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www.hermanchiropractic.com

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Dear Friends:

A Valentine's Day Story...

...and Idea...

Like most elementary schools, it was typical to have a parade of students in and out of the health clinic throughout the day. We dispensed ice for bumps and bruises, Band-Aids for cuts, and liberal doses of sympathy and hugs. As principal, my office was right next door to the clinic, so I often dropped in to lend a hand and help out with the hugs. I knew that for some kids, mine might be the only one they got all day. One morning I was putting a Band-Aid on a little girl's scraped knee. Her blonde hair was matted, and I noticed that she was shivering in her thin little sleeveless blouse. I found her a warm sweatshirt and helped her pull it on. "Thanks for taking care of me," she whispered as she climbed into my lap and snuggled up against me.

It wasn't long after that when I ran across an unfamiliar lump under my arm. Cancer, an aggressively spreading kind, had already invaded thirteen of my lymph nodes. I pondered whether or not to tell the students about my diagnosis. The word breast seemed so hard to say out loud to them, and the word cancer seemed so frightening. When it became evident that the children were going to find out one way or another, either the straight scoop from me or possibly a garbled version from someone else, I decided to tell them myself.

It wasn't easy to get the words out, but the empathy and concern I saw in their faces as I explained it to them told me! I had made the right decision. When I gave them a chance to ask questions, they mostly wanted to know how they could help. I told them that what I would like best would be their letters, pictures and prayers. I stood by the gym door as the children solemnly filed out. My little blonde friend darted out of line and threw herself into my arms. Then she stepped back to look up into my face. "Don't be afraid, Dr. Perry," she said earnestly, "I know you'll be back because now it's our turn to take care of you."

No one could have ever done a better job. The kids sent me off to my first chemotherapy session with a hilarious book of nausea remedies that they had written. A video of every class in the school singing get-well songs accompanied me to the next chemotherapy appointment. By the third visit, the nurses were waiting at the door to find out what I would bring next. It was a delicate music box that played "I Will Always Love You." Even when I went into isolation at the hospital for a bone marrow transplant, the letters and pictures kept coming until they covered every wall of my room. Then the kids traced their hands onto colored paper, cut them out and glued them together to make a



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freestanding rainbow of helping hands. "I feel like I've stepped into Disneyland every time I walk into this room," my doctor laughed. That was even before the six-foot apple blossom tree arrived adorned with messages written on paper apples from the students and teachers. What healing comfort I found in being surrounded by these tokens of their caring.

At long last I was well enough to return to work. As I headed up the road to the school, I was suddenly overcome by doubts. What if the kids have forgotten all about me? I wondered, What if they don't want a skinny bald principal? What if I caught sight of the school marquee as I rounded the bend. "Welcome Back, Dr. Perry," it read. As I drew closer, everywhere I looked were pink ribbons - ribbons in the windows, tied on the doorknobs, even up in the trees. The children and staff wore pink ribbons, too. My blonde buddy was first in line to greet me. "You're back, Dr. Perry, you're back!" she called. "See, I told you we'd take care of you!" As I hugged her tight, in the back of my mind I faintly heard my music box playing . . . "I will always love you.

We need those of you who are great at forwarding on information with your network. Please read and pass this on. It would be wonderful if 2007 were the year a cure for breast cancer was found!!! This is one email you should be glad to pass on. The notion that we could raise \$35 million by buying a book of stamps is powerful! As you may be aware, the US Postal Service recently released its new "Fund the Cure" stamp to help fund breast cancer research. The stamp was designed by Ethel Kessler of Bethesda, Maryland. It is important that we take a stand against this disease that affects so many of our Mothers, Sisters and Friends. Instead of the normal 37 cents for a stamp, this stamp costs 40 cents. The additional 3 cents will go to breast cancer research. A "normal" book costs \$7.40. This one is only \$8.00. It takes a few minutes in line at the Post Office and means so much. If all stamps are sold, it will raise an additional \$35,000,000 for this vital research. Just as important as the money is our support. What a statement it would make if the stamp outsold the lottery this week. What a statement it would make that we care. I urge you to do two things TODAY:

1. Go out and purchase some of these stamps.
2. E-mail your friends to do the same.

Many of us know people and their families whose lives are turned upside-down by breast cancer. It takes so little to do so much in this drive. We can all afford the \$0.60. Please help & pass it on.

'Nuf Said.

Larry Herman, DC

Mary Beamer, DC

Jan Herman, DC

Josh Rosinski, DC

Joe Brady, DC