

Steel Magnolias

Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc.

April 17, 2006

Running in Season

Change

The year was 1963, the 3rd day of July, when I, with my mom, dad and siblings, moved to Calhoun County, Alabama. For more than twenty years, subtropical Florida had been my home. Little did I know, before the end of 1963, what wonders were to be seen, by me, and I could not have imagined how I'd be affected by that first Spring in my new habitat, my home.

As summer slipped away and the hills became rich with color, to then be replaced in January with 12 inches of snow, the first I'd ever seen, I was intoxicated with the beauty.

This new world, my new home, stirred me to write the poem that I would later dedicate to the memory of those I love. I'm not the first poet to compare the seasons of the year to the changing seasons of a person's life. The longer I live, the more I have come to know that we can experience those changing seasons at any age. I've also come to know that God

teaches us more as we, in our broken bodies, wrestle with storms. I have also come to know that God has a plan and purpose, in all the seasons of our lives.

Seasons of Life

Oh, Life! So full, so rich, so sweet;
From which there is but one retreat.
So like the seasons of the year;
You bring laughter, sadness, joy, and fear.

Oh, Spring of Life! So sweet and pure;
Reaching out with your beckoning lure.
Walk among the trees and calm brooks of life;
Where gentle winds erase all sadness and strife.

Come sit in the sunshine of a sultry day;
As life moves to Summer, with fickleness and play.

Like waves of the ocean that roar and break;
Youth walks tall, and

spirited, and brave.

Shadows are gathering across endless skies;
As Autumn approaches and Summer dies.

Like the parching of leaves in a cool dry breeze;
Life replaces youth with wisdom that old eyes see.

Oh! The darkness of a winter's night;
So like the retreat of a person's short life.
Stealing the Spring, the Summer, the Fall;
To leave only darkness, without recall.

No sound of singing or drum and fife
To announce the abandon of mortal life.
Just the bidding of our risen King,
"Come my child, spend eternity with me."

by Lenora Washington Johnson



Sharing love through support

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A Time for Everything

There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity
under the heaven:
a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build
a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,
a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain,

a time to search and a time to give up,
a time to keep and a time to throw away,
a time to tear and a time to mend,
a time to be silent and a time to speak,
a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.
Ecclesiastes 3: 1– 8

Springtime In Dixie

Red clay hills and bubbling hills;
Across the meadow, a church bell rings.
Farmers are hopeful for what the day brings,
As across the sky, a mocking bird wings.

Spring's rich blossoms smell fresh and sweet.
Streets come alive with the patter of feet.
Old folks, young folks, smile as they meet;
Everyone rushing to perform his personal feat.

Sunlight glitters on a trickling brook,
The old fellow smiles at the fish on his hook.
Squirrels are frisking up big oak trees,
And all through the woods is the buzzing of bees.

Life is a moving, wonderful thing
To peon, debutant, servant and king.
All through Dixie on a fresh spring morn,
Another day of work and play has been born.
By Lenora Washington Johnson

Easter..... New-life

As the soil, warmed by the glow of Spring's sunlight, breaks forth with flowers and foliage of every color, it's impossible not to think of new life. As we celebrate the resurrection of Christ from the tomb, we celebrate the victory that we and all of nature have in our risen Lord.

The eldest of our three sons was born on Easter Sunday. Daffodils, Lilacs and our old Apple Tree, celebrated his arrival. Easter, that year, fell on April 6. As we drove home with our first child, surrounded by the warmth, beauty and sweet smells of an awakening earth, I was never more aware of the promise of the empty tomb.

We wish for everyone, a healthy, happy and blessed Easter!

Run, Run, Run!

Billy Mills, a member of the Oglala Lakota (Sioux) tribe, was orphaned at the age of 12. After his dad, who had raised him on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, died, Billy was sent to a boarding school.

Billy never forgot his father's advice, "Athletics will help build pride and self-esteem." He joined the track team as a long distance runner.

At the 1964, Tokyo Olympic Games, 26 year old Billy Mills ran straight into the record books. He finished in 28 minutes, 24.4 seconds, becoming the first American to win a gold medal in the 10,000 meter race.

