

# Steel Magnolias

Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc.

## My Living...2009...My Life

January 19, 2009

### Phenomenal 2008

A letter to "Speak Out," was recently submitted to the Anniston Star, publicly thanking contributors who made it possible for Steel Magnolias to turn dreams into reality. Now, poised, the first month of 2009, Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc., is ready to make a positive difference in the lives of our active members as well as in the lives of newly diagnosed women and men, some whose faces, we will never see.

Regardless of where in this country a person lives, regardless of race or occupation, everyone has been affected by the recession. It can become easy to fall into the trap of feeling helpless and unable to contribute to anyone or any cause outside our own family. I encourage every person to consider what we have and not dwell on the losses of 2008.

On November 23, 2008, Leatherwood pastor, Mike Owens, delivered a message on stewardship that I found to be pro-

found. Two quotes have become part of who I am:

**We make a living by what we get....We make a life by what we give.**

**Some people know the price of everything ....and the value of nothing.**

When we consider what we contribute, let us not forget the value of our time, our creative abilities, our people skills. So many people need to have someone send a card, make a telephone call or cook a meal.

The best way for a person who is just trying to find their way back into life, after a period of surgeries and treatments, is to help and encourage someone, caught like a deer in the headlights, not knowing which way to turn.

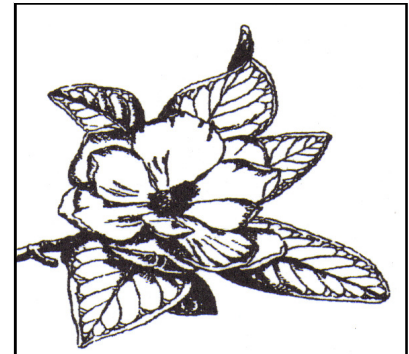
A few months ago, my brother, Gerald, a widower, and his friend, Bruce, who had recently lost his wife, came to visit. Gerald brought a movie, "The Bucket List." I thought it would be morbid because it is about two men who have

both been diagnosed with terminal cancer. Even though the subject matter is certainly anything but funny, the characters, brought to life the lyrics of the song, "I Hope You Get the Chance to Live Like You Are Dying." They had adventures that left us in tears because of laughter.

An email that I've received several times, closes with, "Be nice to everyone you meet, everyone you meet is dealing with something." When I read the following poem, I thought about that statement:

### God Forgive Me When I Whine

Today, upon a bus,  
I saw a girl with beautiful hair  
I envied her, she seemed so merry,  
When suddenly she rose to leave,  
I saw her hobble down the aisle.  
She had one leg and used a crutch.  
But as she passed, she gave a smile.  
Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.



Sharing love through support

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.....  
I have two legs, the world is mine.  
I stopped to buy some candy.  
The lad who sold it had such charm.  
I talked with him, he seemed so glad.  
If I were late, it'd do no harm.  
And as I left, he said to me,  
"I thank you, you've been so kind.  
It's nice to talk to folks like you.  
You see," he said, "I'm blind."  
Oh, God forgive me when I

whine.

I have two eyes, the world is mine.

Later while walking down the street,  
I saw a child with eyes of blue.  
He stood and watched the others play.  
He seemed not to know what to do.  
I stopped a moment and then I said,  
“Why don’t you join the others dear?”  
He looked ahead without a word.  
And then I knew he couldn’t hear.

Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.  
I have two ears the world is mine.  
With feet to take me where I’d go.  
With eyes to see the sunset’s glow.  
With ears to hear what I’d know.  
Oh, God forgive me when I whine  
I’ve been blessed indeed, the world is mine.

### **Tribute**

On November 20, my birthday, I received a card from Marie Harbin, signed, “Steel Magnolias.” What makes this noteworthy is that Marie, has been sick for just about all of 2008 and others have taken over her duties. What I learned on November 20, 2008, is that in spite of her battles with cancer recurrence, diabetes and dialysis, Marie, at her own expense, has been sending cards, she bought, with postage she bought, to active Steel Magnolias members. Marie said, “This is all I was able to do and it made me feel like a part of the group.” Thank you Marie! We love you and hold dear your devotion to Steel Magnolias!

