

Steel Magnolias

Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc.

Loss.... Legacy....Gratitude

November 16, 2009

In Memory of Representative Lea Fite, Jr.

1-4-1955—10-26-2009

Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc., feels a great sense of loss! Representative Fite earned the respect and devotion of every Steel Magnolia. He was our Champion, he is our Hero!

Steel Magnolias worked hard, collected petitions and wrote letter after letter, but without an elected representative to sponsor legislation, we had little hope of changing Alabama's inequitable policy.

Representative Fite was not the first legislator to respond to letters we sent to Montgomery, but he is the only legislator to take a stand about the cruelty to uninsured Alabama women because of the little known gap in coverage, provided by the Medicaid Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act.

I well remember the call I received on March 17, 2008, from Markeshia Ricks, political correspon-

dent, at the time, for The Anniston Star. In October 2007, I had mailed Ms. Ricks copies of all the information, collected since 2005, about the Alabama Medicaid policy that excluded uninsured Alabama women because of where they were diagnosed. I told her to keep the information because it would be useful in the future.

Monday, March 17, 2008, I was just getting out of my car in the RMC outpatient parking deck. My cell phone rang. Markeshia said, "I reopened the package of documents you sent to me. In a few days, the Anniston Star will publish an article about a bill sponsored by Representative Lea Fite, HB147.

Even though HB147 never came up for a vote in the 2008 session, Representative Fite refused to quit fighting to pass legislation that would provide coverage for poor, uninsured, Alabama women. He pre-filed HB147 for the 2009 general session.

Who Is My Neighbor

Representative Fite was convinced of his responsibility to his constituents. When we first spoke, he said, "It was rough when my wife was diagnosed with breast cancer, and we had good insurance! I cannot imagine being told there is no money to pay for treatments, especially if it is because you unknowingly were diagnosed at the wrong clinic."

In Luke 10: 30-37, Jesus answers the question, "Who is my neighbor?" We know the text as the Parable of the Good Samaritan. A man lay bleeding, where thieves had left him. A priest, and a Levite crossed the road to avoid the injured man, but a Samaritan, bandaged his wounds and cared for him. Jesus then asked the expert in the law, "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

From Ms. Ricks' March



Sharing love through support

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19, 2008 article, Rep. Fite said, "This is just absolutely awful. When someone gets sick, you can take them to the emergency room, and by law, they have to treat them. But a lady with breast or cervical cancer can't just go to the emergency room. There is nowhere for these



Rep. Lea Fite, Jr. at New Beginnings Banquet

ladies to turn.”

In a January, 2009, Anniston Star article, written by Mary Jo Shafer, *RMC guest speaker on cervical cancer stresses prevention*, Representative Fite was quoted as saying, “It absolutely tears my heart out that we can’t get this type of legislation passed, but I’m going to keep trying.”

For every woman who is enrolled in the Medicaid Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Program, who was diagnosed by a physician without first going to the health department, Representative Lea Fite is the “Good Samaritan.”

HB147 is not the full extent of the life and accomplishments of Representative Lea Fite, but it is a legacy. In a card of thanks I sent to Rep Fite, I concluded, “The joy is ours, the victory is for the poor uninsured women of Alabama.” Rep. Fite was our friend and a neighbor to anyone needing his help.

We are grateful for the brief time we worked with Representative Fite, and

trust his sudden death will be a reminder to each of us that whatever we need to say to those we love, or whatever we can do to make our world a better place, we must do it now.

Faye Roberts, wife of Steel Magnolias’ board chairmen, Dr. Dave Roberts, sent this email. I have kept it since November 16, 2007. Somehow I just couldn’t discard it, I felt that in some newsletter it would be appropriate. Thank you Faye.

Clay Balls

A man was exploring caves by the seashore. In one of the caves he found a canvas bag with a bunch of hardened clay balls. It was like someone had rolled clay balls and left them in the sun to bake. They didn’t look like much, but they intrigued the man, so he took the bag out of the cave with him. As he strolled along the beach, he would throw the clay balls one at a time out into the ocean as far as he could. He thought little about it, until he dropped one of the clay balls and it cracked open on a rock. Inside was a beautiful, precious stone!

Excited, the man started breaking open the remaining clay balls. Each contained a similar treasure. He found thousands of dollars worth of jewels in the 20 or so clay balls he had left. Then it struck him. He had been on the beach a long time. He had thrown maybe 50 or 60 of the clay balls with their hidden treasure into the ocean waves. Instead of thousands of dollars in treasure, he could have taken home tens of thousands, but he had just thrown it away!

