



HopeCircle

Salutes

"The Triumph of the Human Spirit"

On Tuesday, March 2, HopeCircle hosted a community celebration honoring the following individuals. Although they or a family member has experienced a catastrophic illness, their spirit of hope and encouragement touched the lives of others within our community. This is a special recognition of their 'triumph of the human spirit'. Special appearance by David M. Bailey, singer/songwriter/survivor.

Married and the mother of two children and two grandchildren. Family member and caregiver for loved ones with Alzheimer's Disease. Works as a volunteer providing individual and group support along with education for people going through the perils of Alzheimer's disease. Greatest Accomplishment: Just growing and learning through catastrophic illness has allowed me to help others. Accomplishments: Founded the first Alzheimer's Support Group twenty years ago when her mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. There was minimal support or information at that time. This group continues today through the Area Agency on Aging and she remains actively involved in supporting families living with this disease. Affiliations: Member Faculty Womens Club at ASU, St. Bernard's Auxiliary, Advisory Board Member for Center on Aging, and member First United Methodist Church. Greatest Inspiration: My mother and my grandparents. My grandfather instilled the importance of giving back and making the world a better place. I always looked to my mother as a teacher and she continued to teach me about life even through her Alzheimer's disease. Having my husband's support all these years has allowed me to do this work. Advice or Wisdom: You must learn patience with illness or your task will be impossible. There are things we can do in caring for someone to improve the quality of life for the family and patient even when there is not a cure. Never forget to laugh. In times of adversity, what sustained your hope? Faith and remembering that this too shall pass. Ms. Crawford has patiently, persistently, and lovingly provided information and encouragement to others who are following the path that she has traveled with many families over two decades.



SHIRLEY CRAWFORD



JANE B. MCDANIEL

Married, four children and eight grandchildren and survivor of breast cancer. Employed as Senior Healthcare Consultant for McNabb Kelley & Barre and St. Bernards Healthcare. Greatest Accomplishments: My greatest accomplishments are my children and grandchildren. Accomplishments: Ms. McDaniel helped develop the Breast Program at St. Bernards Regional Medical Center, the Mobile Mammography Unit, the "Pink Warriors" team for the Susan Komen Race for the Cure, producer and moderator of a physician call in program, "Issues in Health" on Channel 8. Affiliations: Member of Southwest Church of Christ, past Board member of AR Cancer Society and the local Cancer Society, "Our Kids Count" Coalition, past Board member of American Heart Association, past Board Chamber of Commerce, Chair Breast Cancer Control Advisory Board, past V.P. Marketing at St. Bernards Healthcare, past President of the Arkansas affiliate of the Komen Foundation. Greatest Inspiration: My mother for encouraging my education and my faith. The continuing support of my husband, Garnet, my children, grandchildren, and sister. Advice or Wisdom: Wherever you find yourself, look for ways to make a contribution. In adversity, what sustained your hope? My faith and my family. I have an incredible support system. Ms. McDaniel has used her training as a nurse, professional affiliations and personal experience with cancer to be a driving force in breast health. She has made a huge impact on a local and state level in helping others in the fight against breast cancer through education, screening and fundraising efforts.



STEVEN WRIGHT

Married and the father of one child. Employed by the Jonesboro Fire Department as a driver for Station 5. Survivor of Hodgkins Lymphoma. Greatest Accomplishments: Survived cancer. I try to be a good father and good husband. Affiliations: Member of Cathedral Baptist Church, Arkansas State Firefighters Association, and an Air Force Veteran. Greatest Inspiration: People I met facing poor odds of survival who were still willing to keep fighting to survive their illness. Advice or Wisdom: Cancer is not a respecter of persons. You should spend every day as if it is your last. In adversity, what sustained your hope? I was in a win-win situation. My faith assured me if I did not survive I would still win. Three days before my diagnosis of cancer we learned that we were expecting our first child. He was born two days before my last treatment. Mr. Wright has used his experience with cancer to mentor children facing cancer. He has been a special mentor to Cole Nash, a young boy who is in treatment for leukemia. He has used Cole's love of fire trucks to reach out and touch his life with joy and laughter. He has been a source of strength, hope and encouragement to children, especially Cole Nash and his family.

