

Steel Magnolias

Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc.

May 15, 2006

Waiting for My Life to Begin

Points To Ponder

“For a long time it seemed to me that real life was about to begin, but there was always some obstacle in the way. Something had to be got through first, some unfinished business; time still to be served, a debt to be paid. Then real life would begin. At last it dawned on me that these obstacles were my life.”
Reader’s Digest

What we think will make us happy, is a fantasy, we all have neatly designed in our minds. We also think we know what it will take to launch us into our life, never thinking that life is already well under way. We deceive ourselves into believing we know exactly what will make our life complete. Then, we turn a corner and “The It,” the treasure, we sought after, no longer seems like a treasure.

Gloria Greening, Probation and Parole Officer for Cullman County, sent this E-mail to Kathy Evans, and Kathy sent it on to me. It is a powerful illustration of this truth.

The Package

A young man was getting ready to graduate from college. For many months he had admired a beautiful sports car in a dealer’s showroom., and knowing his father could well afford it, he told him that was all he wanted.

As Graduation Day approached, the young man awaited signs that his father had purchased the car. Finally, on the morning of his graduation, his father called him into his private study. His father told him how proud he was to have such a fine son, and told him how much he loved him. He handed his son a beautifully wrapped gift box. Curious, but somewhat disappointed, the young man opened the box and found a lovely, leather-bound Bible, with the young man’s name embossed in gold. Angrily, he raised his voice to his father and said, “With all your money, you give me a Bible?” and stomped out of the house, leaving the Bible.

Many years passed and the young man was very

successful in business. He had a beautiful home and wonderful family, but realized his father was old and thought he should go to him. He had not seen him since that graduation day.

Before he could make arrangements, he received a telegram telling him his father had passed away, and willed all of his possessions to his son. He needed to come home immediately and take care of things. When he arrived at his father’s house, sudden sadness and regret filled his heart. He began to search through his father’s important papers and saw the still new Bible, just as he had left it years ago. With tears, he opened the Bible, and began turning the pages. His father had carefully underlined a verse:

Matthew 7:11
“And if ye, being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father which is in heaven, give to those who ask Him?”



Sharing love through support

Lenora Johnson, Founder,
Editor, Director
P.O. Box 36
Jacksonville, AL 36265
www.steelmagnoliasinc.org

Jim Wilson, Chaplain
(256) 235-5146

.....
As he read those words, a key dropped from the back of the Bible. It had a tag with the dealer’s name, the same dealer who had the sports car he had desired. On the tag was the date of his graduation, and the words.
..... PAID IN FULL.

How many times do we miss God’s blessings because they are not packaged as we expected?

When the idea for this newsletter began to form in my mind, I was reminded of a poem; I was asked to write for Pleasant Valley High School’s first yearbook. The title of the 1982 yearbook was to be TREASURES. That was to

be the title of my poem. Married and the mother of three sons, I realized I no longer knew what treasure was to a high school student. I was thankful that I had kept my high school scrapbook. For days, I poured over my old keepsakes, until I began to remember what was important to the girl who had graduated from Immokalee High School. This project taught me that there are some treasures we never devalue, and some that with the passing of time, retain no value.

TREASURES

As sunlight awakens earth, with the kiss of spring;
So treasures touch our lives kindling vibrance to sing.
Fleeting are the years since our walk in school began,
Treasured are the memories to enliven, again and again.

At times we ached for losing games we fought to win.
At times, we wept for losing the presence of a friend.
And yet, in our trophy case postured proudly, more and more,
Trophies shout for victory, in competing for score.

Evenings filled with laughter, in our faded cotton suede.
We played games of skill at the Cinema Arcade.
The daring of Travolta; the beauty of Brook Shields.
Hours consumed in adventure; our fantasies fulfilled.

Emotions stir within us like moving shifting sand.
The future looms before us; as a vast un-traveled land.
Careful rearing by our parents, and our teachers' skillful hand;
Promises introduction to treasures, in our yet un-traveled land.

