

Steel Magnolias

Breast Cancer Support Group, Inc.

Change

August 18, 2014

"The One Constant in Life is Change"

Greek Philosopher, Heraclitus who was active around 500 yrs. BCE, is credited with this quote. However, from Genesis through Revelation, we read about the inevitability of change.

Even though we all know that change is an unavoidable part of life, we all resist change, some more than others. Change was more painful for Prentiss than for me. I think that was because I had experienced more change in my childhood. Prentiss and I reared our sons on property that Prentiss had lived on since he was 10 years old and only 1/4 mile from where he was born.

We also live at a time when there is great resistance to aging. I am no exception as I'm sure is true of most everyone. One of my favorite scriptures is: ***"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 be faint."*** Isaiah 40:30-31

Regardless of age, we would all be more enthusiastic about our day to day life if we started each day with the belief that we were born for a purpose. Some people live long lives and some people don't. It is heartbreaking, even for the unaffected outsider to hear of the passing of a young person. We try to block even the reality we all know, because of the precious children, young adults, people of all ages who have lost their battles with diseases of all kinds.

My sister, Betty, two years younger than me, was called to her heavenly home in 2009. Five years earlier, she lost her youngest son, age 27. Thomas Gerald Skelton, named for my brother, Thomas Gerald Washington, was diagnosed a few days after his birth with classic hemophilia (a disorder characterized by the blood's inability to clot). Then at age 11, Tommy was diagnosed with HIV (the AIDS virus). He contracted the virus through the blood supply upon which he had depended his entire life. Tommy's stark reality caused frightening nightmares; his mom encouraged him to record his dreams. At first his writings were dark. His writings, in poetic form, helped him come to grip with his thoughts and feelings. As time passed, Tommy's writings became more positive. From Thomas Gerald Skelton's recently published book, *Through The Valley*, published by Tate Publishing--

SEARCHING

Thomas (Tommy) Gerald Skelton

*We will all feel pain, we all will cry,
The end is inevitable, we all will die.
Situations may vary from life to life,
But you cannot dwell on struggle and strife.*



Sharing love through support

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*We all have a purpose, something we must do,
A mission to complete before our time is through.
On the day we were born we were given a gift,
Something to use to give hope and uplift.
You may not know your gift or the reason why you live,
But you must keep searching because your gift is to give.
And we must all learn to put aside ourselves to help others,
For in this fight we are all sisters and brothers.
And each and every person needs someone who can forget I,
To give support and wipe tears others cry.
And if your gift you've yet to find,
Turn and face the future and quit looking behind.
For everyone that's born unto the earth,
There is a reason for their birth.
So I stand before you today with my purpose revealed,
To tell you all, that in Heaven, we will be healed.*

In his forward to *Through The Valley*, Thomas Gerald Washington wrote: "Tommy's suffering is finished. These writings Tommy left behind have become his legacy for those suffering through disease, depression and other problems.

Through The Valley
Thomas Gerald Skelton
(Poetry/Subjects & Themes/Inspirational & Religious)
Published by Tate Publishing & Enterprises, LLC
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Proceeds from the sale of *Through The Valley* will go to the Hemophilia Foundation

I Know The Plans I Have For You

Jeremiah 29: 11-13

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord,
"Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

The 11th annual New Beginnings Banquet was outstanding! I am not writing a report on the banquet, Elaine Johns has a report in this newsletter. What I did want to comment on was the performance by Praise Dancer, Tommya Worthy. It was most inspiring! 15 year old Tommya danced to lyrics based on scripture, and recorded by Martha Munizzi. Tommya's mother, Amber, was kind enough to provide everyone in attendance with the powerful lyrics:

I Know the Plans
Martha Munizzi

***I know the plans I have for you
I know just what you're going through
So when you can't see
What tomorrow holds
And yesterday is through,
Remember I know,
The plans I have for you.

