OIL: Cancer survivor feels warmth

Cheri Ambrose, co-founder of the Male Breast Cancer Coalition, of which DeVito, a survivor of the disease, was an original member, happened upon his GoFundMe. Then she got on the phone.

“Cheri called and found a company willing to donate their time, and a supplier to donate the tank,” DeVito said.

“She made one phone call and within the hour she had these arrangements made.”

That company was Superior HVAC and Tank Removal, where owner Joe Riggi agreed to install for free a new oil tank donated by the city-based FW Webb Co. He then helped secure a donation of enough oil to fill the tank from Superior Oil, the company he recently sold.

“The way this girl Cheri called me saying the guy is in deep trouble now, he’s been through a lot,” Riggi said. “So I said, all right, we’ll help him out.”

All the donors who raised the $1,750 online have agreed to allow him to put the money toward fuel costs, DeVito said.

DeVito first met Ambrose as he sought information about male breast cancer after his diagnosis.

Ambrose, of New Jersey, said she co-founded the organization a few years ago after several friends had been diagnosed with male breast cancer, and she was unable to find substantive information about the disease online.

Her co-founder, she said, is a young Kansas man named Bret Miller who was diagnosed with the disease as a teenager, but didn’t receive treatment until he was in his 20s because doctors didn’t believe he had breast cancer. He had a mastectomy at age 24, she said.

DeVito said he spoke with Miller’s mother, Peggy Miller, and became involved in male breast cancer awareness efforts.

“Men have breasts, too,” he said. “I’ve been very vocal, very active in the community trying to get the word out.”

But illness has prevented him from working, and even with his husband’s two jobs, the replacement of the oil tank would have been a serious financial blow, he said, were it not for the efforts of Ambrose and the donations.

“I called Bob, and I thought the phone went dead. He was crying, and I said, ‘Don’t do that or I’m going to cry along with you,’” Ambrose said. “The way things are in the world, anyway, it’s so incredible someone would go above and beyond.”

The new oil tank and 200 gallons of fuel are expected to be delivered Friday.

“I’m floored. I’ve had my faith in humanity, the goodness of people restored. Certainly it would make it a thankful Thanksgiving. Certainly a merry Christmas as well.” — B0B DEVITO

“Thank you” — BRET MILLER

“Thank you” — PEGGY MILLER

“Thank you” — CHERI AMBROSE