It’s like that with people. We look at someone, maybe even ourselves, and we see the external clay vessel. It doesn’t look like much from the outside. It isn’t always beautiful or sparkling, so we discount it. We see the person as less important than someone, more beautiful or stylish or well known or wealthy. But we have not taken the time to find the treasure inside that person.

There is a treasure in each one of us. If we take the time to get to know that person, and if we ask God to show us that person the way He sees them, then the clay begins to peel away and the brilliant gem begins to shine forth.

May we not come to the end of our lives and find out that we have thrown away a fortune in friendships because the gems were hidden in bits of clay. May we see the people in our world as God sees them. We are blessed by the gems of friendship we find in one another, let’s be thankful for those who look beyond our clay vessels.

Author Unknown

Weeping May remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. Psalm 30:5

**Fabulous October/November
Breast Cancer Awareness**

Picture to the right is of church members who, on October 24, attended an Awareness Luncheon at the Eastaboga, **Sunlight Baptist Church**, .

Anniston, First Missionary Baptist Church, Seniors in Action, on October 17, sponsored a Breast Cancer Awareness Luncheon. Those attending enjoyed a delicious spaghetti lunch. A tea cake bake-off was won by Nakisha Duncan, pastor's wife and daughter of Patricia Armour. Speakers were Steel Magnolia, Patricia Armour, who spoke about her journey with breast cancer and how Steel Magnolias helped her at that time and Margaret Taylor, who spoke about services S.M. is currently providing for breast cancer patients. This wonderful group of ladies made a contribution of \$114 to the work of Steel Magnolias. Steel Magnolias have been invited back for next year's event.



Wow! Who could have predicted the number of breast cancer stamps that would be sold at the Weaver Post Office during the month of October?

Steel Magnolias are very grateful to have been asked to participate in such a tremendous project and work with some of the nicest people in Alabama.

Marilyn Lawson, known around Weaver as the "Weaver Cookie Lady," is now known for her way with puppets. She kept us entertained and delighted postal customers as she became the voice for Steely Priscilla.

In the picture to the left, Marilyn helps Steely Priscilla give a big hug to Roswitha's mom, Margarethe Johnson. Pilot Club, president, Charlotte Haynes, who delivered a big basket of yummy cookies, and Lenora Johnson were entertained.



Cynthia Christopher, surgical Nurse, with new adoptee, Steely Priscilla

Postmaster, Roswitha Sparks And husband, Sherwood Sparks

All around, this was a really great program! Thanks to everyone for buying Breast Cancer Stamps!

Steel Magnolias,
I can't thank you enough for the way you jumped in to help with our Breast Cancer Stamp promotion. We didn't get to visit with you much when you were here and I hope you didn't feel slighted. It's difficult to get away from the demands of the window and office with just one or two of us here. We held on to our #4 spot in the state. Montgomery, Mobile, Orange Beach were 1,2,3 respectively. Our Weaver total Breast Cancer Stamp sales total were \$5237.65 with \$1,047.53 going to research. Thank you again!
Roswitha



November 8, 2009

Dear Steel Magnolias,

I just wanted to let all of you who sent me a card or a note, as I take my cancer treatments, know how very much I appreciate you wonderful Steel Magnolia members, who took the time to send me such wonderful thoughts and have added me to your prayers. I am doing well, and am halfway through my treatments. I take it one day at a time, being thankful for each day, staying positive. I do have some bad days but I am blessed with many more good ones. Your love and prayers have brought a smile to my heart. Thank you so very much.

Love and Hugs,

Gerri Smith (Tuesday Bear Hugger)



Steel Magnolias Pinks, located on the fourth floor of the RMC Physicians' Office Building, adjoining the RMC Cancer Resource Center, is stocked with wigs, breast prosthesis, mastectomy bras and an assortment of caps and scarves. Everything is free to cancer patients. A wig form is provided with each wig.

Nora Embry Personally Thanked Steel Magnolias



Nora Embry speaking to Steel Magnolias in the RMC Cancer Resource Center. Also pictured are: Nancy Burnell and Sherry Grinstead.

Dear Friends of Steel Magnolias,

You are friends who put hands and feet to your friendship. During the past year I have requested 2 packets for people facing breast cancer surgery. You were so gracious to send packets to my own dear sister (Linda Haynes) and another to a friend's aunt. Both were encouraged by your kindness. Linda has had difficulty draining for months following her surgery. She needed your package. I was delighted when visiting her. She was giggling over the jokes at the back of the Steel Magnolias publication. She stated, "This is just exactly what's needed, something to make people laugh.

