve: Serving all community members in Gunnison and Hinsdale counties, including men, women, and children of all ages. Gunnison Tough programs are available to individuals with any kind of cancer.



@GunnisonTough.com



BOARD

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dean Dillon | Tim Neyman |
| Mike Dawson | Suzanne Sullivan |
| Gloria Kern | Mary Blake |
| Cjay Clark | Lisa Youngblood |
| Derek Taaca | Norman Eastwood |
| Jeri Defeo | Megan Mensing, <i>Ex Officio</i> -
<i>Rep. from GVH Foundation</i> |
| Adonia Cokinos | |



STAFF

- Heidi Sherratt Bogart- *Executive Director*
- Lana Athey - *Programs Manager*
- Mackenzie Bode - *Marketing Director*
- Kirstie Pike- *Administrative Manager & Event Coordinator*
- Alysia Percy - *Webmaster*
- Shannon Mujica - *Events Director*



Letter from the Executive Director

Not a day goes by without someone—whether a friend or a stranger—approaches me to share their gratitude for what Gunnison Tough (GT) has brought to the Gunnison Valley. They tell me stories of how GT has touched their lives or supported someone they love during a cancer journey. I often hear how life-saving cancer screenings were made possible through GT for those without insurance or whose coverage didn't extend to vital, doctor-recommended tests.

The next question I'm usually asked is, "How do you do it? What makes Gunnison Tough so extraordinary?"

The answer is simple: **the PEOPLE.**

Gunnison Tough is not just an organization—it's a community. A collective of big-hearted, hardworking, creative, and passionate individuals who come together to make a difference. It's this network of incredible people that makes GT what it is: a beacon of hope and support for families in our valley facing cancer.

The success of Gunnison Tough has never been, and never will be, about one person. It's about all of us—the community working as one to make the impossible possible. GT thrives because of:

- **Dedicated volunteers** who pour their time and energy into our cause
- **Generous donors** whose contributions fuel our mission
- **Talented singer-songwriter artists** who give their voices to spread awareness
- **Our incredible GT staff and Board of Directors**, who keep the wheels turning
- **The Gunnison Valley community**, united in love and support
- **The brave families battling cancer**, who inspire us every day
- **Our local hospital (GVH)**—its compassionate physicians, leaders, and staff
- **Sponsors**, both local and national, who believe in what we do
- **High school and university students and faculty**, always eager to lend a hand
- **Local kids**, raising money in the most creative and heartfelt ways
- **Every person wearing a GT hoodie or license plate**, spreading our message of hope
- **Ice hockey referees and scorekeepers**, donating their time for the cause
- **Local artists**, crafting one-of-a-kind masterpieces for our auctions

Every single person, in their unique way, plays a part in the magic of Gunnison Tough. Every day, I'm reminded of how lucky we are to live in this valley and to be part of something so profoundly good. Being involved in this movement is not just a responsibility; it's an honor.

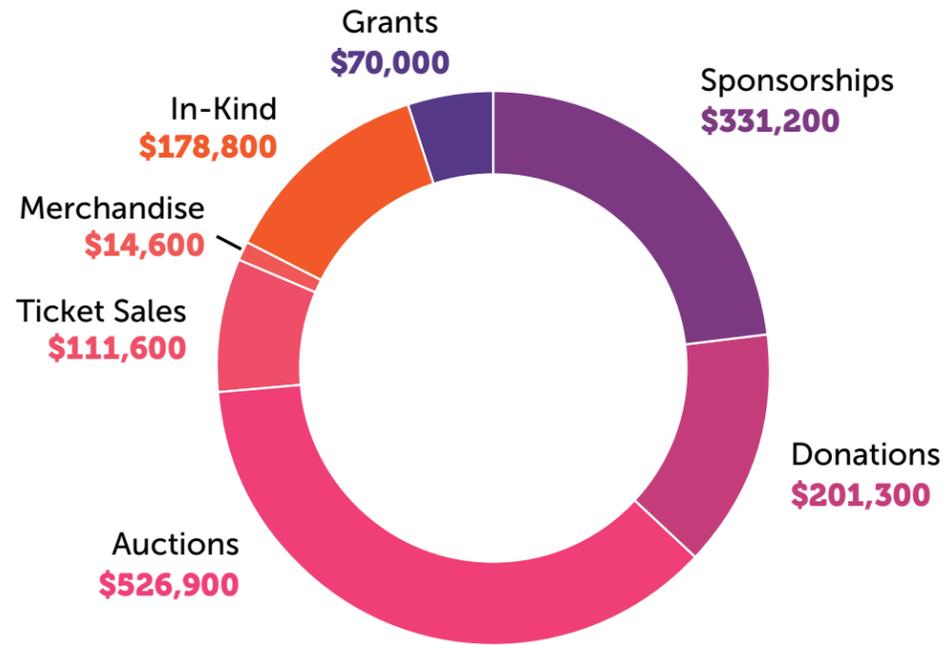
Heart is part of the essence of who we are. It reflects the love, resilience, and unity that drive our mission and define our culture. It's what drives us forward. It's what makes Gunnison Tough truly unstoppable. When people made of heart pull together with a common goal, they can accomplish the extraordinary. Whether you're a staple in our GT family or new to the valley, I encourage you to get involved and hope to see you at our next event.



