

# Steel Magnolias

## Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc.

### About Us

The Steel Magnolias have been active for over a decade in Calhoun County and it is amazing how many people do not know we exist. I have been a part of this group for a little over five years and before I was diagnosed with breast cancer I didn't know they existed either. We have found out that many breast cancer and other cancer survivors know little or nothing about us also. We want to make sure that anyone reading this newsletter, visits local doctors or enters RMC will know about us and about our services from now on.

Our office is on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor in suite 407 in the Physicians Center in Anniston, Al. We are right around the corner from the Chaplin's office. Across the hall from the office we have our "Pinks Boutique" that is stocked with mastectomy bras, breast prosthesis, knitted knockers (a lighter more comfortable prosthesis), wigs, hats and scarves. Our office is staffed from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. to assist you in the Pinks Boutique with any of these items. All these items are free to cancer patients.

We have several groups we have partnered with to help us. The Knitted Knockers are a group of ladies that meet at the Oxford Library to knit the knitted prosthesis. The Angel Ministry from Iron City Baptist Church sews our bags for our care packages and the pouches that go in the care packages that hold the drain bags after surgery. We have other ladies and groups that sew and crochet caps, pillows and throws for us.

I have included part of our brochure to share with you all of our services on page 6. Please take a look at it and see if we can help you in any way or maybe see if you can help us in any way! Please share our information with breast cancer survivors or newly diagnosed cancer patients. We are here to help and we need your help also. Cancer is not going away and anyone facing cancer needs our help. Please get involved in some way to make this battle for them a little less stressful, be a blessing to someone today! We are all in this together!

Submitted by:  
Elaine Johns

June 19, 2017



### Sharing love through support

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& Sherry Grinstead  
RMC Chaplain, Jim Wilson  
Historian & Photographer  
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Pinks Boutique: For Appointment  
Call the Office @ 256-231-8827  
Physicians Center, STE 407  
901 Leighton Ave.  
Anniston, AL 36207  
[www.steelmagnoliasinc.org](http://www.steelmagnoliasinc.org)

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[@steelmagnoliasinc.org](mailto:@steelmagnoliasinc.org)

**Steel Magnolias and Men of Steel Meeting**  
**May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017**

The Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc. met on Tuesday, May 23, 2017 in the private dining room at RMC.

Pizza was provided by RMC with side dishes from Steel Magnolias.

Following dinner, President Elaine Johns call the meeting to order.

**New Business:** Elaine Johns suggested that the group think about changing the meeting time to 5:30 to hopefully attract new members and cut our sessions down to 1 hour with time afterward for fellowship. There was some discussion and it was decided that everyone think about it and we will discuss it at the June meeting.

Kristen Reimer suggested placing posters, advertising or Pinks Boutique in some of the Doctor's offices and in the hospital. She will create the posters and the hospital and the doctor's offices will approve them.

Elaine Johns reminded everyone of the Quad City Event on June 10<sup>th</sup>. A signup sheet was passed around for those who wished to attend.

In the absence of secretary Connie Stephens, Nancy Burnell read the minutes. A motion was made to approve by Judy Elders and a second by Linda Barton.

Chuck Trull gave an update on the health of Marti and Pokey Warren and also on his wife, Barbara. Pokey is in the hospital and Mart and Barbara are doing well.

Nancy Burnell gave an update on Keither Zeimet. She is doing well and going to therapy 3 times a week.

Susan Dupree made a presentation of a beautiful porcelain magnolia to Margaret Taylor for the Steel Magnolia Office. It will be placed in the office for everyone to come and see.

**No Old Business.**

Elaine Johns told the group of her journey with breast cancer. It was very inspiring. She told us about how she became part of the Steel Magnolias. It was through a friend of hers that told her about the work of Steel Magnolias. Elaine related to the group how much a gift, "Jesus Calling" devotional, from a friend of hers had helped throughout this journey and how that devotional had brought her into a deeper relationship with God.

Following Elaine's presentation, Susan Dupree suggested having someone tell their story at every meeting. Those stories are very inspiring to others that may be going through or have gone through similar experiences, several commented positively on this suggestion.

Chaplain Sherry Grinstead read the prayer list. Several names were added before sherry prayed for them.

