

# Steel Magnolias

Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc.

D.R.E.A.M.S.

October 15, 2012

## From Challenge To Victory

Last month's newsletter was the most difficult I've ever written. I tried every possible way to find another subject, but couldn't get away from Chaplain Wilson's comment. In late summer of 2001, before writing the first newsletter, I told Chaplain Wilson, "I feel that a newsletter needs to be a part of this new support group but how will I know what to write?" The Chaplain's answer was, "If the newsletter is God's work, He will show you what to write." The September newsletter was the 122nd letter since 2001.

I remember writing a letter in October of 2003, and after including an inspirational page, experiencing a flicker in the electric power. In an instance the page was gone. I was not a happy camper! I walked into other parts of the house and realized that none of our clocks were affected. I then said, "Well, God, I don't think you liked my choice. Show me what to include." I then decided on a poem I'd written when my sons were very young. At the next group meeting, Marilyn McCormack, a young mother, in treatment for breast cancer, who had small children, thanked me for the poem. She had just watched a movie on HG TV about a young mother with stage 4 breast cancer who feared she would be leaving her babies. Marilyn said, "I took that poem from the newsletter and it is on my refrigerator."

The poem begins:

*I gaze into the faces of my babies, living  
in their worlds of tranquil fantasies.  
Questions race through my mind, When*

*you are men, what life will you find?*

No doubt the poem was for Marilyn.

Now back to the September 2012 newsletter. **On Monday, September 17**, the day the Steel Magnolias Newsletter went on line, I received this email from Ted Nail, the blind man who made history by being the oldest blind man to ever earn a degree from JSU. Then several semesters at Louisiana Tech., but had to drop out before earning a masters. Ted came back to Birmingham, Alabama. He applied for a few jobs where his blindness would not be an issue. He became discouraged but continued to seek employment, and did go to work for Disability Rights and Resources.

His message after reading September's newsletter was: "Ms. Lenora, Thanks for sharing in your last newsletter for September. I truly felt your emotions you shared with the rest of us. Just by listening to what you had to say, I could feel as if I were 10 years old again. While I listened, I felt such a peace come over me at how God gave you the peace to put down into words how you felt at this period in your life. It is truly good friends and sisters in the Lord, like you that show boldness in times like we are facing today. Keep up the great work, I am so proud of all the STEEL men and women in Calhoun County. Love Ya, Ted"

**September 20, 2012, at 6:24 AM**, Ted sent this message.... "Ms. Lenora, Well you will not believe what happened to me yesterday. Yesterday our organiza-



## **Sharing love through support**

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held the regional AL DAN meeting at the Alabama Power Building, just a block from our offices. I got to go and before hand I made calls getting some of our consumers signed up to go. I went and I helped greet people as they came in. We had a great lunch and I got to meet many

people with many diverse disabilities, from the northern part of Alabama. In the afternoon there was a time when they were going to nominate members to the advisory board for our section of the state. They would be voting on three from each of the sections of the state and since we are the northern part, I so happened to be picked to be on the board from our section. I was totally taken back. You would have been so proud of me! I had to stand up in front of the crowd and spill out a few things about myself. It all happened so fast, I could hardly believe what was really going on!

I am going to Montgomery next Wednesday with my supervisor, Miss Judy Roy, who nominated me for our state advisory board, and we are meeting at our annual meeting for AL DAN I just wanted to update you on this.

Do you know what D.R.E.A.M.S. stands for? — — **-Desiring Real Effective And Meaningful Solutions.**  
**By Ted Nail**

**Thank you Ted!**

Ted's experiences of being turned down for jobs he prayed for, and then getting a job that gives him such a feeling of accomplishment is a great illustration of a quote I read some time ago....**"When God doesn't say yes to our requests, it is because our vision for ourselves is not as big as the vision God has for us."**



Ted Nail at graduation, in the Spring of 2011—Pictured with Omar, a blind classmate. When Ted spoke to our group, his closing remark was profound: "I am blind, but I have never lost my vision."

