



The Breakfast Club
Sister to Sister
Caring & Sharing

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BREAKFAST CLUB, INC.
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The Breakfast Club Beacon

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Our Mission

Impacting the St. Louis Metropolitan community through Education, Awareness, Resources and Support concerning breast health, breast cancer and breast cancer prevention and screening.

Ella M. Jones Elected Ferguson Mayor



Ferguson, Missouri is 126 years old and has elected its first female, African American mayor. Mrs. Jones a 40 year resident of Ferguson and former two time elected Ward 1 Councilwoman, was publicly sworn into office on July 17, 2020. The Honorable Judge George W. Draper III, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Mis-

souri, had the honor of swearing in Mayor Jones.

Ferguson gained national attention in 2014, after the killing of Michael Brown. As Ward 1 Councilwoman, Mayor Jones, worked diligently to improve the image of Ferguson and unite the community. As mayor she has pledged to continue her efforts to move Ferguson Forward. Her plans include to attack the wide disparities with regard to economic opportunity, home ownership, financial insecurity, food access, public health and the city's physical infrastructure. Mayor Jones states "What is good for Ferguson, is good for the rest of St. Louis county, our metropolitan area, our state and our Nation!"

Mayor Jones is widowed and has one daughter. She is a graduate of the University of Missouri-St. Louis and received training sponsored by the Missouri Municipal League and received a Certified Municipal Official designation from the Municipal Governance Institute in September 2017. She is also a Pastor for the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The Breakfast Club partners with Ferguson in two annual events. The Faith on the Move program, brings the mammogram van to Emerson Family YMCA and is a vendor at Ferguson's Annual Senior Resource Fair.

Congratulations to Mayor Ella M. Jones.

2020 Meeting Dates

In Person Monthly Meetings Currently Suspended Due To Covid-19. You Will Be Notified When Meetings Will Be Resumed. Meanwhile Follow CDC, City and County Guidelines.

STAY IN, STAY ALIVE AND
STAY SAFE

Important Upcoming Events-Mark Your Calendar

2020 Events That Have Been Canceled or Rescheduled Due To Covid-19

- ◆ Sistah Strut Virtual Celebration, Sat., Oct 3, 2020-Centennial Church, 9:45 A.M.
- ◆ Komen St. Louis More Than Pink Virtual Walk, Sunday, October 4, 2020, 1 P.M.
- ◆ Pink Posse Round-up for Cure Western Dance- Scheduled for Oct. 2020-Canceled
- ◆ BCI Christmas Celebration-Scheduled for 2020-To Be Announced
- ◆ BCI Healthy Eating Program-Dates To Be Announced



Breast Cancer Does Not Sleep During the Pandemic

Covid-19, the novel coronavirus that first arrived on U.S. shores in February, has infected over seven million people and killed over 200,000 Americans in seven months. This viral disease is our worst health crisis in over 100 years. Even today our infection rate continues to rise and hospitals in several states are at ICU capacity. Families are struggling with the decision of in-person vs virtual classrooms for their children, while struggling from historic rates of unemployment.

These are challenging times. The Breakfast Club understands the importance of family safety and would like to stress the importance of following the guidelines below from the Centers for Disease Control, The

**Lannis Hall, MD, MPH, Director of Oncology
Siteman Cancer Center-St. Peter, MO**

World Health Organization and our Chief scientific officer, Dr. Anthony Fauci.

1. Face mask in public spaces. Worn to prevent respiratory droplets that can travel in the air when talking, singing, laughing and breathing. Prevent potentially contagious respiratory droplets from entering the airspace and infecting others. **2. Social Distancing.** Stay six feet away from others to reduce exposure to the virus. For the elderly and other high risk individuals with health conditions like diabetes, heart disease, immunocompromised state and lung disease, social distancing is especially important. If you are not near others, the risk of personal contact with the virus is greatly reduced. **3. Assembling outdoors.** Outdoor venues promote a lower risk of transmission of viral particles. Open air venues allow for more airflow and less recirculated air. Nearly all super-spreader events have oc-

curred indoors in venues of close-contact and limited air circulation. **4. Practicing good hand hygiene.** Avoid touching common surfaces in public places, i.e. elevator buttons, door handles and hand rails. Avoid handshaking. Wear gloves or use tissue or sleeve to cover your hands. Wash hands after touching surfaces in public place and avoid touching your face, nose and eyes.

