

the life in DILWORTH

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A PUBLICATION FOR AND BY THE RESIDENTS OF THE DILWORTH COMMUNITY

Second Chances! *Breast Cancer Survivor Clair Campbell*

Photo by Piper Warlick Photography



Your Stories. Your Photos. Your Community.

Clair Campbell

A Second Chance, or Two?

Pray for it. Plan on it!



Clair's wedding day (photo by Piper Warlick Photography)

Not often does life give us a shot at a do-over. Like the song, *Can't Stop* by the Red Hot Chili Peppers, “this life is more than just a read through.” My whole legal career has been a series of one-shot chances to get it right, to shine, to win, to collect the recovery my clients deserve. And as a mom, we’ll only know how successful we were as parents when we see our children as successful, independent adults themselves. But, who would think that in my middle years, the middle chapter of my life, I would become the grateful recipient of not one but two second chances?

In September 2016, I was told by a great general surgeon and equally kind and gentle man, Dr. Peter Turk, that I had “a tiny little bit of cancer.” Luckily, I was sitting down at the time he spoke those words to me through my phone. Not a lot had stopped me in my tracks up until this point, not even a divorce after nearly 25 years of marriage. I had an abnormal mammogram, then an abnormal MRI with contrast, followed by a biopsy. Finally, after that tissue sample was analyzed, the truth was revealed. I was persistent, vigilant, and impatient to know what was masquerading inside my body. Prior to the biopsy, the radiological team had said I could wait for the next year’s testing because nothing appeared on the tests as clearly cancerous. I’m glad I didn’t wait. A lumpectomy was performed, followed by a bilateral mastectomy. Body parts removed and redesigned. None of my existing clothes would fit exactly right again.

All this came on the heels of helping to launch “Dancing with the Stars of Charlotte for the Pink House.” I loved to dance, so when my friends Claire Talley and Felipe Gonzalez Edmiston asked me to help with the inaugural event, I was honored and enjoyed preparing for and dancing in the show. I was well, fit, confident, and pleased to help. I actually won the Judges Choice Mirror Ball trophy with my partner Pavel Antanovich. Exciting, for sure, but that paled in comparison to the experience of meeting wonderful women and men working with and through Carolina Breast Friends and raising money for that organization. Their slogan is aptly, “Until there’s a cure, there’s care.”

I never expected to need any of their care or resources. No one in my family had ever had breast cancer. But shortly after my brief basking in the limelight of ballroom dancing fame, I was in the spotlight yet again. And, not a spotlight anyone wants. Rather than on the stage, I was in the OR. Dilworth business neighbor and plastic surgeon, Dr. Peter Capizzi, put me back together after



Clair, Randy, and their Yorkie, Maeve (Photo by Wanda Koch)



Clair with her children, Anna and Ian, in Reykjavik, Iceland (New Year's 2020)



With reindeer in Swedish Lapland above the Arctic Circle (Christmas Day 2019)

Dr. Turk took me apart. Great job, guys—and thank you. I was lucky and blessed with their care as well as with the good fortune of meeting another man, my second chance at love, to accompany my, now, second chance at life. He was a veteran of the breast cancer wars. His first wife of nearly 30 years had breast cancer, a lumpectomy, chemo, and radiation. He braced himself for another roller coaster ride with me. Why didn’t he run? He loved me. He was going to love me and ultimately, he married me despite my scars and imperfections last October. We celebrate our first anniversary this month.

When five in 10 marriages end in divorce and one in 8 women get breast cancer, why get married a second time? Slim odds. But through the scary and the not-so-scary prevails hope. And, love, if we’re fortunate. Neither have a price tag. My life is a testament to that. Rebuilding from scratch. Never giving up and never stopping being positive, adding value, and having fun. Don’t miss a chance at any of these, even if they aren’t all present at the same time. And, having God in my life and a wonderful and supportive family carries me daily.

My breast cancer is in the rear-view mirror or, still in the mirror when I’m fresh out of the tub, but, so what? I’ll never win a wet t-shirt contest. And, at least for now, I’m happy, healthy, and in love.



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I Know A Thing Or Two About Dilworth

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Dilworth is an unbelievable neighborhood, from eclectic shops to great restaurants! Being part of the Dilworth community is why my family lives here and why I wanted to open my office here.

If you are an existing client, be sure to drop by and say “hi”! If you aren’t one yet, stop in or call us so we can review your current coverages and share how we can help protect your most valuable assets... and provide peace of mind.

Do you have the coverages you THINK you should have? Let one of our experienced professional agents assist you today! *Justin M Hamilton*



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