

## Surrender your Bras to Support the Fight Against Breast Cancer

by ASHLEY HUGHES, 2010

by Ashleigh Eisbrener

Ladies, hand over your bras! Athena's Cup, a national campaign, aims to collect and hook together 169,000 donated bras by this October! Their goal is to commemorate Breast Cancer Awareness Month, raise breast cancer awareness and attempt to break the current bra-chain Guinness World Record. Just think, you could have one of your bras pictured in that collectible book. (Make sure to pick a pretty one!) Along with the bras, Athena's Cup will collect a \$5 donation, which will be given to The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation and The Gloria Gemma Foundation in support of breast cancer research.

"The Athena's Cup Campaign is not about the bras," says Jennifer Jolicoeur, Mother Goddess and President of Athena's Home Novelties, one of the country's premier adult novelty companies. "It's



**169,000 bras linked together for one cause — the fight against Breast Cancer. Help us set a world record and find a cure!**

Send a \$5 donation and as many bras as you like to:  
**Athena's Home Novelties**  
640 Winter Street  
Woonsocket, RI 02895

Make check payable to:  
**Athena's Cup**

For more information, visit [www.athenacup.org](http://www.athenacup.org)

**ATHENA'S Cup**

JANUARY 10, 2010 • NEWPORT, RI *Feel free to write a loved one's name on the bra you submit!*

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July 2010

June 2010

about giving the women who wear them the chance to live in a world that is rid of breast cancer.” Her goal is to get women talking to others about the importance of scheduling yearly mammograms and performing regular breast health exams. “If a chain of bras can stop women in their tracks and cause them to do just that, then we can potentially save lives,” she says.

In honor, or in memory, donors are encouraged to write names or other meaningful inscriptions on the bras prior to sending them. To donate to the Athena’s Cup Campaign, send one or more bras, with a \$5 donation, to Athena’s Home Novelties, 640 Winter St, Woonsocket, RI 02895. The gently worn bras received will be donated to battered women’s shelters following the campaign. Shelters interested in receiving a donation of bras are encouraged to send a request to [marketing@athenashn.com](mailto:marketing@athenashn.com). For more information, or to make an online donation, visit [www.athenascup.org](http://www.athenascup.org). Checks should be made out to “Athena’s Cup.”

{ 0 comments }

## It’s (Not) Just a Cyst

by A S H on LJ EU IL GY H 2 1 , 2 0 1 0

by Susan McBride



I’m now 45 and heading toward four years as a survivor (as of this December!). It’s been a very interesting road, I must say, and it’s still not over yet. I’ve heard other survivors say “breast cancer is the gift that keeps on giving,” and that’s true in many respects. Sometimes I wonder if I’ll ever feel completely normal again, and then I remind myself that my life was never normal to begin with!

I was 42 in 2006 and had just bought a house with my boyfriend (now my husband), when I went to my gynecologist for a physical and pap smear. She felt a lump in my left breast that she thought was a cyst. I remember

## Events Calendar



### UPCOMING EVENTS

**July 27, 2010** – DJ Nights at Swanson Pool

6:30 pm, Community Event

**July 28, 2010** – Rotary Breakfast Meeting

7:00 am, Networking Event

**July 28, 2010** – Net Linc! Networking Lunch

11:45 am, Networking Event

**July 28, 2010** – Business After Hours

4:00 pm, Networking Event

**July 28, 2010** – Business After Hours

5:00 pm, Networking Event



her saying, “Here, feel it. Did you know it was there?” I said, “No,” because I’d been super-busy with moving and a book deadline for my fifth mystery (called TOO PRETTY TO DIE, ironically), so I hadn’t done a self-exam in awhile. Plus, I’d always had cystic breasts so it didn’t seem like a big deal.

I needed to get my annual mammogram anyway and was scheduled for September 11 (cue ominous music!), and I figured that would tell the tale.

Only my mammogram showed nothing, and I still have the letter saying, “All clear! See you next year!” So I went on with my life but kept feeling the lump and thinking it was getting bigger and was too hard to be a cyst.

Finally, in December of 2006, I was at a birthday brunch for my sister and felt jabs of pain in my left breast. I said to myself, “That’s a sign. Go check this out.” I called my gynecologist, insisted on an ultrasound, and even went in for an exam with her before the test. She palpated my left breast again, and said, “Susan, it’s just a cyst.” Famous last words. At the ultrasound, the tech knew right away that it was no cyst. She called in the chief radiologist, who checked it out and said, “We need to do a biopsy.” Whoa! I was scared out of my mind and had a bad feeling about the whole thing.

