

## Co-Survivor Team Award Submission by Cindy Wheeler, Glow Team Glow!

First, as a breast cancer survivor, I must say that it is very difficult to nominate just one co-survivor. When diagnosed with breast cancer, you have little choice but to fight for survival, but our co-survivors do choose to be there for us. They walk before us when we are too frightened to find our way, walk beside us so we know we are never alone, and sometimes they must walk behind us, urging us forward when we need a push to keep going. And, best of all, no matter what, they always carry us in their hearts and prayers.

That being said, my nominee for the 2010 Co-Survivor Award is Kyra Burns. God brought Kyra into my life when I was surviving another challenge...a difficult pregnancy that ended with the loss of our twins. She came to help with our then six year son and quickly became like a member of the family. Kyra was there over the following years for all our family's highs and lows, so it was no surprise that she was there when I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Our family was already reeling since my father had been diagnosed only 3 days earlier with leukemia and was in critical condition. Our resources and coping skills were stretched beyond belief...and along came Kyra! The amazing thing about Kyra's support was we never even asked. Yet every time I turned around, there was Kyra. She came with food, visited the hospital, and was always there to squeeze my hand and whisper that all would be well. Kyra was an invaluable support to me with our daughter, Hope. It was a tumultuous time for Hope...Grandpa, who she adores, was so sick; Mommy had cancer; and just five days before my partial mastectomy, Hope started kindergarten. I scheduled my radiation treatments while she was in school, but a couple of times, I had to take her with me. I was so worried how she would deal with this, but when I came out of treatment...there was Kyra playing 'Go Fish' with Hope and promising an ice cream treat when we were done! How had she even known that Hope was with me?! Then my last day of radiation therapy arrived...a snowy December day. I arrived home so tired, so burned, struggling to be thankful and relieved when there was a knock at the door. There stood Kyra with a huge handmade poster 'YOU MADE IT!' She had driven 45 minutes on those bad roads just to deliver this message. This poster (now filled with mementos) still hangs on my bedroom wall, a daily reminder of my blessings of survival and love.

Kyra was the first to suggest I organize a team for the Race for the Cure. She has walked the Race by my side every year since my diagnosis, even the year she had surgery just days before!

So, I can't think of a better way to celebrate 10 years of survivorship then by celebrating Kyra!



My 'YOU MADE IT!' Memory Wall