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My journey for a cure began in 2002 when I participated in the final Avon 3-day walk in Atlanta in support of my Aunt Judie - a breast cancer survivor who is only 2 years older than me and more like the sister I never had. That year I also walked those 60 miles to mark the milestone of my 50th birthday along with Judie and some other friends that we met during our long summer months of training and fundraising.

My reasons for walking changed drastically after completing the 2006 Atlanta 2-Day Walk for Breast Cancer. Just a few days afterwards, my doctors discovered that I had a pelvic tumor the size of a basketball and weighing more than 8 pounds. The tumor contained an encapsulated malignancy and I was diagnosed with stage IIA ovarian cancer. Now I proudly proclaim that by the grace of God the breast cancer walk saved my life because it forced me to seek medical treatment which led to early detection.

In the summer of 2007 my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer which gave me another reason to walk and raise money for the cause. Since my mother's breast cancer was still in the very early stages, she did not have to undergo chemotherapy. Thanks to a new procedure called Mammosite, she received accelerated radiation over a period of 5 days rather than 6 to 7 weeks. Again early detection was a key factor.

As you can imagine, the battle to find a cure for cancer now has a much greater significance to me than ever before. During my chemo treatments I learned that genetic breast cancer and ovarian cancer are closely related and that having one of these greatly increases your chances of getting the other. At the request of my oncologist, I underwent genetic testing. Praise God there was no evidence that I have the gene which causes breast cancer.

Although I have recently participated in several other walks for different causes including my first ovarian cancer walk, I remain passionate about the Atlanta 2-day Walk for Breast Cancer. One thing that I love best about this walk is the fact that all money raised here stays here in Georgia. Another benefit is the wonderful ladies that

you meet along the journey. We all walk for the same cause but for different reasons.

The 2009 walk will be my fifth Atlanta 2-Day Walk. We invite YOU to join our Circle of Friends team. I guarantee that your life will never be the same! You cannot imagine the precious memories that you will gain from the experience.



## OVARIAN CANCER SURVIVOR