

Steel Magnolias

Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc.

Devoted—Faithful—Resolute

March 15, 2010



Sharing love through support

At our Pinks Dedication, a man attended who has, since our inception, been a friend of Steel Magnolias. Several days ago, he had reason to be in a local oncologist's waiting room. His remark about the visit was: "I am encouraged by how many patients were accompanied by family."

Before marrying Prentiss, I had been engaged a few times, only to break the engagement because I couldn't see the relationship staying true for a lifetime. Still, like most teenagers and young adults, I dreamed of the perfect mate. In my late teens, my idea was of a tall, dark handsome Latin on a beautiful beach. Years later, I wrote a poem about a fictional couple.

Ben and Louise

*'Till death do us part,'
pledged Ben and Louise,
Standing on their home-
stead, among Fall's golden
leaves,
Their home would be hum-
ble, their rooms but a few,
Peacefully they lived and
their children numbered
two.*

When thinking about love and marriage, the very

young think only of intoxicating moments with their chosen mate. That is true for everyone. It is easy to be devoted to our idea of the perfect mate. Reality, however, doesn't operate the same way; but commitment requires continued devotion.

Close to thirty years ago, I became friends with a woman I'll call Louise. She and I would periodically take time from our daily chores and eat breakfast out before a short day of shopping. On one of those days, as we were sitting in Huddle House, Louise showed me a little book of poetry, intermingled with pictures of herself and her now husband, Ben. The poems were all declarations of love, written by Ben to Louise. I said, "Gee, Louise, who would have thought that big rough looking Ben had this tender place in him?" She simply said, "That is my Ben."

As of the writing of this letter, Ben is lying in a hospital, where he has been laying for almost 5

months. He has lost both legs just below the knee, he has coded three times and has a living will that states 'No more Respirator.' He hasn't swallowed food in almost five months and will require therapy to strengthen the muscles at the base of his tongue before it will be safe to eat again. He has a wound-vac for a large bed sore on his back and everything is compromised because he has multiple health conditions. Louise has been beside him, vigilant to see that he is receiving the best care possible.

Last week I walked into Ben's room. With warmth and a placid look, he held out a gloved hand to greet me. How is this possible? Because he can see that he is still loved. Not only is he loved, he knows Louise is faithful and resolute about his value to her and she will never abandon him.

Inspiration

Just as I am always looking for jokes to publish on the "Joggin' Inside"

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page, I am constantly looking for inspirational material. Over the past few years, the following emails have come through my box several times. Each time I read them, I think, "Someday the time will be right for these to be included in a newsletter." This is the time.

The Mayonnaise Jar

When things in your life seem, almost too much to handle, When 24 hours in a day is not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and 2 cups of coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was. So the professor picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was. The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "Yes." The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that the jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things-your God, your family, your children, your health, your friends, and your favorite passions-things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter, like your job, your house, your car. The sand is everything else-the small stuff. "If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles and golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Spend time with God. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your partner out to dinner. Play another 18. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal.

Take care of the golf balls first, the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand. One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented. The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend."

Author Unknown

Two Horses

Just up the road from my home is a field with two horses in it. From a distance, each looks like every other horse. But if you stop the car, or are walking by, you will notice something quite amazing. Looking into the eyes of one horse will disclose that he is blind. His owner has chosen not to have him put down, but has made a good home for him. This alone is amazing. If nearby and listening, you will hear the sound of a bell. Looking around for the source of the sound, you will see that it comes from the smaller horse in the field. Attached to her halter is a small bell. It lets her blind friend know where she is, so he can follow her. As you stand and watch these two friends, you'll see how she is always checking on him, and that he will listen for her bell and then slowly walk to where she is, trusting that she will not lead him astray. When she returns to the shelter of the barn each evening, she stops occasionally and looks back, making sure her friend isn't too far behind to hear the bell.

Like the owner of these two horses, God does not throw us away just because we are not perfect or because we have problems or challenges. He watches over us and even brings others into our lives to help us when we are in need. Sometimes we are the blind horse being guided by the tiny ringing bell of those who God places in our lives. Other times we are the guide horse, helping others see.

Author Unknown

The Hippocratic Oath: Modern Version

The fourth article

"I will remember that there is art to medicine as well as science, and that warmth, sympathy, and understanding may outweigh the surgeon's knife or the chemist's drugs."

