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Courtesy photo

Emanuel Alonso puts fuel into an airplane recently at Lyddon Aero Center, where he works. Alonso had a cancerous brain tumor removed recently, a procedure he also went through three-and-a-half years ago. A poker tournament fund-raiser has been scheduled for March 15.

By ROBERT PIERCE • Daily Leader

Emanuel Alonso has recently had to have surgery to remove a cancerous tumor in his brain.

He had the same procedure done three years ago, which was a great success, and his cancer was in remission. Recently, the tumor has come back.

Alonso, a long-time employee of Liberal's Lyddon Aero Center, is determined to fight not to lose this battle with cancer.

Now, Alonso's fellow employees are trying to help him raise money to help with that fight by hosting a Texas Hold 'Em tournament next month.

The tournament will take place March 15 at the Liberal Elks Lodge.

"Registration starts at 1, and the play starts at 2," said Jennifer Mannel of the aero center. "It's a \$25 donation to play. First place is \$500 cash. We haven't figured out the rest of the prizes yet, but I know for sure we're going to have a Nintendo Wii, an iPod, a digital video camera."

Throughout the night, there will also be a raffle and a 50/50 drawing, according to Mannel.

"All of the money from this is going towards his medical fund," she said.

Mannel said Alonso has worked for the aero center for about 10 years.

"About three and a half years ago, he got diagnosed with a brain tumor," she said. "He had surgery, and they got the tumor out. The surgery was successful. He did the chemotherapy and the radiation. It was horrible."

The cancer was in remission about two weeks ago, Mannel said, and doctors found another tumor in Alonso's brain.

"He just had surgery last week to get that one out," she said. "He's got two kids. We're just trying to help out with his costs."

Alonso's daughters, Kathy and Kristina, are both attending Southlawn Elementary School.

“Any donation you could make to ease the financial burden of this ongoing battle would be greatly appreciated by Emanuel and his family,” Mannel said.

Mannel said she recently did a Texas Hold 'Em tournament for the Liberal Bee Jays when she was on the board for the team, and that event was a successful, in her opinion.

“I thought maybe this might be the best way,” she said. “We were thinking of ways we could raise the money to help him and his family out.”

Mannel said she is optimistic about Alonso's chances of success with the most recent tumor.

“He's doing chemotherapy again,” she said. “He's pretty down, but he's trying really hard to fight it. He's a really good guy.”

In addition to the fund-raiser, a donation jar has been set up at Lyddon Aero Center, and there is also an account at Community Bank.

It is under Emanuel Alonso Medical Fund.

For tickets to the Texas Hold 'Em fund-raiser or more information, go by Lyddon Aero Center at the Liberal Municipal Airport, or call 629-7076.

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