The Breakfast Club also wants to encourage our busy sisters not to forget about important health screenings and maintaining medical appointments. Breast cancer has not taken time off during this pandemic. Unfortunately, just like the coronavirus disproportionately impacts the African American community, breast cancer mortality is 90% higher in African American women compared to white women in the St. Louis Region. The importance of screening annually starting at age 40 is our message.

Healthy Eating 4 Life By Rosie Willis and Diane Stevenson

Ms. Rosie is my breast cancer buddy, 80 years young. She can be an inspiration to all. She had been getting her mammograms every year since she was age 40 and was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2020. This lets older women know the importance of continuing mammograms into their later years. Ms. Rosie is eating healthy by growing organic fruits and vegetables. Here is the story behind her garden.

The name of our garden is Fresh Starts Community Garden. My son and a neighborhood helped me start the garden in 2009. The garden helps me in many ways.

YES! It helps me MENTALLY! It is a place of quiet peace; beauty and nature in action. Have you ever watched a bird build a nest and then

mom or dad bird kept away any intruders? Or watched when the little baby birds are hatched? The garden is very therapeutic. Try it sometimes, you may love it.

YES! This garden helps me PHYSICALLY!! I do not have to buy something cute to wear to a gym; then drive a distance to the gym; pay fees to get into the gym, just so I can lift, bend, stretch or walk. I am not on any time schedule to get a GOOD WORKOUT.

You may ask what do I do when the garden is closed? I'm smiling because the answer is simple, prepare for when it is open the following year. Since, I started the garden, I continue to manage the daily operations, schedule volunteers and help create events. I also train new gardeners, instruct gardeners on how to use certain organic insect control products, buy garden equipment when needed, pay bills and pick up trash. I am the go to person in the garden.

Prior to Covid-19 we had an annual "Candlelight Dinner in the Garden" celebrating our hard work, showcasing the garden and thanking God for the garden. We began with about 30 guest and our guest list is now over 100 and still growing.

We started the garden because we wanted a vacant neighborhood lot to have something positive growing on it; we wanted beautiful flowers, fresh organic vegetables for the community and we wanted the trash, tall weeds, drug material and general dumping to end. Our garden is 11 years old and with God, we are still growing. We are located at 2901 Dayton Street.

How do I get involved? Glad you asked. If you have a serious desire to raise your own vegetables. Contact me by phone (314)685-5183 or visit the garden, submit an application with your \$20.00 gardening dues for the year. You are on your way to becoming an Urban FARMER.

"Make your day; Plant something!"





On Bertha Merriweather

By Ella Jones

Bertha Merriweather, known to her Breakfast Club family as Ms. Bertha.



Her daughter, Lynn Silver, also a breast cancer survivor, encouraged her mother to attend the support meetings. In 2012, Ms. Bertha de-

ecided to join and has been an active member since.

Ms. Bertha is a two-time breast cancer survivor. First being diagnosed in April 2005, she had a mastectomy. She remained healthy and cancer free until her second diagnosis in May 2020. Due to Covid-19 she had to delay her surgery until June 2020. Her surgery was successful and she is on the road to recovery.

Beacon Bits

The Breakfast Club will participate in the Sista Strut Virtual Celebration by hosting a drive through Fountain Park at 10am on Saturday, October 3, 2020. Team members will meet at Centennial Church (4950 fountain Ave St Louis, Mo. 63113) at 9:45am to pickup pre-ordered Sista Strut masks and line up.

KOMEN misses you! And although we are excited to celebrate all of you virtually on October 4, we've come up with a way to safely replicate our traditional survivor procession. We will host a virtual walk on Sunday, October 4, 2020. At 1pm there will be an online ceremony (videos, tributes to those lost, recognition of fundraisers) Afterwards, you are asked to walk wherever you are, snap pictures.

Ms. Bertha is proud to let everyone know she will be 90 years old on April 28, 2021. I need to share some of the things she has done since joining the Breakfast Club.

She has participated annually in Komen Walk for the Cure. Her dance talents have been showcased at the Sista Strut where she won \$100 in their on stage dance contest. Ms. Bertha wanted to "Hula Hoop" but says she could never get the hula hoop and her body moving at the same time. At age 80, body and hula hoop worked as one and she finally could Hula Hoop.

She attends the annual Breakfast Club Women's Seminar; attends most monthly support meetings and sometimes brings her hula hoop to support meetings and entertains us with a short routine. Ms. Bertha supports the Breakfast Club's annual Roundup for a Cure Benefit Dance and annual Christmas Party.

