

Motivation

STRENGTH



Local women share their stories about battling cancer



*A special
publication
of the*

Kentucky New Era.

Oct. 17, 2011

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Dear Kentucky New Era readers,

For the second straight year, the Kentucky New Era is making a profound statement during National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

More likely than not, each of you reading this has been or will be impacted by breast cancer in some manner, be it yourself, through a family member, a co-worker or a friend. One out of every eight women in this country will be directly affected by this disease.

I know this because I am thankful to say my mother is a 12-year survivor of this terrible illness. She survived because the cancer was found early dur-

ing a routine mammogram.

Affirming our commitment to fighting this disease, the Kentucky New Era began its focus on breast cancer awareness with the quarterly magazine, "In Step with Health," which was published on pink paper on Sept. 29. The health section was produced in conjunction with the annual Women's Health Show at the James E. Bruce Convention Center. The focus continued Oct. 1 when we published the entire Kentucky New



TAYLOR WOOD HAYES

Era on pink paper with cancer-related stories in each section.

Today, this special section — printed entirely in pink — focuses on the personal stories of cancer survivors and others affected by the disease.

I also want you to know that our effort is about more than just generating awareness. Pink isn't just a color. It's a cause.

This section, along with the others before it, is about encouraging more screenings, supporting research and helping support groups. The Kentucky New Era will again donate a portion of the revenue generated through the advertisements in these publications to

the Pink Ribbon Network, a local breast cancer support group.

If printing the Kentucky New Era on pink paper encourages just one person to get a mammogram or screening for any type of cancer, then we have succeeded.

Sincerely,

Taylor W. Hayes

TERESA BOWERS' STORY

'God, please let me live to see ...'

I am proud and thankful to say that "I am a survivor." At the age of 30, I could not have understood the tremendous impact that profound statement would have on the rest of my life.

I was a wife with a wonderful husband, a mother of two beautiful young children and had a profession that I enjoyed. Everything was going along just great until ...

On a late Sunday evening upon returning from a weekend of fun with friends and family, I found a small lump on the upper side of my left breast. I didn't think much about it at the moment. I had been water skiing all weekend, and since I spent much of the time hitting the water, I felt I could have somehow gotten a bruise. However, I did work in the medical field and I had witnessed many patients receiving diagnoses that they had never anticipated. I made the decision to have it checked out the next day, just to be on the safe side.

I called my primary care physician, and he gave me an appointment the same day. After a brief exam, he decided that I should also have a surgeon take a look "just to be on the safe side." The surgeon was out of the town but saw me early the next week.

After my exam, he explained that he felt a lump in the same area I had and he wanted to try to aspirate the lump. He approached me with a needle and explained that he was going to try to draw fluid from the lump.

That was a good thing because it could just be a cyst, and if he could draw fluid, we may wait to see if it went away. After several attempts, it was decided that this lump was not full of liquid but instead was a hard mass. He asked his nurse to schedule me for a mammogram. Just to show you how far we have come in the past 30 years with preventative medicine, mammograms were not routinely performed at that time regardless of history. In my



case, there was no history of cancer in my family and I did not smoke so I was still very optimistic about this lump.

I had the mammogram performed and left the hospital feeling pretty good that this was all behind me. I went to work ready to run a medical practice. Not long after I began my routine day at work, my boss called me into his office. He had received a call from my surgeon asking him to let me off to come to his office. That was the quickest I have ever gotten to one of my doctor's appointments.

There I received the news that rocked my

world and not in a good way.

I was told I had a suspicious tumor that may be breast cancer, and I needed to have it surgically removed.

He asked that I go home, discuss this with my loved ones and decide what to do. I drove home in a complete fog. I was stopped by a state trooper who asked what my hurry was. I told him exactly what was on my mind, and he wished me well and said to drive slower.

After researching the options and talking with physicians at Vanderbilt and Cleveland Clinic, the decision was made by me to have a modified radical mastectomy. I felt in my gut this was the best decision for me.

I really never thought of any cosmetic issues at that time. I just wanted to get rid of the disease that had invaded my body so I could get on with my life. I was scheduled for surgery two weeks later.

I am blessed with a loving network of family and friends. During this time, I shared

everything with them. They listened and supported me all the way. I was very open with my children. Although we never discussed the possible negative outcomes, I knew it was on their minds.

At the ages of 12 and 8, they were probably talking to one another about it. I managed to maintain a positive attitude throughout this time, and I encouraged them whenever I could see a glint of concern in their eyes. Although I remained outwardly positive, I am still a realist. I began planning for worst case scenarios "just in case." I did not want to leave my family with any more than having to deal with the loss of a wife and mother.

My prayers always included "God, please let me live to see my children graduate from high school."

I chose to remain in Hopkinsville to have my surgery. The surgeon said the tumor I had was the size of a pea, and the fact that I found it early possibly saved my life.

He had seen nothing to indicate I should have any further concerns. The margins were clear and further testing of tissue removed from around the tumor showed no signs of remaining cancerous cells.

I did not have to have any chemotherapy but this was a long time ago. Today, I would most likely have received some further treatment.

After five years, I was proclaimed "cured." I do not take that as meaning I will never have cancer again.

I thank God for each day I have and I live life to the fullest. I believe in the saying, "When life hands you lemons, make lemonade." In my case, that meant helping anyone I can and having reconstructive surgery. The latter was just for me!

