

Never DULL Moments



By Lynn Auclair
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Have you ever had a day where you just thought you'd like to pull your hair out? Well, it wasn't long ago when I actually had one of those days, and yes, I actually pulled my hair out.

How was I able to accomplish such a feat, you might ask? Well, in

late May, I was diagnosed with inflammatory breast cancer and after only two chemotherapy treatments, my hair was ready to jump ship.

It happened on a day that was to be a day of celebration for our son, Jesse's, 11th birthday party bash. My husband, Jim, and I live in Lake Delton, and this fun event was being held at Riverview Waterworld Park in Wisconsin Dells. Invited to share in this celebration were 10 of his friends, some cousins and many our own friends and family members.

The morning started with everyone meeting at our home and then dividing the extra kids into different vehicles in order to get them all to the waterpark. It was a chaotic time

as we tried to make sure that everyone had a towel, a change of clothing and no one was forgotten.

I encouraged everyone to head to the waterpark, letting them know that my parents were on their way to pick me up and we would meet them at the waterpark's pavilion for the luncheon and gift opening. My mom and dad were to be my chaperones, so to speak, making sure that I was strong enough for the day's event and to be there if it became neces-

sary for me to head home a bit early. They were also there for companionship, since I wasn't allowed in the sun, which unfortunately didn't matter since it was very rainy most of the day.

I had decided that it would be best to be home alone during this possible crisis of hair loss. I could have waited until my parents arrived, but I wanted to have my true experience alone, without having to act for someone else's benefit. It was strange how I knew this was the time when all my hair would come out. It was the same strangeness as feeling that I would some day have breast cancer and then having it come true. My doctor still has an eerie feeling about me and my seemingly uncanny intuition about my body. Now, if only I could do better with the lottery numbers!

Anyway, it was a surreal moment in my life, something I have never experienced before. I stood in the shower, where I wet all my hair and then proceeded to pull it out in large clumps. There was no sensation of hurt, just a unique feeling of tugging as I pulled my fingers through, and looked down and saw my hands covered with my hair. I took the handfuls and set them on the side of the tub until there was nothing left but wisps of hair on my head. As I looked at the tub, it looked like I had shaved one of our four cats and put their hair in piles along the edge.

Little fluffy kitties was all I could think of, until the thought of stepping out and looking at my new self in the mirror, hit me. My

attitude, from the onset of being diagnosed and told that I had breast cancer, has been nothing short of light-hearted and jovial. I was smiling and happy throughout the duration of the first meetings with the doctors, never sad, angry or wondering "why me."

Understand that I take this disease very seriously as a threat to my well-being and to my livelihood. But, I have considered it to be something that should not have power over my attitude. Attitude is everything as the saying goes. Mine has been one of acceptance, to the conditions of life that the Lord wants me to endure. I'm on this roller coaster ride to the very end, and I might as well enjoy the time I have on it, looking for the blessings along the way.

So, in the moments it took to step out of the shower, wrap the towel around my body and look into the mirror, I decided that this would be one of those jovial moments. I figured that I would most likely look like Darth Vader, from the movie Star Wars, when he took off his helmet to talk with his son, Luke.

When I looked in the mirror I could only laugh and think that I really did look like Anakin Skywalker or Darth Vader. I figured with a hat, I probably wouldn't look that bad. I would look like a person going through cancer treatments, and that was fine with me. I continued to get ready for the rest of the day's fun and waited by the door for

mom and dad to arrive. When I saw them park in the driveway, I called mom on her cell phone and

told her and dad to look up on the front porch at their new daughter from Star Wars, Lynnakin Skywalker. They laughed at my comments and showered me with hugs and praises of how cute my head was.

Mom took me into the bathroom and shaved the rest of the wisps off so that it was all uniform, then kissed the top of my head and cried. She let me know that she was glad to have her bald baby again and that she would be there, with me, through it all. I knew this to be true and was overjoyed to have shared my bad hair day with them both.

I put on my pink, American Family/Green Bay Packer breast cancer hat, got in their car and we drove to the waterpark pavilion, where the lunch was already in progress. I wasn't sure how I would react to the multitudes of people so soon after losing all my hair, but I decided best to handle it with a smile.

It's amazing how far a smile goes to put those around you at ease. I acted as if I had always been without hair, and it helped make the rest of the day and party a fabulous time.

Lynn Auclair is an account executive for the Poyette Press and DeForest Times-Tribune newspapers. Look for her to appear in the made-for-television Star Wars movie as Lynnakin, Anakin's long-lost step-sister, twice removed.