Picture to the left is of Ted, speaking to the Steel Magnolias and Men of Steel prior to his graduation from JSU in the Spring of 2011

Ted touched us deeply! He lost his sight in his 20's after getting married to Kathy and the birth of their 1st child.

Ted's smile shouts,

**Life Is Worth Living!**

Very early, Saturday, September 29, I emailed Ted, asking permission to publish his incredible story. His response was, "Of course you can, I also wanted you to know: "This past Wednesday, I was voted the Treasurer for AL DAN. I have some ideas about how we can get more people signed up, and this can be done with organizations, or individuals. Everyone on the board has some kind of disability. I so happen to be the first blind person to hold a position. **God is always surprising me on what He can do, if we will let Him.**"

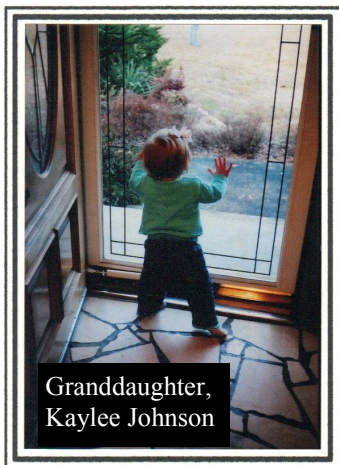
**Little is much when God is in it!**

I can do everything through Him who gives me strength. Philippians 4:13

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11



**Why write about blindness when I founded a breast cancer support/service organization?** It is simple, the writing is about the loss of our emotional and mental compass, and finding a way to reclaim our life. The first step is the acceptance of that loss, whether it be from cancer or an inherited condition like Ted's blindness. We must accept our new normal. Family members want us back as we were before we were consumed with loss. In time our new normal is accepted by most family members. As painful as it is to feel a disconnect, while struggling for our new normal, it is possible to recover, and see ourselves become stronger and more focused. A short poem I wrote concerning the struggle to feel whole again goes like this:



Granddaughter,  
Kaylee Johnson

### **Beyond My Heart's Door**

The beauties I behold  
As I peer beyond my heart's door,  
Awards my imagination  
With beauties untold

God help the frightened child  
That lives within my heart  
To move bravely, beyond this portal  
Strong and Focused and Riled

Lenora Washington Johnson

Recently I received an email from a woman who is struggling, searching for her emotional compass. She saw a Steel Magnolias brochure in Dr. Trupp's office. She wrote, "I had a lumpectomy June 11 and started my radiation July 27th. It has been a whirlwind and an emotional roller coaster that has been very hard. I thought maybe your guidance could help me with some things. Thank you for what you are doing."

My response was: Because of the "Whirlwind and Emotional Roller

Coaster," I started Steel Magnolias. Please know that in time these feelings of having lost control of your life will subside. Becoming part of a group like Steel Magnolias, meeting women who have taken a like journey, will certainly help. Becoming an advocate for newly diagnosed breast cancer patients will give you a new sense of purpose and accomplishment.

### **Correspondence**

We thank each of you for your outstanding support and services being provided to those who have physical and mental needs during their treatment for Breast Cancer. (Included was a generous contribution.)  
Bill and Annette....Jacksonville, AL

Anyone who would like to attend classes to learn about playing Bridge, please call Anne Phillips 256-237-2374. Classes are held on Friday at 1:00 pm at the Bridge Club, located in the Lenlock Shopping Center. Our club house is near the middle of the shopping center. Joan Cleveland was a Steel Magnolia, a dear friend, and she loved to play bridge. Thanks, Anne Phillips and Clyde Cleveland.