The seventh article

"I will remember that I do not treat a fever chart, a cancerous growth, but a sick human being, whose illness may affect the person's family and economic stability. My responsibility includes these related problems, if I am to care adequately for the sick."

The ninth article:

"I will remember that I remain a member of society, with special obligations to my fellow human beings, those sound of mind and body as well as the infirm."

Doctor-Patient Communication

There are circumstances that make communication with our doctors more difficult. To begin with the patient is at a disadvantage because we are in an environment that places us outside our comfort level and we are not sure how to conduct ourselves. Patients usually mask their discomfort, either by making jokes or appearing angry. Many of us are intimidated by doctors, we are partially clothed, in a cold, sterile room, sitting on an examining table, talking to someone who uses language we don't understand and seems to be in a hurry. All of this prevents us from being 100% in charge of our thought processes, preventing us from thinking straight or sticking up for ourselves. How do we navigate this experience that is common to all of us? Write a list of questions on paper before you leave your home. Ask your doctor to read the questions and answer each one. If he says he doesn't have time, you need to find another doctor.

A HUGE problem for patients past fifty years of age is that they put their doctors on some sort of pedestal as if doctors are "better" than they are. But most doctors are uncomfortable there, and they don't want us to be intimidated. Most doctors want to make our experience with them and their office a positive and successful one. A happy patient is a doctor's best advertisement.

How do we overcome making "gods" of our doctors? Think of your doctor as a service provider, not unlike your auto mechanic, hairdresser or carpenter. Granted, he/she has years of very specialized education and he/she is taking care of your body, not your car, your hair or your house. Even still, he/she is just that, a service provider, and he/she should be expected to provide decent and effective service, barring unforeseen problems. When problems do arise, your doctor should be willing to discuss your displeasure.

I cannot stress enough!!!!!! When deciding on a surgical procedure, if you have any questions and you do not feel absolutely comfortable with the advice of the attending surgeon, get a second opinion from a doctor in a different clinic. It is my belief that second opinions should come from a doctor, in the region who is highly respected by doctors in his surgical field. Talk to a group like Steel Magnolias. We are survivors who because of our journeys can provide many insights.

DEVOTED—FAITHFUL—RESOLUTE—(Trustworthy means strong allegiance to one's principles and unwavering determination in adhering to one's personal aims.) Adopting these powerful words as our code to live by, would for each of us, both doctors and patients, provide less stressful experiences and we would be seen in our homes, our communities and our workplaces as people of integrity.

Cold—Cold—Cold—Cold!!

According to our TV meteorologist, February 2010, has been one of the coldest on record for Alabama! I am not a lover of cold weather, so I am chilled to the bone! However, since January 1, people who claim to love winter, have felt more cold than desired. A few years ago I wrote a poem that was published in the March 2005 newsletter. It is certainly appropriate this winter!

The Promise of Daffodils

Lenora Washington Johnson
March, 2005

Beneath my lovely willow tree,
Her graceful limbs, bowing and spinning;
Laid bare, in the cold, north wind,
Her once rich leaves lay quivering.

Her cold and naked branches
Sleep through the winter's wind and snow
Till Spring's warmth once again
Clothes her with beauty that entrances.

In the grip of a Winter's night,
My being aches with mother nature
Go away day, cold and gray,
Come warmth, come beauty, come light.

While earth is still frozen and still,
In a relentless Winter's chill;
My spirit is made to soar
By the promise of daffodils.

"Pinks" Reception and Open House

Thank you, CEO David McCormack and every department head, who attended the *Pinks Reception and Open House*, for your support of the work of Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc. Without your support, Steel Magnolias ability to help patients would be limited, certainly more difficult. Having our office, our wig closet and our meeting place in the Physician's Center is wonderful. Thank you! Lenora Johnson, founder & executive director

Prentiss and I arrived at the Cancer Resource Center at about 9:15 am, in time to place fresh flowers on the reception table and organize the information table. Thank you Wendy and Charlotte for your invaluable help. Classic on Noble, as promised, were right on time with a tray of chicken salad cups and a huge fruit and cheese tray with a variety of crackers. RMC Cafeteria provided trays of chocolate chip and oatmeal raisin cookies and a tray of sliced, banana nut muffins. Food Outlet provided soft drinks. Thank you, Classic on Noble, Food Outlet and RMC Cafeteria for the wonderful food and drinks. Dr. Dave, Charlotte and Wendy, thank you for making sure our drinks were cold.