To give you hope for tomorrow
Joy for your sorrow
Strength for everything you go through
Remember I know the plans I have for you.***

submitted by Lenora Johnson, Founder

RECAP OF JULY EVENTS

I hope everyone that attended the 11th Annual New Beginnings Banquet enjoyed the evening. Elaine Johns welcomed everyone and asked Chaplin Wilson to say a few words and to bless our food. The dinner was great, Dr. Dave Roberts kept us entertained and our guest speakers were wonderful. Not to leave out the awesome singing by our soloist for the evening, David Shirley. We had 56 members and 43 guests that attended. Dr. Dave Roberts started the evening with a report on the Steel Magnolias accomplishments and information on services provided by the Steel Magnolias. The Steel Magnolias provided in the past year 504 dining vouchers, 66 care packages, \$800 in transportation funds and serviced 117 patients from the Pinks Boutique. Jimmy and Margaret Taylor gave a report on our successful golf tournament. They thanked all the Steel Magnolias and Men of Steel for making it our most profitable tournament yet. Many thanks to Mark Green, manager of Winn Dixie in Golden Springs, who provided our lunch again this year. Margaret recognized all the corporate sponsors individually and thanked all the hole sponsors for their continued support. Dr. Dave thanked Margaret and Jimmy for their hard work and dedication heading up the annual golf tournament.

Nancy Burnell introduced David Shirley, our soloist for the evening who touched us all in singing Amazing Grace, My Chains Are Gone and 4 Days Late. What a wonderful voice!

We were entertained by Claudia Johnson, a breast cancer survivor with her take on having cancer and surviving cancer. We all enjoyed her “soap opera” spill on life.

Dr. Dave asked for the Men of Steel to come forward to recognize them and their support for the Steel Magnolias. The Steel Magnolias were asked to stand also to be recognized. The Men of Steel then presented each of them with a beautiful rose, a very touching moment.

Dr. Dave then asked Lenora Johnson to come up. She was presented with a Founders Award plaque and a dozen roses. Lenora thanked everyone for such a special recognition.

Lenora introduced Tommya Worthy who performed an interpretive dance.

Dr. Dave closed the evening with the song “I hope You Dance”.

Submitted by Elaine Johns



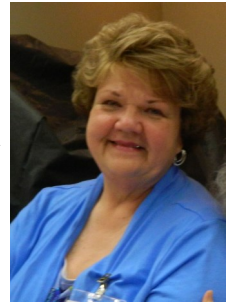


Survivor Story

My story by Marilyn Lawson

In God's number system seven is the number for perfection, completeness. August is the 7TH anniversary of my first visit to Steel Magnolias, thanks to Elizabeth McCabe.

In March 2007 I found a lump and went to see Dr. Young. He sent me to Dr. Clark. Two biopsies later (on my 60th birthday) Dr. Clark informs me...."you have cancer". On that blessed day I was waiting in the little exam room. I knew by that time it must be cancer. When Dr. Clark walked in and picked up the chart he grimaced and attempted to speak. I said, "Dr. Clark, I sense you have difficulty telling people they have cancer." He sat down, composed himself and said, "Yes, I just hate it. You are the second one today." I said to him, "Dr. Clark, it's going to be OK because I am in Good Hands, really Good Hands". He smiled and said "I have a feeling you are not talking about my hands." My response..."you're right." Then we got down to business. I'll skip the details, but it was stage 3 breast cancer. I opted for a lumpectomy and the surgery was scheduled. My only family, a daughter lives in Florida. She came up for the surgery and was here for 2 nights before she had to return home. My church family dropped the ball. Phew, breast cancer! Physically I was alone and in uncharted territory, the ball rolling faster than I could comprehend. Chemo began in June. That had to be one of the toughest challenge. I was so sick and so alone. Then Elizabeth McCabe invited me to a Steel Magnolia meeting in August. The meeting was held in the little kitchen area of the Tyler Center. There were about 12 to 15 ladies packed in that little room. But there was lots of love. People brought food, a make-up demo was given, there were door prizes and most of all these ladies were laughing and enjoying life. I hadn't laughed in 3 or 4 months! By the time I left that meeting I decided.... "there must be life after cancer". I've not missed many meetings since August 2007 and I still say..."yes, there is life after cancer. I'll always feel gratitude for Lenora and the organization she founded with God's help. I pray Steel Magnolias will continue to touch lives crushed by cancer.