Billy saw his Olympic win as a gift. Believing that gifts were meant to be shared, he founded, “Running Strong for American Indian Youth.” The goal of this foundation is to make a positive impact in the lives of Native Americans and their communities, and build pride and self-esteem. In addition to supporting cultural and language education, the organization addresses critical needs on reservations, funding water wells, gardens, medical facilities, and housing. For Billy, the challenge didn’t stop after 10,000 meters—it was just beginning.

Over-comers

As survivors of a life threatening disease, and after taking the devastating journey forced upon us by breast cancer—then being blessed to live, love and share our lives with those we love, we must view ourselves as possessing a great gift. Some of us are very young, some are in the Autumn of our lives, we all have a gift to share with those who have just begun their battle with cancer. Regardless of our age, or the challenges we face, God has promised that He can give us strength.

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary, and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:28-31

Steel Magnolias Meeting

As we gathered in classroom #1 for our regularly scheduled Steel Magnolias meeting, we were very happy to meet a dear woman who was just starting her journey into breast cancer treatments. We were also pleased to welcome several members who have been providentially hindered from attending. Many of our Magnolias were absent because of health issues. Our group was still one of our largest, with over twenty Magnolias in attendance.

Our meeting was called to order by President, Pam Bussey. In the absence of Secretary, Debbie Lee Barno, a roll list was passed around for everyone to sign. In Chaplain Marti Warren’s absence, the prayer list was read and prayer was offered by Ina Rooks. The financial report was given by Treasurer, Nancy Burnell:

			Balance Brought Forward
			\$2,752.03
3-7 (-)	\$100	March expenses: Lenora Johnson	2,652.03
3-22(+)	25	Memorial for Ina Pressly	2,677.03
3-22(-)	18	Stamps—Marti Warren	2,659.03
3-28(+)	12	Sale of Steel Magnolia Pin and Donation from Quintard Health Fair	2,671.03

Gladys Denizard spoke to the group about her visit with Joyce, an Hispanic woman in Jacksonville. She spoke of her warm reception and she told the group about how much Joyce appreciated the care items she received from Steel Magnolias. Gladys read our poem, “I’m A Steel Magnolia” to Joyce and went on to tell us how beautiful our poem is when read in Spanish. We are very grateful to Gladys, who works with the Calhoun Hispanic Association, for translating our brochure into Spanish.

Lenora Johnson made the motion that Gladys Denizard be elected as Chairperson of the visitation committee. Gladys was elected by unanimous vote. Gladys said that that one visit to breast cancer patients homes, who had received care packages would be sufficient. Everyone agreed. Gladys passed the current list, of local patients, who recently received care packages and asked that each lady sign her name by the breast cancer patient she would visit. We were encouraged to telephone the newly diagnosed woman before a visit is made.

Wanda Pettus gave a report on the Steel Magnolias Dining Vouchers that had been given at Regional Medical Center. As of March 28, six vouchers had been given and Wanda, who is a nurse in the holding area where patients are readied for surgery, said the vouchers were well received.

Lenora Johnson passed “Lymphedema Alert Bracelets” for each member to see and suggested that Steel Magnolias provide bracelets for patients who need their surgical arm protected from pressure cuffs and needle sticks. The pink bracelets boldly read, NO BLOOD PRESSURE—NO STICKS. The motion was seconded and unanimously adopted.

A few alert bracelets were given to Wanda. We have Coach, Sandy Hunter to thank for giving us a start of these bracelets and for also giving us the information needed to place an order.

Pam announced that, those Steel Magnolias, who wished to attend Relay for Life, had been invited to sit under the MGMA Tent. MGMA President, Jane Taylor provided attendance sheets for those wishing to sit under the tent. Catering for the MGMA Tent, for Survivors and Caregivers, will be provided by Outback. If you plan to attend Relay, contact Pam Bussey for the MGMA form.

Margaret Taylor announced that the Swinging Stars, a square dance club that meets and dances each month at Golden Springs Community Center, voted to contribute everything from their Fall fund raiser to Steel Magnolias. Thank you Swinging Stars! We are looking forward to the day that our contributions will allow us to expand our hospital ministry to include vouchers for all cancers.

Lenora asked for Steel Magnolias to sign a work sheet for the April 15 Jewelry and Bake Sale at Quintard Mall.

Motion was made and approved that meeting adjourn.

Steel Magnolias then joined our wonderful husbands in the Deli for refreshments. We had a wide variety of really tasty finger food.