Married with three children and four grandchildren and two time breast cancer survivor. Retired Director of the Office of Emergency Services for Poinsett County. Greatest Accomplishments: I feel like I was given a second chance at life and I reorganized my priorities. Every day I want to do something for someone. Affiliations: Member of Craighead County Local Emergency Planning Committee, member Governor's Earthquake Advisory Board, past Board member and officer of NEA Chapter of Red Cross and volunteer coordinator for Reach to Recovery. Greatest Inspiration: My parents. They always instilled in me to be a survivor. They taught me to look outside myself and see that others were surviving things that were worse than what I was going through. Advice or Wisdom: Go get a mammogram and regular checkups. You are your best keeper. Being a volunteer can even boost your physical and psychological health. In adversity, what sustained your hope? My faith in God, the support of family and friends, colleagues and the medical staff. Ms. Clements has survived cancer twice and rebounded to be a hero through service in the community. She has always been faithful in her church and community while raising three children. Her service to the community was not to keep her busy but a true outpouring of her spirit and deep concern for those who have suffered illness as she has.



LOU ANN CLEMENTS



PENNY M. DOWNING

Mother of two children and one grandchild. Surviving a nine year battle with colon cancer. Employed by Jonesboro Public School as a sixth grade teacher. Greatest Accomplishments: Receiving my master's degree. Education is important. The two children I raised and the ones I teach. Motivating children to be the best person they can be. Affiliations: Member of First United Methodist Church. Greatest Inspiration: The children I teach. Advice or Wisdom: Never give up hope. Dance while you can. Remember to laugh. Advice for students: There's nothing you can't accomplish. In adversity, what sustained your hope? Faith. Love from family and friends. Ms. Downing has continued to teach throughout her nine year battle with cancer. Some of her greatest lessons in the classroom have been about living life in the face of adversity. She meets everyday with a sense of optimism. She is an inspiration to more people than she will ever realize. She is a teacher of life's greatest lessons.

Theme for the Evening:

"The Triumph of the Human Spirit"

I will not die an unloved life.
I will not live in fear
Of falling or catching fire.
I choose to inhabit my days,
To allow my living to open me,
To make me less afraid,
More accessible,
To loosen my heart,
Until it becomes a wing,
A torch, a promise.
I choose to risk my significance;
To live so that which came to me as seed
Goes to the next as blossom
And so that which came as blossom,
Goes on as fruit.

- By Dawna Markova

Married, three children and four grandchildren and survivor of breast cancer. Employed by Dr. Jason Casey as a registered nurse. Greatest Accomplishments: My greatest accomplishments are my children and grandchildren. Affiliations: Founder of NEA Breast Cancer Support Group, volunteers for Reach to Recovery and attends Southwest Church of Christ. Greatest Inspiration: Barbara Walters because we are both in the later stages of life and she remains active, giving and continues to learn. Mother Teresa because of her care of the underprivileged. I wish I could do more. Advice or Wisdom: You have to draw inner strength from sources such as books, people, and prayer. For me it helps to pray. It helps me to shift my attention, thoughts and actions toward others who have greater needs and problems than I have. By helping them, I also help myself. In adversity, what sustained your hope? I approach each day with this prayer... God help me to make this a better day for someone else because I crossed their path. Ms. Berry has used her cancer experience to reach out to others with a spirit of perseverance, benevolence and compassion. She founded the first breast cancer support group in Jonesboro in 1988 and this group continues today with 25-30 active members. She also exemplifies hope, strength and courage for her grandson who is currently being treated for Ewing's Sarcoma.



MARY KATHERINE BERRY

Married and the mother of two children and survivor of breast cancer. Employed as a licensed mental health counselor at Lighthouse Counseling Center. Greatest Accomplishments: Going through cancer treatment and redefining my life purpose. Spending one week a year at a camp for children with cancer. Feeling like I am making a difference in someone's life. Snatching a great husband who walked close by during my treatment and raising two wonderful daughters. Affiliations: Member of Community Fellowship Church, American Cancer Society (I Can Cope, Reach to Recovery, Relay for Life), Craighead County Crisis Response Team, American Red Cross, Sisters in Survival support group, Arkansas Counseling Association, Camp Quality. Greatest Inspiration: My father. He died of colon cancer during my first stage of chemo. He was able to keep his sense of humor and love of people right up to the end. I admire a good sense of humor. Advice or Wisdom: A catastrophic illness will either make you bitter or better as a person. I believe it is a time when you need to dig down and figure out what you really believe spiritually and tap into that with all you've got. It is also important to rid yourself of "toxic" people. People who are negative will just pull you down. But the most important advice I could give would be to reach out to others as much as possible. The more you focus on others, the less time you have to worry about your own stuff. In adversity, what sustained your hope? My relationship with God. I can honestly say going through cancer was a good thing in how it made me grow and change as a person. I was able to feel a real peace in that no matter what happened I was in a win-win situation. If I die, I get to experience an awesome heaven and if I live I have a lot left to still enjoy. Ms. Holmes has used her experience to educate and support others. She has been the spokesperson for many community events and educational programs. She has worked in fundraising efforts to support cancer research. She is always looking for new ways to help families going through a cancer experience.