By Lenora Washington Johnson

Thank you, Veronia, for asking me to write this poem. In so doing, I looked more deeply into myself than I probably ever would otherwise have done.

VALUE

To realize

The value of a sister: Ask someone who doesn't have one

To realize

The value of ten years: Ask a newly divorced couple.

To realize

The value of four years: Ask a graduate

To realize

The value of one year: Ask a student who has failed a final exam.

To realize

The value of nine months: Ask a mother who gave birth to a stillborn.

To realize

The value of one month: Ask a mother who has given birth to a premature baby.

To realize

The value of one week: Ask an editor of a weekly newspaper.

To realize
The value of one minute: Ask a person who has missed the train, bus or plane.

To realize
The value of one-second: Ask a person who has survived an accident.

To realize
The value of a friend or family member: Lose One.

Time waits for no one. Value every moment you have. You will treasure it even more when you can share it with Someone Special.

Origin Unknown

Survivors

Survivors are cancer patients who have been told their cancer is in remission, people of all walks of life, both male and female, young and old. In common, these people bear the scars from surgery required to save their lives and the residual effects of chemotherapy and radiation treatments. Another common thread that runs through cancer survivors, is their awareness of the value of each day. I have heard survivor, after survivor say, "I don't have time for the little things, everything is more beautiful, the love I feel for friends and family runs deeper, and there is an awareness that no one is promised tomorrow, today must be spent well." I have coined a phrase, "I don't major on minors any more."

Correspondence

Dear Lenora,

I just wanted to send a small check for the annual Steel Magnolias Bake and Jewelry Sale. I have been sick almost all spring and can't believe how weak I am. I'll help next year. Love, Sandy.....Lineville

(NOTE) We were so very happy that Sandy was up to attending Steel Magnolias April 25 meeting.

Dear Pam Bussey and Steel Magnolias,

Thank you so much for the immediate support you have shown towards me just upon hearing about my breast cancer diagnosis from my husband. I loved the gifts from the Tuesday Bear Huggers and also the reading materials are very helpful as I prepare for my upcoming surgery. I hope to come to a support group meeting as soon as I feel well enough and can drive. I appreciate your acts of support and kindness more than you know.

Sincerely, Charlotte.....Pell City

Lenora, I took your advice and just today, visited the Steel Magnolias website. There, I was so moved by your testimony. I will definitely tell others about the site in hopes that they too will be inspired! Yes, it was Greg that told me about it initially. Thank him when you see him. I pray you walk in confidence, knowing that you are a blessing to those around you! Amen, Kathy....Fairhope

(NOTE) Kathy is standing by and supporting her girlfriend as she battles metastatic disease.

....Mother's Day....

As I formulated my thoughts concerning Mother's Day, I resisted the idea of including some sentimental story that really didn't reflect the depth of the women I know. Clarke Stallworth, who writes a column for *Senior Living*, a prime time news and entertainment publication that is distributed in Birmingham, Central and North Alabama, wrote an article for the March 2006 issue that shouts what I was wanting to express. This little paper is provided for patient's families who are staying in quarters provided by UAB. I have included two paragraph's from his article:

I Know a Quick Way To Solve the Situation in the Middle East

Turn it over to women. Put a group of Israeli women and a group of Palestinian women in a room and they will come out with a solution, and it won't be war.

The reason? Women don't like body bags. They carried and bore, the young men and women who will die in a war.

So they will find a way to work it out and it won't be war. Also, it just might be fair.

Mr. Stallworth concluded his story with:

So if the UN gave me full power in the Middle East, I would get a group of Israeli women, and a group of Palestinian women, and put them in a room. I would give them 24 hours. I believe they would come out of that room with a solution-and it wouldn't be war.

