

# Steel Magnolias

Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc.

## The Sounds of Change

March 16, 2009

### Nature's Travail

We have all heard the saying, *If you don't like the weather, just wait a minute.* Alabama, February 27 –March 1, was certainly true to the saying. The last few days of February, Mother Nature convulsed in travail, struggling to break winter's grip. Depending on where you lived in Alabama, there was flooding, tornados, and hail storms. Temperatures were warm enough for shirt sleeves.

Not to be outdone, Sunday brought 1 to 5 inches of snow to almost every Alabama county. And, there was wind! March came in like a lion! On Monday morning, March 1, we awoke to find a pine tree on top of our house. In forty years of living in the same house, this was a first!

Today, March 6, the weather is beautiful and we are promised a week of temperatures in the seventies!

In 1963, my family moved to Calhoun County, Alabama, from Collier County, Florida

(Big Cypress Swamp). I was so inspired by Fall's colorful leaves, I wrote a poem, "Season's of Life."

Not until the fall of 1999, after being diagnosed with breast cancer, did I associate the turbulence of Nature in travail with the storms that gripped my spirit.

Working with patients, some with no insurance and few assets, has added a new dimension to that travail.

Who are these uninsured women? They are newly divorced, single mothers with children, recently retired women, wives of sub-contractors: women working in the service industries, etc., etc. Why don't they have insurance? These questions have a wide array of answers, all boil down to one answer. After paying for food, lodging and other essentials, there is no money to pay the high premiums charged by insurance companies.

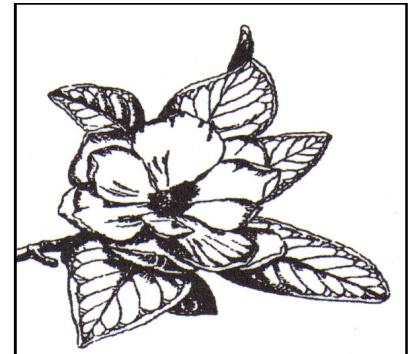
Why a program for breast cancer patients? Working with the Chaplain's office at RMC, Steel

Magnolias, in 2008, ministered to almost 100 breast cancer patients. All other cancer patients: Thyroid, Skin, Lung, Colon, Rectum, Bladder, Prostate, Kidney, Stomach, Liver, Pancreas, Hodgkins Lymphoma, totaled 36.

Women are the caretakers of the health of a family. A real mother will not take food from her children's mouths or chance losing the roof from over their heads in order to get treatment until she has very uncomfortable symptoms. By that time, she has probably lost her window of opportunity to survive her battle.

The loss of a wife or mother can mean that dependent children or a disabled husband can become wards of the state.

There are many dedicated people working on behalf of Alabama's uninsured. While storms raged, Friday, February 27, Nancy Wright, Director Breast and Cervical Cancer Division, Bureau of Family Health Services, drove



**Sharing love through support**

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.....  
from Montgomery and Ellen Zahariadis, Executive Director of Susan G. Komen, for the Cure, North Central Alabama Affiliate, drove from Birmingham, to Cotton Antiques and Collectables, in Oxford, to meet with Marti Warren and me. Early Friday, I called Ellen and strongly suggested that we conduct our meeting through email. It took very strong dedication and devotion to the cause of uninsured Alabama women for Nancy and Ellen to drive through wind and pouring rain for this meeting.

Ellen and Nancy wanted Steel Magnolias to know that they agree with us about the need for Alabama to join 29 other states in providing access to treatment for breast and cervical cancer patients. In the south, only Alabama and Florida require an uninsured woman to make her way through bureaucratic hurdles in order to have access to treatment through the Medicaid Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act, that became law in Alabama in 2001.