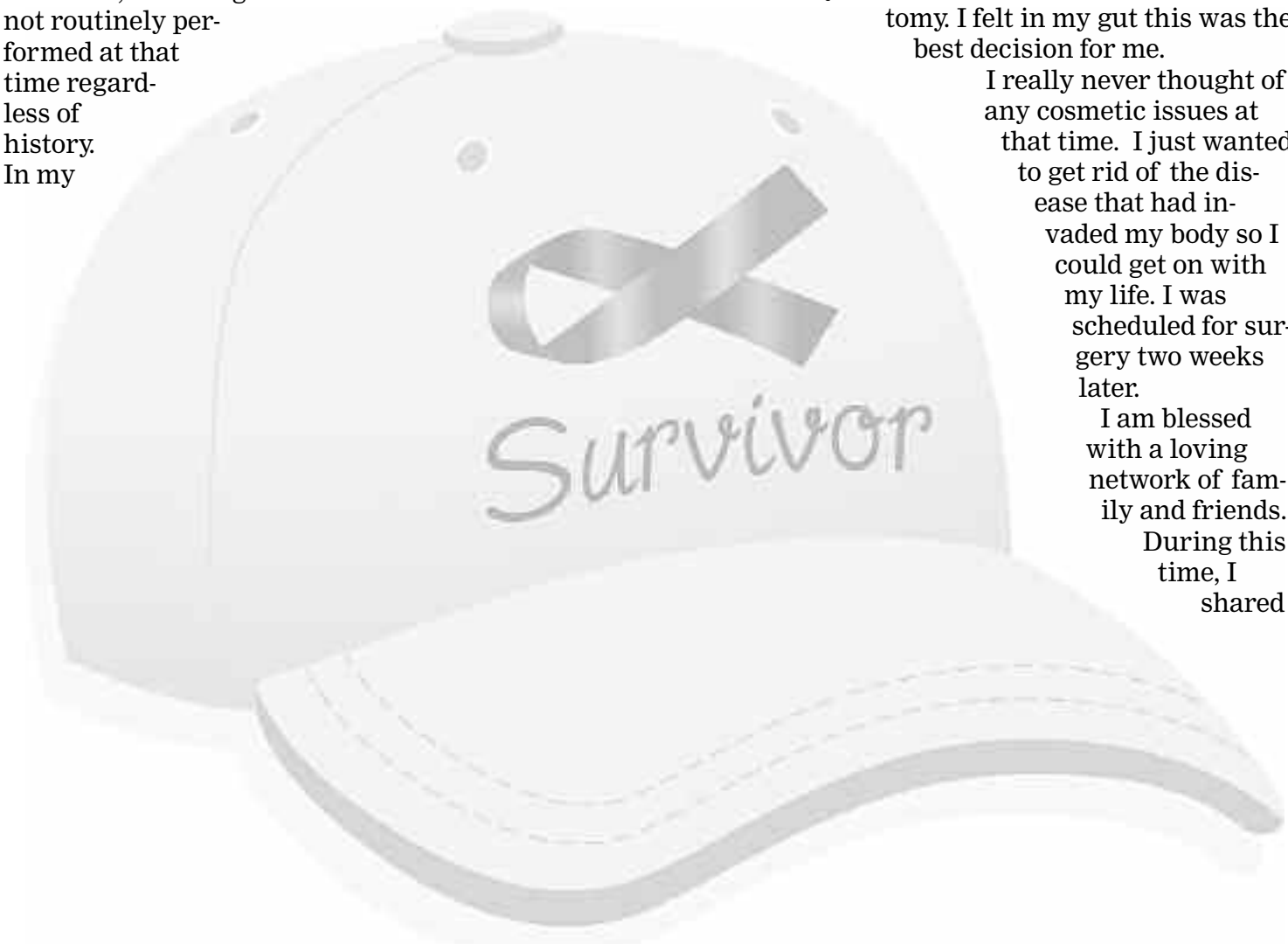
When asked to share my story, I did not hesitate. I want others to know that this disease can be beat.

The best advice I can give is to do your routine self exams. Early detection definitely helps to beat the odds.

On September 8, 2011, I celebrated the 30th anniversary of my surgery. I still reflect on that time in my life. It was the time that I got my priorities in order. Spending time with family and friends is always more important than cleaning house.

I take the time to pray. God answered my prayers to see my children graduate from high school. Once the second graduation was in sight, I started praying to see them graduate from college, then marriage.

Now I have two wonderful grandsons and my prayers include ... "God, please let me live to see my grandchildren graduate from high school."



CHANGES OVERTIME

Nurse reflects on improving treatment options

BY DENNIS O'NEIL
NEW ERA FEATURE WRITER

For registered nurse Sheila Sadler, increased awareness about cancer has made treating patients much easier.

Sadler works in the E.C. Green Cancer Center at Jennie Stuart Medical Center with radiation oncologist Dr. Michael Murray. She has worked at the hospital since 1990.

At the start of her career, Sadler said cancer patients knew less about the disease and weren't as open to talking about it.

As cancer awareness and education have improved, though, Sadler said patients are much more knowledgeable and engaged in their treatment.

"People are more informed and better educated," Sadler said, attributing some of the awareness to the Internet. "Sometimes they are confused but definitely better informed. A woman with breast cancer, when they come in, may have talked with three or four other women already."

Sadler meets with cancer patients as they are preparing for radiation treatments. Before her patient's first visit, Sadler will examine his or her medical history and various test results. Sadler talks with the patient for 30 or 40 minutes on the first visit, educating them about radiation and what they might experience during treatment.

After her meeting, Sadler said Dr. Murray will sometimes spend 30 minutes to an hour with a patient, discussing cure rates, long-term side effects and goals for the treatment.

The meetings, Sadler said, are to help educate patients and ease their anxiety.

"The more that person understands about their diagnosis and treatment options, the less anxious

"The more that person understands about their diagnosis and treatment options, the less anxious they will feel and the better decision they will make."

Sheila Sadler
Nurse at the E.C. Green Cancer Center



they will feel and the better decision they will make," she said.

Sadler said she is sometimes correcting misinformation a patient may have about their disease.

"The things they are informed about, they may be confused about also," she said. "They may be anxious about the information they have read, but they are asking good questions. They are better informed about what questions to ask."

Sadler said she and Dr. Murray work together very closely, seeing sometimes between 25 and 30 patients a day. Sadler monitors patients' conditions during treatment to see if there is any way to lessen side effects.

"If there is something going on, I am going to see them and determine whether or not they need to see the doctor," she said.

Sadler said side effects differ depending on what area of the body the radiation is targeting.

With improvements in radiation technology, though, she said they have been able to minimize side effects.

With one form of radiation, Intensity-Modulated Radiation Therapy, she said doctors are able to deliver a high dose of radiation to a malignant tumor while minimizing the dose to the surrounding structures.

"Twenty years ago, it was common for a man receiving radiation treatments in his pelvic area to have a lot of diarrhea," she said. "Now it is very uncommon because we are able to block out more of their bowel."

Sadler stressed the importance of technological advances in improving treatment.

"(There is) better technology in planning and better technology in delivering," she said.

REACH DENNIS O'NEIL at 270-887-3237 or doneil@kentuckynewera.com.

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KAREN WHEELER'S STORY

Managing a secondary lymphedema

The first clue of a possible problem occurred in March 2008 when a small lump was felt in my left breast.

Not realizing how important early detection was, I delayed having this checked out until July. Upon receiving a positive report from the biopsy on Thursday, I was rushed into surgery the following Monday for removal of the cancer.

It was determined to be a Stage 2 tumor. Tests showed that cancer cells had traveled from the breast into primary lymph nodes.

At this point, I learned that current medical procedures could not determine if the cancer cells had invaded other lymph nodes or attached to organs in my body.

A decision was then made to proceed with a more aggressive surgery by removing all lymph nodes from the underarm area. In September, after the wounds from surgery healed, chemotherapy treatment began.

Radiation therapy followed upon completion of these chemotherapy sessions.

Ann Isom, a Pink Ribbon Network member, visited me in my home soon after my surgery. I will forever be grateful to her for giving her time and sharing the experience with breast cancer treatment.

She invited me to attend a monthly meeting this group holds to support breast cancer patients. The knowledge and support gained from these meetings have been invaluable to me.

In March 2009 lymphedema developed in my left arm. This was caused by damage to the lymph drainage system. There is no cure for lymphedema, but it can be controlled. Controlling lymphedema involves diligent care of your affected area.

Statistics show that a good number of patients develop this problem from breast cancer treatments. This was another hurdle to be met head on. It was learned that if the collection of fluid was left unmanaged, severe infections to the skin could occur.

Therapy began on moving this fluid into other parts of the body where it would be processed as nature intended. The therapy prescribed for this was very time consuming and cumbersome.

I was advised that this condition would probably need some attention for the rest of my life or until a better treatment could be developed in the future. The manual manipulation of the lymph fluid is nearly impossible to properly perform personally.

