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**MEDIA  
PLANET**

September 2011

# BREAST CANCER AWARENESS



## MELISSA ETHERIDGE ROCKS OUT

Hard Rock's PINKTOBER "Artist Ambassador"  
discusses her triumph over breast cancer

PHOTO: HARD ROCK INTERNATIONAL/RENE MACURA



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## CHALLENGES

With National Breast Cancer Awareness Month upon us in October, I'm mindful again this year of **encouraging news...**



# Hope for the future

**D**eath rates from breast cancer have declined by 31 percent in 20 years and the five-year relative survival rate for early stage cancers caught and treated is 98 percent, versus 74 percent when I started my work almost 30 years ago. These are encouraging numbers, but now is no time to let our guard down against a disease that is the most common cancer in women and the leading cause of cancer death in women worldwide. I'm encouraging all women this year to keep their guards up and take action for their health.

## Manage your risks

When you see the pink of October, I hope you think about actually scheduling that breast cancer screening you've been putting off (yes, I know, we're all busy), or having that discussion with your mother or grandmother about your family's health history. While you're at it, you might remind your mother or grandmother to get their mammogram. I hope you take a few minutes to visit our website, [komen.org](http://komen.org),

and learn about the disease itself and the symptoms you should be looking for.

I also hope you take a few minutes to think about steps you can take that are good for your overall health and also may reduce your risk of breast cancer, like maintaining a healthy weight, being active and limiting alcohol intake. I hope that you take a minute to sign up as a cancer advocate or to make a donation. For those of you participating in a Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure or other Komen event, I thank you for that involvement. What you're doing means we can take significant action for women's health through programs we fund right here in the community, and in our global research program.

## A global effort

The researchers funded by Susan G. Komen for the Cure have given many women more options for breast cancer treatment than ever before. I'm excited by a new era of research going after the toughest issues that remain in breast cancer: how to stop breast cancer from spreading; how to detect it before symptoms form; even potential



**Ambassador Nancy G. Brinker**  
Founder and CEO,  
Susan G. Komen for the Cure

vaccines. I'm grateful every time I talk to a woman living 10, 15, 20 years after her diagnosis, for the gift that this science has given us. In our communities, Komen-funded health advocates deliver the programs that mean so much: providing screenings for low-income and uninsured women, getting them help through treatment, even paying for groceries and childcare for women undergoing treatment. Globally, we're providing new hope to women in developing countries, with partnerships and advocacy in more than 50 countries.

We've come a very long way in our global fight against breast cancer. We have far more to do to end a disease that will strike 1.4 million women

worldwide this year, and kill another half a million. You can help by taking action this October, and every day, for yourselves and for others.

**Chicagoland Area Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure**  
Komen Chicago kicks off Breast Cancer Awareness Month by challenging all women to take action, get screened and be their own breast health advocates!

"Early detection is the key to survival," says Michael, Ziener, Executive Director of Komen Chicago. "There is a 98 percent five-year survival rate for cancers caught and treated early in the U.S."

Komen Chicago granted \$1.5M to 22 local organizations funding lifesaving education, screening and treatment programs.

"Komen guarantees resources for uninsured and underinsured women in the Chicagoland area," says Leticia Kees, Manager of Mission Initiatives. "We encourage all women to get annual mammograms starting at age 40."

**NANCY G. BRINKER**  
[editorial@mediaplanet.com](mailto:editorial@mediaplanet.com)



## WE RECOMMEND



**Pattie Cagney Sheehan**,  
Certified  
Mastectomy Fitter,  
Second Act

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"Armed with this knowledge ... she can face her surgery focused on her recovery, not fearful of what comes next."

# MEDIA PLANET

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### REGISTER TO WALK TODAY.

It's our 10th birthday, and all we want is you. Join us for the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer as we celebrate an extraordinary decade of shared conviction and life-changing advances. For 2 days and 39 miles, we'll walk side-by-side and keep the momentum going. Because of you, more promising research initiatives will be funded, more low-income women will receive mammograms and more under-insured breast cancer patients will get the care they need. Join us. **ARE YOU IN IT TO END IT?**

**REMEMBER, EARLY DETECTION HELPS SAVE LIVES.** Discuss breast cancer screening with your doctor and make informed decisions about what age to start mammography. Get to know your risk and risk reduction strategies.

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## INSPIRATION

**Question:** What do you do when cancer throws your body out of balance?

**Answer:** You take back your health through better choices and a stronger mind.

# The rejuvenation of Melissa Etheridge

## HOW I MADE IT

### How breast cancer taught the rocker to live happily and healthily.

In 2005, just two weeks after finishing chemotherapy for breast cancer, Melissa Etheridge took stage at the Grammys to sing the rock classic “Piece of My Heart” in memory of Janis Joplin. Bald but bold, her performance was nothing short of triumphant, highlighted by a soul-shaking scream before the final chorus that she calls “the most cathartic noise I’ve ever made in my entire life.”

“It certainly took the whole experience I’d just been through and just shoved it up to the universe. It really healed me,” she says.

