

Mark Borja — Save a Nut

Mark Borja founded “Save a Nut” to help men ... save a nut.

July 22, 2019 By [Justin Birckbichler](#)

Welcome to the [Band of Ballers](#)! In this series on ABSOT, I’m turning over control to some other ballsy testicular cancer survivors and patients who have inspired me with their work in advocacy and awareness during and after their diagnosis. This month’s feature is all about Mark Borja, who began the Save a Nut campaign. Enjoy!

One day after work in October 2017 when I was 23, I felt a weird pain in my left testicle. I wasn’t sure what it was, but it did feel abnormally large, so I needed to find out what was wrong. Since my father is a pediatrician, he took a look at me. He realized that my testicle was numb and much larger than ever. We went to the hospital he worked at and they pushed to do an MRI to dig deeper.

During inspection they found two masses that were most likely tumors so they pushed to do surgery for further inspection. Later that month, through a radical orchiectomy, doctors removed my left testicle. (Editor’s Note: Hey! They [took Lefty from me](#), too! Twinsies!)

I was distraught and could not believe it happened, but I was cleared of any further signs of cancer. However, there was a 15% chance of it returning, and I was given the choice taking radiation or chemotherapy. I opted to not because I believed in taking the risk and working to be healthy.

As a film and photography creator, I wanted to be open about my struggle.

The best way I figured how would be to create a brand that would raise awareness and possibly money for it. I felt weak and empty by not expressing myself. I knew that there was no way that I was the only one feeling this way.

After doing some research, I found out that there was no one in the Charlotte, North Carolina, area that was doing anything to help raise awareness for testicular cancer. After I found out about the [Testicular Cancer Foundation](#), I reached out to them to see how I can help raise awareness.

I always heard about “Saving the Boobies” for breast cancer, yet, I had never heard of the latter for males. I thought to myself, “Why not ‘Save a Nut’?”

Thus, [Save a Nut](#) was born. Soon after, Connor O’Leary, chief mission officer of the Testicular Cancer Foundation, got back to me and we planned to throw an event in Charlotte to show what we are all about. I partnered up with my good friend Shawn Cosner of Third Rock Events to help create an event called “Paint Your Balls Out.”

The goal was to make “balls look beautiful” and have everyone from all types of backgrounds show that they can make balls become beautiful and worth talking about.

On August 18, 2018, we raised over \$5,000 and sold out the entire event. We had far more attendees than we expected. Even people who didn’t paint came out. With so much support from friends and family, it was incredible, and we gave out awards for the best paintings and most creative. Everyone loved the paintings because each one was unique in its own way (Editor’s Note: Just like every scrotum is unique in its own way. Cue the violins.)

Now, on August 9-11, 2019, I will be attending the [Testicular Cancer Foundation Summit](#) to tell my story and continue to have Save a Nut as a safe haven for males who don’t know where to go or who to talk to about their struggles.

With Save a Nut as a support group, I want to continue to make it a brand for all males to feel better about themselves and what they have gone through because I firmly believe that life gets better after it gets harder and harder to push through it — you just gotta keep going, no matter what, because we have our brothers with us every step of the way. We do the best we can for each other.

Be sure to connect with Mark by visiting him at [@Markwhut](#), [@Marknow](#), [@SaveANut](#), facebook.com/MrMarkBorja, or markborjaofficial@gmail.com.

Know someone (or even yourself!) who is supporting TC awareness and would be willing to share their story? [Drop their name, contact, and why they should be featured into this Google Form](#) and I’ll reach out!

Until next time, Carpe Scrotiem!

This post originally appeared on [A Ballsy Sense of Tumor](#). It is republished with permission.