



Kathy & Ruth *Talk the Walk*

A Special Invitation



This picture was taken at an outdoor café in Thessaloniki, Greece in November. This was pre-training; however, we did log a lot of miles—some uphill!

It's beginning to look like we're trying to be like Oprah by putting pictures of ourselves on the "cover" of every issue. Next thing you know we'll be starting our own book club. (Hmmm, wonder if there's a way to turn that into a fundraiser?)

Now, about that special invitation. In talking with people about this event, we often hear how breast cancer has touched people's lives—they have friends, wives, mothers, aunts, etc. who have survived the disease or sadly who have succumbed to the disease. Some have faced it themselves.

We intend to find a way to bring those women along on our journey

as a way to honor them and to remind ourselves why we are there. We would like to carry their names with us during our 3-Day walk. If you donate in honor or in memory of someone, please provide us with their names and we will proudly walk with them.

In other news, fundraising and training are on track and we're beginning to think about what we want to see and do while we're in Seattle. We're going out the Saturday prior to the walk so we have a chance to explore Seattle and the surrounding area. We welcome suggestions from those of you who have been there or know anything about the area.

Profile in Courage—Karen McCommas

Contributed by her daughter, Amanda Dey and her niece, Shelly Ballesteros.

Breast cancer awareness has always been part of our family - our maternal grandmother had a bilateral radical mastectomy long before either one of us can remember. Her victory over breast cancer provided proof to her daughters (and granddaughters) that being diagnosed with breast cancer was not a death sentence. For the females of the family that meant monthly breast self-exams and regular mammograms.

My mother (and aunt), Karen McCommas, was no exception. She performed her self-exams and had regular mammograms until we moved from Texas to Kansas in November 2005. I had given birth just before the move and as always, my mother was there to help. Instead of finding a job immediately she took care of my newborn for six months. She then began her job search—after temp jobs, leaving a permanent job, and then waiting for insurance to kick in at her current employment, it had been around two years since her last mammogram.

In August 2006 she discovered a lump on the side of her left breast. The biopsy results came back positive for breast cancer. By September 2006 she had a left mastectomy with a second surgery to retrieve lymph nodes that were missed during the original surgery. The lymph nodes showed almost complete replacement of normal cells with cancer cells so the treatment plan was an aggressive one.

Every two weeks she received chemotherapy and then would give herself injections every day for 10 days following treatment. She scheduled her treatments for Fridays so she could rest over the weekend and return to work on Monday. Even after sleepless nights and all the side effects of the chemo she still

From left to right: Karen's daughter, Amanda Dey; her granddaughter, KC Dey; Karen McCommas; and Karen's niece, Shelly Ballesteros.



went to work every day. She is still going through Radiation treatment which should be finished by May.

Throughout it all, Karen has maintained that positive and bubbly attitude we know and love her for. She has never complained, never let being diagnosed or going through the various treatments get her down or prevent her from living her life. Karen is an amazing woman, full of courage and an enormous amount of strength.

Having breast cancer has never prevented Karen from the joys of being a wonderful Nana to my very active 2 ½ year old. She has been the epitome of strength - reminding us all that no matter what life gives you, you can overcome any obstacle.

Training Training Training Training Training Training



Kathy has recovered enough from busy season that she is regularly making it to the gym at 5:00 am to walk or crosstrain. Ruth is making it there, too, but not without moaning and groaning about it. Kathy is tired of her asking, "How much further?" after the first two laps.

On Saturday we will participate in a training walk with other Kansas City area 3-Dayers up north of the river. It will be nice to meet others who are as insane as we are. We'll be walking about six miles that day. Let's hope for decent weather!

Kathy's Cogitations

A special thank you to Ruth for filling in for the first two newsletters while I was in the midst of busy season. As my son, Jameson, said "I had a few laughs at some of the things Ruth said in your April newsletter." Thanks Superwoman for a great job.

Thanks too for inviting me (sometimes strongly pushing me) to join her on this journey. A journey of training our bodies to walk 60 miles over 3 days so that we can raise money for a worthy cause. I know there will be days ahead that will be a real struggle for me and I will wonder what I got myself into. However, from my experiences as a food service crew member in the 2006 event I know at the end I will get more out of the journey than what I put into it.

And as I close words of wisdom I recently heard (author unknown) "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery and today is a gift". Enjoy today.

Mo' Money Mo' Money Mo' Money Mo' Money

There isn't much new to report on the fundraising front. We continue to get donations though we haven't had a fundraiser in April. Our current total is \$3,248. We have less than \$1,200 to go!

Our next fundraiser is Mom-o-Grams for Mothers Day. The finalized flyer is enclosed.

At right, Kandi Oberlander accepts her prize winnings for the Brackets 4 Breast Cancer event. Kandi won \$133 and donated 25% of her winnings back to our cause. Thanks, Kandi! She wanted us to mention she is single and loaded (thanks to this windfall!)



Ladies, Don't Forget Your Monthly Breast Self-Exam!!!

Ruth's Reflections

"To pedicure or not to pedicure?" that is the question. Last year I intended to get a pedicure shortly after the walk. I didn't want to get one during training because if your feet are callused, you don't blister as badly. Well, during training, I lost three toenails. (I'm blaming that on shoes that didn't fit well despite the fact I paid high dollar for "properly fitted" shoes.)

Anyway, I didn't want to walk into the salon with three missing toenails, so I had to wait for them to grow back. I finally got a pedicure a couple of weeks ago. I won't get one again until after the walk in September. I hope to keep all my toenails this year.

I'll be wearing different shoes. I got three pair (for less than I spent on the one pair of "high dollar" shoes) on sale at Kohl's. I've learned that cashiers look at you a little funny when you buy multiple pairs of the exact same shoe at the same time. I've been wearing the first pair for a couple of months and so far, so good. They fit well even with the funky orthotic inserts.

That's it for me this time. Superwoman signing off.

Our next fundraiser:



See enclosed flyer for more details.
To purchase a Mom-o-Gram contact Ruth at 913-221-8620 or Kathyruth3day@yahoo.com.

If you would like to donate

You can visit our personal fundraising pages <http://www.the3day.org/seattle07/kathyungerer> <http://www.the3day.org/seattle07/ruthriggs>

or mail checks to

Kathy & Ruth
c/o Ruth Riggs
8400 W 131st Place, Apt 817
Overland Park, KS 66213

Your donation is tax deductible.
Make checks payable to "Breast Cancer 3-Day."

Why We Walk

Because every woman is at risk for breast cancer—a disease that strikes at random and for which the causes and cures are still unknown—we know that every moment counts:

- Without a cure, 1 in 8 women in the U.S. will continue to be diagnosed with breast cancer—a devastating disease with physical, emotional, psychological and financial pain that can last a lifetime.
- Without a cure, an estimated 5 million Americans will be diagnosed with breast cancer—and more than 1 million could die—over the next 25 years.
- Without a cure, an estimated 25 million women around the world will be diagnosed with breast cancer—and 10 million could die—over the next 25 years.