Soon enough, the biopsy results showed I had a rare form of cancer (1 to 2 percent of all breast cancers) called “pure mucinous carcinoma.” It’s most often found in women over age 60, is very slow growing, and not as aggressive as other forms of cancer; so I was assured I had an excellent prognosis. But I wanted that sucker out of my boob ASAP!!! I saw a surgeon as soon as I could get in and scheduled a lumpectomy with sentinel node biopsy for three days after Christmas in 2006. Ed proposed on Christmas Eve so we had some good news to tell our families amidst the bad. I also had two book deadlines looming (for TOO PRETTY TO DIE and my first young adult novel, THE DEBS), and I kept wondering how I could fight cancer and do my job AND plan a wedding without having a nervous breakdown!

The lumpectomy went fine, but I ended up having to undergo a re-excision in January of 2007 to get one margin clear. Not long after, I started six and a half weeks of radiation therapy. The oncologist wanted to do chemo, but I read so many studies on pure mucinous carcinoma that I knew it would likely be overkill and thankfully my other doctors agreed. I wasn’t sure how I’d deal with it—or how Ed would deal with it—but we really pulled together. His mom and my mom took turns driving me to rad therapy, which was wonderful. I also realized I was much stronger than I ever believed. It was a trial, for sure. But I made it through the treatment with minimal discomfort. Amazingly, I got my books written nearly on time (working at home was a godsend!) and planned my wedding without losing my mind or interfering with my recovery.

Three-and-a-half years post treatment, I still feel the effects. I have intermittent rib pain below my left breast and occasional weird stabbing pains in my left chest wall. I know lots of nerves were damaged during my surgeries and radiation, but I've learned from talking to other survivors that this is pretty common stuff. I'm followed closely with physical exams and either an ultrasound or mammogram every six months.

My doctors advised that I wait six months post-surgery to start working out again, so I eased into it as soon as I was cleared. For about six months after that, I used a personal trainer who had experience with breast cancer survivors. Now I work out on my own and go to yoga once a week. I eat organically as much as possible and take good care of myself, using organic products on my body and in my house. Being told you have cancer is a terrifying thing and affects you for the rest of your life. What it does to your body sometimes isn't as harsh as what it does to your head. I try to focus on all the good things in my life and spend time with people I love. I speak often at breast cancer events and tell my story to other survivors and their families. I love doing that. It makes me feel like my experience has a real purpose. I do listen to my body very carefully now and have my doctors check out anything that doesn't feel right. And I will never, never take my health for granted again.

{ 3 comments }

## Celebrating a Day in Cocktail History

J U L Y 1 9 , 2 0 1 0

by Ashleigh Eisbrener

Who said the next holiday isn't until Labor Day? Today is National Daiquiri Day, and we wish a happy one to you. Although this popular summer drink has transformed into beautifully bright hues blended to the perfect consistency, (they must be thick, but still easily suckable through a straw!), daiquiris actually were invented [...]

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[Why I Went Gluten-Free](#)

## Permission to Live my Dream; All it Took was Breast Cancer

J U L Y 1 5 , 2 0 1 0

by Jean Campbell

I doubt that I would have given myself permission to live my dream if it had not been for getting breast cancer. For most of my career before cancer, I was a closet writer, earning a living as an educator and administrator. I wrote educational and business articles related to my work. Today [...]

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[DJ Bistro's Napoléon of Crab and Shrimp](#)

J U L Y 1 2 , 2 0 1 0

## Dealing with Dining Out

by Melissa Galt

I've known for awhile that gluten is an issue for me, but wasn't able to get a hard diagnosis. I have recently opted to live gluten-free and can safely say that not only has my weight dropped but my energy is up, and I certainly feel a [...]

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## Dealing with Diverticulitis

J U N E 2 9 , 2 0 1 0

by: Ashleigh Eisbrener

He lays in bed, sick with a high fever and piercing pain in his lower left abdomen. It's the same throbbing and soreness he's had twice in the last couple months. He rubs the area and wonders how he could have pulled the same muscle again. He starts cramping up. He won't [...]

[Read the full article →](#)

## The Unknowns that Lurk Beneath the Surface

J U N E 2 9 , 2 0 1 0

by: Ashleigh Eisbrener

Birds lay on the shore lathered in oil, unable to move; sea otters rest on rocks, their bodies coated in a glossy black sheen; and schools of fish take their last breath before the toxic substance clogs their gills. The oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is the first in history to [...]

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## Provençal

J U N E 2 9 , 2 0 1 0

The Suburban Woman visited the kitchen of D&J Bistro in Lake Zurich, where Chef Masato showed us how to cook up Napoléon of Crab and Shrimp Provençal. It's simple, beautiful and absolutely delicious! Learn how to make it yourself at home with our step-by-step recipe.

Owners of Lake Zurich's D&J Bistro Chef Masato and Dominique Legeai get [...]

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## My Chronicle of an Unplanned Journey

J U N E 2 9 , 2 0 1 0

by: Gretchen Slusser

Wanderlust: a strong longing or impulse toward wandering. Vagabond: moving from place to place with no fixed home. No matter what you call it, I've spent the last 38 years searching for my purpose in life. The thought of settling into a routine, establishing roots and dealing with everyday business seemed boring. I [...]

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