


# The Strength of Survival

## Letter from the Director

Hello Survivors,

And happy spring! Spring means that race season is upon us, and the 2008 race season is looking to be an active one. Team Survivor Tri-State has a race for everyone, whether you're a walker, a runner, a cyclist, or a triathlete. You don't have to be a competitive athlete to participate in these races. You can run (or walk) for fun! Give yourself the opportunity to try new things. With Team Survivor, you can explore the more adventurous side of your body and soul in a safe, supportive environment. March and April were busy months in the "trying-new-things" department... many of our members tried indoor rock-climbing for the first time, even with a fear of heights! Kudos to you for being afraid... and doing it anyway! We also had first-time racers attend the D&R Canal 5K. The smiles on their faces and the look of extreme pride when they crossed the finish line were priceless. One of my favorite quotes is from Eleanor Roosevelt. She said, "We gain strength, and courage, and confidence by each experience in which we really stop to look fear in the face... we must do that which we think we cannot." I can't think of anything more true. You are far more capable and strong than you realize. You can do anything you put your mind to. I know this, because I've seen you do it time and time again. So look fear straight in the eye, acknowledge it, and do what you want anyway. Your friends at TSTS will support you, believe in you, and celebrate with you when you've accomplished what you only dreamed possible!

Happy Training!



### Upcoming Events:

- 5/4: Long Branch Half Marathon
- 5/10: "Creating a Balanced Life" seminar

*Life tosses people curveballs once in a while to see how they handle them.*

*- Sean Swarner*

### REMINDERS

- Applications for the Philly Women's Triathlon and the NJ State Triathlon are due ASAP. If you plan on participating in these events, please contact [ronni@teamsurvivortristate.org](mailto:ronni@teamsurvivortristate.org).
- If you participate in TSTS programs, please be sure that we have your medical release forms on file. For more information on the forms needed, please visit [www.teamsurvivortristate.org](http://www.teamsurvivortristate.org) and click on "Join"

## Fun Day at the D&R Canal 5k

A great group of TSTSers turned out for the D&R Canal 5K in Titusville, NJ on Saturday, March 29. Participants included Sarah Blakeley (along with husband Matt and baby Charlotte), Claire Bransfield, Janice Caldwell, Bonnie Crowley (with husband Rick), Jean Deamond, Donna Gunderson, Sue Heinze, Martha Hostetter, Jacque Knuttel (with her mom Louise Bomont and their new puppy), Anne Lumberger, Jennifer Polo, and Clementine Reyes. Executive Director Ronni Blaisdell also participated. Supporters included Lenora Kandiner (along with her sweetie Tim), who was nursing a broken toe, and Susan Holden, who was very pregnant at the time of the race (Susan's husband Scott also ran).

The weather was a little chilly the morning of the race. The first half of the course took participants through the quaint riverside town of Titusville. Views of the Delaware River made for lovely scenery. The second half of the course was on the D&R Canal towpath, and except for one small hill at the beginning, the course was relatively flat. It was a nice, casual race to start off the TSTS racing season.



TSTS members gather before the race!



TSTS member Clementine Reyes finishes her first race ever. We're so proud of you!



TSTS member Bonnie Crowley after the race



TSTS member Jean Deamond with our new mascot?



Smiling to the finish.



TSTS members wait at the finish, cheering every TSTS participant to the end.

*The miracle isn't that I finished. The miracle is that I had the courage to start.*

*-John "The Penguin" Bingham, on his first race*

## Mind-body medicine helps cancer patients rebound from treatment

For the second straight year, the number of cancer deaths has dropped in the US, down another 3,000 cases. But life-saving cancer treatments often come with some hefty side effects. Medicine can help, but a growing body of research suggests the best prescription may not come in a pill.

At University of North Carolina researchers are conducting cancer studies in the gym. Exercise physiologist Claudio Battaglini is measuring the impact of exercise on cancer patients as they recover from treatment. "The patients are feeling better - they are stronger, their quality of life has increased."

Upstairs, recreational therapist Diane Groff is using biofeedback and other activities as a way to help patients cope with treatment side effects like depression and memory loss. "There are so many people battling cancer, living with cancer surviving cancer, we've got to give them opportunities to create highest quality of life possible."