The performance was a symbolic victory over cancer, and an inspiration to women worldwide suffering from the same disease. It left a profound impression on Academy Award winning actress Kathy Bates, who was recovering from ovarian cancer at the time.

“When I saw Melissa come out with the bald head, I thought, ‘You know, that’s the way I wish I would’ve done it,’” she says.

### Renewed, reawakened

Six years later, Etheridge is healthier than she ever knew was possible.

“Those hours and days I spent lying there on chemotherapy led me to an enlightenment about life, spirit, purpose, health, what I’m doing here. It just opened a gateway to be able to understand and have



joy in life—a change for the better, definitely,” she reflects. “Cancer is your body’s last wakeup call.”

### Choosing happiness

Given a second chance, Etheridge has taken enthusiastically to natural, in-season fruits and vegetables, which, along with yoga, help keep her body in balance. She’s also realized the importance of happiness as a safeguard against stress and “emotional toxicity.”

“My joy is the most important thing,” she says. “I will never be healthy if I cannot be happy. For my health I need to make the choice to be happy.”

### Other roads to healing

Looking back on the experience, Etheridge believes she would seek

alternative treatment options if she had to face it again.

“Chemotherapy is just gnarly,” she says. “Knowing what I know now, I would not have done it. I believe that more damage was done because of chemo than the tumor and the cancer.”

She believes that cancer is already curable through cutting edge treatments offered by doctors and healers, and that healthy choices in life can put up a remarkable defense against the disease. And, naturally, there is something to be said about the restorative properties of rock ‘n’ roll.

“Music goes straight past the brain, right into the soul. I take it very seriously as far as healing goes.”

STEVE ETHERIDGE

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## A young survivor faces the challenges

### Being diagnosed as a young woman leaves one facing very adult issues.

When a woman is diagnosed at such a young age—in my case, six days after my twentieth birthday—there are issues thrown at you that you were never ready to address.



The majority of us are not prepared because we never expected to

face this disease in our 20’s or even 30’s. I quickly learned that this is a chronic disease. There will always be that chance of recurrence. There is no “cure.” The social stress, psychological distress and need for that psychosocial support is ongoing. You need a strong mental mindset to physically fight this disease. You

quickly learn stress only decreases our immune system.

### Our best resources

After putting your pride aside for the sake of your life, you are still left to answer questions—not only to yourself, but people you care for in your life. As you go on through

your 30’s, 40’s, and 50’s you address daily issues, but also must incorporate your cancer treatment and prevention from recurrence. This will always be a struggle we face as young women, older women and men, but we don’t have to face it alone. We have each other and we will always be our best resources.



# INSIGHT



TIP  
2

SUPPORT PINK  
INITIATIVES!

**WALK FOR HOPE**  
Participating in walks and  
researching "pink partners"  
and products are fun ways  
to show your support.  
PHOTO: AVON FOUNDATION



## POST BREAST SURGERY PRODUCTS AND CARE



**Pattie Cagney  
Sheehan,**  
Certified  
Mastectomy Fitter,  
Second Act

For a woman facing breast cancer surgery, the question "What will I look like afterward?" is a scary thought. An appointment at an accredited full service Cancer Recovery Boutique before her surgery can put her mind at ease. Here she can learn about post-surgical garments, handle a prosthesis, examine a mastectomy bra, and ask questions. She can also look at, feel and try on wigs. Armed with this knowledge and experience she can face her surgery focused on her recovery, not fearful of "what comes next".

Following surgery, she will return to the Boutique where a Certified Mastectomy Fitter will make sure all her post-breast surgery products are properly fitted to meet her individual needs. Even women undergoing reconstruction will find interim products to make them look and feel like their former self during the transition period.

It is also important to note that with a properly written prescription Medicare and private insurance will cover most, if not all, of the cost of these items. And this is true not just for recently diagnosed cancer patients, but for survivors who have been thriving for years.

# From trauma to triumph

Six years ago I was a 33-year-old woman living in New York City with great friends and an active social life, a successful career in public relations, two marathons under my belt and a gym membership tattered from over-use.

All was well in my world. Then I received my breast cancer diagnosis and everything changed. My life was consumed with fighting breast cancer: five surgeries, chemotherapy, shedding my long hair and a lot of tears.

When I successfully landed on the other side of this disease, I wanted



**ELOISE CAGGIANO (L),** founder of Avon Walk for Breast Cancer, enjoys one of several annual walks with her organization.  
PHOTO: AVON FOUNDATION

to take the personal trauma of battling breast cancer and put it to good use daily and show others that there is hope after a breast cancer diagnosis. Now, as the program director for the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer, I

am so proud that the money raised at our events—more than \$50 million annually—helps people get the breast cancer screening and treatment they need, regardless of their ability to pay for it!

I was so fortunate to have good health insurance and access to great doctors, but not everyone is so lucky. To know that the work we do every day could ultimately help turn someone's diagnosis into a story of survival is incredible. And to know that we are funding research into new treatments, prevention, and ultimately a cure is not only amazing for those it will help, but selfishly I am hopeful that this research will keep me from ever having to go through breast cancer again.

