

Kathy & Ruth *Talk the Walk*



September 7-9, 2007

So Long, Farewell...For Now



Opening Ceremonies—Kathy and Ruth are decked out with their fanny packs (which they wear on their bellies) and are ready to go.

We cannot adequately describe what a moving and powerful experience this journey has been for us. The event itself was fantastic, but part of what made this 3-Day experience so great was all the support from friends and family—and in some cases people we don't know. We thank you again.

Our special thanks to the following:

- Our friend, Kathi Monter, for helping us raise money and training with us,
- Singles Available for Community Service (SACS) for their individual and group support,
- Uno Chicago Grill for the \$438 donation through our fundraiser, and
- Executive Limousines for the limo ride.

We wish we could list every individual who has supported us. Please know that we sincerely appreciate all donations, words of encouragement, and prayers.

We are already planning next year's newsletters. If you know someone who has been touched by breast cancer and want to honor them in our Profile in Courage section please contact us via e-mail at kathyruth3day@yahoo.com. We also welcome your feedback, suggestions and fundraising ideas.

Let us know if you have a change of address or would prefer to receive our newsletter via e-mail or mail (or not at all). This will be the last issue of "Kathy & Ruth Talk the Walk" until January 2008. Until then, best wishes to you all.

Profile in Courage—Deanna Piska

Contributed by Kathi Monter in honor of her sister-in-law.

While working on the farm on a spring day in April of 1999 my sister-in-law, Deanna, got her arm caught on a gate and sustained a couple of bruises—one of which did not disappear in a reasonable amount of time. She was due for a mammogram and decided to have one done to be on the safe side. That is when they found the lump not detectable by normal self breast exam.

She had a single mastectomy on the left side and was told no lymph nodes were involved. She went through chemotherapy but opted not to use the oral cancer drug Tamoxifen since the doctors indicated it was unnecessary at the time. That decision may not have been the right one as a scan showed later that Deanna's cancer had metastasized (spread) to the bone.

Deanna continued to have many setbacks. A second mastectomy on the other breast left her with a massive infection from implants, but she continued medication and treatments.

Based on the bleak outlook the doctors were giving and unsure of what the future would bring, Deanna and her husband, Jay—after many tears and heartache—decided to sell the farm and the business. They bought a 5th wheel and traveled. They landed in Texas where they wintered. They spent summers back home in Mason City, Iowa with family for the next few years.

All indications were that things were going well until this past year. It was then that doctors discovered there was a one-centimeter hole in her left femur from the cancer along with some other new spots. Deanna sustained more radiation this summer in Iowa to contain the cancer. More chemotherapy was also recommended.

A couple of weeks ago a decision was made to go back to Texas before winter set in and get the chemotherapy treatments started. So, off they went with a cocktail of pain medications in the new motor home they decided to buy in order to make things easier for Deanna to travel.



Deanna Piska—
September 2005

This profile in courage is not only about a very brave woman who has been through many painful operations, broken bones and time consuming treatments, but is also about Jay—the man who has stood beside the woman he calls "his bride"—loving and caring for her for all these years without any complaints. It is truly love, courage and faith that have seen them through. Please keep Deanna and Jay in your prayers as their fight is not over yet.

We like this sign at Opening Ceremonies: We walk because we must. We are strong because the journey demands it. Together in body and united in spirit, we lay down our footsteps for this generation and the next. This is our promise: a world without breast cancer.



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

Susan G. Komen Story

Contributed by Kathy. The following article is provided based on feedback from our readers. Information for this article was obtained from the komen.org website.

What is the Susan G. Komen story? Susan G. Komen died of breast cancer at the young age of 36 after a three year battle with the disease. Her sister, Nancy, was there with her through the struggle as much as the distance and her schedule would permit. Several times during her illness Susan talked to her sister about doing something to help the other sick women in the hospital who had breast cancer. Nancy promised her dying sister that she would put an end to the shame, the pain, the fear and the hopelessness that breast cancer caused.

In 1982, Nancy Brinker, along with a handful of dedicated friends, founded Susan G. Komen for the Cure in her sister's memory. At that time, the words "breast cancer" were never said in public and could not be used in the press. Few treatment options existed and hardly any researchers focused on the disease. Within a few years, Brinker, who led a relentless, one-woman breast cancer information and awareness

campaign, succeeded in breaching the silence surrounding the disease, changing the way it is talked about and treated.

For the past 25 years, Komen for the Cure has played a critical role in every major advance in the fight against breast cancer—transforming how the world talks about and treats this disease and helping to turn millions of breast cancer patients into breast cancer survivors.



The Survivors Circle at Closing Ceremonies. The center flag reads "A World without Breast Cancer."

Kathy's Cogitations

The 3-Day Seattle journey has come to an end. What an awesome experience and one I will never forget. As some of you already know I was able to walk the 60 miles in Seattle. I was lucky that blisters, injuries or falls were not an issue for me. The weather was perfect with high temperatures ranging from 72 to 76 degrees. The routes were very scenic and the community support was fantastic. Somehow the encouragement and thank yous heard from the spectators lined up along the trails and streets added an extra punch to my step no matter how tired I was at the time.

Although the training helped us through the physical part of walking you were all a part of this incredible Seattle 2007 journey with your donations, prayers, inspiration, words of encouragement, camp mail, feed back on our newsletter, the fundraising, and the donation of the limo ride by Executive Limousines. Thursday evening before the start of the 3-Day walk, Ruth and I made a toast to all the people who helped get us to that point. You should be proud.