Also, the regular air pumps in use failed to get any results with my lymphedema. Upon doing some research, we discovered a highly recom-



“A positive attitude during this treatment journey has been made possible by my faith in God. The doctors and personnel of E.C. Green Cancer Center were very kind, supportive and professional while administering my treatment. Support from my husband, family and friends has also been vital to my recovery.”

Karen Wheeler
Who suffers from lymphedema

mended and recently patented system called the “Flexitouch” system.

When questioned, the therapist who was treating me at Baptist Hospital in Nashville, was aware of this equipment. They advised it had been of great assistance to many of their patients and seemed to be the most successful piece of

equipment developed for lymphedema treatment in a long time. This machine was acquired and has completely taken over my therapy.

Some other advantages are that it can be used without any assistance and it is portable. In addition to this machine therapy, a compression sleeve must be worn daily on my affected arm.

Living with secondary lymphedema is a nuisance. However, I am thankful that my arm can be used in a fairly normal manner.

As breast cancer can be a fast-growing disease, my message to anyone who feels any change in the breast is to seek medical help immediately to determine the cause.

A cure is almost always successful when detected while the tumor is in early stages. Had I not delayed in seeking help, it is possible my lymphatic system would not have been damaged, and a less invasive treatment could have been used. Also, lymphedema will not go away when incurred. Please seek help soon upon evidence it may be active.

A positive attitude during this treatment journey has been made possible by my faith in God. The doctors and personnel of E.C. Green Cancer Center were very kind, supportive and professional while administering my treatment.

Support from my husband, family and friends have also been vital to my recovery from this dreadful disease and for this I am grateful and appreciative.

Pink Out coming Oct. 28

BY ELI PACE
NEW ERA EDITOR

Barb Heneisen expects to see a sea of pink at the second annual Pink Out on Oct. 28 in Cadiz.

The event sponsored by WKDZ and WHVO Radio has partnered with area businesses and the Relay For Life groups from Christian and Trigg counties to raise breast cancer awareness and encourage people to seek early screenings.

This is the event's second year in existence, and Heneisen, executive assistant for WKDZ and WHVO, said

organizers are expecting a big turnout this year.

“With very little planning and advance notice, we drew about 200 people last year,” Heneisen said. “And, it was such a success that we know it is an event that can grow.”

The Pink Out will run from 3 to 5 p.m. and meet at Broadbent Square in Cadiz. Everyone is invited.

The event will feature a mile walk, educational booths from area health agencies, cancer survivors from the community and much more, Heneisen said.

Beginning at about 3:30 p.m., there will be a presenta-

tion with local dignitaries, including the Relay For Life groups and Hopkinsville Mayor Dan Kemp. Cadiz Mayor Lyn Bailey should be there too, but he hasn't confirmed that yet, Heneisen said.

The walk will kick off at 4 p.m. There will also be food and prizes, and the Lakeland Bouncers will be on hand for children.

Additionally, various tents will be set up, including ones for the Relay For Life teams, which will be raising money for the fight against cancer.

WKDZ and WHVO will have their own booth, and it will be “loaded with, pink koozies and pink T-shirts,” Heneisen said. The booth will also have

QuickInfo: Pink Out 2011

Where: Broadbent Square, 19 Wooldridge Lane in Cadiz
When: 3-5 p.m. Oct. 28
Info: Call WKDZ and WHVO at 270-522-3232

information about early screenings. The can koozies and T-shirts will be available for donations, which will be given to the Relay For Life groups.

“It's a very casual event,” Heneisen said. “The only structured part of it is the program at the beginning with the dignitaries and the mayors, and then the walk at 4 p.m.”

The Pink Out is the brainchild of WKDZ/WHVO Gen-

eral Manager Beth Mann. Heneisen said Mann came up with the idea last year as a way to support local charities in the community while raising awareness for a good cause.

Heneisen said that even though they didn't publicize the event very much last year, it drew people from all around, and few who just happened to be passing by.

“Last year was our very first year, and we just kind of thought, ‘We're going to try this,’” Heneisen said. “Last year we even had people who came off (Interstate 24) just because they needed gas, and then they saw all these people in pink T-shirts and decided to stay for a while.”

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Cincinnati exhibits breast cancer survivor photos

CINCINNATI (AP) — Four years ago Vanessa Tiemeier, of Delhi Township, boarded a New York City-bound Greyhound bus to pose, bare-chested, for a photographer she had never met.

His name was David Jay, and he had spent much of his career as a fashion photographer, capturing striking images of perfectly formed, classically beautiful women.

But then, about five years ago, he began shooting young breast cancer survivors after his girlfriend's twin sister was diagnosed with the disease in her late 20s. He wanted to raise awareness that breast cancer could ravage young women as well as old: More than 10,000 women younger than 40 are diagnosed with breast cancer every year. But he never expected his first subject and her friends to tell him that they found the process of being photographed — scars and all — to be empowering.

Those revelations led Jay to develop a series of photographs known as the SCAR Project, which stands for "Surviving Cancer. Absolute Reality." Tiemeier, who was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 25, became one of Jay's first subjects after she saw a post from him on the Young Survivor Coalition's website.

Her photo also became part of the SCAR Project exhibition, a collection of 30 large-scale portraits of 18- to 35-year-old women from all over the country that premiered in New York City last October.

In part because of Tiemeier's efforts, the exhibition will make its debut in her hometown. It opened to the public at the Art Design Consultants Gallery Downtown in Cincinnati.

"I hope people see that breast cancer is more than

charity runs and pink ribbons," said Tiemeier, now 29. "We are real people with many sides to us. Our physical scars usually aren't seen but are a big part of us."

The project — nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in feature photography based on an article on the front page of America Online last year — is jarring. One photo in the exhibition shows a woman revealing her pregnant belly protruding beneath a jagged scar where her right breast used to be. Another survivor who had a double mastectomy raises her arms above her head, revealing a winged pink ribbon tattoo on the right side of her chest.



Vanessa Tiemeier plays with her nephews Max Yaeger, 3, and Myles Yaeger, 1, at her home in Highland Heights. Tiemeier has beaten cancer once and participated in the Scar Photo Project that will soon open in a gallery in Cincinnati. She is currently going through daily radiation treatments for a recurrence of the cancer cells throughout her body.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

And then there is Tiemeier. Jay captured the photo after her right breast had been removed and her short hair had just begun to grow back after she lost it to chemotherapy treatments. Her body faces to the side but her face is turned slightly to the camera.

"He has a talent of capturing your true emotion," Tiemeier said of Jay. "I just look so timid and unsure, still trying to accept the physical differences. There's so much that is behind my eyes in that photo that I didn't even know was happening."

What moved her to do this, to bare her body and her soul for the camera? A graphic designer by trade, Tiemeier said she's always better expressed herself visually than verbally. The photo was a way that she could communicate what she was going through without having to say a word. It was liberating.

"I tend to just tell people the good stuff," she said. "I think this was my coming out, in a way. This was the truth."

