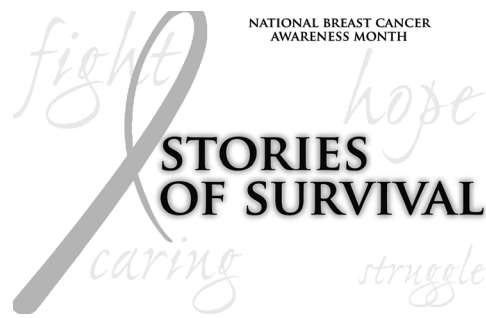


SPOTLIGHT



‘...He is really what gave me the strength to get up every morning.’

Thanks to a grandbaby

News of a grandchild to be born kept Bishop motivated during treatment

By **Todd G. Higdon**
Daily News Staff Writer

The day before Kerry Bishop, 47, Joplin, went into surgery to perform a lumpectomy from her breast her oldest daughter, Amy Renfro, brought in a *Neosho Daily News* article about her aunt, Donna Hood of Neosho.

“The story was on how she survived it, what kept her motivated,” Bishop said. “At the time, she did not have any grandkids. She mentioned that the future of wanting to be a grandma is what kept her going. That is something that kept me going, too.”

Like Hood, Bishop had no grandchildren at that time.

“I knew someday I would be a grandma, I wanted them now, but that was not happening,” said Bishop. “So, I kind of looked at (a grandchild) to keep me strong.”

All of her family was there before she was getting ready to go into surgery. Her son-in-law, James Renfro, and the family all prayed.

“He, of course, prayed for me to get through the surgery and be strong and to look for the future with grandkids, to keep me going,” said Bishop. “About five months later, I found out I was going to be a grandma.”

Her first grandchild, — later identified as a grandson — was going to be due on Jan. 22, 2007.

“I really wanted him to be born Jan. 23, the day of my surgery (one year later),” Bishop said. “My son-in-law prayed for him and we got our prayers answered that he was actually born on my birthday. After I found out he was going to be there, he is really what gave me the strength to get up every morning.”

Bishop’s grandson, Brock, now 8 months old. Bishop credits the rest of her family for also helping around the house, including her husband, Tom, who does a lot of the cooking, and daughters Amy, Melissa Bradley, and Kristen Bishop, for helping with the laundry and cleaning the house.

“He is what kept that fire burning, knowing that I wanted to live to share his life,” said Bishop.

EARLY DETECTION

Bishop said she never had any signs of



Breast cancer survivor Kerry Bishop, 47, of Joplin, holds her 8-month-old grandson, Brock Renfro. Five months after Bishop went through her breast cancer surgery, she was told she would be a grandmother for the first time.

DAILY NEWS / TODD G. HIGDON

breast cancer and never felt any lumps in her breasts.

After a routine mammogram on Friday, Jan. 16, 2006, Bishop was told that she had breast cancer. She saw the doctor the next week, and set up an appointment for surgery, which was performed on Jan. 23, 2006, the day before her birthday.

“The lump was on top of my left breast and the size of it was fairly small,” said Bishop. “About the size of a pea.”

FIRST DIAGNOSED WITH CANCER

Asked what went through her mind when she was first diagnosed with cancer, Bishop

said, “Is this really happening to me?” There was not any breast cancer in her immediate family.

TREATMENT

Bishop underwent chemotherapy, radiation and had lost her hair. She had her last chemo treatment in April of this year.

“So I did chemo for approximately 14 months and six weeks of radiation,” said Bishop.

NOW A SURVIVOR

For the last two years, Bishop has participated in the American Cancer

Society’s Relay For Life.

“I had always contributed to people walking in Relay,” Bishop said, “But I had never walked in it.”

ADVICE FOR CANCER PATIENTS

“Never give up and let people help you,” said Bishop.

Bishop said she is doing fine now and attends her regular checkups.

“I encourage other women to get their yearly mammograms,” said Bishop. “My surgeon told me to tell my daughters to get their mammograms between 30 to 35 years old.”

Here are some books about breast cancer that will let you learn, laugh

“The Breast Cancer Survival Manual: A Step-by-Step Guide for the Woman With Newly Diagnosed Breast Cancer”

Dr. John Link
256 pages, February 2007

This fourth edition includes the most recent advice, from how to get a second opinion or the best doctor to what you should ask and what you need to know about radiation treatments.

Link has studied breast cancer prevention and treatment for more than 20 years.

He helped open a comprehensive breast center in Long Beach, Calif., that was featured on “20/20” in 1990 and named by *Self* magazine in 1997 as the No. 1 breast center in the country.

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

“Cancer Made Me A Shallower Person: A Memoir in Comics”

Miriam Engelberg
144 pages, April 2006

It’s OK for the author to poke fun — she was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2001. The cartoonist details everything from surgery to chemotherapy, from support groups to wigs in this humorous and serious graphic novel.

She questions why breast cancer is so much more personal to speak about than any other cancer, such as kidney cancer. Or why cancer is approached in a don’t ask, “don’t look at my breasts” kind of way.

In one cartoon, she proposes a line of T-shirts with an arrow pointing to her left breast with the words “Cancer Inside” just to “cut to the chase.”

“B.O.O.B.S.”
Ann Fisher
320 pages, May 2004

The cover and title of this compilation of personal stories pretty much say it all. But the title actually stands for “A Bunch of Outrageous Breast-Cancer Survivors Tell Their Stories of Courage, Hope and Healing.”

Ten women share their encounters with the disease, from diagnosis to surgery

and afterward. They talk about the importance of group therapy and becoming advocates for other women with breast cancer.

This book can help family and friends because it offers insight into what survivors are going through and how they can help them.

“After Breast Cancer: Answers to the Questions You’re Afraid to Ask”

Musa Mayer
176 pages, March 2003

Musa Mayer is another survivor who knows what breast cancer patients want and need to know. Mayer addresses the fears and emotions that will come over a patient. While touching on those hard-to-address questions, she also reviews the technical and scientific matters that patients should think about, such as survival statistics.

Mayer isn’t the only one

with firsthand advice. The book includes perspectives

from about 40 other women who’ve been diagnosed.

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