

Local Woman Exemplifies 'Hero of Hope' after Battle with Cancer

When Patty Cook was diagnosed with breast cancer 13 years ago she threw everything at it: surgery, treatment, alternative medicine, even humor.

"A friend gave me a book about having a 'no' hair day," says Patty. "It gave me a way to laugh about it. I had friends over for a ceremony about losing my hair. It felt really good to have that kind of power over it."

She later found another outlet for her cancer journey: the American Cancer Society's signature event, Relay For Life.

"About 5 years ago my friend invited me to a Relay For Life. I was inspired by the power of people coming together for a common cause, and especially by the Luminaria Ceremony."

At Relay For Life events across the country, people like Patty join friends, family and community members to celebrate, remember, and fight back against a disease that takes too much.

Along the way, Patty has faced a second breast cancer diagnosis. Through it all, the American Cancer Society has been there to help her get well, including the extensive research she did on www.cancer.org.

"I wanted to learn as much as I could," she said. "All about my particular condition and what resources were available. It helped me find a protocol that I believed in. All the information that was available for me was huge."

Patty says that her life isn't defined by having had cancer, though it has shaped it. It keeps her focused on designing a life of joy, inspiration, service... and of course humor.

"I love fun. I love to giggle," says Patty. "There's something about it that's uplifting to me. It makes me feel better; makes me feel stronger."

While humor has played a role in her healing, she is serious about beating cancer and fighting back through Relay For Life.

"The experience of cancer can be an isolating one as we focus on our own experience and process of healing," says Patty. "Relay For Life is a powerful way to keep life in perspective, keep hope and inspiration alive, be of service to others, and help to end this disease."



What is Relay For Life?

This nationwide signature activity for the American Cancer Society began in May 1985, when Gordon Klatt M.D. took the first step of his 24-hour marathon around a Tacoma, Wash., track and raised \$27,000. The following year 340 supporters joined Dr. Klatt in this overnight event, and Relay For Life was born. Relay For Life is not just a fundraiser; it's a unique activity that offers an opportunity to take up the fight. It's about empowering individuals to fight back against a disease that has taken so much from them. Held at high school tracks and parks, this non-competitive relay-style, overnight walk, unites the community with music, games, food, and touching ceremonies. Find out more at relayforlife.org or by calling (314) 286-8100.

RELAY FOR LIFE

American Cancer Society

Help create a world with more birthdays.

	<p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Relay For Life of St. Louis City – April 27-28 <i>Bishop DuBourg High School</i></p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Relay For Life of South County – May 18-19 <i>Mehlville High School</i></p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Relay For Life of West County – June 1-2 <i>Villa Duchesne Oak Hill School</i></p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Relay For Life of Southwest County – June 22-23 <i>Moss Field in Webster Groves</i></p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Relay For Life of North County – August 3-4 <i>Hazelwood Central High School</i></p>
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