### **Inspiration**

It is amazing to me that God places amazing people, with triumphant stories, at just the right time, where we either see or hear their testimonies of meeting unbelievable challenges. This morning, on the Today Show, I saw and heard Scott Hamilton tell his story of being diagnosed with brain cancer. He told about becoming overwhelmed at the thought of chemotherapy. His wife told him, “It is what it is, and we have no choices. We have to make this journey and do the best we can. Scott said, “Instead of dreading chemo, I began to see it as a weapon to kill the monster in my head.

Recently, on the news, I learned that major health organizations are saying that by 2010, cancer will be the leading cause of death in the world. Already, there are few people who don’t know someone very close to them who is waging a battle with this disease. The best, we can do is be supportive, be helpful, and always engage these precious people, like the valuable individuals they are, not simply like cancer patients.

Also, I truly believe, myself, being a cancer survivor, cancer patients must continue to contribute, as much as is possible to our families and communities. Staying focused on our gifts and abilities, gives us a spirit, ready to battle the cancer that has invaded our bodies. We also have to be responsible and prudent in keeping appointments, taking medications and following doctors orders, just as a soldier follows the orders of a commanding officer. If we are doubtful of the advice of professionals, we must ask for a second, even a third opinion.

### **Correspondence**

Dear Ina Rooks,

**I just received the most beautiful card from** Steel Magnolias and I have to let you and your wonderful organization know what it means to me. The great comfort and peace that it brings to me is indescribable and very unexpected. You see, I am clear across the country in Ogden, Utah, fighting pancreatic cancer. I am originally from **Calhoun County** and still have two wonderful sisters and their families there. I knew they, their families, and their church

were praying for me but then to find out there is a whole network like yours doing the same brings even more comfort. How lucky I feel that you are praying for me. **Your organization has a wonderful history and I want to tell you all, to know that if you can touch my heart in the way that you did even being so far physically from you, think** of the importance you are providing to those near by.  
Thank you for your prayers, Dianne.....Ogden, Utah

Dear Steel Magnolias Support Group,  
Thank you so much for your contribution to The Susan G. Komen For The Cure Foundation. **Celeste is Smiling in Heaven from All The Support.** We also appreciate all your prayers. Also, please continue to pray for Hazel. Thanks for all your support the last few years. P.S. Celeste loved St. Therese. She was her favorite saint so I included her prayer card.  
Morris.....Dripping Springs, Texas

Lenora, Pam and All,  
Thank you for lovingly contributing in Celeste's memory after a long 6 year journey. She was so very strong and her team raised \$10,000. People are so **Good!** Our prayers are with you.  
Wanda....Austin, Texas

Thank you so very much for your generosity during this time. Your love and support is so very appreciated. People like you are making this difficult journey more bearable. I am grateful for all your thoughts and prayers. **Thank you so much for the Goodies!**  
With Love, Susie.....Pelham, AL

Dear Lenora and S.M. Support Group,  
Thank you so very much for thinking of me and for sending the beautiful package. You are so kind and thoughtful. I can't believe all the hand made gifts! I sleep in the soft blue cap every night. It's the first thing that is comfortable to sleep in that I've had. Everything is great & perfect. I pray for God to bless you in your special ministry. I would love to live near so that I could attend your support group but even so, I might have the opportunity at times. I would like to meet and thank each of you.  
Sincerely, Linda.....Pinson, AL

Dear Steel Magnolias,  
Thank you **to All of the Steel Magnolias**, you are a wonderful group of people.  
Thank You, Debra....Loganville, GA

Dear Steel Magnolias,  
Thank you for your participation in WISE Fest. Our celebration of women would not have been complete without your organization. A special thanks to Gladys, who was an absolute delight. She added immensely to our day with her intelligence, enthusiasm and her energy. Hope we can do more together in the future!  
Sincerely, Danielle, Trace and Tina W.I.S.E.....Jacksonville State University

**Brenda Johnson, Calhoun County School Nurse Supervisor, whose address was changed to Heaven on December 15, forwarded these emails to Steel Magnolias on November 19.**