Margaret Taylor, Gladys Denizard, Prentiss and I furnished, organized and decorated Pinks Closet. All our efforts created a greater impact because of the effort Wendy and Charlotte put into making sure the walls of this room were repaired and painted, as well as the floors stripped and waxed.

We were honored beyond words to have all the Tuesday Bear Huggers, including husbands participate in the dedication of Pinks. Thank you Gerri for agreeing to model a wig for the Anniston Star photographer. Susan Dupree assisted Gerri in finding a suitable wig.

Thank you Chaplain Wilson and your many devoted volunteers for helping us celebrate the dedication of Pinks. A special thank you to Helen Henley for your faithfulness in the distribution of care packages and dining vouchers. Thank you, Hillary Folsom for a nice advertisement, in the Anniston Star, on the morning of the Pinks Open House. Thank you also for arranging to have a reporter and a photographer present to record our celebration of the opening of Pinks. Snapshots you and Belinda Kennedy generously provided will become a part of our Steel Magnolias' history.

RMC employees and people from the community stopped by to take a look at Pinks Closet and to share from our wonderful reception table. From our Pinks Closet, we were able to provide for several cancer survivors. We welcome these survivors and cancer survivors who were not able to attend our "Pinks" Reception, to join us in the work of supporting each other, educating those not yet diagnosed and providing for the unique needs of women living with breast cancer.

Speakers Bureau

Kudos to the Variosa Club of Alexandria

Marti Warren

In February, it was my pleasure to speak to these wonderful ladies about Steel Magnolias and the impact we are making locally, state wide and nationally in the fight for women with breast cancer. When Ms. Nelms, the president asked about my speaking fees, I told her if the ladies would bring in their old jewelry, it would be recycled for our April 3rd Bake Sale and Jewelry Show in the Quintard Mall. Are you ready for this? 262 pieces of GOOD jewelry was donated and each piece has been cleaned, is on doilies and ready to sell! God bless them! They then sent a check for \$100 to Steel Magnolias. This was truly a great experience for me, and to think I almost cancelled due to getting pneumonia! God is truly in the efforts of Steel Magnolias, and as a 25 year survivor, I am blest!

School Girl Awareness Program

March 9, 2010, Margaret Taylor, Susan Dupree and Registered Nurse, Tamra Kirby, with Counselor, Sandra Akins met in the Piedmont High School Library, where four classes of 9th-12th grade girls were given the Susan G. Komen



The Tuesday Bear Huggers: Standing—Bunny and Bobby McGee, Helen Butram, Don Minton, Gerri and Mel Smith. Sitting—Gayle Bishop, Judy Lyle.

Guest signing the ledger

From page 4 (Awareness Program)

booklet, "We're Taking Care Of Our Lives," a booklet written especially for young women; and taught about breast cancer awareness. Margaret and Susan gave short testimonies before Ms. King taught the class. In the library, there was access to a computer and a screen. Margaret reported that the girls were very attentive.

Correspondence

Lenora,

Just got the newsletter (Feb. 25) and I have to tell you how much I enjoy every issue. The light side at the end was especially helpful today. Feb. 10th my husband was seriously injured in an automobile accident. It was a Wednesday night and he was on his way to church. He has been in ICU at UAB since then. I know all the men and ladies involved with Steel Magnolias and Men of Steel are praying folks and I would appreciate your prayers for our family. We are confident he will recover, but it is going to be a long and difficult process. Just keep us in your prayers.

Thanks, Senator Kim Benefield.....Clay County and Randolph County, AL

(NOTE) I implore every praying person to remember Kim and her family in prayer....Lenora

Dear Steel Magnolia Sisters,

I want to thank you so much for the packet of goodies waiting for me the day I came home from the hospital and also the cards. Most especially, I thank you for the good feelings and good advice you all gave me the night I attended my first meeting with you. The time you spent with me, answering questions and sharing your own experiences was so helpful and so positive. I will never forget the way you welcomed me in and your kindness to me. I look forward to being able to rejoin the meetings soon...and again...thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Gratefully, Linda.....Piedmont, Alabama

Ladies of Steel Magnolias,

Thank you all so much for allowing me, at the Feb. 23 meeting, to come present to you. I really enjoyed the time I spent with you all and I hope I informed you well enough you will be able to help educate family and friends on lymphedema. I enjoyed your fellowship so much and intend on helping out with the golf tournament. Hope to see you all soon and may god bless each one of you everyday. Please tell Lenora I am sorry I didn't get to meet her, but maybe next time! Alissa Bennett.....Anniston, Alabama

Steel Magnolias and Men of Steel Meet

The Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc., met on February 23, 2010 at the RMC Cancer Resource Center. Men of Steel joined us for the much anticipated program presented by lymphedema intern, Alisa Bennett.