The truth was more than what any 25-year-old should have to accept. Tiemeier was

diagnosed with breast cancer just nine months after her wedding, after an initial misdiagnosis of dense breast tissue. Chemotherapy, a modified radical mastectomy of her right breast and radiation treatments swiftly followed over the next seven months.

"We had just gotten married," said her husband, Billy Tiemeier, 29, who met his wife at a party when they were both college students. "We hadn't even figured out what side of the bed we were going to sleep on yet."

Despite his initial reservations about Jay's project, he got on the Greyhound bus with his wife to go to her first photo shoot with Jay (she did a second shoot in 2008). So did her younger sister, Christina Blust, now 27 and living in Terra Haute, Ind.

Billy Tiemeier said it's still difficult to look at the photos and to see the new reality of the woman he fell in love with. But he and Blust want people to see that reality through the photos in the SCAR Project, and not just the pink ribbons and endless parade of pink products that appear during breast cancer awareness month every October.

"What I want people to know is that it's physical pain," Blust said. "It's blood, it's scars, it's really awful things that you go through. It's trauma to the body, and it's trauma to the spirit. But

the women seem so strong, so vibrant in their expressions of who they are individually."

That's why Art Design Consultants Gallery owner Litsa Spanos agreed to put on the exhibit after 46-year-old breast cancer survivor Joules Evans, of West Chester Township, who also saw the SCAR Project premiere in New York, proposed the idea. It took some convincing.

"I'm in the business to show beautiful art, to make people happy and to make spaces amazing and come to life," Spanos said. "When I first saw the pictures, I was shocked. I don't have a whole lot of experience with breast cancer and with cancer in general. After the shock went away, I looked deeper into it and saw that this is a totally different type of beauty."

Jay discovered that, too.

"Previously, my pictures were very focused on this idealized version of female beauty," he said. "I think the SCAR Project has made me see beauty much further beyond that. It's the soul of a woman. That's what I set out to capture, the soul of a woman, and that's what's beautiful. That's something that can't be taken away with breast cancer."

Ultimately, the SCAR Project is not about breast cancer, Jay said.

"Ultimately, the SCAR Project is about humanity and compassion and understand-

On the Web:

Young Survivor Coalition's website:
www.youngsurvival.org
SCAR Project Cincinnati blog:
<http://thescarprojectcincy.blogspot>

ing and acceptance," he said. "It's about realizing that you don't know what's going on when you walk by someone on the street."

Tiemeier's battle against cancer is not over. After the mastectomy of her right breast, she also had prophylactic mastectomy of her left breast, a hysterectomy and both of her ovaries and half of her thyroid removed.

Last year, a full-body bone scan doctors ordered after she broke a finger showed cancer had spread to her lymph nodes, her lungs and her bones. And earlier this month, an MRI revealed a cluster of cancer cells in the lining of her brain.

The news was not a surprise but still not easy to hear, she wrote in a post on the SCAR Project Cincinnati blog. But she said that she is continuing radiation and chemotherapy treatments and being thankful for every day.

"I've said it before, but I really mean it ... live with passion. Live with intention. Live healthy. Live with no regrets. Live Sincerely," she wrote.

"Life's not easy, but I am challenging everyone out there to live, really live. If for no one else, do it for me."

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PHOTOS SUBMITTED
 Women from the local Pink Ribbon Network attended the Horses and Hope event Aug. 13 at Ellis Park. They were provided with lunch, door prizes and a day full of horse racing. The Horse and Hope event is "a fun day filled with many other breast cancer survivors from surrounding cities," said Ann Isom of the PRN. During the event, cancer survivors walk along a portion of the track in different sections, according to how many years they have survived after being diagnosed with cancer.



Members of the Pink Ribbon Network annually attend the Horse and Hope Event at Ellis Park in Henderson. Local PRN members standing with First Lady Jane Beshear (third from right) include (from left) Judy Shemwell, Kathy Anderson, Ann Isom, Lisa Cunningham, Diane Reddick and Carolyn Sholar.

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Participants play away during the 2011 Bunco Bash, which supports the Pink Ribbon Network. For more information about the annual event, see Page 10.



People went all out with their attire at last year's Kentucky Bunco Bash.



Above: The Pink Ribbon Network annually participates in the Hopkinsville Relay for Life. Seen here (from left) are Mary K. Green, Judy Shemwell, Dixie Primm, Kathy Anderson, Kay Nave, Ann Isom, Carolyn Sholar, Angela Doss, Lovey Rogers, Karen Wheeler and their "special beauty queen." Left: Members of the Pink Ribbon Network (top row, from left) Karen Wheeler, Carolyn Sholar, Lisa Cunningham, Dana Miner, (second row) Rita Roberts, Kathy Anderson, Linda Pursley, Dixie Primm, (bottom row) Linda Croft, Judy Shemwell, Ann Isom and Mary K. Green stand together at the Bunco Bash.

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month



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'I'm Gonna Love You Through It'

Woman's cancer battle draws attention of Martina McBride

BY STACEY MENSER
THE TIMES LEADER

A diagnosis of cancer is not only life-altering for the patient, but also the family and friends who take on the role of caregivers.

That is the focus of Martina McBride's new song and video, "I'm Gonna Love You Through It," and members of a Princeton family are featured in the video.

Daniel Sledge, a Caldwell County High graduate and son of Ferrell and Celeste Sledge of Princeton, is featured in McBride's video with his wife, Lindy, a cancer survivor.

It was just over three years ago that Lindy was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma.

It all started for Lindy with a sore shoulder. After years of working as a labor and delivery nurse in Mayfield and then as a cosmetologist in Murfreesboro, Tenn., she thought it was just an injured rotator cuff.

"I just didn't feel great, and I was breaking out in sweats. I thought it was menopause," said Lindy, who now lives in Franklin with Daniel.

After encouragement from a co-worker and her daughter Hayley, she decided to make a trip to the emergency room.

That simple trip to see what was wrong with her shoulder turned into her being admitted to the hospital with a diagnosis of stage four Mantle Cell Lymphoma.

The diagnosis came on Aug. 21, 2008.

"I couldn't believe what the doctors were telling me," Lindy said. "They didn't sugar-coat anything. They told me exactly what to expect, and I didn't like it."

Being diagnosed with cancer turned her world upside down. In addition, it directly affected those who care for her.

Daniel had recently taken a different job that was seven hours away.

Lindy was still living in Murfreesboro and trying to sell her and Daniel's house. Daniel returned to Murfreesboro and got his old job back. Daughter Hayley and her son moved in with Lindy to help. After seven rounds of chemotherapy, she



PHOTOS SUBMITTED
Top: Lindy Sledge shared her story of how cancer changed not only her life but also the lives of her family members who took on the roles of caretakers with producers for the Martina McBride music video for "I'm Gonna Love You Through It." The family was featured in the music video. Bottom: Lindy's husband, Daniel, displays his tattoo that reads "cancer sucks."

wasn't finished.

There was something Lindy needed that only a sibling could provide — stem cells. The best hope for a recovery would be for one of her siblings to be a match and to donate bone marrow.

The painful process of a stem cell transplant began and Lindy's older brother, Dale Murphey, was a match.