I wanted to let you know that I was very impressed with Ms. Denizard's presentation. She is very comical, sincere, exciting, informative and is very welcoming and that is why I saw so much participation from the girls. I have also encouraged some of the ladies to at least take a look at her demo breasts so they can feel what normal, cystic, and tumors feel like. I know this has a special place in your heart. I really think the girls are taking it serious.  
Leigh Ann Patterson, LPN....Calhoun County Float Nurse (From Weaver High School)

Dear Gladys,  
Thank you so much for your time to come & speak with the girls here at Weaver High School.  
God Bless You, Bonnie Harris, LPN...School Health Nurse, Weaver High School

Ms. Denizard came and did her presentation to Coach Vinson's first 4 periods. She told us she couldn't stay all day and we tried to get some of the other students that had choir and band the first two periods to go and come to P.E. but Mr. Whatley said no. Also we asked if the Science teacher 's of 10th-12th grades would let their girls come to P.E., but that wasn't able to happen either. Maybe next time we can try and have an assembly with maybe 2 grades at a time. I think Ms. Denizard did fine. I was able to sit thru her first presentation and I enjoyed it.

Sheila Wilson, LPN.....White Plains High School

(Note) **It is the hope of Steel Magnolias that the classes missed at White Plains can be scheduled in January.**

### **Christmas Celebration**

**Steel Magnolias is so very blessed to have many creative people in our group, as well as creative friends who are valuable associates.** At this year's Christmas program, we were blessed to have a tribute, "Our Volunteer, Gladys," written by Marti Warren and a Christmas poem, written on December 10, 2008 by Bear Hugger, Geri Smith. Our December 13, party started with Geri Smith's poem:

#### **"Celebrating Christmas"**

The season for love and the season for hugs  
The season for thanking our Lord above  
The season for reaching out to old friends  
To those who need us, to lend them a hand.

The season of celebration, understanding too  
The season of counting blessings in all that we do  
The season to remember again and again  
The special blessings of family and friends.

The reason for the season, we can attest  
Is the reason for love and happiness...  
He was born in a manger, and died for our sins  
Celebrating Jesus, our Savior and friend.

Gerri Smith 12-10-2008

#### **Our Volunteer, Gladys**

Twelve days before Christmas, Steel Magnolias were meeting  
To celebrate the season, great friends and great eating.  
While many of our sisters give generously of their time,  
There's none like our Gladys, and Oh, DOES SHE SHINE!  
She lovingly meets new victims of breast cancer  
To the Tyler Center they go, our Benevolent Closet is there,  
To fit these women with boobs, bras, wigs and hats with care.  
You'll find her at health fairs, her Spanish flying,  
With women who are afraid of breast cancer, and sometimes they are crying.  
But that's not all our dear Gladys is doing.  
Our young girls, she is teaching to check their own breasts,  
To know how to find suspicious lumps in their tests.  
But did you all know Gladys has not shared our disease.  
She just loves to help others get well, she says, "Oh please."  
So here's to our volunteer, Gladys Denizard  
We love you, salute you and say thank you is not hard.  
Come forward, dear friend, we hold you so dear.  
Let us all now stand up and give her a cheer!

Marti Warren, December 13, 2008

Steel Magnolias Christmas Breakfast, Classic on Noble



Research in this area is focused on chemotherapeutic options, some improvement has been seen with very high dose chemotherapy regimens. This requires a bone marrow transplant after therapy, as the medication is so strong that it destroys the bone marrow. Also, some important strides are being made in the area of targeted therapy. That means profiling the genetics peculiar to an individual cancer cell line and creating the most lethal cocktail of drugs to attack it.