Clarke Stallworth, newspaper consultant, writing coach and former managing editor of the Birmingham News, is working on a book of memoirs, stories from his life. He is the author of three books of Alabama history. For more information about him and his work, take a look at www.writinghelp.com.

Guide Posts' Quotes from Today's Positive Thinkers

“As I got to know these women, reading their letters, I came to the conclusion that there's nothing unique about them. They did-with great hardship, courage, pluck, prayerfulness, sadness, joy, energy, and humor-what women do. They put one foot in front of the other in remarkable circumstances.” from the book, *Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation* by Cokie Roberts

A Woman of Industry, Integrity, Resourcefulness

A woman of noble character, who can find one? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. She sees that trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hand to the needy. When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. She make coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. She makes fine linen garment and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: “Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.” Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring praise at the city gate. Proverbs 31: 10-31

Happy Mother's Day

Steel Magnolias Meeting

The monthly meeting of Steel Magnolias was held, Tuesday, April 25, in classroom #1 of the Tyler center. President, Pam Bussey welcomed everyone, making special note of ladies who were new to our group. We were very happy to have several Steel Magnolias, back, who had missed meetings because of sickness. Roll was called by Secretary, Debbie Lee Barno.

A prayer list was distributed by Chaplain, Marti Warren, and other names were added by the group. Marti gave each of us the name of a person on our prayer list. After we each, prayerfully, announced the name of a person on the Steel Magnolias prayer list, Marti led us in prayer. Marti also gave her report on contacts made which totaled 11 through the sending of, “Steel Magnolias Are Praying For You,” cards.

Pam Bussey then introduced Physical Therapist, Jerry Klug, owner of Alabama Physical Rehabilitation Service. Mr. Klug has over 25 years in Women's Health Services and has worked with several doctors in our area to improve women's health. Mr. Klug's power point presentation was complete with handouts for each person attending.

I wish that every person could have seen and heard Mr. Klug's power point presentation on Osteoporosis. I cannot possibly capture the class presented to those of us who were present for this study. I will list the facts as they were presented to us:

- 1) Osteoporosis: There IS something you can do about it!!
- 2) Osteoporosis is a PEDIATRIC condition that is manifests in ADULTHOOD
- 3) As of 2002: Osteoporosis and low bone mass are a major public health hazard for about 55% of the U.S. population aged 50 and older. Total number of people 50+ estimated to be at risk for osteoporosis and low bone mass, 44 million.
- 4) Estimated prevalence rate for osteoporosis and low bone mass in Women=30 million, 35 million by 2010, 41 million by 2020.
- 5) 1.5 Million fractures annually: Hip-300,000...Vertebral-700,000...Wrist-250,000...Other Sites-300,000
- 6) It is occurring in all populations: Women, Men, Children, Young Adults, and the Elderly
- 7) National Expenditure: \$17 Billion/Year, 46 Million/Day...By Year 2020: 65 Billion/Year, \$178 Million/Day
- 8) Determinants of Peak Bone Mass: Heredity—60-80%, Physical Activity, Nutrition-Calcium, Ethnicity, Caucasian and Asian are more likely to have Osteoporosis, Dark Skinned are less likely.
- 9) Normal Bone: Thick Plates—Micro-architecture Intact—Low Fracture Risk
- 10) Osteopenia is beginning of Osteoporosis. Plates are Thinner— Micro-architecture is intact— Slightly Higher Fracture Risk
- 11) Osteoporosis: Plates thinner—Micro-architecture disrupted—Higher Fracture Risk
- 12) First Signs: Postural Change—Thoracic Kyphosis, Protruding Abdomen, Fracture, Wrist Compression, Stress, Hip, Low Trauma—Loss of teeth—Periodontal Disease—Transparent Skin—Persistent Back Pain
- 13) Risk Factors: Female, Family History, Post Menopausal, Caucasian/Asian, Small Boned, Delayed Puberty, Early Menopause, Smoking, Sedentary Life Style, Overexerciser, Advanced Age
- 14) Dietary Considerations: Eating Disorders, Low Calcium, High Protein, High Sodium, High Alcohol, Caffeine?
Men: Low Testosterone
- 15) Medications: Corticosteroids, Diuretics, Methotrexate, Coumadin, Cholestyramine, Thyroid Medication, Anticonvulsants, Heparin, Cyclosporine, Gonadotropin Releasing Hormones, Antacids Containing Aluminum
- 16) Diseases: Thyroid Dysfunction, Congenital Disorders, Cancer, Chronic Inflammations, Diabetes, COPD, Seizures, TB, Burns, Liver Disfunction, Neurological Disorders, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Malabsorption Disorders, Kidney Dialysis
- 17) Wrist: Fractures heal readily—May serve as warning of Cortical Bone Loss
- 18) Hip Fracture: Most Disabling/Life Threatening, **1/2 women with hip fracture die within 1 year** of fracture.
- 19) Risk for women is 2-3 times higher than men—**Mortality rate for men nearly 2 times that of women**—Older woman who falls backward most likely to fracture hip. Of those who survive, 1/2 never regain previous quality of life-They are living in assisted living facilities, nursing homes, skilled nursing facilities or if home, using walkers and are not as active.
- 20) VERTEBRAL: Bones of spine first to show signs of osteoporosis—Primarily, trabecular (soft bone)—Occur during movement that includes trunk flexion (bending forward), “Stooping Over,” as in Opening or Closing a window, etc.
- 21) Other Common Fracture sites: Ribs, Pelvis, Any Bone in the Body
- 22) **The Best Exercise: Walking** —The Single Best Exercise for most people at most anytime—promotes weight-bearing through the hip joints and the bones
- 23) **Definitely AVOID:** Any Exercise that includes *Forward Bending *Trunk Twisting *Lateral Bending *High Impact, ESPECIALLY SIMULTANEOUSLY.
- 24) **GET A BONE DENSITY TEST Don't ignore persistent joint and skeletal pain.**

Following this presentation, the floor was opened for questions. Among the questions asked, was one concerning the scar tissue that causes discomfort for several of the Steel Magnolia. Jerry said there was help for people with tightness because of scar tissue. He encouraged those with problems to consult their medical doctors about a referral to physical therapy. Whether they choose to come to his clinic, stay at the Tyler Center or make an appointment with another physical therapist, please don't ignore symptoms. With referral, Insurance covers physical therapy.

THANK YOU JERRY KLUG! For more information please E-mail Jerry Klug <jlkpt@cableone.net>

Secretary Debbie Lee Barno read the minutes of the February and the March meetings. They were approved as read.

The Financial report, read by Treasurer, Nancy Burnell, was approved as read.

Financial Report

Balance Brought Forward	\$2,671.03
4-1 (-) \$182.55 Monthly Expense— Cosmetic Bag Toiletries—Postage	2488.48
4-5 (-) 270.00 Advanced Printing	2218.48
4-13 (-) 100.00 Change for Bake Sale	2118.48
4-22 (+)2451.34 Deposit	\$4569.82

Breakdown of 4-22 Deposit: April 15, Bake and Jewelry Sale

Jewelry Sales	\$1200.00
Bakery Items	956.34
Bubbles the Clown	167.00
Poetry Books	55.00
Memorial-Jane Abbott	25.00
PVHS Home Ec.—Bracelets	48.00
Starting cash	100.00
Total	\$2451.34
(-) Starting Cash	100.00
Fund Raiser Total:	\$2351.34

The meeting then moved to old business:

*Gladys Denizard, Visitation Chairman gave the report of 2 phone calls and 5 follow-up home visits for cancer patients. She has a list of 12 visit/phone calls to make and has asked for volunteers to help with these contacts.

* Jo Ann Taylor asked for volunteers on Monday, May 15, at 12:30 p.m. at the Tyler Center for newsletter mailing.