The winners of the gift cards this month were Judy Williamson, Nancy Buchmann and Vickie Norman. Elaine also had a drawing for a stuffed bear and Shirley Barger was the lucky winner.

Susan Dupree moved to adjourn the meeting and Kristen Reimer seconded.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Margaret Taylor



**On behalf of Susan Dupree, Linda Daniels (a former Steel Magnolia) and Steele Away Home Canine Foster and Rescue, we are denoting this Beautiful Ceramic Magnolia for use in the Steel Magnolia Office.**

## **Behind the Battle Scars of a Two-Time Breast Cancer Survivor**

*By Vicki Everett*

**Surviving breast cancer the first time was traumatic to say the least. Surviving breast cancer a second time, just a decade later, was even more astonishing!**

**Although it has been 10 years since my first breast cancer diagnosis, the experience is still as fresh as if it were yesterday. After the ten-year marker, I caught myself bragging and celebrating my 10-year-success marker! Shortly after, during my annual women's exam with my gynecologist, the sonogram technologist discovered an "odd, suspicious lump". "Here we go again," I thought. I could feel the familiar tears welling up in my eyes and my heartbeat accelerated. My thoughts were racing. For one, I didn't think I had enough strength to fight it again. A lot had happened, physically, since the first time—for one, menopause. If you don't know, menopause is not friendly to the body nor the mind!**

**Like the last time, doctors tried to be positive and optimistic, "This could be scar tissue." Unlikely, I thought pessimistically. I was trying to remain calm but my thoughts were turning more negative by the minute. In fact, I felt I could be in a coffin by the end of the week! But that is what cancer does! It steals your joy and you begin to think of it as a death sentence which 20 years ago, it very well may have been.**

**As the days went by, there was a battlefield of words in my mind: negative versus positive. One side of my brain was listing all the things that could go wrong while the other side of my brain was trying to throw in the "buts"... but every year, more cancer research is done and there are more available treatments and preventions than there were even a month ago.**

**This constant battle of the negatives and positives went on for the entire length of treatment. This battle was, however, going to be more devastating to my body. The first time, I had just turned 40 when I was diagnosed with DCIS—stages 0 and 1. I opted for a radical double mastectomy and was put on a hormone blocker, Tamoxifen for five years. When it was over, I didn't want to talk about it but I became a health nut. I ran a 5K nearly every day. I didn't put anything in my body unless it had super nutrients in it.**

**Then five years later, menopause hit me hard. I started having issues with my feet and knees and was unable to run. Running was my air; it was my mental getaway! When I stopped running, I started bad eating habits as well. Five years after that, and a couple of weeks before the Big 50, I was diagnosed again with more invasive breast cancer. This time, there was a stage 1 in the same breast and it was in one of the three lymph nodes also. I was devastated but I didn't have time for emotion. Kirklin Clinic had me scheduled almost every day for some type of test or bloodwork. This was good, though, because it kept my mind focused on positively working toward surviving—AGAIN! But this didn't come without some strong emotions! I was furious! I felt betrayed! I didn't feel as strong as I did 10 years ago and I, once again, had too much going on to be doing all of this. I was working on my educational specialist degree at UAB. As an older student, teacher and mother of a 15-year-old boy, and a daughter who was pregnant with her first baby and four other grandchildren, this was taxing enough! Now I'm going to have to add what to my "To Do List"?!**

**The day before my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, I had a lumpectomy. What a way to spend the Big 50! I would also have to do what I did not experience the first time around was chemotherapy and radiation. Six weeks after the lumpectomy, I began chemotherapy which felt like someone injected me with the devil and he was running rampant through my body. I only felt nauseated once but my immune system hit rock bottom the first round and I ended up being admitted to UAB's Emergency Room with neutropenic fever. My body was almost void of all white cells. It took me a couple of days spent at UAB to recuperate.**

After that, my treatments were reduced to 25%. After each treatment, I received a shot of Neulasta and a 4-day prescription for steroids to build my immune system. It was not only taxing mentally but also physically. I had deep pains all the way down to my bones—so much that sleep was almost impossible. To make it worse, my family really couldn't relate or understand the change they saw in my both physically and mentally! It was my battle and my battle alone to fight! I began to seclude myself from my friends and the rest of my family because I felt my mental state was burdening enough to me and I didn't want them to also feel the burden I carried.