**Thank you Dr. Ashley Stewart!** (Dr. Ashley Stewart is a breast cancer surgeon with the surgical clinic at McClellan Medical Mall.) Got a question?... Steel Magnolias, P.O. Box 36, Jacksonville, or lenora@steelmagnoliasinc.org

### Financial Report

	November Balance	\$7,281.74
December	Monthly expenses	7,181.74
01 -100.00	Anniston Oncology: Fuel charge for Lincoln Patient to Wound Healing	7,121.74
01- 60.00	Advanced Printing: Brochures and note pads	6,914.00
01- 207.74	Jeff Owens & Associates-200, Marti's RAJ-500	7,614.00
02+ 700.00	Quintard Mall: Christmas Gift card for Lenora Johnson	7,514.00
13- 100.00	Gladys Denizard: Appreciation for contribution to Steel Magnolias	7,414.00
13- 100.00	Helen Henley: Appreciation for RMC contributions to Steel Magnolias	7,364.00
13- 50.00	Linda Barton: Appreciation for outstanding volunteer for Steel Magnolias	7,314.00
13- 50.00	Margaret Taylor: Snacks for Oncology Treatment Rooms	7,231.2
13- 82.80	Classic on Noble—33 meals @ 16 ea.—Annual Christmas Party....	6,649.20
13- 528.00	Pokey Warren: 2 dozen "Steel Magnolias are praying For You" cards	6,625.20
13- 24.00		
15+ 922.00	Swinging Stars Check (Benefit)-150, Ina & Jimmy Rooks- 150, Reimbursement for Classic on Noble (Checks)-176, Reimbursement on Noble (Cash)-276, Swinging Stars Silent Auction (100 check, 75 cash)-175	7,601.20

### Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday, January 27: Steel Magnolias and Men of Steel meeting at 5:00 p.m., Tyler Center, Men in Nook, Magnolias in the Galley.  
Chili Supper....Everyone attending, please bring:  
salad, fruit or light dessert

Tuesday, February 24: Steel Magnolias and Men of Steel meeting at 5:00 p.m., Tyler Center, Men in Nook, Magnolias in the Galley.  
Everyone please bring either: sandwiches, light dessert or fruit.  
Special Guest: Oxford Curves' Jo Ann Stephens and Reps. From Saks and Jacksonville Curves.

Pam Bussey flew to Denver, Colorado for the birth of a grandchild, Be sure and read her story, "Grand-mama's Mile High Drama," in the Feb. newsletter.

# Thank you for your support in 2008

Due to your support we had an exciting year:

## Services:

1. Care Packages....More than 75 breast cancer patients at RMC received care packages with gifts from Steel Magnolias, Tuesday Bear Huggers and
2. Quintard Mall Avon Beauty Center...30 care packages to patients in other AL counties or patients in other states.
3. Steel Magnolias Prayer Card.... More than 100 prayer cards were mailed by Steel Magnolias' Chaplain, Ina Rooks.
4. Steel Magnolias Group Meetings....Steel Magnolias meet 12 times a year, Jan.-June in the Tyler Center; July at the New Beginnings Banquet, location announced; Aug.-Nov. at the Tyler Center; Dec. at the Steel Magnolias Christmas party, location is announced. Attendance at meetings were from 15 to 30. Record attendance at July and Dec. events
5. Dining Vouchers....Provided meals for 200 family members of cancer patients at RMC Cafeteria.
6. Benevolent Closet....Many patients met Gladys Denizard at the Tyler Center for a prosthesis, wig, bra, hat or scarf.
7. Steel Magnolias Newsletter....We mailed a record number of monthly newsletters from the RMC Mailroom. Hundreds of people receive our newsletter in their personal email, others download the newsletter from [www.steelmagnoliasinc.org](http://www.steelmagnoliasinc.org) Newsletter provides information, education, inspiration and laughter. (No letter in Dec.)
8. Website....[www.steelmagnoliasinc.org](http://www.steelmagnoliasinc.org) Developed into an effective outreach tool. Contact: [lenora@steelmagnoliasinc.org](mailto:lenora@steelmagnoliasinc.org)
9. Steel Magnolias RMC office....Thanks to RMC, even though our office is staffed part time, our phone (256) 231-8827) allows us to check messages several times a day. Fax (256) 231-8828.
- 10.Men of Steel....Directed by Jimmy Taylor has completed 1 year.
11. 7th—12th Grade Awareness Program....Mandy McFall, Registered Mammographer taught students in Alexandria & Ohatchee High Schools....Gladys Denizard taught students in Wellborn, Weaver & White Plains High Schools. Saks and Pleasant Valley High Schools await scheduling.
- 12.Snacks for patients taking chemotherapy...Transportation funding for stranded patients.

