

STRENGTH • COURAGE • HOPE

# BREAST CANCER AWARENESS 2020



**'WOMEN MY AGE DON'T THINK  
THEY CAN GET IT'**  
Carol Keton Parsons



**PINK LOBSTERS HONOR  
18 YEARS CANCER-FREE**  
Anna Sanfilippo



**'HOPE COMES WHEN YOU GET  
THROUGH IT'**  
Maureen Aylward



**'A LIGHT OF FAITH, STRENGTH AND LOVE'**  
Dawn Addison Burnham, right, recalling Jane Shaw, left

## INSIDE

Survivor stories

Treatment advances

Screening and  
prevention



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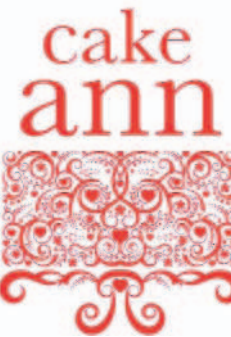
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TO OUR READERS

# United against breast cancer

In early September, we put out a call throughout the North of Boston region seeking stories from breast cancer survivors and others for our ninth annual special supplement.

We encouraged individuals to tell us of instances of courage, hope, determination, fear, survival and even loss.

The calls and emails started coming at once. And they didn't stop coming. Even this week as we were about to go to print, women continued reaching out.

Single mothers, grandmothers, young women and retirees. They called on behalf of themselves, their moms, their daughters and their friends.

Their stories were all uniquely raw and personal.

Some credited a mammogram or a self-examination with saving their life. Others talked about the pain and isolation of the disease. A couple of women told how they fought through one diagnosis, only to be confronted with breast cancer a

second time.

A daughter who lost her mother when she was young wanted people to know what a warrior she was. One husband whose wife successfully beat breast cancer 10 years ago explained how he was now losing her to dementia and Parkinson's disease.

We listened as many fought back tears, some more successfully than others, as they offered a glimpse into their private worlds.

When we asked what compelled them to come forward, their answers, not surprisingly, were very much the same.

Even those who said they initially hesitated to connect with us ultimately decided to tell their stories for the sake of others.

They wanted to offer

advice and perspective to those newly diagnosed. They wanted to tell women in the throes of treatment that things do get better. They wanted to stress the importance of early detection and implore women to schedule their annual exams. And they wanted to warn women — and men, too — who think they're immune that they're not.

"I had a few people reach out to me in my early days of diagnosis, and their stories inspired me," says Aurelie Alger, a lawyer, wife and mother from North Andover, who faced stage 2B cancer in 2018.

"Since I've recovered, in my own way, I've tried to be a resource for other women who are experiencing this because ... having positive examples when you are diagnosed and

treating it is very important in helping with one's own perspective."

There wasn't a lot of sugar-coating. But there wasn't only negativity either.

The final message, even in the most tragic of circumstances, was always one of hope for a future with fewer occurrences and less heartache around the disease.

"When you go through this, hope is the last thing that arrives," says Maureen Aylward, of Rockport, who was diagnosed with early stage 2 breast cancer last year. "Hope comes at the end. Hope comes when you get through it and the light comes back for hope."

Many of those we heard from thanked us for our annual commitment to

raising awareness about breast cancer and bringing attention to ongoing efforts toward a cure.

But the gratitude rests squarely with them.

Without the stories of the women featured in this section and in additional stories that you will find online at [www.gloucestertimes.com](http://www.gloucestertimes.com), we would be hard-pressed to continue our campaign.

We once again also offer our appreciation for the many community and business leaders who appear throughout this supplement in support of our initiative. Please join us in thanking them for making this campaign possible through their generosity.