He is the retired police chief of the Mayfield Police Department. His retirement came after he was hit by an automobile accident just a few months earlier.

"But he made the many trips to the Sarah Cannon Cancer Center (in Nashville) to be poked and jabbed and his bone marrow extracted.

"I can't ever thank him enough for what he has done

for me," Lindy said. "I always joked that he didn't like me much when we were little, but I know he loves me so much."

The stem cell transplant took place on April 13, 2009.

During the process of the transplant and recovery, Lindy spent 113 days at the Hope Lodge in Nashville. She had to be within 30 minutes of the hospital and spent most of the days being treated.

Hope Lodge provides a free place for cancer patients to stay if they live 40 miles or more from Nashville.

Hope Lodge is one way donations made to the American Cancer Society are used to directly benefit cancer patients.

"Different organizations

and church groups would bring in meals and caregivers would provide meals for those of us staying there," Lindy said. "My mom would go to the kitchen and cook spaghetti for all the patients and caregivers."

To be able to reside at Hope Lodge, it is mandatory to have a caregiver with the patient at all times. Lindy's parents, Bob and Sue Murphey, are in their 80s.

"It was hard on my family, but they took turns and helped me so that I could stay at Hope Lodge."

While all of this was taking place, the company Daniel worked for closed down, and he was forced to find another job.

He used his industrial engineering degree and found a

Here is what Lindy Sledge wrote to Martina McBride and her video producers to be considered for "I'm Gonna Love You Through It"

Cancer? Lymphoma? Someone must be wrong. I am 49.

I came to the ER because my shoulder was hurting, not anything serious. That was the beginning of a journey that was a fight for my life.

"Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma," they told me. Stage 4 Mantle Cell Lymphoma. Rare, aggressive and ugly. The usual survival rate, not very good. Actually, not good at all.

As of Aug. 21, I will have survived this dreaded disease for three years. Not only have I survived, but I am doing well. My cancer is in total remission and I

am caring for my 7-month-old grandson Jackson since his military parents are both in Afghanistan and will be there the next year.

There are many reasons I credit my recovery to. God, a wonderful group of doctors and nurses at Tennessee Oncology and all of my caregivers.

I was told a stem cell transplant was my only hope for a cure ... and that might not even work.

And the chance of the transplant killing me was up to 20 percent. I would have to stay at the Hope Lodge in Nashville for around 120 days. It ended up

being 113. And I had to have a caregiver with me at all times. Mandatory.

But first, we needed to find a donor match.

I prayed for the 10 days in between my siblings submitting blood and my visit to reveal the results.

My brother. My big brother. The one who fought with me, tattled on me and generally made me miserable so long ago. A perfect match.

He saved my life. I cry as I say this. He had just recovered from being hit by a car during duties as a police officer and had suf-

fered plenty already. But he came willingly.

He went through testing and rounds of shots that made him feel horrible and a port in his chest as they took the precious stem cells from him that saved my life.

I can never repay him. He has gone back a second time and given again when I needed him.

I realize he didn't really dislike me when we were kids. He loved me. And I loved him back.

Dale Murphey, you are my hero. I would love to be in this video with him.

Thanks for considering us.

Maryland man founds Men Against Breast Cancer group

ADAMSTOWN, Md. (AP) — When Marc Heyison's mother, Gloria Heyison, was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1992, he, his brother and his father were with her every step of the way as she battled the disease.

They went to all her appointments, to her chemotherapy treatments; everywhere she went, they went.

"That was just the way we were brought up, that was the norm," said Heyison, who has lived in Adamstown since 2004. "Our mother was there for us, it was time for us to be there for her. We must be there."

While accompanying her to appointments, he noticed there were other women with breast cancer who were alone.

He thought that wasn't right, that it was important for men to be with the women they love in such a time.

So, in 1999, he founded Men Against Breast Cancer, a nonprofit organization designed to help men support a loved one who has the disease.

"Marc said that some men don't know how to handle certain situa-

tions like breast cancer," said Gloria Heyison, who is now cancer-free. "There are a lot of things that they need to learn about it. Marc has given a lot of help to a lot of people."

He became passionate about helping men who have a loved one with cancer because he knows firsthand how devastating it can be, not

only to the person with cancer, but their loved ones, too.

"You feel so hopeless, so helpless," said Heyison, who was 29 years old when his mother was diagnosed. "I felt like a 4-year-old boy. I was thinking, 'My mommy is going to die and there is nothing I can do about it. I can't fix it.' But I can be there. Not being there is

not an option."

He became more serious about starting the organization after talking with a surgeon he knew. "He called me up and said that a lot of men were asking him how they can support their wives," Heyison said. "After I hung up, I began the paperwork for Men Against Breast Cancer."

Bunco Bash supports survivors

BY ELI PACE
NEW ERA EDITOR

When local organizers first began the Bunco Bash in 2010, they wanted to find a partner because they thought the event needed some support.

The bash, which has drawn 42 to 55 players from a handful of different states for three days of Bunco, had to get the community involved in order to be successful, said Cheryl Cook, tourism director for the Hopkinsville-Christian County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

For Cook, getting that involvement meant finding the right group in the community.

"We wanted to partner with somebody because we wanted to make it a community event and get that community involvement," Cook explained, "so we got involved with the Pink Ribbon Network."

What she found in the Pink Ribbon Network was a partner that knows a thing or two about supporting others. And now, two Bunco Bashes later, the event is heading into its third year and also lends its support to the Pink Ribbon Network.

"(The CVB) is not in it to make money because we're a nonprofit, but we wanted to do something with a charity to help them make money for their projects," Cook said of the motivation behind the event that raised a little more than \$4,000 for the Pink Ribbon Network last year. "The thing that touched me the



Diann Bailey, of Cullman, Ala., came to last year's Bunco Bash even though she was undergoing chemotherapy at the time. She had lost her hair during the chemo and drew three dice on the back of her head. According to Cheryl Cook, Bailey said she plans on attending this year's Bunco Bash too.

PHOTO SUBMITTED

most working with Pink Ribbon Network was what a strong group they were to support each other while they are going through their cancer.

"(Last year) we had some people there from out of town who had gone through cancer, and they stood up, told their stories and had a real bonding moment. Because that's what the PRN is all about, supporting breast cancer survivors."

As tourism director, Cook

also hopes the bash will "bring visitors into the community and get them to spend their money here. When they go shopping and stay in our hotels, they're paying taxes, and it cuts down on our local taxes."

The Bunco Bash will roll from March 23 to March 25. Cook stressed that people in the community are invited to participate any one of the days or all three if they chose.

The first day of the Bunco

Bash, a Friday, will be for people to register and learn how to play the simple game involving three dice.

The event will ramp up the next day, a Saturday, and end on a Sunday with the grand prizes.

Last year, because of sponsorships, the bash awarded almost \$4,000 in prizes over the course of three days. And there will be prizes all three days again this year, Cook said.

"We start on Friday night

QuickInfo: Bunco Bash

When: 5-9 p.m. March 23 (registration and warm-ups); 9 a.m.-6 p.m. March 24 with two hours for lunch; 9-3 p.m. March 25 with another long lunch break.

