

Volunteer Newsletter

Volunteer Highlight



In 2008, Curves began a Breast Cancer Bridge Walk that brought together organizations that help support breast cancer

screening services for women in the Mid-Ohio Valley, connecting towns that border the Ohio River from Ohio and West Virginia. This year resulted in the largest Breast Cancer Walk held in the valley.

On October 4, 2009, over 200 participants registered and 180 walked across the bridge from Belpre, Ohio, to Parkersburg, West Virginia. A special logo was designed by a local artist and will be used to promote the Walk in future years.

One of the sponsors, Camden Clark Memorial Hospital, covered the county with billboards featuring breast cancer survivors. One of those survivors, Crystal Hanna, walked the bridge with her young daughter as a billboard featuring her message was displayed in the background.

On October 1, 2008, at age 33, Crystal was diagnosed with breast cancer. She immediately had surgery, followed by six months of chemotherapy and 6 1/2 weeks of daily radiation. Her treatments ended on July 31, 2009. She admits that the diagnosis of cancer changed her life. "It is difficult to imagine when you first hear the word 'cancer' that there will ever be something positive as a result," she says. "I praise God that I am now cancer free and for all

the blessings that have come my way over the last year (new friends and outreach opportunities)."

Crystal confesses that she has learned to appreciate each moment of life more, especially spending time with her family - husband (Ryan), daughter (Riley, age 5), and son (Alex, age 2). She also recognizes the strength of her husband and children throughout her diagnosis and treatment because they "never let me think for one second that we wouldn't beat this. My kids gave me a reason to smile every day, even through the chemotherapy treatments."

Crystal is passionate about sharing her story with others, so that women (especially in their 20s and 30s) will understand the importance of breast self-exams. "I found the lump myself and was shocked to find out that it was cancer," she says. "I had no immediate family history and was in relatively good shape having run the Wheeling Ogden 20k and Parkersburg Half Marathon in 2008 prior to my diagnosis. Early detection saves lives. It's that simple. I want to do my part to spread the word and help others."

The Walk certainly inspired Crystal to do more. She has partnered with Harriet Dial, Region 5 Cancer Information Specialist to spread awareness. Her outreach activities included hosting an awareness event at her church with speakers, free clinical breast exams, and more. The WVBCCSP would like to thank Crystal and all other partners in the Mid-Ohio Valley for their commitment to the fight against breast cancer.

In addition to Curves, Camden Clark Memorial Hospital, and the WVBCCSP, Walk sponsors included the CEOS's, Chick-Fil-A, RiteAid Foodland, the FCE, the WV Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure, the Lions Club, the T-Shirt Factory, and more. Thank you all.

Contents:

- ◆ **Volunteer Highlight**
- ◆ **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**
- ◆ **Volunteer Luncheon**

Breast Cancer Awareness Month



October, celebrated nationwide as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, is a time to fight back against a disease that has claimed the lives of so many women. Pink clad items line store shelves and vary from kitchen mixers and coffee mugs to watches and makeup bags.

During October 2009, WVBCSP staff, volunteers, providers, and partners worked together to create awareness among community members and raise donations for the West Virginia Breast and Cervical Cancer Diagnostic and Treatment Fund. Every dollar raised directly benefits West Virginia women who might not otherwise be able to afford the necessary services.

This year, a number of unique events marked the calendar in October. Such events included the Second Annual Ride for Breast Cancer Prevention in Martinsburg, WV, where motorcyclists traveled in packs along a local stretch of road while supporting a cause they believe in. A Dog Walk in Putnam County had animal lovers out and about with their furry friends dressed in pink accessories.



Volunteers braved the chillier than usual weather to attend twenty statewide Walks for Women and numerous courthouse events, wreath hangings, balloon launches, and parades. One ice skating rink even dyed its ice pink to showcase its support.

As part of a unique project in Region 6, Jondavid Pollock, M.D., Ph.D., from the Schiffler Cancer Center of Wheeling Hospital, successfully spearheaded an effort to develop a 2010 breast cancer survivor calendar titled *Landmarks of Recovery*. As of mid-December, the calendar had raised \$13,000 for the WV Breast and Cervical Cancer Diagnostic and Treatment Fund.

As you can see, the opportunities to increase breast cancer awareness are boundless. When volunteers bring their ideas to life, West Virginia women benefit. The WVBCSP thanks all those who participated in activities this year.

**VOLUNTEERS RAISED MORE
THAN \$89,500 IN DONATIONS
DURING OCTOBER 2009!**

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

This year's Breast Cancer Awareness Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon had record-breaking numbers. On November 10, 2009, approximately 120 participants attended the Luncheon at the Days Inn in Flatwoods, WV, for a day of fun, good food, and socializing.

With cooperative weather, a fun game of breast health Bingo, and a heartfelt performance by Webster County's Community Education Project titled Hope's Café, volunteers left in good spirits with many ideas for next year's Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The WVBCSP wants to thank all volunteers for your dedication and commitment to the fight against breast cancer. Your skills and community ties ensure that the Program continues to provide services to the women of West Virginia.



Webster County Community Education Project