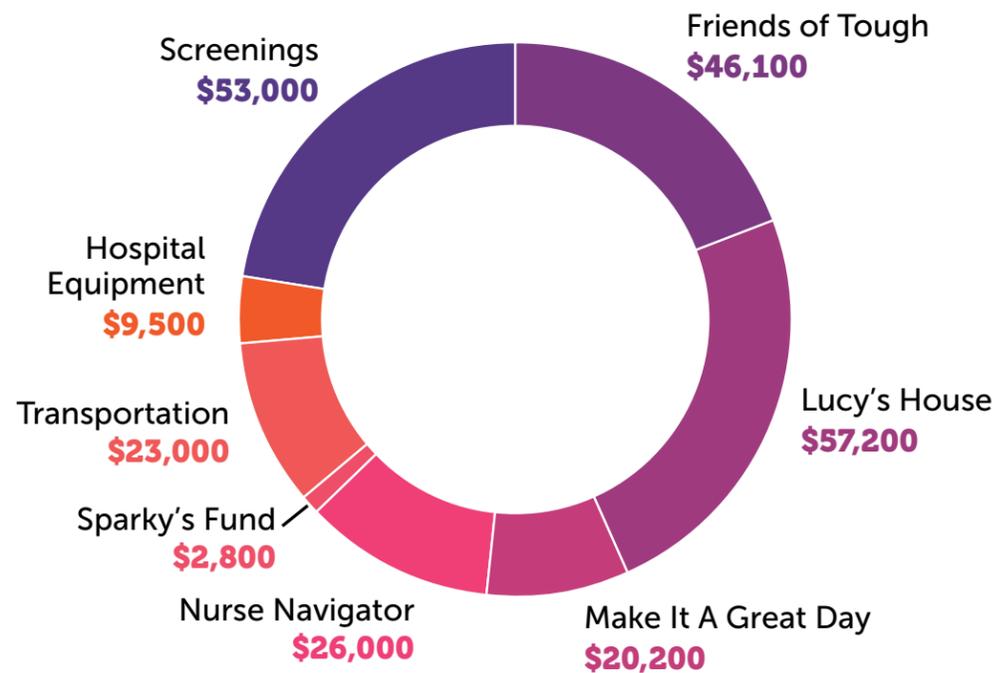
Heidi Sherratt
Executive Director



TOTAL REVENUE: \$1,434,400



PROGRAM EXPENSES



FUND BALANCES:

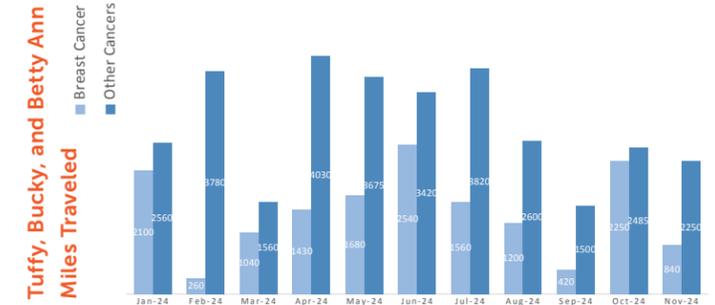
Dean Dillon Gunnison Tough Endowment - **\$415,400**
 Community First Foundation - **\$404,000**

GUNNISON TOUGH 2024 FINANCIALS



PROGRAM NUMBERS

All of the money raised through our organization supports our LOCAL communities in Gunnison and Hinsdale counties. We have helped members of our LOCAL community from 6 to 90 years old, men and women, in their fight against cancer. With our new broader initiatives and programs that serve ALL cancers, the legacy will continue to grow and impact more of our community members until we beat cancer. We are **#GunnisonTough** and a proud partner of national Tough Enough to Wear Pink.



