

features

13 My First 5K

Follow in the footsteps of one woman's journey from Biggest Loser re-runs to the starting line of her first 5K run.

16 Crazy Sexy Survivors

Five cancer survivors proudly show off their badges of courage and share their stories of hope.

21 The Humanitarian Hairdresser

A Cincinnati hair stylist builds an orphanage in Tanzania through a tip jar on her counter.

24 Fall Foliage Getaways

From upscale wine tours to day hikes in the mountains, our colorful coordinates offer fall foliage fun for every leaf-looker.

departments

7 FITNESS

Seven ways to take your exercise outdoors.

8 GREEN LIVING

Conscious clothing from head to toe.

11 HEALTH

Add flavor and fun with farm-fresh produce from CSAs.

28 FAMILY

A dose of nature, a tinge of fear.

30 FASHION

Recycled handbags turn discarded materials into fashion statements.

breathe

CO-EDITORS

Emily Diznoff, M.D.
Will Harlan
editor@readbreathe.com

ART DIRECTOR

Megan Murphy

DESIGNER

Amanda Powers

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Annie Daly
Leah Ferguson
Bettina Freese
Julia Green
Sarah Hubbard
Monica Johnson
Jennifer Matzner
Amanda Straus

PUBLISHER

Martha Evans
martha@readbreathe.com

IT DIRECTOR

Craig Snodgrass

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES

Tom Daly
Charles Leonard

breathe magazine

107 West Market Street
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902
(434) 817-2755 phone
(434) 817-2760 fax

56 College Street, Suite 303
Asheville, North Carolina 28801
(828) 225-0868 phone
(828) 225-0878 fax

readbreathe.com

COVER

© Jennifer May
jennifermay.com

Cancer survivor Kris Carr turned a seemingly tragic diagnosis into creative expression in her documentary *Crazy Sexy Cancer*, where she searches for a cure and finds her self. *Crazy Sexy Cancer* inspired countless women—including the five featured in our story—to celebrate their bodies and their lives.

Breathe Magazine is the property of Summit Publishing, LLC.
Blake DeMaso, President

Copyright ©2008 Summit Publishing, LLC. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission of the publisher.

“Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls;

the most massive characters are seared with scars.” —Kahlil Gibran



Crazy Sexy SURVIVORS

BY SARAH HUBBARD

DEDICATED TO MERRILEE MILSTEIN

I'm the spitting image of my father. I have his olive skin, brown eyes, funny-looking feet, and for better or worse, his sweet tooth. My mom passed on her social nature, her Midwestern charm and kindness, possibly her nose, and most definitely her flat chest.

My greatest feature, though, is one that not everyone gets to see. It's a little more intimate, but absolutely original. When I bring a man home, no matter how hot my newest Victoria's Secret purchase is, or when I drop my towel at the pool, no matter how many hours of lunges I've done, all eyes run straight to my stomach, and there's just one question everyone is dying to ask: "What's that huge scar from?"

Ta-da, there it is. I have a scar, 13 inches long. It runs from my mid-torso down, takes a clever detour around my belly button and heads straight south of the border. And let me tell you, there is no better downer, poolside or in the sack, than the answer to that question, which is: I had cancer. It's a universal conversation stopper. No one really knows how to react. Eventually, the inevitable four follow-up questions are posed: when, what, how, and are you okay now?

The sass in me is always tempted to say something like "I got a tummy tuck," or "You know how everyone jokes about a separate dessert stomach, well I had one put in." The honest answers aren't half as fun: age 4, Burkitt's Lymphoma, just unlucky, and going on two decades cancer-free.

There is no doubt that at the young age of 4, my cancer had a profoundly larger effect on my family than it did on me. At that age, I had no idea who I was or what I was fighting. I remember vivid images from my 18 months of chemotherapy, as well as the pain of 24 spinal taps without anesthesia. And I still get a weird feeling in my gut whenever I see pictures of myself with a bald head and those chubby prednisone cheeks. But I like to think that my experience has shaped who I am now and the way I handle the challenges that life throws in my path. I definitely can't forget that it happened, and I definitely cannot escape the lasting mark that the disease left on my body, so I choose to embrace it.

The funny thing is that, despite the awkward social reactions, this scar is my favorite feature. It's that one part of my body that doesn't ever bother me. It gets tan with me in the summer, and when I get really fit, it actually gives the illusion from far away that I have a six-pack. I guess it killed my hopes of being a swimsuit model, but my short stature and less-than-chiseled features would have done that on their own. It will very likely grow so large when I am pregnant that it will be seen from outer space, but for now, I love it, and I may be the only one who thinks so, but I think it's sexy. It is a constant reminder of a fight that I won. My scar reminds me that I'm lucky to be 26, wear unmatching socks, dance to Cuban music in the kitchen when I cook, sing bad karaoke,

drink too many martinis, make mistakes and fall in love, and die on my own terms a long, long time from now.