Thank You! Thank You!! Thank You!

Over the past several months, on several occasions, I've contacted Chaplain Wilson about, what are the needs of Steel Magnolias, that would enable us to expand and reach more newly diagnosed patients and provide the needs of more dear women who are living with breast cancer. Chaplain Wilson said, "Be willing to wait, and as God opens doors, Steel Magnolias must have the courage to walk through those doors."

The ministry opportunities and the challenges of the past year has our heads spinning: Our web-site, so beautifully designed by Chris Williams and Jeff Williams, partners in WideNet Consulting, now has the first of a series of survivor stories, the first being, *Lenora's Journey With Breast Cancer*. Soon our site will be fully functioning. Thank you WideNet for giving us a web-site beyond our greatest dreams.

We have had contributions of wigs, prosthesis, and mastectomy bras from, AlaMed, as well as from some caring individuals.

Monet Salon and Day Spa, owner, Cha Mi Madden has given Steel Magnolias use of a walk in closet. We are calling this room, that will be a fitting room for breast cancer patients who reach out to us, Steel Magnolias Benevolent Closet. Kay Hogue heads the committee that will over-see this ministry. Kay can be reached @ (256) 435-6152. Cha Mi has also given Steel Magnolias permission to enjoy our, "New Beginning Banquet," in the beautiful Tea Room. Thank you Cha Mi!

Steel Magnolias will soon have an office in RMC West. We will be sharing an office with Emergency Preparedness. Our office will have a telephone with answering service, allowing a web-site contact number, not attached to any one person's home. We thank Chaplain Wilson for putting forth the effort and making this BIG DOOR open for Steel Magnolias. We are also very happy that our office is in close proximity to Vickie Simmons, Director of the RMC Memorial Foundation. We thank RMC Memorial Foundation, Mail Room, Susan Williamson, and the Cancer Board, who are working to develop an atmosphere where cancer patients feel more connected to a support system.

Mrs. Martha Hooton Barker, a gifted poet, and an incredible woman, that some of our Steel Magnolias have for many years known, and some of us know through her daughter, Marti Rogers, as well as her beautiful poetry, that we were so privileged to publish in our Steel Magnolias Newsletter, has compiled another little book. This book, a collection of Mrs. Barker's compelling verse, "Times of the Heart," sells for \$10. Proceeds go to further the ministries of Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc. At 90 years old, Mrs. Martha Hooton Barker, formerly from Anniston, now living in Chattanooga, TN, herself a breast cancer survivor, is still expressing her buoyant spirit and depth of feelings in captivating poetry. Thank You Mrs. Barker, for allowing us the joy of your rousing, insightful poems, and

then using your gift to help fund the work of Steel Magnolias. "Times of the Heart," can be purchased through Steel Magnolias by calling Marti Warren @ (256) 237-0206 or Lenora @ (256) 447-9822

Table Settings

Jo Ann Taylor, assisted by her family, in spite of a torn ligament in her right knee, created a beautiful, "Tea on a Sunday Afternoon," table setting in the fellowship hall of Golden Springs Baptist Church. Jo Ann's beautiful table was one of 36 entries that were part of a "Concern for Children" fundraiser. "Tea on a Sunday Afternoon," didn't win one of the three top prizes, but Prentiss and I both thought it deserving. The tables were all so beautiful, I would really have hated to vote against any of them.

Marti Warren also raised over \$650 with her Recycled Antique Jewelry. When Prentiss and I got to the event, Saturday morning, a crowd of ladies were already gathered at Marti's table. I found two pieces that I couldn't leave laying on the table.

It is a tribute to the ladies of Steel Magnolias, that so many of our members volunteer to work in fundraisers for many worthy organizations.

Committee on Health Fairs and Educational Booths

Eleanor placed this report in the mail on March 13, however it didn't make it to our P.O. Box until March 18. Janet Reese and Eleanor Henderson do a great job and here is their Health and Wellness Expo report:

Health and Wellness Expo

The Health and Wellness Expo at Quintard Mall, on March 11, was a great success. The event brought many concerned people by the Steel Magnolias' table. Their questions and concerns were answered by the many well informed volunteers, who were on hand for the event. Nearly every person who stopped by our table was a breast cancer survivor or knew someone who was. A list of names were taken for those who were interested in receiving our newsletter, and names for our prayer list, and to receive care packages from the Tuesday bear Huggers.

