

November 2007



You Can Make the Difference

Dear Friend:

I'm sure you've noticed how quickly the weather changes at this time of year. From warm days to crunching leaves, color changes lead to closing windows. What will winter be like this year? Sunny, snowy, or something in between? How long until spring?

Health can be like the weather in Michigan, rapidly changing. I remember thinking that when I heard, "You have breast cancer." Like an unexpected storm, I found myself wondering – how will I weather this? How long before this is over?

The hardest part was the waiting. Until the diagnosis is made, you wait, and you wonder. Will I see my daughter graduate? Will I plant a garden and not see it grow? Will I die from this?

I waited in cramped rooms, sitting knee to knee with other worried women who also waited. Munson Medical Center tries to keep up with the need for breast health screenings, but the volume has increased dramatically in recent years, surpassing the ability to make a diagnosis quickly. Although the facility was lacking, my care at Munson was always stellar throughout my treatment.

Today I am fortunate to be healthy, strong, and ready for my future. So, why don't I move on, and put this experience behind me? Because I know that **one in seven women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime.** I know that Munson's current facilities are too small, and they have too few machines to keep up with the demand for breast health care and prompt diagnosis. I know that we need to keep up with technological advances to maintain the quality of care we all seek, for ourselves, and for those we know and love.

Munson Breast Health Center, located at Copper Ridge in Traverse City, will be able to provide digital mammography for faster evaluation and diagnosis, as well as ultrasound for those women and men who need more intense evaluation. The new center will feature rooms for private counseling, as well as for community education.

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The focus is on **preserving women's health**, as well as providing emotional support for patients who need it. On-site breast health coordinators will assist patients with their pathway through the health care system. Bone density testing is another type of service that will be available, and those who need prosthetic care, wigs, and other special needs will find them in a specialty boutique.

With so many worthwhile causes, why should you choose to support Munson's Breast Health Center?

Because we need a facility that keeps pace with rapidly changing technology in a private, supportive environment, and we need it now.

I made a promise to a friend of mine who died of breast cancer last year. I promised her that I would do whatever I could to make it easier for the people who follow us, but **I need your help**. As a wife, mother, daughter, sister, co-worker, and friend, I ask you for your support. As a nurse, neighbor, customer, and survivor, I ask you to donate to the Breast Health Center – **lives WILL change because of your gift.**

Sincerely,



Lorraine Beers, RN, FNP
Co-Chair, Breast Health Center Steering Committee

P.S. Thanks to many generous donors, we have less than \$1 million left to raise by spring 2008.
Each and every gift is important in helping us achieve this important goal.
A short video on the project can be viewed at munsonhealthcare.org.