Other July News

Steel Magnolias participated in the RMC sponsored Health Fair, Saturday, August 2. Thanks to the following volunteers for their help. Elaine Johns, Lawrence Gillespie, Connie & Steve Stephens, Linda Barton, Barbara & Chuck Trull, Keither and Roger Zeimet, Margaret Taylor, Marilyn Lawson, Nancy Buchmann and Nancy Burnell. With the help of these people we were able to tell over a hundred people about Steel Magnolias and our goal of providing services and support to women going through the journey of cancer. We collected emails from some of the people to receive our newsletter and took in \$169 in donations. Thank you again for stepping up and being there. Submitted by Nancy Gillespie

The board of directors met and discussed a proposed budget, changes to our by-laws and needed updates to all of our information being handed out. This will be presented at our next group meeting. Submitted by Elaine Johns

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, **August 26th** is our next Steel Magnolia Men of Steel meeting in the private dining room at RMC. We will have pizza. Steel Magnolias please bring salads, side dishes and desserts. Our speaker will be Kathryn Hindman. She is from RMC and will speak on nutrition. FYI we will be serving fat free pizza!

Thursday, **August 28th** RMC's 22nd Annual Cancer Survivor's Celebration will be held at the Anniston City Meeting Center. RSVP by Thursday, August 21st at 256-235-5877. The theme this year is "Hope Anchors The Soul". Dinner will be provided.

September 15th will be the next newsletter mailing day.

September 23rd the next Steel Magnolia Men of Steel meeting. More information will be in the September newsletter.

August is a quiet month. Get ready for October, Breast Cancer Awareness month. We always participate in the Ranburne walk, the Pink fire truck, Brighton Jewelry in Birmingham and we have talked about Oxford fest. Last year Chris Dudchock raised money for the Steel Magnolias by putting on a Zumbathon. The Swinging Stars Square Dance Club had a dance and silent auction to raise money for the Steel Magnolias. So please everyone plan participate in some way to help bring awareness in October.

On Thursday July 24th 22 members of the Steel Magnolias and Men of Steel attended the soft Grand Opening of Sam's Club of Oxford. The presentation of donations made to local non profit groups and other organizations in the Anniston and Oxford area were made by store manager, Tarah Pounders. Sam's Club gave \$25,000 in donations to our area. She presented the Steel Magnolias with a check for \$2,500. We are also thankful for Sam's Club's participation in our golf tournament providing us water to hand out and a TV for a door prize. We are praying for continued support in coming years.

Submitted by Elaine Johns



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Each month we want to feature a survivor's story. Please consider writing your story to let others know we are survivors! We all know there are struggles in this journey, but staying positive and staying connected with others is so important. This is not limited to members of the Steel Magnolias. Send your story to elaine@steelmagnoliasinc.org.

How would you like to help someone personally? Volunteer at the Steel Magnolia's office and aid cancer patients with a wig, bra or set them up with an appointment to be fitted with a prosthesis. The personal rewards are great! We are needing someone that is willing to fill in or work half days. If you feel you can help us here contact me at elaine@steelmagnoliasinc.org or nancy@steelmagnoliasinc.org.

If you are a newly diagnosed breast cancer patient or are reading our newsletter for the first time, contact us if you would like to talk to someone who has been on this journey. Get in touch with us at info@steelmagnoliasinc.org and give us your diagnosis, how you would like to be contacted (email or phone) and we will pair you up with someone with a similar diagnosis. If you are not a cancer patient and would like to be a volunteer, we need you! We meet the 3rd Tuesday of every month except July and December in the private dining room at RMC at 5pm.

We have found help in sewing for our care packages! The ladies @ Iron City Baptist church and a couple of ladies at Golden Springs Baptist Church are helping out. The Tuesday Bear Huggers are still our main group helping us, but the number of women we help is increasing as word gets out about our services. Thanks for all of your help in keeping us supplied with these needed items.

