



Anne D.

By the time I was 39 years old I had been diagnosed twice with, and gone through various treatments for, breast cancer. The first diagnosis was given when I was only 31 and the second one came when I was 38 years old. The first time you hear the dreaded words, for me they included the phrase, “bizarre cells,” you fleetingly wonder why you got breast cancer; that soon gave way to several other emotions, after which I seemed to settle on fear and bewilderment especially at the journey I had to take in order to ensure my survival. After the second diagnosis however, my emotions quickly moved past fear... after all, the other shoe had dropped at last. I ran the gamut of the usual emotions and seemed to settle on, “Why?” I haven’t been able to move on since then.

That emotion helped define a new mission for me; besides gratitude for each new day, there is a vigor and motivation to get closer to the answer to why. Not just why me, but why that twenty- and thirty-something year old? Now, alongside my all too important mission of raising and keeping my family together, and working at a job I enjoy most of the time, I am committed to serving with the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester in the specific interest of advocacy, and an attempt to better understand the link between breast cancer and the environment in which we live.