Insufficient funding has really crippled this program. March 4, "Wear Pink Shoes," lobby day, at the State House in Montgomery, was a trip to influence legislators to restore funding for the ADPH Screening Program (BCCEDP)

On the Agenda: **Restore and increase state funding for BCCEDP**

**Allow qualified women screened by any medical provider to get treatment through Medicaid**

Steel Magnolias is asking state legislators, to give qualifying, uninsured, breast and cervical cancer patients access to treatment for their cancer, regardless of who diagnosed their disease. This requires additional funding from the state, with additional funds coming from the federal government.

Nancy told us that in every county in Alabama, clinics and doctors, of various specialties, are certified by Medicaid to provide for uninsured breast and cervical cancer patients. These professionals accept Medicaid as full payment for services they provide. In Calhoun County, I requested a list of local doctors and clinics. Upon approval from Calhoun County's caring professionals, Nancy gave me the go-ahead to publish information so that uninsured, at risk women, who read our newsletter, will have a road map as they seek a way of getting life saving treatments.

I urge everyone, **KEEP THE INFORMATION** on this page, so you can pass it on to someone who needs to know!

**Guidelines For Uninsured Breast and Cervical Cancer Patients**

-We have eleven contracts in Calhoun County. Three of them are primary care providers/county health department where women can enroll in the program. The others are radiology clinics: (2) mammogram facilities....(3) Breast surgeons....(2) Anesthesiologists....(1) that provide services once a woman has an abnormal result from her mammogram. (NEARMC is one of the 3 mammogram facilities we have a contract with. The contact is Nick Kaufman, Practice Manager.) (Jacksonville Medical Center is a mammography facility.)

**Women** who are **50-64**, at or below 200% of poverty level, and have no insurance **can enroll at the three sites** below:

**Calhoun County Health Department: Holly Brown/Jacqueline Hires ((256) 237-7523**

**QOL-Anniston Quality Health Care: Cathy Goggins (256) 236-0221**

**Anniston OB/GYN Associates: Betty Shepard (256) 237-6755**

**Women** who are **40-49**, at or below 200% of the poverty level, and have no insurance can enroll at **Calhoun County Health Department ONLY!!!!**

Any woman who wants **to find out if they are eligible for the program** can call **1-877-252-3324**

**This information was provided by: Nancy Wright, Director, Alabama Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program and Rita Maynard, Regional Screening Coordinator Area 6 & Area 8**

If you are an uninsured Alabama woman with concerns about your breast, **younger than 40**, please call Steel Magnolias for additional information.

**(256) 231-8827 or Email <lenora@steelmagnoliasinc.org>**

**Rep. Lea Fite called to say he has help from the health department and that they have amended our bill. He also said he has asked the help of American Cancer Society Lobbyist, Ginny Campbell, and that we have no promises but we are closer than last year. We haven't yet seen the amendment. Steel Magnolias may not succeed in our campaign to change Alabama's inequitable policy, but ignorance of the law is no longer a legitimate excuse for inaction.**

## Threads That Weave Through The Passing of Time

(Reprinted from June 19, 2005 Newsletter)

In February of this year, Steel Magnolias received a call from Sarah O'Dell, a dear uninsured lady from Heflin, AL. We felt sure that Sarah would be able to receive a mammogram through the annual Altrusa Club screening. During the month of March, at the Tyler Center, women could get free screening for breast cancer. Because Sarah had already seen an OBGYN and a surgeon, she was considered to have a pre-existing condition.

Because of Sarah and a few other uninsured women who contacted us about the need for diagnosis of a lump in their breast, Marti Warren called every conceivable organization to seek services for uninsured women. Through this search, we learned that Susan G. Komen Foundation had made a grant of over \$114,000 to the Alabama Public Health Dept., for the purpose of providing mammograms and other testing for uninsured women who are suspect for breast cancer. In April, Sarah called Marti Warren to see if we had any better news for her. Marti instructed Sarah to call me because I had the needed information.

