

Links for Life

Newslink

August 2008

Links for Life owes a debt of gratitude to our community for their support!

Happy New Year

from Links for Life!

What a whirl wind adventure it has been with Links for Life since I began in October of 2005! Just this past year some of the wonderful adventures I have been on are; applying for a scholarship to a Breast Cancer Conference for women under the age of 45 and attending. This year there were six of us from Bakersfield who attended the conference in Jacksonville Florida. It is so wonderful that the conference will award scholarships to husbands; two of the six who attended were men. We established a Yoga class for survivors and their family, & this year we are starting a young breast cancer survivors support group called **"Too Young for This."** I have enjoyed working with the Paint the Town Pink & Gala/Golf committee and all of the wonderful volunteers that make this organization so successful!



Jennifer Henry, Executive Director

Some of the wonderful accomplishments of Links for Life in 2007-2008

Fielded over **3900** calls with questions related to Breast Cancer

Assisted **154** walk-ins with services

Provided **228** Wigs

Supplied **6** Bras/Prostheses

Funded **461** Free Mammograms & **533** Ultrasounds

Sponsored **30** Needle Biopsies to under or uninsured individuals of Kern County.

Hosted **149** women in the Support Group

Accommodated **93** survivors and family members for Yoga

As we continue to grow and assist new individuals I want to thank you for supporting this organization because without you we would not exist. One of the many things wonderful about Bakersfield/Kern County is that when we see a need, we fill the need and Links for Life is proof of that generosity. Thank you again and I look forward to another fabulous year!

Jennifer Henry



Mercy Pena's Journey

Diagnosis

Mercy's journey began eleven months ago with her annual mammogram that showed a lump on her right side. "My results went to my primary care physician who told me she wanted me to go ahead and have a biopsy," says Mercy. "I did that two weeks later and that's when they found out it was a tumor and my doctor said it was cancerous. She wanted me to see an oncologist that same day. So at 3 o'clock I saw Dr. Nguyen."

That's when she heard the words most breast cancer patients never hear. "He said it was abnormal, not your typical breast cancer. It was more aggressive and he had never seen that type before." Not encouraging.

She and Dr. Nguyen went over her options, from biggest to smallest, and started with a PET scan. "Because of the type it was, we wanted to make sure there was nothing else in my body. They didn't find anything," she says, "but there

was a spot below the tumor, it did light up on the PET scan. To this day we don't know what it was."

Mercy's lump was under 1.8 cm and one of her options was a lumpectomy, which she chose. "He first told me 'mastectomy', but I said No, I don't think we're gonna do that. I wanted to go in stages to find out more about what's in that lump. I went to see Dr. Kay and he did the lumpectomy." That was the first of November at Memorial Hospital.

The tumor biopsy showed nothing damaging and the margins were clear. A tiny piece of the 'spot' was also taken along with a piece of the lymph node. "(The lymph node) was enlarged but there was no cancer in it. The tumor was a stage 3, more like a brain tumor that would spread quickly." Even UCLA told her that her cancer was uncommon. "So I decided to treat it aggressively with chemo and radiation afterward."

Mercy didn't even share her diagnosis with her family until the day before her surgery. "I have children and I didn't want to scare them. I wanted to get all my information before I went in there and told them," she says. A single mother, Mercy has a 22 year old, twin 17 year olds and a 15 year old. Their reaction was as she expected - they were afraid for her. "My sister was devastated. My brother told me, 'I know you're strong, you can do it. We cried, we hugged and then they wanted the details.'"

More of Mary's journey next month...

Wall of Hope

Every year the Bakersfield Californian publishes an article in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness. It will be in the Bakersfield Life Magazine in the September Issue. Included in the article is Links for Life... Wall of Hope. We would like YOU to be part of this.

Karla Jadwin of Jadwins Photography (a breast cancer survivor) volunteers her time to take the annual Survivor Portraits at no charge. All photos must be taken by August 15th, so please call Karla now to schedule an appointment to be photographed between the dates of August 1-15.

Jadwins Photography
2540 La France Drive
661.832.0677

If you were photographed in past years, you are welcome to update your photo at this time or you may use your previous photo.

If your photo was used last year, we need permission to use it again this year. This is a requirement of the Bakersfield Californian. If we do not have this permission, we will not be able to use your photo. Please call the Links for Life office for details—
661.322.5601



Paint the Town Pink Luncheon & Fashion

This year's theme is

"Stepping Out Against Breast Cancer"

and will be held at the DoubleTree Hotel. This special day begins with an extraordinary gift gallery, followed by a delicious lunch and concluding with a fashion show where professional models and breast cancer survivors showcase the latest fashions for the year. This is a wonderful event to treat your staff as a thank you for all of their dedication. Please do not wait to purchase your table, as last year's event was a sell out!