I want to encourage anyone receiving this newsletter by mail that would like to change to receiving it through email con-tact us at info@steelmagnoliasinc.org to be removed from the mailing list and added to the email listing.



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Steel Magnolias and Men of Steel,

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for the recognition of the passion, hard work and tenacity was necessary in founding Steel Magnolias. The award is a forever treasure and the beautiful roses in baby's breath brightened my table for over a full week. I've never had roses stay beautiful that long. Again, THANK YOU!

The past thirteen years, since founding Steel Magnolias, under Chaplain Wilson's umbrella, besides my family, has been the most meaningful endeavor of my life. God's vision for us is always bigger than we can dream. Chaplain Wilson told me that at some point, God was going to begin opening doors for Steel Magnolias, it would be up to me to walk through those doors. In the beginning, I trembled through what seemed impossible, but I learned that nothing is impossible with God. Remembering that the foundation of Steel Magnolias and testing every recommendation by that prayer will keep Steel Magnolias on solid ground.

My work with Steel Magnolias, over the past thirteen years has been a labor of love! Marilyn Lawson called Steel Magnolias, "Lenora's baby." In the beginning it was and each of you are precious to me. It is an accomplishment for which I'm most thankful that Steel Magnolias survived to be passed on to the next generation. Chaplain Wilson and I have been praying for over two years that God would provide leaders to take Steel Magnolias forward. I am truly thankful for the leadership abilities of Nancy Burnell and Elaine Johns. The membership of Steel Magnolias needs to be ready to step up to the plate, doing whatever is helpful so that Steel Magnolias can continue to be a lighthouse for cancer patients, especially cancers that are exclusive to women.

Sincere Love to Each of You,

Lenora Johnson, Founder

JOGGIN' INSIDE

Two barbershops were in red-hot competition. One put up a sign advertising haircuts for seven dollars. Not to be outdone, his competitor put up one that read, "we repair seven-dollar haircuts."
Submitted by Judy, Anniston AL.

The judge frowned at the tired robber and said, "Then you admit breaking into the same store on multiple occasions?" "Yes, your honor." "And why was that?" "Because my wife wanted a dress." The judge checked with his records, "But it says here you broke in three nights in a row!" "Yes sir," the man replied. "She made me exchange it two time."
Submitted by Judy, Anniston AL.

A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.
Submitted by Elaine, Anniston, AL

I was at a magic show, when after one particularly amazing trick, someone screamed out, "wow, how did you do that." I would tell you", answered the magician predictably, "but then I'd have to kill you." After a moments pause the same voice screamed out "can you tell my mother in law?"
Submitted by Elaine, Anniston, AL

An old man went to the Doctor complaining that his wife could barely hear. The Doctor suggested a test to find out the extent of the problem. "Stand far behind her and ask her a question, and then slowly move up and see how far away you are when she first responds." The old man excited to finally be working on a solution for the problem, runs home and sees his wife preparing supper. "Honey" the man asks standing around 20 feet away "what's for supper?" After receiving no response he tried it again 15 feet away, and again no response. Then again at 10 feet away and again no response. Finally he was 5 feet away "**honey what's for supper?**"
She replies "For the fourth time it's lasagna!"
Submitted by Elaine, Anniston, AL

Please send jokes to elaine@steelmagnoliasinc.org.



PSALMS by Donna Houston

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BOOKS
CLOISTER
COUNSEL
DAVID
FAITH
GOD
GRIPE
HEBREW
HEART
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HUMAN
INSTRUMENTS

JUDGE
JUSTICE
KING
MOVE
MUSIC
NEED
OLD TESTAMENT
PARALLELISM
PATTERN
PERSONAL
POETRY
PRAY
PSALMS
PSALTER

REBEL
RECOIL
REPENT
RIGHTEOUS
RULER
SELF
SONG
SOUL
SPAT
TITLES
TRUTH
VACUUM
VERSE
WISDOM