

color me PINK

It is with great pride and joy that we bring to you our very first monthly newsletter to keep you in touch with what is in store.

A monthly Gemmaletter

Issue No. 1-March 09

Meet Barbara



My name is Barbara Manni. I am 42 years old. I have been married to the most incredible man, John Manni for 16 years and am the mother of two. Joe is 14 and Cassie is 12. I have been a breast cancer survivor for five months. Like many of the stories, I felt a lump in my breast. I have a lot in common with others in that I did not think it was anything other than a cyst. I was up to date with my mammograms so how could something develop so quickly? I was nervous, but I was brave enough to face the situation and have it checked. When you hear that early detection can save lives, it is true. It saved mine!

After numerous tests and surgery, it was discovered that I had an aggressive type of breast cancer, and that I was going to need chemotherapy and radiation as a part of the treatment. Hearing the news was of course devastating. In a matter of weeks we were thrown into a horrible world we knew nothing about. I went from planning the kid's calendar to having the next six months of my life planned out for me. I was scared for my children and my husband. I was afraid for myself. Was I going to die? How sick was I going to get from the chemo,

and how was I going to deal with losing my long blonde hair?

I remember telling my husband that if I were to die tomorrow, I can say I had the perfect life. We did everything right! So thinking that, I knew what I had to do. I hugged my husband, had my cry, and then made a plan which was to take it slow. I Faced the challenges as they came along and was strong for my husband and children whom I adore. I shared my situation with loved ones and friends. I accepted help gracefully and appreciated the kind words and prayers. I did not complain. I figured for what I was going through, someone- somewhere was experiencing something far worse. I always tried to see the up-side of every situation. Even when complications would arise, I kept that same attitude. I made sure to laugh, smile, and be myself. I did what I could, accepted what I could not.

I have to say it was not easy. There were days where I really had to convince myself to get out of bed. There were times when I thought the physical pain and mental anguish would cripple me. I found the beginning of the treatments were the worst. I had surgery, a week later my first chemo, then had 10-12 day grace period left with my long blonde hair. The anxiety over the hair loss surprised me. I am not one to dwell on other people's thoughts or opinions, but that is all I could think of. I knew it was only hair, and that it would grow back, but I was so upset.

I could not find anything to wear on my head. It was then I realized I had to take control. I had to do something that would solve the situation I was in. I bought a very costly wig, but found it hot,

itchy and would not be able to wear it for any length of time. I felt I was too young to wear a turban, and regular bandanas did not cover my whole head. Without hair, I needed a way to show my personality and hats alone were not soft enough, and scarves were too bulky for me.

I was running out of time. I felt I had been through enough and I needed something to make me feel special and pretty. I realized like anything else, I would get used to my new look and make the best of it. I could not change the fact that I did not have hair, but I certainly could give myself some options. That's just what we did. My sister and I designed kerchiefs for me to wear. We chose incredibly soft fabrics in solids and patterns. We made them Fun and stylish. We made what we now call a KareChief.tm

We make KareChiefs and I Kare ware for adults and children. A portion of the proceeds is donated to cancer related charities and organizations. We feel it is so important to not only help others, but to give back! Please visit our web site www.karechiefs.com or visit the Cotton Candy Boutique at 1455 Mineral Spring Ave. North Providence, RI.

We would like to thank the Gloria Gemma Breast Cancer Resource Foundation for their support and incredible work they do. Their commitment and dedication to helping people and their families affected by this horrific disease is remarkable and appreciated by many. You definitely make a difference in the lives of others and we are grateful to you for that!

Who is Gidget?

Simply referred to as Gidget she is the inspiration behind our corner. Gidget passed on March 28, 2008 from Stage 4 Breast Cancer. She had worked for www.amica.com and they treated her like an angel which she already knew she was. As she got older, her attitude seemed to get cockier and cockier but that is what made her who she was. She was loved for that.

Gidget will forever be in the hearts of not only those that knew her but all of you reading this now. You have become a part of this story and we hope that what you take from this is setting up your annual mammograms.

Ok, so what is Gidget's Corner? "GC"

Our mission statement

Together, as a community, we strive for one purpose: to create a prolonged relationship of service and relief, uniting families affected by breast cancer in a sanctuary of strength, hope, and rejuvenation.

I introduce to you Jessica Goldstein, our director of Children's programs for the Gloria Gemma Breast Cancer Resource Foundation.

Jessica, a wife and a mother of 3 was diagnosed when she was 30 with Stage 2, Grade 2 invasive lobular Breast Cancer. Jessica's children watched as she lost her hair and struggled day to day with chemo side effects, medication and countless surgeries. "As a parent it was agonizing to not fulfill my duties as a mom, to not have the energy to even get out of bed." Miraculously, Jessica's children came through this with new attitudes about life and the importance of reaching out to others. Our new Gidget's Corner program will benefit countless children and their parents with age appropriate activities. Not only will they be fun they will be therapeutic! This is only the beginning of beautiful things that we are working on bringing to you.