The walkers who are survivors of breast cancer have a special honor in the opening and closing ceremonies. It was during this time I observed a significant number of survivors whose age I estimated to be 30 or 40 something. I think it was at that point that I decided this can't be a one time journey for me. God willing and with your continued support I hope to walk again in 2008—the city and date to be decided later. If anyone has an inclination or desire to participate in one of the 2008 3-Day events either as a walker or crew member we would be glad to share more information, pictures, training tips etc. Please send us an e-mail at KathyRuth3Day@yahoo.com.

So until the next newsletter (maybe January or February) take care and God Bless.



Kathy captured this message left in the sand by an unknown supporter. Messages like this were plentiful and encouraged us to keep going.

Money Update

Below is the final accounting of our fundraising efforts. Thanks for helping us reach our goal!

Donation	\$2,788
SuperBowl	\$1,140
Brackets 4 Breast Cancer	\$440
Mom-o-Grams	\$240
Uno Dough Raiser	\$438
Matching Funds	\$650
Total	\$5,696

Bonnie the Singing Bus Lady

Contributed by Ruth.



If you have to end up on a SAG bus, it helps to have someone like Bonnie on board. A SAG bus is for walkers who have to leave the route—usually for medical reasons.

I was disappointed to find myself on a bus rather than walking, but Bonnie encouraged me and the others on board and brightened our day with cheerful songs she wrote. Thanks, Bonnie! Below is one of her songs.

3-Day Things

(Tune: My Favorite Things)

Thousands of walkers enduring 60 miles
To end breast cancer and all of its trials
Sweep vans and buses adorned with huge bras
Reminding us all to have faith in the cause.

Street crossings guided by the Motor Safety Crew
Collections of stickers & carnival beads, too.
Colorful outfits and crazy head gear
Inspires us all to sign up for next year

CHORUS

*When the pain starts, when the tears flow,
when fatigue sets in...
We simply remember the reasons we're here
and then we can walk...again.*

Thousands of pink tents all pitched in rows.
Kindness & compassion wherever you go.
Band aids for blisters from the Medical Crew.
Water & sports drink in colorful blue.

Clean porta potties and showers in semis
Duct tape & moleskin are needed supplies
Chowing down dinner like tomorrow won't come
Packing our tents before break of dawn.

CHORUS

First there is Boston, Chicago & Cleveland
Then comes Twin Cities, Seattle & Michigan
Philly, Atlanta & Tampa Bay
Dallas, Arizona & San Diego C.A.

Sun screen & lip balm & huge water guns
Help to relieve the effects of the sun.
High fives from strangers, giving thanks & loud cheers
Only increase our unquenchable tears!

CHORUS

Words written by Bonnie Scriba
2007 Seattle Breast Cancer 3-Day
Crew Captain—Bus Liaison Crew

Riding in Style Thanks to Executive Limos



Ruth and Kathy arrive safe and sound at Kathy's house.

Executive Limousines was kind enough to donate transportation home from the airport. Training and travel expenses add up, so it was nice to save a few bucks. Ruth has recommended them to others in the past and given their support it's appropriate we tell you about them here.

They didn't ask for this plug, but give them a call at 816-801-8500 next time you need transportation.

Meet Hope Walker—Bunny Extraordinaire!



Hope Walker is a real go-getter. She travels across the country to participate in all twelve 3-Day walks. We had the pleasure of hosting her in Seattle. Ruth carried her on her back. Ruth wasn't the most reliable host. She left Hope on the steps making her an easy target for a bunny-napper.

Hope is a woman of few words. If you squeeze her hand she says, "It's all about the boobs." Other than that, she was very quiet.

Some people walk in all twelve cities, but only one bunny makes the journey! You go girl!

Ruth's Reflections

Another year, another ride on the SAG bus. Many of you know by now that I wasn't able to walk on Day 3 due to a large blister. I trained and trained without getting blisters. Then, in August, I switched shoes and started having problems. However, by the time of the walk I thought the blister issues were resolved. Not so much. I was disappointed, but overall it was still a fabulous experience. It is so difficult to describe how moving this whole experience is.

Kathy walks faster than I do, so I told her to walk ahead. Because we were each walking alone, it allowed for the opportunity to chat with other walkers. Everyone has their own story as to why they are there. Each one is interesting, but I was particularly moved by one woman's story. She was wearing wings on her back. People wear all sorts of crazy things on this event, from large bras on the outside of their shirts to weird gear on their heads. So, I wasn't particularly surprised to find this woman with wings beside me. She began to tell her story. Her mother had breast cancer and was currently in hospice care. She shared that her mother had gathered her grown children around her and said, "I'm not going to rest in peace, I'm going to fly with joy." That is why this woman wore the wings. She wore them for her mom.

My journey began when my sister was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2005. It was then that I knew I had to do something. My sister is doing well now. However, I keep hearing about how breast cancer has touched the lives of friends around me and I know breast cancer doesn't always have a positive ending. Since last year's walk, two of the ten women I walked for passed away. These women were mothers, sisters and friends. This is why I will walk again next year.

Thank you all so much for being supportive of Kathy and me. It is a journey that we could not have made alone. We appreciate that you were by our sides.

Our Photographs



Kathy and Ruth at the finish line.



Ruth wasn't in last place!
Check out the line of walkers behind her!



As is 3-Day tradition, walkers paid tribute to the survivors by raising their shoes and kneeling.



Signs like this reminded us why we were there.



A view of the space needle from the stadium during Closing Ceremonies.



Kathy is all smiles at Closing Ceremonies.



Top left: Tent City – our home away from home during the 3-Day.

Top right: The Safety Crew was quite creative in decorating their bikes.

Bottom: The walk route. Day 1 is bright pink, Day 2 is light pink and Day 3 is black. The triangle represents camp.



To see more of Kathy and Ruth's pictures from the event, or to view the video they created, visit:

<http://kathyruth3day.tripod.com>