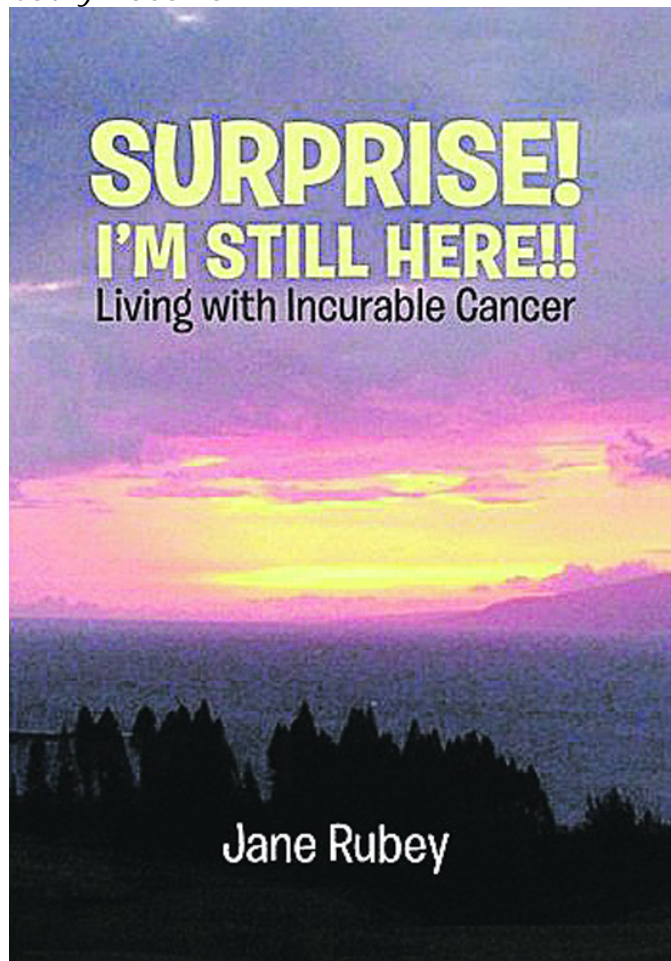


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Surprise! I'm Still Here! (Living with Incurable Cancer) Author: Jane Rubey

Cathy Dausman



Jane Rubey is not a pessimist, although some might say she has reason to be one. She's more of a realist, but she's written what she calls her "missal of hope," and a "legacy for her grandchildren." Rubey was diagnosed in 2003 with incurable cancer (myeloma) and has endured "horrific treatments," but is slowly returning to what she calls her "new normal." In the process she wrote the book she wishes someone had given to her.

Rubey, who just returned from a two-week trip along Europe's Rhine and Mosel Rivers, says you don't have to be sick to read her short (75 pages), upbeat book. "Cheer up," advises the author. "Do the right thing:" sort photos, focus on favorite and special things and "clear out your closets." Her advice, even by phone, skips from the sublime to the ridiculous. She talks about taking her own advice, including enjoying fresh air and meeting her goal of celebrating life. Still, Rubey insists, "I didn't write this." A friend, she says, made her publish her journaling. "A lot of people [who get a life-threatening diagnosis] give up," says Rubey. The book's message is you don't have to.

Rubey is "scurrying" to take her 12 year old grandchild on a trip, a rite of passage she has also shared with her 17 and 15 year old grandchildren. She and the 12 year old will visit Mt. Rushmore in two weeks for what she says will be a "nice bonding experience." Two more grandchildren, ages 3 and 5, live out of state, and for a moment Rubey turns pensive: "It is sad to me that my [younger] grandchildren never knew me as not sick." But it's clear she is taking her own advice, and in the process, letting those who suffer know they're not alone. When a patient can only rest during [cancer] treatment, then "reading is a big thing." And SURPRISE! is a little book that makes everyone appreciate hope and encouragement in their own life.

Rubey kept a website when she worked as a nutrition professional; however she has since dropped the site, explaining it now requires far too much effort. Her book is available at local stores, and online at Amazon; profits go to myeloma research.

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