Share your experience on #walkwhereyouare. Survivors and \$100 or more fundraisers will receive a t-shirt.

Congratulations to our member **Rev. Dr. Doris Graham** on receiving the Lifetime Achiever Award. The St. Louis American Foundation's Salute to Excellence in Education award will be presented at their gala on October 17, 2020. Rev. Dr. Graham has been an educator in St. Louis Public Schools for 38 years.

Breast Health Tips from Dr. Lannis Hall.

- 1. Limit Alcohol**-the more alcohol you drink daily, the greater the risk of breast cancer.
- 2. Don't Smoke**-studies have linked an increased risk of breast cancer with tobacco use.
- 3. Exercise Routinely**-physical exercise helps to maintain a healthy weight and can help prevent

If that is not enough, Ms. Bertha exercises at Bayer (formerly Monsanto) YMCA five days a week. I often hear younger members ask her. "Where do you get the energy?" or "I want to be just like you when I grow up." Ms. Bertha gives them a wide smile and shakes those hips and keeps moving. She as yet to divulge her secret of how her 89 year old body has energy and moves of a 35 year old.

Ms. Bertha was born in Louisiana and had 12 siblings. Seven of her siblings are still living. She moved to St. Louis in 1950. She retired from Deaconess Hospital, Linen Department, with 33 years of service. Ms. Bertha is widowed, has one daughter, Lynn; one son; four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Her hobbies include dancing and reading. She is a member of St. Paul AME Church in St. Louis City.

She is one classy and sassy lady.

breast cancer-and many other diseases-later in life.

- 4. Eat Healthy Foods**-a large study suggested that women who consume over five servings of fruits and vegetables a day had a lower risk of developing breast cancer.
- 5. Limit Dose and Duration of Combination Hormone Therapy**-combination hormone therapy, such as progestin and estrogen, increase your risk of breast cancer if taken over three to five years.
- 6. Know Your Family History**-document family history of cancer, if any genetic testing done. You may need earlier screening.
- 7. Begin Annual Screening at Age 40 and Practice Self-Awareness**-know your breasts!
- 8. Abnormal Mammogram**-women who delay surgery and other recommended care have a lower survival rate than women who do not have delays in therapy.

Inside BCI

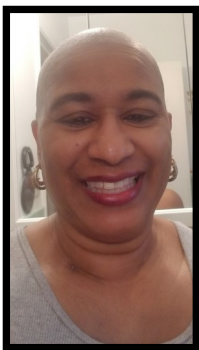
Monthly meetings are held at Centennial Christian Church, 4950 Fountain, St. Louis, MO and are held the 3rd Saturday mornings from 9:00 a.m. until 12 Noon. There is no cost to you for the breakfast. OUR meetings always include a sharing period. We are currently holding meetings by teleconference calls. The calling committee will notify you several days in advance regarding the conference telephone number and access code. **Please note and keep for your records the new conference call number is 602-580-9646, Access Code is 4673693#**

July, August and September meetings were held by conference calls and were very successful with average participation of 20 members per meeting. **You will be notified when meetings resume. When they are, be sure to join us for "The Breakfast**

My Story

On November 25, 2019 I was diagnosed with breast cancer, this was a life changing event for me. I asked myself how could this happen? I never missed a m a m m o g r a m appointment; I always did my self-breast exam. How did this happen? A few days passed and after crying uncontrollably, I had to accept my diagnosis.

My doctor wanted me to start chemotherapy due to the cancer being aggressive. My first chemo treatment was December 15th. I thought this was going to be an easy task to take on. I'm a very strong person; I never depended on anyone; I was the giver; the helper; and the listener in my family. I thought I could do this alone and be done, whoa, was I wrong.



of Champions."

New members are always welcome..

If you know of any women who may benefit from our services, invite them to join us in our conference call meetings

Happy Birthday-to all BCI members

and co-survivors celebrating birthdays and survivor anniversaries in July, August and September. We wish you the best and many more.

Happy Birthday!



Special birthday wishes to Mr.



Thomas F. Vaughns of Pine Bluff, AR. Mr. Vaughns celebrated his 100th birthday on July 12th, 2020. Mr. Vaughns is the cousin of Wanda Morganfield.

by Renea Thompson

I was at one of my chemo treatments and saw a booklet of organizations that offered funding, I took the book home and started calling from the top to bottom. I left messages and no return calls. Finally I received a call from Gateway to Hope. At this point I just wanted to talk to someone who had been through or was going through the same situation as me. I was given the number to The Breakfast Club. I had just about given up on calling due to being depressed and not having anyone to talk to about my diagnoses. My family didn't know what to say to me and they were scared, just as I was.