I'm sorry it took me so long to let you know how much I appreciate your response to my loved ones.

Sincerely, Nora Embry

P.S. I enjoyed getting to meet you personally at your last meeting. Nora

Thank you, Nora! Please join us at any future meetings.



Fun at Ladiga Manor

What an inspiration the ladies at the Ladiga Manor were, to us on Oct. 26th. I asked Marti Warren to join me there and to share with the residents, the story of Recycled Antique Jewelry. Following my short talk about the work of Steel Magnolias, Marti told her story of how she has been able to sell old jewelry and then donate the proceeds to many charities, and reported that since 2002, Steel Magnolias has received \$9,867.08 from the sale of donated jewelry.

Marti submitted this report: The lovely ladies of Ladiga Manor came into the meeting room saying, "I'm deaf, but I wanted to be here," or "I can't see, but I wanted to hear about Steel Magnolias. They ranged in age from middle 70's to middle 90's, but they had "Spunk" and "Grit!"

I shared how having breast cancer had given me a new life and mission to help others. So I say, "Thank you, dear God, for breast cancer and the wonderful people who have donated or bought Marti's Recycled Jewelry to share with Steel Magnolias." Remember, your donation of old jewelry is tax deductible, and it means I can raise more money for our remarkable program. Anyone wishing to contribute jewelry, clearly write on bag or box, "For Steel Magnolias," and carry to the RMC Cancer Resource Center, suite 406, of the Physicians Center.

Margaret Taylor speaks to Jacksonville Kiwanis Club

Steel Magnolia, Margaret Taylor was honored to speak to the Jacksonville Kiwanis Club, on Wednesday October 21, 2009, at the Jacksonville Community Center. Margaret shared with them the history of Steel Magnolias and about the work and services we offer to those in need of our help. She explained that our only source of income was from donation and fund raisers and asked if they might consider Steel Magnolias at some time in the future as a possible organization to help fund.

Chaplain Jim Wilson was responsible for the speaking opportunity. As always, we thank him for his constant support.



Cleburne County School Girl Awareness Program Complete

Below: Margaret Taylor guides students as they feel difference in breast lumps.



Left: Holly Harland McLain, a young mother and breast cancer survivor shared her story of being diagnosed, in her twenties, with breast cancer. Holly gave her testimony to both Ranburne and Heflin Middle and High Schools.

Carolyn Parker, RN, taught classes at Heflin and Gladys Denizard, RN, with a MS in Health Science, taught classes in Ranburne.

Steel Magnolias are very grateful for the love that made these professionals work as volunteers to teach this important program so that girls can know better how to care for their bodies.



Gladys Denizard, RN, teaching class at Ranburne High School.

Saks High Completes Calhoun County Program

Gladys Denizard has been a busy lady! Gladys wears many hats: Retired Lt. Col., Calhoun Co. Hispanic Association President, Parrish Nurse, Chair of Steel Magnolias' Pinks, volunteer RN with the Steel Magnolias School Girl Awareness Program, and all while working nights at NHC.

Pleasant Valley High School and Saks High, completed the Calhoun County school system. On November 2nd, Gladys carried the program to girls in Pleasant Valley and on November 9th, Gladys and Margaret were at Saks High School.

Gladys, on the request of school nurses, made follow-up visits to Weaver and White Plains.

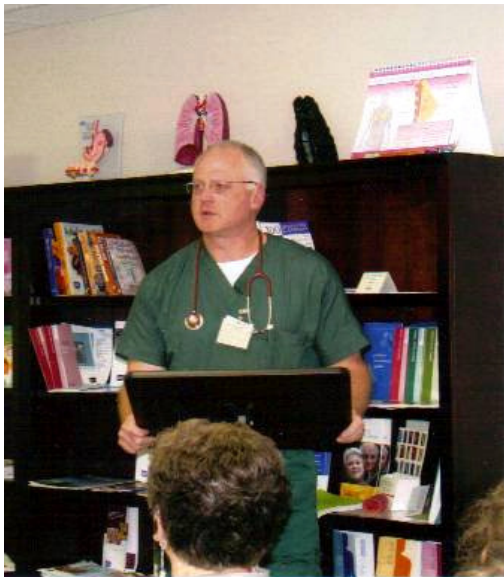
Correspondence:

I want to thank Steel Magnolias' (Gladys Denizard) for coming out to Weaver and speaking to all the girls about Breast Cancer Awareness. The students really enjoyed her presentation. Hopefully we can have her back again next year.