Just as I'd done with another woman, I gave Sarah the telephone number of Komen AL Executive Director, Ellen Zahariadis. From Ellen, Sarah learned the name of the person to contact at the Calhoun Co. Health Dept. The health dept. sent Sarah to OB/GYN, Dr. Collins, who ordered Sarah's test. She is awaiting the results of her mammogram. Now the rest of the story:

Sarah, while speaking to me, in April, said, "My sister knows you." I asked, "Who is your sister?" Sarah replied, "Rosa Lee King." I immediately thought of how mine and Rosa Lee's paths had crossed and re-crossed. While working as a dental assistant in Heflin, during the sixties, I met a beautiful young girl who came to have dental work. I knew she lived with a Ms. Otwell. Only now, did I learn of the hardships that placed her with a foster mom.

Sarah told me some of the Sarah and Rosa Lee story and on Thursday, May 26, 2005, I sat at Rosa Lee's dining table and listened, while Rosa Lee relived the events of so many years ago. I asked Rosa Lee if I had permission to print this moving story in the Steel Magnolias Newsletter. She said that she and Sarah had talked about it and they wanted their story told. I would never have known that behind the sparkling eyes of the beautiful girl who came into Dr. Owen's Dental Office, lived a girl who had experienced such desperate circumstances.

When Rosa Lee was about 11 years old and Sarah was 12, their mother, Julia Taylor, who raised her children in absolute poverty, had a stroke. Abandoned by their father, Sarah, being the eldest, told her sister, "Rosa Lee, we have to get jobs so we can take care of ourselves." Rosa Lee got a job cleaning Ms. Otwell's house, beauty shop and working at Otwell's Quick Shop, tending gas pumps. Rosa Lee said, "I just about raised Ms. Otwell's children." Rosa Lee was taken in by Ms. Otwell, who said, "There is just something about that little girl." Rosa Lee said that Ms. Otwell treated her just like she was a daughter and Rosa Lee lived in that residence until she was 19.

Sarah got a job cleaning Ms. Harris' Boarding House. Sarah ironed sheets and pillow cases, as well as scrubbing floors, bathrooms and whatever else needed cleaning. At night, Sarah would go home to sleep in her mother's house. Sarah married at 16 and left her mother's house, if you can call one room a house.

The next time I saw Rosa Lee was in the mid seventies at Calhoun County's Roy Webb School. My husband, Prentiss and I were enrolling our eldest son, Van in the first grade. I turned and looked into the face of Rosa Lee. I said, "Rosa Lee, what are you doing in Roy Webb School?" She replied, "I'm enrolling my son, James." The same sparkle that I saw in the beautiful teenager that came into the Heflin dental office, I now saw in the face of a beautiful young mother. James and Van graduated Pleasant Valley High School together in 1987.

Through the years, mine and Rosa Lee's paths have crossed and re-crossed, little did I know that Rosa Lee had a sister or that one day, our paths would cross. I thank God that He allowed Marti and me to be part of offering some service to Sarah, who, since childhood, has scraped and struggled for everything in her life.

Rosa Lee said, "Sarah and I had a sweet mother who loved us, she was sick and just had no means to care for us."

PRAISE GOD!!! The Sarah's of the state of Alabama have Representative Lea Fite and other legislators, the Steel Magnolias, Komen Alabama, the Alabama Public Health Dept., Medicaid and American Cancer Society, making every effort to see that they have access to Breast & Cervical Cancer Treatment, through the Alabama Medicaid Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act.



Jan. 2009

Thanks for the beautiful flowers (pink azaleas-small; gorgeous) and lovely card. Continue to lift me up in your prayers. Love to all of you, Carol.....Jacksonville, AL

God bless you Carol, and thank you. You are special to Steel Magnolias.

### **Steel Magnolias and Men of Steel Meeting at the Tyler Center**

With great anticipation, Steel Magnolias Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc. met in the Tyler Center Galley, Tuesday, February 24, at 5:00 p.m. Ina Rooks started our meeting by reading the names on our prayer list, offering prayer for each one and returning thanks for our food. Following a great meal, our special guests presented a great program.