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**'YOU GET YOUR LIFE BACK':** Two-time survivor Linda DeCola Sheehan thankful for early detection

**'BE GRATEFUL FOR WHAT YOU HAVE':** Aurelie Alger says success stories need to be shared, celebrated

**'I PLAN TO LIVE A LONG LIFE':** Angela Tita Antonopoulos calls on inner titan in face of breast cancer

**'EVERY DAY IS A GIFT':** Survivor Helen Nadeau takes no breaks from fundraising

**'I'VE GOT NO CHOICE BUT TO LIVE':** Laurie Jewett says a positive attitude is essential

**'DON'T FEAR THE FIRE, BECOME IT':** Seanna DiStefano is a living example that mammograms matter

**'YOU HAVE TO BE AGGRESSIVE':** Joan Ayotte urges others to 'be vigilant' about their health

**We're banking  on a cure.**

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.  
 But for survivors, it is every single day.

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PAUL BILODEAU/Staff photo

Maureen Aylward, of Rockport, chose to be true to and honest about her emotions as she dealt with her breast cancer diagnosis.

# Scared, confused and undeniably courageous

## Friendship helped MAUREEN AYLWARD through darkest moments of treatment

By GAIL MCCARTHY  
GMCCARTHY@NORTHOFBOSTON.COM

On April 21, during the initial surge of COVID-19, Maureen Aylward walked alone into North Shore Medical Center in Salem to have her right breast removed as part of her treatment plan for early stage 2 breast cancer.

"I was petrified about the coronavirus, and I was overcome with this

tidal wave of anxiety and fear going into a hospital," Aylward, 55, said.

The Rockport mother of three older boys expressed gratitude and deep appreciation for the support of a dear friend, and former colleague, from Swampscott, who was diagnosed just weeks before her.

Together, they traveled through this life-changing diagnosis.

"I was flabbergasted when my friend told me, and I was thinking,

what can I do to be there for her, and a month later, I felt a lump in my right breast," said Aylward, who is the general manager of 1623 Studios, a community media center and creative agency on Cape Ann. "We just couldn't believe it was happening at the same time.

"We were there for each other in the darkest moments of this experience. We could call each other and say, 'I'm done with this' and 'I don't

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want to deal with it any-  
more,' because you get pretty  
down, and it's super hard to  
walk back into the cancer  
center and sit down in that  
infusion chair and willingly  
receive those treatments."

Her friend had surgery  
first — a double mastectomy  
at a Boston hospital — fol-  
lowed by reconstruction and  
then chemotherapy.

Aylward underwent six  
rounds of chemo first, fol-  
lowed by a mastectomy and  
reconstruction.

As devastating as the  
diagnosis was, Aylward  
found solace in being wel-  
comed into the care of an  
all-female surgical team,  
from the surgeon to the  
recovery room nurses.

When she was getting  
prepped for surgery, the  
woman anesthesiologist  
was receptive to Aylward's  
request for affirmations  
while coming out of anes-  
thesia based on positive out-  
comes she had read about.

"I was told that I was going  
to be OK and I am going to  
be safe," she recalled. "It  
was so important to me to

have women around in this  
breast cancer experience,  
especially in the loss of the  
breast. They listened to  
me, and the compassion on  
their faces was real. They  
guided me through. It was  
empowering in the middle of  
this time of intense fear and  
anxiety."

For Aylward and her  
friend, the word "hope"  
— often used in breast can-  
cer discussions — was a  
misnomer.

"One day, as I looked at  
the other women in a wait-  
ing room, I wondered, 'Do  
you have hope or are you  
scared to death?'" Aylward  
said. "It's so confusing at  
the beginning and every-  
thing just drains right out of  
you. You're scared and you  
don't know what to do and  
you don't know what's going  
to happen to you.

"In those early days, my  
friend and I were trying to  
figure out what would be  
expected of us as breast  
cancer patients. There are  
organizations that use hope  
as a way to carry patients  
through, but there is the

other side. My friend and  
I didn't have hope at that  
time. I couldn't fathom hope,  
because I didn't know what  
was going to happen."

Aylward and her  
friend turned away from  
support groups and decided  
to be each other's support  
system.



*"It was so important to me to have women  
around in this breast cancer experience,  
especially in the loss of the breast. They  
listened to me, and the compassion on their  
faces was real. They guided me through.  
It was empowering in the middle of this  
time of intense fear and anxiety."*

"We are not warriors and  
that narrative of fighting  
cancer didn't make sense  
for us," she said. "We didn't  
have the strength to battle  
it and, for me, it created a  
lot of stress to think I was  
going into battle with some-  
thing that was part of me.