Gladys Denizard was on hand to communicate with our Spanish speaking friends, which was such a blessing. Our thanks to Gladys, Marti Warren, Gail Tuck, Lenora and Prentiss Johnson, Linda Morris, Pam Bussey, and Gloria Woosley. You helped to make this event such a success.

Submitted by: Chairpersons, Eleanor Henderson and Janet Reese

St. Michaels's Clinic....Health Day

St. Michael's Clinic held a health fair on Friday, March 17, at Sterling Point Apartments. Gladys Denizard and Ina Rooks represented Steel Magnolias at this Health Day, from 9 a.m.—2 p.m. We sincerely thank these two committed sisters for working this very important event.

The Edge

Monday, April 10, Marti Warren and Lenora Johnson were interviewed, at the same time, by Donna Feazell. We recorded a show for Friday, April 14, and then did a live show. After reminding both Marti and Donna that we needed to be careful and let everyone know that we couldn't take special orders after Wednesday, I goofed up! All in all, I think the interview went well. We appreciate Donna's faithfulness to support Steel Magnolias' events.

Those Incredible Pink Ladies

Recently, I was talking to Chaplain Wilson about a phone conversation I'd recently had, with Penney's salon manager, concerning the wig program at J.C. Penney's. I learned how the program works and who funds the program:

1. Patient must be a resident of Calhoun County
2. Patient must have a prescription from a doctor who practices in Calhoun County
3. Patient must call for an appointment and will be seen by a stylist in the Salon within 3 days.

I asked Ms. Smith if she could tell me who funded this wig program? She responded, "The Pink Ladies" I said, "Do you mean those dear ladies who deliver cards and flowers to patient's rooms." She said, "Yes, and they have been doing it for 10 years!"

Chaplain Wilson then said, "The Pink Ladies fund a great many projects that no one knows about." He went on to tell me that they had made a large contribution toward the Heart Center and that they had bought the little shuttle that we see moving around the RMC parking lots. These ladies are incredible! They operate the Gift Shop and they have, in the lobby of the hospital, several fund raisers each year.

Steel Magnolias Bake Sale and Marti's Antique Jewelry Show

Just in front of Kirklin's, early Saturday morning, April 15, the day before Easter, Steel Magnolias worked feverously, in the walkway of Quintard Mall. Marti Warren, Gloria Woosley, Ina Rooks, Janet Reese and two hard working students from Sacred Heart Catholic School, displayed jewelry, while some others of us arranged bakery items. Soon many Steel Magnolias arrived, each bearing beautiful bakery items. Janet Reese and Marti Rogers served as clerks for the jewelry show. Which ever Steel Magnolia, collected money for bakery purchases, served as clerk.

Marti Rogers arrived with a stack of, "Times of the Heart," A collection of poems, written by her mother, Mrs. Martha Hooton Barker. Mrs. Barker, a breast cancer survivor for many years, is contributing proceeds from her book to the work of Steel Magnolias. Several books were sold, one by a friend, for a recently diagnosed, 28 year old.

A little after 11 a.m., Bubbles the Clown, a dear woman who is herself a breast cancer survivor, joined the fun. Bubbles, for a contribution in the Steel Magnolias' donation jar, made a variety of balloon toys for children. I was amazed at how everyone who passed our table responded to Bubbles. She had parents and children waiting their turn to put money in the jar and get a balloon sword, dog, or crown. Thank you Bubbles!

Donna Fezell made pictures for the JSU web-site and the Anniston star sent a photographer and a reporter to cover this Steel Magnolias fund raiser. Ms. Jarvis did a great job of reporting on the steel Magnolias' Benevolent Closet at Monet and the Dining Vouchers that are provided in RMC, Stringfellow, and Jacksonville Medical Center.

I was thrilled beyond words, when just before we left the mall, Van and Michelle and Olivia, our precious granddaughter, and Steel Magnolias' poster girl, walked up to our tables. Olivia had fun, helping Janet and Marti. Soon, our middle son, Bill and his wife Andrea, joined our fun. We had previously planned to meet at Outback for a family dinner. We were already at Outback when our youngest son, Greg, wife, Amy, and our other precious beauty, Kaylee, made our circle complete. Our family fun was the closing of an absolutely great day.

In the May newsletter, we will report on the proceeds of our fund raiser.