Where: James E. Bruce Convention Center, Hopkinsville

Cost: \$50 to register for all three days or \$25 for people who only want to play for one day.

Information: Email Cheryl Cook at ccook@visithopkinsville.com or call the Hopkinsville-Christian County Convention and Visitors Bureau at 270-885-9069.

with practice roll-offs and get people registered. There will also be door prizes that night," Cook said. "Then we'll play Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. with a two-hour lunch in the middle so (participants) can get out and do some shopping, because we have some nice coupons and things from the local stores for them. And then we'll play again Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. with another long break in the middle."

Because people are constantly rotating tables, Cook said, the Bunco Bash also provides a great opportunity to make some new friends.

Cook added that this is a game for beginners, too.

"It's really mindless," she said. "You don't have to have played before to come. You can come Friday night and, in 10 minutes, have it picked up. It's not brain surgery you just have to have fun and enjoy the company."



KY Bunco Fillies (left) came from Louisville to play in last year's Bunco Bash. Save 2nd Base (right) is a group of women from Louisville referring to their breast as 2nd base.

PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Warmth for women



SHELBY WALTZ | KENTUCKY NEW ERA

Diagnosed with breast cancer in October 2007, Mary K. Green had a bilateral mastectomy in January 2008. After her surgery, Green, whose cancer did not return, began working with the local Pink Ribbon Network, buying and embroidering blankets for breast cancer patients. Using an embroidery machine, Green adds the Pink Ribbon Network's name to all of the blankets. "You start thinking, 'What can I do to help?'" Green said about her getting involved with the blankets. "Anything I can do, I'll be glad to." Now those blankets are being given to women who are battling cancer, and they often take the blankets with them to chemotherapy sessions.

Secretary of state diagnosed with breast cancer

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) — Secretary of State Elaine Walker said Wednesday she has been diagnosed with breast cancer after a routine mammogram.

Walker, 60, of Bowling Green, told reporters that because of early detection, "the prognosis is excellent."

Walker said she has begun meeting with physicians to determine the best course of treatment, which will be private and decided within her family. She said surgery was likely.

Walker, accompanied by her husband, Dorian, informed her staff early Wednesday before announcing the diagnosis publicly at a news conference in her Capitol office. She used the occasion to encourage all women to get routine mammograms and to perform self-exams to catch the disease early. Appointed to the job by Gov. Steve Beshear, Walker has 2 1/2 months remaining in her term. She said she plans to maintain a regular work schedule, particularly with the general election approaching.

Beshear and his wife, Jane, issued a joint statement saying "we pray for her full and speedy recovery."

Wearing a pink blazer, Walker said she now is one of the roughly 3,000 Kentucky women who will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year.

"It is now part of my life and my family's lives even though, like so many people, there is no family history," she said.

KERRI DAWSON'S STORY

Finding a world of support

Just like an important birthday or anniversary, January 31, 2011, is a significant date that stands out on my calendar, and in my mind.

It's the day I was diagnosed with breast cancer.

I prayed that I wouldn't hear the word "cancer" that day; however, there it was — shocking me to my very core. From the second I was told that I had cancer, I was surrounded by family members the rest of the day.

I tried to put on a brave front, while they reassured me that I was going to get through this. At that time, none of us really knew anything at all about breast cancer, except that I had it.

It was the first of many sleepless nights that I would encounter. I cried quietly, trying not to wake anyone. I desperately tried to remember everything I had been told that day, but I couldn't.

The medical terminology was like a foreign language that I didn't understand. My train of

thought was in overdrive all night long. I was uncertain about what was going to happen to me, and I couldn't help but wonder what I might have done to cause the cancer. Was it my lifestyle, genetics or what?

The next morning, I went through the motions of our normal routine, but I was falling apart inside. After everyone left the house, I became completely overwhelmed by it all. I soon realized that I couldn't deal with this by myself. I went to see our family physician, Dr. Brazil. The very first impor-



Cindy Jones (left) and Kerri Dawson

tant thing he told me about breast cancer was not to blame myself for it. I didn't do anything to cause it. It just happens when cells grow out of control. This

was my starting point to getting well again. I believe that God always guides us in the direction we need to go and puts the right people in our lives at exactly the right time and place.

Through a chance encounter, when my niece was having car trouble, I met Cindy Jones at Holiday Burger. I could tell by all of the cards and posters hanging on the wall, she also had breast cancer. I told her about my situation, and she told me about hers. We immediately became friends.

Cindy was extremely helpful in preparing me for what

was ahead, and invited me to attend a Pink Ribbon Network meeting with her. She explained to me that it was a breast cancer support group, and we could both benefit by going.

I had never once been to a support group of any kind in my entire life.

Cindy and I took our seats among the many other women who were at the meeting. One after another, each person disclosed the date of their diagnosis. For some, it had been several months. For many, it had been several years. For me it had only been three days!

It sounded strange and intimidating to hear myself say it out loud. My diagnosis was still so new I couldn't even think about it without tears filling my eyes. As I sat there, I realized that every woman in that room had already gone through what I was facing. Everyone there was eager to answer my questions and lend support. My brain was like a sponge, trying to soak up all the information they were giving me.

The Pink Ribbon Network provided me with several

books and pamphlets about breast cancer. After reading them several times over, I felt much more knowledgeable about what I was dealing with. I was still extremely nervous about having surgery, but I knew it was the only way to get rid of the cancer.

Unfortunately, the tumor had an indentation that caused the margin to split while it was being removed. An MRI, at the Vanderbilt Breast Center revealed there were no visible signs of cancer cells that had spread. It was a huge emotional relief.

Family and friends helped me tremendously during my recovery process. I had several visitors and phone calls to help brighten my days. I heard stories from many different people about their experiences with cancer.

Every testimony was different. Most were really inspiring, while others were downright alarming. By the time, I got the phone call to start radiation therapy, I was frightened out of my mind about it. I had already decided that I was not going to do it.

As I expressed my con-

cerns about radiation therapy at a Pink Ribbon Network meeting, everyone there was so kind to share the details of their radiation experience with me.

It definitely gave me something to think about, but I still didn't want to do it. During an office visit, Dr. Brazil explained to me that without radiation, the cancer would come back and it would be much worse the second time. Knowing this could happen, I decided that I should at least attempt it.

I was absolutely terrified going into the cancer center to start radiation therapy. Dr. Murray and his staff were very friendly and helpful during my entire course of treatment. I'm glad I changed my mind and followed through with it.

Now, when I say, "I was diagnosed on January 31, 2011," I feel like I own that date!

I can't begin to express the gratitude that I feel toward everyone that has helped me through this ordeal. I owe a heartfelt thank you to all the doctors, nurses and staff members I have encountered throughout the year. It was, without a doubt, divine intervention that brought Cindy and the Pink Ribbon Network into my life. I thank all of you for your support and kindness.

A special thank you goes out to my parents, James and Virginia Brooks; also to my husband, Donald Dawson, and my children, DJ and Heather Dawson. Thanks for taking care of me when I was at my worst. I love you all very much!

I also want to thank everyone for all of the thoughts and prayers that were sent my way. I have met many people and acquired several new friends on my journey with breast cancer. I can only hope and pray that I will be able to take what I've learned from this experience, and help someone else along the way.