New Business:

*Sign-up sheet for Steel Magnolias shirts is available. Shirts to be ordered from Wakefield's. With a order of at least 48 shirts there will be a substantial cut in price.

*13th Annual Sister's Luncheon, May 4, 2006 at The Club in Birmingham with Janet Hall as Mistress of ceremonies. If interested in attending contact Pam Bussey. Reservation deadline is May 1, 2006

*Sign-up sheet for Martha Hooton Barker's book of poetry, *Times of the Heart* is available. Books sale for \$10 with the proceeds going to Steel Magnolias

*New Beginning Banquet is scheduled for Tuesday, July 25, 2006 at Monet's Tea Room. Details about cost per plate for a catered meal will be in the June letter.

*Jacksonville Medical Center is offering a self exam class on Tuesday May 9, 2006 Refreshments will be served.

*A 100 x 100 inch Crochet Bed Covering has been donated by Geri Smith (Tuesday Bear Hugger) to Steel Magnolias. A motion was made and seconded that raffle tickets be sold to raise money for Steel Magnolias. Tickets will be ready for sale in a few weeks and the winner will be announced at the New Beginning Banquet.

*Our special guest for our Tuesday, May 23 meeting will be, Director of RMC Imaging Services, Nick Kaufman.

*New address cards were given out. A revised list is being created. If you were not present at the April meeting, please E-mail your address, phone number, e-mail address and birthday to <dflee@bellsouth.net>

There being no further business to come before this meeting, upon motion duly made and seconded and unanimously approved it was adjourned.

Refreshments, in the Deli, were enjoyed by everyone.

Get Ready for SUMMER

7-25-2006: New Beginnings Banquet...A Great Celebration!

In Monet's beautiful Tea Room...catered meal, Special entertainment, Keynote Speaker: 23 year survivor and co-founder, 23 yrs. ago of Georgia's Bosom Buddies, closing a memorable evening with, Steel Magnolias' theme song, "I Hope You Dance."

8-5-2006: Swinging Stars Square Dance Club Benefit Dance for Steel Magnolias at Oxford Civic Center, 7 p.m.-10 p.m. \$6 charge for each dancer and \$3 charge for each non-dancer. Raffle Tickets will be available from club members and Steel Magnolias who wish to participate for \$50 savings bonds. Tickets available for Square Dance Outfit from Jimmy and Margaret Taylor. There will be a silent auction and cake walk at the dance. We would appreciate contributions from businesses for silent auction. Example of items for auction: an evening cruise on Lake Wedowee with drinks and cheese , a makeover with skin care items and a hair appointment at the beauty salon with a basket of hair care items.

8-19-2005: Celebration of Life Picnic in Ohatchee, Food and great Fun!!!

More details in the June Letter

Steel Magnolias now have \$1 Contribution Tickets for a Beautiful 100" x 100" maroon, mauve, cream Crocheted Bed Covering, Made by Geri Smith (Tuesday Bear Hugger) Winner will be announced at the New Beginnings Banquet

"Times of the Heart" Collection of poetry by Martha Hooton Barker \$10

To order: send \$10 + .75 postage to Steel Magnolias, P.O. Box 36, Jacksonville, AL 36265.

Steel Magnolias will be set up soon in our office in RMC West: (256) 741-8827

Steel Magnolias now has a Benevolent Closet in Monet Salon and Day Spa

Please call (256) 741-8827, Leave message for Benevolent Closet Chair, Kay Hogue

HELP!!! *We need contributions of Old Costume JEWELRY*** HELP!!!**

Give to Pam in the Wound Healing Center at Tyler Center, call Marti @ (256) 237-0206

or carry to 710 E. 22nd St., Anniston, AL.

.....Mark Your Calendars.....

Thursday, May 18, 2006, Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Tyler Center Deli

Tuesday, May 23, 2006, Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group Meeting, 5:00 p.m.

