

## PEGGY NEWKIRK - 2009 HONORARY SURVIVOR CHAIR

The breast cancer diagnosis of a Quad-City medical professional truly underscores the importance of a yearly mammogram.

Nurse practitioner Peggy Newkirk, 61, of Rock Island, performs regular breast exams. She felt nothing strange, but her yearly exam in February of 2006 led to an alarming diagnosis—stage 3 A breast cancer. Peggy knew what she saw on an ultrasound was breast cancer. What alarmed her was how advanced it was.

"When I woke up from the surgery, and I found out they took lymph nodes - that surprised me. When I heard it was stage 3 - that really knocked my socks off," she said.

Peggy's breast cancer was treated with a lumpectomy, removal of lymph nodes, chemotherapy, and radiation. She's thankful that the mammogram caught the disease when it did.

"If I didn't have a mammogram, it may have been caught much later. We just have to be diligent. It can be so sneaky," she said.

Peggy says the importance of a yearly mammogram can't be stressed enough.

"There are ways everyone can get a mammogram. That's why we do Race for the Cure®, to get women the care that they deserve. Ultimately, we need to find the cause of breast cancer and the cure. In the meantime, we need to diagnose and treat it so women can go on with their lives for many years," she said.

Peggy was nominated for the honorary survivor chair position by fellow nurse practitioner Nancy Agnew, who also works for Genesis Health Group, Davenport.

"I think Peggy goes the extra mile for people who are diagnosed with breast problems. She's very empathetic," said Agnew.

Peggy and her husband, Jon, reside in Rock Island. Peggy has two sons and two grandchildren.