

Research is the answer in many cases. Just ask Charles Jantz, founder of the RITA (Research Is The Answer) Foundation, which helps fund local breast cancer research and education programs.

Jantz started the nonprofit organization 10 years ago when he chaired the Deercreek tennis committee. "We were talking about adding a women's tennis event and I said, 'Let's make it a charity event.' Everyone said that was a good idea," he said.

"Since breast cancer happens to run in my wife Nancy's family, we chose that and off we went from there."

That original charity event has blossomed into nine fundraisers, with money going to Baptist Cancer Institute, Mayo Clinic Jacksonville and Shands Jackson-

ville, among others.

The Lexus of Jacksonville Champions of Charity Golf Tournament on Oct. 10 raised \$105,000, said Brandon McCray, director of development at Shands, who said RITA has given The Breast Health Center at Shands Jacksonville \$380,000 in cash and gifts in kind over the last three years.

"One hundred percent of everything raised comes back to the hospital," he said. "You don't find that with most foundations. Without RITA we wouldn't have the equipment that we have today."

That includes state-of-the-art diagnostic tools such as a magnetic resonance imaging biopsy system, a 3TP color-enhancing MRI breast cancer detection software package, and an ICAD, a "second look"

system that helps radiologists detect breast cancer earlier.

"The thing that makes us unique is we are an all-volunteer organization," Jantz said. "No salaries. No overhead. And we donate 100 percent of the proceeds. All the money stays in Jacksonville."

Shirley Webb, executive director of the Women's Center of Jacksonville, expects to raise more than \$10,000 at the next CASH 5K on Nov. 19 at Metropolitan Park.

If RITA reaches its 2005 goal of \$400,000, the nonprofit will have donated a total of \$1.5 million to local breast cancer programs.

—Dolly Penland

## Community Service Finalist



**Charles Jantz**  
RITA Foundation