Tyler Center, Classroom #1, Special Guest: RMC Imaging Director, Nick Kaufman—
Refreshments in Deli,

Tuesday June 27, 2006, Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group Meeting: 5:00 p.m.

Jo Ann, Here Goes!

We Aren't THAT Old (I Don't Think)

This is the story of two elderly people living in a mobile home park in Florida. He was a widower and she was a widow. They had known one another for a number of years. One evening there was a community supper in the Club House, and the widower and widow made a foursome with two other singles. They had a wonderful evening and! Spirits were high. The widower sent a few admiring glances across the table, and the widow smiled coyly back at him. Finally, he plucked up his courage to ask her, "Will you marry me?" After about six seconds of careful consideration, she answered, "Yes. Yes I will." The meal ended with a few more pleasant exchanges and they went to their respective homes. The next morning the widower was troubled. Did she say 'Yes' or did she say 'No'? He couldn't remember. Try as he could, he just could not recall. He went over the conversation of the previous evening, but his mind was blank. He remembered asking the question, but for the life of him he could not recall her response. With fear and trepidation, he picked up the phone and called her. First, he explained that he didn't remember as well as he used to. Then he reviewed the lovely evening past. As he gained a little more courage he then inquired of her, "When I asked if you would marry me, did you say 'Yes' or did you say 'No'?" "Why, you silly man, I said "Yes'. Yes I will.' And I meant it with all my heart." The widower was delighted. He felt his heart skip a beat. Then she continued, "And I am so glad you called because I couldn't remember who asked me."

Baptist Squirrels

There were four country churches in a small TEXAS town: The Presbyterian Church, the Baptist Church, the Methodist Church, and the Catholic Church. Each church was overrun with pesky squirrels. One day, the *Presbyterian Church* called a meeting to decide what to do about the squirrels. After much prayer and consideration they determined that the squirrels were predestined to be there and they shouldn't interfere with God's divine will. In the *Methodist Church* the squirrels had taken up habitation in the baptistery bowl. The deacons met and decided to put a cover on the baptistery bowl and drown the squirrels in it. The squirrels escaped somehow and there were twice as many the next week. The *Catholic* group got together and decided that they were not in a position to harm any of God's creation. So, they humanely trapped the squirrels and set them free outside of town. Three days later, the squirrels were back. But—the *Baptist* *Church** *came up with the best and most effective solution. They baptized the squirrels and registered them as members of the church. Now they only see them on *Christmas and *Easter!!*

My Dad

Three boys are in the school yard bragging about their fathers. The first boy says, "My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem, they give him \$50." The second boy says, "That's nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song, they give him \$100." The third boy says, "I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon, and it takes eight people to collect all the money!"

Pallbearers

An elderly woman died last month. Having never married, she requested no pallbearers. In her handwritten instructions for her memorial service, she wrote, "They wouldn't take me out while I was alive, I don't want them to take me out when I'm dead."

No Old Lady Meetings For Me

A tour bus driver is driving with a bus full of seniors down a highway when he is tapped on his shoulder by a little old lady. She offers him a handful of peanuts, which he gratefully munches up. After about 15 minutes, she taps him on his shoulder again and hands him another handful of peanuts. She repeats this gesture about five more times. When she is about to hand him another batch again he asks the little old lady why they don't eat the peanuts themselves. "We can't chew them because we've no teeth," she replied. The puzzled driver asks, "Why do you buy them then?" The old lady replied, "We just love the chocolate around them."

Run Herman Run!

Fifty-one years ago, Herman, a Tennessee Mountain Man, was drafted by the US Army. On his first day in basic training, the Army issued him a comb. That afternoon the Army barber sheared off all his hair. On his second day the Army issued Herman a toothbrush. That afternoon the army dentist removed seven of his teeth. On the third day the Army issued him a jock strap. The Army has been looking for Herman for 51 years.