Joann Stephens, owner of Oxford Curves For Women, invited Sandy Smith, owner of the Sak's Curves, and at my request, invited Trudi Loy, Owner of the Piedmont Curves and Ruby Keith, Manager of the Jacksonville, Curves. Later, Trudi said, "Ruby and I were just eye candy." Far from it, Curves in Piedmont is the Tuesday Bear Hugger and Steel Magnolias Depot. I wanted our Steel Magnolias members to meet the generous woman who graciously allows us to leave and pick up packages at her business. As for Ruby, she is one of my favorite people and when I was a member of Jacksonville Curves, she and I had great talks and I learned much about rising above discouragement, as well as recognizing how God was working through my life. Thank you Ruby and Trudi!

Joann was our first speaker. She said if she had not had several days to edit her notes, we would have been there for a couple of days. Joann told us of how a breast cancer survivor benefits from regular exercise. I asked for Joann's notes but someone else took them so I will try from memory, yeah!, Chemo brain and old-agers brain, Ha!

Joann reminded us that the fatter a woman is, the greater amount of estrogen she has because fat retains estrogen. When a woman participates in a regular exercise program, she replaces fat with muscle, decreasing her risk of being diagnosed with estrogen receptor positive breast cancer. Breast cancer survivors who exercise regularly, increase their odds of never having a recurrence

Joann went on to say that every system of our body benefits from regular exercise: digestion, elimination, bone density, skin and probably most importantly, our coping skills, memory and just generally a sharper mind.

Sandy Smith talked about the exercise equipment and told us the machines are designed to give you 90 minute workout in 30 minutes. She said when a woman joins Curves, she is asked a series of questions so that her Curves manager will know what she hopes to accomplish. She is weighed, counseled about a healthy diet and she has the support of other women who are exercising at the same time as she.

.Thank you to Calhoun County's ladies of Curves! We enjoyed your company, your great advice and we thank you for great gifts!

### **Business Meeting**

President, Marti Warren called our business meeting to order. In Margaret Taylor's absence, Lenora Johnson read the minutes, they were approved as read. Treasurer, Nancy Burnell gave the financial report that was approved as read.

**Old Business:** **1)** Marti Warren reminded everyone of the April 11, Bake and Jewelry sale at Quintard Mall and encouraged everyone to bring contributions of jewelry to Cotton Antiques and Collectables or call @ (256) 239-0855. **2)** Marti also reminded everyone of the need for help with the newsletter, on the third Monday of the month, 12:30 p.m., at the RMC West main lobby. Lenora thanked Gloria and Theresa for helping in February; Marti R and Keither helped in January. **3)** Lenora distributed empty Petition Lists. We have already mailed 4 installments of petitions signed by concerned citizens, to legislators, asking for their votes for Lea Fite's bill (HB147) concerning the loophole in the Medicaid Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act. **4)** Lenora told everyone that she had bought a prayer calendar for each of her grandchildren. 100 calendars, "My Gift To The Baby Jesus," were contributed to Steel Magnolias by Galassini & Associates, Montgomery, AL, through Jimmy and Margaret Taylor. These beautiful prayer calendars, with original art by Susan Poole, sell for \$5.00. Ina bought 5 for her grandchildren and Rhonda took 15 to sell.

Business meeting was adjourned....

## Financial Report

February	Balance Brought forward	\$7,001.21
01-100.00	Lenora Johnson, Monthly Expense	6,901.21
04- 87.20	Advanced Printing, 27 posters/500 flyers	6,814.01
04- 16.80	Margaret Taylor, Postage	6797.21
05-444.94	Office Max, Brother's Wireless Printer/Ink Cartridges/Warranty	6352.27
06+220.00	Oxfordfest, In honor of Nancy Burnell (200) Ina Rooks (10) Nancy B. (10)	6,572.27
06- 45.15	Armstrong Florist, Flowers for Carol Wilson	6,527.12
24- 17.74	Marie Harbin, Postage	6,509.38
24-213.38	Lenora Johnson, Reimbursement: Office Max (50.80) Roll of stamps (42) Postage for Petitions to Montgomery ((50.98) Large Envelopes (31.59) Postage for Petitions (11.76) Winn Dixie Fellowship Supplies (16.87) Petition Postage (9.38)	6296.00
25-126.63	Advanced Printing, Notepads	6,169.37

