

Free mammogram -- read on

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It's breast cancer awareness month again, and this week there were two events I attended that reminded me once again how much I hate this disease.

Since it's been 23 years since my bad diagnosis of breast cancer (I had DCIS in 2007 in the other breast), I forget the pain sometimes.

I forget the bald head and the fear and the anger. Then I am blessed with an event in October that reminds me. I say blessed because, as hard as it was to go through breast cancer, I never want to forget what it did to my life and how very much I don't want other women to have to go through it.

That's one reason why I was appalled at one statistic I heard yesterday at the Faces of Breast Cancer event put on by Astra Zeneca here in Dallas. As part of the event there were presentations from the executive director of Susan G. Komen for the Cure Dallas affiliate and Gilda's Club, both of which do remarkable work in our community.

Chris Packard, the executive director of the Komen affiliate in Dallas, told the assembled group that Texas is number 42 out of 50 states in the ranking of the number of women who should get screening mammograms at age 40 and don't.

I was appalled. That means there are only 8 states worse than Texas. How could my Texas sisters be so stupid.

Then I realized that part of the reason has to be that Texas has the largest uninsured population in the country, which is another horrible statistic about the Lone Star State.

Breast cancer can be deadly if left undetected and is very survivable if found early. And a mammogram costs \$110 at most reliable places – less when it's subsidized. So let's do something about that. No matter where you are in the country when you read this – but particularly if you are in Texas – send an e-mail to your whole list of friends and remind them that it's breast cancer awareness month, and that if they are over 40 and haven't had a mammogram they may be harboring a very survivable cancer.

In fact, I challenge you to go a step further. If you know a woman who has no insurance, pay for her mammogram.

That's what I am going to do. I will pay for a mammogram for the first uninsured Texas woman over 40 who has not had a mammogram who sends me an e-mail at kathyl@curetoday.com.

If you want to pledge to help a Texas woman get a mammogram, let me know and I'll send you number 2, 3, 4 . . .

We are our sister's keepers.