DIANE ELIZABETH HOLMES



DR. FAYE WILLIAMS COX

Married with five children and seven grandchildren. Living with a pre-myeloma condition. Employed by First United Methodist Church as Director of Lay Ministries. Greatest Accomplishments: My greatest joy is my family. Affiliations: Member of First United Methodist Church, Rotary Club of Jonesboro (past club secretary and committee chairs), The Learning Center Board of Directors (as Board president and committee chairs), past member Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce (chair of Business Network Committee and chair of Business Expo) and chair and member of Board of Directors of Leadership Link Alumni Group. Greatest Inspiration: I always aspired to be like my mother - an intelligent, independent thinker, grace-filled, compassionate, and encouraging. She truly made a difference in the lives of those around her. My family - particularly my children and grandchildren. Cancer patients - I am privileged and so incredibly blessed on a weekly basis to share the experiences of those who are facing their fears and the realities of their disease with grace and dignity. Advice or Wisdom: Consider what really gives meaning to your life as you focus on balancing your work, family and self-care. Tell your spouse how much you cherish him. Share with a good friend how blessed you are that you have her in your life. Stop taking your brother or sister for granted and actually say the words, "I love you." Allow others to share your joys, but also allow them to support you when times are difficult. Be intentional about truly listening to others. In times of adversity, what sustained your hope? When facing hard or scary times, I've relied on my natural optimism. When I've revealed my fears to family, friends, and God I've experienced the powerful healing of loving arms and compassionate hearts. As a volunteer and humanitarian, Dr. Cox has used her experience with illness to walk in grace and bring grace to others.



FRED AND SUSAN CATHCART

Married and the parents of two children. They are the owners of Valley View Agri Systems. Surviving parents of a nine year old daughter who died in 1993 of a brain tumor. Accomplishments: The Cathcarts have created a living legacy for their daughter through extraordinary fundraising efforts. Through Super Bowl parties over the past eleven years they have raised \$720,403.00 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Through partnership with KFIN and Country Cares Radio-thon they have raised \$364,632.90 in the NEA market to date. Captured for Kids raised over \$30,000. Hillcrest Elementary School Math-A-Thon has raised \$60,000. They have also worked tirelessly for Make-A-Wish and Ronald McDonald House. Affiliations: Members of First United Methodist Church. Susan is an associate member of Jr. Auxiliary. Greatest Inspiration: The children at St. Jude. They hold their parents and friends up. Advice or Wisdom: God gives you gifts and you have to be thankful for them even if it's taken away. You have to be thankful for the time you had with them. Live a life of gratitude. Live your life one hour or one day at a time. In adversity, what sustained your hope? Faith in God. Memories of good times. Knowing that we have so much to be thankful for. The Cathcarts have used their love and loss to provide resources for cancer research and to enrich the lives of hundreds of families by creating hope, joy and strength for children who are suffering from life-threatening conditions.

Married and the mother of two children and survivor of lymphoma. Employed by Health South Rehab-North of Memphis as Director of Quality, Case Management and Education - Sr. Leadership Team. Greatest Accomplishment: Survivorship. Accomplishments: Ms. Schmidt has used her experience as a nurse and her experience with cancer in teaching nursing students at Arkansas State University. She helped start the Jonesboro Church Health Center and started the first Stroke Support Group in Jonesboro. She also started a cancer support group and helped bring the "Look Good, Feel Better" Program. She has participated in organizing teams for Relay for Life and has also been a speaker for many groups such as the Alzheimer's Support Group. Affiliations: Member of First Baptist Church, Rehab Nurses Association, Sigma Theta Tau. Volunteer for the American Cancer Society and American Stroke Association. Greatest Inspiration: My family, especially my father's experience with cancer as well as many others who triumph over serious illness or adversity. Advice or Wisdom: Through the experience of cancer I've learned that the human spirit is good in everyone. Stories are meant to be shared to connect you to others. Celebrate every day. Always treat thy neighbor as thyself. In adversity, what sustained your hope? Belief in God. Positive attitude. Humor. Surrounding myself with other spiritually strong people. Ms. Schmidt has done all of this with a caring heart, great smile and positive attitude. She inspires everyone to do the same.



ANGELA STONE SCHMIDT



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