Steel Magnolias is a volunteer, 501 c 3 non-profit, organization. No one is paid a salary! We are now planning our April 11, Bake & Jewelry Sale at Quintard Mall. Please contribute your stored, forgotten, costume jewelry. Call Marti (256) 239-0855. Carry or ship jewelry to Cotton Antiques & Collectables, 518 Main St., Oxford, AL.36203, clearly marked "For Steel Magnolias." All contributions are tax exempt. Marti takes broken pieces and shattered beads and creates beautiful one of a kind treasures

## Here Goes

### Family of the Groom

At an Easter mass, at which some young ladies were to take their final vows to become nuns, the presiding bishop noticed two rabbis enter the church just before mass began. They were seated at the back of the sanctuary and insisted on sitting on the right side of the center aisle. The bishop wondered why they had come but didn't have time to inquire before mass began. When it came time for some announcements, his curiosity got the best of him. He announced that he was delighted to see two rabbis in their midst at the mass but was curious as to why they were present at this occasion where young ladies were to become "Brides of Christ." The eldest of the rabbis slowly rose to his feet and explained, "Family of the Groom." Courtesy of....Pokey

### Pregnancy Test

The other day, my neighbor, who is a little naïve, came running up to me in the driveway just jumping for joy! I didn't know why she was jumping for joy but I thought, "What the heck," and I started jumping up and down along with her. She said, "I have some really great news!" I said, "Great. Tell me why you're so happy." She stopped jumping and breathing heavily from all the jumping up and down, and told me that she was pregnant! I knew that she had been trying for a while so I told her, "That's great! I couldn't be happier for you!" Then she said, "There's more." I asked, "What do you mean more?" She said, "well, we are not having just one baby. We are going to have TWINS!" Amazed at how she could know so soon after getting pregnant, I asked her how she could know....She said, "Well, that was the easy part. I went to Wal-Mart and they actually had a home pregnancy kit in a TWIN- pack. Both tests came out positive!" Courtesy of....Marti R.

### On Safari

A big game hunter goes on Safari with his wife and his mother-in-law . One morning, the wife wakes up to find her mother gone. Immediately, she awakens her husband and they both set off to find the old woman. Suddenly, they break into a clearing and there's the mother-in-law, standing face-to-face with a ferocious lion! "Quick, Darling," the wife shouts, frantically, "do something!" "Oh no," the husband says, "That lion got himself into this mess, let him get himself out!" Courtesy of.....Marti R.

### Husband Passed Away

Mary Clancy goes up to Father O'Grady after his Sunday morning service, and she's in tears. He says, "So what's bothering you, Mary my dear?" She says, "Oh Father, I've got terrible news. My husband passed away last night." The priest says, "Oh, Mary, that's terrible. Tell me Mary, did he have any last requests?" She says, "That he did, Father." He said, "Please Mary, put down that darned gun!" Courtesy of....Gudrun

### Insights on Aging

The local paper sent a reporter out for my 90th birthday. He asked the secret to my longevity. "Simple," I sez to him....."KEEP BREATHING!"

I knew the romance was dead when I drank champagne out of the old girl's slipper and choked on a Dr. Scholl's foot pad. Courtesy of.....Rhonda

### Laughter Increases Longevity....Funny Quotes

My doctor is wonderful. Once, when I couldn't afford an operation, he touched up the x-rays.....Joey bishop

I am a marvelous housekeeper. Every time I leave a man, I keep his house.....Zsa Zsa Gabor

If you like your passport photo, you're too ill to travel....Willkommen

Misers aren't fun to live with, but they make wonderful ancestors....David Brenner

I'm not going to vacuum 'til Sears makes one you can ride on....Roseanne Barr

The most remarkable thing about my mother is that for 30 years she served us nothing but leftovers. The original meal has never been found....Calvin Trillin

My grandmother was a very tough woman. She buried three husbands and two of them were just napping..... Rita Rudner

My grandmother is over eighty and still doesn't need glasses. Drinks right out of the bottle...Henry Youngman  
Courtesy of.....Pokey