



CONTEST WINNERS



DONNA ANGSTEAD



me a pink bowling ball for my birthday three years ago. Since that time we have displayed an ""Aquarium Komen Collector"" on the desk at Centennial Lanes for bowler donations during "Pink Month" from all who would like an opportunity to share, and many have generously done so. May God continue blessing our Komen family as we work together helping to heal the victims until this dreaded disease is extinct. God willing, April 2, 2017 will be my 20th year for celebration of my SURVIVAL! I am so grateful!

As a young adult, my dream came true when I became a registered nurse, caring for patients, families and friends. I spent most of my career working in critical care units across our country and loved the closeness of "hands on" care, and being able to help our patients and their families. On March 8, 1997, while doing my "self check exam," I found a lump which I thought I would never be able to recognize. I called our family doctor who became very proactive, as was our surgeon. The mammogram revealed a two centimeter aggressive cancer lesion which was the guideline for breast removal or lumpectomy. The choice would be for radiation and chemotherapy, or complete removal. The fifteen lymph nodes were shown negative so I asked my doctor, "If it were your decision what would be your choice?" Her answer was the latter and I trusted her and respected her assessment. I was so relieved to feel the cancer was gone and the chemotherapy and radiation were my protection from recurrence, along with my faith and hope and support of family and friends.

I am so grateful for the care received, and the opportunity to help others and help wipe out breast cancer. I have participated in the Komen presentation at the National USBC meeting each year since the beginning, and feel honored to do so! In addition to helping with our local Association campaigns, my husband gave

JACKIE CLUXTON



light hearted atmosphere. Not only were there many tears that night, there were many prayers. Prayers that God would heal my mom and that He would make us all stronger (and more faithful) from this journey. I feel like God has answered our prayers.

I would like to nominate Jackie Cluxton. Here is my version of her story: May 27th, 2016 is a day I will never forget. It started as a usual day but ended with a million different emotions. When I got to our campground that evening for our typical family dinner I didn't expect what would come next. My mom was fixing dinner when she turned to my sister and I and said, "Girls, I have breast cancer." I felt like I had been kicked in the gut. My mom is one of my best friends. I was pregnant, my sister was pregnant, we have other children — we needed our mom — they needed their mamaw! My mom had known for a couple weeks that there was a strong possibility she had breast cancer but had kept it between herself, my dad and my aunt (her sister). She didn't want to scare my sister and I because she had had a lung cancer scare before which turned out to be nothing... or so we thought.

Mom was so strong during those couple weeks of the unknown although she admits she had many breakdowns at night. Luckily, she had my dad to comfort her. When mom got that call that confirmed her worst fears she told us as soon as she could. Mom's strength amazed me. She didn't show fear and therefore I tried to remain strong too. There were many, many tears shed that night. Our family dinner wasn't as pleasant as usual. Family would arrive with tear filled eyes and somber hugs versus the usual

Although mom's journey is not done she is already a survivor to me. Her positive attitude, grace, and strength have proven to be a constant reminder that we are stronger than we know and that with faith and family we can get through anything. Mom faced those first several appointments showing her strength. It was a lot to take in but knowing her plan for care was helpful in decreasing our fear. I am thankful for a good team of people that have helped her along the way. On June 17th, we also found out mom's cancer was in a lymph node and in her lungs. She was labeled with stage IV cancer. Her first of six chemotherapy treatments was on June 27th. She did well on all of her treatments considering, but it was extremely hard to see her down. Our mom NEVER stops but during these she just didn't have it in her. Her following treatments continued to be hard on her but her PET scans were showing improvements which helped her push through.

After her 6th and final chemo treatment, my sister and I gathered our family and some of her biggest supporters together to celebrate. Her smile was contagious that night. I've seen my mom inspiring others and it brought tears to my eyes. Mom's smile is the first thing that many strangers notice and comment on. Other people battling cancer have found strength in my mom's story and her positive attitude. She is giving others HOPE that they can get through their struggle. We weren't able to enjoy our typical summer happenings — such as boating — because mom couldn't be out in the sun long and she would feel bad during her treatments that it just wasn't worth it. She continued to keep her positive attitude. Cancer may have stolen our summer, fall, and some of our winter but it's not going to steal our mom. She is a SURVIVOR, an inspiration to others. Please consider my mom for this amazing opportunity. She will not disappoint. P.S. She used to be a great bowler so she would have fun with this adventure.

