

I am a Sarah's Soldier. Being part of the Sarah's Soldier team is what brought me to my first Making Strides Against Breast Cancer event in 2000.

Over the past 12 years, I have had many different roles in this event. I have been a team member, the team captain, a member of the Planning Committee working with teams, the volunteer Director of Publicity, and for the past two years, the volunteer Event Chair.

Through it all, there have been two constants: Sarah's Soldiers, and my three children, Roger III, Emily, and Marissa. In 2000, we walked our first Making Strides together. Marissa, my youngest, was five, and she walked all five miles with a smile on her face, never once complaining and at times running ahead, encouraging us to keep up.

Having cancer is hard. Raising money and walking five miles is not. Through the years, my children have raised their own money, held their own fundraiser, recruited team members, and volunteered their time, getting up in the wee hours of the morning to set up for countless Kickoff and Making Strides walks. They have supported me and made me proud.

I have always felt an obligation to make strides against breast cancer, because I can. There are many things in life you don't get a choice in, like being diagnosed with cancer. By participating in Making Strides, I feel I am making a choice to make a difference in the lives of so many who have been touched by breast cancer.

When I got up on Strides morning last month, I found a note and a gift from my daughter Emily: a bracelet with the inscription *Thrill, See Soldiers on page 28*



Emily, Kimberly, Roger III, and Marissa Laro at Making Strides 2012.

Photo: Chantal Caron



Concord's Making Strides event set a new record again this year.

Making Strides Raises Record-Breaking \$613,763 In Concord

By Kimberly Laro
Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

The 20th annual Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of Concord was held on Sunday, October 14, and more than 5,000 participants came out despite the weather to walk and show their support for those currently battling the disease, to celebrate the survivorship of many, and to remember and honor those who have been lost to the disease.

Concord's event is one of the 270 American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer events held throughout the country. The first Making Strides events were held in Boston and New Hampshire. In 1993, there were 29 participants at Memorial Field in Concord for the first Making Strides Against Breast Cancer event. There were more volunteers that day than actual participants, and they raised \$3,000 for the American Cancer Society.

Over the past 20 years, the greater Concord community has embraced and supported this event and made it into what it is today, the top per-capita fundraising Making Strides event in the country, raising in excess of half a

million dollars at each of the previous five events.

The American Cancer Society is the largest volunteer health care organization in the country, and the Concord's Making Strides event is planned and run by a group of dedicated volunteers. So when the American Cancer Society was deciding which Making Strides event the volunteer National Chair of the American Cancer Society, Dr. Cynthia LeBlanc, would attend, it was only logical that she would come to New England where Making Strides started and attend Concord's event.

Dr. LeBlanc addressed the crowd to deliver a message of appreciation from the American Cancer Society and to thank the participants for raising the funds that allow the American Cancer Society to be the leader in the fight to end breast cancer and all cancers – investing the most in research of any non-governmental organization to find, prevent, treat, and cure the disease.

Today, one in every two women diagnosed with breast cancer reaches out to the American Cancer Society for help and support. The American

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Shelby Perreault, Taryn Galliher, Amanda Naigle and Kristi Perreault walk for Imagination Inn.
Photo: Doreen Perreault



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BREAST CANCER!**

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**Making Strides
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walk in Concord.

SAVE THE DATE for next year's strides:
Sunday, October 20, 2013



cancer.org/stridesonline

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