"I was going to be brave

and courageous as I went  
through it, and it had noth-  
ing to do with being a war-  
rior, but everything to do  
with making the next right  
decision, showing up for my  
treatments and doing what  
the doctors are telling you  
to do."

Aylward struggled with  
the loss that comes with a  
mastectomy.

"One of the most difficult  
parts is the thought of my  
breast being amputated,"  
Aylward said. "That loss is  
not talked about, but there  
is much grief and sadness  
connected to that. I was  
shocked and dumbfounded  
that I couldn't even speak of  
it. But now, with a new level  
of acceptance, I can talk  
about it. I was losing this  
symbol of motherhood, this  
symbol of womanhood.

"When I was worried  
about the grotesque nature  
of what it might look like,  
my friend bared her chest  
to show me and it's not bad.  
It helped me understand my  
goal of acceptance for what  
was to come."

Even before she

underwent surgery, Aylward  
faced another setback in  
January, what she referred  
to as a triple threat —  
pneumonia, sepsis and  
a potassium crash while  
undergoing her chemo  
treatments. She spent six  
days in the Salem hospital.

"Suddenly, I wasn't a  
cancer patient anymore. I  
was another kind of patient  
because I had an infectious  
disease," she said. "I thought,  
if I can make it through this, I  
can do anything."

Aylward stressed that  
she believes it's critical for  
women coping with breast  
cancer who don't have  
a support system to find  
groups or other individuals  
experiencing the same situ-  
ations to interact with.

While she may not  
have been consumed with  
optimism throughout her  
treatment, Aylward did  
eventually find hope.

"Hope comes at the end.  
Hope comes when you get  
through it and the light  
comes back for hope," she  
said. "You can say, I'm going  
to be OK."

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# A legacy of faith and FRIENDSHIP

## Dawn Addison Burnham inspired by loved ones

BY GAIL MCCARTHY  
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Dawn Addison Burnham's first encounter with breast cancer was with her mother-in-law, who was diagnosed more than 30 years ago.

When she first noticed a lump, Ann Oakes Burnham went to her family doctor, but was told not to worry about it.

A year later, after losing a good amount of weight on a diet, Oakes Burnham noticed that the lump had grown. She saw a breast surgeon and was scheduled for a radical mastectomy within days.

The surgeon came into Oakes Burnham's hospital room when Addison Burnham brought her elementary school-age daughters to visit their grandmother.

"The surgeon said, 'I'd like to talk to you,' and I thought he meant me, but he wanted to talk to my daughters," Addison Burnham, a native of Essex, said. "It still brings tears to my eyes when I think of that moment.

"He told them their grandmother had a lump in her breast and he wished that she had come to see him sooner," she said. "But he told the girls that he hoped it was treated soon enough for their grandmother to see them graduate from school, get married and have children."

Her mother-in-law, who was part of the third generation of women in her family to have breast cancer, went through several rounds of chemotherapy.

"Her drive for life was amazing," Addison Burnham said. "She had sheep and made sweaters for the family from yarn she spun, dyed and knitted. She and her husband did the Great Race several times during and after her chemo. It was a race for old cars going from the East Coast to the West Coast."

But in December 1994, a CT scan showed that the cancer "had metastasized too far," said Addison Burnham, who became her mother-in-law's 24/7 caregiver.

"During her last months, Ann said, 'I never realized how many friends I had until I was dying,'" Addison Burnham said. "This has stuck with me for 25 years."

In fact, Oakes Burnham was still knitting four days before she died on Oct. 1, 1995, Addison Burnham said.

Addison Burnham's paternal grandfather also had breast cancer.

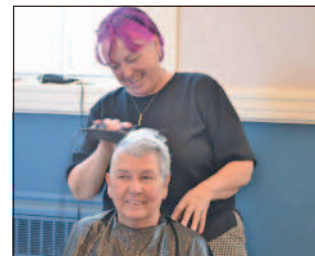
"When he was diagnosed, only 1 in 100 men survived. He was the one," she said. "But he had two sons, and Ann had three sons. Thirty years ago, there was no research on whether men could pass this on to their children.