### **Anniston Fire Department Follow-up**



**The Anniston Fire Department Family**



**Margaret, Marilyn, Marti, Lenora, Joyce  
Judy Elder & Janet Reese, not pictured**



**Anniston Fire Department Chiefs with Sam who drove Cindy from Orange Beach to Anniston**

Ms. Johnson,  
We would like to thank you very much for the participation your organization showed during our event. It was a great success. We greatly appreciate the support you showed by getting involved and spreading the word throughout the community. We feel like we have broken ground to a lifelong partnership with you and your organization. As a result of your efforts we were able to raise over \$3,000.00 that day alone....bringing our totals to well over \$11,000.00 at this point. We will continue our fund raising effort through the month of October with T-shirt sales. Our initial goal of \$2,500.00 has been blown out of the water. The Lord has really blessed in this fund raising effort. Meeting great people such as yourself and your organization has been a blessing. Please feel free

to contact us if you ever need anything of Anniston Fire Department, we feel like you have become a part of our brotherhood, and would be honored to help you in any way possible. Please share our gratitude with the whole of your organization.

Thank You,  
Assistant Chief, Jeff J. Brooks  
B-Shift Supervisor  
Anniston Fire Department

**Burn Out Cancer shirts are still available at Anniston Fire Department. I bought both a long sleeve and a short sleeve shirt. Message shirts are not my thing but these shirts are special—Black with Pink**  
**Anniston Fire Department: 256-231-7649**

#### **Response to Assistant Chief Brooks:**

Dear Mr. Brooks, It is with sincere appreciation that I thank you for contacting me (Lenora Johnson) about being part of the historic "Burn Out Cancer" event of September 15. Five of us, Steel Magnolias members, were standing at the entrance to the fire station when "Cindy," the Pink Fire Truck, led by a motorcycle brigade, turned off Quintard Ave. on to 17th Street. It was a moment filled with such meaning for us that we were brought to tears, then laughter and left with a sense of gratitude that firemen at our 17th Street Fire Station recognized cancer survivors and remembered those lost to cancer in such a meaningful way. Special thanks to Sgt. Keith Bryant for remembering me (Lenora) asking for prayer for the journey with breast cancer that I knew loomed before me and for remembering that, because of my journey, I founded Steel Magnolias. Like a house fire, the diagnosis of cancer affects the family of the person diagnosed. We were told that the Orange Beach Chief brought the Guardians of the Ribbon project, founded by Dave Graybill, a retired firefighter in California, to Alabama. God bless our Anniston Firefighters for bringing this outstanding event to Calhoun County! We are so appreciative of everyone at the 17th Street Station for your Big Hearts! Steel Magnolias feel a kinship to you and your brotherhood, and look forward to "Burn Out Cancer," 2013.

Lenora Johnson, Founder & Executive Director  
Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc.

#### **Speakers Bureau**

##### **Alpha Delta Cappa**

Tuesday, October 2nd, Marti Warren spoke to the local Teachers' Sorority. Marti talked to 25 retired teachers about the work of Steel Magnolias and how Steel Magnolias is meeting many personal needs that are common to breast cancer patients. Many in the sorority made contributions designated for Pinks Boutique, for the purchase of mastectomy bras.

##### **Brighton Collectibles at The Summit**

Margaret Taylor represented Steel Magnolias Friday, September 28th at the kick off of Breast Cancer Awareness Month at Brighton Collectibles. On Saturday, September 29, Elizabeth McCabe and her daughters, Becky and Brenda Tiner represented Steel Magnolias in this beautiful store. Thank you Brighton at The Summit for naming Steel Magnolias a nonprofit of choice.





**Becky Tiner at Brighton Collectibles**



**Margaret Taylor**



**Brenda Tiner with Brighton Staff**

### **Steel Magnolias & Men of Steel Meeting**

The Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc. met on Tuesday, September 25, 2012 at 5:00 P.M. in suite 403 of the RMC Physicians Center. President, Marti Warren welcomed everyone and thanked the group for the flowers sent to her husband, Pokey,

Chaplain Sherry Grinstead gave thanks for our meal of baked potato bar, provided by RMC and salads and desserts brought by Steel Magnolias members. Following the meal, Chaplain Grinstead gave a very inspirational devotion about our motives for doing the things we do. Her scripture reference was Luke 5: 22. Sherry then prayed for those on our prayer list.