The next day I called The Breakfast Club and left my name and number. The next day, Sherrill Jackson called me back. I must tell you, that was the best call I could have received. I cried as I was speaking with her. She asked if she could refer me to a Buddy. I immediately said yes. My Buddy, Ella Jones, is

Comfort Kits are available for women going through chemotherapy and radiation treatment for breast cancer. The kits include Aquaphor cream, booties, a scarf, a journal, pen and other comfort items. If you know of any woman in need of a kit, please contact Eloise Crayton, (314)839-1024. Please note you do not have to be a BCI member to qualify for a kit.



BCI T-Shirts and Sweat Shirts-new members, still don't have your BCI T-shirt or sweatshirt? Old members, need a new T-shirt? Contact Brenda Carter at 314-799-9546.

Special Needs if you have been impacted by Covid-19 or any other emergency situation, BCI may be able to assist you. The Oneta Welch Relief and Emergency Fund can give financial assistance to BCI members who may need help and who qualify.

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God sent. She has gotten me through a lot of dark days.

On June 8, 2020. I had a double mastectomy. I had cancer in my left breast, I wanted both removed because I didn't want to seem unbalanced. During my surgery my doctor found cancer cells in my right breast lymph nodes which he removed. I started physical therapy and during my second week, I was exposed to the corona virus. I cried and prayed and God said to me, you've come to far to give up now.

I'm a God fearing, strong, tuff (sic) and a fighter. I had a few side effects from chemotherapy and that's it. I have started radiation treatments and have 36 treatments to endure, followed by another round of chemotherapy. And my Buddy, Ella, is with me all the way. I'm glad I called the last number that was given to me, The Breakfast Club.

This is my story and my journey. This Battle Will Be Won!



BCI Umbrella of Love

The BCI family opens its Umbrella of Love to our members, supporters and friends in need of prayer.

Special Prayers Go Up for Krista Stewart, Glenda and John Laws, Bertha Merriweather, Pearl Clair, Rosie Willis, Darryl Collier, Kim Whitley, Carolyn Vaughn, Rutha Rice, Geraldine Dolgins, Delicia Williams, Deborah Pratt, Dawn Brown, Willie Crayton, Nathalie Davis-Spivey, Lelua Jackson, Nurse Diyon Duke, Dr. Charron Woods, Tierra Long, Kathy Thompson, Carlene Reedus, Herbert Jefferson, Linda Gaskin, Bessie Thomas, Renea Thompson and Ms. Wanda. Special prayers for ALL front line workers, nurses and doctors and the essential workers who work faithfully and tiredness to take care of us. We thank you and pray for your strength and safety.

Asking God to continue to bless us with his goodness, grace and mercy. He knows our every need and will be a healer to the sick and a comforter to the bereaved. May he lift us and grant us love, peace and wellness.

Inspirational Corner

My friend, Candace Jordan, sent me the book, Rest is Healing for the Soul™, written by her friend Wanda S. Brown. The book contains the authors definition of REST and survivor testimonials.

Mrs. Brown says her doctors told her that rest would be one of her best friends. Her favorite definition of rest is to be totally supported by something so as to stay in position. For Ms. Brown that meant to anchor her thoughts of God's promises and rest in the knowledge that He loves her and has already healed her. The theme of REST is profound and inspirational. Here are just a few of

Gratefulness...do you sometimes become down and want to have a Pity Party for yourself? We may have all been there at one time as we travel along our journey. Instead, make a "I Am Grateful" list on a daily or weekly basis. Does your "Grateful" list outweigh your "Pity" list? Your "Grateful" list should show you just how much you have to be grateful and thankful for. It should lift your spirits, cheer you up and let you know that your situation could always be worst.

My "Grateful" list includes being on God's "Wake Up" list to seize a brand new day and to create a wonderful day for myself and others, being of sound mind, having control of my limbs, having a roof over my head, food on the table, not having the threat of eviction or utilities being cut off, that my cancer treatments are going well and that I have remained safe from Covid-19. What's on your "Grateful" list?