REGINA OWENS



what we were looking at and what we were looking for. The radiologist walked in, introduced herself, and began to explain the x-rays. She said it could be calcification but needs ruling out with a biopsy to determine whether it was cancer. I started to feel uneasy at that point and my daughter was telling me not to worry it would be OK.

My story did not begin with breast cancer. I was 36 on February 2, 1996, when diagnosed with early stage cervical cancer. They performed a procedure called "surgical cone," which removes a cone shape part of the cervix. About a year later cancer returned at almost stage 4. My doctor asked if I had planned to have any more children, in which, the answer was no, so a partial hysterectomy was performed. Everything went well after the surgery and life was back to normal. I told my husband I felt or thought I felt something unusual, something I did not remember feeling before. I was concerned but knowing I had a mammogram appointment a few days later I thought if it is anything to worry about we will find out then.

On September 6, my appointment arrived and I went through the regular routine of taking my mammogram and afterwards went back into the waiting room. After a few minutes, the nurse came in and told me I was free to go. All was well! A few days later, I received a call at work. "Is this Regina Owens?" Yes, it is. This is the hospital. Your mammogram came back abnormal and they would like you to come in for a diagnostic mammogram to look a little closer. I said OK but of course I was bothered and my thoughts were, "they saw something, what?" On October 6, 2006 at age 44, I went in for the diagnostic mammogram. When the results were back, my daughter and I went in. We set in the waiting room several minutes before transitioning to another room where the radiologist would be in to speak with us. By now, I am concerned and confused. I have no understanding to why I am getting ready to speak with a radiologist. The nurse left my x-rays hanging on the lighted board. My daughter and I looked at them as if we knew

After my biopsy on Nov 8, 2006, I had an appointment, which my husband attended with me, to get my results. When told that the surgeon would be in, I was kind of dumb-founded. I had no idea I would be seeing a surgeon. I was anxious and not sure of what I was expecting him to say. We went to a room to wait for the surgeon. I will never forget... I was sitting on the table and my husband was kind of pacing the floor waiting for the surgeon. When the door swung open, the surgeon was matter of fact, (I do not remember a "hello," "how are you" or anything) — it is cancer! I looked at him and could not speak. The room was silent for what seemed like minutes. Then he said... you look like a deer in the headlights, which brought me back and in my mind I was thinking, CANCER, ME! Just like that. Did he think I was prepared to hear this? I was not. I then looked at my husband and he was just staring at me then at the surgeon. He was also looking like a deer in the headlights. Then the tears came and after that, I do not remember what the surgeon was saying. I had always made sure I took care of myself, got my mammograms, and did self-breast exams — and now breast cancer.

There was no family history so how could this have happened? Is this it for me? Those things go through your mind. So, on December 14, a lumpectomy was scheduled. After the surgery, I had appointments to see my radiologist, oncologist, echocardiogram, CAT scan, chest x-ray, teachings and labs. It was a whirlwind of things. I still could not believe I was going through this. After going through the teaching, my chemo treatments were scheduled to begin on February 2, 2007. Going through chemo was very tough. I had six treatments and my husband took me to each one. I do not think he will ever know just how much he being there meant to me. Even though he was not able to be in the room with me, on the first day they allowed him to come back until they got started. It was a big comfort knowing he was there and still by my side. I was required to receive a shot three days after each treatment to ensure my white blood cells were back up, which my husband always drove me for those appointments as well. Five days after my last treatment due to my blood counts being low I was hospitalized and had a plasma transfusion. I received 33 radiation treatments.

About a year after my surgery and treatments, my preacher introduced me to a young woman at church, who was getting ready to go through what I had. He thought I could be an encouragement or listening ear for her. She and I formed a beautiful friendship. This has brought her and me closer, we were survivors and formed a sisterhood. Our local news station had a money chain challenge to donate for Race for the Cure in which I participated and raised money. I also won a tool set that I donated to raise money as well for the Race for the Cure. It is a blessing to be able to help others. Having gone through mammograms throughout the following years, I was now back in "the room" to have more pictures taken. Holding my breath and then told everything is OK, "you can go now," can be scary. About 8 years later, my annual mammogram was scheduled for December 4, 2015. I went in as I always do praying all will go well, and it did. A sigh of relief! Four days later was my birthday Dec 8, 2015, I turned 54, and I treated myself to lunch. As I was coming back from lunch, listening to the radio, backing into my parking space my cell phone rang. The dashboard screen said it was the hospital. I got a sick feeling in my stomach, a bad feeling. When I answered, she said. "May I speak with Regina Owens?" I said. "This is she." The woman said that she was from the hospital. "You had a mammogram done on Dec 4, 2015, and we need you to come back in and have a diagnostic mammogram. I felt shaken.