"The fact that breast cancer is in both sides of my daughters' family is what weighs heavy on my heart," she said.

Addison Burnham soon became active in the American Cancer Society Relay for Life in Gloucester. Through her participation, she and her



From left, Jane Shaw, Ray Shaw and Dawn Addison Burnham show off their newly shaved heads at the Kid's Cancer Buzz-Off in 2012 at Gillette Stadium in Foxboro.



Courtesy photos

RIGHT: Dawn Addison Burnham shaves the head of Ann Shaw at St. John the Baptist Church in Essex during the 2017 Cape Ann Shave to Save, an event the two women started. LEFT: Shaw returns the favor.

daughters are now part of a study, responding to a survey every few years about their health, diet, level of exercise and overall well-being.

Through her church, St. John the Baptist in Essex, Addison Burnham became close friends with Jane Shaw, who was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 1995, the same year Oakes Burnham died.

"(Shaw) was a wonderful woman who couldn't do enough to help others," Addison Burnham said.

"One day, Jane said she was going to shave her head because she felt guilty when she went to breast cancer support groups," Addison Burnham said. "She had a full head of hair because she did not have chemo, while

many of the women were bald."

In June 2012, Addison Burnham joined Shaw and her husband, Ray Shaw, at the Kid's Cancer Buzz-Off at Gillette Stadium, where participants shave their heads to raise money for Boston Children's Hospital.

"Jane and I had a friend spray our heads hot pink the night before, but we never thought about it getting to our scalps," Addison Burnham said. "For almost a week, we had bright pink bald heads."

The three friends were active supporters of fundraisers for St. Jude Children's Hospital. In 2013, they created the Cape Ann Shave to Save, raising more than \$2,000 at their first event.

"The summer of 2017,



Sisters Erin Burnham Ricker, left, and Kelly Burnham Burns, right, visit with their grandmother Ann Oakes Burnham, who died of breast cancer. This photo was taken in 1995 when Erin graduated from eighth grade and three months before their grandmother died.

Jane was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer, but this did not slow her down," Addison Burnham said. "Jane was one of those people who never forgot a birthday or anniversary. She sent cards of encouragement to people who were ill, recovering or just feeling down.

"She was truly a light of faith, strength and love," Addison Burnham said. "Then COVID-19 hit. Jane stayed home except for doctor's appointments. She lost her battle on June 15."

Addison Burnham and Ray Shaw changed the name of the fundraiser to the Jane G. Shaw Shave to Save. This

past August, the event raised more than \$15,000 for St. Jude in her memory.

"The spirit of these two women remain with me. They continued to live their lives," Addison Burnham said.

"They taught me how important it is to reach out and stay connected to the people in my life. That a simple card or a batch of cookies can change someone's week. I was blessed to have had Ann and Jane in my life."

For more information or to donate to the local fundraiser, visit [fundraising.stjude.org/JaneGshave](http://fundraising.stjude.org/JaneGshave).



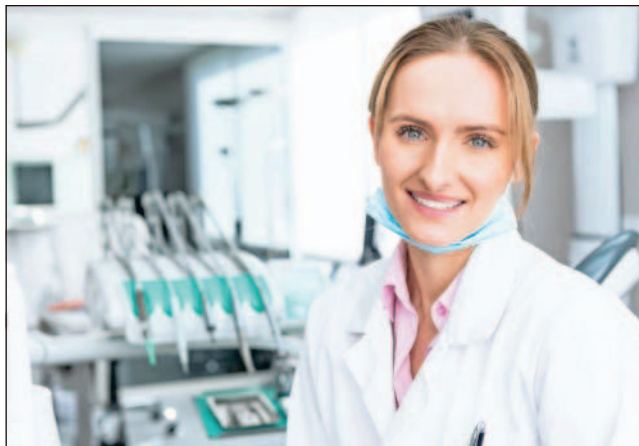
# Clinical trials offer vaccine hope

Breast cancer affects both men and women and the family and friends who support them as they navigate their diagnoses and subsequent treatments.