I survived the four rounds of chemotherapy bestowed upon me every three weeks. Six weeks later, it was time for radiation. The radiation was easy-peasy until the last two weeks. Then I began to feel like I was set on fire and beaten at the same time. After six weeks of radiation therapy, I was set free but not completely. I must, once again, take Tamoxifen but this time for 10 years!

The thing is, when you are a breast cancer survivor, you carry battle scars that no one can see. They are not just hidden in our bras but deeply buried in our minds. Like any warrior, no one sees what you have faced on the battle ground and how you have looked death in the face and fought with all your mite for a little more time with those you love!

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## **Birthdays and Survivor Years!**

**June 30<sup>th</sup> is Man of Steel Pokey Warren's birthday!**

**July 7<sup>th</sup> is Nancy Burnell's Birthday and she is a 13 year survivor!**

**July 13 is Sherry Grinstead's Birthday and she is a 15 year survivor!**

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## **Up Coming Events**

**June 27 is our next meeting in the private dining room at RMC at 5 p.m. We will have baked sweet and irish potatoes. Steel Magnolias please bring side dishes. Our guest speaker will be Adam Portwood from Walgreens.**

**July 17<sup>th</sup> will be the next newsletter mailing day.**

**July 25<sup>th</sup> is the New Beginnings Banquet at Classic on Noble. Look for your invitation in the mail if you are an active member. Active members will receive tickets for two. If additional tickets are needed or you are not an active member, you can purchase tickets for \$35 each. Deadline for purchase is July 17<sup>th</sup>. You must have to have a ticket for entrance to the banquet.**

**Please contact Nancy Burnell for additional tickets @ 256-835-5380.**

**Our guest speaker will be Edie Hand. She is a business woman, speaker, television/radio celebrity, author and Mom. The business world knows her for her many acts of kindness and work in various charities. She is the founder of Genuine Pearl Girls Society who promotes these acts of kindness to make lives better for women and children.**



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## Services Offered By Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc.

### 1. Group Meetings

Steel Magnolias meet on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in the 1st Floor Private Dining Room of RMC.

### 2. Steel Magnolias' Office

Our office is located in suite 407 of the Physicians Center in Anniston. Currently our office is staffed (part time) by Steel Magnolias volunteers Monday through Friday, 11:00 am - 4:00 pm. Every effort is made to have someone in the office when our staff is sick or on vacation. Phone (256) 231-8827

### 3. PINKS Boutique

Located in the Physicians' Center across from the Steel Magnolias Office, we are stocked with Mastectomy Bras, Breast Prosthesis, Wigs, Hats and Scarves. These items are of no cost to cancer patients.

### 4. Care Packages

Steel Magnolias provide a comfort package including inspirational and educational materials to breast cancer patients the day of surgery at Regional Medical Center. Packages are mailed or taken to newly diagnosed patients who do not receive them on day of surgery.

### 5. Dining Vouchers

Dining vouchers are provided for two family members of any patient, in surgery, at Regional Medical Center. Each provides a meal in the hospital cafeteria.

### 6. Snacks

Steel Magnolias provide the following: (1) snacks in Anniston Oncology chemo treatment room - Suite 602 Physician Center (2) chemo treatment room on the 4th floor of RMC and (3) the Radiation / Oncology Center on 2nd Floor of RMC.

### 7. Breast Cancer Awareness Program

Available to girls in grades 7-12, this program is taught in the school by a trained volunteer under the supervision of a Registered Nurse. Anyone interested in having our program presented, contact our office.

### 8. Speakers Bureau

Speakers are available to civic clubs and churches. To schedule, contact our office.

### 9. Steel Magnolias Newsletter

Our monthly newsletter is an informative and inspirational publication about upcoming events, meetings and activities. Also included is a joke page and current information regarding cancer testing and treatments.

### 10. Web-Site

[www.steelmagnoliasinc.org](http://www.steelmagnoliasinc.org) is a great source of information and inspiration. Also,  Find us on facebook.

### 11. Men of Steel

Group of men (husbands, friends or family) of breast cancer patients or survivors and for men who themselves are breast cancer survivors. Meetings are held jointly with Steel Magnolias (see Group Meetings #1). Contact Jimmy Taylor (256-463-4313) or email [tjimmeg63@aol.com](mailto:tjimmeg63@aol.com) for additional information.