Marti Warren presented the nominating committee's slate of officers for 2012—2013. She asked if there were any other nominations or discussion. There was no discussion and a motion was made by Linda Barton to approve the committee's nominees, second was made by Jack Wells. The motion passed.

Lenora Johnson, Executive Director, reminded everyone of the Breast Cancer Awareness Walk in Ranburne, AL. on October 20. She told us that Elaine Johns has procured a 15 passenger van, from Pee Wee Turner, to transport those who wish to attend the walk. Chuck Trull volunteered to drive.

Lenora passed around a picture of Brighton's 2012 Bracelet, in celebration of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Brighton Collectibles at The Summit has named two Non Profits of Choice: Steel Magnolias and The Breast Cancer Research Foundation of Alabama. A contribution of \$5.00 will be given to each nonprofit from the sale of each bracelet. Kick off for the sale will be September 28 through the 30th. Margaret Taylor will represent Steel Magnolias on the 28th and Elizabeth McCabe and her daughters, Brenda and Becky Tiner will be our representatives the 29th of September.

Lenora announced that the Distressed Doe Cook Team plan again this year to donate proceeds from a Chili Cook-Off to Steel Magnolias.

Lenora reported that she has accepted an invitation from Quality Of Life to be part of a Forum, on October 23rd. The Forum will be from 10:00 AM until 11:30 AM.

Lenora talked about the Black Out Breast Cancer event at the Anniston Fire Department. Marilyn Lawson said pictures were made that will be aired on TV 24 sometime in the future.

Door prizes were awarded and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by

Margaret Taylor, Secretary

### **Financial Statement**

September		Balance Brought Forward	\$19,224.80
01 (-)	100.00	Lenora Johnson, Monthly Expense	19,124.80
11 (-)	22.00	Kyuka Waters—Anniston Oncology	19,102.80
19 (-)	614.90	Downey Medical—9 mastectomy bras & 2 prosthesis for Pinks	18,487.90
27 (-)	119.21	Lenora Johnson, Reimburse - Postmaster (100 stamps & Care Pkg.	
		Postage. Flowers for Pokey Warren	18,368.69

27 (-) 794.00	Advanced Printing: Brochures, Bookmarks, newsletters for waiting areas	17,574.69
30 (-) 467.17	Margaret Taylor, Reimburse— Sam’s for chemo Snacks, Sally’s for wig forms, Office Max for Ink cartridges.	17,107.52

### Breast Cancer Awareness Events

**Month of October:** The Brighton Collectible Store at The Summit in Birmingham—Fundraiser for Steel Magnolias and The Breast Cancer Research Foundation of Alabama.

**Wednesday, October 17:** Breast Cancer Awareness at Anniston Public Library—10:00 AM

**Saturday, October 20:** “Steps To Help” Breast Cancer Awareness Walk in Ranburne, AL, 8:00 AM Registration Benefitting Steel Magnolias in Anniston, AL and Tanner Breast Health Center in Carrollton, GA.

**Sunday, October 21:** The 3rd Annual Chili Cook at Glass’ Cocktails & Grill, in Decatur, AL 2:00 PM -6:00 PM Proceeds going to Steel Magnolias

**Tuesday, October 23, 10:00 AM—11:30 AM** Breast Cancer Forum at Quality of Life Complex, Hwy. 278, Hokes Bluff—Lenora Johnson will represent Steel Magnolias.

**Wednesday, October 24:** Margaret Taylor will speak to members of the Alabama Extension Club at the Heflin Rec. Center.