According to the most recent statistics from BreastCancer.org, an estimated 276,480 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed in women in the United States in 2020. That estimate includes 48,530 new cases of noninvasive, or in situ, breast cancer.

The average five-year survival rate for women with invasive breast cancer is 91%. While that's good news, what if there was a breast cancer vaccine that could eliminate the threat of breast cancer?

A vaccine may not be that far into the future. An experimental breast cancer vaccine already has been developed by Dr. Leisha



Courtesy photo

Emens at the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland.

Clinical trials are underway, but the concept behind the vaccine is to activate the immune system and cause immune cells that are typically unable to detect cancer cells to attack the cancer in

the breast and throughout the body.

Early studies point to modest, but real improvement in survival rates.

Emens continues to work with her team to study the efficacy of the vaccine.

Other vaccines also have been in the works.

Researchers at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota,

*An experimental breast cancer vaccine already has been developed.*

supported in part by the Artemis Project of the National Breast Cancer Coalition, also are trying to develop a vaccine that will prevent breast cancer.

Dr. Keith Knutson, who is leading this project, has seen some evidence of elimination of the breast cancer tumor, as well as some evidence of the immune system responding. Knutson's team is seeking more trial subjects to continue testing the vaccine.

There is still more work to be done, but early trials offer some hope that this disease may soon be defeated.

# MIT professor, survivor wins \$1M research prize

A Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor using computer science to detect cancer and discover new drugs has won a new \$1 million award for artificial intelligence.

The world's biggest AI society awarded its top prize last month to Regina Barzilay, a professor at MIT's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory in Cambridge.

MIT says Barzilay, 50, is a breast cancer survivor whose 2014 diagnosis led her to shift her AI work to creating systems for drug development and early cancer diagnosis.

Her early diagnosis tool has been tested in multiple hospitals, including Boston's Massachusetts General Hospital and others in Taiwan and Sweden.

She's the inaugural winner of the new annual award given by the Association for



The Boston Globe via AP

**Regina Barzilay shifted her work to creating systems for drug development and early cancer detection following her 2014 diagnosis.**

the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence and funded by Chinese online education company Squirrel AI.

It's meant to elevate AI advancements to the level of a Nobel Prize or computer science's Turing Award, while also highlighting AI research that benefits society.

— Associated Press

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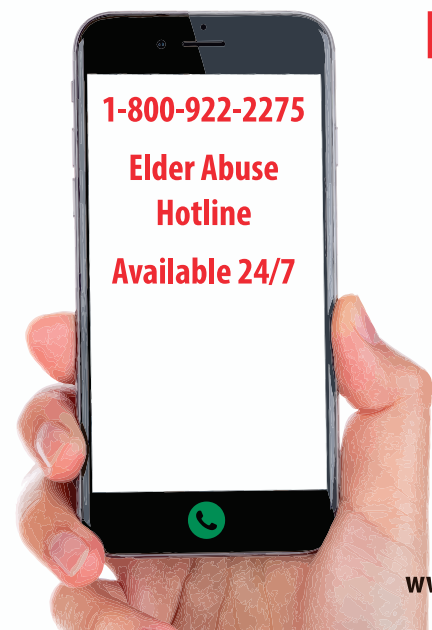
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# Operation pink lobster

## Gloucester fishing family's breast cancer experience gives rise to benefit T-shirt

By BILL KIRK  
BKIRK@NORTHOFBOSTON.COM

As the daughter of a Gloucester fisherman, it wasn't too much of a reach for Enza Iacono to launch a business called Lobster Trap Gifts.

Working in her garage and selling her work online, Iacono, 45, turns brightly colored, coated wire trap material into all sorts of nautical decor — from wine bottle totes to salt-and-pepper shakers.

Since she started her business, however, Iacono's range has expanded. Now she sells hats emblazoned with a variety of ocean-related subjects, such as her trademark red lobster. She also sells other merchandise, such as key

chains, sail bags, dog collars and even personal protective equipment masks with a red lobster on the front.

Last year, she offered a product that held much more meaning to her and her family — T-shirts with pink lobsters on them.