The combined mind-body approach is a pilot program for women with advanced breast cancer. Researchers hope they are onto something that could benefit all cancer patients.

Mimi Davis says she doesn't need proof. The program gave her the strength and confidence to tackle a rope climb while recovering from treatment. "I have a lot more energy, a lot more endurance, much more flexible."

A mind - body approach that could be a powerful prescription in the war against cancer. Patients in this study start the program after they finish treatment - but there is also research suggesting exercising during treatment can help offset side effects. While this project is focusing on cancer recovery, researchers say they are hopeful the mind-body approach will also have a positive impact on survival rates.

Right now there are more than 500 studies, through the National Cancer Institute, that focus on reducing cancer side effects.

*Carrie Young - NBC News - 2/21/2007*

*Peer-Reviewed Medical Literature and Media Comments  
on Exercise & Nutrition during/after Cancer 2006-2007  
Compiled by Archie Bleyer, MD*

### FITNESS TIP OF THE MONTH: Stairs

Take the stairs! Elevators may be convenient, but stair-climbing builds strength in the legs, and increases cardiovascular fitness. So the next time you have a choice, choose to get a mini-workout on the way to your destination!

### CONGRATULATIONS!

TSTS member Susan Holden gave birth to a boy, Brayden Jordan Holden, on April 18. Parents Susan and Scott, and big sisters Caitlin and Keira are very proud!

### Volunteers Needed for the Philly Women's Triathlon: July 12 & 13

To thank the wonderful people of the Philly Women's Tri (who support TSTS every year), we will provide volunteers to help with registration on Saturday, and we'll also run the "Inspiration Station" tent on race day, Sunday. A free t-shirt will be provided to all volunteers, and the event is a lot of fun!

Please let Ronni know if you, or your family or friends if you're participating in the event, would like to volunteer.

Tax deductible donations always welcome: Please click "Make a Donation" at the bottom of our home page at [www.TeamSurvivorTriState.org](http://www.TeamSurvivorTriState.org)

## Member Spotlight: Sharon Harrison

### **What and when was your cancer diagnosis and what treatment did you choose?**

I received my breast cancer diagnosis on February 26, 2007. I had questionable "specks" on my routine mammogram which I had taken Dec 28, 2006. They appeared to be calcifications but my family physician wanted me to see Dr. Beth DuPree, the breast surgeon, to get her opinion. She thought too that they were calcifications but wanted to biopsy them to see if they were pre-cancerous cells. To all our surprise it was breast cancer stage 1. I had a lumpectomy on March 1, 2007 followed by 7 weeks of radiation.



TSTS Member Sharon Harrison

### **When did you get involved with TSTS?**

I got involved with TSTS in the fall of 2007 starting with Yoga classes and all because I have Ronni as my new neighbor.

### **What TSTS programs do you participate in and what is your favorite?**

I love yoga classes that I take with Liz Conner of the Prancing Peacock. I always wanted to take yoga but never found the time to make it happen. I also take the spin class at PEAC on Thursday and Saturday, another activity that interested me but never pursued.

It is hard to say which is my favorite program. I'm very happy to have the diversity to choose from and as I stated above, they are programs I would not have done if they were not offered through TSTS. They all are wonderful.

### **Have your exercise and nutrition habits changed since your**

#### **diagnosis?**

Ironically, a year before my diagnosis, at the age of 55, I had decided to get back into better shape. Since I was not losing weight walking 3 miles, with the encouragement of my daughter, I started running. To my great surprise, I started loving it, in fact craving it. Now I run 5-6 miles every other day and I just signed up to run the More magazine 1/2

marathon on April 6. *(Editor's note: Sharon successfully completed the More race—Congratulations!)*

I also had started healthier eating when I started back to full exercising. I feel better and I am sure it helps to keep me strong in my routine.

