



Hometown News

OCTOBER—AWARENESS

The summer of 2003 was a busy time in my life. My mother was diagnosed with breast cancer and had a mastectomy in June. She was extremely ill, her wound reopened and the medications were making her sick. She was staying at my home with nursing care daily. I was running on empty, exhausted but still working with my real estate customers and fulfilling my duties as Councilwoman for the City of Homestead. Finally, my husband and I had an opportunity to get away for a couple of days on city business in late August. While away on our trip, Merv became very ill. He was later diagnosed with West Nile Virus. He was hospitalized and nearly died.

The end of September I had my annual mammogram, followed by a biopsy because the radiologist saw a little something in the films. Not giving this any thought as I had been down that road before and everything was always okay, I spent the weekend with girlfriends, laughing and lounging by the pool.

On Monday afternoon, when Merv handed me the phone, it took only an instant to see the pain in his eyes to know it was bad news. My doctor told me that I had a malignant tumor in my breast and he said I needed to see an oncology surgeon immediately. I remember that it was as if the breath had left my lungs and I could hardly speak. Knees like jello, I slid to the floor, holding the

phone and trying to answer the doctor's questions.

I was scheduled to have a lumpectomy, but my cancer spread so fast, it became quickly apparent that we had to take a much more aggressive path. Because of my family history, my doctors helped in the decision to have a radical bilateral mastectomy with reconstruction.

My friends were and are wonderful. They kept me busy, made me laugh, and were always there to share a cry if need be.

I discovered an internet website for breast cancer ladies, Ladybirds, who live all over the world. It is my honor to be in their company. They are my sisters.

Internet friends are wonderful, but there is nothing like having someone close by who shares your darkest days. The day I met a beautiful redhead, named Colleen Beem, was truly a blessing from above. It was something that I had prayed for—someone who could honestly say, I know what you are going through, and she really did. Colleen and I have each had five surgeries, and I am so grateful she and I have each other to always lean on.

Because I am a breast cancer warrior and have been lifted up by so many beautiful friends, it is my life goal to continue to educate both men and women to see their doctors for regular checkups or if any unusual symptoms appear. I have very dear

friends who I stand by, hold their hand, fix their wigs and devote every minute I can to ensuring they know they can beat this and to keep HOPE alive.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month, and it is so important that we remind our family, friends, co-workers and sometimes even strangers to get their check-ups and to have genetic testing if there is family history. There are four women in my family who have battled breast cancer. Early detection saves lives. You are reading a story of a living example of a life begin saved because of early detection.

A survivor I met once told me, the world treats you as if once you have cancer, you have one foot in the grave; but I know that there are 8 million and counting cancer warriors on this earth that can tell you that just isn't so.

We must continue to support cancer research and I know that some day during those first five minutes when a person is told that they have cancer, they will also be told there is a CURE FOR THIS HORRIBLE DISEASE, because of the effort of people like you.

In closing, I encourage each of you to say a very special prayer for all those who have lost their fight and are battling it now. Thank you for the tremendous community support that I have. I send best wishes and love to each of you!

"Take every step with purpose and passion. Do whatever you can, whenever you can, however you can. Share love and hugs freely. One person truly can make a difference." ~Stacy Matseas

CITY OF HOMESTEAD—News and Events!

In 1987, October was declared Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The Day of Unity, first observed in 1981, is the first Monday in October to mourn those who have died, to celebrate those who have survived, and to connect all who work to end domestic violence. Studies reveal 50-70% of cases in which a parent abuses another parent, the children are also physically abused, and that up to 10 million children witness some form of domestic violence annually. Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women, more than accidents, muggings, and rapes combined. Approximately 40% of domestic violence victims are men. Nearly 1 in 2 women have been abused worldwide, and most often by a family member. Domestic violence can happen to anyone and affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels. Homestead is fortunate to have a domestic violence advocacy organization, Start Off Smart, Inc.—305-224-5585. It is everyone's responsibility to recognize and report domestic violence.



Congratulations and Farewell to our Assistant City Manager, David Hebert. He has been named the City Manager of Oakland Park.

The news is bittersweet however. He has done so much in the interest of Homestead since he arrived in 2011, and he has been there for our City Manager, as well as Council. It is hard for me to say goodbye (the bitter). I am so thrilled for him to make the step into the City Manager seat (the sweet). I know he will do amazing things there. All the best David! We will miss you!



FIRSTS: My dear friends, Charles and Emilia Gugliuzza are amazing, giving people, individually and collectively. On October 1, at the Kiwanis District Convention, Charles will be installed as the Governor of the Florida District of Kiwanis International. He is the 1st South Miami-Dade resident to serve. Thus, on this same day, Emilia, his lovely wife of 14 years, will be the first Latin American First Lady in the District's 79-year history. Due to the efforts of the Gugliuzza's, Florida ranks as the 4th largest contributor to the planetary Kiwanis/United Nations UNICEF ELIMINATE Project to end maternal/neonatal tetanus. This couple doubles in charity, kindness, and love through their efforts in civic organizations and community. They strive and never tire to make a difference in the lives of children. I have no doubt in the year ahead, they will achieve their goals in making Kiwanis stronger and their reach wider.



Pic: Charles at Jail & Bail for Relay for Life



Congratulations to Daniella Levine Cava, Miami-Dade County Commissioner-elect, Eighth District. I am looking forward to working with you!



EVENTS

Breast Cancer Awareness Month	Oct. 1-31
Domestic Violence Awareness Month	Oct. 1-31
This is for The Kids Rock' Rib Fest; Harris Field Pavilion; 305-979-8424, \$10	Sat. Oct. 4 11 a.m.— 9 p.m.
Dade County Farm Bureau 72nd Annual Meeting, Redland Golf & Country Club, 305-246-5514, \$30	Tue. Oct. 7 12-1:30 p.m.
Homestead Main Street Book Fair, Losner Park, 305-323-6564—FREE	Sat. Oct. 11 1-5 p.m.
Columbus Day	Mon. Oct. 13
Binational Health Week of the Americas at Cinco de Mayo Park	Sat. Oct. 18 9 a.m.— 3 p.m.
EBC Freedom Ride (Bicycles), Homestead -Miami Speedway, \$45-\$60, www.evergladesbc.com/freedomride2014	Sun. Oct. 19 6 a.m.—2 p.m.
United Nations Day	Fri. Oct. 24
Atala Montessori 5th Annual Chili Cook-Off, 240 N. Krome Ave., 786-738-1210, \$5	Fri. Oct. 24 5-8 p.m.
City of Homestead Halloween event, Harris Field Pavilion, 305-224-4570	Sat. Oct. 25 6:30-9:30p.m.
Kiwanis 2nd Annual Reverse Raffle Scholarship Fundraiser, 1601 N. Krome Ave., \$100 (for 2)	Sat. Oct. 25 6-10 p.m.
PATCHES GALA, Trump National Doral Golf Club, 305-242-8122, \$200	Sat. Oct. 25 6—10 p.m.
HALLOWEEN	Fri. Oct. 31

Councilwoman Judy Waldman

"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope & confidence." - Helen Keller

October 2014