Transition: Our sister and member, **Mildred Rias** passed in July 2020. Our sister, member and Chaplain, **Janice Jones** passed on August 5, 2020. BCI Buddy, **Pearl Clair**, granddaughter, **Tinisha Watson** passed on September 22, 2020.

her **REST** quotes.
Listen to your body:
Recognize when my body is speaking to me. Listen closely.
Even the smallest change should not be ignored.
Symptoms can lie dormant for periods of time.
Take action, Engage medical professionals for a diagnosis and peace of mind.

Think Positive Thoughts:
Rally Positivity!
Emancipate your mind from worry and negativity.
Speak encouraging words and avoid bitterness and strife.
The way you think makes a big

Condolences to their families. Please keep their families in your thoughts and prayers.

In July 2020. U.S. Representative John Lewis, age 80, passed on July 17, 2020. He was active with Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in fighting for voting rights. Rep. Lewis is remembered for the beating he took in Selma, AL on March 7, 1965 when leading 600 marchers across the Edmond Pettus Bridge. Event became know as "Bloody Sunday" as Rep. Lewis' skull was fractured. Mr. Lewis went on to serve 17 terms in the U.S. Congress.

Rev C.T. Vivian, age 95, passed on July 17, 2020. Rev. Vivian was a key advisor to Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Charles Evers, age 97, passed on July 22, 2020. Mr. Evers was active in Mississippi politics and was field secretary for the Mississippi NAACP. He was the brother of slain civil rights leader, Medgar Evers.

Locally, we lost a pioneer in health care. **Betty Jean Kerr**, founder of People's Health Centers passed on September 12, 2020.

difference in your healing and quality of life.

A 30 year survivor said how her doctor shared her diagnosis in a very creative way. He told her she had an incurable illness, but Mark Twain said, "The way to live a long healthy life is to get an incurable illness, because you take so much better care of yourself." I smiled when I read this, because when I was told my disease was incurable, I did begin to take better care of myself and so far I'm still here.

If you are interested in purchasing the book, contact me at [mwsandal103@gmail.com](mailto:mwandal103@gmail.com)

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"Sister to Sister, Caring & Sharing"

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Find us on 

From the Desk of the Editor



I cannot say enough about exercising your **RIGHT** to vote. Because **YOUR** vote does matter! Whether you are Democratic, Republican or Independent, **VOTE**. General (Federal) election day is Tuesday, November 3, 2020. Don't use the excuse of my vote won't make a difference or I don't want to stand in long lines to vote. **YOUR VOTE WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

PLAN YOUR VOTE-decide **NOW** how you will vote; early voting by mail, absentee or in person. **Voting Reminders: In person Absentee voting began September 22, 2020. October 7, 2020-last day to register to vote for Nov. 3 election. October 21-last day to request absentee ballot. Nov 2-last day to vote absentee in person. Nov 3-ELECTION DAY**

You may vote now at the St. Louis County Government Center, Board of Elections at the Crossings at Northwest Plaza from 8a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mondays-Fridays, 314-615-1833. Ab-

sentee voting begins at Satellite sites on October 22, 2020. Satellite voting locations are located at North County Recreation Complex, 2577 Redman Road, 63136, St. Louis County Library, 7821 Maryland Ave., 63105; West County Government Center, 74 Clarkson Wilson Centre, Chesterfield, MO 63017; South County Government Center, Keller Plaza, 4554 Lemay Ferry Rd., 63129.

St. Louis City residents can vote at the Board of Election Commission office at 300 N. Tucker, from 8:a.m. to 5 p.m., 314-622-4336. Both St. Louis City and County Websites have full information about absentee voting, registering to vote, polling places, verifying if you are registered and sample ballots. **Don't forget your I.D.**

Heads up to St. Louis County Voters. On election day you can now vote at ANY polling place in St. Louis County.

Be mindful that your polling place may have changed. Start early to verify your status. Also research who you are voting for and the issues. Make sure that person will represent you and your interest. In these times of unrest and demands for change, keep in mind that **PRO-**

TEST raises awareness, but **POLICY** makes the changes and changes come through **VOTING**.

Encourage your family, friends and neighbors to **VOTE** and make their voices heard.

SEE YOU AT THE POLLS!

Census deadline extended to October 5, 2020. Don't let your community lose their share of Federal dollars and representation.

The Census determines congressional seats, Electoral College votes and influences the distribution of \$1.5 trillion dollars in federal spending. On state and local levels it helps plan infrastructure projects, school locations and business operations and expansions. Return your census **TODAY!**

Share Your Newsletter
E-mail your newsletter to your family, friends, and church members so they may be informed about your breast cancer support group and our efforts to fight breast cancer and increase breast health awareness.