**Thank you to everyone who signed a petition/said a prayer  
One Hurdle Overcome!!**

**House Government appropriations Committee/ 15 members/  
Unanimous Vote YES for Rep. Lea Fite's bill, (HB147) amended by  
State Health Department: to Close Loophole in  
2001 Medicaid Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act  
Steel Magnolias/Komen Alabama Executive Director Ellen Zahariadis/  
Rep. Lea Fite/Legislators/ACS Lobbyist, Ginny Campbell/  
ADPH Dr. Donald Williamson & Director Nancy Wright/  
Greg Flanders/Peggy Kelley/Local Churches**

**Are working tirelessly to change Alabama policy and provide better access to treatment for  
Alabama uninsured women who are diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer!**

**NOTICE To uninsured women who suspect breast or cervical cancer  
Until HB147 becomes law you must be seen at the Health Department  
before seeing a doctor.....For more information  
Call (256) 231-8827 or Email lenora@steelmagnoliasinc.org**

### **Mark Your Calendars**

**Tuesday, March 24, 5:00 p.m. Steel Magnolias & Men of Steel Meet. Men in Nook,  
Magnolias in the Galley. Dr. Vadlamani, Oncologist— Debi Kaufman— and Dr. Chai,  
Surgeon will be sharing food and fellowship with Steel Magnolias. Keither has asked  
everyone to bring your favorite casserole, salad (fruit /vegetable) or light dessert**

**Saturday, April 11, 9:00 am—5:00 pm Annual Steel Magnolias Bake and Jewelry Sale  
Quintard Mall in front of Kirklands**

**Time is getting close! We need your contribution of costume jewelry!  
Call Marti Warren (256) 239-0855—Give to any Steel Magnolia—Take to Cotton Antiques  
Marti Rogers is keeping Steel Magnolias office on Thursday & Friday till further notice**

## **Joggin' Inside**

### **Tavern and Church**

In a small conservative town, a new bar/tavern started a building to open up their business. With petitions and prayers, the local Baptist church started a campaign to block the bar from opening. Work however, progressed right up until the week before opening, when a lightening strike hit the bar and it burned to the ground. The church folks were rather smug in their outlook after that, until the bar owner sued the church on the grounds that the church was ultimately responsible for the demise of his building, either through direct or indirect actions or means. In its reply to the court, the church vehemently denied all responsibility or any connection to the building's demise. As the case made its way into court, the judge looked over the paperwork and at the hearing commented, "I don't know how I'm going to decide this, but as it appears from the paperwork, we have a bar owner that believes in the power of prayer, and an entire church congregation that doesn't." Courtesy of....Greg

### **Polish Divorce**

A Polish man moved to the USA and married an American girl. Although his English was far from perfect, they got along very well. One day he rushed into a lawyer's office and asked him if he could arrange a divorce for him. The lawyer said that getting a divorce would depend on the circumstances, and asked him the following questions:

- 1) Have you any grounds? "Yes, an acre and half and a nice little home."
- 2) No, I mean what is the foundation of the case? "It made of concrete."
- 3) I don't think you understand. Does either of you have a real grudge? "No, we have carport, and not need one."
- 4) I mean, what are your relations like? "All my relations still in Poland."
- 5) Is there any infidelity in your marriage? "We have hi-fidelity stereo and good DVD player."
- 6) Does your wife beat you up? "No, I always up before her."
- 7) Why do you want this divorce? "She going to kill me."
- 8) What makes you think that? "I got proof."
- 9) What kind of proof? "She going to poison me. She buy a bottle at drugstore and put on shelf in bathroom. I can read, and it say: 'Polish remover.' Courtesy of....Greg