You can e-mail Jessica with questions at Jessica@gloriagemma.org
You can also call her at 401-241-0620

What's on your mind

My Hero

by Melissa Sorkin

8th grade

Pain can come in all shapes and sizes. It can come from the sheer break in your skin as your blood spills over like lava. It can be the piercing words coming from a familiar voice that you fear the most. It can be a fatal disease racing through your veins destroying everything in its path, or it could be those few phrases that seem to tear your heart in two. In life pain is inevitable. It always seems to catch up with us at some point in our lives. However, it's those who overcome such pain with unbroken spirits and a smile gleaming across their face that I like to call heroes. My mother is one of these heroes. One who looked death straight in the eyes, and lived to tell her story. My mother is a survivor of breast cancer. She fought and struggled with every last ounce of strength left in her body until it was defeated. Through her highs and lows as she battled through her disease, she always managed to give us so much support and comfort as if we were the ones with cancer. Her tender loving touch and her inspiration to young women everywhere is undeniable, and her endless courage and selflessness is just a small piece of

the pie. My mother not only inspires me, but she also has taught me so much as a person. My mother, Aida Sorkin is my hero because throughout her life she has shown to be nothing less than inspirational, courageous, and loving.



Fun stuff

Rearrange the letters in the puzzle to find the answer

Hint: wig wearer

HE GETS GOING ON WAR

True or False?

Identical twins have the same fingerprints.

Give Up?

Stay tuned for the answers in next months Gemmaletter.

Have something you want to add, send me an email:
kreativ.1@mac.com



Events listed below are subject to change .
 For weekly classes offered at the Center please call 401-861-4376

Dinner & Comedy Show



March 13th
 @ Ninos on Lake Tiogue
 Doors open at 6:00 PM
 Dinner is at 7:00 PM
 A night of Dinner & Laughs featuring comedians "Ace" Aceto & Mary Ellen Rinaldi
 All proceeds for this event benefit the Foundation, an absolute steal at \$35

To reserve your ticket please call 401-861-4376 or 401-556-8507



ARS Casino Night



to benefit the Gloria Gemma Breast Cancer Resource Foundation
 Saturday, March 21st
 Gillette Stadium - East Club Section
 6:30 pm - 11:00 pm
 Tickets: \$50 per person (\$75 at the door)

A great night of casino games plus prizes! Yup, I said it - PRIZES!



Pancake Breakfast at the North Providence Senior Center located at 2 Atlantic Blvd.
 Sunday, March 22 at 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
 What do you like on your pancake?

Grand Opening of Gidget's Corner Saturday, April 4th at 10:00 am

Join us as the North Providence High School hits the street with their Mineral Spring Avenue Parade honoring the Grand opening of Gidget's Corner located at the Gloria Gemma Breast Cancer Resource & Wellness Center.

Upcoming events:

- Gasbaro Wine Tasting - 03/29 please call us at 401-861-4376 for more information
- Womens Expo - 04/18 with more to follow in the next gemmaletter
- Southern New England Women's Expo with more to follow in the next gemmaletter
- Mother's Day Bike Run - 05/10 with more to follow in the next gemmaletter

thank you, gracias, merci, danke, tack, arigato

Thank you to Amica for making a difference in Gidget and her family's lives. The gift baskets she received from you when she was allowed to work from home meant so much. She was determined to be Vice President of your company and maybe someday we can consider her an honorary one.

Thank you to Jessica for all of your efforts and hard work with Gidget's Corner. I know that this project is close to your heart and it shows in your enduring spirit.

Thank you to you all at North Providence High School. You all have made a dream become so much more than just a reality. This project has morphed into one million butterflies and you have truly let your colors fly.



What do you think?



I hope you have enjoyed the first of many newsletters to come. Our goal is to keep you informed of the latest happenings and maybe introduce you to something new.

We want you to know that you are not alone and that we are here. You will come to find that you have more in common with people than you may have realized. I know I have.

I invite you to send in any questions you may have as well as suggestions. This is all trial and error and if you feel like something was missing or can be improved upon I would like hear about it.

Please feel free to send me an e-mail at kreativ.1@mac.com

Inspiration can come from anywhere, you just have to walk with your head held high to see it.

We at the Gloria Gemma Breast Cancer Resource Foundation are here for you, take advantage, please.

**1455 Mineral Spring Avenue
North Providence, RI**

Need to talk? Give us a call.

401-861-HERO (4376)

800-549-HERO (4376)

info@gloriagemma.org