Mart Warren, president, called the meeting to order and following prayer time led by Chaplain Ina Rooks, Steel Magnolias and Men of Steel enjoyed a meal that featured potato soup, provided by RMC Cafeteria, and salads and desserts provided by Magnolia members.

Marti Warren introduced our special guest speaker, Alisa Bennett, an intern at Gadsden State. Alisa will graduate in May of this year and will be searching for a position as a certified lymphedema therapist. Alisa gave a very informative and inspiring presentation on lymphedema. She added a power point to her presentation, explaining that the lymphatic system is very complex. Following her program, there was a time of questions and answers.

Business meeting: No minutes were read and there was no financial report due to the absence of Nancy Burnell. Executive Director, Lenora Johnson is acting treasurer in Nancy's absence and Lenora was absent due to illness.

Everyone was reminded of the Saturday, April 3, 2010, Quintard Mall Bake Sale and Jewelry Show.

Jimmy Taylor and Dave Roberts talked to us about the May 8, 2010 Lea Fite Memorial Golf Tournament. They told everyone that we all needed to help make this huge fund raiser a success. Several volunteered to go into different areas to solicit advertising sponsorships for holes and contribution of door prizes. Following the address by Men of Steel, the meeting was adjourned. Motion to adjourn: Sherry Grinstead. Second: Elizabeth McCabe.

Respectfully submitted by Margaret Taylor, Secretary

Financial Report

February 2010	Balance Brought Forward	\$6,100.85
01 (-) 100.00	Lenora Johnson: Monthly expense	6,000.85
01 (-) 19.44	Southern Bottled Water: Cancer Resource 13.96, Anniston Oncology 6.48	5,981.41
23 (-) 118.75	Pokey Warren: Quilt photo cards 8.75, 100 Birthday cards 100.00	
	300 address labels 10.00 for Chaplain Ina Rooks	5,862.66
23 (-) 132.78	Lenora: reimburse for "Pinks" screen from Hobby Lobby, Flowers from Winn Dixie for "Pinks" Reception	5,729.88
23 (-) 344.29	Margaret Taylor: Snacks from Sam's Club for Chemo Patients	
	Reimburse Margaret for wig forms from Sally's Beauty Supply	5,385.59
23 (-) 88.00	Margaret Taylor: Reimburse for 200 postage stamps to mail	
	Lea Fite Memorial Golf Tournament Registration forms	5,297.59



Quilting For A Cure

Tickets for sale after March 23 from a Steel Magnolia.

This beautiful quilt was made especially for Steel Magnolias by gifted quilter and Tuesday Bear Hugger, Bunny McGee. It measures 67" in length and is 47" wide. A size perfect for your single bed or snuggling up on the couch. A chance to win is \$1 a ticket. Drawing for the quilt will be held at the Steel Magnolias meeting in May. Winner does not have to be present to win. Call office (256) 231-8827



Lea Fite Memorial Golf Tournament

Benefiting Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc.

Pine Hill Country Club

Anniston, Alabama

SATURDAY MAY 8, 2010

Format: 4 Person Scramble

Cost \$50/player or \$200/team

Time: 1:00 p.m. Shotgun Start

Lunch will be provided and served for all players at 11:30 a.m.

To play in the tournament, please fill out the following form and mail it with your team's check in the amount of **\$200**. If you are registering as an individual send in the form with your name and a check for **\$50**.

Checks should be made payable to **Steel Magnolias, Inc.**

DEADLINE: APRIL 22, 2010

Mail to: **Jimmy Taylor** Phone (256) 463-7620

1015 County Rd. 13

Heflin, AL 36264

.....
Lea Fite Memorial Golf Tournament

May 8, 2010

Player 1 Name_____

Player 2 Name_____

Player 3 Name_____

Player 4 Name_____

.....

Opportunity at time of registration to purchase a separate package that includes: 2 mulligans, a throw and a skirt @\$15. Cost after registration \$20.