### **The Gynecologist**

A gynecologist had become fed up with malpractice insurance and HMO paperwork and was burned out. Hoping to try another career where skillful hands would be beneficial, he decided to become a mechanic. He went to the local technical college, signed up for classes, attended diligently, and learned all he could. When the time for the practical exam approached, the gynecologist prepared carefully for weeks and completed the exam with tremendous skill. When the results came back, he was surprised to find that he had obtained a score of 150%. Fearing an error, he called the instructor, saying, "I don't want to appear ungrateful for such an outstanding result, but I wonder if there is an error in the grade." The instructor said, "During the exam, you took the engine apart perfectly, which was worth 50% of the total mark. "You put the engine back together again perfectly, which is also worth 50% of the mark. After a pause, the instructor added, "I gave you an extra 50% because you did it through the muffler, which I've never seen done in my entire life." Courtesy of....Pokey

### **Hearing**

Leroy and Agnes go to a revival and listen to the preacher. After awhile the preacher asks anyone with needs to be prayed over to come forward to the front at the altar. Leroy gets in line, and when it's his turn, the preacher asks, "Leroy, what do you want me to pray about for you?" Leroy replies, "Preacher, I need you to pray for my hearing." The preacher puts one finger in Leroy's ear, and he places the other hand on top of Leroy's head and he prays and prays and prays, and he prays a blue streak for Leroy. After a few minutes, the preacher removes his hands, stands back and asks, "Leroy, how is your hearing now?" "I don't know, Reverend, it ain't till next Wednesday!"  
Courtesy of.....Gudrun

### **Traffic Camera**

A man was driving when a traffic camera flashed. He thought his picture was taken for exceeding the speed limit, even though he was not speeding. Just to be sure, he went around the block and passed the same spot, driving even more slowly, but again the camera flashed. He thought this was quite funny, so he slowed down even further as he drove past the area, but the traffic camera flashed yet again. He tried a fourth time with the same result. The fifth time he was laughing when the camera flashed as he rolled past at a snail's pace. Two weeks later, he got five traffic fine letters in the mail for driving without a fastened seat belt. Courtesy of....Pokey

*We Cross The Oceans, Climb Mountains Steep  
Praying for the Cure, Our Daughters to Keep*

*We Are Steel Magnolias!*

*Thank you for your support in 2008*

*Due to your support we had an exciting year:*

**"Climb for the Cause: A Breast Cancer Story"  
Free Dinner Theatre**

**We began an Awareness Program  
for High School Girls**

**Provided snacks for patients in treatment**

**85 breast cancer patients at RMC  
received a Care Package with gifts from  
Steel Magnolias, Tuesday Bear Huggers and  
The Quintard Mall Avon Beauty Center**

**Provided meals for 200 family members  
of cancer patients in surgery at RMC**

**Provided transportation funding  
for stranded patients**

**Care Packages mailed to patients  
not only in Calhoun County  
but also other counties in Alabama  
and in other states**

**Online monthly newsletter and  
website developed with  
special information providing  
inspiration, education and laughter**

**We need contributions of  
old costume jewelry!!**

**Mail Contribution to:  
P O Box 36  
Jacksonville, AL 36265**

**Please continue your support in 2009  
We will accept costume jewelry, jewelry boxes  
and as always monetary donations,  
please call the office for more information  
(256) 231-8827  
lenora@steelmagnoliasinc.org**

**Local contribution can be delivered to:  
Cotton's Antiques and Collectibles  
518 Main Street  
Oxford, Al 36203  
Call Marti  
256-239-0855  
(clearly marked for  
Steel Magnolias' donation)**

**ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX EXEMPT  
please include contributor's  
name and address**

 *Steel Magnolias* 

**ANTIQUÉ JEWELRY SHOW**

**& BAKE SALE**

**QUINTARD MALL**

**(IN FRONT OF KIRKLAND'S)**

**APRIL 11, 2009**