Vehicles: 47,000 miles and **15 individuals** in 2024 (4 with breast cancer)



Sparky's Fund:

\$552 child care for 1 family
\$2,000 scholarships for 2 children who lost their mother
\$225 summer camp for 1 child



Friends Of Tough: \$21,798 of financial assistance for **8 women**



Lucy's House:

321 nights of lodging for **27 individuals**



2024 EVENTS RECAP

Winter Songwriter Shuffle Series AT THE ELEVATION HOTEL & CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Emma Zink, Marla Cannon-Goodman &
Ava Paige, Dean Dillon & Larry Gatlin, Brent
Cobb & Matt McDaniel, Wood Box Heroes,
Ward Davis & The Likely Culprits, Moose
Brown, Ronnie Bowman & Trent Willmon,
Bryce Long, Wynn Varble, Josh Martin

8th Annual Pink in the Rink

Women's Hockey Tournament benefiting
Friends of Tough program

Songwriter Shuffle VIP Dinner AT DOUBLE TOP RANCH

An evening to thank our generous
summer event sponsors
Brent Cobb, Buddy Cannon

Songwriter Shuffle Concert and Auction AT ALMONT RESORT

Dean Dillon, Brent Cobb,
Buddy Cannon, Josh Martin, Marla
Cannon-Goodman and Chris Coady

Poker Ride AT AMBUSH RANCH

Mae Estes and Evelyn Roper

Community Dinner

An evening of connection and shared
strength for individuals and families of our
Valley that have been impacted by cancer
to come together.



PARTNERSHIP EVENTS

One Love JERMAINE'S ANNUAL COMMUNITY DINNER

With Jermaines and Gunnison Valley
Mentors, gathering together to celebrate
the love in our community!

Luminary Lighting WITH GUNNISON VALLEY HOSPITAL

Remembering our loved ones no longer
with us and cherishing those battling
cancer. We are stronger together.

Ladies Night WITH GUNNISON VALLEY HOSPITAL

A night of warmth, wellness, and
community.

Check Your Chest WITH GUNNISON VALLEY HOSPITAL

Navigating your screenings can be a
maze, but you don't have to navigate
it alone- We're here to help!

Favor the Kind GIVE BACK WITH GUNNISON TOUGH

Sip, shop, and mingle! Percentage of
sales benefited Gunnison Tough.

Program Testimonial

As 2024 came to an end, I reflected on the profound changes in my life and feel gratitude.

May 2024, I was diagnosed with an advanced aggressive form of bladder cancer at Gunnison Valley Health (GVH).

Fortunately, the staff at GVH Family Medicine Clinic identified my symptoms and had me admitted for CT scans and MRI immediately. We are lucky to have such caring and professional healthcare at the hospital and local clinics.

After my diagnosis, it became apparent that I would need to travel to Anschutz Medical Campus in Denver for immediate surgical procedures to remove the tumors in my bladder.

My head was spinning at this news and things were moving very fast. Nurses and friends suggested that I reach out to our local cancer support organizations.

I am not accustomed to asking for help, however I've come to realize how important community, family and friends would be to me during this time.

The following week, I was walking down Elk Avenue in Crested Butte and decided to stop in on Heidi Sherratt at her office. I know Heidi as a friend and in my capacity as a carpenter, have worked with her on custom kitchen installations. I have also known many locals she has helped navigate cancer. She had just heard of my situation through the grapevine and assured me not to worry because Gunnison



Tough (GT) had my back and would be there to see me through this. Finally, I shed a few tears!

Next, my brother and I met with Lana Athey, the GT Programs Manager. Lana was comforting and made

things simple and easy to become enrolled as a client with GT. She explained to me about the Transportation Program and Lucy's House Programs which provide vehicles for out of town appointments and assistance with housing while out of town.

The following week I was driving "Tuffy" the GT truck to Denver for my 1st surgery to remove my bladder tumors. I stayed in a hotel across from the hospital that was covered by the Lucy's House Program.

All summer and fall I traveled to Denver for specialized chemotherapy treatments and numerous doctors appointments. I have used "Betty Ann" the Ford Explorer and the Dodge Durango, "Bucky" for my trips. I must say it is nice to travel in style in new vehicles!

