



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Dave and Bobbie: The First Proton Wedding

Historic wedding celebrates a new chapter of life

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (May 16, 2018) – Love is in the air at the [UF Health Proton Therapy Institute](#) as one couple puts their cancer diagnosis aside to start a new chapter as husband and wife. Patient David “Dave” Leek and his fiancée Bobbie Godden will be the first to get married in the lobby of the UF Health Proton Therapy Institute on May 23 at 11:30 a.m. EDT. The event will also be streamed on [Facebook Live](#).

Leek, Godden and their two children have traveled from England to Jacksonville for Leek to receive proton therapy for a tumor he has been dealing with for four years. In February 2014, Leek was diagnosed with a sacral chordoma, a rare form of cancer that arises in the spine, and had a surgery to remove it. Even though Leek had routine MRIs every six months, it wasn’t until October 2017 that his doctors noticed the tumor was back and had been growing for several years.

Leek underwent another surgery in January and his doctors recommended he follow it up with proton therapy at the UF Health Proton Therapy Institute to ensure the tumor site receives targeted radiation to eradicate the cancerous cells while sparing healthy tissue in this very sensitive area of the body. Leek began proton therapy on May 1 and is feeling confident about moving past his cancer ordeal to focus on the future with his soon-to-be wife and two children.

“Until now, we’ve always seen marriage as a piece of paper. But cancer puts life in a whole new perspective. We are considering this wedding as a celebration of life and are looking toward the future,” said Leek. “We’ve stuck together through all of life’s hurdles over the past 13 years and decided that there’s no better place to begin our next journey than at the UF Health Proton Therapy Institute.”

Leek and Godden will be the first to get married in the lobby of the UF Health Proton Therapy Institute on May 23 at 11:30 a.m. EDT. The event will also be streamed on Facebook Live.

“We are so happy for the couple and are excited they chose to share their special day with us,” said Stuart Klein, executive director at the UF Health Proton Therapy Institute. “We not only focus on providing the best possible cancer treatment, we also want everyone who comes through our doors feel like they’re a part of something bigger. We are thrilled to help plan and facilitate this special day on behalf of this amazing couple that is a part of our family.”

While it is the first wedding, the Institute has some experience with celebrating marriage. In October 2014, the Institute hosted a wedding vow renewal for patient Mark Kelso and his wife Kerry who celebrated their second anniversary while he was on treatment.

A second wedding will follow Leek and Godden’s on May 31. More details will be released at that time.

About UF Health Proton Therapy Institute

UF Health Proton Therapy Institute is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization affiliated with the UF College of Medicine and the UF Health Cancer Center, a Florida Cancer Center of Excellence, dedicated to delivering state-of-the-art cancer treatment and setting new standards for treating and curing cancer. It is an accredited radiation oncology facility by the American College of Radiology. The cancer treatment facility houses both conventional radiation and proton therapy, and delivers proton therapy to 100 patients a day. For more information about the UF Health Proton Therapy Institute, please visit www.floridaproton.org, or call toll-free 877-426-9790.

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