### **Is there anything else you'd like to share with other TSTS members?**

I have lived most of my life taking it "one day at a time". I love the more current phrase of "be in the moment". I have learned even more this past year to be the best I can to myself and that makes me better for loving everyone else. I take time everyday to be grateful because I have found that through any tough time, there is always something to be grateful and thankful for. I love reading inspirational books and sharing them with others. TSTS has increased my circle of friends. Thank you all.

And, I must mention the "silver lining" to my cancer diagnosis was the opportunity in meeting Dr. Beth DuPree at the right time to be commissioned to paint a mural in the 3-story atrium of her new hospital in Bensalem.

## NUTRITION TIP OF THE MONTH

Eat your greens! Leafy green vegetables (such as lettuce and spinach) are low in calories and fat, high in fiber and protein per calorie, and very high in vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals. To be sure you're eating enough leafy greens, make your salad the main meal!

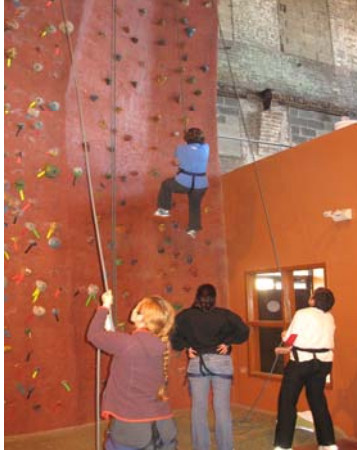
Start with a big bowl (a REALLY big bowl) of greens, and add topping to create a delicious meal. If you're in a "fruit" mood, add a handful of nuts and seeds, then some dried cranberries, sliced apples, and fresh strawberries. Top it off with a low-fat raspberry vinaigrette.

If you're looking for something more "hearty", try topping your greens with a cup of black beans and your favorite salsa. Or, add fresh veggies such as carrots, tomatoes, onion, cucumbers, and a cup of garbanzo beans.

There are salads to fit your every mood, so get ready to be a lean, green-eating machine!

## TSTSers Reached New Heights in March!

The TSTS rock climbing seminar brought out the adventurous spirit in our members! They scaled the walls at the Rockville Climbing Center in Hamilton, NJ on Sunday, March 9. Some of our members tried rock-climbing for the first time, and some even conquered their fear of heights (at least temporarily!)



TSTS member Jean Deamond tackling her fear of heights with great courage



Smiling faces at the conclusion of the seminar. Back row: Jen Polo, Janice Caldwell, Donna Gunderson, Donna Morrissey, Susan Holden, Jean Deamond. Front row: Coach Tom Battaglia, Martha Hostetter, Jacque Knuttel



TTSer Martha Hostetter is the group's own Spiderwoman!

## Don't miss the "CREATING A BALANCED LIFE" seminar May 10!

What are you doing to create true happiness in your life?  
 Have you been talking about change, but wonder where to start?  
 Do you find that tomorrow keeps showing up the same as today?  
 Do you feel like everyday is a juggling act?

Let's bridge the gap between where you are now...and where you want to be.

- Create balance in your life
- Make health and exercise a way of living
- Set attainable goals and reach them
- Design a life you love
- Learn to live in the moment

WHEN: Saturday, May 10  
 TIME: 1pm – 2:30pm  
 WHERE: PEAC Health and Fitness

Don't Miss This Great Workshop! Presented by Lesley Geller, Professional Coach, CC CTA  
[www.LesleyGeller.com](http://www.LesleyGeller.com)

Program is free but registration is required. RSVP by phone 609-203-7012 or by email  
[ronni@teamsurvivortristate.org](mailto:ronni@teamsurvivortristate.org)

TSTS member and yoga coach Donnalyn Giegerich announces the following speaking engagements:

- May 8 - Eatontown, NJ - Speaker for the Wellness Community on The Benefits of Exercise For People Affected By Cancer
- May 29 - New Brunswick, NJ - Keynote Speaker for NJ's Annual Cancer Research Public Forum cosponsored by NJ Commission on Cancer Research & Cancer Institute of NJ (also viewable on UTUBE)

Please visit [www.donnalyn.org](http://www.donnalyn.org) for more information

### Coming next month:

- *The Long Branch Half-Marathon* review
- *Are plastics safe?*
- *More great news and tips!*

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