Gunnison Tough's Transportation Program and Lucy's House Program have helped me immensely,

and I cannot express how much stress it relieved during this process. Thank you to all who have founded and contributed to these programs.

My doctors and staff at UC Health Anschutz Medical Campus are extremely impressed with the love and support I am receiving from the people of the Gunnison Valley. I say to them, "Yes, I am very lucky!"

I would also like to note that I have received calls and texts from Gunnison Tough Board of Directors, their friends and GT Staff checking in on me. This genuine love and concern is

exceptional and does so much to lift my spirits and remind me to be positive, strong, and Tough!

Thanks for all you do.

Sincerely,
Rob Mahedy

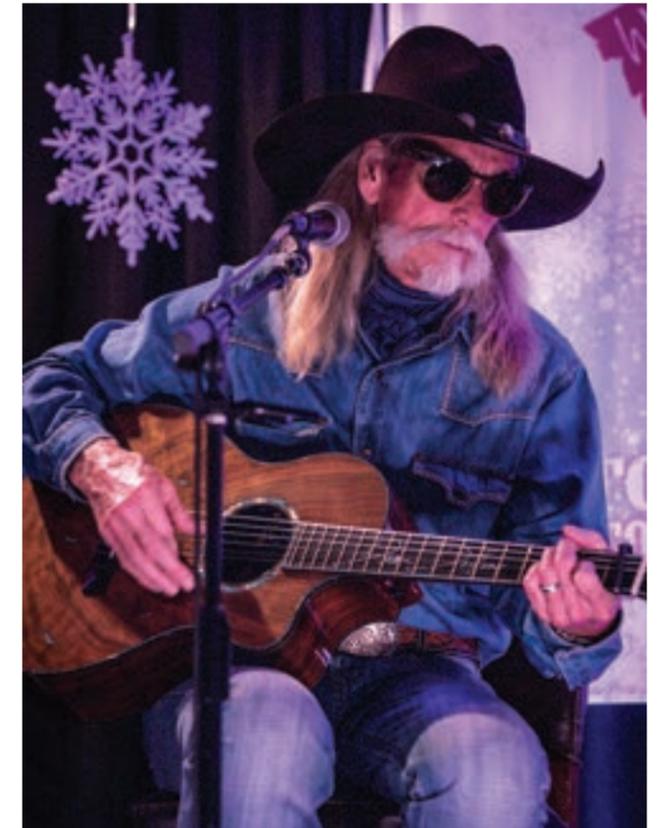
A Tribute to Dean Dillon:

CELEBRATING A COUNTRY MUSIC LEGEND AND GUNNISON TOUGH'S CHAMPION

In October, the Gunnison Tough (GT) family had the distinct privilege of supporting and celebrating one of our own—Dean Dillon. A group of the GT Board and dedicated patrons, traveled to the Von Braun Center in Huntsville, Alabama, to attend a special Dean Dillon Tribute concert, recognizing Dean's extraordinary career as a singer-songwriter in the world of country music.

Dean is a Country Music Hall of Fame inductee, a BMI Icon, and a member of the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame, among many other accolades. For more than 40 years, country music fans have enjoyed his poetic and timeless songs, including classics like Tennessee Whiskey, The Chair, and Marina Del Rey. In Huntsville, 40 of country music's biggest stars—such as George Strait, Jamey Johnson, and Riley Green—performed Dean's iconic songs.

While Dean's contributions to country music are monumental, he has often said that he is most proud of his work with Gunnison Tough and its mission. In a heartfelt video that played before the tribute concert, Dean and his wife, Susie, shared their passion for supporting those battling cancer in the Gunnison Valley. Because of their vision and generous support, Gunnison Tough has the means to make the impact on our community the way it does today. Dean's introductions to Nashville's legends and up and coming songwriters has led directly to the creation of GT's popular Songwriter Shuffle benefit concerts, the organization's primary fundraiser and GT family builder. Thanks to the Dillons, GT has grown into a community united by our mission to provide comprehensive cancer programs to keep our community strong.



The memories of two unforgettable nights in Huntsville will stay with all who witnessed it forever. I don't think there was a louder or more enthusiastic group in the audience than ours. Our organization has had the privilege of getting to know many artists who have the same heart of gold as Dean and Susie. Because of introductions from Dean, these artists have performed at one or several Gunnison Tough events and naturally became an extended member of the GT family, many with their own connections to cancer.

