

Diane Dale Turner – Dahlonga, GA (Dawson County native):

My story drastically changed after finishing the 2006 Atlanta 2-Day Walk. 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 the breast cancer walk saved my life because it forced me to seek medical treatment which led to early detection. My last chemo treatment was February 12, 2007. Two weeks later on March 1st, I began training for the 2007 Atlanta 2-Day Walk with some of my teammates and have gradually begun to regain my strength.

As you can imagine, the battle to find a cure for cancer now has a much greater importance to me than ever before. Recently I have learned that genetic breast cancer and ovarian cancer are closely related and that having one of these significantly increases your chances of getting the other. I plan to continue walking for a cure as long as I am physically able.

In 2002 I began walking for breast cancer 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 60 miles to mark the milestone of my 50th birthday along with Judie and some other friends.

Judie is the youngest of six sisters and the youngest girl of eleven brothers and sisters. Her mother died when she was only 3 years old. My mother is the oldest of the eleven and became “mother” to all of her younger siblings.

I say that Judie “shamed me” into walking because she kept saying that everyone said it would be great if one of her sisters could walk with her but they were all too old.

Although I had doubts that I could actually walk 60 miles in 3 days, I decided it was the least I could do after everything that Judie had been through with her breast cancer and treatments. I have never had any regrets and am proud to say that I walked every step of the way.

In 2005, I was once again shamed into walking – this time by Miss Olivia who was 70 years old that year. Olivia wrote me saying “Let’s Walk”. We had met at the Avon 3-Day Walk in 2002 and walked together all day on Day 3 that year for over 20 miles.

I tell my teammates that I am built for endurance not speed like most of them. Keeping up with Miss Olivia is more my speed.

Olivia and I quickly became good friends. Olivia even rode with us in November 2002 to El Paso to visit my daughter after the 60-mile walk in October. After driving 24 hours one way without stopping except to eat and for bathroom breaks, we decided that it was easier to walk 60 miles. Olivia just wanted to go because she had never been to El Paso – just another new adventure.

These days, I have become a passionate advocate for the Atlanta 2-day Walk for Breast Cancer and strongly encourage all of my friends to walk with our team. My friends say that I will not take “no” for an answer. I can be very persuasive. My friends have awarded me the title of “my pushy friend.” They say I nag them year after year until they finally accept the challenge; however, none of them ever regret being “pushed” into this life-changing experience. This will be my third 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.



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