



Marianne S.

It was New Year's Eve 2001 just around 11:00 am when the phone rang. I had a benign breast lump removed two weeks before but was surprised to hear my surgeon was calling. "We found cancer cells in your biopsy. I need you to come in to the office and we'll schedule you for a lumpectomy." Like so many women before and after me, I was in shock. My brain skipped from "I feel fine, but no one in my family has had breast cancer, so maybe he called the wrong number". Not a very happy New Year.

Over the next few months I went through a few surgical procedures, none achieving the desired clear margins. Then a mastectomy was recommended and reconstruction was suggested. A friend calling to wish me well mentioned the Breast Cancer Coalition was having an information session on breast reconstruction given by Dr. Serletti. "He's the best around here", she said. So off we went to the seminar and on to the next step in my journey and my involvement with BCCR.

Throughout this experience I had support from my wonderful family and caring friends. Every meal, card and phone call were treasured. Family time was precious. I was teaching third grade and found that twenty five eight year olds were a great way of focusing on each day and not dwelling on the what ifs. Our children were 23, 21 and 19. I had enjoyed many milestones with them but wanted more! Would I live to see grandchildren was my biggest fear. I did, Matthew is five and twins are on the way.

Through the Breast Cancer Coalition, I met so many wonderful people. Everyone had an experience to share, a shoulder to lend. I learned too much about this disease and much about myself. I am so proud to be a part of this strong organization and offer to others what I have received. The words "You have cancer" are bone chilling to anyone hearing them. The Breast Cancer Coalition provides a blanket of support and serenity to those on this journey. It is almost ten years now. I am a lucky one.