As we gathered to honor Dean's contributions to country music, I couldn't help but reflect on what an incredible impact he's had—not just in the world of music, but also in the lives of those fighting cancer. Dean, my friend, job well done. You've used your incredible talents to touch lives in ways that will be remembered for generations. After all that Dean has done for our community, it was a top tier experience to in return, celebrate his Legacy.



Written by Suzanne Sullivan

2024 Survivor Buckles



Gunnison Tough presented the 2024 Survivor Buckles to Jim Swain and Missy Kizer at the summer Songwriter Shuffle.

Jim and Missy shared their history and passion for the organization:

In December 2005, the Cattleman's Days Rodeo Committee attended the annual PRCA Committee meetings in Las Vegas. As a committee, we walked into our meeting with Wrangler Marketing President, Karl Stressman. The first thing Karl said was, "We are inviting rodeos to participate in raising dollars for breast cancer. The money raised can stay in your community." We answered, "Enough said; we are in."

In March of 2006, Cattleman's Days Tough Enough to Wear Pink (TETWP) truly came alive with Jimmy Clark asking if he could team up with me to be a part in creating this program. Jimmy and I would meet two to three times a week at the Palisades talking, planning, considering fundraising ideas, along with our visions and what-ifs, like raising a million dollars. What would we do if...? Of course, drinking too much Crown Royal, made the visions more and more real in our minds.

Tragically, in 2006, Jim's close friend, Jimmy Clark, passed away in a rodeo accident, but his vision for TETWP lived on. The community rallied together, raising funds in Jimmy's memory,

and the event grew each year. In 2007, when Missy was diagnosed with breast cancer, the cause became even more personal. Efforts continued to evolve, and by 2013, fundraising surpassed \$1 million for breast cancer support in the Gunnison Valley. I'm sure Jimmy was looking down, laughing with his big smile and pride, saying, "Now whatcha gonna do, Jim?"

By 2013, the organization had raised a total of over \$1 million for breast cancer support in the Gunnison Valley, funding mammograms, cancer treatment, and other vital resources for local women. "Jimmy and I had talked about what if... what if we could raise enough to help men with prostate cancer, or even all cancers," Jim reflected. "Our Crown Royal dreams were inching closer."

Missy and I have been away from the organization for about the past 10 years. A huge congratulations to you all, what you have done is legacy!! Thank you for this honor to both of us. Let's keep making people's journeys comforting, graceful, healing, and hopeful.

Jim Swain and Missy Kizer



Congratulations to our Volunteers of the Year, **DOUG DIXON AND NOAH MENSING!**

The most dependable, kind hearted, and helpful folks around, Gunnison Tough is so grateful for both of your years of hard work supporting our needs.

Doug has been helping with the setup and cleanup of events, and if you've ever set up tables, loaded/unloaded vehicles, schlepped drinks, put together finishing touches, then tore it all down... you know how big of a process this is! For all our biggest events, Doug is around all day and one of the last to leave! Doug has been a lead volunteer, leading by example, for the last 8 years!

Noah's service runs in the family, his mom and brother have both previously received a volunteer buckle. Noah is always asking how he can help, is up for any job he's given, and is eager to be a helping hand all year long!

This event and so many others, we could not have done it without these two rockstars!

Gunnison Tough presented Doug and Noah with Volunteer Buckles at the 2024 Songwriter Shuffle Concert & Auction.





Donate

Every dollar stays in the Gunnison Valley.

Online:
gunnison tough.com/donate

or via mail:
Gunnison Tough
PO Box 375
Gunnison, CO 81230

Volunteer

Email us at:
events@gunnison tough.com

Merchandise

To order please email:
office@gunnison tough.com

or make an appointment
at our office at:

243 N Main Street
Gunnison, CO 81230

Upcoming 2025 Events:

WINTER SONGWRITER SHUFFLE

Feb 14, 2025

MOUNTAINEER SQUARE BALLROOM

with Dean Dillon, ERNEST and
the Wood Box Heroes!

March 22, 2025

ELEVATION HOTEL

with SJ McDonald,
Marti Dodson, Autumn McEntire,
and Mae Estes!

PINK IN THE RINK

February 28 - March 2, 2025

JORGENSEN ICE RINK

SONGWRITER SHUFFLE

Tentative Save the Date:

July 16 & 17, 2025

ALMONT RESORT

DETAILS COMING SOON!

Please visit our website
for more information
about our programs,
events, sponsorships,
and much more!