"I believe that God always guides us in the direction we need to go and puts the right people in our lives at exactly the right time and place."

Kerri Dawson

who was diagnosed with breast cancer earlier this year

Proclamation

by
Steven L. Beshear
Governor

of the

Commonwealth of Kentucky



To All To Whom These Presents Shall Come:

WHEREAS, Many women and men in Kentucky are battling the disease of breast cancer; and

WHEREAS, More than 2,100 men and nearly 230,500 women in the United States have been diagnosed with breast cancer this year; and

WHEREAS, Early detection of breast cancer can save lives, and medical experts stress that every woman over 40 years of age should have a yearly mammogram; and

WHEREAS, Breast cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths among women in Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, First Lady Jane Beshear is committed to combating breast cancer in Kentucky. In 2008, she founded Horses and Hope with the Kentucky Cancer Program, which provides breast cancer education, screening and treatment referral for the often overlooked members of Kentucky's horse industry and their families; and

WHEREAS, The First Lady annually hosts Celebration of Hope, which is a gathering of survivors and advocates to celebrate survivorship and educate Kentucky's women about breast cancer awareness; and

WHEREAS, All Kentuckians are urged to raise awareness for and support the fight against breast cancer;


NOW, THEREFORE, I, STEVEN L. BESHEAR, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, do hereby proclaim October 2011 as

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

in Kentucky.

DONE AT THE CAPITOL, in the City of Frankfort the 22nd day of September, in the year of Our Lord Two Thousand Eleven and in the 220th year of the Commonwealth.


STEVEN L. BESHEAR
GOVERNOR


Elaine N. Walker
Secretary of State



Women from the local Pink Ribbon Network attended the Horses and Hope event Aug. 13 at Ellis Park. They also had the opportunity to get their picture taken with this pink Mustang.

SUBMITTED PHOTO



Sally Zube, from Crofton, is hugged by Juls Harrison during the cancer survivor ceremony at the start of the 2006 Relay for Life at the Stadium of Champions. Zube, a 4 1/2-year survivor of breast cancer, said it was a wonderful feeling to be attending the relay for the third consecutive year.

NEW ERA FILE PHOTO

think pink



**Mother.
Daughter.
Friend.
Sister.
Wife.**

breast cancer saves lives. Screening tests can help diagnose breast cancer in its early stages, when it's most treatable. Doctors recommend a clinical breast exam every three years beginning at age 20, and a mammogram every year starting at age 40. Breast self-exams and healthy lifestyle choices that include exercise, good nutrition and not smoking can also help protect women against the threat of breast cancer.

During October, National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we remember the mothers, daughters, friends, sisters and wives who have lost their lives to breast cancer. We also salute the survivors whose successful fight against breast cancer gives us hope for the future and a cure.

Dedicated to a Cure, in the Name of Love.

In 2011, it is estimated that over 230,000 women in the United States will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer, and that there will be more than 39,000 breast cancer deaths. Experts agree that early detection of

Signs and Symptoms of Breast Cancer

The widespread use of screening mammograms has increased the number of breast cancers found before they cause any symptoms, but some are still missed.

The most common sign of breast cancer is a new lump or mass. A lump that is painless, hard, and has uneven edges is more likely to be cancer. But some cancers are tender, soft, and rounded. So it's important to have anything unusual checked by a doctor. Other signs of breast cancer include the following:

- Swelling of all or part of the breast
- Skin irritation or dimpling
- Breast pain
- Nipple pain or the nipple turning inward
- Redness, scaliness, or thickening of the nipple or breast skin
- A nipple discharge other than breast milk

Sometimes breast cancer can spread to lymph nodes under the arm and cause a lump or swelling there, even before the tumor in the breast tissue is large enough to be felt. If you have any symptoms that might be a sign of breast cancer, be sure see a doctor as soon as you can.

Thanks to these local businesses for helping us bring more awareness to this deadly disease.

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Beth Casey

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Kay Nave

We love and support you.

Your Family

Michelle Roeder

1 year cancer free. I love you and support you.

Becky

Kathy Anderson

What a blessing you are to our family. We love you!

Tommy, Leslye & Tammy

Karen Wheeler

Karen, your upbeat attitude, efforts, God trusting spirit during this trial of life have been an inspiration to your husband and entire family.



Love Darrell

Ann Isom

We are so proud of you. You are such an inspiration to us and many others. We Love You!

Clay, Stacy, McKenzi & Cadyn

PK

You are special and we love you so much. May you continue to inspire others.

Love, Mabry, Hunter & Bennett

The JSASC supports our Breast Friends!

Judy Shemwell

Hi Mimi We love you.

Cadence & Donovan

Judy Shemwell

We love you and are proud of your courage for fighting the battle against breast cancer.

Your family, Larry, Scott, Stephanie, Aron, Mom & Carolyn

Kathy Anderson

Our Nana Beat Cancer! We Love You!

Emily, Scotty, Riley & Ty

Brenda McKinnis

To the best woman we know! We are proud of you and admire your strength.

We love you lots! Your Family

Ellen Houchens Skinner

10 Years FREE! We are so proud of you. We ALL LOVE YOU.

Mom, Dad, Doug, Rhonda, Brittany, Mark, Becky & Bill

Pink Ribbon Network Sisters & other breast cancer survivor friends



Brought together with a special, lasting friendship because we each traveled this journey. Keep faith in God, be courageous & always "Fight like a Girl!"

Love you all, Ann Isom

Jan Denton

I am a Breast Cancer survivor of 9 years. Praise the Lord for His healing & saving power. I have learned to treasure each day!

Susan Elliott

5 Year Survivor. You are an inspiration to us and we love you very much.

Mom, Dad, Sheryl, Kenny, Colton & Steve

Judy C. Smith

She lost the battle. We will continue the fight for a cure.

In loving memory, Mom & Brother

Becky Wood

As an 12 year survivor, we are proud of your continued courage, strength and determination.

Love, Taylor, Tom, Helen & Families

Wilma L. Brettschneider

A strong woman & tough survivor of 2 mastectomies, each ten years apart. Had it not been for the stroke, you would still be with us!

In loving memory Nina, Jessica & Jennette

Martha Smith

We are proud of your courage and strength in your battle against breast cancer.

You are such an inspiration! We Love You, Your Family

JACKIE STRICKLAND'S STORY

Finding a correlation between cancer and lifestyle

For most of my 40 years, I considered myself to be fairly healthy.

I exercised regularly and ate what I considered to be a healthy diet. I had thought about training for a long-distance race, but the more I read about the training and discipline it involved, it became overwhelming.

At that moment, I had been extremely involved in my career. I was promoted to pharmacy manager and completed diabetes disease-management training. The next step was to become an immunizing pharmacist. Little did I know there was an insidious cancer growing inside my right breast.

After my two mammograms, an ultrasound and a needlepoint biopsy, I was confident my diagnosis would not be breast cancer because I felt so healthy.

But it was. I can recall July 2, 2008 vividly in my mind as my surgeon was sorry to inform me at work that the walnut-size mass growing inside me was an aggressive cancerous tumor that

needed to be removed immediately.