Light the Town Pink! October 20-28, 2008



PINK SPLASH, PACKAGE A- \$100*

By covering your outside entryway lighting with pink "gel," a translucent Linka for Life pink plastic, you will be showing your support for Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

The goal of "Light the Town Pink" is to turn the Bakerfield area pink between October 20th-27th for "Breast Cancer Awareness Month." Between October 20th and 22nd volunteers will be covering outdoor lighting and adding the ribbon between October 23rd and 25th. By October 27th the entire town will glow. On October 28th the volunteers will remove the lights and gel.

*Indicates that actual results may vary from photos shown.



PINK SPLASH WITH A RIBBON PACKAGE B- \$250*

This package adds a special light that is placed inside your home or business, projecting a special ribbon out your window commemorating this exciting event!

Linka for Life is a local non-profit organization that provides free mammograms, ultrasound, or needle biopsy for those without insurance or are underinsured. In addition, they help to provide wig for those who are under the effects of chemotherapy; provide a library of positive mental health, support groups, and seminars. Further, Linka for Life offers scholarships for those who are entering the nursing field. All money raised in Kern County stays in Kern County. You can learn more about Linka for Life by visiting us at www.linkaforlife.org or call 661-322-5601.



BIG SPLASH WITH A RIBBON PACKAGE C- \$500*

This package adds "Linka for Life Pink" to all of your outdoor lighting.

BIG SPLASH WITH A ROTATING RIBBON PACKAGE D- \$1000*

This adds the special effect of a limited-availability rotating ribbon.

HUGE SPLASH, PACKAGE E*

This customized package allow you to go all out! Trained professionals, volunteers for this event, will help you maximize your "Linka for Life" impact. Custom packages come in different styles and price ranges. LET US WORK IT OUT WITH YOU!

Ordering begins September 1, 2008

To place your order, or for more information, please go to www.lightthetownpink.org or call 661-322-5601.



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Your donations, whether monetary or in kind are always welcome and deeply appreciated.
Links for Life Donation/Membership Form

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ () Yes, I would like to volunteer
 Phone _____ E-mail _____

Enclosed is my tax deductible contribution Thank you for \$25 or more for membership!

Calendar of Events - October '08

Pink Ribbon Tying

October 1, 2008 - 11:00 am

This event takes place at the Liberty Bell on the corner of Truxtun and Chester Avenues and will highlight the proclamations from both the Kern County Board of Supervisors and Bakersfield City Council declaring October 2008 Paint the Town Pink month. The media intends to cover the event and breast cancer survivors will ring the Liberty Bell as a celebration of life. After the bell ringing, volunteers throughout Kern County tie pink ribbons on trees, lamp poles, etc. to celebrate life.

Lace'n It Up for Links for Life

October 1, 2008 - 11:30 am to 2:00 pm

Lace'n It Up for Links for Life will be a kick off walk to celebrate survivors, remember the individuals we have lost and encourage the ones just diagnosed with breast cancer. The walk will begin at the Liberty Bell on the corner of Truxtun and Chester Avenue with a walk throughout downtown. Participants can choose between two routes, a one-mile or a 1/2 mile path. A donation of \$10 provides you with a box lunch and small memento. The lunches will be available at the end of your walk and can be carried back to your workplace or eaten onsite with other participants.

Jazz & Jewelz

October 4, 2008

This event is a new addition to the Links for Life Paint the Town Pink activities and will be held in a wonderful Seven Oaks home where you will enjoy the sound of jazz while live models showcase an assortment of diamonds from local jewelers. Heavy hors d'ouvers will be served. Limited to 100 attendees.

Paint the Town Pink Fashion Show

October 16, 2008 - 10:00 am—2:00 pm

This year's theme for the event is "Stepping Out Against Breast Cancer" and will take place once again at the DoubleTree Hotel. This spectacular afternoon includes lunch, fashion show, and shopping galore. Reserve your table early—last year was a sell-out.

Christine's Bunco

October 21, 2008 - 6:30 pm

Christine's will host its annual Bunco to Benefit Links for Life. What could be more fun than a group of women throwing dice for a great cause? Paid reservations are a must—be sure to visit Christine's to sign up or call 834-3068. Refreshments and Brighton prizes complete the evening.