Her mother, Anna Sanfilippo, 78, is a breast cancer survivor. Diagnosed with the disease in 2002, she was treated at Lahey Health Cancer Institute in Burlington. She underwent a mastectomy and has been cancer-free ever since.

But the experience made a big impact on Iacono, her five older brothers and her father, retired fisherman Nick Sanfilippo.

"It was a tough time," Iacono said. "I wish I could

have put myself in her shoes. It was awful."

Iacono said her mother and father went to Florida earlier that winter. When she had a mammogram, Iacono said, "that's when they saw it. She thought she was fine, but when she came home, she wasn't fine. She had a lumpectomy first, then a mastectomy."

Much of the caregiving fell to Iacono.

"As the only girl in the family, I had to help out," she said.

As with her other products, the breast cancer awareness T-shirts feature lobsters. But instead of just one lobster, two strategically placed pink crustaceans adorn the front of these Ts.

Under the lobsters, in big,



PAUL BILODEAU/Staff photo

**Breast cancer survivor Anna Sanfilippo, left, and her daughter, Enza Iacono, standing in front of their family's commercial fishing boat, model the Breast Cancer Awareness T-shirts that Iacono sells through her Lobster Trap Gifts business to raise money for Lahey Health Cancer Institute in Burlington.**

pink letters, are the words "BITE CANCER," followed by a pink ribbon.

"Our pink lobsters don't just want to fight cancer, they want to bite it and destroy it once and for all," Iacono says on her website. "Let's keep fighting to find a cure."

Iacono sells the shirts for \$20 each, with all proceeds

going to the Lahey Health Cancer Institute, which Iacono praises for its excellent care of her mother.

While she sold only a handful of the Breast Cancer Awareness Month T-shirts last year, Iacono hopes this year to generate more attention for them and the cause they support.

But she's also quite

generous with the T-shirts. "If I hear of someone who has breast cancer, I give it to them, or mail it to them, to help them smile in a hard time," Iacono said. "Anything I can do to uplift their spirits."

For more information on Lobster Trap Gifts' breast cancer awareness shirts, check out [lobstertrapgifts.com](http://lobstertrapgifts.com).

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Photos by Patrick Sporleder



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# 'One less thing to worry about'

Mother of survivor touts scalp hypothermia to prevent hair loss

By MICHAEL CRONIN  
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Eva Korpi, of Rockport, recalls that her daughter had a lot of fears after being diagnosed with what was an aggressive form of breast cancer in 2016.

One of her biggest concerns was facing the loss of her hair, Korpi said.

For many, the trauma of hair loss while undergoing cancer treatments can be immeasurable.

"It's kind of a mark of breast cancer, and it wasn't something I wanted people to know about or have people worry for me," Korpi's daughter, Anna Quigley, said. "I just wanted to go out and be myself. I also work with children with autism and severe issues, and I didn't want to scare a child



Eva Korpi, of Rockport, holds a photo of her flanked by her daughters, Anna Quigley, right, and Karin Koga.

or have them not recognize me."

Korpi said her daughter spent a lot of time researching various treatments in hopes of minimizing the trauma of hair loss.

Through her research, Quigley, who now lives in Virginia, outside of Washington, D.C., discovered scalp hypothermia.

The therapy involves patients wearing caps frozen with liquid nitrogen during chemotherapy treatments to prevent hair loss.

"It was a fairly new concept back in 2016," Quigley said. "People hadn't really heard of it. When I went to my oncologist, she tried to talk me out of it, but my surgeon said, 'Why not? Let's give it a try.'"

Quigley would bring heavy coolers filled with Penguin Cold Caps every time she went for a round of chemo, which was about two to three times a week from October 2016 to January 2017. She credits these caps — which can be rented on a monthly basis for \$449 a month, according to the Penguin Cold Cap website — for keeping 50% to 60% of her hair intact.

"Having my hair was a good thing (through

the chemo treatments)," Quigley said. "It was one less thing to worry about. There's a bonus, too. All day long (during treatments), you're sitting in this awful, tragic place. The cold cap kind of numbs your brain to the point where you don't know what's going on. It really soothed me."

She said her oncologist came to recognize the benefits as well.