Thank you again,
Bonnie Harris, LPN/WHS Health Nurse

Steel Magnolias & Men of Steel Meeting

Tuesday, October 27, 2007, Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc., met in the RMC Cancer Resource Center. Special speaker for the meeting was Dr. Keith Smith, General Surgeon at RMC.



Dr. Smith spoke briefly about general surgery but his focus for the evening was about his patients. He talked about two breast cancer patients, who had inspired him. One was a mature woman and one a woman in her twenties who learned she had breast cancer while she was pregnant. Both of these women showed great courage and hopefulness in the face of great loss. Dr. Smith said he believed their faith gave them a calmness when all about them spoke only of an unsure future.

His description of the young mother holding her new born on her hip close to where her breast had been, where now she had incisions that were still healing, left all of us in tears.

Dr. Smith said he thought breast cancer was especially cruel because it changes the form of the body, whereas, the remains of surgeries for other cancers are hidden inside the body.

It was a breath of fresh air to hear a surgeon who spoke openly of his faith and the affection he obviously has for his patients.



The Potato Bar

Thank you Wendy and Charlotte for such a great dinner! Picture to far left shows Magnolias chowing down! Lenora and Prentiss can't believe the size of the potatoes! Susan said, "Look at the size of those spuds!"

Business Meeting

In Chaplain Ina Rooks absence, Marti Warren, President read the prayer list and others were added. Intercessory prayer was spoken for each person. Request was made that members send get well cards to Bear Huggers, Gerri Smith and Judy Lyle. Marti also welcomed everyone attending for the first time.

Minutes were read and approved. Financial report was approved as read.

New Business: The vote was unanimous to change the meeting place for Steel Magnolias meetings from the Tyler Center to the RMC Cancer Resource Center. Meeting Adjourned

Financial Report

October		Balance brought forward	\$8,291.12
01 -	100.00	Lenora Johnson, Monthly Expenses	8,191.12
12 -	19.44	Southern Bottled Water (Refills)	8,171.68
12-	650.00	American Awards (1000 Lapel Pins)	7,521.68
14+	393.00	\$143 from Weaver PO, \$200 RAJ Tyler Center, \$50 for Bear Huggers	7,914.68
14-	50.00	Tuesday Bear Huggers	7,864.68
27-	36.45	Lenora Johnson, Reimburse Office Max purchase	7,828.23
29+	1,253.00	Donations from Weaver PO, Oxfordfest, Tkt. sales from Angel picture	9,037.23

Correspondence

Thank you so much for your support and prayers during my cancer surgery and recovery. You are all so special to me. May God's richest blessings be upon each of you. Sincerely, Carolyn.....Columbus, GA

Thank you so much for the package you sent to me by Margaret Taylor. Margaret spoke to our WMU at East Heflin Baptist. The material, hats, pillow and bag will be used on November 16th. Please keep me in your prayers. Janice Brown.....Heflin, AL

You Go Girl!

Steel Magnolias is truly blessed to work with Susan Dupree! She is truly an ADVOCATE! Susan, who had her surgery in Rome, GA, at the hospital where she worked., was recently named a Breast Health ADVOCATE by Floyd Medical Center. Susan is a survivor of breast cancer and looks forward to sharing her story with others. She is a member of Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc., Rome, GA Bosom Buddies Support Group, Northside Baptist Church in Piedmont, AL and the American Society for Clinical Pathology. Susan, is in the Steel Magnolias RMC West office on Tuesday, 11 am to 4 pm. She still visits her friends at the Redmond Regional laboratory where she worked. Susan has joined the list of professionals who work as Steel Magnolias volunteers who go into schools and teach young girls, 7th-12th grades about breast cancer awareness. Log onto www.steelmagnoliasinc.org. Susan's story can be read on the survivor page.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Tuesday, November 24, 2009: Steel Magnolias & Men of Steel meet at 5:00 pm in the RMC Cancer Resource Center, Suite 406 of the Physicians Center. Join us for a Pizza Party. This will be a food and fellowship meeting. Steel Magnolias will provide the pizza. Football fans wear school colors.

Saturday, December 12, 2009: (By Invitation) Steel Magnolias Christmas Breakfast, 10:00 am at Classic on Noble. Cost of breakfast \$11, includes gratuity. Checks can be mailed to Steel Magnolias, P.O. Box 36, Jacksonville, AL 36265 or given to Wendy or Charlotte in the Cancer Resource Center.

Each person attending, please bring a gift suitable for either male or female, not to exceed \$10 value.

Please RSVP to Lenora Johnson (256) 447- 9822 or lenora@steelmagnoliasinc.org

The next newsletter will be Jan. 19, 2010
Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas !!