When I arrived back into my building I told my supervisor, who was there during my first breast cancer treatments, that I had just received a call from Baptist to come back in for a diagnostic. She told me not to worry everything would be fine. I then called my son and my daughter to inform them of the call. This was unbelievable! Around my birthday, again! I went in the next day on Dec 9, 2015, for the diagnostic. I waited five days to hear my results and they came back positive. Trying to be positive and strong, my thoughts were all over the place. At this point, a Stereotactic and Ultrasound-Guided Biopsy was scheduled for Dec 14, 2015 to make sure it was cancer. My daughter and I went in for my biopsies and I was so nervous. I almost felt that I was having an anxiety attack, sitting in that chair for one of the test for about 20 to 30 min and could not move. After the tests was completed, the waiting began again. My thoughts were consumed with, "if I did have cancer again, how much had it spread?" Prayerfully, they caught it early. On December 21, I received the call at work my job, again. The young woman on the other end asked if I could talk and if so, did I have somewhere private to talk. Not good were my thoughts! My supervisor had been standing beside me. When she saw the look on my face, she said do you need to go in the office, yes. I told the young woman I would call her back. After I went to an office for some privacy, I called her back. She proceeded to tell me the findings were cancer. The tears came. I looked at my supervisor and shook my head, yes. The look on her face was... Oh no Regina, not again! I called my husband crying. He was so brokenhearted for me but trying to console me at the same time. After talking with him, I called my daughter and son who were in disbelief. After work, I informed the rest of my family. I would need my support system yet again. My appointment was scheduled for Dec 23, 2015, to see a surgeon to discuss my options.

I did not believe that I was going through this yet again. I could not wrap my brain around it. It was as if I was functioning in a daze. I still was not sure whether I would have to take chemo again until I spoke to the oncologist. It was a comfort seeing my old surgeon walk through the door. As he walked in, he said oh no not again. I said... Yep! He said bless your heart, came over to where I was sitting, and gave me a hug. After praying and talking with the surgeon, going over my options with my husband, I decided to have a double mastectomy with reconstructive surgery using my own stomach fat. I did not want to go under the knife twice. Therefore, I decided to have everything done at once. It was a bit scary, hearing the surgery would take about 6 hours. The healing process was tough and it got pretty depressing some days, but I had an awesome support team. After a couple of weeks, I went to see my oncologist and was informed that, I did not have to have chemo or radiation. That was great news to my ears.

After fighting the battle with breast cancer a second time, you gain a new perspective on life. It is important to be available for people, especially someone who has gone through or someone who is fighting cancer. I remember talking with a co-worker about his wife at that time going through chemo. I asked how was he doing and he told me, "I'm fine, and I'm just worried about her. I want to make sure she is OK." I said to him, "Yes, I understand, but I want to know how you're doing; because my husband, daughter and granddaughter were where you are and it's important to make sure that the care-taker is ok." By then, we had finished talking and were both choked up and crying. I had to give him a hug because he needed it.

We do not know why we go through things in life but I believe it is so we can be available when someone else needs us. In 2015, there was a Bowl Pink Polo Giveaway. Bowl for the Cure gave away four Polo shirts and guess who won one of the four? I wear my Bowl for the Cure shirt proudly on Thursday nights when I bowl, along with my breast cancer pin and other breast cancer paraphernalia during October for the Cure awareness and the need to keep the fight going for a cure of breast cancer not only in October but also throughout the year. I am Regina Owens; I am a Survivor!

DAWN PAOLILLO



I was diagnosed with breast cancer in June 2010. I had a bilateral lumpectomy in August 2010 and two more surgeries in 2011, followed by radiation treatment. Since being diagnosed, I have made two public speeches at the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life, encouraging all women to get themselves checked and advocate for early detection saving lives.

Before my diagnosis, my friend and I would go Bowling "Against" Breast cancer every year at Rab's Country Lanes. That event has some more meaning for me now. We have raised over \$500,000 for various breast cancer charities in the past 14 years while enjoying a great day of bowling.

I would love to be chosen as one of the Fabulous Four so I can share my story with others all over the country. I have bonded with many breast cancer survivors through the Diva For a Day program, which encourages survivors to pamper themselves after surviving the grueling treatment. It's important for women to know they need to get their mammograms every year and not be afraid. At Sloan Kettering, I have met many inspirational women and I would love to continue to inspire others via your Bowl For The Cure platform.