PRIZES Based on full field:

1st place team: \$600

2nd place team: \$400

3rd place team: \$200 or gift certificate

Advertising opportunity: Sponsorship Hole \$100

Contact Jimmy @ (256) 463-7620 or Email <tjimmeg63@aol.com> or <Lenora@steelmagnoliasinc.org>

Steel Magnolias Office @ Suite 103 Physicians Center (256) 231-8827

Steel Magnolias, P.O. Box 36, Jacksonville, AL 36265

Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday March 23, 2010:

Steel Magnolias & Men of Steel Meeting, 5:00 p.m., Suite 406 of the Physicians Center. Food and Fellowship meeting. RMC is providing pasta salad and sandwiches. Magnolias bring either fruit or light dessert.

Saturday April 03, 2010:

Steel Magnolias Bake Sale and Marti's Antique Jewelry Show, 9 am to 5 p.m., Quintard Mall, Oxford, AL. Tables will be set up near Bath and Body Works. Back entrance. Great homemade goodies, cakes and pies just in time for Easter.

Two huge new collections of jewelry just in time for Easter and Mother's Day!

Joggin' Inside

Talking Centipede

Bob decided life would be more fun if he had a pet. So he went to the pet store and told the owner that he wanted to buy an unusual pet. After some discussion, he finally bought a talking centipede, (100-legged-bug), which came with a little white box to use for his house. He took the box home, found a good spot for the box, and decided he would start off by taking his new pet to church with him. So he asked the centipede in the box, "Would you like to go to church with me today? We will have a good time." But there was no answer from his new pet.. This bothered him a bit, but he waited a few minutes and then said again, "How about going to church with me and receive blessings?" But again, there was no answer from his new friend and pet. So he waited a few minutes more, thinking about the situation. Bob decided to invite the centipede one last time. This time he put his face against the centipede's house and shouted, "Hey, in there! Would you like to go to church with me and learn about God?" This time, a little voice came out of the box, "I heard you the first time! I'm putting on my shoes!" Courtesy of Pokey....Anniston, AL

Born A Baptist

Each Friday night after work, Bubba would fire up his outdoor grill and cook a venison steak. But all of Bubba's neighbors were Catholic....and since Lent, they were forbidden from eating Meat on Friday. The delicious aroma from the grilled venison steaks was causing such a problem for the Catholic faithful that they finally talked to their priest. The priest came to visit Bubba and suggested that he become a Catholic. After several classes and much study, Bubba attended Mass....and as the priest sprinkled holy water over him, he said, "You were born a Baptist, and raised a Baptist, but now you are a Catholic." Bubba's neighbors were greatly relieved, until Friday night arrived, and the wonderful aroma of grilled venison filled the neighborhood. The priest was called immediately by the neighbors and he rushed into Bubba's yard clutching a rosary, preparing to scold him. He stopped and watched in amazement. There stood Bubba, clutching a small bottle of holy water which he carefully sprinkled over the grilling meat and chanted: "You wuz a deer, you wuz raised by a deer, but now you a catfish." Courtesy of Pokey.....Anniston, AL

Married 44 Years

After being married for 44 years, I took a careful look at my wife one day and said, "Darling, 44 years ago we had a cheap apartment, a cheap car, slept on a sofa bed and watched a 10 inch black and white TV, but I got to sleep with a hot 25-year-old girl. Now I have a \$500,000 home, a \$45,000 car, nice big bed and plasma screen TV, but I'm sleeping with a 65-year-old woman. It seems to me that you're not holding up your side of things." My wife is a very reasonable woman. She told me to go out and find a hot 25-year-old gal, and she would make sure that I would once again be living in a cheap apartment, driving a cheap car, sleeping on a sofa bed and watching a 10 inch black and white TV. Aren't older women great? Mine really knew how to solve my mid-life crisis! Courtesy of Pokey.....Anniston, AL

God's Problem Now

His wife's graveside service was just barely finished when there was a massive clap of thunder, followed by a tremendous bolt of lightening, accompanied by even more thunder rumbling in the distance. The little, old man looked at the pastor and calmly said, "Well, she's there." Courtesy of Pokey.....Anniston, AL

Good Samaritan

A Sunday School teacher was telling her class the story of the Good Samaritan. She asked the class, "If you saw a person lying on the roadside, all wounded and bleeding, what would you do?" A thoughtful little girl broke the hushed silence, "I think I'd throw up." Courtesy of Pokey.....Anniston, AL