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

Thursday, April 20:Board of Directors Meeting....

Tyler Center Deli, 5:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, April 25: Steel Magnolias Meeting, Tyler Center, 8th St. and
Leyton Ave., Anniston Classroom #1, 5:00 p.m.**

Special Guest: Physical Therapist, Jerry Klug

Tuesday, May 23: Steel Magnolias Meeting: Tyler Center

Special Guest: RMC Imaging Services

Director, Nick Kaufman

Jo Ann, Here Goes!

Good Celebration

A man and his wife are dining at a table in a plush restaurant, and the husband keeps staring at an old drunken lady, swinging her gin as she sits alone at a nearby table, until the wife asks, "Do you know her?" "Yes," sighs the husband, "She's my ex-wife. She took to drinking right after we divorced, seven years ago, and I hear she hasn't been sober since." "Darn," says the wife, "Who would think a person could go on celebrating that long?"

Red Skelton's Recipe For A Perfect Marriage

- 1) Two time a week, we go to a nice restaurant, have a little beverage, good food and companionship. She goes on Tuesdays, I go on Fridays.
- 2) We also sleep in separate beds. Hers is in California and mine is in Texas.
- 3) I take my wife everywhere.....but she keeps finding her way back.
- 4) I asked my wife where she wanted to go for our anniversary. "Somewhere I haven't been in a long time!" she said. So, I suggested the kitchen.
- 5) We always hold hands. If I let go, she shops.
- 6) My wife told me the car wasn't running well because there was water in the carburetor. I asked where the car was: She told me, "In the lake."
- 7) She got a mud pack and looked great for two days. Then the mud fell off.
- 8) She ran after the garbage truck, yelling, "Am I too late for the garbage?".....The driver said, "No, jump in!"
- 9) Remember: Marriage is the number one cause of divorce.
- 10) I married Miss Right. I just didn't know her first name was ALWAYS.
- 11) I haven't spoken to my wife in 18 months. I don't like to interrupt her.
- 12) The last fight was my fault though. My wife asked, "what's on the TV?" I said, "Dust."

A Well Planned Life

Two women met for the first time since graduating from high school. One asked the other, "You were always so organized in high school, did you manage to live a well planned life?" "Yes," said her friend. "My first marriage was to a millionaire; my second marriage was to an actor; my third marriage was to a preacher; and now I'm married to an undertaker." Her friend asked, "What do those marriages have to do with a well planned life?" "One for the money, two for the show, three to get ready, and four to go."

Just Remember

An old Jewish gentleman was on the operating table awaiting surgery and he insisted that his son, a renowned surgeon, perform the operation. As he was about to get anesthesia, he asked to speak to his son. "Yes, Dad, what is it?" Don't be nervous, son; do your best and just remember, if it doesn't go well, if something happens to me...your mom is going to come and live with you and your wife...."

Senior Citizen

A distraught senior citizen phoned her doctor's office. "Is it true," she wanted to know, "That the medication you prescribed has to be taken the rest of my life?" "Yes, I'm afraid so," the doctor told her. There was a moment of silence before the senior lady replied, "I'm wondering, then, just how serious is my condition because this prescription is marked, 'NO REFILLS'."

Loving Marriage

This is what marriage is all about...He ordered one hamburger, one order of French fries and one drink. The old man unwrapped the plain hamburger and carefully cut it in half. He placed one half in front of his wife. He then carefully counted out the French fries, dividing them in two piles and neatly placed half in front of his wife. He took a sip of the drink, his wife took a sip and then set the cup down between them. As she began to eat her few bites of hamburger, the people around them kept looking over and whispering. You could tell what they were thinking. "That poor old couple-all they can afford is one meal for the two of them." as the woman began to eat her fries, a young man came to the table. He politely offered to buy another meal for the old couple. The old man said they were just fine-They were used to sharing everything. The surrounding people noticed the old man hadn't eaten a bite. He sat there watching his wife eat and occasionally sipping a drink. Again the young man came over and begged them to let him buy another meal for them. This time the old woman said, "No thank you, we are used to sharing everything..". As the old woman finished and was wiping her face neatly with the napkin, the young man again came over to the old man who had yet to eat a single bite of food and asked, "What is it you are waiting for?" Pointing to his wife he answered..... "THE TEETH."