I tried desperately to hold back the tears and to remain strong but quickly my world began to falter, and I would no longer be the same.

After reading and studying more about this intimidating disease, I became more curious with my diagnosis of breast cancer. Although there are many different causes of cancer, I began to better understand the correlation between cancer, nutrition and exercise.

The National Cancer Institute estimates that at least 35 percent of all cancers have a nutritional connection. There is no food or diet that can prevent breast cancer. But some foods can boost the immune system, and help keep the risk for breast cancer as low as possible.

Research has shown that getting the nutrients from a variety of foods — especially fruits, vegetables, legumes and whole grains — can make the body feel the best and provide the energy it needs.

In addition to eating right, exercise plays an important role in preventing the occurrence of breast cancer. Although I had worked out in the past, I realized I probably had not been doing it properly.

After healing completely from chemotherapy and radiation treatments, I decided to learn more about the science behind diet and exercise to help me maintain a healthier body. After being diagnosed with breast cancer, I realized there are many factors that can contribute to the development of cancer.

I have only one short life to live and even though I may not be able to control the external factors that can cause harm to my body, I can control what I decide to put into my body and the amount of exercise I can do.

I believe our bodies were not designed to handle excessive amounts of processed foods but with the proper diet and workout regimen, it is possible to be the best you can be.



JUDY SHEMWELL'S STORY

Challenges that change a life

Life has thrown some challenges my way. I have a special needs son and a wheelchair-bound husband who was seriously injured in 1997 in a work-related accident. God has given me the ability to face those challenges with strength and determination.

Nothing has challenged me like the diagnosis of breast cancer I received in April 2008. I knew the results of my annual March mammogram when the doctor asked which surgeon I preferred.

In April, I went for a biopsy on my right breast and was diagnosed with “infiltrating ductal carcinoma, grade III.” The name alone was enough to scare me.

In May, I had a mastectomy of my right breast. After surgery, I used a temporary prosthesis made of soft fabric and after about six weeks, I wore a permanent prosthesis.

In June, a vasport catheter, also known as an IV port, was surgically inserted. This port is used for labs and chemotherapy treatments. I received my chemo treatments in a large room filled with other patients who were also getting treatments. There is where I learned how quickly deep friendship can develop in stressful times.

I was lucky the chemo made me physically ill only a couple of times. Of the other side effects that I experienced — split fingernails, loss of appetite, loss of hair, eyebrows, and eyelashes — the one that was the most difficult to cope with was the fatigue.

The fatigue robbed me of my ability to care for my family as I had. But I'm a fighter, and I decided early on to battle this disease with a positive attitude and God's guidance.

On the Fourth of July, 2008, I fractured my left foot. The doctor was



unable to perform surgery to insert a screw since the chemotherapy treatments made my bones weak and harder to heal.

Therefore, I had to wear a medical boot 24/7. It was very difficult to find a comfortable sleeping position. I needed to elevate my right arm because I was still healing from the surgery, and I needed to elevate my left foot.

In the daytime, crutches were not an option because of my mastectomy, so a wheelchair had to be used. This put extra stress on my son because he had to load and unload two wheelchairs whenever we went out. He also had to take on household chores, as did my husband, who had many more responsibilities put on

his shoulders.

Since I had to wear the medical boot for such a long time, physical therapy was needed for my calf muscle. After using a bone growth stimulator from July of '08 until January of '09, my foot was finally healed.

In February of '09, my strength was further tested when my sister was diagnosed with a different type of cancer and died in April of sepsis.

Beginning in March of '09, I started my radiation treatments and completed all of my treatments by August of that year. What a wonderful feeling!

I would like to thank the oncologists, nurses and staff who helped and supported me during my

“... It is the emotional support of these women who have been there before you that eases the stress and fears of breast cancer.”

Judy Shemwell

About the Pink Ribbon Network members

chemotherapy and radiation. They were understanding of my fears and willing to patiently answer any questions I had.

I would also like to thank Kathy Anderson and Lisa Cunningham of the Pink Ribbon Network. It was their own personal experiences with breast cancer that led to the creation of this important local breast cancer support group.

This group reaches out to women diagnosed with breast cancer. A “support bag,” consisting of a small pillow, a monogrammed Pink Ribbon Network blanket and important information about breast cancer, is given to those diagnosed with the disease.

However, it is the emotional support of these women who have been there before you that eases the stress and fears of breast cancer.

I never would have been able to survive the challenges of my life without God's grace. Also, the support and prayers from family and friends, and even many strangers, were a great comfort to me during my battle with breast cancer.

A heartfelt “Thank You” goes out to all of them.



NEW ERA FILE PHOTO

A group of teachers from University Heights Academy begin their walk in October 2008 from UHA to El Bracero on Fort Campbell Boulevard. The teachers were raising money for breast cancer research.

We salute the local Pink Ribbon Network!



The local "Pink Ribbon Network" Support Group meets the first Thursday of each month at First United Methodist Church on South Main Street in Hopkinsville.

What's the Pink Ribbon Network all about?

BY MELONY SHERBERGER
SPECIAL TO THE NEW ERA

Six years ago, Kathy Anderson was diagnosed with breast cancer, and she needed a support group to turn to for guidance.

"I didn't know who to talk to about a wig or about anything else to help me get through this," she said.

Anderson was not able to find a group to meet that need, leading her to begin a new journey that would enlighten and assist others. In 2006, she formed the Pink Ribbon Network, and quickly, breast cancer patients found a place where they could seek some comfort and advice.

"I get a lot of calls, many of them

knowing I've been through breast cancer, but they also want to know more about us because either they need us or know someone who might need us," said Ann Isom, an active member of the Pink Ribbon Network who was diagnosed with breast cancer in November 2007.

Anderson and Isom attend Sunday school class together and knew each other well, even before Isom learned she had cancer.

"God has a plan in everything,"



Ann Isom
Pink Ribbon Network member

Isom said. "It seems we were put together. We both have a strong desire to help other people go through the journey we have to go through."

"Attitude is 100 percent of your recovery," Anderson said.

The Pink Ribbon Network meets at 7 p.m. the first Thursday of every month at First United Methodist Church on South Main Street in downtown Hopkinsville. Meetings include guest speakers on topics beneficial to breast cancer victims.

The organization also seeks to become part of community activities, such as the Western Kentucky Women's Show on Sept. 30 and Oct. 1 at the James E. Bruce

Convention Center, and plans events for women to enjoy and may not be related to breast cancer.

"Laughter is a big part of healing. We like to do things that don't always focus on cancer," Isom said.

Anyone wanting more information about the Pink Ribbon Network may e-mail Anderson at katand@bellsouth.net or Isom at ami@lawfr.com.

"We try to approach people when we learn they have been diagnosed with breast cancer, but we understand that not everyone may be ready for that kind of contact," Isom said. "We just want them to know they are not alone."

We're "THINKING PINK" again....

"Motivation and Strength," an entire section dedicated to breast cancer survivors and their stories.

Coming Monday, Oct. 17 in your  Kentucky New Era.

For more information 270-887-3270 • www.kentuckynewera.com