**Friday, October 26:** Margaret Taylor will speak to girls at the Cleburne Tech. School

**Monday & Tuesday, October 29-30:** Margaret Taylor will speak to girls at Ohatchee High School

### Mark Your Calendar

**Tuesday, October 23:** Steel Magnolias & Men of Steel meeting, 5:00 PM, at RMC Physicians Center, Suite 403. RMC will provide Chicken Fingers with choice of dip. Steel Magnolias bring salad, fruit or light dessert.....

Some local legislators will be at our meeting to present Marti Warren with a proclamation from the Alabama State Legislature for her award of being inducted into the Alabama Seniors Hall of Fame.

Marti will also display a collection of Avon jewelry, in the box, that was donated to Steel Magnolias. Everything priced at \$5.00 ea.

**Monday, November 19:** Newsletter mailing day, meet in Suite 406 at 12:30 PM to stuff envelopes

**Tuesday, November 27:** Steel Magnolias & Men of Steel Meeting, 5:00 PM in RMC Physicians Center, Suite 403.

**Saturday, December 1:** Christmas Breakfast at Classic on Noble, 10:00 AM. Invitations will be mailed.

### Special Prayer Request for Steel Magnolias Partners

Gerri Smith, a Tuesday Bear Hugger. In spite of the battle she wages for her health, she is still passionate about the care packages that Steel Magnolias give to newly diagnosed breast cancer patients.

Pokey Warren has been responsible for most of the jokes on page 8 of the newsletter. He is now very sick.

**Please pray for these two people who have brought such comfort and joy to cancer patients.**

## **Joggin' Inside**

### **What The Heck**

A friend of mine confused her Valium with her birth control pills. She had 14 kids but she doesn't care.  
Courtesy of Judy.....Anniston, AL

### **Twins**

A set of twins was placed up for adoption. One went to a family in Egypt that named him "Ahmal." The other went to a family in Spain; they named him "Juan." Years later, Juan sends a picture of himself to his birth mother. Upon receiving the picture, she told her husband that she wished she also had a picture of Ahmal. Her husband responded, "They're twins! If you've seen Juan, you have seen Ahmal." Courtesy of Judy.....Anniston, AL

### **Class Tour**

Johnny's class toured the local police station, where he saw pictures of the ten most wanted men tacked to a bulletin board. On the way out, Johnny said to the officer, "It was so nice of you to put my daddy's picture up there."  
Courtesy of Judy.....Anniston, AL

### **Not So Good**

After examining a woman who had been rushed to the emergency room, the doctor took the husband aside and said, "I don't like the looks of your wife at all." "Me neither, doc," said the husband. "But she's a good cook, and she's really good with the kids." Courtesy of Judy.....Anniston, AL

### **Why**

While reading a newspaper, Walter came across an article about a beautiful actress and model who married a boxer who was noted for his IQ. "I'll never understand" he said to his wife, "Why the biggest jerks get the most attractive wives." His wife replied, "Why thank you, dear." Courtesy of Pokey.....Anniston, AL

### **An Arm And A Leg**

One day God was talking to Adam and he said, "Adam you look lonely, I know, I'll give you a woman but it will cost you an arm and a leg." Adam said, "What can I get for a rib?" The rest is history. Courtesy of Pokey.....Anniston, AL

### **Basketball Game**

After a recent basketball game, the coach spotted a cell phone lying on the floor. He picked it up and handed it to one of the referees, saying, "Here's your phone." "What makes you think it's mine?" the ref asked. "Easy," the coach replied. "It says you missed 13 calls." Courtesy of Pokey.....Anniston, AL

### **Trying To Please**

"Sir, I understand you admit to having broken into the dress shop four times," the judge said. "Yes, Your Honor," the suspect replied. "What did you steal?" the judge asked. "I stole a dress, Your Honor," replied the suspect. "One dress?" the judge bellowed. "But you have admitted breaking in four times!" "Yes, Your Honor," sighed the suspect, "but the first three times my wife didn't like the color!" Courtesy of Pokey.....Anniston, AL

