

I am sure that everyone knows that October is Breast Cancer Awareness month. What you may not know is that October 13th is National Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness day. Until this year, I didn't even know that metastatic breast cancer even existed, but that always seems to be the way it goes until it directly affects your life.

In March of this year, my mom, Lori Dack-Pearson, was diagnosed with Metastatic Breast Cancer. MBC is stage IV breast cancer that has metastasized, or grown, somewhere else in the body. In my mom's case her cancer has spread to the outer surface of her lung. Despite all of this bad news, my mom has found amazing doctors who have created her a manageable treatment plan. At this time we are thankfully able to discuss her treatment plan in terms of many years and have not been given a specific timeline yet but for many with this diagnosis the life expectancy is no more than a heartbreaking 2-5 years. For this particular kind of breast cancer there is no cure. There is no chance for remission at this time and the individuals with this disease will be treating or managing their cancer every day for the rest of their lives. They are known as 'cancer lifers'. For many with MBC, my mom included, they do not look sick. My mom will not take traditional chemotherapy or radiation so she will not lose her hair or show many of the physical signs that we have come to associate with cancer fighters and survivors. Instead, my mom takes a daily chemotherapy pill to help maintain her cancer and hopefully keep it from spreading any further throughout her body and does her best to go about her daily life as a daughter, wife, mother, and grandmother as normal.

It is because of this that I found the Metastatic Breast Cancer Network (link below). It is a group whose mission is to empower, advocate, and educate those who are affected by this particular kind of cancer. In my own experience hearing terms like: "remission is not possible at this time" and "cancer lifer" were very scary terms to hear -even as the daughter of someone with this disease. Information really has been my best friend when coming to terms with my family's current situation.

I am personally encouraging anyone who is able to be at the football game on Friday, October 13th to wear pink and help Southern Public Schools support Breast Cancer Awareness Month and the Metastatic Breast Cancer Network. Come out, support our Raiders. Support the women in all of our lives who have been touched by this horrible disease in whatever form it has taken so that we can help fund the necessary research so our daughters and granddaughters do not have to live with the uncertainty that comes with breast cancer. We are also contacting the Ashland-Greenwood community too, to encourage them to don their pink on that day as well. The hope is that we can all come together in support of those dealing with this terrible disease no matter what side of the football we line up on.

We have worked with Kotchulookin on a PINK OUT tshirt design that will be available to order through TUESDAY 10/10 and at the game there will be pink pom-poms for sale to help us cheer on the Raiders in their final regular season home game. All proceeds from these sales of the shirts and pom-poms will go to the Metastatic Breast Cancer Network.

So far we have several organizations within the school that are coming together in support of Breast Cancer Awareness, including: Southern Cheerleaders, S-Club, Sophomore Class, Art Club, FBLA, and Student Council.

If there are any community groups, organizations, or people who would also like to donate to this cause please contact Mrs. Nerverve at the High School or email me at: mneverve@southernschools.org for more information.

<http://www.mbcn.org/october-13-national-metastatic-breast-cancer-awareness-day/>