

Reagan and Zoe's Mother's Day Walk Against Breast Cancer

By Laurie Snyder

"What this world needs is a new kind of army – an army of the kind." – Cleveland Amory

Mother's Day, say Zoe Zabetian and Reagan Tierney, is "a perfect day to help strong, courageous women (and men, for that matter) fight against breast cancer, especially mothers who are dealing with cancer and having to take care of their families."

But Zabetian and Tierney aren't just sitting around hoping for the day when cancer becomes consigned to the same distant memory where smallpox now resides. As seventh grade students at Orinda Intermediate School, they've been researching the role that timely diagnoses can play in helping to save the lives of those who have the disease, and are determined to raise funds to enable more adults to receive testing.

"Our teacher assigned the Take Action Project, where you pick a problem in the world and make an action to help the problem or situation," explains Zabetian. "Late last year, Reagan and her family discovered that [a family member] was diagnosed with breast cancer. Since then, both Reagan and I knew that it would be a perfect choice for this project."

As part of this project, this dynamic duo has mounted an awareness campaign rivaling those created by far more experienced public relations practitioners – and they've also scheduled a fundraising walk for this Mother's Day. "The money we raise will go to the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Center (www.altabatessummit.org/breast-health/) to pay for mammograms, so women can detect the cancer early," says Tierney.

According to its website, the center was established "to reduce the incidence of breast cancer in the Bay Area, where one out of eight women is diagnosed with the disease." Because mammograms are an important tool in this fight, the "American Can-

cer Society recommends that women age 40 and older should have a mammogram every year and should continue to do so for as long as they are in good health. Women in their 20s and 30s should have a clinical breast exam (CBE) as part of a periodic (regular) health exam by a health professional preferably every three years."

Tierney and Zabetian first reached out to the Orinda City Council "doubting that any of them would email back," they say. "But, just hours later, some of them started responding, including the mayor, Amy Worth. We have been emailing back and forth with Mayor Worth, and have had a meeting with her, the city manager, Janet Keeter, and Michelle Lacy, the director of Parks and Recreation. They are all wonderful people and we couldn't have done this project without them."

Zabetian and Tierney are hoping Lamorinda residents will join their small army of the kind by donating in honor of a loved one with breast cancer, by turning out to walk along the St. Stephen's Trail in Orinda, by purchasing wristbands specially designed by the girls – or by sponsoring those who will be lacing up their sneakers between 7:30 to 9 a.m. this Mother's Day.

Pre-registration is not required, but anyone wanting more information about the event may email the organizers in advance: reaganandzoe@gmail.com. To learn more about the goals of the Take Action Project, visit the OIS website: ois.orindaschools.org.

"We just want everyone to know that anyone can get breast cancer, but also, that anyone can help fight it too," say Zabetian and Tierney. It's important "that we all fight it together."

Mothering a Mama Duck

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Image provided

Concerned about the cats' possible involvement, Brunicardi ran interference. This is after all a Mother's Day story, so it ends on a happy note.

With Mama Duck in the lead, her babies waddled in V-formation after her. Brunicardi took up the rear, flapping his arms and quacking to encourage the entourage and discourage the cats. He said it was a bit like going on a cattle drive. "I felt like [I was on the TV show] Rawhide," Brunicardi said.

Mama and her nine ducklings

made it safely to a nearby creek, where their part of the story ended.

Then it was Reif's turn. "When Dan first dropped by to tell me this story, I knew it needed to be written," she said.

She began calling Brunicardi "Papa Duck," and wrote her first children's book with the same title to record the event. "I recently read 'Papa Duck' in my granddaughter's first grade classroom," she said. "The children were enthralled."

Brunicardi has his own copy of the book to remember the day, as well as a single black down feather which is still on his refrigerator.

So that is how "The Mayor" became "Papa Duck." And they all lived happily ever after!

You can see how the "Papa Duck" story unfolds online at www.papaduckstory.com.

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Samira Says



Samira Davi is a Nurse Liaison for ManorCare Health Services in Walnut Creek. Samira has over 10 years of experience working in health care in Contra Costa County, which has gained her a wide view of what is important to the health care consumer. She will be posting common questions and comments in each issue of the Lamorinda Weekly. You are welcome to contact Samira directly at 925.270.8766

Warm Weather Safety

As spring turns the corner to summer, the urge to spend time in the sun consumes many people. The desire to bask in the rays of the summer months results in numerous positive physical benefits, but can be detrimental if certain safety precautions are not followed. Although the sun provides the body with essential nutrients like Vitamin D, it can be very dangerous if the body is overexposed. This is especially true in older adults.

As we get older, our bodies become much more susceptible to dehydration and heat-related illnesses. Our thirst sensations diminish over time, which means that the body loses its ability to alert us when we are becoming dehydrated. The aging body also loses its ability to cool rapidly, increasing the chances of heat-related illness.

Here are a few important safety measures to take to help avoid heat related issues:

- Stay indoors as much as possible during the late morning and early afternoon.
- If you exercise outdoors- do so during the cooler hours of the day.
- Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of fluids, even if you don't feel thirsty!
- Stay away from alcoholic beverages or those that contain caffeine, as they can increase the risk of dehydration.
- Try to stay in the air conditioning if at all possible. If you do not have air conditioning, consider going to places that do- like the mall, library, grocery store, or movie theater.
- If you go outside, wear a hat that can help shield your face the sun. Wear sunglasses and sunscreen!
- Do not wear heavy or dark clothing.
- Do not do any heavy lifting or other laborious tasks during the hotter parts of the day.

We at ManorCare Walnut Creek and ManorCare Tice Valley are happy to provide you with these Warm Weather Safety Tips.

As always, we at ManorCare offer post-acute medical and rehabilitation care for those recovering from surgery, illness, or injury. The continuum of care provided by our experienced and committed team members (including physical, occupational, and speech therapist) helps our patients to successfully transition back to home.

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