### **Exemplary Congregant**

The pastor said to Mr. Smith, one of his long-time parishioners, "Thank you, Mr. Smith, for attending our church. I wish I had twenty parishioners like you." "Gosh, it's nice to hear that, Pastor, but I'm kind of surprised," admitted Mr. Smith. "You know that I complain about every sermon and hardly ever give money." The pastor said, "I'd still like twenty parishioners like you. The problem is, I have two hundred!" Courtesy of Pokey.....Anniston, AL

### **Three Expectant Fathers**

Three expectant fathers were in the waiting room. The nurse came out of the delivery room and announced to one of the fathers that he was the father of twins. He was delighted and said what a coincidence, since he was a member of the Minnesota Twins team. A little later the nurse came out again and said to the next father, "Congratulations, your wife had triplets." He was happy—and said "Isn't that a coincidence—I work for 3M." The other father took off like a shot—the nurse ran after him saying "Where are you going?" Over his shoulder, the nurse heard him mumbling about his work at 7UP. Courtesy of Pokey.....Anniston, AL

### **Giving Thanks**

**Just three days before we celebrate Thanksgiving, our newsletter will go online and in P.O. boxes. To everyone who has made our work possible, Thank You! To everyone who contributes to the Steel Magnolias newsletter, Thank You! Pat, Thank You for helping me get the best possible black & white pictures!**



**THE 3RD ANNUAL CHILI COOK!  
PREPARED BY**

**The Award Winning**

**DISTRESSED DOE COOK TEAM  
"Flame" Ramon Haley, Jon Alton Haley  
Michael Hulsey, Don Perry**

**JOIN THE FUN AT**

**GLASS' COCKTAILS & GRILL  
1313 D Point Mallard Parkway  
Decatur, AL 35601  
(256) 351-1108**

**Sunday October 21, 2012  
2 pm – 6 pm**

**In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month  
100% OF ALL PROCEEDS**

**GO TO  
STEEL MAGNOLIAS  
BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP,  
INC.**

**Preorder—Take Home—or Stay  
For the FUN**



**"Steps To Help"  
Breast Cancer Walk**

**Saturday October 20  
At Ranburne High School**

**Registration at 8:00 AM  
\$10 registration fee.**

**Walk to Benefit  
Steel Magnolias, Inc. and  
Tanner Breast Health Ctr.**

Make your Donation check pay-  
able to either Steel Magnolias or  
to Tanner Breast Health Center.

Contributors of \$100 will receive  
a free shirt. Shirt will be shipped  
to you after the walk. If you wish  
to contribute to both support  
groups, please make checks \$50  
to each. We would like to give  
money collected immediately  
following the walk.

Donations that arrive following  
the walk will be mailed to  
designated group.

Mail your contribution to:

Steps To Help  
c/o Runa Kimbrell  
2124 Frank Ledbetter Drive  
Ranburne, AL 36273

770-710-6908

stepstohelpwalk@gmail.com

Steel Magnolias thanks everyone  
for your contributions. Because  
of you we have been able to pro-  
vide a wide variety of services to  
newly diagnosed breast cancer  
patients, services and support for  
survivors and education for those  
not yet diagnosed.

Steel Magnolias is truly a volun-  
teer organization, in that no one  
receives a salary. From the bot-  
tom of our hearts, THANK YOU!



**Brighton Collectible Store at the Summit  
Named *Steel Magnolias*  
A nonprofit of choice**

Pictured to the left is the 2012 limited edition brace-  
let, made to commemorate Breast Cancer Awareness  
month and is being sold to raise money for Steel  
Magnolias and The Breast Cancer Research Founda-

tion of Alabama. This beautiful bracelet that sells for only \$50, is like having  
two bracelets in one. It can be worn with pink accented links or reversed to  
wear as an all silver bracelet. It's dangling heart charm and pink ribbon with  
touches of light rose Swarovski crystals show support for everyone who has  
been touched by breast cancer. If interested in helping a great cause, please  
give us a call at 205-972-4662.