"My oncologist looked at me and said, 'I'm sorry, I was wrong,'" Quigley said.

Today, hospitals, including the one where Quigley was treated, are installing in-house scalp-cooling machines that tout even higher success rates of preventing chemo-related hair loss.

The DigniCap, developed by Swedish medical technology company Dignitana, is a large cooling cap machine



MICHAEL CRONIN/Staff photos

Eva Korpi hopes to see scalp hypothermia systems like her daughter utilized become more readily available so breast cancer patients can worry less about losing their hair during chemotherapy treatments.

designed for hospital use only. Both of its models have been certified by the Food and Drug Administration and are available at select hospitals across the country.

The Paxman Scalp Cooling System, which has also been cleared by the FDA, is available at many of the major hospitals in Massachusetts as well as New Hampshire.

Now going on four years

cancer-free, Quigley said she hopes to get scalp-cooling therapies more readily available for cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy across the nation.

It's something her mother believes strongly in, too.

"I really want to be an advocate for people going through it just to help them understand (what's available)," Quigley said.

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# CAROL KETON PARSONS: Testing and support are key



Courtesy photo

Carol Keton Parsons has been cancer-free for 10 years, after being diagnosed with invasive ductal triple-negative breast cancer when she was 69.

By TAYLOR ANN BRADFORD  
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- **Name:** Carol Keton Parsons
- **Age:** 79
- **Hometown:** Born in Manchester-by-the-Sea, grew up and currently lives in Gloucester
- **Background:** Married with three daughters, graduated from Gloucester High School and took psychology courses at North Shore Community College in Danvers, grew up at Hillcrest Nursing Home as her parents owned the facility, is a Daughter of the American Revolution, loves the local museums and library.
- **Favorite childhood memory:** “My grandmother lived on Centennial Avenue, and she would make homemade old-fashioned doughnuts. I can still see her standing there making doughnuts.”
- **Experience with breast cancer:** When Parsons felt a lump

in her breast while taking a shower at the age of 69, she knew something was not right. That same week, she went to a cancer clinic, where an ultrasound confirmed her fear. The doctors diagnosed her with invasive ductal triple-negative breast cancer.

“All breast cancer is serious, but they said this was an aggressive kind of cancer where you don’t live very long,” Parsons said.

A doctor in Gloucester suggested that Parsons pursue chemotherapy, which she ended up doing every other day for three weeks.

After finishing up her chemo treatment, Parsons was given radiation treatment at Massachusetts General Hospital and had a lumpectomy to remove the cancer from her breasts.

The Gloucester resident is now 10 years cancer-free.

■ **What she wants people to know:** First, older women should get tested. “A lot of

## WHAT IS TRIPLE-NEGATIVE BREAST CANCER?

Triple-negative breast cancer is a kind of breast cancer that does not have any of the receptors that are commonly found in breast cancer.

Think of cancer cells as a house. The front door may have three kinds of locks, called receptors.

One is for the female hormone estrogen.

One is for the female hormone progesterone.

One is a protein called human epidermal growth factor (HER2).

If an individual’s cancer has any of these three locks, doctors have a few keys (like hormone therapy or other drugs) they can use to help destroy the cancer cells.

But for those people who have triple-negative breast cancer, it means those three locks aren’t there. So the keys doctors usually use won’t work. But chemotherapy is still an effective option.

Often, patients first need to have the lump removed (a lumpectomy) or the entire breast removed (a mastectomy). Then, they have chemotherapy treatments to target any cancer cells that can’t be seen – cells remaining in the breast or that may have spread into other parts of the body. Sometimes doctors recommend chemotherapy before surgery to shrink the cancer.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

women who are my age don’t think they can get it,” she said.

Secondly, go to the support meetings for those who have breast cancer. For Parsons, the bond with other women who have or had breast

cancer is a strong one. When she would see other women in head scarves, she would go up and hug them.

“When you have breast cancer, it is like a bond,” she said. “Everyone hugs everyone.”

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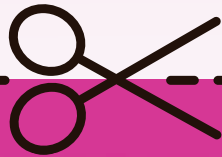
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