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**DALLAS BASED WILLETT FOUNDATION NOMINATES MILWAUKEE  
RESIDENT AS ITS FIRST CANDIDATE TO RECEIVE FUNDS FOR A LIFE  
SAVING LUNG TRANSPLANT**

**DALLAS** (September – 2006) – Dallas entrepreneur and author, Sandy Halliburton, is bringing local and national attention to Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF), an incurable and progressive lung disease that has attacked a long-time family friend and thousands of others each year. This year, Ms. Halliburton formed The Willett Foundation, a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization established to financially aid lung transplant patients with inadequate insurance coverage and to heighten awareness of IPF. Sallie Willett Shea, Milwaukee resident, has been named as its first candidate to receive funds for this life-saving procedure.

The foundation is named after the Willett family, who have been a part of Ms. Halliburton's life for 33 years, as she first began babysitting for Sallie Willett when she was born. Four years ago, Sallie was diagnosed with this fatal disease. Now 33, Sallie Willett Shea has been told by her insurance company they will not cover the full cost of her life-saving lung transplant procedure. "It is sad and alarming how so many families find themselves in this difficult situation – needing to secure additional funding for what has been medically determined a necessary and life-sparing treatment. The bureaucracy in the healthcare system often gets in the way of what should be the goal of treating people. It makes a person finally want to stand up and do something," says Sandy Halliburton.

There are five million people worldwide who are affected by this disease. In the United

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States, there are more than 200,000 patients with Pulmonary Fibrosis. As a consequence of misdiagnosis, the actual numbers may be significantly higher. **Of these, more than 40,000 lose their lives annually; the same number that die from breast cancer.**

Jerry Lewis and Evil Knievel both suffer from pulmonary fibrosis while Marlon Brando, James Doohan, Mary Jane Russell, Bill Bright, Key Kolb and Laurence Rockefeller lost their battles with this debilitating disease.

*“The number of pulmonary fibrosis patients who cannot get life-saving lung transplants because their insurance companies will not cover the procedure is quite substantial. We get calls all the time and, unfortunately, there is often not an answer for them.”*

Dr. Michael Rosenzweig, President, Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation

To raise funds through private and corporate donations, The Willett Foundation is hosting the Nanci Griffith (2 Time Grammy winner) in concert on Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup> at The Milwaukee Theater. For more information on tickets or sponsorship opportunities and how you can support the foundation, please email ([info@willettfoundation.org](mailto:info@willettfoundation.org)) or call 214-697-1230.

For more information or to schedule an interview with Sandy Halliburton, the Willett family or Dr. Michael Rosenzweig, please call the media contact above.

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