

Salem woman fights the good fight

By Vladimir Shvorin
Advocate Staff

Before she was diagnosed with breast cancer, Marilyn Glazer-Weisner was a strong woman. But following a successful surgery on March 2000, she transformed into an even stronger activist for others that may not have the same strength.

"I kept a good healthy diet," she explained. "I didn't bottle feed my children. I did everything you're supposed to do to not get breast cancer. I was in a zero-risk group. But I got breast cancer."

But instead of allowing the disease to defeat her, she decided to fight the cancer into remission. And while she may have been driven, she didn't overcome it entirely by herself.

"Because I'm Jewish and I have this connection to my faith, I was able to get through this, in addition to the love from my family, which was huge for me," Glazer-Weisner said.

For the last three months, she has been collecting funds for a walk that was informally started by her daughter eight years ago. Officially called the North Shore Medical Center Cancer Walk, the event is well-organized and committed to funding research for a cure for cancer. The family has already eclipsed their target fundraising goal of \$1,800 for this year, having amassed \$2,096 and counting. They've done this by allowing people to simply visit

'Whenever I can speak to somebody and change their outlook, I feel like I've made a contribution.'

a website to donate. Once there, visitors are allowed to leave an optional comment on the page to be read by all. While the donation denominations may vary, all the messages being left echo a positive sentiment, paying homage to the resilient Glazer-Weisner and her cause.

"You are an inspiration to us all," one donator's message read. "May the sun shine and the wind be at your back."

The cancer survivor is never at a loss for creative ways to pro-



Marilyn Glazer-Weisner

mote her cause. Urban Elements, an eco-friendly home-decorating business that doubles as an art gallery (Glazer-Weisner was eager to point out that they also offer yoga lessons on Sunday), and is located in downtown Lynn, recently hosted a health and wellness fair that she organized.

"The whole purpose was to allow the community to walk into a business that's co-owned by a nice Jewish lady, while raising awareness," she said. "When I talked about the idea of having a health and wellness fair in [the owner's] shop, she said,

"That's a great idea, let's do it."

When it comes to her work in the community, Glazer-Weisner has is very ambitious. Her efforts are entirely focused on her cause. This translates to progress towards the ultimate goal: finding a cure for cancer.

"I just enjoy knowing that I contribute," she explained. "I say that in a positive way because for many centuries people have been conditioned to think in terms of fighting battles. That creates a lot of unnecessary negative energy. If we can intentionally choose to speak and think in a positive way, we can create a lot of positive energy around us. If you look at my page and see all the people that encourage me to do this, all of these people do this. They have this positive energy and positive intentions. In my prayers, I focus on our contributions so we can create enough positive energy to lead the brilliant minds to find the cure for cancer."

Anybody that speaks with Glazer-Weisner would likely perceive her as someone who is selfless in her actions — someone that would help a person they hardly knew. When discussing her work to help others cope with the disease, this characteristic permeates through

her responses.

"As soon as someone tells me about someone who has been diagnosed with breast cancer, I want to meet them," she said. "I walk through their door and the first question I ask them is, 'Do you want to meet a survivor?'" It's very powerful. But at the same time, the cancer is very scary. I remember how frightened I was when my surgeon read the results of my cancer [screening] to me."

In addition to the one-on-one visits, the cancer survivor also does public speaking to promote awareness and early detection of breast cancer. Every year, she speaks at North Shore Community College for Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October), and she also speaks at different Jewish organizations.

To Glazer-Weisner, it's clear that after surviving cancer, she is devoted to helping others do the same.

"Whenever I can speak to somebody and change their outlook, I feel like I've made a contribution," she said.

Those interested in joining or donating to the North Shore Medical Center Walk can visit www.firstgiving.com/keineinboreh.