The way I see it, every woman has an imperfection or two or five that they either can hate every day or come to love as their own. Big butt, birthmark, crooked teeth, curves, muffin top—everyone's got something good. Mine is this stomach, and I have decided to love it.

It turns out that I'm not alone. Much to my surprise, the idea of beauty has begun to get a makeover lately in the media. Our societal image of strength and power has shifted from paper-thin porcelain perfection to a more realistic representation. Celebrity starlets still find their way onto magazine covers for their gorgeous looks and artistic talents of course, but also with a deeper appreciation of their responsibility as role models. Whether it is the environment, human rights violations, or disease awareness, we want to see and read about a woman with a cause, a three-dimensional woman with things to say, stories to tell, and a humanity and vulnerability that makes her real.

In 2007, Dove launched their Real Beauty campaign, a series of ads created as a result of a global study that Dove conducted on beauty. After surveying 3,000 women worldwide, they found that only 2% considered themselves beautiful. Their response was a series of brilliant ads that celebrate the everyday woman, at any age, gorgeous, imperfections and all. The host of my favorite TV show, *Top Chef*, is the show-stopping Padma Lakshmi. The actress, author, and model has made her way to every major cover, all the while proudly showing foot-long scars on each arm from a childhood accident. *People Magazine* added her to their "Top 100 Most Beautiful People" list in 2007. The fresh-faced superstars of 2008 are walking red carpets where big baby bellies couldn't be more beautiful, wrinkles represent wisdom, and standing for something means much more than wearing size-zero couture.

Along with beauty, cancer is getting a makeover as well. Over 1.4 million people will be diagnosed with cancer this year. It is a disease that has become impossible to ignore, and with the help of a few famous faces, the disease is getting a new attitude. Sheryl Crow had four "radiation tattoos" added to remind her of her fight with breast cancer, and Melissa Etheridge proudly flaunted her baldness and boldness and was public about every step of her treatment.

Recently, the release of a sassy documentary called *Crazy Sexy Cancer* rocked the country with its honesty, humor, bravery, and humanity. At the ripe age of 31, actress and photographer Kris Carr was diagnosed with a terminal form of cancer, but instead of sitting back, she decided to find the answers that she wasn't getting from doctors. She continues to be determined not to let cancer define her or take away her right to be a sexy young woman, but rather enhance it. Her "cancer adventure," as she calls it, treads through diet, spirituality, sex, medicine, fitness, and even love, in the most human, humorous, and powerful manner I have ever seen.

She calls her fellow survivors "Cancer Cowgirls," which she defines as "a free-spirited bunch of powerful women who take charge as they gallop through life's obstacle course. We don't whisper, we *roar*. This is just the beginning, a match to light the tinder of curiosity, possibility, and tenacity we all possess. Women are heavenly creatures full of sass and fireworks, dazzling warriors full of peace and fury."

Breathe Magazine found several cancer cowgirls with passion, attitude, and crazy sexy scars who have learned how to heal and love. They live fully in each moment. And like Kris Carr, they have become stronger, deeper, and more whole human beings through their cancer adventure.

Kila Waldrop



Kila started a support group called "The Young and the Breastless."

"I wear my scars like badges of honor."

Following a bad mountain biking accident, Kila was left with bruises all over her body. While monitoring them, she discovered a lump in her breast. She was diagnosed with breast cancer at her first appointment in December 2006 at the age of 32.

"I was in the best shape of my life. The diagnosis floored me, but I made up my mind right then that cancer was never going to have me."

She had a partial mastectomy that same

month, eventually a partial hysterectomy, and then began eight rounds of chemotherapy, which resulted in her losing all of her hair.

"As a hairdresser, losing my hair surprisingly wasn't as hard for me as it is for others. I actually had fun with it. I went out and bought five wigs, one of which was bright fuchsia. I styled them and took pictures with everyone in my family wearing them."

Kila focused on exercising and keeping up a sense of normalcy at home with her family. She spent time with her then 11-year-old son, and tried to stay upbeat so that he wouldn't be scared.

Kila founded a support group called The Young and the Breastless, a fearless group of women who provided her not only with support and understanding, but hope for the future. "We have a ten-year survivor in the group," she said. "It gives me hope for the long term."

Life after cancer has been devoted to her family, focusing on the big picture, and never taking the time that she has for granted.

"I don't stress over the little things anymore. I'd rather forget about cleaning and say, let's go to the movies!"

The mastectomy, hysterectomy, and reconstructive work, which Kila completed in April of this year, have left a number of scars on her body.

"I have lots of new scars, but every one has a story, so I wear them like badges of honor."

To commemorate her successful fight, Kila had "survivor" tattooed over the scar on her breast and plans to get her birth flower and her son's birth flower eventually tattooed someday next to her two matching hysterectomy scars. She also helping other women facing cancer through the Look Good Feel Good program.

"The C-word is a scary thing," Kila says, "but my fight with cancer made me open my eyes to living life. If there is any way that I can help other women through this, I will do anything I can."