**ELOISE CAGGIANO**

Program Director, Avon Walk for Breast Cancer  
editorial@mediaplanet.com



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## INSIGHT

## SPECIAL THANKS

**A Silver Lining Foundation**

Research information, outreach and cost-free mammograms to uninsured and underinsured women (and men) at six Chicago-area partner hospitals.

■ [www.asilverliningfoundation.org](http://www.asilverliningfoundation.org)

**BreastCancerTrials.org**

Nonprofit service dedicated to helping breast cancer patients, those at risk, or post-treatment survivors considering clinical trials as an option for care. BCT's personalized trial matching service makes it easier for visitors to find trials that are right for them. Alternatively, visitors can browse its listings to easily find and share trial information with others.

■ [www.breastcancertrials.org](http://www.breastcancertrials.org)

**Bright Pink**

Bright Pink provides education and support to young women who are at high risk for breast and ovarian cancer. To get involved in our free programs and services or access information on how you can be proactive with your breast and ovarian health, visit our website.

■ [www.brightpink.org](http://www.brightpink.org)

**Keep A Breast**

Keep A Breast's mission is to help eradicate breast cancer by exposing young people to methods of prevention, early detection and support. Through art and music events, educational programs and fundraising efforts, they seek to increase breast cancer awareness among young people so they are better

equipped to develop habits that will benefit their long-term health and well-being.

■ [www.keep-a-breast.org](http://www.keep-a-breast.org)

**Sisters Network® Inc. Chicago Inc.**  
(An Affiliate Chapter of Sisters Network Inc.)

Sisters Network® Inc. (SNI) is the leading voice and the only national African American breast cancer survivorship organization in the United States. Founded in 1994, the 501(C) (3) nonprofit organization is governed by an elected national Board of Directors and is represented in 19 states through 40 affiliate chapters. Under the direction of Founder & CEO Karen E. Jackson, Sisters Network is a nationally recognized organization within the medical community and a critical resource for African American women fighting breast cancer. The organization's purpose is to save lives and provide a broader scope of knowledge that addresses the breast cancer survivorship crisis affecting African American women around the country.

■ [sistersnetworkchicagochapter.org](http://sistersnetworkchicagochapter.org)

**Young Survival Coalition**

Young Survival Coalition (YSC) is the premier global organization dedicated to the critical issues unique to young women who are diagnosed with breast cancer. YSC offers resources, connections and outreach so women feel supported, empowered and hopeful.

■ [www.youngsurvival.org](http://www.youngsurvival.org)

**Question:** How do you best combat a ruthless, impersonal disease?

**Answer:** By first understanding how it will affect your body.



## FINDING PERSONALIZED CARE

**Death rates for cancer in the United States haven't changed in 50 years, despite the myriad advancements made in research and technology.**

This disheartening statistic signifies a need for a dramatic shift in how we treat the diseases. Matthew Ellis, MD, PhD, a professor of medicine at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, insists that treatments must become more personal.

"We need to completely redo the way we treat cancer and we have to

start with a genomic approach," he says. "An accurate diagnosis based on the cancer genome can eliminate all this trial and error medicine. There are a whole lot of other opportunities that we are ignoring because we didn't get the diagnosis right in the first place."

**Make it unique**

Plenty of clinical data emphasizes the importance of understanding individual patients' bodies in developing unique treatments for cancer, and more and more options are becoming available for those seeking personalized treatment.

A predictive treatment includes a simple BRACAnalysis test, which can detect if a woman carries a mutation of the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene, a mutation that gives a woman an 87 percent risk of developing breast cancer. Further, finding molecular markers in a patient can help sidestep much of the guesswork involved in treating tumors, leading to more accurate care with fewer potential side-effects.

STEVE ETHERIDGE

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## Tomorrow's technology

**According to Michael Kinney, MD, of The Center for Advanced Breast Care in Arlington Heights, early detection improves the chances cancer can be diagnosed at an early stage and treated successfully.**



**Michael Kinney, MD**  
The Center for Advanced Breast Care

"In recent years, there has been dramatic growth in the diagnostic options available to breast specialists and their patients," says Dr. Kinney. "Ultrasound, mammography, MRI, and BSGI are some of the

common technologies used today. Positron Emission Mammography, PEM, is a relatively new and advanced tool used to help diagnose breast disease."

PEM is a nuclear medicine procedure that produces a detailed image of the metabolic changes

to breast tissue. With PEM, doctors can see cancers earlier and as small as 1.5 mm, about the width of a grain of rice. According to Kinney, PEM aids in surgical planning to assure the removal of all suspicious tissue while conserving healthy tissue. It is also used to monitor treatment and check for recurrence of disease. As the first breast surgeon in the country to conduct a PEM guided biopsy, Dr. Kinney stresses the importance of utilizing both new and traditional diagnostic methods.



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**The Center for  
Advanced Breast Care**

Michael R. Kinney, MD  
Allyson F. Jacobson, MD  
Marc Lovett, RN, MN, APN

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