Joggin' Inside

Don't Get Choked in Just Any Restaurant!

Two hillbillies walk into a restaurant. While having a bite to eat, they talk about their moonshine operation. Suddenly, a woman at a nearby table, who is eating a sandwich, begins to cough. After a minute or so, it becomes apparent that she is in real distress. One of the hillbillies looks at her and says, "Kin ya swallar?" The woman shakes her head no. Then he asks, "Kin ya breathe?" The woman begins to turn blue and shakes her head no. The hillbilly walks over to the woman, lifts up her dress, yanks down her drawers and quickly gives her right butt cheek a lick with his tongue. The woman is so shocked that she has a violent spasm and the obstruction flies out of her mouth. As she begins to breathe again, the Hillbilly walks slowly back to his table. His partner says, "Ya know, I'd heard of that there 'Hind Lick Maneuver' but I ain't niver seed nobody do it!" Courtesy of.....Debra

The next two stories would no doubt have been included on a television show, hosted by Art Linkletter and co-hosted by Bill Cosby. **Kids Say The Darndest Things**

The Middle Wife

A second grade teacher had a weekly classroom time for her students to present an interesting event in their life, "Show and Tell." Erica walked to the front of the class with a pillow stuffed under her sweater. She holds up a picture of a baby and says, "This is Luke, my baby brother, and I'm going to tell you about his birthday. First, Mom and Dad made him a symbol of their love, and then Dad put seed in Mom's stomach, and Luke grew in there. He ate for nine months through an umbrella cord. Then, about two Saturday's ago, my mom starts saying and going, 'Oh, Oh, Oh, Oh!' My dad called the middle wife. She delivers babies but she doesn't have a sign on the car like the Domino's man. They got my mom to lie down on the bed. And then, pop! My mom had this bag of water she kept in there in case he got thirsty, and it just blew up and spilled all over the bed, like Psshheew! Then the middle wife starts saying, 'push, push, push and breathe, breathe.' They started counting, but never even got past ten. Then, all of a sudden, out comes my brother. He was covered in yucky stuff that they all said it was from Mom's play-center, (placenta) so there must be a lot of toys inside there. When he got out, the middle wife spanked him for crawling in there..." The teacher, not identified, is still laughing! Courtesy ofPokey

What is This, Why is it on Me?

I guess when you have three sons, you have to expect one of them to ask such a question!

One of my three sons, from the time he could talk was curious about his navel. One Sunday afternoon, while Prentiss was at National Guard week-end drill, I decided the time was right to open the medical book that showed the development of a fetus. My focus was the umbilical cord. I thought I'd done a great job of answering all of my son's questions. I felt quite pleased with myself as I heard my husband's truck door slam. Prentiss didn't get into the house good, on that Sunday afternoon, when our son rushed up to him shouting, "I know all about my navel!" His dad simply grunted, as our boy exclaimed, "When I was in Mama's stomach, I reached out there and got me something to eat." Courtesy of.....Lenora

Oldies But Goodies

A passenger in a taxi leaned over to ask the driver a question and tapped him on the shoulder. The driver screamed, lost control of the cab, nearly hit a bus, drove up over the curb and stopped just inches from a large plate glass window. For a few moments everything was silent in the cab, and then the still shaking driver said, "I'm sorry, but you scared the daylight out of me." The frightened passenger apologized to the driver and said he didn't realize a mere tap on the shoulder could frighten him so much. The driver replied, "No, no, I'm sorry, it's entirely my fault. Today is my first day driving a cab.....I've been driving a hearse for the last 25 years. Courtesy of.....Gudrun

As a young bagpiper, I was asked by a funeral director to play at a grave-side service for a homeless man, with no family or friends. The funeral was to be held at a cemetery way back in the country, and this man would be the first to be laid to rest there. As I was not familiar with the backwoods area, I became lost; and being a typical man did not stop for directions. I finally arrived an hour late. I saw the backhoe and the crew, who were eating lunch, but the hearse was nowhere in sight. I apologized for my tardiness, and stepped to the side of the open grave, where I saw the vault lid already in place. I assured the workers I wouldn't hold them up for long, but this was the proper thing to do. The workers gathered around, still eating their lunch. I played out my heart and soul. As I played, the workers began to weep. I played like I'd never played before, from *The Lord is My Shepherd* to *Flowers of the Forest*. I closed with *Amazing Grace*. As I opened my car door to leave, I overheard one of the workers say to another, "I never seen nothing' like that before and I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years." Courtesy of.....Pokey