### 12. Prayer

We are praying for you with love and blessings.

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## WAYS YOU CAN HELP

### 1. VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME

- attend our meetings and get involved with us
- volunteer for office work or Pinks Boutique
- help with our fund raisers (2 per year)
  - a. Bake and jewelry sale (annually the Saturday before Easter at Quintard Mall)
  - b. Golf Tournament at Pine Hill Golf Course (in the spring each year). Numerous opportunities to serve.

2. CONTRIBUTE - contributions are tax deductible (a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization) and can be made to: Steel Magnolias, P.O. Box 2208, Anniston, AL 36202. ALL contributions are used to provide services to breast cancer patients who reach out to us.

3. DONATE UNUSED JEWELRY (new, vintage or broken) - it is cleaned, repaired and resold at our events. Drop off at the following: Steel Magnolia Office, Cotton Antiques, 508 Main Street, Oxford or call Marti Warren 256-237-0206.

### 4. PRAY FOR OUR MINISTRY

### **An Animal Situation**

Not long after I resigned as pastor of a small community church, the phone rang. "Is the reverend there?" a man asked.

I explained that I was a minister, though not the current pastor.

"You'll do," he said. The man wanted to know which Scripture verses applied to funeral services.

I gave him several references, and he jotted them down.

"What about the 'ashes to ashes, dust to dust' part?" he asked.

I read it to him slowly. Then, intending to offer him some sympathy, I inquired, "And who is the deceased?"

"My daughter's rabbit," he replied.

### **Arriving Late**

One Sunday morning my sister Liz was surprised to receive a phone call from her minister. He reported that he'd just been in a minor car accident and asked if she could inform the congregation he'd be unable to conduct services that day.

Liz was flattered that out of the entire congregation, she was the one he had called—until the minister went on to say that since Liz was always the last to arrive at church, he knew she would be the only person he could still reach at home.

### **Asking for Money**

The pastor of my church hates to plead for money. But when the coffers were running low, he had no choice. "There's good news and there's bad news," he told the congregation. "The good news is that we have more than enough money for all the current and future needs of the parish. The bad news is, it's still in your pockets."

### **Big Fall**

During an ice storm I went to check the mailbox, carefully shuffling down the driveway. When I reached for the mail, my feet went straight up in the air, and I landed on my back. More embarrassed than hurt, I looked to see if anyone witnessed my fall and spied a fire truck passing by. The crew had seen the whole thing.

Firefighters climbed out of the truck to assist me. "It's the preacher," one said. "Are you okay?"

"I just got the wind knocked out of me," I replied.

"Wow," said another firefighter. "It takes a lot to knock the wind out of a preacher!"

### **Flexing**

Our pastor was teaching Proverbs 16:24: "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones."

The minister then added, "You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar."

My wife leaned over, put her head on my shoulder, and whispered in my ear, "I just love to watch your muscles ripple when you take out the garbage."

### **"Forced Into It"**

We accompanied our son and his fiancée when they met with her priest to sign some pre-wedding ceremony papers. While filling out the form, our son read aloud a few questions. When he got to the last one, which read "Are you entering this marriage at your own will?" he looked over at his fiancée.

"Put down 'yes,'" she said.

# YOU ARE WHO GOD SAYS YOU ARE

F A M I L Y T D E R O P M E  
 P N E V L I G U E V O R I U  
 M E N E W C R E A T I O N A  
 I S V M S G D B N E A T N E  
 F O H P N Y E E S I B E O B  
 L H E O A T V U T E M C R A  
 E C R W E S O P R U P T T C  
 H T O E R I L L O Q A E S A  
 S P E R C E E A W N G D I R  
 I R B E A U T I F U L N E E  
 C U R D Q S F C I O U S W D  
 N P S I R U N E V I G R O F  
 I T N A T R O P M I R U P O  
 M U C L U N E S O P A M I R

BEAUTIFUL

FORGIVEN

PRECIOUS

CARED FOR

IMPORTANT

PROTECTED

CHOSEN

LOVED

PURPOSE

CREATED

LOVELY

SPECIAL

EMPOWERED

MINE

STRONG

FAMILY

NEW CREATION

UNIQUE